

THE
LOLLARDS;

OR,

**SOME ACCOUNT OF THE WITNESSES FOR THE TRUTH
IN GREAT BRITAIN,**

FROM A. D. 1400 TO A. D. 1546;

WITH A BRIEF NOTICE OF EVENTS CONNECTED WITH
THE EARLY HISTORY OF

THE REFORMATION.

Stokes, George

“ They were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonments.” Heb. xi. 35, 36.

“ Whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation: Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.” Heb. xiii. 7, 8.

“ Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” Rev. ii. 10.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following pages contain some account of the followers of the truth, in Great Britain, between the years 1400 and 1546.

Bitter, indeed, were the sufferings inflicted upon the poor lollards and gospellers, during that period, by the church of Rome, but they were enabled to bear a powerful testimony to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; and this was the cause of the enmity manifested against them. Many contests, recorded in ecclesiastical history, have risen upon less important points; but we should ever bear in mind, that the differences between the church of Rome, and those whose sufferings are related in the following pages, arose upon that great question, *HOW SHALL MAN BE JUST WITH GOD?* The lollards and gospellers had learned from the scriptures, that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. ii. ; that "the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin," 1 John i. 7; and that "we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins," 1 John ii. 1, 2; also, that there is but "one mediator between God and man," 1 Tim. ii. 5. Having learned these important truths, they could not rest satisfied with the doctrines of the church of Rome, which, in those days, taught its votaries, as it does at present, to trust in human merits, as well as in the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, and to look to other mediators in addition to him who bare our sins in his own body on the tree; while other errors of vital importance resulted from, and were connected with this as the source.

Thus we are not to consider these particulars as furnishing merely a history of human contests, and earthly passions. They are far more momentous; for they relate to subjects connected with the salvation or perdition of souls! And, viewed as such, assuredly it cannot be a matter of indifference, whether we inquire into these subjects, or disregard them.

The present work presents a simple record of past events, accompanied by a statement of doctrine which may interest the general reader.* Many volumes, both of protestant and romish authors, have been examined to collect the particulars inserted in the following pages, and no reasonable doubt can be entertained of the truth of the narratives. Romanists, indeed, have accused protestant writers, and Fox, in particular, of giving currency to falsehoods. This outcry was made immediately his great work appeared; but he completely refuted these slanders, as may be seen in the later editions he published, yet they have been repeated to the present day. They are without foundation; and whoever examines the authorities adduced by Fox, and similar historians, will be convinced of the general truth of their narratives, and the scrupulous fidelity with which they examined the evidences and documents whence their accounts are drawn.†

The details respecting the early sufferers in this cause, are comparatively brief and imperfect. Printing was not then invented. Their persecutors desired that their memorials should perish with them, and were able, for the most part, to destroy such accounts as were written. But some interesting documents escaped them, and, by a singular providence, in many

* The manner in which this work is divided into Parts, may, in some instances, appear rather abrupt. This has arisen from the work being originally circulated as separate Tracts, each Part containing twenty-four pages of letter press.

† See page 71. To the testimonies there adduced may be added that of the learned and indefatigable Neale, who speaks in the highest terms of the Martyrologist, and says, "No book ever gave such a mortal wound to popery as this." See his *History of the Puritans*.

instances, the romanists recorded the truths maintained by these martyrs, as well as their own cruel conduct; thus supplying evidence which cannot be disputed!

There is little mention of the leading events to be found in general historians, but, during the latter portion of the reign of Henry VIII. many temporal occurrences, by Divine Providence, were made the means of introducing spiritual benefits into our land, and it was impossible to omit these particulars, without passing over the main design of this work. Thus it became necessary to state many facts, respecting Cranmer and others, which have been denied or misrepresented by romish authors, although they are proved by indisputable evidence. The reader will, therefore, find an account of various events connected with the early history of THE REFORMATION in England.

Of late years, that important subject has been much neglected by protestants, while romanists have been unceasingly active in the circulation of accounts, in which the truth has been obscured by misrepresentations and sophistries, or more frequently, efforts have been made to conceal it by direct falsehoods. Thus, comparatively few amongst us are aware of the events that occurred in the dark and dismal period, during which our forefathers were enthralled by romish ignorance and superstition. Surely, all those who value the doctrines of the Reformation, and the deliverance from mental and spiritual bondage obtained thereby, should earnestly endeavour to extend the knowledge of the real history of that period, and this is the special duty of all parents and instructors of youth.

The above brief explanation has been given, from a desire to show, that these pages have not been compiled with a political or a worldly object; at the same time, the writer cannot but add, that as an ENGLISHMAN as well as a PROTESTANT, he desires to feel thankful for the blessings of THE REFORMATION. He rejoices to reflect, that similar feelings have been declared and maintained by those who have held the great doctrine of truth, as set forth by the reformers, namely, justification by faith alone, in the finished work of our Lord and Saviour; and who, although of various denominations, as to outward observances, have ever sought to keep "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Many of them now rest from their labours; but in their works, though dead, they speak to us. Others yet survive, and the increasing boldness of the advocates of romanism has called them forth to declare their sentiments on this momentous subject.

To avoid observations of a personal or political nature is difficult, when the manner in which the romanists treat the subject is considered; but it is the duty of every christian to do so. When speaking of the opposers of the truth of old, the apostle was enabled to say, "Being reviled, we bless;" such should be the aim of all those who adopt the doctrines of the gospel, and such should be their conduct towards their opponents personally. But, with respect to those doctrines; the course also pointed out by the same apostle must be our guide, "To whom," says he, "we gave place, no not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." Then let us not sacrifice the truth in vain endeavours to conciliate, when those who possess supreme authority in the church of Rome, and whose words are received as laws by the romanists, continue in the strongest terms to declare their irreconcilable enmity to the principles, which ever must be the guide and the delight of every consistent protestant.*—A modern romish writer, Dr. Norris, of Stonyhurst, has not hesitated even to declare that members of the Roman church cannot, consistently, enter into an examination of doctrinal points with members of a protestant church.

* See the bull of the pope against the Bible Society, 1824: and another, authorizing the Jubilee, 1825; also the circular letter of the romish prelates in Ireland, against the Bible, Tracts, &c. &c.

As the advocates of the church of Rome assert that the doctrines it maintains have been held by the church of Christ from the earliest period, a brief view is here given of the principal errors contained in her creed, and the periods at which they were introduced.

For a general statement of its peculiar tenets, we refer to the creed of pope Pius IV.; which is the standard of doctrine in the church of Rome. This is here reprinted from the copy published in the English language, by the romanists themselves.*

After reciting the Apostles' Creed, it proceeds thus:—

"I most steadily admit and embrace apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other observances and constitutions of the same church.

"I also admit the holy scriptures according to that sense which our holy mother, the church, has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the scriptures: neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise, than according to the unanimous consent of the fathers.

"I also profess, that there are truly and properly seven sacraments, of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and necessary for the salvation of mankind, though not all for every one: to wit, baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony; and that they confer grace: and that of these, baptism, confirmation, and orders, cannot be reiterated without sacrilege. I also receive and admit the received and approved ceremonies of the catholic church, used in the solemn administration of all the aforesaid sacraments.

"I embrace and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the holy council of Trent, concerning original sin and justification.

"I profess, likewise, that in the mass there is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead. And that in the most holy sacrament of the eucharist, there is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ: and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood; which conversion the catholic church calls transubstantiation. I also confess, that under either kind alone, Christ is received whole and entire, and a true sacrament.

"I constantly hold, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.

"Likewise that the saints, reigning together with Christ, are to be honoured and invoked, and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration.

"I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, of the mother of God, ever a virgin, and also of the other saints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration is to be given them.

"I also affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to christian people.

"I acknowledge the holy, catholic, apostolic, roman church, for the mother and mistress of all churches; and I promise true obedience to the bishop of Rome, successor to St. Peter, prince of the apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.

"I likewise undoubtedly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy council of Trent. And I condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies which the church has condemned, rejected, and anathematized.

"I, N. N., do at this present freely profess, and sincerely hold, this true

* See "The Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine, as contained in the Profession of Faith, published by Pope Pius IV. By R. Challoner, D.D. Bishop of Debra, and Vic. Apost. 12th ed. Lond. 1823."

catholic faith, without (or out of) which no one can be saved: and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and unviolated, (or whole and entire) with God's assistance, to the end of my life."

Here then we have the fundamental doctrines of the church of Rome, to which its clergy are required unequivocally to consent, and which are inculcated upon the laity as necessary for them to believe. There may be, and doubtless there are, many romanists who reject some of these errors; but this does not show that their church has altered its tenets; it only proves that they differ, in a greater or less degree, from that church, and, in this respect, it is a valuable comment upon her boasted unity!

To enter into arguments, showing that these doctrines are opposed to the truths of scripture, and contrary to the religion of Christ, would be superfluous in this place. However ignorant many amongst us may be of the real character of popery, there can be but few, that are more than merely nominal protestants, who will not at once see that these doctrines cannot be held by any church, which has not departed from the faith, as "delivered to the saints."

It is very important to trace the period at which these errors were first introduced, as we shall from thence perceive that the mists of ignorance and superstition gradually increased, till the world was almost entirely involved in darkness, as to spiritual things. Such an inquiry must tend to excite us to thankfulness for the spiritual blessings we enjoy, and show the falsehood of the assertion, that these tenets have always been held by the church.

In the third century,* oblations began to be frequently offered for the dead, and the sacraments began to be changed from the simple form in which they were originally administered. Oil, milk, and honey, were used at baptisms, and water was mixed with the wine of the Lord's Supper.

In the fourth century, Syricius, bishop of Rome, began to oppose the marriage of the clergy; but this innovation did not finally prevail for many centuries. Much stress also began to be laid upon human traditions, and superstition made considerable progress. From the time when Constantine became a christian, and the power of heathen Rome was restrained, the principles of popery, (the man of sin, 2 Thess. ii. 3.) began to be revealed. The ancient fathers generally understood the roman empire was the impediment to the man of sin being revealed, and therefore the primitive christians were accustomed to pray for its continuance. See Townsend's New Testament arranged.

In the fifth century, pictures and images were introduced.

In the sixth century, the Lord's Supper was turned into a sacrifice, and mass was performed as beneficial for the living and the dead.† The clergy were partially exempted from civil jurisdiction; and Boniface III. bishop of Rome, assumed the title of universal bishop, under the sanction of the emperor Phocas, who was a murderer and a usurper; thus claiming a supremacy over other bishops; whereas the writings of the fathers, during the preceding centuries, show that this power had never been allowed; and it has not been admitted by the christians of the Greek, the Syrian, or the Armenian churches.

* See "A Caution to Protestants, and a Warning to Catholics, a Sermon by the Rev. W. Marsh, 1825."

† Blanco White, who was a romish priest in Spain, says, that the romish doctrine of the sacrament was, and still is a never failing source of profit to the romish priesthood. The notion, that they have the power of offering up the whole living person of Christ, whenever they performed mass, paved the way to the doctrine which makes the mass itself a repetition of the great sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. Under the idea, that the priest who performs "the bloodless sacrifice," as they call it, can appropriate the whole benefit of it to the individual whom he mentions in his secret prayer, before or after consecration, the roman catholics are eager, all over the world, to purchase the benefit of masses for themselves, to obtain the favour of saints, by having the masses done in their praise and, finally, to save the souls of their friends out of purgatory, by the same means.

In the seventh century, Boniface IV. opened the pantheon at Rome, commanding the virgin Mary and the saints to be worshipped therein. Divine service was ordered to be celebrated every where, only in the Latin tongue; saints were invoked in the public prayers, and the doctrine of purgatory made further progress.

In the eighth century, pope Zachary deposed Childeric, king of France, and set up Pepin in his room. Certain meats were forbidden, the worship of images was confirmed, by the second council of Nice; pilgrimages were enjoined, and many new saints were canonized.

In the ninth century, the effects of these inventions became more decidedly manifest. Cardinal Bellarmine, the favourite champion of the romanists, declares, "there never was any age more unlearned and more unhappy." Such is the testimony of one of their own writers.

In the tenth century, ignorance and vice had advanced. The popes earnestly sought for temporal power and wealth. The doctrine of transubstantiation was now decidedly set forth, and many lesser superstitions arose. Cardinal Baronius, the romish annalist, states, "In this century, 'the abomination of desolation' was seen in the temple of the Lord; and in the see of St. Peter were placed the most wicked of men. And how hideous was the face of the Roman church, when filthy and impudent prostitutes governed all at Rome." Dark, indeed, is this picture; but if we consider the extensive introduction of error, already noticed, we must exclaim, "Is there not a cause?"

In the eleventh century, pope Hildebrand, named Gregory VII. raised the power of the papacy above all temporal monarchs. Purgatory and transubstantiation were more strongly maintained; relics, beads, and pretended miracles abounded. This state of error and darkness could only be supported by severe persecution. Accordingly we find some who opposed these corruptions, burned to death at Orleans, in 1017, for pretended heresy; they were canons of the cathedral in that city.

In the twelfth century, monarchs were dethroned, and treated with contempt by the popes. The scriptures were generally set aside, while the absurdities of what is called "school divinity" were carried to their height.

In the thirteenth century, the scriptures were almost forgotten. The cup was denied to the laity, auricular confession of sins to a priest was enjoined, and his absolution was accounted necessary to salvation. The council of Lateran ordered transubstantiation to be received as an article of faith. The Franciscan and Dominican orders of monks and friars, as well as the inquisition, by which even parents are compelled to accuse their children, if they suspect them of heresy, were established. The Albigenses and Waldenses were destroyed by thousands, for opposing the errors of the church of Rome. The jubilee was appointed by Boniface VIII.

In the fourteenth century, romanism may be considered at its height; but even then not half the professed followers of Christ were subjected to its sway. The pope was now blasphemously styled, "Our Lord God the pope," and was considered as a deity. The romish clergy were extremely dissolute and impious, and ruled the nations with a rod of iron. But a better day began to dawn; the morning star of the Reformation had appeared, and the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness were again about to shine upon the world.

In the fifteenth century, the vices and ignorance of the romanists continued in their full extent, and the people began to cry aloud for reformation. The papacy was rent by schism; the general councils assumed power over the pope himself. The scriptures were again circulated in the vulgar tongues; the art of printing was invented. From this time light and knowledge increased, and the power of romanism declined. To support this sinking cause, greater violence and cruelty were resorted to, and heretics were pursued with unrelenting rigour. At that period, the struggles recorded in the following pages began.

Here this brief sketch may be closed. The Reformation having advanced, the council of Trent was held, and the final seal of authority was stamped on the errors above enumerated. Human traditions were declared equal to the scriptures, which were forbidden to be read by the laity, except under such restrictions, as, in fact, amounted to a direct and full prohibition, and were considered as such. The doctrines of human merit, works of supererogation and purgatory, received the most decided sanction, and all who opposed them were anathematized. The doctrine, that no faith was to be maintained with heretics, first taught by the popes, and adopted by the council of Constance, in 1415, was confirmed; and the twelve new articles of faith, already enumerated, were added to the creed of Rome. All its errors and abominations were sanctioned in the strongest terms.

The canons and decrees of this council continue to be the rule of faith of the church of Rome to the present day. They were finally arranged by pope Pius IV. (see page vii.) every priest is bound to obey them; and every member of the Latin church is required to revere them as dictates of the Holy Ghost!

Nor is this mere matter of theory. If we look at Spain, Italy, Ireland, France, and other countries where romanism prevails, we shall see that these tenets, in their fullest extent, are received and acted upon at the present day. It is true that popery does not rule with such an undisturbed sway as formerly. The progress of light and knowledge, especially through the medium of the press, acts as a weight upon the system; under which, by the Divine blessing, it must sink; its struggles to cast off this power are felt at the present moment throughout the nations of Europe, and a still more awful crisis may be at hand, but the final event is not doubtful. The day approaches when the voice of the angel shall proclaim, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," Rev. xiv. 8.

Romanism in our land would assume a milder aspect. And although its doctrines in reality remain unchanged, and its principal advocates glory in declaring that they are so, yet too many amongst us are ready to believe that it is but one branch of the church of Christ, nay, the oldest, and most venerable, although, perhaps, as they term it, in some degree, fallen into error! But this is not the real state of the case. It is wholly corrupted; the departures of romanism from the church of Christ, are not confined to modes of worship and minor points of doctrine, it is decidedly and diametrically opposed to all the leading and vital truths of christianity, and, in fact, in its distinguishing doctrines and customs it is more nearly allied to heathenism than to the religion of Jesus!*

Here we may inquire, in what respect has a change taken place. Do not romanists still boast of the infallibility of their church, and assert, that it alone holds the doctrines of truth? Do we not hear in our own land of its pretensions to miraculous powers? Has any council, or public authority, repealed even one of the objectionable doctrines set forth and confirmed by the council of Trent? Has the pope directed the romanists no longer to obey him in preference to their natural rulers? Is the free use of the scriptures allowed? If these things are not changed, and such evidently is the case, is it not evident, that all the doctrines to which protestants have objected, still remain a part of the romish religion? As the church of Rome still maintains her pretensions to supremacy, infallibility, and exclusive salvation, we may inquire, Wherein is she changed?

How then, it may be asked, is it that romanism, according to the description of its followers in England, appears so different from the preceding delineation? If it really is thus far gone from the truth, why do they attempt

* See the Rev. G. Hamilton's Tract on the Heathen Ceremonies adopted by the Church of Rome; Middleton's letters from Rome; Rome in the Nineteenth Century, and The Protestant, printed at Glasgow; also Faber's Difficulties of Romanism; for further statements on this subject.

to set it forth in other colours? Upon this point we may quote the words of archbishop Wake, a prelate of the last century, who had been induced to believe that a large proportion of the romish clergy were convinced of the errors of their church, and desirous of uniting with those who professed a purer faith. He found that this expectation was erroneous, and has recorded his opinion upon this point, in the following words: "Popery, in all its colours, is so unlike christianity, that it is in vain ever to hope to promote it, if it appears in its own shape. It is necessary, therefore, that this religion be made to look as orthodox as possible.* Some things are denied, some are mollified, all disguised; and a double benefit is thereby obtained. Popery is to be received as a very harmless thing, and the protestants, especially the ministers, and first reformers, are to be represented to the world, as a sort of people that have supported themselves by calumny and lies, and made a noise about errors and corruptions, which are no where to be found but in their own brains, or books; but which the church of Rome detests as well as we."

Having thus briefly shown what were the errors and false doctrines, held by the church of Rome in the fourteenth century, and that these tenets remain unchanged at the present day, we have now to return to the immediate subject of the following pages, and to observe what was the effect of these doctrines in our own land at that period.

Rapin gives a melancholy picture of the state of the church in that century; it is, however, fully confirmed by writers of the romish persuasion. He says, "The christian church had never been in so deplorable a state as in the 15th century. God's justice and mercy, and Christ's meritorious death, were scarce any more the object of a christian's faith. Most people's religion consisted in pilgrimages, and the worship of the blessed virgin, saints, and relics. As for the clergy, their whole care was confined to the supporting themselves in that height of grandeur and power they had enjoyed for several centuries, and to the seeing that no man presumed to dispute their immunities. Discipline never was more remiss. The clergy seemed to look upon their spiritual power and jurisdiction, only as a means to prevent the violation of their temporal privileges. Provided their rights were untouched, every one might do what seemed good in his own eyes. The authority of the church was become the capital point in religion. It was not only over spirituals that the popes had stretched their authority, they pretended also to extend it over temporals, under colour that religion was concerned in all affairs. Rome and Avignon were the centre of pride, avarice, luxury, and sensuality, and all the most scandalous vices. The popes were neither learned nor religious. Hardly was there one to be found that might pass for an honest man, even according to the maxims of the world. This is no aggravation, for the authors who wrote, before the Reformation have said a hundred times more. Nay, it has even been publicly preached before the councils. The legates sent to the several states of Christendom, were so many incendiaries, who sought only to sow discord and division among princes, or to excite them to shed the blood of their own subjects. They regarded only the interest of their own master, and the Roman see, making no conscience to violate all the rules of religion and equity to accomplish their ends. The rest of the clergy, in general, were not better. As for real learning, it was scarce heard of in this century. England, with regard to religion, was in the same condition with the rest of Europe. The people passionately wished for a reformation of

* It is a well known and indisputable fact, that the catechisms of the church of Rome, and her books of devotions, are carefully adapted for the different countries in which they are published. Where romanism reigns undisturbed, and ignorance prevails, the grossest errors and superstitions are inculcated; while in other lands, the same, or similar works, are cleared from many of the more objectionable parts: nor are these merely variations, in translating from one language to another.

sundry abuses crept into the church. The clergy strenuously opposed t, as every change would be to their prejudice."

Such was the state of religion in our land in the fourteenth century, as sketched by this able historian, whose accuracy, research, and moderation, are generally acknowledged. And we may readily believe that such was the case, when we consider the actual state of those countries where the romish faith now prevails, and the bulk of the people have been kept in ignorance. But this is not the state of our land at the present time. To what then is the difference owing? The answer is plain. Under the Divine blessing, it is owing to THE REFORMATION; and the particulars detailed in the following pages will show how THAT REFORMATION arose, how strongly it was opposed, and how greatly we are indebted to those excellent and revered individuals, who counted not their lives dear unto them, for the sake of Christ, and his gospel.

The blood of the martyrs has ever been accounted the seed of the church: by the Divine influences of the Holy Spirit, it was so in our land; and we are now enjoying the fruits of the patience and faith of the saints.

Do we desire to see our nation deprived of the opportunities she now possesses, and is endeavouring to use for conferring spiritual blessings on the whole world? Without the least reference to subjects of a political nature, let us consider whether we wish to be reduced to the degraded situation of Spain, and other Roman catholic countries at the present day, as to spiritual knowledge? Assuredly not. Then let us beware how we allow our countrymen to be deceived by the cunning craftiness of those who would, by degrees, lead us back to that system of doctrines, which once reduced our land to the unhappy state we have just described. As individuals and as fellow-citizens, they may command our sympathy, and, in a moral point of view, many among them, both clergy and laity, deserve our esteem; but surely our regard for them will be better manifested, by endeavouring, with christian charity, to draw them from the error of their ways, than by silently relinquishing the pure doctrines of the truth as revealed in the scriptures, in the vain hope of conciliating those, who, upon principle, cannot admit that there is any salvation for such as refuse to hold their erroneous doctrines.*

Let us remember the awful denunciations of wrath against the mystical Babylon, as recorded in the Apocalypse, Rev. xviii.; and, in the spirit of christian love and affection, let us urge all those who are still within her pale to "SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES," like the noble Bereans of old, Acts xvii. 11, 12, to see whether these things are so. Let us remember the warning addressed, not to nominal protestants, but to the followers of Christ of whatever denomination. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities."

* This is too universally admitted to need reference to authorities for proof. One, however, of recent and of the highest authority it may be well to mention—the bull of the pope, 1825, respecting the jubilee; which, stating the certain condemnation that awaits all who are not of the romish faith, adds, "we also openly profess that out of the Church is no salvation."

THE LOLLARDS ;

*Or some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England,
between the years 1400 and 1546.*



Martyrdom of John Badby, A. D. 1409. (See page 13.)

PART I.

The state of true Religion in England in the fourteenth Century.—Bradwardine.—The Ploughman's Prayer.—Begging Friars.—Wickliff.—His Translation of the Bible.—The Lollards.—William Swinderby.—Queen Ann.—Persecutions.—Law for burning Heretics.—William Sawtree, the first English Martyr.—John Badby.—Transubstantiation.—William Thorpe.—Superstitions.—Trial and Condemnation of Lord Cobham.

IN the fourteenth century, true religion scarcely existed in ENGLAND, and it may justly be said that the days were evil. The papal usurpation of power over the consciences of men was then at its height, for error and superstition had been advancing during the preceding centuries, till both the doctrines and the precepts of our Lord, as declared in the scriptures, were no longer taught by those who professed to be his followers; and the little that remained of the truth was corrupted and concealed from view, by the superstitions and vain traditions of men. The scriptures were almost unknown both to the laity and the clergy; in a word, darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people. Complaints, however, of the abuses of popery began to be heard; a few individuals, eminent for their abilities, ventured to bear testimony against the errors

which prevailed; and some there were in humbler stations, who rejoiced in the precious truths of the gospel; for, though poor as to this world, they were rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven.

Among the more eminent characters, Thomas Bradwardine was conspicuous: he did not, it is true, stand forth like Grosseteste in the preceding century, and personally oppose the usurpations and errors of the church of Rome; but examining calmly into the truths of the gospel, he wrote fully upon the subject of Divine grace, pointing out the helplessness and unworthiness of man by nature, and his need of a better righteousness than his own; deriving his knowledge of these truths from the scriptures, and the writings of the fathers. A valuable historian of the Church of Christ says—"Bradwardine had observed how very few in his days appeared to be conscious of their need of the Holy Spirit to renew their natures; and being himself deeply sensible of the desperate wickedness of the human heart, (Jer. xvii. 9.) and of the preciousness of the grace of Christ, he seems to have overlooked, or little regarded, the fashionable superstitions of his time, and to have applied the whole vigour and vehemence of his spirit to the defence of the foundation of the gospel." He has been called "The morning star of the reformation." One sentence, extracted from his works, will convey to the reader an idea of his humility of spirit, and of the manner in which he looked to God for direction:—"Arise, O Lord, judge thy own cause. Sustain him who undertakes to defend thy truth; protect, strengthen, and comfort me; for thou knowest that no where relying on my own strength, but trusting in thine, I, a weak worm, attempt to maintain so great a cause." Let every one who advocates the cause of truth, endeavour to proceed in a similar spirit.

The immediate design of the following pages does not admit of particular details respecting these early followers of the truth in our land. Also, before the invention of printing, books were scarce, and but few copies of any works could be circulated; thus one great means of diffusing truth, and opposing error, could hardly be said to exist; and the few writings which were sent abroad were easily suppressed, if deemed objectionable by the church of Rome. Several, doubtless, have thus perished whose contents would be most interesting to us; some few, however, have sur-

vived. "The praier and complaynte of the ploweman unto Christ, written soon after the yere of our Lorde a thousande and thre hundred," presents a striking picture of the spiritual bondage under which our forefathers groaned, and shows that some, even in humble life, called not upon saints, nor the virgin Marv, but upon "Jesus Christ, to have mercy and pity upon his poor servants, and to help them in their great need to fight against sin, and the devil who is the author of sin;" for thus this interesting document begins; and from its being called the Ploughman's prayer, we may conclude that there were some labourers who used similar language. The vision of Pierce Plowman might also be referred to; and in the writings of Chaucer and Gower, two poets of those times, we find sufficient evidence that the gospel had made considerable progress, even in that day. But in promoting this work, WICKLIFF was the great instrument.

JOHN WICKLIFF was a distinguished member of the University of Oxford, where he rendered himself conspicuous, soon after the middle of the fourteenth century, by his determined opposition to the Dominican and Franciscan Friars, who then infested the kingdom, and especially that university. They taught that the absurdities which they maintained were more perfect than the truths contained in the word of God; they asserted, that Christ had not only recommended the course they followed, but had set an example himself, by becoming a mendicant friar; and declared, that all who became members of their orders, were sure of salvation. They levied contributions from the ignorant, especially when upon their sick beds; and many purchased, at a high price, the worn-out garments of these friars, believing that if their bodies were committed to the grave wrapped in them, their souls would be sure of admission into the kingdom of heaven. Wickliff boldly opposed these friars, and bore testimony against the antichristian proceedings of the pope, by whom their abominations were encouraged. His opposition was grounded on the best foundation. He saw that for the soul to be without knowledge was not good; and, to forward the progress of truth, Wickliff translated the bible into the English language,*

* There were translations of some parts of the scriptures, even as early as the days of Alfred, who himself translated the Psalms; but

which was the most useful measure he could have devised. The Romish clergy loudly objected to this proceeding; and the following curious specimen shows the manner in which the ecclesiastics of that day reasoned on this subject.—“Christ,” says one of them, “committed the gospel to the clergy and doctors of the church, that they might minister it to the laity and weaker persons, according as the times and people’s wants might require; but this master John Wickliff translated it out of Latin into English, and by that means laid it more open to the laity, and to women who could read, than it used to be to the most learned of the clergy, and those of them who had the best understanding. And so the gospel pearl is cast abroad, and trodden under swine; and that which used to be precious to both clergy and laity, is made, as it were, the common jest of both; and the jewel of the church is turned into the sport of the laity.”

The reader cannot fail to remark the exact similarity between these arguments of the Romish priests in the fourteenth century, and those which are urged by the same class of individuals at the present day. They will rather suppose that they are reading the address of a papal advocate in Ireland in our own time, than the words of Knighton, a learned canon of Leicester, who lived at the same time as Wickliff, and from whose writings this passage is taken. It is another proof, if proof were wanting when the fact is admitted on both sides, that the church of Rome has always opposed the circulation of the scriptures among the people. “Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be re-proved,” John iii. 19, 20. But we must not stop to relate the particulars of Wickliff’s history. They are deeply interesting, and are noticed by most historians who record the events of those days. He was a bold and undaunted opposer of the errors and corruptions of the church of Rome, and has been appropriately called, “The rising sun of the Reformation.” The times in which he lived were turbulent, and God was pleased to over-rule the political proceedings of some men of rank and influence in the state, so that they they had become obsolete, and were very scarce. Wickliff was the first who translated the whole scriptures into English, in a language and style understood by the people.

protected him from the malice of the Romish prelates, and he died in peace at his living of Lutterworth, in the year 1387. One of his latest efforts was to bear his testimony against the unchristian proceedings of the popes of that day, for there were two! Pope Urban VI. took up arms against his opponent pope Clement, and appointed the Romish bishop of Norwich to be his general, and sent his bulls, or decrees, into England, promising spiritual indulgences and pardons for sin, both here and hereafter, to all who would assist him personally, or with money, in this ungodly warfare. "The banner of Christ on the cross," Wickliff says, "which is the token of peace, mercy, and charity, is used to slay christians for their attachment to two false priests, who are open antichrist, that they may maintain their worldly state, and oppress Christendom worse than Christ and his apostles were oppressed by the Jews. Why (adds he) will not the proud priest of Rome grant full pardon to all men, to live and die in peace, and charity, and patience, instead of encouraging all men to fight and slay christians?" He was commonly styled, "The Gospel doctor;" and a firm attachment to the truths of the gospel was evidently the leading principle which actuated his conduct.

The Romish prelates, after much consultation, brought a bill into Parliament to suppress Wickliff's translation of the bible; but it was rejected by a great majority;* and for a short time the circulation of his version was permitted: it must, however, have been very limited, as the art of printing was then unknown, and few persons had means sufficient to purchase a written copy. From the register of Alwick, bishop of Norwich, it appears that a testament of Wickliff's version, in the year 1429, cost four marks and forty pence, or 2*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* (equal to more than 20*l.* of our present money.) A large sum in those days, when

* The Parliamentary proceedings of those times throw considerable light upon the grasping power of Rome, and also show that our ancestors did not willingly submit to the encroachments of papal authority. But their efforts were in vain. In the year 1316, the clergy had obtained a law exempting them from secular authority, even for heinous offences, such as robbery and murder. We also find, that the Commons in parliament presented a petition to the king in 1376, in which they state the result of an inquiry, as showing that the taxes paid yearly to the pope, from England, amounted to five times the revenues of the king!

five pounds was considered sufficient for the annual maintenance of a respectable tradesman, or a yeoman, or one of the inferior clergy.

Although the circulation of the scriptures in the English language must have been comparatively small, yet still, under the influence and direction of the Holy Spirit, it produced considerable effects; and there can be no doubt that the word of God was in this, as in other instances, the means of bringing many unto the knowledge of the truth, and turning them from the ways of the world to the practice of godliness. These followers of Christ soon experienced the truth of our Lord's declaration, "Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

Courtney, when bishop of London, was strenuous in his opposition to Wickliff: he was afterwards appointed to the see of Canterbury; and as the reformer himself was protected from the effects of his power, he engaged with activity in persecuting his followers, who were called **LOLLARDS**—one of those names of reproach by which the followers of Christ have been reviled in all ages. It is supposed to have been derived from Walter Lollardus, one of the teachers of these truths on the continent, or from a German word which signifies psalm-singers. Many of them, who were preachers, travelled about the country, in the simplest manner, barefoot and in common frieze gowns, preaching in the market-places, and teaching the doctrines of truth with great zeal and much success; so that in a few years their numbers were very considerable, and it was calculated that at least one fourth of the nation were really or nominally inclined to these sentiments.

Knighton mentions several active preachers of the lollards; among them was *William Swinderby*, a short account of whom will give an idea of these zealous servants of Christ. He was originally an hermit: coming to Leicester, he preached against the corruptions of the age, particularly reproving the pride and vanity of females, until, as we are told by the Romish historian, "the good and grave women, as well as the bad, threatened to stone him out of the place." He then addressed the merchants and rich men, denouncing those who neglected heavenly riches for worldly wealth: so often dwelling thereon, that, as the

Romish chronicler remarks, had not the Divine clemency interposed, he had driven some honest men of the town into despair. Swinderby then became a recluse, but, after a short time, resumed his preaching, directing his discourses against the errors and vices of popery. Knighton, of course, stigmatizes his doctrines as erroneous, but adds, "He so captivated the affections of the people, that they said they never had seen or heard any one who so well explained the truth." Being excommunicated, and forbidden to preach in any church or church-yard, he made a pulpit of two millstones in the high street of Leicester, and there preached "in contempt of the bishop." "There," says Knighton, "you might see throngs of people from every part, as well from the town as the country, double the number there used to be when they might hear him lawfully." Swinderby was cited to appear before the bishop at Lincoln, when he was convicted of heresy and errors, for which, it is said, "he deserved to be made fuel for fire." He was, however, allowed to escape. He afterwards settled at Coventry, where he preached and taught with greater success than before. Walsingham, another Romish historian, says, that the multitude raged in his behalf so as to deter the bishop of Lincoln from further measures against him. Swinderby then retired to Herefordshire, where proceedings were instituted against him by the bishop of the diocese in 1391. Fox has given them at length from the registers of the bishop. They show that Swinderby taught the same doctrines as Wickliff, and was active in preaching the truth; but no particulars are recorded of the subsequent events of his life.

The following description of the lollards is given by a Romish inquisitor of those times, named Reinher. Strange to say, he thought such conduct highly deserving of censure. "The disciples of Wickliff are men of a serious, modest deportment, avoiding all ostentation in dress, mixing little with the busy world, and complaining of the debauchery of mankind. They maintain themselves wholly by their own labour, and utterly despise wealth; being fully content with bare necessaries. They follow no traffic, because it is attended with so much lying, swearing, and cheating. They are chaste and temperate; are never seen in taverns, or amused by the trifling gaieties of life. You find them always employed, either learning or teaching. They are con-

cise and devout in their prayers; blaming an unanimated prolixity. They never swear; speak little; and in their public preaching they lay the chief stress on charity. They never mind canonical hours, because, they say, that a pater-noster or two, repeated with devotion, is better than tedious hours spent without devotion. They explain the scriptures in a different way from the holy doctors and church of Rome. They speak little, and humbly, and are well behaved in appearance."

Richard the second was at that time king of England, and he countenanced the archbishop in persecuting the Wickliffites, and a proclamation was issued against all persons who should teach or maintain these opinions, or possess any of the books and pamphlets written by Wickliff and his followers. Many suffered imprisonment, and were required to do penance under the most degrading circumstances; although it does not appear that any were actually put to death during this reign. This may partly be ascribed to the power and influence of the duke of Lancaster, who was the great patron of Wickliff; and of queen Ann, the consort of Richard II. and sister of the king of Bohemia. That excellent princess seems to have been a pious character, and we cannot but regret that the account given of her by the historians of those times is so very brief and imperfect; they, however, relate that she had in her possession the gospels in the English language, with four commentaries upon them. This is evidence of a mind not inattentive to the truths of the gospel, and a proof that she engaged in the study of the scriptures; for in those days a person of her rank, and especially a female, would not have sought to possess such expensive and uncommon works, unless she desired to profit from their contents.

After her decease, which took place in the year 1394, the lollards were more cruelly harassed, and severer punishments were inflicted on all who dared to read the scriptures in their own language.

Richard the second was deposed, in the year 1399, by Henry of Lancaster, who succeeded to the throne. He was the son of John of Gaunt, who had been the constant patron of Wickliff, and his preserver in many scenes of difficulty and danger; but, widely differing from his father. Henry was no sooner seated on the throne, than he encouraged the ecclesiastics in their proceedings; and under this monarch

and Arundel, then archbishop of Canterbury, a most violent persecution was commenced. The persecutions were general throughout the kingdom; and every where the suppression of lollardism was earnestly kept in view. Now, for the first time, was exhibited in England the spectacle of martyrs **BURNED ALIVE** for their opposition to the abominations of popery. From that period, till the reformation freed the land from the shackles of papal power, this persecution continued: many followers of Christ had "trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonments;" and others counted not their lives dear unto them, "having respect unto the recompense of the reward."

The design of this brief sketch is to give some account of these faithful **WITNESSES** for the truth, and the events connected with their history; it will show us that there was a time when **ENGLISHMEN** dared not to read the **BIBLE**, nor worship God according to its dictates. It is not intended to detail events of a political nature, but simply to refer to the history of those who suffered in the cause of Christ and his gospel; hoping that the readers may be led to think more deeply upon these subjects than they have yet done; and that they may peruse this account of past times with profit to themselves, and thankfulness to Him who has appointed their lot in a far different period.

To return to our narrative. The prelates, finding that a vast number still professed the doctrines of the gospel, resolved to act with greater vigour, and presented an address to the king, noticing "the trouble and disquietness which was now risen by divers wicked and perverse men (as they called them) teaching and preaching, openly and privily, a new, wicked, and heretical doctrine, contrary to the catholic faith, and determination of the holy church." Whereupon the king, Henry the fourth, by the persuasion of the clergy, was induced, in the second year of his reign, to consent to a law against all persons who should "preach, maintain, teach, inform, openly or in secret, or make or write any book, contrary to the catholic faith, and the determination of the holy church." It also prohibited conventicles or assemblies, or keeping any schools, "concerning this sect, wicked doctrine, and opinion," and enacted that no man should "favour such preacher, maker of assemblies, or book-maker, or writer, or teacher." And that "all persons having

such books or writings, should, within forty days, deliver them to the ordinary.* The law also directed that all persons who "should do or attempt any thing contrary to this statute, or should not deliver the books," should be arrested and detained in safe custody, till, "by order of the law, they cleared themselves, as touching the articles laid to his or their charge," or recanted their opinions. If convicted before their ordinary, or his commissioners, they were to be laid in any of his prisons, and there to be kept so long as by his discretion shall be thought expedient; and if they refused to abjure, the mayor, or sheriffs, or other magistrates, were to be present with the ordinary when required, and to confer with him in giving sentence against the parties convicted: and after the said sentence so pronounced, it was enacted that such mayor, &c. "shall take unto them the said persons so offending, and any of them, and cause them openly TO BE BURNED in the sight of all the people; to the intent that this kind of punishment may be a terror unto others; and the like wicked doctrines and heretical opinions, or authorers and favourers thereof, be no more maintained within this realm and dominions, to the great hurt of the christian religion, and the decrees of the holy church." Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, proceeded, without loss of time, to put this bloody law into force, even during the session of parliament in which it was passed!

WILLIAM SAWTREE was the first English martyr burned alive for opposing the abominations of popery. He was priest of St. Osyth's, in the city of London; and although at one time he had been induced to renounce, before the bishop of Norwich, the sentiments he held, yet he was enabled, by the grace of God, to see his error, and again openly to profess the truths of the gospel. On Saturday, February 12, 1401, he was summoned to appear before the archbishop of Canterbury, and accused of holding heretical opinions. The principal articles against him were, that he had said, "He would not worship the cross on which Christ suffered, but only Christ that suffered upon the cross: that every priest and deacon is more bound to preach the word

* By "the ordinary," is meant the person who possesses the ecclesiastical jurisdiction in any place; it usually refers to the bishop of the diocese. The reader will observe, that judgment was to be passed upon those accused of heresy, at the pleasure of the clergy, without any reference to the judges of the land, or a jury.

of God than to say particular services at the canonical hours; and that after the pronouncing of the sacramental words of the body of Christ, the bread remaineth of the same nature that it was before, neither doth it cease to be bread."

A few days were allowed him to answer these accusations; when he appeared and delivered his reply, in which he fully explained his views; and being required by the archbishop to renounce his opinions, he refused to do so. He was then examined more particularly respecting the sacrament of the altar; and continuing to defend the doctrines he had advanced on that subject, he was condemned as a heretic, and sentence* was pronounced against him.

The council adjourned for a few days, when the record of the former process against Sawtree by the bishop of Norwich was brought forward, and he was again called to say whether he still affirmed that "in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration made by the priest, there remaineth material bread;" and as he refused to recant, the proceedings against him were continued. He was degraded from the priesthood on the 26th of February, according to the form and ceremony usual upon such occasions in the church of Rome, and committed to the custody of the high constable and marshal of England, with the phrase used upon these occasions, "requesting the said court that they will receive favourably the said William Sawtree, thus committed unto them."

The real intention of this hypocritical expression was soon manifested. The Romish prelates urged the king to cause the sentence to be executed, and a writ was issued on the same day, directed to the mayor and sheriffs of London,

* A copy is here inserted, that the reader may see the sentence under which the first English martyr in the cause of truth suffered death; it also shows the awful manner in which these persecutors profaned the name of the Most High:—

"In the name of God, amen. We, Thomas, by the grace of God, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England, and legate of the see apostolical, by the authority of God Almighty, and blessed St. Peter and Paul, and of holy church, and by our own authority, sitting for tribunal, or chief judge, having God alone before our eyes, by the counsel and consent of the whole clergy, our fellow brethren and suffragans, assistants to us in this present council provincial, by this our sentence definitive, do pronounce, decree, and declare by these presents, thee William Sawtree, otherwise called Chawtrej, parish priest pretended, personally appearing before us, in and upon the crime of heresy, judicially and lawfully convict as an heretic, and as an heretic to be punished."

purporting to be the decree of the king "against a certain new sprung up heretic," commanding them to "cause the said William, in some public or open place within the liberties of the city, (the cause being published unto the people,) to be put in the fire, and there in the same fire really to be burned, to the great horror of his offence, and the manifest example of other christians."

The sentence was carried into execution without loss of time; and thus Henry the fourth was the first English king who caused Christ's saints to be burned for opposing the pope; and William Sawtree was the first who suffered in this cause in England, as appears by the public registers and other documents of authority.

The Romish prelates were eager to use the power thus given them. Accordingly, they were diligent in carrying the penalties into execution; and, as Fox expresses himself, "it cost many a christian man his life."

We may also observe, that this law was especially enacted for the purpose of destroying the first attempts at reformation: it was not a plan already in force, nor an old law of our land newly revived; but it was adopting the bloody practice which had prevailed on the Continent during the two preceding centuries, when the church of Rome first openly declared war against the saints of the Most High.* About the year 1200, Dominic and his followers were appointed inquisitors, and authorized to commit to the flames those whom they deemed heretics; thus adopting the plans of the heathen persecutors, Dioclesian and others. Fox observes, although the laws of the heathens differ in form from the statute just mentioned; yet in the ends proposed, and the cruelties by which they were enforced, there is no difference between them; and they must be referred to the same author or original doer. "For the same Satan which then wrought his uttermost against Christ, now also doth what he can, and seeks to spill the blood of the saints."

JOHN BABBY is the next martyr that requires our attention; he was of a humbler rank in life; a tailor by trade. On Sunday, March 1, 1409, he was brought before Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of London, with other lords and bishops, and accused of maintaining that,

* The first who suffered by fire, for opposing the errors of the church of Rome, were some canons of Orleans in France. They were burned in the year 1017.

“after the sacramental words spoken by the priests, to make the body of Christ, the material bread doth remain upon the altar as in the beginning; neither is it turned into the very body of Christ after the sacramental words spoken by the priests.” To which it was added, that he had further said, “It was impossible that any priest should make the body of Christ, and that he never could believe it, unless he saw manifestly the body of Christ in the hands of the priest; and that when Christ sat at supper with his disciples, he had not his body in his hand to distribute to his disciples, but spoke figuratively, as he had done at other times.” The archbishop endeavoured, by arguments and exhortations, to change his opinions. Among other things it is related, that “the said archbishop said and affirmed there openly to the said John, that he would (if he would live according to the doctrine of Christ,) gage (or pledge) his soul for him at the judgment day!” Similar offers have repeatedly been made in later days by the Romish clergy!

The articles were again read, and Badby was called upon to reply to them. He did not shrink from bearing a faithful testimony, and among other things, he stated his firm belief, “That after the consecration at the altar, there remaineth material bread, and the same bread which was before; notwithstanding,” said he, “it was a sign or sacrament of the living God.” He added, “That he would believeth the omnipotent God in Trinity, which they had accused him of denying; and that if every host, (or wafer used in the sacrament,) being consecrated at the altar, were the Lord’s body, then there would be 20,000 gods in England.”

After much time spent in discussion, Badby was committed to close custody till the 15th of March. On that day he was called before the bishops and the temporal lords assembled in St. Paul’s. The archbishop, finding him resolute, and that what he said appeared in some degree to affect others, pronounced sentence against him as a heretic, and delivered him over to the temporal lords then present, using the hypocritical form of “desiring that they would not put him to death for his offence.”

This sentence being passed on Badby in the morning, the king’s writ for his execution was sent down in the afternoon of the same day. He was immediately led to Smithfield; and placed in an empty barrel, he was bound with iron chains, fastened to a stake, and dry wood was put about him.

The prince of Wales (afterwards Henry V.) was present, and admonished Badby to recant his opinions, adding threatenings if he persisted in his heresies; also Courtney, the chancellor of Oxford, preached a sermon, in which he set forth the faith of the church of Rome.

While this was passing, the prior of St. Bartholomew's in Smithfield brought, with much solemnity, the sacrament of the host, carried in procession with twelve torches; and showed the consecrated bread to the poor man fastened to the stake, demanding of him what he believed it to be. He answered, "That he knew well it was hallowed bread, and not God's body;" upon which the fire was immediately kindled. When he felt the flames, he cried, "Mercy!" (most probably as a prayer to God, and not to man.) The prince hearing this, ordered the fire to be quenched; which being done, he asked Badby if he would now forsake heresy and turn to the faith of the holy church; promising that if he would do so, he should have a reward, and a yearly stipend out of the treasury, as much as he could require.

Here, indeed, was a tempting proposal on the one hand, an immediate and painful death on the other; and not only pardon and deliverance, but also an ample supply for all his future wants! Badby was enabled to refuse these offers. "Wherefore the prince commanded him to be put again into the barrel, and that he should not look for any grace or favour. But as he was not allured by their rewards, even so he was nothing abashed at their torments, but persevered immoveable to the end; not without great and most cruel battle, but with much greater triumph of victory, the Spirit of Christ enabling him to subdue the fury, rage, and power of the world."

The reader will observe that both Sawtree and Badby were condemned and burned as heretics, because they would not believe in the popish doctrine of transubstantiation. It is the more important to notice this, for all the modern Romanists assert this doctrine as fully as it was set forth in the times to which we refer. One instance will sufficiently prove this, as every modern publication of that church upon the subject, from the decrees of the council of Trent to the present day, is to the same effect.—The Laity's Directory for 1824, (which is an annual publication, containing various lists of chapels and schools, and other information intended for Roman catholics,) contains an address respecting the

sacrament of the eucharist from a Roman catholic prelate, the vicar apostolic (or bishop) of the London district; in which it is asserted, in the strongest terms, that "by the consecration of bread and wine, there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood of Christ. Consequently, the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, and of transubstantiation (or of the mode of his presence,) is there declared to be equally true and equally to be believed as the doctrine of the Trinity, of the divinity of Christ, of the necessity and effect of baptism, of the future resurrection of our bodies, and of the other revealed articles of the christian religion. It is impossible to deny the doctrine of the real presence, and at the same time, with any consistency, to believe as true any article of the christian faith."—Reader, mark how the opinions and doctrines of the Romish church remain unchanged!

But to proceed with our narrative. After the passing of the above mentioned law, Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, continued to direct the most rigorous measures against the lollards. He decreed that every person calling in question any determination of the church, was to be excommunicated for the first offence, and burned as a heretic for the second; and forbade all books from being read which were not licensed by persons authorized by the universities; and in the strongest and most positive terms prohibited the reading of any part of the scriptures in English, or any other tongue, until the translation was allowed by the ordinary; stating, that "it is a dangerous thing to translate the text of the holy scriptures out of one tongue into another." Surely this assertion cannot be read with indifference. Already, many a poor Indian, or South Sea islander, once an unenlightened heathen, has had reason to bless God that he has not suffered protestants to entertain such an opinion.

WILLIAM THORPE, a priest noted for his abilities, was one of the number who contended valiantly for the faith which was delivered unto the saints. He was imprisoned, in the year 1407, in the castle of Saltwood in Kent; and being brought before the archbishop, was required to abjure; upon which he stated the particulars of his faith desiring to be convinced of his errors, if he in any point maintained what was contrary to the law of God. Arundel

replied, by again requiring him to forsake the sect of lollards, and in future to abstain from holding any opinion which might be pointed out to him as erroneous. To this Thorpe was required to declare his assent upon oath, and also to promise that he would, in future, denounce and inform against any whom he might find holding such opinions; but with these conditions he refused to comply. The archbishop then threatened that he should be burned in Smithfield. "At this saying," observes Thorpe, "I stood still, and spake not; but I thought in mine heart that God did to me great grace, if he would, of his great mercy, bring me to such an end." He then goes on to say, "In my heart I prayed the Lord God to comfort me, and strengthen me against them, and I prayed God, for his goodness, to give me then and always grace to speak with a meek and an easy spirit; and whatsoever thing that I should speak, I might thereto have true authorities of the scriptures, or open reason." How simple yet how pleasing a picture of a true follower of Christ, "stedfast in the faith," desirous meekly to render a reason of the hope that is in him!

The examination then proceeded at great length. With respect to the doctrine of transubstantiation, Thorpe desired simply to refer to the words of scripture, neither offering to explain them himself, nor seeking to have them explained by human reasoning, according to the scholastic quibbles introduced by Thomas Aquinas, and adopted by the church of Rome. Upon the subject of images, the archbishop asserted, that "A crucifix ought to be worshipped for the passion (suffering) of Christ that is painted thereon, and so brought to man's mind; and thus the images of the blessed Trinity, and of the virgin Mary, and other images of saints, ought to be worshipped." This branch of the examination was stopped, after some further discussion, by Thorpe's inquiring of the prelate, "Since the Father of heaven, that is, God in his Godhead, is the most unknown thing that may be, and the most wonderful Spirit, having no shape, nor likeness, nor members of any mortal creature; in what likeness, or what image may God the Father be painted?" After further examination upon the subjects of confession, pilgrimages, and other errors of the church of Rome, Thorpe was again committed to a noisome prison. His end is uncertain; but as the registries do not state that he was burned, it appears most probable that he was secretly

put to death in prison, or died there by sickness. Had he recanted, the Romanists would have recorded it. A like end had previously been the fate of JOHN ASHTON, who, refusing to recant the doctrines of Wickliff respecting the sacrament, was committed to perpetual imprisonment, and died in confinement.

Having now, in some degree, checked the progress of truth, the Romish prelates had more leisure to attend to the regulation of their ceremonies; and among other things, archbishop Arundel, about this time directed a mandate to the bishop of London, to warn men to say certain prayers to the virgin Mary at the ringing of the curfew bell. A short extract from this curious document may suffice. After speaking of "the mother of God" in lofty terms, it goes on to state: "We truly, as the servants of her own inheritance, and such as are written of to be her peculiar dower, ought more watchfully than others to show our devotion in praising her, who being hitherto merciful to us, (yea being even cowards,) would that our power being spread through all the coasts of the world, should, with a victorious arm, fear (terrify) all foreign nations. That our power being on all sides so defended with the buckler of her protection, did subdue unto our victorious standards, and made subject unto us, nations both near at hand and far off."

The papists are in general very fond of ascribing Divine honours to the virgin Mary; they dignify her with many titles. For the most part they are titles of mercy, as the mother of peace, and many similar; but here is a curious exception: she is addressed as a goddess presiding over war and bloodshed; and to her is ascribed precisely the powers which the heathens of old attributed to the goddess Bellona!* The mandate then proceeds to enjoin, "that you command the subjects of your city and diocese, and all other suffragans, to worship our lady Mary, the mother of God, and our patroness and protectress ever more in all adversity, with such like kind of prayer and accustomed manner of ringing as the devotion of Christ's faithful people is wont to worship her with at the ringing of the curfew."—It then

* The virgin, however, is frequently represented in this character in Romish legends, even of more recent date. She, and her images, are said to have fought repeatedly against Moors, Indians, and infidels. At the siege of Rhodes she is reported to have appeared in person upon the walls, accompanied by John the baptist, both well armed. It is a story, that they slaughtered the Turks in an incredible manner!

further states, that "We grant, by these presents, to all and every man that shall say the Lord's prayer, and the salutation of the angel, (Luke i. 28,) five times at the morning peal, with a devout mind, forty days pardon." Yes, reader forty days pardon of sin, for repeating the Lord's prayer five times, and "hail Mary!" five times more; and this not the reveries of a distracted mind, but the declaration of the first ecclesiastic in the land, set forth in a solemn instrument, and commanded by authority! as appears from his own register.* We find from the same authority (his own register) an order to suspend certain churches in London from the use of their organs, because their bells were not rung one morning as he passed unexpectedly through the city. This was not a solitary example of such attention being required; similar disputes occurred at Worcester and St. Alban's, on the same ground. Other instances of the capricious tyranny of this Romish prelate are also recorded; and in the canons of this archbishop Arundel, passed in the year 1409, it is declared to be the most horrid of all crimes to dispute any of the doctrines, or to disobey any of the decrees of the pope, who is blasphemously denominated, "the key bearer and porter of eternal life and death, bearing the place and person, not of a mere man, but of true God here in earth." At the very time these canons were passed, to keep the people in the unity of faith under one head of the church, there were actually three popes openly excommunicating and anathematizing each other; and, at length, they were all declared heretics by the decree of one general council, and soon afterwards deposed by the sentence of another; yet Romanists assert that the decrees of the pope are equal in authority to the scriptures, nay, superior to them.

LORD COHAM is the next sufferer who claims our attention. In the year 1413, king Henry the fourth died, and was succeeded by his son, Henry the fifth. This prince has been already noticed in the account of John Badby. Immediately after his accession to the throne, archbishop Arundel caused a synod of the clergy to be held at St.

* We may here notice that the pope himself, in his Bull of Indiction, 1825, "grants and imparts the fullest and most complete indulgence, remission and pardon of all their sins, to all the faithful in Christ, of both sexes, who are truly penitent, and have confessed and have partaken the holy communion, PROVIDED they shall have devoutly visited these churches (four are then mentioned,) for thirty days, if inhabitants of Rome; or fifteen days if strangers."

Paul's. The principal cause of its assembling was to repress the growth of the gospel, and especially to withstand the noble and worthy lord Cobham, who was noted as a favourer of the lollards. It was well known that he caused the writings of Wickliff to be copied and widely dispersed, and also that he maintained many itinerant preachers in different parts of the country. At this synod appeared the twelve inquisitors, who had been appointed at Oxford the year before, to search after heretics and Wickliff's books. They brought a list of two hundred and forty-six doctrines, which they had collected from the writings of that reformer, many of whose books, as well as other similar works, were publicly burned, and their contents denounced as heretical. The chief subject for consultation, as already noticed, was the conduct of Sir John Oldcastle Lord Cobham; but as he was a favourite, both of the king and the people, it was deemed necessary to proceed against him with caution. The archbishop and the other prelates accordingly went to the king, and laid before him most grievous complaints against that excellent nobleman. Also one of Wickliff's writings, which had belonged to lord Cobham, was read before the king, who declared he never heard such heresy, and consented to their proceeding against lord Cobham; enjoining them, however, to pause till he himself had endeavoured to persuade him to renounce his errors. The king having admonished him to submit to "his mother, the holy church, and as an obedient child to acknowledge himself in fault;" this christian nobleman replied, "You, most worthy prince, I am always ready and willing to obey, as you are the appointed minister of God, bearing the sword for the punishment of evil doers." He then stated his readiness to obey him in all earthly things. "But as touching the pope," added he, "and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, as I know him, by the scriptures, to be the great antichrist, the son of perdition, the open adversary of God, and the abomination standing in the holy place." When the king heard this, he would talk no longer with him.

The archbishop having received permission to proceed, sent his chief summoner to the castle, at Cowling, in Kent, to which place lord Cobham had retired; where he availed himself of the privileges then possessed by the nobility, and refused to obey the mandate. The archbishop then caused his citation to be affixed to the gates of Rochester cathe-

dral, and as lord Cobham still refused to appear, sentence of excommunication was pronounced against him, and the civil power was called upon to assist in his apprehension.

Lord Cobham, perceiving the dangers which now threatened him on every side, wrote a confession of his faith, grounded on the apostle's creed, noticing briefly the points on which he was accused; with this writing he went to the king, and with all meekness entreated his majesty to read it over, and judge how far he had offended. The king had blindly submitted to Romish domination, and not only refused to receive the paper, but commanded that it should be delivered to the archbishop. Lord Cobham then offered to prove his innocence by any of the methods which were allowed in those days, some of which, such as personal combat with his adversaries, appear strange and improper to us; but we must remember that they were legal customs in those times. Henry, however, had determined to leave this christian nobleman to the power of his enemies, and allowed the archbishop's summons to be served upon him, in his royal presence. Lord Cobham then appealed to the pope; but, worse than Festus of old, Henry refused to allow him to pursue this appeal, and, by the king's express command, he was arrested in his presence, and committed to the Tower of London.

On the 23rd of September, lord Cobham was brought before the prelates then sitting in the chapter house of St. Paul's. The archbishop told him that he stood convicted of heresies, also excommunicated for refusing to obey his summons; notwithstanding which he was willing to give him absolution if he asked for it. Lord Cobham paid no attention to this offer, but took out of his bosom a writing concerning the articles whereof he was accused, and openly read it, delivering a copy to the archbishop. The paper contained in substance as follows:—1. That the sacrament of the altar is Christ's body in the form of bread. 2. As to penance, it is needful for every man that shall be saved, to forsake sin, and to do penance for former sins, with true confession, real contrition, and due satisfaction, as God's law teacheth. 3. That images were permitted by the church, to represent to ignorant men the death and sufferings of Christ, but that whosoever worshipped them became an idolater. 4. As to pilgrimages, every man was a pilgrim to bliss or woe, and that he who knew not God, and kept

not his commandments, would be damned, although he went on all the pilgrimages in the world; while those who knew the will of God, and kept it, would be saved, though they never went on any pilgrimage, as men go to Canterbury or Rome, or other places.

The archbishop told lord Cobham that his writings contained many good things, but that there were other points on which he wished also to inquire. He then tried to lead him into further discussion upon the sacrament, and also inquired whether he believed "that every christian man was necessarily bound to confess his sins to a priest ordained by the church."

The prisoner endeavoured to avoid being drawn into an ensnaring discussion, and desired to abide by the writing he had given in. At last, he was again committed to prison till the Monday following, and required at that time particularly to answer, "Whether there remained material bread in the sacrament after the words of consecration or not?" Arundel promised also to send him in writing, the determinations of the church on the points in question, that he might be instructed by them.

The unscriptural and superstitious notions held by the church of Rome at that time, (and they are not altered in our days,) appear from the contents of the writing sent by the prelates to lord Cobham, as promised. They stated, 1. That the faith and determination of the holy church respecting the sacrament was, that after the sacramental words were spoken by a priest, in saying the mass, the bread and wine were turned into Christ's very body and blood; and that there remained nothing of the bread or wine which were there before the words were spoken. 2. That holy church had determined that every christian man ought to come to a priest, ordained by the church, to be absolved by him. 3. That Christ gave his power to St. Peter, and granted that the same power should succeed to all Peter's successors, "which we call now popes of Rome;" by whose power other ranks in the church were ordained, "unto whom christian men ought to obey after the laws of the church of Rome, and this is the determination of holy church." 4. Holy church hath determined, that it is meritorious for a christian man to go on pilgrimage to holy places, and there to worship holy relics, and images of saints, apostles, and martyrs, confessors, and other saints, approved by the church of Rome."

To these decisive and clear statements of their belief, was added the short yet pithy inquiry addressed to the prisoner, "How believe ye this article?" "How feel ye this article?" Reader, have we just ground to think that the opinion of the church of Rome is changed on any of these points?—If not, then propose these questions to yourself:—"How believe you this article?" "How feel you this article?" Can you place your trust and ground of confidence in the hour of death upon such doctrines, believing them to be according to the word of God, and consequently not resting upon Christ alone for salvation, but upon what "holy church hath determined?" These are the doctrines of the church of Rome; and all within its pale are required to assent to them.

On the Monday, the trial was resumed at the Dominican convent on Ludgate. After being exposed to the taunts and insults of a rabble of monks and friars, lord Cobham was again reminded of the accusations against him, and again offered absolution, if he submitted and desired it. "Nay," said the noble confessor, "forsooth I will not, for I never yet trespassed against you, and therefore I will not do it." And then kneeling down on the pavement, holding up his hands towards heaven, he said, "I confess myself here unto THEE, my eternal living God, that in my frail youth I offended thee, O Lord, most grievously, by pride, wrath, covetousness, lust, and intemperance. Many men have I injured in mine anger, and done other horrible sins: good Lord, I ask thee mercy!" He then stood up, and with tears in his eyes exclaimed, with a loud voice, "Lo, good people, lo! for breaking of God's law, and his great commandments, these men never yet cursed me; but for their own laws and traditions most cruelly do they handle me and other men. Therefore, both they and their laws, according to the promise of God, shall be utterly destroyed."

This powerful address for a time threw the Romish clergy into confusion. The archbishop then proceeded to examine the prisoner as to his belief, to which he replied, "I believe fully and faithfully in the laws of God. I believe that all is true which is contained in the sacred scriptures of the bible. Finally, I believe all that my Lord God would that I should believe." He was next required to answer the writing sent him by the bishops, which has been already mentioned, especially concerning the sacrament of the altar. With that writing, he said, he had nothing to do. The primate then asked, Do you believe that there remains

any material bread after the words of consecration spoken over it?" After some discussion, "The scriptures," said Cobham, "make no mention of material bread. In the sacrament there is both Christ's body and the bread; the bread is the thing that we see with our eyes; but the body of Christ is hid, and only to be seen by faith." Upon which they all cried out with one voice, "It is an heresy." One of the bishops in particular said, it was a manifest heresy to say that it is bread after the sacramental words be once spoken, for it is Christ's body only. Cobham replied, "St. Paul the apostle was, I am sure, as wise as you be now, and more godly learned, and he called it bread in his epistle to the Corinthians; 'The bread that we break,' saith he, 'is it not the partaking (or communion) of the body of Christ?' Lo! he calleth it bread, and not Christ's body, but a mean whereby we receive Christ's body."

Then said they again, Paul must be otherwise understood; for it is an heresy to say that it is bread after the consecration. Lord Cobham asked how they proved this, they replied, "it is against the determination of holy church!"

The examination of lord Cobham extends to a considerable length, which our limits will not allow us to follow. Throughout the whole scene he behaved with undaunted courage and christian serenity. Friar Palmer, when examining him respecting the worship of images, said, "Sir, will you worship the cross of Christ that he died upon?"—"Where is it?" said lord Cobham.—"Suppose it was here," said the friar.——"This is indeed a wise man," said lord Cobham, "to ask me such a question, when he knows not where the thing is! But what worship shall I do to it?"—One of the clergy answered, "Such worship as Paul speaketh of, 'God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ our Lord.'"—"This," said lord Cobham, and spread his arms abroad, "This is a cross, and better than your cross of wood, as it is created of God, (not made by man;) yet I will not seek to have it worshipped."—"Sir," said the bishop of London, "you know that Christ died upon a material cross."—"Yea," replied lord Cobham; "and I know also, that our salvation came not by the material cross, but by him alone that died thereon. And well I know that holy saint, Paul, rejoiced in no other cross, but in Christ's death and sufferings only; and in his own suffering like persecution with him, for the self-same truth that Christ had suffered for before."

Sentence of condemnation against him was then read ; in this was set forth, that he was a heretic respecting the two sacraments of the altar, and penance, and as to the pope's power, and pilgrimages. But we also find recorded in this sentence, the assertion of his judges, that they had followed Christ's example, who "willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he might be converted and live!" Surely, it is not for the church of Rome, to accuse protestants of wresting the scriptures to their own purposes!

It appears to have been Arundel's constant practice to make a great outward show of lenity and kindness to his prisoners, while he was in reality acting towards them with unrelenting barbarity. In his own registers at Lambeth palace, it is repeatedly stated, that "he made use of the most sweet and gentle terms in addressing the prisoner ; and that when he found his endeavours to reclaim him were vain, he was compelled to pronounce sentence, and he did so with the bitterest sorrow!"*

When the sentence had been read, lord Cobham, with a cheerful countenance, said, "Though ye judge my body, which is but a wretched thing, yet I am certain and sure ye can do no harm to my soul, any more than Satan did to the soul of Job. He that created it, will, of his infinite mercy, and according to his promise, save it. Of this I have no manner of doubt ; and as concerning the articles of my belief, by the grace of my eternal God I will stand to them even to the very death." He then turned to the people, and said, with a loud voice, "Good christian people, for God's love, be well aware of these men, else they will beguile you, and lead you blindfold into hell with themselves." Then kneeling down, and lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he prayed thus ; "Lord God eternal, I beseech thee, of thy great mercy' sake, to forgive my persecutors, if it be thy blessed will." After this he was taken back to the Tower, where he was kept prisoner for a considerable time.

* A modern Romish historian describes the conduct of lord Cobham to have been "as arrogant and insulting as that of his judge was mild and dignified." It has been well remarked, "It is fitting indeed that we should know in what manner an English Roman catholic historian speaks of such transactions at this time."

THE LOLLARDS :

Or some Account of the Witnesses of the Truth in England, between the Years 1400 and 1546.

PART II.

Lord Cobham escapes from the Tower.—A small company of the Lollards meet in St. Giles's Fields, and are taken Prisoners, condemned, and executed.—Apprehension and Execution of Lord Cobham.—Claydon.—Taylor.—Florence.—White.—Persecutions in Norfolk.—Wickliff's Bones burned.—Bishop Peacock.—John Goosa.—Canons of Archbishop Neville.—Tylsworth burned at Amersham; his daughter compelled to set fire to the Pile.—Chase, and others.—Progress of the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.—Invention of Printing.—Commencement of the Reign of Henry the Eighth.—John Brown.—Agnes Greville.—Opposition to the Scriptures.—Sweeting and Brewster.



The Martyrdom of William Tylsworth, A. D. 1506. His own daughter was compelled to set fire to the pile.

THE history of lord Cobham, after his condemnation, may be briefly related. Although his enemies sentenced him to die, they hesitated as to putting him to death immediately; for he was a popular character, and, as one of their own historians relates, "a man of integrity, dearly beloved by the king." These concurring circumstances induced them to delay his public execution for a few weeks: meanwhile, they circulated slanderous reports respecting his character, affirming, among other things,

that he had recanted; and publishing a form of abjuration, which they said he had signed; upon which lord Cobham caused another paper to be posted up, contradicting these false assertions.

Whatever caused the delay, it gave him an opportunity for escape; and, availing himself of a dark night, he fled into Wales, where he remained for four years.

The persecution against the lollards at this time was very severe; a proclamation being issued to forbid their assemblies, they no longer dared to meet openly for their devotions; but, like the primitive christians, they met in small companies; and often in the dead of the night, St. Giles's-fields, then a thicket or copse, was a place of frequent resort on these occasions; and a company assembled there on the night of the 6th of January, 1414. The enemies of the lollards artfully availed themselves of this opportunity to excite the king's anger against them still more severely; and repairing to him at Eltham, they informed him that lord Cobham was then in St. Giles's-fields, at the head of twenty thousand of his followers, with an intention of destroying his persecutors, seizing the king's person, and making himself governor of the realm.

Henry was never wanting in personal bravery. he armed the soldiers about his palace, and instantly marched to the place. He attacked the lollards who were assembled, killing about twenty, and taking sixty prisoners: he then pressed forwards, thinking he had only met with an advanced guard, but found that he had routed the whole army.

Strange to say! Popish historians have endeavoured to raise a story upon this slight foundation, and have accused the lollards of rebellion. But whoever peruses the evidence which Fox has adduced, and fairly examines the complete investigation of the subject which he has given, will be fully satisfied; and, with all impartial historians, will consider the story as a gross fiction. It does not even appear that lord Cobham was present; however, in the inflamed state in which the mind of the king then was, this charge served as a new ground of accusation. A bill of attainder was passed against him, and a reward of a thousand marks offered for his

apprehension, with the further boon of a perpetual exemption from taxes to the town whose inhabitants should secure him. The prisoners to the number of thirty-six, including sir Roger Acton, and Beverley, one of their preachers, were hanged and burnt, near the spot where they were taken.

Towards the end of the year 1417, lord Cobham was apprehended in Wales by lord Powis, and sent as a prisoner to London. His death was not long delayed: he was dragged upon a hurdle, with insult and barbarity, to St. Giles's-fields, and there hung alive in chains upon a gallows; and a fire being kindled beneath, he was burned slowly to death.

We have not any exact particulars of his last moments. There is, however, good ground for believing that he was enabled to resign himself patiently to the will of God, and to derive comfort and support from the sacred scriptures; it is also said that he suffered this painful and ignominious death "with the utmost bravery and most triumphant joy, exhorting the people to follow the instructions which God had given them in the scriptures, and to disclaim those false teachers whose lives and conversation were so contrary to Christ and his religion."

Arundel died in February 1414, and was succeeded in his see by Henry Chicheley, who continued archbishop of Canterbury till April, 1443. He was a more violent persecutor than his predecessor: by his influence, a law was passed in 1415, enacting that the chancellor, the judges, justices, mayors, sheriffs, and all other magistrates, should, on admission to their offices, take an oath that they would do every thing in their power to extirpate the lollards out of the kingdom, and assist the ecclesiastical authorities in persecuting these followers of Christ. thus, by banishment, forced abjurations, and the flames, the vestiges of godliness were, for a time, almost effaced throughout the land.

The accounts of those who suffered are very imperfect; but from the registries of the bishops, and other documents, they appear to have been numerous; and their sufferings were severe. Surely, we ought to be thankful that we live in different times!

JOHN CLAYDON, a furrier, was carried before the archbishop in the year 1415, and accused of heresy. The chief ground of accusation against him was, that having formerly been imprisoned as a heretic, and having abjured his opinions, he was found to have in his possession a book called *The Lanthorn of Light*, which pointed out various errors of the church of Rome. The book had been written at his expense, (printing was not then invented,) and three of his servants were examined to prove that although he could not read himself, he had delighted to hear it read by others, and said "that many things he had heard from this book were profitable, good, and healthful to his soul." He was burned in Smithfield with **Richard Turming**, a baker.

In the year 1416, archbishop Chicheley issued a mandate, which appears in the records of that period, directing that three persons in every parish should be examined twice every year upon oath, and required to inform against any persons whom they knew, or understood, to frequent private conventicles, or who differed in their life or manners from the common conversation of catholic men, or to have any *suspected books* in the English language, that process might be made against them; if not sentenced to be burned, they were to be kept in prison until the next convocation of the clergy.

The names of many individuals of all ranks are recorded, who appear to have suffered under this persecution: several gave way to these severities, and abjured, while others "accepted not of deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection." But notwithstanding their sufferings, there does not appear any just ground for imputing to the lollards a departure from the injunction of the apostle, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," so far as concerned the things of this world.

In 1422, died Henry V. The reader will have seen that he was not only distinguished by the false glare of splendour reflected upon him as a hero and a conqueror, but that his name stands recorded as one who joined in "wearing out the saints of the Most High."

Henry the Sixth, who succeeded to the throne, was an infant, and full power continued in the hands of the

persecutors. In the first year of his reign was burned WILLIAM TAYLOR, a priest in the diocese of Canterbury, for having taught what was called heresy, at Bristol; the substance of which appears to have been that he had said, God alone is to be adored, and that saints are not to be worshipped. He was, however, allowed to offer an explanation, and at that time only condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Upon further consideration, even this sentence was about to be recalled, when some writings which had passed between him and another priest named Smith, were put into the hands of the bishop of Worcester, and he was again brought into trouble; although he had only asserted, "That every petition and prayer, for any supernatural gift, ought to be directed to God alone, and not to any creature." Taylor was, at last, referred to the four orders of friars for examination, and by them he was convicted of heresy for the above doctrine, and for having held that "to pray to any creature is to commit idolatry;" that is, for asserting a maxim which is the *peculiar distinction* between true religion and idolatry. He was then degraded according to the usual form, by taking from him in succession the cup and paten, the gospels and the tunicle, the epistles, the cruets which held the oil for extreme unction, the candlestick, the book of exorcisms against evil spirits, the church door key, and the surplice: his hair was then cut so as to destroy the tonsure or manner in which it is usually worn by priests; and all this mummery having been performed, he was committed to the flames!

In the year 1424, we find *John Florence*, a turner, residing in Norfolk, accused of holding heretical opinions against the pope, and the worship of images. He was brought before the chancellor of the diocese; but submitting himself to the authority of the church, was allowed to escape, upon performing penance, and being disciplined with a rod before all the people for three Sundays in the cathedral at Norwich, and three other Sundays in his parish church at Shelton. As a part of this punishment, he had to walk in a procession bare-headed, bare-footed, and bare-necked, in a canvass shirt and canvass breeches, carrying a taper.

Many others appear to have suffered similar persecutions in the diocese of Norwich between the years 1424 and 1428, and a larger number between 1428 and 1431. Upwards of one hundred and twenty individuals are mentioned by name, who were apprehended during the latter period, and examined upon suspicion of heresy. Some of them were put to death, others imprisoned, and the remainder were compelled to abjure, and to do such penance as it pleased the bishop and his chancellor to appoint, which usually was very severe.

One circumstance appears plain from the registers of their persecutors, and is well worthy of being noted: that these martyrs do not appear to have held a *variety* of doctrines and opinions, as the Roman catholics contend is *always* the consequence of leaving that communion; their doctrines were uniform; and scarcely one that is not now held by every true protestant.

WILLIAM WHITE, a priest, appears to have been a learned and upright character: he was a follower of Wickliff; and resigning his priesthood and benefice, he married a godly young woman; but did not cease from his former office and duty, for he continually laboured in reading, teaching, and writing. The principal points he taught were, "That men should seek forgiveness of their sins from God only; that the pope was an enemy to Christ's truth; and that men ought not to worship images." After several examinations, he was condemned, and burned at Norwich, in September, 1424.

He is related to have been a man of such a devout and holy life, that the people greatly revered him, and desired his prayers, notwithstanding he was condemned to suffer as a heretic. One Margaret White said, that if any saints were to be prayed to, she would rather pray to him than any other. When he came to the stake, he was about to exhort the people to stand fast in the truth; but one of the bishop's servants silenced him by a blow upon the mouth. His wife followed her husband's footsteps, and confirmed many in the truth; for which she suffered much trouble.

Passing over the particular accounts of others, who were burned, or forced to abjure, and suffer penance, about the same time, we find, in another list of sixteen,

also enumerated in the bishop's register, as accused during the next year, one John Baker; among whose offences is reckoned having a book in his possession, which contained the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, and the Creed in *English*! And one Margery Backster, among other particulars, was accused for having had a brass pot over the fire with a piece of bacon and some oatmeal in it, on the first Sunday in Lent; it was also deposed against her, that she had asked one of her neighbours, "what she did every day at church?" Her neighbour replied, that she kneeled down, and said five Paternosters, "in worship of the crucifix, and as many Ave Marias in worship of the virgin." "You do wrong," observed Margery, "to kneel or pray to such images in the churches; for such prayers will do you no more service than a candle lighted and put under the cover of a font, will give light to those that are in the church. Carpenters and carvers make these crosses and images, and painters daub them over with colours." The cross had become an object of adoration, like the serpent among the Jews, and the following petition was regularly repeated in the bidding prayer before sermon; "Ye shall pray for the Holy Land, and for the Holy Cross that Jesus Christ died upon, for the redemption of men's souls, that it may come into the power of christian men to be honoured by our prayers."

Others were accused of having heretical books; and among them Nicholas Belward, who had bought a new testament at London, for which he paid four marks and forty pence, or £2. 16s. 8d. equal to more than £20 in the present day, as has been already noticed. Printing was not in those days invented; and there was no bible society; a testament now may be purchased without difficulty for one shilling, at London, Norwich, and elsewhere, and may be read without interruption. It is also related of Belward that "he had studied his new testament *diligently*." The word of God was, indeed, precious in those days, when there was "no open vision."

These and many other particulars, recorded in the registers of the diocese of Norwich, sufficiently prove how furiously persecution then raged against the poor

lollards ; and if these things took place in one corner of the realm, we may well suppose that similar scenes occurred elsewhere. The names of the victims already mentioned, and the offences of which they were accused, appear from these statements of their enemies ; but we have again to regret that we do not possess fuller accounts of the manner in which they were enabled to bear testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus.

The historians of those times incidentally mention a few names of persons who suffered in London about this period, but do not enter into full particulars. The registers, however, state the opinions they held, styling them "mad opinions;" they were similar to those already noticed ; and several of these accusations are preserved in *Wilkins' Concilia*. We may now close this brief sketch of the persecutions which the lollards underwent from Chichely and his brethren. To him succeeded others, who acted in the same manner.

It has been related, that Wickliff died in peace at Lutterworth, in the year 1384, and was buried in the chancel of the church of that town. The malice of his enemies, however, sought him in the grave. The council of Constance, in 1415, passed a decree, condemning forty-five articles of his doctrines ; and, pronouncing him to have died an obstinate heretic, ordered that his bones should be dug up, and thrown upon a dunghill. The execution of this paltry act of malice was deferred till the year 1428, when the pope sent a positive order that it should be complied with. Fleming, then bishop of Lincoln, accordingly sent his officers to Lutterworth ; the grave was opened, and the bones taken out and burned. The ashes being carefully collected, were thrown into the Swift, a brook which flows near the town : his enemies thinking, no doubt, that his name and doctrines, as well as his remains, would perish for ever. But they have been disappointed ; as Fuller observes, the Swift conveyed his ashes into the Avon, the Avon into the Severn, the Severn into the narrow seas, and they into the main ocean ; and thus the ashes of Wickliff were made the emblems of his doctrine, which has been dispersed all the world over ! This decree against the remains of Wickliff was passed by the council about six

weeks before their decree forbidding the cup in the sacrament from being administered to the laity; and by the same council, Huss and Jerome of Prague were condemned to the flames. In the early part of this century the peace of Europe was much disturbed by the disputes between the popes, and the general councils: some of the former were deposed; and the histories of those times fully show that the pope was not always considered infallible, even at Rome; but a particular account of these circumstances is foreign to the design of this work.

A circumstance occurred in the year 1457, which caused no small stir among the romish hierarchy in England. One of their own number, REYNOLD PEACOCK, bishop of Chichester, was imprisoned for the gospel of Christ. He does not appear to have fully adopted the opinions held by the lollards, and in several of his works he opposes their proceedings. But he would not join in the bloody means then used to extirpate them; he advocated the reading of the scriptures, though not in the English language, and opposed the papal usurpations, which was an unpardonable crime at a period when an implicit belief in the authority of the church was considered necessary to salvation. The citation accuses him generally of "holding conclusions contrary to the true faith;" but by other authorities he is more particularly stated to have maintained and preached openly at Paul's Cross, that "the office of a christian prelate, above all things, is to preach the word of God; that man's reason is not to be preferred before the scriptures; that scripture is only to be taken in its proper sense;" and other similar opinions. For these doctrines he was summoned before archbishop Burscher, and was induced to recant, after long examinations and severe treatment; presenting a painful instance of human frailty, as the fear of being burned caused him to confess that he had held false doctrines, of which the smallest trace does not appear in his writings. His enemies were not satisfied with this forced compliance with their demands, and it seems that he did not finally relinquish his opinions, as he was deprived of his bishopric, and detained a prisoner in Thorney Abbey, during the remainder of

his life, which some assert was brought to an untimely end.*

In the year 1466, Neville, archbishop of York, made some singular decrees, or canons as they are usually termed. By these he commanded every parish priest to preach four times in each year to his people, either by himself or others, and explain to them in English, "without any fantastical subtilties," the fourteen articles of faith held by the church of Rome, the ten commandments, the two precepts of the gospel, the seven works of mercy, the seven mortal sins, the seven principal virtues, and the seven sacraments of grace. Here, surely, was matter enough for *four* sermons, yet we find no direct reference to the Saviour, as the only Mediator, the only way of salvation for lost sinners. The better to enable the clergy to perform this task, an explanation of the different articles was given. As a specimen of this commentary, we may observe, that in the ten commandments the *second* is entirely omitted, as is done in the books of instruction of the church of Rome, in many countries, even at the present day. The reason is obvious, "*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,*" is a precept too directly in opposition to the worship of images, to be allowed to remain; and to make up for this omission, the tenth commandment is divided into two!†

* The following is a short, but comprehensive prayer of bishop Peacock for the church of Christ. "O thou Lord Jesu, God and man, head of thy christian church, and teacher of christian belief; I beseech thy mercy, thy pity, thy charitie; far be this peril (*of implicit faith in the authority of the church of Rome required by the popish ecclesiastics*) from the christian church, and from each person therein contained; and shield thou so that this venom be never brought into thy church, and if thou suffer it to be brought in for any while, I beseech thee that it be soon again cast out; but suffer thou, ordain and do, that the law and the faith which thy church at any time keepeth, be brought under examination, whether it be the very same faith which thou and thine apostles taught or no; and whether it hath sufficient evidences to prove whether it is the real faith or not."

† The commandments are thus divided in "*the First Catechism*" now used in England by Roman catholics, but the second commandment is given as a part of the first, with an explanation in some degree authorizing, while it appears to condemn the adoration of images. In a catechetical work commonly used in Ireland, the *whole* of the second commandment is omitted.

The explanation of the commandments is singular. The first is explained as particularly forbidding witchcraft and superstition. The second, as already observed, is *entirely omitted*. The third is stated to forbid herecy, as well as blasphemy, and also perjury. The fourth, as inculcating the christian religion. The fifth is said to refer not only to our natural parents, but to our spiritual ones, the bishop of the diocese being our father, the "Holy Church" our mother! The first division of the tenth commandment is called the ninth, and is explained as forbidding us to covet our neighbour's immovable property; the latter clauses are called the tenth, and are stated to refer to movables.

Edward the fourth, who, at that time, was king of England, appears to have sought the assistance of the clergy to support him under the difficult circumstances in which he was placed. To obtain their goodwill, he granted a charter which rendered them almost independent of the civil government. By this charter he took upon him to dispense with the law called "the Statute of Premunire," which, in some degree, checked the temporal authority of the church of Rome in this country, and which several popes had sought to have set aside, but the House of Commons always refused to repeal. The charter also prohibited judges or magistrates from taking any notice of crimes, even murder, if committed by ecclesiastics of any rank, including also their inferior officers. To such an extent was this privilege carried, that if any person, accused of a crime, falsely pretended that he was in holy orders, it was not left to the judge or magistrate to determine, but he was delivered over to the bishop or his officials, by whom it was decided whether he was a layman or not, and if deemed an ecclesiastic, punishment seldom followed to any extent. This proceeding gave room for gross abuses. There were repeated instances of layman, guilty of crimes, procuring admission into the ranks of the clergy, even *after* they were apprehended, and thus escaping the penalties due to their offences.

At this period, England was filled with confusion by the civil wars between the families of York and Lancaster: it is foreign to our purpose to notice these

events, further than to observe, that to the horrors of civil outrage were added those of religious persecution, as the sufferings of the lollards still continued. Among other circumstances, the following particulars of the martyrdom of JOHN GOOSE, who suffered on Tower-hill, in the year 1473, are recorded by a historian who lived in those times. He was delivered to Robert Belisdon, one of the sheriffs, with an order that he should be burned in the afternoon. The sheriff, being a charitable man, took him home, and exhorted him to forsake his errors. After listening for a long time, the martyr desired the sheriff to say no more, and entreated him to give him some meat, as he was very hungry. The sheriff ordered food to be set before him, of which he ate heartily, saying to those who stood by, "I eat now a good and sufficient dinner, as I have a short but sharp shower to pass through before supper." And when he had dined, he gave thanks, and signified that he was ready to be led to execution.

We now pass on to the reign of Henry VII. On the 28th of April, 1494, was burned, in Smithfield, a widow upwards of fourscore years of age, named Joan Boughton, the FIRST FEMALE MARTYR that was burned in England, and mother to lady Young, who also suffered for holding some of Wickliff's opinions. This aged martyr underwent severe examination, but wavered not from the truth: she shrunk not when she was told that she should be burned; and when in the midst of the flames, she cried to God to take her soul into his holy hands. Others suffered about the same time, particularly a man far advanced in years.

Among all the circumstances of barbarity which attended these persecutions, none perhaps was so monstrous as that which took place at Amersham, in Buckinghamshire, in the year 1506. One WILLIAM TYLSWORTH was burned for heresy, and his only daughter, a married woman, named Joan Clerk, was COMPELLED, WITH HER OWN HANDS, TO SET FIRE TO THE PILE WHICH CONSUMED HER FATHER! Her husband, at the same time, did penance with more than sixty others. Fox relates this refinement of cruelty from the information of persons whom he names, *who were eye-witnesses*

of this horrid scene, and related the particulars to him. Several of those who did penance on this occasion were also branded on the cheek; one of whom, named William Page, was alive when Fox wrote this account.

The next day one Roberts, a miller, of Missenden, was burned at Buckingham, and about twenty persons were compelled to bear fagots, and do penance at the same time. Within three years following, two more were burned at Amersham; and others, who survived till Fox wrote, were branded on the cheek. One of them, called Father Rogers, was confined fourteen weeks in the bishop's prison, where he suffered so much from cold, hunger, and the irons with which he was loaded, that his back was bowed, and he never went upright again. They were branded in the following manner: being tied fast to a post with towels, and their hands holden, the hot iron was applied to their cheeks, and thus they were made to "bear the marks of the Lord Jesus."

We may here notice the careful manner in which Fox has mentioned the authorities for the narratives he relates. The first editions of his work, published during his lifetime, were attacked by the Roman catholics, who, as may easily be supposed, desired to convict him of falsity, and even now repeat these calumnies. But this was overruled for good; it caused him carefully to state the authorities from whence he had gathered the facts he relates; many of the latter events were told him by persons actually alive at the time when his book was published; and those of older date were taken from the records and registries to which others had access, and which have since been examined, and bear the strongest testimony to the accuracy with which he has quoted them. Indeed, if the details related by Fox were entirely laid aside, Strype, Fuller, and others who have written since his time, adduce additional particulars quite sufficient to silence the gain-sayings of these adversaries of the truth.

THOMAS CHASE, of Amersham, also suffered in the same cause, having been strangled in prison, after enduring much severe treatment. His persecutors reported that he had hanged himself in the prison, and caused him to be buried in Norland wood, between Wooburn and Little

Marlow ; but the falsity of this assertion came to light by means of a woman who heard him calling upon God to receive his spirit, while they were putting him to death ; and it further appeared that the place wherein he was confined was so low, that he could not stand upright therein ; and that he was so loaded with fetters and manacles, as hardly to be able to stir hand or foot.

Among those who suffered about this time, was **LAWRENCE GHEST**, who was burned at Salisbury for denying the romish doctrine respecting the sacrament of the altar. When he was at the stake, his wife and seven children were brought and placed before him, but he was enabled to hold fast his profession.

The reader will have observed the great stress which the papists laid upon the doctrine of transubstantiation, or the believing that the bread and wine in the sacrament are actually turned into the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and no longer remain bread and wine after the words of consecration have been pronounced over them by the priest. At first, it may appear difficult to conceive why this point is reckoned of so much importance by the papists, but, upon reflection, it will be easier understood. The church of Rome asserts, that directly after the words of consecration are repeated, neither bread nor wine remain, notwithstanding the positive evidence of our senses ; and it seeks to establish this doctrine, although the scriptures do not authorize the assertion, because such a wondrous change shows that a more than human power must be possessed by the priest, and consequently by the church from which *his* power is derived. By this power the Roman catholic is required to disbelieve the plain matter of fact before his eyes ; and if he can be induced to do so fully in this instance, of course he will be the easier persuaded to do the same in other matters. Thus the power of the church of Rome to rule the consciences of men, may be considered as mainly depending upon the belief of this doctrine ; for if the mind can be brought to resign the scripture, and the evidence of the senses which God has given us, surely no absurdity can be too great to submit to ; and in every age the church of Rome has made a traffic and gain from imposing its superstitions upon the minds of men.

One circumstance happened in this reign, which shows the way in which the power assumed by the ecclesiastics for the pardon of sins was abused. Moreton, the archbishop of Canterbury, was appointed legate from the pope, and to him was delegated, by his holiness, among other powers, that of the pardon of sins, or, as it was termed, granting indulgences. At that time Rochester bridge was out of repair, and few were willing to aid the work. While in this state, it probably inconvenienced the prelate in his journeys from Canterbury to London; whether this were the case or not, he offered a release from purgatory for all sins committed during forty days, to all persons who would render assistance; and the bridge appears speedily to have been completed.

Dr. Henry has summed up his account of the history of religion in England during the period noticed in the preceding pages, with the following portraiture of the errors and corruptions introduced by the church of Rome.

“ Though Wickliff and his followers detected many of the errors, and exposed many of the superstitious practices of the church in this period, the clergy obstinately refused to abandon any of these errors, or relinquish any of these superstitions; and persecuted, with unrelenting cruelty, all who attempted the smallest reformation. So great was the opposition to every thing that had the appearance of reformation, that errors and superstitious rites were multiplied rather than diminished. Transubstantiation was now fully established, and made an essential article in the creed of every member of the church. The cup was taken from the laity, but with great caution, and by slow degrees. The clergy were first commanded to be at great pains to instruct the people, ‘ that both the body and blood of the Lord were given at once under the species of bread, nay, the entire living and true Christ; that the wine in the cup was not the sacrament, but mere wine given them (it was then given them) to make them swallow the bread more easily.’ The clergy were next directed ‘ to begin to withhold the cup in small obscure churches, and to exhort the people to swallow the bread without chewing, that none of it might stick in their teeth.’ The churches were crowded with images of the virgin Mary, and other saints, to which much greater

homage was paid than to the Supreme Being. Several English saints were canonized in this period, and festivals instituted to their honour.

“The festivals of other saints, as of St. George, St. Edward the confessor, the visitation of the virgin Mary, were made double festivals, and many additional ceremonies appointed to be observed. (See page 17.) Great stress was now laid on pilgrimages, processions, indulgences, confessions to priests, and their pardons;—the people seem to have had a good deal to confess, and to have stood much in need of pardon. George Neville, archbishop of York, enumerates thirty-seven kinds of sin, which none but the pope or a bishop could pardon. The first and greatest of all these was heresy. Ignorance, vice, and superstition, seemed to have gained ground in England in the course of this period.”

It is well worthy of remark, as a striking instance in which the providence of God overrules the designs of men, that the art of printing was invented during the period just noticed.

The church of Rome had used its utmost efforts to prevent the diffusion of the light of truth; and, as the preceding pages have shown, these exertions were, in a great degree, successful. While men could be kept in ignorance of the doctrines of truth, there was but little fear of their shaking off the fetters of superstition; and with this view the utmost industry was used to prevent the circulation of the scriptures, and other pious works, in the vulgar tongue. These endeavours had been, in a great measure, successful, when God was pleased to ordain that the art of printing should be invented; and then these “pestilent little books,” as the papists called them, were multiplied beyond the possibility of their utmost efforts to counteract.

Fox has well observed, that “at a time when all the christian world was brought under the dominion of the church of Rome, when deliverance seemed not only past the power, but also past the hope of man; in this very time, so dangerous and desperate, when man’s power could do no more, then the blessed wisdom and omnipotent power of the Lord began to work for his church, not with human power, or weapons, but with printing, writing,

and reading, to dispel darkness by light, error by truth, ignorance by learning." After other similar observations, he says, "Wherefore, I suppose the pope must abolish printing, or else, as this world standeth, printing doubtless will abolish him. Though he stopped the mouth of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, and others, that they might not preach, thinking to make his kingdom sure; yet, in their stead, God hath opened the press to preach, whose voice the pope can never be able to stop with all the power of his triple crown. By printing, as by the gift of tongues, and a special instrument of the Holy Ghost, the doctrine of the gospel is sent to all nations and countries under heaven; and what God revealed to one man, is dispersed to many; and what is known to one nation, is open to all."

The church of Rome was well aware of these truths, and for three hundred years has used its utmost industry to restrain the operations of the press, wherever it has power; but although it may impede, it cannot wholly prevent the slow, yet sure results. Grown wiser by experience, or rather desirous to make a desperate effort to regain its power in our land, we find its policy is changed among us; and the press teems with Roman catholic publications of every description. To *this* activity, the lover of the truth does not object: this is a legitimate species of warfare; and, as in the contest between Elijah and the priests of Baal, the result cannot be doubtful, if the followers of the truth, like the prophet, look simply yet earnestly to the Lord; not indeed that a miraculous interposition is to be looked for; such an expectation may be left to the believers in modern romish miracles; and whether deluders, or deluded, those "that sow iniquity, shall reap vanity." But where the blessed influences and directions of the Holy Spirit are humbly sought, instead of leaning upon human arguments, or human wisdom, they will be vouchsafed, and the Spirit of Truth will guide into all truth. Then let not protestants be slothful: let them remember the conduct of the reformers, and meet the stream of error now issuing from the press, with a stronger and deeper flood of the waters of life. In a word, let the active exertions of the Roman catholics to circulate *their* little publications, excite to increased activity

in the distribution of *those* which inculcate the doctrines of the Reformation.

When speaking of this change of policy, our own country alone is referred to. In Spain, and other places, which are wholly under the dominion of popery, the same rigid restraints upon the press are still continued. A decree recently issued at Madrid, orders that all books, pamphlets, papers, or books prohibited by the church, or the Inquisition, shall be given up; and whoever retains them, shall be subjected to a summary trial, and punished. This decree also states, that whoever informs against persons having such books in their possession, shall receive a third of any pecuniary fines or forfeitures, which may be incurred, and his name shall be *kept secret*. It is hardly necessary to add, that the list of prohibited books includes all denominated heretical. Measures have also been adopted in France, to restrain the hawking of books; nay, even in Ireland, in our own country, the romish prelates endeavour to prevent the circulation of all protestant books and tracts, as well as bibles and testaments.

In the year 1509, Henry the eighth succeeded to the throne of England; and during his reign, as is well known to the reader, these kingdoms were delivered from the power and authority of the pope.

In tracing the history of the martyrs in the cause of Christ during the preceding century, we have to regret the want of fuller information, as the little that remains, convinces us that much more is wanting. In the reign of Henry the eighth, we also meet with difficulties, but of another kind. It is hard to separate the account of the followers of Christ and the sufferings they endured, from the struggles of those who were compelled to withstand the outward oppressions of the church of Rome, and thereby incurred its wrath. Indeed, these two cases are often found united in the same individual; and the narrative would not be clear without reference to the events of the day.

Some of the earliest accounts of proceedings against the lollards in this reign, are recorded in the registry of archbishop Warham; from which it appears that on the 2nd of May, 1511, eight men, and four women, mostly inhabitants of Tenterden, were summoned before that

prelate, and accused of holding the following opinions: "1. That in the sacrament of the altar there is not the body of Christ, but actual bread. 2. That baptism and confirmation are not necessary for the salvation of the soul. 3. That confession of sins ought not to be made to a priest. 4. That there is no more power given by God to a priest than to a layman; and other articles against extreme unction, pilgrimages, worshipping of images, prayers to saints, and various minor points." The accused were compelled to abjure these doctrines, and to make oath that they would inform against all others who might hold similar opinions. They were brought before the court again on the 5th of May, and sentenced to wear the badge of a fagot in flames, during their lives, or till pardoned; and in processions at Canterbury cathedral, and at their own parish churches, they were to carry a fagot on their shoulders, as an acknowledgment that they had deserved burning. The archbishop also sat in judgment at Lambeth several times during the same summer, and a great many other persons were brought before him under similar accusations.

On the 29th of April in the same year, William Carder, of Tenterden, was accused of the same opinions; and he was condemned as an obstinate heretic, although he was willing to retract all he might have said, except "that it was enough to pray to Almighty God alone, and that we needed not to pray to saints." Agnes Grevill, Robert Harrison, John Brown, and Edward Walker, were also condemned on the 2nd and 19th of May. Fox relates the following particulars respecting the martyrdom of a John Brown, of Ashford, whom he states to have "carried a fagot" some years before; whether it be the same as the above, or not, does not appear, nor is it material.

The first occasion of the trouble of JOHN BROWN, of Ashford, was by means of a priest, who had been fellow passenger with him on board a Gravesend barge. Brown, happening to sit close to the priest, was rebuked by an inquiry, "Dost thou know who I am? Thou sittest too near me; thou sittest on my clothes." "No, sir," said Brown; "I know not what you are." "I tell thee, I am a priest." "What, sir, are you a parson, a vicar, or a lady's chaplain?" "No," said the priest, "I am a

soul priest; I sing for souls;" meaning that he was one who sang mass for the deliverance of the souls of deceased persons from purgatory. "I pray you, sir," said Brown, "where do you find the soul when you go to mass?" "I cannot tell thee," said the priest. "I pray you, where do you leave it, sir, when the mass is done?" "I cannot tell thee," again replied the priest. "Then you can neither tell where you find it when you go to mass, nor where you leave it when the mass is done; how then can you save the soul?" inquired Brown. "Go thy way," said the priest; "thou art a heretic, and I will be even with thee."

As soon as they landed, the priest took with him two gentlemen, named Walter and William More, and going to archbishop Warham, they informed against John Brown as a heretic. Three days afterwards, as Brown was bringing a mess of pottage to his table for some guests who dined with him upon the occasion of his wife having been churched that same day, he was apprehended by Chilton of Wye, a bailiff, with others of the bishop's servants, who entered the house suddenly, and put him upon his own horse, tying his feet under its belly. In this manner he was taken to Canterbury, his wife and friends not knowing whither he was carried; and was kept for forty days in prison, where, "through the cruel handling of the archbishop, and Fisher, the bishop of Rochester, he was piteously treated; and *his bare feet were set upon hot burning coals*, to make him deny his faith, which, notwithstanding, he would not do, but patiently abiding the pain, continued unmoved."

At length, on the Friday before Whitsunday, 1517, Brown was sent to Ashford, where he dwelt, to be burned. He was brought to the town in the evening, and set in the stocks, and it so happened, as pleased God, that a young maid of his house coming by, saw her master: she ran home, and told her mistress, who, till that time, had remained in ignorance of the fate of her husband. His wife came, and found him in this deplorable state, set in the stocks, and appointed to be burned the next morning. She sat by him all night, and he declared to her all the particulars of his sufferings, and *how his feet were burned to the bones by the two bishops, so that he could not set them to the ground*; "to make me," said he, "deny my Lord,

which I will never do ; for if I should deny him in this world, he would deny me hereafter. And I pray thee," added he, " good Elizabeth, continue as thou hast begun, and bring up thy children virtuously in the fear of God." The next day he was burned ; and when at the stake, he made a simple but earnest prayer, concluding with these words, " Into thy hands I commend my spirit ; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." These affecting particulars were related by his daughter Alice, upon whose memory the scene was impressed by Chilton, who talked of throwing Brown's children into the fire with their father, lest they should be like him.

Thus, for a shrewd question, asked of a priest, whose sole employment was engaging in one of the greatest absurdities of popery, the praying of souls out of purgatory, this man was seized in the midst of his family, carried they knew not whither ; and his wife, children, and friends, left for six weeks in ignorance of his fate ; till at length they found him placed in the stocks of their own town, mutilated and tortured, with his feet burnt to the bone ; the next day after which, his poor tormented body was committed to the flames.

The case of Agnes Grebil, or Greville, also deserves particular notice. Archbishop Warham called her husband, and two sons, who had abjured the opinions which she was charged with holding, and caused them to be examined upon oath as witnesses against her. Her husband deposed, that his wife was converted to the doctrines of the lollards by John Ive, in the reign of king Edward the fourth, and had ever since continued therein. He further stated, that when his sons were about seven years of age, he had instructed them himself in these opinions teaching them that the sacrament of the altar was not Christ's body, but only bread, and that his wife fully approved of his so doing.

The two sons, one about nineteen, the other twenty-two years of age, were then examined, and compelled to give evidence against their mother, upon pain of being considered relapsed heretics. They all stated that their father and mother believed and taught these doctrines, and that within the last three years the whole family had frequently conversed, agreeing that such opinions were good

and lawful, and resolving that they would not betray each other. They concluded by stating that they never recollected their father and mother teaching any other opinions than these (so called) errors respecting the sacrament of the altar, pilgrimages, offerings, and worshipping of images.

Fox gives these particulars from the archbishop's own register, and remarks, that the mother appears to have denied the accusation, trusting to the mutual agreement in the family that they would not betray each other; but resolutions of this sort are of little avail. Her husband and children were unable to stand in the day of fiery trial, and being brought forward by the cruel ingenuity of the persecutors, they were compelled to give evidence against their nearest and dearest relative, to save their own lives! It is further stated, that she, "being now destitute of all friends and comfort, burst out into these words openly, (as the register reporteth,) that she repented the time that ever she bare those children." She then stated her readiness to recant, but this was refused, and she was condemned. The sentences against these martyrs are in the usual terms; they represent that the archbishop, "having called upon the name of Christ, and having God alone before his eyes," proceeded to examine these persons accused of heresy; and after stating, at some length, that every endeavour had been used in vain, to bring them back to "the catholic faith, and to the unity of mother church," unwilling that they should contaminate the flock of the Lord any longer, "with grief and sorrow of heart he sentenced them to be left as heretics to the secular power!"

These particulars show us a pleasing trait in the character of the lollards, namely, their care to instruct their children in those opinions which they believed to be the truth. With this, however, we must contrast the other painful circumstances just related, which would cause us to fear that the good seed had but little root in their minds, seeing that, although they "received it with gladness," yet, "when affliction and persecution arose for the word's sake, immediately they were offended," and forgot the promises of the Lord to his people, "that he would be with them even in the fire, and if faithful unto death, would give them a crown of life." Let this be a useful lesson

teaching us not to be high-minded, but to fear ; and to look continually unto the Lord, in whom alone we have righteousness and strength.

Dean Colet, the munificent founder of St. Paul's school, appears to have had a narrow escape about this time. Fitz-James, the bishop of London, accused him of heresy to archbishop Warham ; but that prelate, being personally acquainted with Colet, and valuing him for his learning, piety, and integrity, stood his friend, and refused to sanction the proceedings against him. Tindal, who lived in those times, states that one article in the accusation against Colet was, that he had translated the paternoster, or Lord's Prayer, into English !

The registers of bishop Fitz-James contain particulars of the accusations against several persons who were brought before him for heresy, between the years 1509 and 1517. They were mostly troubled on account of the sacrament of the altar. Against Joan Baker it was alleged, that she not only would not reverence the cross herself, " but that she had also persuaded a friend of hers, lying at the point of death, not to put any trust or confidence in the crucifix, but in God who is in heaven, who only worketh all the miracles that are done, and not the dead images, which are but stocks and stones : and therefore she was sorry that she had so often gone on pilgrimage to idols."

Five others were particularly charged with reading certain heretical books. The reader will perhaps be surprised to find that these books were the gospels in the English language ! But the words of their accusation are as follows : " Also we object to you, that divers times, and especially upon a certain night, about the space of *three years last past*, you *erroneously* and *damnably* read in a great book of heresy of the said Robert Durdant's, all that same night, *certain chapters of the evangelists in English, containing in them divers erroneous and damnable opinions and conclusions of heresy,*" &c. Yes, reader, the evangelists are here accused of heretical opinions against the church of Rome ! May it not be fairly surmised, that the apostles themselves, if they had lived in the times to which we refer, would have suffered as severely from the pope of Rome, as they did from the pagan emperors of that city ? A like spirit appears to have excited the opposition to

circulating the scriptures in other countries, even to the present day ; and the " Catholic Scriptural Catechism for Children," now in use in England, states that the word of God does not consist in the mere words of the sacred text, but in the meaning of it *as the holy fathers teach* ; and that great evils have ensued from an unrestricted reading of the bible.

Passing by many others, we must briefly notice WIL LIAM SWEETING, and JOHN BREWSTER, who had been formerly allowed to escape, upon abjuring their opinions, and doing penance. Being again found professing the truth, as it is in Jesus, in opposition to the tenets of Rome, they were apprehended, condemned, and burned. Among the accusations against them, their having left off wearing the painted fagots, the usual badge enjoined upon all accused of heresy, was insisted upon ; although it appeared that Sweeting, having wandered to Colchester in search of a livelihood, which he was prevented from earning at home, had been engaged as holy water clerk by the priest of St. Mary Magdalen, and by him told to lay aside his badge ; while Brewster had left off his, by the command of the comptroller of the earl of Oxford, who employed him as a servant, and would not suffer him to wear it. The register states that they were burned,* but adds, that, before their death, they submitted to the church, and craved absolution. Fox says the truth of this note in the register may be doubted ; and well observes, that if true, it strongly shows the extreme cruelty of the popish clergy ; who, according to their own statement, although men recanted, and submitted, yet put them to death, and adds, " If nothing stay their bloody malice towards such as willingly submit to their mercies, what favour may the faithful and constant confessor of Christ look for at their hands ?"

* To this hard fate were the poor lollards reduced. If they wore the badge they were starved, for nobody would employ them,—if they laid it aside, they were burned as relapsed heretics !

THE LOLLARDS;

*Or some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England,
from 1400 to 1546.*



Seven martyrs burned at Coventry for teaching their children the Lord's prayer and the ten commandments in English, A. D. 1519.

PART III.

Dissolute conduct of the ecclesiastics.—Contests respecting the claims of the clergy for exemption from the usual course of law.—Murder of Richard Hunne.—Reformation in Germany.—Preachers among the Lollards.—Thomas Mann, and others.—Seven martyrs burned in one fire, at Coventry, for teaching their children the ten commandments in English.—Persecutions in the diocese of Lincoln.—Doctrines of the Lollards.—Penances inflicted on those who abjured.—Discontent at these persecutions, and at the encroachments of the clergy.—King Henry's book against Luther.—Persecutions in the diocese of London.—John Tybull.—Unfounded accusations of the papists against Fox's Acts and Monuments.

At the commencement of the sixteenth century, the dissolute lives of the ecclesiastics, particularly of the monks and friars, gave much offence to the laity; who were provoked to see the wealth bestowed upon the church by their pious ancestors, thus shamefully misused. The pope had interfered; and by his command, monitory letters were sent to the different ecclesiastical establishments: but these vices were too deeply rooted to be overcome by an admonition, and the evils rather increased than abated. Disputes prevailed among the clergy relative to several points connected with their power and interests; also between the

Franciscans and Dominicans, respecting the virgin **Mary**, the Franciscans maintaining that she was born free from original sin. This point was warmly debated for several years in England, as well as in other countries: at length the pope, in direct opposition to the scriptures, decreed that the virgin **Mary** was, in this respect, different from the other descendants of **Adam**; and all who denied it were declared to be heretics.

Another subject of controversy arose. For several centuries the clergy had claimed that all persons connected with the church should be exempted from the usual course of law, whatever crimes they might commit, and only be liable to trial before their own superiors, who were, in general, too lenient towards criminals belonging to their own number. It was not unfrequently the case, that persons who had committed great crimes, procured admission into holy orders, and were then considered as freed from all accusations, even for offences previously committed. The laity, for a length of time, complained much of this exemption; and in the year 1512 an act of parliament was passed, which, while it exempted bishops, priests, and deacons, from the power of the civil courts, even in cases of murder and robbery, subjected sub-deacons, clerks, and other inferior officers of the church to be tried by laymen, like other subjects, and to be punished, if found guilty. Strange to say, the pulpits rang with declamations against this act, and the abbot of Winchelcomb declared publicly, in a sermon, that all persons who assented to that act had incurred the censures of the church: he also published a book to prove that the persons of the lower, as well as of the higher orders of ecclesiastics, were sacred, and that they should not be tried by the laity for any crimes. The houses of lords and commons, indignant at this attempt of the clergy to free themselves from the restraints of law, and from punishment for the greatest crimes, petitioned the king to compel them to submit. The matter was debated before the king (**Henry the eighth**) in council. **Dr. Standish**, a friar, one of the king's spiritual council, opposed the abbot, and urged that ecclesiastics ought to be liable to punishment for their crimes; his arguments made a considerable impression upon the council, and the bishops were requested to command the abbot to retract his assertions. This they refused to do, stating that what he

had advanced was their own opinion, and the doctrine of holy church.

At this time a circumstance occurred, which increased this animosity between the clergy and the laity, and also caused the matter just mentioned to be more warmly debated. One Richard Hunne, a respectable citizen and merchant tailor in London, had a child at nurse at White-chapel, who died when about five weeks old, on which the priest of that parish claimed a mortuary, or fee, from the father; this he refused to pay, considering that it was an unlawful claim. The priest cited Hunne to appear in the legate's court; and he, by advice of his counsel, sued the priest upon a statute which rendered him liable to punishment for citing any one before a foreign court of law. Such bold conduct was new to the clergy: to prevent Hunne from prosecuting the priest, and to take vengeance upon him, they made diligent inquiry into his conduct, and accused him to the bishop of London of heresy; upon which he was committed to the Lollards' tower,* and at the instigation of Dr. Horsey, the bishop's chancellor, was accused, on the 2d of December, 1514, upon the following points: "1. That he had objected to paying of tithes. 2. That he had taught, that bishops and priests be like the pharisees and scribes that condemned Christ to death. 3. That the bishops and clergy were teachers, but not doers of the law of God;" and, lastly, that "the said Richard Hunne hath in his keeping divers English books, prohibited and damned by the law; as the Apocalypse in English, the epistles and gospels in English, Wickliff's damnable works, in the which he hath been a long time accustomed to read, teach, and study daily." He denied the truth of these accusations, except having the bible in his possession; but acknowledged having made use of some expressions against the church, for which, it was stated in the bishops' register, he begged pardon; but it should be observed, that this acknowledgment was written

* Lollards' Tower joined the bishop's house, and the old cathedral of St. Paul, and stood near the spot where the south-west tower of the present church is built, in which the clock is placed. It was so called from being used as a place of confinement for the poor Lollards. When we pass by St. Paul's church, and look up at the clock, it may remind us of them and their sufferings.

as an interlineation, and in a different hand-writing from the rest of the entry respecting him.

The examination being ended, Hunne was taken back to the Lollards' tower; and on the 4th of December, in the morning, the boy who went to carry his provisions found him hanging by a silk girdle. The clergy immediately gave out that he had hanged himself; but his neighbours, knowing how unlike this was to his usual character and conduct, and well aware of the hatred of the clergy against him, suspected that he had been put to death by their means. They called upon the coroner to summon a jury, and inquire into the matter; which he proceeded to do, and upon examination of the body, it evidently appeared that his neck had been broken by an iron chain, and other violence used, which he could not have done to himself.

The bishop and his clergy, being alarmed at this investigation, determined to carry the business through, if possible, with a high hand. They condemned Hunne for heresy, although deceased, and exhibited new articles against him, taken from the assertions against the church of Rome, contained in a preface to the bible found in his possession. These accusations are too tedious to repeat, but they conclude with saying, that "Hunne defendeth the translation of the bible and the holy scripture into the English tongue, which is prohibited by the laws of our mother holy church." These were read at Paul's Cross on the Sunday following; and on the 16th of December, the bishops and two other prelates, six notaries, about twenty-five doctors, abbots, and priests of note, with many others of the inferior clergy, sat in judgment and summoned all who wished to defend the bible, or the opinions of Hunne, to appear. Of course, nobody ventured to answer this summons, and sentence being pronounced against the dead body, it was committed to the secular power to be burned for heresy, which sentence was put into execution in Smithfield on the 20th, "to the great grief and disdain of the people." Instead of quieting the murmurs of the citizens, every body exclaimed how shameful it was, that because a man had sued an ecclesiastic according to law, he should be imprisoned and murdered, and then an attempt made to defame him, and ruin his family! To this

was added the poor revenge of burning his body; and the whole was thought a complication of most extreme cruelty.

Meanwhile the coroner and his inquest proceeded diligently in their inquiry. They were several times called before the king and the privy council, and the judges; but the matter being examined into, appeared so strong against the clergy, that the inquest were directed to proceed; and after fully searching into the affair, they found, upon good proof, that Dr. Horsey the bishop's chancellor, Charles Joseph the sumner, and Spalding the bell-ringer, had committed the murder; and they brought in a verdict accordingly. Among other circumstances, it was stated, that before Hunne's death, the chancellor came to the Lollards' tower, and kneeling down before Hunne, prayed for "his forgiveness for all that he had done, and must do to him."

The discontent excited by this act of cruelty, was not confined to the citizens of London. The parliament met on the 5th of February, 1515, and petitioned the king to order that the property belonging to the deceased, and forfeited on account of his being condemned as a heretic, should be restored to his children, which was done, to the amount of £1500. On the 3d of April, the house of commons sent up a bill to the house of peers, for bringing the murderers to justice; but the clergy had too much power in that house to suffer the bill to pass, and it was thrown out upon the first reading, the bishop of London speaking violently against it; affirming that Hunne had destroyed himself, that the coroner and his jury were perjured, and that if the bill passed, the heretics would be so bold, that he should not be safe in his own house.

The prosecution was still continued upon the verdict of the coroner's inquest, and the bishop's chancellor and the sumner were indicted as principals. The convocation, finding that this foul murder much strengthened the idea of making ecclesiastics liable to be tried in courts of law, resolved to exert themselves to the utmost, and actually accused their active opponent, Dr. Standish, of heresy, on account of what he had said upon this subject. The doctor claimed the king's protection, and Henry was in great perplexity how to act: however, he sent for Dr. Veysey, the dean of his chapel, and charged him upon his allegiance to

tell him the truth ; upon which the dean confessed that he thought Dr. Standish was right. After much debate upon the subject in the council, parliament, and convocation, at length it was arranged that the archbishop should surrender Horsey, who was concealed in the palace at Lambeth ; that he should plead not guilty, and that the attorney-general should admit this plea, and allow the prisoner to be dismissed without a trial. This iniquitous arrangement was carried into execution, although the citizens loudly exclaimed against it : however, the power of the ecclesiastics was too great for them to overcome ; and the king, having carried the point in dispute, and obliged the clergy to admit his prerogative by Horsey's appearing at the bar of his court of law, cared not for the final result. Although Horsey thus escaped the just reward of his crimes, he did not dare to continue in London, but retired to Exeter.

The particulars of the evidence, the coroner's verdict, and the other documents, including the king's letter directing the restoration of the property, are fully given by Fox, and other historians ; and are stated with a minuteness and precision which would lead us to suppose we were reading the accounts of an occurrence of our own times. The originals of many of these records perished in the fire of London, but some escaped, and on comparing them with the extracts given by the earlier historians, they have been found so correct as to satisfy those who examined them, that there can be no doubt of the others being also correctly given.

About this period, the Reformation in Germany began to make a rapid progress ; the writings of Luther, and other reformers, were widely circulated ; many of their books were brought over to England, and being translated into our language, were much read and approved. There was but little difference between their opinions, and the doctrines which the Lollards had held for the last hundred and fifty years ; and although the clergy, as we have seen, had been active in their endeavours to repress them, the fire had never been quenched ; and these new means of instruction were as fuel to the flame. The bishops and their officers now redoubled their diligence ; but when the Holy Spirit enlightens the mind with the saving truths of the gospel, man cannot prevent the work of God from going forward ; and as the inferior orders of ecclesiastics

became more and more dissolute and disorderly, so the people became more inclined to doubt the purity and infallibility of a church, which, while it appeared to decry vicious conduct in others, connived at excesses among its own members.

It is painful to find that many abjured the truths they once maintained; but we must consider the cruel trials to which these followers of Christ were exposed; and there is reason to believe they were sometimes allowed to escape for other causes, while a false statement of their having abjured was inserted in the records.

The persevering efforts of the preachers, and other individuals among the Lollards, appear from several documents. Fitz-James's register contains the abjuration of Elizabeth Stamford, from which it appears that she had been taught by one Beel, residing at Henley, the following doctrines: "That Christ feedeth and nourisheth his church with his own precious body, that is, the Bread of life coming down from heaven; this is the worthy word that is to be worthily received, and joined unto man, to be in one body with him. True it is, that they are both one, they may not be parted; this is thinking rightly of the holy sacrament, Christ's own body. This is not received by chewing of teeth, but by hearing with ears, and understanding with your soul, and wisely working thereafter. Therefore, saith St. Paul, I fear me amongst us, brethren, that many be feeble, and sick, therefore I counsel you, brethren, to rise and watch, that the great day of doom come not suddenly upon us, as the thief upon the merchant." This Beel often taught her that she should confess her sins unto God, and that the pope's pardon and indulgences were nothing worth, and that worshipping of images and pilgrimages were unlawful. He doubtless was one of the many children of God who sought to spread the knowledge of the truth quietly, and without observation.

It is strange that the Romish clergy should so wilfully shut their eyes to the truth, as to call such sentiments erroneous; and still more strange that they should enter them in their records as such: surely this was by the Divine permission, that the real sentiments of these persecuted individuals might appear.

A great many persons appear to have been cited before

the bishops about the same time, 1517 to 1520. Among the accusations against JOHN STILLMAN, burned in the year 1518, we find it stated, that when formerly examined before the bishop of Salisbury, he had not given up some books of Wickliff's, but concealed them in an old oak tree, and afterwards brought them to London, where they were found in his possession.

THOMAS MANN was burned in the same year: he had been in trouble before the bishop of Lincoln, among other things, for "that he believed not aright in the sacrament of extreme unction," and submitting to the judgment of the church, he was enjoined to wear the badge of a fagot, and not to depart from the monastery of Fredeswede at Oxford. He afterwards escaped from this confinement, and being found at large in London without his badge, was proceeded against as a relapsed heretic. In the account of the proceedings against him, inserted in the bishops' register, the ceremonial of the oath administered to the witnesses was stated, which is worthy of notice, not only as a ridiculous ceremony, but as an attempt to put a spiritual meaning on a mere human invention, without authority from the word of God. "They were caused to swear upon the holy evangelists with their three middle fingers, stretched outright, and laid upon the book in sign of the Trinity, and the thumb and little finger put downwards under the book, in token of damnation of body and soul, if they did not depose the truth in the matter." Assuredly it was necessary that the meaning of these signs should be given, for the reading of the word of God would never have explained them, although the simplest reader of the bible cannot remain ignorant of the meaning of "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," or "A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall perish."

A counsel was assigned to Mann by Dr. Hed, the bishop's chancellor, who, under pretence of assisting in his defence, induced him to confess a conversation which had taken place five years before, and thus to confirm the evidence of a witness against him: the keeper of the prison was also brought forward to state that the prisoner had said, that, as far as he could see, "the laws of the church were grounded upon Pilate and Caiaphas." The register states, that he submitted to the church; whether this is

true or not, may be doubted; and on the 29th of March, he was delivered by Dr. Hed to the sheriff of London, with the following hypocritical sentence, or warrant: "We desire, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that thy punishment on this account may be so moderate, that there be no rigour nor want of mildness, but that all may be done for the salvation and welfare of thy soul." For the welfare of his soul, all appears to have been done, though not for the welfare of his body. The sheriff, sitting on horseback, had the prisoner delivered to him at the back door of the bishop's house in Paternoster-row, the chancellor protesting to the sheriff that he had no power to put him to death, and therefore desired the sheriff to take him as a relapsed and condemned heretic, and see him punished, "but without death." The sheriff, however, knew the real meaning of these words; and receiving no order for his deliverance, but the writ being issued for his execution, immediately carried him to Smithfield, and there caused him to be burned. Thus the words of the martyr were verified; for as Caiaphas and his pharisaical associates said to Pilate, "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death, but if thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend;" so they, delivering him to the magistrate, knowing that he must put him to death, pretended they were unwilling that blood should be shed!

From the evidence of one Risby, as set down in the bishops' register, it appeared that this Thomas Mann was one of the teachers among the Lollards, who went from place to place secretly teaching the truth. He resided at different times, for this purpose, in Norfolk, Essex, Suffolk, Middlesex, Berks, and Buckinghamshire: at Newbery there appears to have been a congregation of faithful followers of Christ, who continued unknown for fifteen years, when they were betrayed by a false brother. Several of them were burnt, and the rest punished in various ways. Escaping from thence, he, for a time, resided at Amersham, till that congregation was also dispersed. Mann, however, was again preserved, but at length was brought to the stake, in the year 1518. The same register states, that he "confesses he hath turned seven hundred people to his religion, for which he thanketh God."

If those "that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever," and it is so declared in the

word of God, then assuredly Thomas Mann now shines as a bright star in the realms of glory.

ROBERT COSIN, burned at the town of Buckingham, is recorded in the registers of Longland, bishop of Lincoln, to have taught Joan Norman, that she might as well drink upon the Sunday before mass, as on any other day! Among other superstitious rites of the church of Rome, its followers are ordered not to break their fast before they receive the consecrated bread.

In the accusation of CHRISTOPHER SHOOMAKER, burned at Newbery, we find it stated, that he came to the house of John Say, and "after other talk, read to him out of a book (probably the gospels) the words which Christ spake to his disciples; and that coming thus to his house four times, at every time he read something out of the same book," teaching him, that the sacrifice of the mass "remained in substance bread, bearing the remembrance of Christ."

In 1519, seven martyrs were burned in one fire at Coventry. These were HATCHES, a shoemaker, ARCHER, HAWKINS, and BOND, of the same trade, WRIGSHAM, a glover, and LANSDALE, a hosier, with a widow named SMITH. They were apprehended upon Ash Wednesday, on an accusation of having taught their children and servants the Lord's prayer and ten commandments in English, and sent to Maxtock Abbey, six miles distant, while their children were taken to the monastery of the Grey Friars in Coventry. Friar Stafford, the warden, examined them respecting the instruction they had received from their fathers, and charged them, if they wished to avoid the death their parents would suffer, never again to meddle with the Lord's prayer, the creed, or the ten commandments in English!

Upon Palm Sunday, the fathers of these children were brought back to Coventry; and the six men were condemned to be burned, but the widow Smith was set at liberty. It was evening, and Simon Mourtou, the bishop's sumner, offered to see her home. As he was leading her by the arm, he felt a scroll of paper within her sleeve. "Yea," said he, "what have you here?" So saying, he took it from her, and found it was the commandments, belief, and Lord's prayer, written down in English. "Ah," said he, "it is so; as good come now as another time;" and carried her back to the bishop, by whom she was immediately

condemned. These martyrs were all burned together on the 4th of April, in the little park.

As soon as they were put to death, the sheriff went to their houses, and seized all the property he found, leaving their wives and children entirely destitute. This horrid cruelty caused many to murmur, which induced the bishop to circulate a report that they were not burned for having the Lord's prayer, &c. in English, but because they ate meat on Fridays and fast days !

One of their companions, named ROBERT SELKEB, escaped ; but was taken two years afterwards, and brought back to Coventry, and the next day (in January 1521) committed to the flames.

Fox adds, (in 1563,) " The witnesses of this history be ye' alive, which both saw them, and knew them ; of whom one is by name Mother Hall, dwelling now at Bagington, two miles from Coventry. By whom also this is testified, that they above all others in Coventry, pretended most show of worship and devotion at the holding up of the sacrament, whether to colour the matter or no, is not known. This is certain, that in godliness of life they differed from all the rest of the city." While we lament that fear induced them outwardly to conform to errors they denied, yet this circumstance shows still more strongly the cruelty of their persecutors, since they could not accuse them of any outward disrespect to the rites and ceremonies of the church of Rome.

The records of the diocese of Lincoln, about the years 1520 and 1521, show that as the light of the gospel began to appear more plainly, and the number of professors increased, the persecutions of the bishops were more violent. This increase of knowledge was evidently, under the Divine blessing, the fruit of the activity of the teachers among the Lollards, such as Mann, whom we have just mentioned ; and was undoubtedly quite independent of the light which appeared on the continent, although books from thence began to come over about this time, as has been already noticed.

Although the public preaching of the word was not then allowed, yet the number of the disciples was very great, and their zeal certainly may well make us ashamed of our indifference in the cause of Christ. We find them sitting up all night, reading and hearing the word ; and although

comparatively poor, purchasing books at high prices, giving equal to eight and ten pounds of our money for little treatises, which now may be bought for a shilling. One gave a load of hay for a few chapters of the epistles of St. Paul. Fox well observes, "To see their travails, their earnest seeking, their ardent zeal, their reading, their watching, their sweet assemblies, their love and concord, their godly living, their faithful marrying with the faithful, may make us now, in these our days of free profession, to blush for shame." If such a sentence was true two hundred and fifty years ago, surely it is not less so at the present day.

Neither were these sufferers accused of a great variety of opinions: all the charges against them may be summed up under four principal heads; which, more or less, enter into every accusation. They opposed pilgrimages, adoration of the virgin and the saints, the real presence of Christ's flesh and blood in the sacrament: and they would not relinquish the reading of the scriptures in English. Be it observed, that in none of these accusations against the Lollards, are there any expressions charging them with incorrectness in life or conduct.

Longland, the bishop of Lincoln, was among the most furious persecutors of those days, as is fully proved by the records of his extensive diocese, which at that time included the dioceses of Peterborough and Oxford. His usual course appears to have been to examine every suspected person, strictly requiring answers to nine questions, most of which referred to their acquaintance with persons known to be active among the Lollards; these answers being compared, they were generally so entangled by additional questions, as to be brought to accuse each other of heresy, and then punishment followed.

His register for the year 1521 contains a list of some hundred names, with the particulars of the proceedings against them, most of whom were accused for reading or repeating portions of the scripture in the English language: the following particulars may give some idea of these proceedings.

Richard White, of Beaconsfield, was discovered to be a Lollard, or, as it was termed, a known man; because, after the death of Smith, the late bishop of Lincoln, he was heard to say, "My lord, that is now dead, was a good man, and divers known men were called before him, and

he sent them home again, bidding them that they should live among their neighbours as good christian men should do; and now, said he, there is a new bishop, which is called a blessed man; and if he be as he is named, he will not trouble the servants of God, but will let them be in quiet." Poor White, however, experienced to his cost that the new bishop would not let them "be in quiet."

Marian Morden was forced to inform against James Morden, her own brother, for teaching her the paternoster, ave, and creed, in English, and that she should not go on pilgrimages, nor worship saints or images.

Six others were accused, because they could not say the creed in Latin.

Jenkin Butler accused his own brother of reading to him a certain book of scripture, and persuading him to hearken to the same!—Reader, mark this!

John Barret, goldsmith, of London, with his wife and maid, were brought into trouble, because he had, in their presence, recited the epistle of St. James without book.

William Littlepage accused his brother for having learned the ten commandments in English.

Agnes Ward was summoned, because, when one Gardiner said, "God help us, and our lady and all the saints of heaven," she replied, "What need is there to go to the feet, when we may go to the head?"

Thomas Halfecker accused fifteen persons, because, "when they came to the church, they would say no prayers, but (as he termed it) sit mum like beasts!"

Robert Drury, vicar of Windrish, was, among other things, accused by his servant, for advising him to eat bread and cheese for supper on a fast day!

Elizabeth Copland witnessed against her sister Isabel Morwen, that conversing together when their father was at the point of death, Isabel said that "all which die pass either to hell or heaven." "Nay," said her sister, "there is between them purgatory."

The accusation against John Tracher was, that he taught Alice Brown, from the gospel, this saying of Jesus, "Blessed be they that hear the word of God, and keep it;" also that he taught her the eight beatitudes in English, (that is, St. Matt. v. 3—12.)

Richard Vulford and Thomas Geoffrey were accused of saying that the consecrated host was not the true body of

Christ; in proof of which they said, Let a mouse be put in the pix with the host, and he will eat it up; and that two priests in Essex had done so, and the mouse had eaten it. This fact being made known to the bishop, one of the priests was burned.

Joan and Richard Bernard were forced to inform against Thomas Bernard, their own father.

Richard Vulford, of Riselyp, was accused that when John Clarke had made a wheel for fish, he asked him, "Whether now that he had made the wheel if the wheel could turn again and make him?" Clarke replying, "No," "Even so," said Vulford, "God hath made the priests, but how can they turn again, and make God?"

Thomas Philip and Lawrence Tailor were cited for reading the epistle to the Romans, and the first chapter of St. Luke.

John Collins, of Burford, informed against his own father, saying, that for eight years he had taught him, in the presence of his mother, the ten commandments; that he should have but one God, and should worship God alone: and that to worship saints, or go on pilgrimage to their shrines, was idolatry; also, that he should not worship the sacrament of the altar as God. "These things so much discontented this John Collins, that he said he would disclose his father's errors, and make him to be burned, but his mother entreated him not to do so." The wretched youth, however, informed against his own father, who doubtless would have been burnt, had he not recanted! Fathers and mothers of Britain, who hold the protestant faith, and love the truth as it is in Jesus, adopt the inquiries addressed to lord Cobham, and ask yourselves, How think ye of this? How feel ye this?

To the above case we may add, that William Phip accused Henry Phip, his own son, of conversing with Roger Dods against pilgrimages and adoration of images.

Four appear to have been committed to the flames. The children of JOHN SCRIVENER, one of the number, were compelled to set fire to their own father, as in the case of Tylsworth, already mentioned.

It would seem scarcely possible that such scenes as those just described could have passed in our land in the sixteenth century, under the name of doing the will of God! But the evidence is too strong to be doubted; it is from

the records of the persecutors themselves, who appear to have gloried in their shame!

Surely the reader will not desire to have further extracts from this black catalogue of the persecutions of one year in one diocese. These particulars were extracted from the bishop's own register, from which it appears that the sufferers were mostly simple labourers and artificers, uninstructed, except by the teaching of others like themselves, and as it pleased the Lord to give them knowledge and understanding of his will, by reading the scriptures in English, and a few other books founded on the truths of God's holy word.

The opinions of these Lollards are ascertained from the accusations against them. From the same undoubted source, we also learn the reasons, and some passages of the scripture, upon which their opinions were founded; and be it remembered, they were not learned characters, able to argue from the fathers and doctors of the church; thus their reasonings were the less encumbered with the doctrines of men. It appears that they argued against the worship of images, and pilgrimages to the shrines of saints, from the Revelation ix. 20. and preceding verses, from whence they plainly gathered that they were not "to worship idols of gold and silver, and brass and stone, and of wood, which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk." They also referred to the first and second commandments, as found in the word of God, not as given in the constitutions of Nevil, archbishop of York, published about fifty years before, in which the second commandment was omitted, as it is now in many of the catechisms and writings of the Roman catholics; and this shows why teaching the ten commandments in English was considered a crime.

The reader's attention may here be called to the ten commandments as given in a small book lately published in Dublin, called, "The Christian Doctrine, composed for the use of Children and unlearned Catholics." 1. I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt have no other Gods but me. 2. Thou shalt not take the name of God in vain. 3. Remember to keep holy the sabbath day. 4. Honour thy father and mother. 5. Thou shalt not kill. 6. Thou shalt not commit adultery. 7. Thou shalt not steal. 8. Thou shalt not bear false witness. 9. Thou shalt not desire thy neighbour's wife. 10. Thou shalt not desire th- neighbour's

goods. Placed together with God's "commands," thus mutilated, and of equal authority with them as good works *necessary* for a christian to do, are "those of the church," as follows:—1. To hear mass on Sundays and holy days commanded. 2. To fast the Lent and other days commanded, and to abstain from flesh on the accustomed days. 3. To go to confession at least once a year. 4. To receive at least at Easter. 5. To pay tithes. 6. Not to celebrate marriage on the times forbidden.

Surely no comment is required to enforce this proof of the identity between modern popery, and its state in the days of our forefathers.

Respecting the sacrament, the Lollards were instructed chiefly from two books, one called Wickliff's Wicket, and the other the Shepherd's Calendar; wherein they read that the sacrament was instituted in remembrance of Christ. They also quoted the words of the Saviour, when sitting with his disciples, he said, "Eat ye," holding forth the bread, and then referring to his body, "This is my body, which shall be given for you; do this in remembrance of me;" and the same with respect to the cup.

One plain simple man said, "Men speak much of the sacrament of the altar, but this will I abide by, that Christ brake bread to his disciples, and bade them eat it, saying it was his flesh and blood; and then he went from them and suffered, and then rose from death to life, and ascended into heaven, and there sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and there he is to remain unto the day of doom, when he shall judge both quick and dead, and therefore, how he should be here in the form of bread, I cannot see."

Although there were no learned men among them, to teach these doctriues, yet they, communing and conferring together, were converted, by the power of Divine grace, and increased exceedingly, so that bishop Longland, seeing the matter was almost past his power to restrain, applied to the king for especial aid, and received letters to the sheriffs, bailiffs, &c. directing them to assist him. Armed with this additional power, he proceeded with renewed activity to search out and persecute all the Lollards he could find, as has been already related; and the same records furnish some particulars of the punishments he inflicted.

Those who, for fear of their lives, submitted and then

abjured these opinions, were all enjoined penance, and in almost every case were sent to some abbey or monastery, there to be kept as prisoners all their lives. The copy of the bishop's letter to the abbot of Ensham, with one of these "penitents," will show what the sentence implied.

"My loving brother, I recommend me heartily unto you. And whereas I have, according to the law, put the bearer R. T. to perpetual penance within your monastery of Ensham, there to live as a penitent, and not otherwise, I pray you, and command you to receive him, &c. As for his lodging, he will bring it with him, and as for his meat and drink, he may have such as you give of your alms. And if he can so order himself by his labour within your house, in your business, whereby he may deserve his meat and his drink, you may order him as ye see convenient to his deserts, so that he pass not the precincts of your monastery."

In the list of those who were thus cut off from their homes, their families and friends, and commended to the tender mercies, the well-provided lodgings, and the hospitable fare, just described, are the names of the father, the brother, the sister, and the son, who have been mentioned as respectively the victims of informations from a son, a brother, a sister, and a father!*

Such as escaped this severe punishment, had to undergo the following penance, under pain of being considered as relapsed heretics, if they did not submit.

They were to bear a fagot of wood at certain times in the public market-place, at market time, in church during the mass, in a procession, and at the burning of a heretic. Also to fast at certain seasons, and repeat "our lady-psalter" (the Ave intermixed with paternosters) every Sunday and Friday throughout the year.

It was further directed that "they shall not hide the mark upon their cheek, (they were branded with a hot iron,) neither with hat, cap, hood, kerchief, napkin, nor otherwise, nor suffer their beards to grow longer than four-

* How exactly were the words of our Lord verified, "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death!" Matt. x. 21. No wonder that the papists are such enemies to the general reading of the bible. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd," John iii. 20.

teen days, nor be found with any suspected person in any private place."

It may be well to add that the form of abjuration was making oath upon the evangelists, subscribing with their hand, and making a cross, declaring that they entirely and voluntarily renounced, detested, and forsook, and would never hold hereafter, these or any other similar opinions contrary to the determination of the holy mother church of Rome, and that they would inform against all whom they should see, or suspect to teach, hold, or maintain the like opinions.

It might well be expected that such scenes of persecution could not long continue in a land where some degree of light and knowledge began to be generally diffused, and where many circumstances had for a long period tended to make the laity disgusted at the vices and encroachments of the Romish clergy.* Accordingly, each succeeding year these discontents became more and more prevalent; and although we cannot rejoice that worldly motives were mixed with the religious principles which hastened forward the Reformation, yet we cannot wonder that the people of England were desirous to shake off priestly domination. Henry doubtless was actuated by worldly motives, yet we must not consider him so entirely devoid of principle in this matter, as the Roman catholics assert. "By reason of the multitude of oppressions, they made the oppressed to cry;" complaints were heard from every part of the kingdom; and Henry, arbitrary as he was, could not patiently bear the galling yoke of a power which bowed down his subjects to the earth, and aimed at independence

* Many instances of their evil deeds are recorded; we may notice the case of Mr. Edmond Loud, a gentleman of rank in Huntingdonshire, who was disgusted at the dissolute lives of the monks of Sawtry, an abbey in his neighbourhood, and even ventured to chastise one of them who had insulted his daughter. For this, and other circumstances, they determined to be revenged; and he was way-laid and assaulted by six men, tenants of the abbey. He defended himself with a bill-hook for some time, till a constable came up and stopped the fray, and Mr. Loud was required to give up his weapon. They then proceeded peaceably with the constable; but, watching an opportunity, as Mr. Loud was crossing a stile, one seized him by the arms, while another fractured his skull with the blow of a club, and he died seven days afterwards. The murderers escaped, and the influence of the Romish clergy prevented the matter being properly followed up. This occurred in 1522.

of his authority. During the first half of his reign, he was warmly attached to the papal see, and strongly supported its authority as well as its doctrines. Among other proofs of this veneration, may be mentioned his controversy with Luther, against whom he wrote a book, called "A Treatise on the Seven Sacraments." The pope bestowed the most extravagant praises upon this work, a copy of which was presented to him about the year 1521; declaring that it should receive as honourable a testimony from the holy see as the works of St. Augustine and St. Jerome! As a reward, he conferred upon Henry the title of "Defender of the Faith;" and to encourage the reading of the king's book, granted an indulgence for ten years, which included permission to eat flesh during Lent, to all persons who should peruse it! Luther treated his royal antagonist with little ceremony, and published an answer, in which, irritated at some contemptuous expressions used by the monarch against himself, he indulged in very violent language: this he afterwards regretted, and publicly confessed that he had done wrong. Cardinal Wolsey, also, did not escape the animadversions of the reformer.

Henry and his favourite, being thus exasperated against Luther, whose person was beyond their reach, proceeded with severity against his books, and all who read or possessed them. The cardinal, by virtue of his authority as legate from the pope, issued a mandate, commanding all persons who had any books written by "that pestilent heretic, Martin Luther," to deliver them to their ordinaries within fifteen days, under pain of being reputed and treated as heretics.* He also ordered a paper to be affixed to the door of every church, containing forty-two propositions, extracted from the works of Luther, which had been condemned by the pope as "damnable heresies." These proceedings did not prevent the importation of Luther's works, nor their being translated into English, but, on the contrary, made the people more eager to peruse them. About this time, also, George Stafford, fellow of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, began to read public lectures on the scriptures, in that university, explaining the doctrines contained therein

* The Roman catholics in Ireland have lately been ordered by their prelates to return and destroy all bibles, testaments, and tracts, or to deliver them to their priests. In Spain, all persons having such works in their possession are punished.

instead of the scholastic divinity of the day; among his auditors were Latimer, and others, who afterwards bore testimony to the truth.

The pride and haughty disposition of the cardinal sometimes caused him to stretch his power too far, and as legate from the pope he disputed with archbishop Warham respecting the rights of the convocation, and the power of his council. With the particulars of this contest we have nothing to do, but merely notice it, as Wolsey's desire to appear supreme in power among the clergy of England induced him to hold a council, which he summoned under the pretence of a "design to reform the manners of the clergy;" thereby admitting the justice of the complaints on this head made by the reformers. To this he was urged by Fox, bishop of Winchester, who wrote a long letter to the cardinal, in which he states that "by this means of a reformation of the clergy, he thought the common people would be pacified, that were always crying out against them."

Of the proceedings in this council we have no particular account; but it is sufficiently clear that no change for the better took place. The cardinal had not even the wisdom to assume the semblance of reformation, and all men exclaimed against his vices and luxury.

The ecclesiastics in general laboured under similar imputations, and not without sufficient cause. Dr. Henry, in his history of this period, gives a sketch of these events to which we have just referred, and observes, "There was one vice, indeed, which the clergy most zealously endeavoured to extirpate. This was what they called the damnable vice of heresy, which consisted in reading the New Testament in English, the works of Wickliff and Luther, and of others of that learning; in denying the infallibility of the pope, transubstantiation, purgatory, praying to saints, worshipping images, &c. Notwithstanding the cruel punishments that had been inflicted on those who entertained these opinions, their number was still considerable, particularly in London, and in Colchester, and in other parts of Essex. They called themselves Brethren in Christ, and met together with great secrecy in one another's houses, to read the New Testament, and other books, and to converse upon religious subjects. Many of them were apprehended, and brought before Cuthbert Tonstall,

bishop of London, and Dr. Wharton, his chancellor. But bishop Tostall, being a prelate of uncommon learning and eloquence, and of great humanity, earnestly prevailed upon them to renounce, or rather to dissemble their opinions, by which they escaped a painful death, but incurred the painful reproaches of their minds."

Strype has given some account of bishop Tostall's visitation of his diocese in the year 1527, extracted from the original registers, which proves the extent to which these "Brethren in Christ," or "known men," as they were sometimes called, had increased, and also shows the activity of their persecutors. Among these cases we may notice the following, to show the manner in which these poor men were examined against their companions after they had themselves abjured.

John Pykas, of Colchester, baker, being sworn and secretly and singly examined respecting Richard Best, declared that he had known him five or six years, and had heard him repeat the epistle of St. James in English by heart, and that he was considered "a brother in Christ" among those who were known men. Pykas also gave evidence against John Girling, that they had conversed together respecting the words which Christ spake of Jerusalem, as recorded in the 24th chapter of St. Matthew, and also respecting a passage in St. James, where it appeared that God is Father of light, and all good gifts come from him, therefore we should pray only to him. And as to the wife of Girling, her son, by her first husband, told him that she had formerly done penance. Respecting Thomas Raylond, Pykas said that they had often conversed concerning the Lord's prayer, and the apostle's creed in English, and about the epistles of James and John; also that Raylond had said, that baptism in water was but a token of repentance, to which his son agreed. He next accused Marian Matthew of repeating parts of the epistles and gospels; for she "had them well by heart." She had also spoken against pilgrimages. Pykas also gave similar evidence against four other females, and Thomas Parker.

The William Raylond just mentioned was then examined, and gave evidence against John Pykas! He also accused many others, who, in their turn, were subjected to the same inquiries.

This gives us an idea of the inquisitorial manner in which

these proceedings were carried on, and the industry with which the poor Lollards were sought for; several hundreds were thus discovered, and brought before the bishop and his chancellor within the space of two years. Robert Forman, rector of a parish in the city of London, with some others of the clergy, were among the number.

John Tyball was charged with having several copies of the New Testament, and portions of it, and confessed that by reading these books, and especially from a chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, he fell into the heresies for which he was accused. He further stated, that "in process of time, by reasoning about the things contained in the said books, and disputing and instructing, he brought Richard Fox (the curate of Bumstead, in Essex) to his learning and opinions." Robert Hempstead said, "that at Lent last he confessed to the said sir Richard Fox, (it was then usual to call parish priests "sir,") the curate of Bumsted; and when the said sir Richard had heard his confession, he asked him how he believed respecting the sacrament of the altar; and this respondent having said that the blessed sacrament of the altar is the very body of Christ, sir Richard answered, "Nay, thou must not do so; for that is not the best way; but believe thou in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and not in the sacrament of the altar." And then this respondent said, "I fear you go about to bring me into the same situation as the men of Colchester." To which sir Richard answered, "What, man, art thou afraid? Be not afraid! For they serve a better master than ever thou didst serve!"

Surely, we are indebted to the popish ecclesiastics of that day for having thus faithfully recorded the opinions for which they persecuted these "Brethren in Christ;" and let it be remembered, that it is from their own registers that Strype, Fox, and other historians, have drawn the greater part of the particulars they relate. How great, then, is the effrontery of those writers, who attempt to persuade us that the accounts given by Fox are forgeries of his own devising! In his preface to the later editions of the "Acts and Monuments of the Church," he tells us, that "no English papist, almost in all the realm, thought himself a perfect catholic, unless he had cast out some word or other, to give that book a blow." The same outcries are again raised at the present time; but, as a modern

ecclesiastical historian observes, "These writings have not proved, and it never will be proved, that John Fox is not one of the most faithful and authentic of all historians. We know too much of the strength of Fox's book, and the weakness of those of his adversaries, to be further moved by such censures than to charge them with falsehood. All the many researches and discoveries of later times, in regard to historical documents, have only contributed to place the general fidelity and truth of Fox's melancholy narrative, on a rock which cannot be shaken." (See the preface to Wordsworth's Ecclesiastical Biography.)

This great work, *The Acts and Monuments of the Church*, was begun about 1552: it occupied Fox eleven years, although he had many assistants; among them was Bishop Grindal, then an exile for religion, as well as Fox, who kept up a constant correspondence with England, and received accounts of the sufferings of most of the martyrs in queen Mary's reign, as they occurred. After their return to England, Fox employed himself in collecting further information from persons who had themselves witnessed and suffered in the scenes he describes, and in examining the bishops' registers and other records. The first edition of his work was published in 1563, in one volume, having been delayed till that time, from the anxiety of both Fox and Grindal to examine carefully into the truth of the various narratives it contains. It was afterwards enlarged by additional documents, and many subsequent editions were printed. The cavils and false assertions of popish writers caused him to revise his work the more scrupulously, and to state the authorities for his narrations; many of his accounts were derived from living witnesses, who bore on their bodies marks which indisputably proved the truth of their statements.

The author of a recent biographical work observes, "The effect of Fox's work in promoting, or rather confirming, the principles of the Reformation, to which we owe all that distinguishes us as a nation, is universally acknowledged. It is proved even by the antipathy of his enemies, who would not have taken such pains to expose his errors, and to inveigh against the work at large, if they had not felt that it created, in the public mind, an abhorrence of the persecuting spirit of popery, which has suffered little diminution even to the present day."

The real cause of the opposition of the enemies is thus stated by Fox himself: "Considering with myself what should move them thus to rage, I began with more circumspect diligence to overlook again what I had done. In searching whereof, I found the fault, both what it was and where it lay, which was not so much in the book itself, as in those who, being ashamed to hear of their past conduct, sought by all possible means to stop the same; and because they could not effect this by public authority, they renewed again an old practice of theirs, as they did with the holy bible in the days of king Henry, telling the people there were a thousand lies in it. With like facing brags (impudent assertions) they think now to dash out all good books, and amongst others these monuments of martyrs; which godly martyrs they could not abide when living, and now cannot suffer their memories to live after their death, lest it might bring their wicked acts and cruel murders to destruction. Even so these men deal also with me; for when they themselves altogether delight in untruths, and have filled the church of Christ with feigned fables, lying miracles, false visions, and miserable errors, &c. yet notwithstanding, as if they were a people of much truth, and as if the world did not perceive them, they pretend a face and zeal of great verity; and, like sophisters, who, when an argument cometh against them which they cannot meet, endeavour to shift off the matter with stout words." Reader, this passage was written about the middle of the sixteenth century; but are not the believers in the modern miracles of the church of Rome pursuing exactly the same course in our own times, boldly and unblushingly denying what they know cannot be refuted?

THE LOLLARDS;

*Or some account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England,
between the Years 1400 and 1546.*



PART IV.

Henry the Eighth. — More persecutions. — Bishop Toustal's mandate against the English Testament. — Tindal. — Some account of his translation of the New Testament, the first that was printed in the English language. — Many copies purchased by the bishop of London, and burned at Paul's Cross. — Proceedings against those in whose possession they were found. — Tracts against the errors of the church of Rome circulated. — Supplication of the Beggars. — Sir Thomas More. — Frith's book on Purgatory. — These tracts actively distributed. — Some of them reach the king. — Bilney. — Some account of him. — His examination before bishop Toustal. — His letters to the bishop. — Is persuaded to recant. — His deep sorrow and repentance for having done so.

DURING the latter half of the reign of Henry, the state of ecclesiastical affairs was much altered. He renounced subjection to the pope, broke off all connexion with the court of Rome, and became its most violent enemy. He assumed the title of supreme head of the English church, and equally persecuted to death the Roman catholics who denied his supremacy, and the protestants who did not
[*Lollards, Part 4.*] D

admit most of the errors of the Romish faith. With singular inconsistency, he sent the persecutors and their victims to the same place of execution, drawn together on the same sledge. Such a monarch, of course, was hateful to both parties. There does not appear any ground for attempting to excuse his conduct; but, surely, we may view the finger of God in these transactions, and consider Henry the Eighth, with all the vices of his character, as raised up to produce that change, which, as far as human views can determine, a milder and more temperate monarch would have been unable to effect.

Without attempting to excuse or palliate the vices of Henry, we cannot allow the manner in which Roman catholic historians have described his character, and exaggerated his errors and evil deeds, to pass unnoticed. They have no right to allege his conduct as an argument against the English Reformation; if we look at the popes who were his contemporaries, we shall find that they equalled, nay exceeded him in all the worst features of his conduct. Guicciardini, an historian of their own, while he calls pope Clement, (who first pronounced sentence of excommunication against Henry,) a good pope, adds, "I mean not goodness apostolical, for in those days he was esteemed a good pope that did not exceed the worst of men in wickedness!" Such were the characters who styled themselves the representatives of God upon earth, whose mandates were considered superior in authority to the Word of God itself!*

We may briefly notice the names of a few individuals mentioned in the Bishop's Registers about this period, who were compelled to recant, and do penance.

Elizabeth Wightiil deposed against her mistress, *Alice Doly*, that speaking of John Hacher, a water-bearer in Coleman-street, London, she had said he was so very expert in the gospels and the Lord's prayer in English, that it did her good to hear him. She was also said to have heretical books in her possession.

Roger Hackman, of Oxfordshire, was accused for saying in the county of Norfolk, "I will never look to be saved for

* The pope's bulls, or decrees, contained a clause, expressly stating that they were to be carried into effect, notwithstanding any thing to the contrary in the Apostolic writings!

any good deed that ever I did, neither for any that I shall ever do, unless I have my salvation by petition, as an outlaw pardoned by the king," adding, "that if he might not have his salvation so, he thought he should be lost." If such doctrine as this was condemned, we cannot wonder at hearing of "certain heretical books called the epistles and gospels." Reader, turn to the third chapter of the epistle to the Philippians, and say, what mercy would the apostle himself have received at the hands of such men?

John Ryburn was accused of objecting to the service of the church, because it was not in English; and in this case, bishop Longland appears to have exerted his utmost endeavours to find evidence; for Ryburn's two sisters, his wife, and, lastly, his own father, as appears from the Registers, were compelled to bear witness against him.

Although many others are passed by, we cannot close this list without mentioning *John Eaton*, who was punished for saying, "That the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ hath made satisfaction for sin, and there was no necessity for going on pilgrimages;" and that "it was casting away money to buy pardons, for the pope could not help any man's soul; but if we ask pardon of the Lord Jesus, he will give it us freely." We may also notice *John Algar*; when Dr. Aglouby argued with him for the authority of the pope, by quoting Matt. xvi. "Thou art Peter," &c. he referred to the following verses, "Get thee behind me, Satan," as at once destroying this argument for the pretended infallibility of the apostle.

Styrye has preserved several interesting pieces from the Bishops' Registers, which relate to the persecuted Lollards, particularly those in the north part of Essex, where they appear to have been numerous. It is important to observe that these were undoubtedly the followers of Wickliff and his disciples, and had secretly thrown off the papal yoke before the Reformation had made any progress in Germany. Although, as might be expected, their doctrinal views were not so clear as some who had greater advantages, yet it is evident that they were made wise unto salvation. A considerable portion of the commonalty of England having thus acquired knowledge of the doctrines of truth, the soil was prepared, and the growth was rapid when those who possessed learning and influence came forward to inculcate the gospel.

We may observe that these poor men had become wiser, from simply perusing the scriptures, with prayer for Divine teaching, than their learned persecutors, who wilfully rejected the light of truth. This remark is not made with a design to undervalue human learning, but to notice that, agreeably to the words of the apostle, "God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world," and that it availeth not, unless its possessor also "become wise unto salvation."

In 1526, Tonsal, the bishop of London, directed an especial prohibition against several books, but particularly noticed the New Testaments in English, which, as he asserted, contained "pestiferous and most pernicious poison," and were dispersed through his diocese in great numbers, to "the peril of souls, and the offence of God's Divine majesty;" and concluded by directing his archdeacons to proceed, with increased activity, in suppressing the Testament, and all such works.

These books were chiefly written by Tindal, Joye, and a few others, who, having been driven from England, resided at Antwerp, and were busily employed in writing and printing works against the corruptions of the church of Rome. Tindal was principally engaged in preparing a translation of the New Testament, the first that was printed in the English language. As it excited violent enmity, and the greatest alarm in the minds of the Romish prelates, we should notice the history of the translator somewhat particularly.

WILLIAM TINDAL, called "the apostle of England in the time of the Reformation," and ever to be remembered as one of the earliest translators of the bible into our language, was born on the borders of Wales. Although the date of his birth is uncertain, it was probably about the year 1490. He had the advantage of a learned education, and was brought up from a child in the university of Oxford, where he was remarkable for a godly and virtuous life, and close application to the study of the scriptures: on account of his learning, he was appointed a canon of Christ Church. From thence he removed to Cambridge, probably because he was strongly suspected of holding heretical opinions; and after some time went to reside with sir ——— Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, as tutor to his children. This gentleman was noted for his hospitality, and frequently had many ecclesiastics and other learned men at his table,

with whom Tindal used to converse freely, and dispute upon the doctrines of the Reformation, and the controversies of the day, pointing out the different passages of scripture which confirmed the opinions he maintained.

The knight and his lady, having been one day invited to feast where some of these doctors were present; on their return home began to reason with Tindal upon the controverted points, quoting the arguments they had just heard. He replied by stating the truth, and showed the fallacy of such opinions; when lady Welch silenced him by the following brief argument, which, in substance, has often been used by others since that day! "Well," said she, "there was Dr. —, who can spend a hundred pounds, Dr. —, who spends two hundred, and Dr. —, who can spend three hundred pounds a year, they said, as we have told you; and is there any reason, think you, why we should believe you before them?" Tindal did not attempt to reply to this notable argument; but being engaged in translating a work written by Erasmus, called, *The Christian Soldier's Manual*, he put it into the hands of his patrons; who, having carefully perused its contents, were convinced, in some measure, of the absurdities of popery; and the priests and friars no longer found themselves such welcome guests as formerly, which soon caused them to discontinue their visits.

The ecclesiastics easily guessed the cause of this alteration, and agreed to accuse Tindal of heresy. He was accordingly summoned to appear before the bishop's chancellor, and went with a heavy heart; but while on the way, he cried earnestly to God to give him strength to stand to the truths of his word. The Lord did not forsake his servant, but preserved him for the great work he was appointed to perform: although false witnesses were not wanting, they were at that time restrained, and this good man was allowed to return home in safety. The clergy, however, did not leave him in peace; one day while Tindal was disputing with a learned Romanist, and refuting all his arguments in a forcible manner by reference to the scriptures, the priest blasphemously exclaimed, "It would be better to be without God's laws, than the pope's."* Tindal, filled with godly zeal, replied, "I defy

* Blasphemous as this expression may appear, it was not without a parallel. Erasmus states, that in the solemn disputations of the scholars,

the pope and all his laws ;” adding, that if God spared his life, before many years were gone by, a plough-boy should know more of the scriptures than he did, although learned, and a priest.

The reformer now found there was no safety for him in that part of the country ; taking leave of his patron, he went to London, where he preached occasionally, at St. Dunstan's, in Fleet-street. He endeavoured to obtain admission into the family of bishop Tonsal, who was esteemed both for his learning, and the excellence of his character. Tindal's application was unsuccessful ; but he soon found that this disappointment was a providential interference in his favour, for it would have been impossible for him to have pursued his translation of the scriptures had he been admitted into the bishop's family. He also speedily ascertained that this work could not safely be undertaken in England ; and being assisted with some money by alderman Humphrey Monmouth, a respectable citizen, and a lover of the truth, in whose house he lived while in London, he departed for the continent.

After passing some time with Luther, and other reformers, in Germany, Tindal settled at Antwerp, where, with the assistance of Coverdale and others, he finished his translation of the New Testament from the original Greek, and printed a large edition in the year 1526. Many copies were immediately brought to England, and anxiously sought for, which occasioned bishop Tonsal's mandate already noticed.

Tindal mentions the following causes as inducing him to engage in this work : he perceived, by experience, that it was not possible the laity should be established in the truth, unless the scriptures were given to them in their mother tongue, that they might themselves plainly see the context and meaning of the different passages ; for in whatever manner the truth might be taught, the enemies of the gospel would hide and obscure the arguments by false

it was by no means uncommon to argue such questions as these, “ Whether the pope can command angels ? Whether he be a mere man, or, as God, participates both natures with Christ ? And whether he be not more merciful than Christ was, since we do not read that Christ ever recalled any from the pains of purgatory ! ” “ Our Lord God the pope,” was a phrase commonly used in speaking of the pontiff.

reasonings and sophistry, unless the plain expressions of the text, and their connexion with other passages could be traced. He also clearly saw that the doctrines and practices of the church of Rome were so completely opposed to the scriptures, that the Romish clergy never would allow the bible to be read, if they could prevent it, but would keep people in ignorance, to the peril of their souls, well knowing that if the word of God was freely perused by their flock, their antichristian and evil doings could not be suffered.

We have noticed bishop Tonsal's anxiety to suppress this Testament; to forward his design, he adopted the following expedient. He consulted one Packington, a mercer and merchant of London, who traded to Antwerp, how he might get all these Testaments into his hands, and burn them. We may give bishop Tonsal the credit of devising this plan, from a wish to prevent their dispersion, without resorting to those cruel measures, which he, differing from most of the prelates, abhorred to put in practice.

Packington, it is said, was a secret friend of Tindal's; and knowing his want of money, and that a great many copies of this Testament were still on hand, this appeared a fair opportunity to assist the reformer; he therefore told the bishop, that, if his lordship pleased, he would endeavour to purchase all that remained unsold. To this the bishop consented; Tindal had the money, Packington many thanks, and the bishop the books, which were sent to England, and burned in Cheapside, to the great surprise and grief of many; while the crowd, excited by the priests, probably joined in outcries against the heretics and their books, as the rabbles that lately dispersed bible meetings in Ireland, not only threatened the lives of the supporters of the society, but also vociferated, "Down with the bible!"

The bishop now thought all was safe, but soon discovered that he was mistaken; for the printers in Holland, finding the books were eagerly sought after, immediately printed another edition, and by the next year they came over in greater numbers than before. His lordship, finding this to be the case, sent for Packington, and blamed him for not buying up all the Testaments according to his promise. Packington assured the bishop that he had bought all that remained unsold, adding, that "he believed they had printed more since, and that he really did

not see how this was to be stopped, unless his lordship would also buy the types and presses!" The bishop, however, having bought experience, only smiled at this proposal, and so the matter ended.

These last editions were printed by the booksellers of Holland; meanwhile, Tindal and his companions continued their exertions in promoting the truth; and, among other employments, engaged in a translation of the Old Testament. Sir Thomas More, then lord chancellor, was very bitter against all the reformers, and their writings, particularly against the translation of the New Testament; and from the records of those times, it appears that he was very strict in examining all heretics supposed to be in any manner connected with Antwerp. At length, George Constantine, who had been beyond sea, was brought before him; and the chancellor, after many questions, told him that he would be favourable to him, if he would but truly say from whom Tindal and his companions had received the money on which they lived. "My lord," said Constantine, "I will tell you truly; it is the bishop of London that hath assisted us; for he bestowed among us a great deal of money for the New Testaments which he burnt, and that has been, and still is our only support." "Now, by my troth," said the chancellor, "I think this is the truth, for I told the bishop it would be so before he went about it!"

A Roman catholic historian has accused Tindal of defrauding bishop Tonstal in this matter. This assertion, however, is unfounded; for, besides that the bishop had all he bargained for, namely, the unsold copies, Tindal did not himself print another edition till several years afterwards; during which time he was engaged in translating the five books of Moses, and in other religious works. The editions with which England was supplied during this interval, were printed by the booksellers in Holland, as a matter of gain, and without reference to Tindal, who had no concern whatever therein. For more particular information respecting these circumstances, the reader is referred to Lewis's History of the English Bible, and to the British Reformers, which contains several of the tracts and other pieces above mentioned, written by Tindal and his companions, with further particulars of his life.

The public burning of the word of God excited much

attention ; most people concluded that there must be something in that book very different from the doctrines of the clergy, who were so eager to destroy it ; and all the arguments of sir Thomas More, and others, who wrote against it, could not remove these suspicions, which were confirmed by the perusal of the scriptures. The demand for the Testaments, therefore, increased, although the bishop preached at St. Paul's Cross, declaring that there were two thousand texts wrong translated ; and those who imported these Testaments, or purchased them, were prosecuted with severity. Among others, one *John Raimund*, a Dutchman, was punished for "causing fifteen hundred to be printed at Antwerp, and bringing five hundred of them into England." *John Tindal*, the brother of the translator, also was punished for "sending five marks to his brother, and receiving letters from him : " and was condemned to do penance with *Thomas Patmore*, another merchant of London, by riding to the standard in Cheapside, with their faces to their horses' tails, having the Testaments hung thickly round them, fastened to their gowns ; they were then compelled to cast the books into a fire kindled on purpose to consume them. They were also condemned to pay the enormous fine of eighteen thousand pounds, equal to two hundred thousand pounds at the present day. A fine evidently imposed with a determination to reduce them to beggary, and keep them in prison.

It appears that several other persons in London sold these Testaments ; the price of them wholesale, in large quantities, was about thirteen pence each ; but singly, by retail, from twenty-eight to thirty pence ; reckoning the difference of the value of money, we may consider these sums as equal to ten times the amount in our days. Notwithstanding all the exertions of the Romish prelates, three large editions were sold before 1530. We may here remark, that although this translation was in some respects faulty, as always must be the case with a first edition, yet the number of errors above mentioned was an absurd exaggeration, even including mere typographical faults, such as broken letters, and words spelt amiss.

Among the great number of small treatises, or tracts against the errors of the church of Rome, printed about this time, (1526,) one of them, entitled, "The Supplication of the Beggars," was widely circulated ; and, being

written in a popular style, had a very considerable effect.

It was written by *Simon Fish*, of Gray's Inn, who, being persecuted by cardinal Wolsey for some personal offence, fled to Antwerp, and joined Tindal and his companions. While there, he wrote this little book. It was in the form of a petition from the poor helpless beggars of the land, who complained of the state to which they were reduced. The reader probably is aware, that in those days there was no system of parish relief to which persons could apply for assistance when sick, or infirm, or destitute. They had no resource but casual charity; and if that was withheld, they must perish, as was frequently the case in times of scarcity, before the Reformation. But it was not of famine that they complained in "*The Supplication of the Beggars.*" They complained of being defrauded of the alms usually given them, by the increasing numbers of idle vagabond friars, and other ecclesiastics, such as priests, monks, pardoners, and all the train in their employ; who visited every house, and compelled each person to contribute to their support, under various pretexts; which were continually increased, till at length they collected a sum which the writer calculates amounted to half the property and income of the nation; thus rendering the people unable to bestow their accustomed charities. In this little work, the vices and corruptions of the priests and friars were freely spoken of as well as their extortions, and the manner in which they endeavoured to assume a power above the laws. The case of Richard Hunne, "murdered in prison by Dr. Horsey and his accomplices," was fully stated, and the king boldly reprov'd for allowing the criminals to escape. The writer also referred to the translation of the New Testament, and showed that the clergy endeavoured to prevent the people from reading the scriptures, because they clearly proved that their conduct was contrary to the word of God; and set forth "that remission of sins is not given by the pope's pardon, but by Christ, for the sure faith and trust that we have in him."

To this treatise, which produced a great effect on the public mind, sir Thomas More replied, in a work entitled, "*The poor silly (helpless) Souls pewling (complaining) out of Purgatory.*" He therein represented the souls said to be in purgatory, as complaining of the misery they were

in, and stating the great relief they experienced from the masses said by the friars for their benefit; although in the first edition of his *Utopia*, published in 1518, he had spoken in a very different manner of the monks and friars, and severely censured their conduct. He now, however, seriously maintained these absurdities, and attempted to support this doctrine by the most plausible arguments he could find, and by wresting some texts of scripture to suit his purpose.* This book strengthened the prejudices of many persons, and confirmed them in the errors of popery; but to readers of more discernment, it at once showed that the orders of friars and all the tricks of monkery were built upon the doctrine of purgatory; and if that were destroyed, they must fall with it. It also encouraged the reformers to write upon that subject, proving that there is no ground for that doctrine, either in scripture, or the writings of the primitive fathers.

FRITH, who was eminent among the reformers, entered very fully into this argument in his "*Book on Purgatory.*" He observes that those who adopt this doctrine say, that such a state is necessary to cleanse us from our evil works, and to supply the place of those good works which we failed to perform while in this life. "But all this," says he, "cannot bring us into heaven, for then were Christ dead in vain." He then enters upon the subject of justification by faith, proving that this great truth does not lead to careless or wicked conduct, for "we are created in

* Purgatory is a place of torment in which the Romish church declares that souls are to remain for a time till they are made fit to go to heaven. This doctrine was founded upon some ideas of the heathen respecting a future state. The poet Virgil describes a purgatory exactly similar to that of the church of Rome; and the priests of the Hindoo deities also teach that there is such a state. As superstition began to prevail about the sixth and following centuries, this doctrine gained ground, and arrived at its height about the twelfth century. Some writers have spoken of it as a harmless, although erroneous opinion. This, however, is a mistaken idea, as indulgences, the different orders of monks, reliance on the merits and intercession of the saints, the power of the pope to rule the consciences of men, and almost all the errors of the church of Rome, are either derived from this doctrine, or strengthened thereby, while, in fact, it is founded upon a denial of the scriptural truth, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. And even at the present time, the priests in India, and the Romish priests all over the world, receive gifts from the people, that they may relieve the souls of the dead!

Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them;" Eph. ii. 10. Then quoting, "By grace are ye saved, through faith," and the epistle to the Romans, he adds, "Now if salvation come of faith, then is purgatory shut out of doors, and vanisheth away." Christ saith, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life," John iii. 16. Then what needeth purgatory? Thou wilt peradventure say, It is true they shall have everlasting life; but they must first go through purgatory. I answer, Nay, verily; for Christ affirmeth, that he which heareth his word, and believeth his Father which sent him hath everlasting life. Wilt thou now say that he shall go into purgatory? And St. John saith, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord," and that they rest from their labours; but surely, if they should go into the painful purgatory, there to be tormented by fiends, then were they not blessed, but wretched.

He next refers to Exod. xxxiii. 19. where God declares "he will be gracious to whom he will be gracious, and will have mercy on whom he will have mercy;" and adds, "Now, if our salvation be of mercy and grace, then can there be no purgatory. For the nature of mercy is to forgive, but purgatory will have all paid and satisfied, so that they can in no wise agree." Also in the 103d psalm we read, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities," &c. Now, if this be true, that he removeth our sins from us, and forgiveth us all our iniquities, why should there be a purgatory to torment poor souls for what was forgiven them before?" Frith also went through the texts More had quoted, and showed that they could not be applied in the manner he attempted to use them; particularly that the fiery trial spoken of, referred to the persecutions and sufferings the believer had to undergo in this life, more especially such as the followers of Christ were then exposed to. He also argued strongly from the passages of scripture which show the efficacy of the blood of Christ as cleansing from all sin; and that as we are to be judged at the last day for what we have done in the body, so nothing could be done to us, or for us, in a state beyond this life which could affect that judgment. Referring to the case of Mary Magdalen, Luke vii. and

the penitent sinner, to whom Jesus promised, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise," not in purgatory, the reformer adds, "Is his hand now shortened? Is not his power as great as it was? Is he not as merciful as ever he was?" Why leave we "the fountain of living water and hew us out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water?" Why forsake we Christ, who hath "himself purged us from our sins," to seek a purgatory of our own imagination? If thou believest that Christ's blood is sufficient to purge thy sin, why seekest thou another purgatory?

These writings of the reformers had considerable effect upon the minds of such persons as were already disposed to examine into those doctrines, while "The Supplication of the Beggars," being written in a popular style, and using arguments which came home to every man, caused many to begin to inquire, who otherwise might have paid little or no attention to the subject. It was actively circulated; many copies, as the Romish clergy complained, "were strewed about the streets of London," and even "thrown and scattered at the procession (of the host) in Westminster, on Candlemas-day, before king Henry the Eighth." That monarch appears to have received copies of it from several quarters. Ann Boleyn, afterwards queen, was desired by her brother to give a copy to the king; and he also received others from Edmund Moddis, one of his attendants, who relates the following particulars:—Being one day alone with the king, and his majesty conversing about religion, and the new books which were come from beyond the seas, he told the king of this tract, and said, if it pleased his grace to pardon him, and those who should bring it, he should see a book that would surprise him. Henry having appointed a time, two merchants, named Robinson and Eliot, were brought to him in a private apartment of the palace, and at his command read the tract. One passage referred to the king's neglect in not avenging the murder of Hunne! Henry heard the whole with much attention, and said, "If a man should pull down an old stone wall, and begin at the lower part, the upper part might fall upon his head:" then taking the books, he put them into his desk, commanding that they should not tell to any man that he had seen them. From this shrewd observation, we may learn that Henry was not

indifferent to the subject; while it seems to explain the policy he was then pursuing, and leads us to suppose that he had already contemplated destroying the monasteries, as a necessary step towards accomplishing his design of rendering his kingdom independent of the pope. Henry might not be actuated by more than mere worldly views, such as the love of power and self-gratification, in his proceedings; but the great Searcher of hearts alone can be a competent Judge of his motives. It is evident that the gospel could not have free course and be glorified, while the man of sin was suffered to have power to "wear out the saints of the Most High," and Henry was raised up to break that power within our land. Those who regard the light of the reformation as a blessing to the souls of men, are not solicitous to enter into any disputes respecting the motives of this monarch: he was a man of powerful abilities, as the Roman catholics themselves allow; and although possessed of strong passions, yet we have no reason to consider him so absolute a slave to his lusts as the Romish historians, for obvious reasons, represent. But upon these arguments we need not enter. He that sent a Cyrus to free his chosen people from Babylon of old, was pleased also to raise up an arbitrary monarch to free his followers in our land from the mystical Babylon of later days. While we desire to bless God for this deliverance, the happy effects of which are now enjoyed by the poorest English cottager who reads the bible, and instructs his children in the truths it contains, let us not forget that these blessings are only to be ascribed to the providence of God; and when we consider the important consequences which have resulted from Henry's arbitrary sway, we cannot but exclaim, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." It was, indeed, a time when there appeared peculiar occasion that God should arise to judgment, to "save the meek of the earth."

The papists, alarmed at this active circulation of tracts, endeavoured to have them gathered up by their own agents, to prevent as much as possible their falling into the hands of the people. Cardinal Wolsey, hearing that the king had received some, went to him, and stated that, "divers persons had scattered abroad books containing manifest error and heresies, of which he besought his grace to beware." Henry replied by putting his hand into his bosom, and taking out

one of these tracts, he gave it to the cardinal ! Soon afterwards he sent for Fish, the author of "The Supplication," gave him his ring as a mark of protection, and sent him with it to the lord chancellor, who, of course, was obliged to stop all proceedings against him ; and he continued in peace during the remainder of his life, which was but short, for he died of the plague in a few months afterwards. He was also the author (or translator) of a work entitled, "The Sum of Scripture."

Others of the tracts written by the reformers, also reached the king's hands. Strype records a singular anecdote, which may encourage the tract distributors of our days in their work of faith. Ann Boleyn (before she was queen) lent to Mrs. Gainsford, one of her female attendants, a tract written by Tindal, called "The Obedience of a Christian Man." One day as she was reading it, a young gentleman named Zouch, also in the service of lady Ann, snatched the book away in sport, and refused to restore it. He was, however, induced to peruse this little tract ; and his heart was so affected by its contents, that, as the writer expresses it, "he was never well but when he was reading that book." Cardinal Wolsey had directed all the ecclesiastics about the court to take especial care to prevent the writings of the reformers from being circulated there, lest they should come into the hands of the king ; but this very caution proved the means of accomplishing what he most feared ! Dr. Sampson, the dean of the royal chapel, saw this book one day in the young man's hand, who was reading it in the chapel ; most probably being weary of attendance upon the mass, the processions, and other mummeries. The dean called Zouch, took the book from him, and gave it to the cardinal. Some days after, lady Ann asked her attendant for the book, who, "on her knees, told her all the circumstances," being doubtless fearful lest her mistress, as well as herself, should come into trouble from this carelessness. Lady Ann instantly went to the king, and "upon her knees" entreated his help, that the book might be restored. Henry interfered, and at his command the book was given up to lady Ann, who brought it to him, requesting he would read it. The king did so, and was much pleased with the contents, saying, "This book is for me and all kings to read."

The clergy were much alarmed at these proceedings, and

renewed bishop Tonsal's prohibition, which has already been mentioned. They also prevailed upon the king to issue a proclamation to the same effect, to which was appended a list of upwards of a hundred books, called, "Works of the Lutheran faction." The names and titles of these works were given, and include a number of the writings of Luther, Melancthon, and other German reformers; Tindal's Testament, the chapters of Moses called Genesis and Deuteronomy, David's psalter in English, "The Supplication of the Beggars," with many writings of Wickliff and his disciples.

This proclamation speaks of the Lollards and the disciples of Luther, as endeavouring to corrupt the king's subjects; and represents his majesty as desirous to repress these errors, "from anxiety for the souls of his subjects!" The civil magistrates were commanded to assist the clergy in repressing "heresies, errors, and Lollardies;" and all persons were prohibited from having such books in their possession, under pain of fine and imprisonment. We must observe, that these penalties were incurred by merely having such works, although the persons in whose possession they were found, might be in every other respect faithful followers of the church of Rome; but, if they approved their contents, they were guilty of heresy, and liable to be burned.

This proclamation is so very similar in tenour and spirit, and almost in expression, to the edict issued at Madrid in November, 1824, against heretical books, and so closely resembles the regulations in force in many Roman Catholic countries, that it affords strong evidence to show that the spirit of popery is unaltered, and may also assist us in judging how far its practice is changed.

It must appear hard to reconcile this proclamation of the king, with the circumstances just related; in fact they are inconsistent, if we suppose him to be influenced only by the spirit of that reformation which he was the means of promoting; but, if we consider him as actuated also by views of a worldly nature, and a desire to avoid open quarrel with the pope, and influenced by the Romish prelates and nobles of his court, we at once perceive the drift of his policy; and although it cannot be approved, yet it was well calculated to forward his designs. Into these points, as already observed, we have no intention to inquire, and

therefore gladly leave them to the secular historian, in whose pages the reader will find the details of the rise and fall of cardinal Wolsey, with his anxious endeavours to obtain the popedom by bribery and other means; also the proceedings respecting the king's divorce, and other important events in the history of those times.

We now will give a summary view of the English monastic orders, as they existed at this period, written shortly afterwards by the author of the homily on good works.

“ Feigned religions were neither the fortieth part so many among the Jews nor more superstitiously abused than of late days they have been among us.” Then is noticed that those sects and religious orders asserted that they had more religion than needful to satisfy for their own sins, therefore had power to dispose of the surplus; “ keeping in divers places, as it were, markets of merits, ready to be sold. And all things which they had were called *holy*; holy cowls, holy girdles, holy pardons, holy beads, holy shoes, holy rules, and all full of holiness. But what can be more foolish, superstitious, or ungodly, than that men, women, and children, should wear a friar's coat, to deliver them from agues or pestilence? or when they die, or when they are buried, cause it to be cast upon them, in hope thereby to be saved? But to pass over the innumerable superstitiousness that hath been, let us consider the enormities and abuses in the three chief principal points they called the essentials, or foundations of religion; that is to say, obedience, chastity, and wilful poverty.” Without entering into all the observations made under these heads, we may notice the following upon the subject of their willing poverty. “ It is such that in possessions, jewels, plate, and riches, they are equal or above merchants, gentlemen, barons, earls, and dukes. But for all their riches they might never help father, mother, or others, that were indeed very needy and poor, without the license of their fathers, abbots, priors, or wardens. They might take of every man, but they might not give aught to any man; no not to them whom the laws of God bound them to help. And so through their traditions, and rules, the laws of God could bear no rule with them.” But from this subject we willingly turn to details respecting the martyrs in the cause of Christ about this period.

THOMAS BILNEY was brought up in the university of Cambridge: he was early distinguished as a scholar, and made considerable proficiency in the study of the law; but, being awakened by the teaching of the Holy Spirit he directed his attention to more important subjects, and became anxious to bring others to the knowledge of the truth. His labours were not in vain; among the fruits of his ministry was that faithful servant of Christ, Hugh Latimer, then a cross-bearer; that is, a priest who carried a cross in the superstitious processions at the university, but afterwards eminent among the fathers of the English reformation.

After some time, Bilney left the university, and visited many parts of the country, boldly reprovng the errors of the church of Rome. Cardinal Wolsey then ruled the land, assuming to himself a power superior even to that of the king. As this authority was founded upon the extravagant claims of the popish ecclesiastics, the cardinal was of course strongly inclined to proceed with severity against all who showed how completely the spirit of the gospel was opposed to the worldly views, pomp, and power of the church of Rome. He soon heard of Bilney's proceedings, and ordered him to be apprehended.

On the 27th of November, 1527, Bilney was brought before the cardinal, at Westminster, who accused him of having taught certain doctrines of Luther, and of holding many opinions then called heretical; that the holy scriptures should be translated into English, that the pope's indulgences should be rejected, and others similar. The farther hearing of the matter was referred to the bishop of London, who proceeded to examine witnesses against him. Some of these accusations appear to be founded upon a conversation at Ipswich, between Bilney and a friar named Brusierd, an account of which was furnished by the friar himself. The following extract may interest the reader

The friar objected to Bilney, "Whereas, you have said that none of the saints make intercession for us, nor obtain for us any thing, you have blasphemed the efficacy (power) of the church, consecrated with the precious blood of Christ; which, nevertheless, you are not able to deny, seeing they (the church) incessantly knock at the gates of heaven

through the continual intercession of the saints, as is plainly set forth in the seven-fold Litany."

Bilney referred to the text, "There is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus;" and asked, "If there be but one Mediator between God and man, even Christ Jesus, where is our blessed lady? where is St. Peter, and the other saints?"

The friar admitted that such was the doctrine of the primitive church, and that St. Paul was right in making such a statement, "when as yet there was no saint canonized, or put into the calendar!" But "now the church assuredly knew and believed, that the blessed virgin, and the other saints, were placed in the bosom of Abraham, and that the church, like a good mother, diligently taught her children to praise the omnipotent Jesus in his saints, and also to offer up by the same saints our petitions to God!"

Bilney replied to this fallacy by quoting the words of our Saviour, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father, in my name, he will give it unto you;" adding, "He saith not, Whatsoever ye ask of the Father in the name of St. Peter, St. Paul, and other saints, but in my name. Let us, then, ask help in the name of him who is able to obtain for us of the Father whatsoever we ask, lest at the day of judgment we shall hear him say, 'Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name.'" The friar could not evade the force of this reasoning, but endeavoured to entangle Bilney in a scholastic argument, and a discussion respecting the authority of the church of Rome. Bilney was too well informed to be so caught; and again referred to scripture, inquiring, if the friar knew the ten commandments? His answer deserves notice: "According as the catholic doctors do expound them, I know them." The remainder of their conference was very similar to what is already given.

On the 2nd of December, Bilney was again brought before Tonsal, bishop of London. He refused to return to the church of Rome, when the bishop produced some letters he had received from Bilney, being anxious, as he said, not to conceal any thing that had come to his hands. He commanded them to be entered in his register, with the articles of which Bilney was accused, and the other pro-

ceedings. On the next day he was brought before the prelates, and bishop Tonstal again exhorted him to recant; but Bilney refused, saying, "He would stand by what he had said according to his conscience." We have already noticed, that bishop Tonstal, although active against the Lollards, did not willingly adopt the cruel measures so eagerly resorted to by many of his brethren, but took much pains to induce them to recant. In Bilney's case he appears to have been particularly anxious not to proceed to extremities, as after reading a part of the sentence, he deferred the remainder till the next day. At length, after several conversations with Bilney, and permitting him to have repeated conferences with his friends, on the 7th of December, the bishop prevailed upon him to revoke the opinions for which he was accused, he was released, after carrying a fagot in a procession, and standing before the preacher at Paul's Cross during the sermon.

Fox inserts copies of the letters above mentioned, which well deserve attention. Our limits will only admit an extract from the first, which contains an account of his conversion; these letters are written in Latin, and fully prove his learning and abilities.

Bilney commences by stating his readiness to give an account of his doctrines, not being conscious of error, heresy, or seditious doctrine. He then reminds Tonstal that there are many false teachers who are enemies to the cross of Christ, who, under pretence of persecuting heretics, seek only their private advantage. After enumerating several classes of these men, he compares them to those physicians upon whom the woman who was healed by touching the hem of Christ's garment, had spent all her living, but when she came unto Christ by faith, immediately her plague departed from her. "O mighty power of the Most High!" he exclaims, "which I, miserable sinner, have often felt. I, who before I came unto Christ, had also spent all that I had upon these ignorant physicians, so that there was small strength left in me, little money, and less understanding; for they had appointed me to perform watchings and fastings, and had directed me to purchase pardons,* and masses; in all of which (as I now plainly

* Pardons or indulgences are a sort of licence, in which the pope declares that the person who purchases them is forgiven certain sins therein mentioned, either for a longer or shorter time, or for ever. They

perceive) they sought rather their own gain, than the salvation of my sick and languishing soul.

“ But at length I heard of Jesus. It was when Erasmus had first published his edition of the New Testament in Latin; which, when I understood to be done by him in most elegant latinity, I was induced, for the sake of the language, to purchase the book, being at that time entirely ignorant of its contents; but I bought it, as I now perceive, by the especial providence of God. I well remember the first time I read it, for I happened to turn to the First Epistle of Paul to Timothy, and there found that sentence, (and it was a most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul,) ‘ It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.’ This one sentence, through the power of God working upon my heart, in a manner at that time unknown to me, rejoiced my soul, then deeply wounded by a sight and sense of my sins, and almost in the depths of despair, so that I felt an inward comfort and quietness which I cannot describe, but it caused my broken heart to rejoice. Then the scriptures became sweeter to me than honey, or the honey-comb: by degrees I learned that all my endeavours, my fastings, my watchings, and all the pardons and masses I had bought, were of no avail, as they were destitute of faith in Christ Jesus, who alone can save his people from their sins. I found that they were nothing worth; but, as St. Augustine says, ‘ a hasty running out of the right way;’ like the scanty covering in

were sold at a price proportioned to the means of the purchaser, and the enormity of the crimes pardoned; even the vilest were included; and they brought much gain to the pope. These pardons were vended by ecclesiastics, whose business it was, and who made considerable profit thereby. They were sold openly. A writer of those times states, that they were sold in Lombard-street, and other places, the same as any other commodity. They encouraged the grossest vices and immoralities. Bishop Grindal says, “ Some bought for money great plenty of indulgences from Rome, and he that had the most of them to be cast into his grave when he was buried, (which I myself have seen done,) was counted best prepared for death!” Many of these indulgences have since been found on opening the coffins of persons buried in the days of popery. When martyrs were to be burnt, forty days’ pardon was frequently promised to those who brought fagots. This abomination of the church of Rome still continues, although not to the extent which it did formerly. A recent proclamation of the pope offers indulgences to all who visit Rome, as pilgrims, during the year of jubilee, 1825.

which our first parents sought to wrap themselves, not finding any rest or peace till they were enabled to believe in the promise of God, that Christ, the Seed of the woman, should bruise the serpent's head. Nor could I find relief from the sharp and deadly bites of sin, till the Lord had taught me that lesson, which Christ speaks of, as recorded in the third chapter of St John, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' Having begun to taste the sweetness of this instruction, which no one can discern unless taught of God, who revealed it to the apostle Peter, I entreated the Lord that he would increase my faith, and at length desired nothing more than that, being restored to the joy of his salvation, I might be upheld and strengthened by the Holy Spirit; and that with power given to me from above, I might teach the wicked the ways of God, which are mercy and truth, so that sinners might be turned to the Lord by me, even by me, who formerly had delighted in sin."

Bilney then refers to his examination before the bishop and the cardinal, and states that his only comfort under his afflictions was in Christ, whom he endeavoured to set forth as of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; "who was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." "Who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." "Who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" that is to say, not those who falsely deem themselves righteous, "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," 1 Cor. i. 2 Cor. v. Gal. iii. Matt. ix. Rom. iii. "And, therefore, with my whole power, I teach that all men should feel the guilt and burden of sin, and acknowledging the evil of their ways, hunger and thirst for that righteousness of which St. Paul speaks, 'Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference. For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,' Rom. iii. Which if a man hunger and thirst after, without doubt he

shall be satisfied, so that he shall not hunger nor thirst for ever.

“But many have sought to satisfy this hunger, and quench this thirst, with man’s own righteousness, established by our own imperfect works, such as pilgrimages, buying of pardons, offering of candles at the shrines of saints,* fasts of our own appointment, and other superstitious observances; to which may be added what they call voluntary devotions, (or works of supererogation,) against which the word of God plainly testifies, Deut. iv. 2. ‘Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.’ I have, therefore, sometimes spoken of these things, not presuming to condemn them, but pointing out how far they were lawful, and endeavouring to cause even children to understand, that they should not so trust in them, that being satisfied therewith, they should loath and depart from the Saviour: in whose name, most reverend father, I bid you farewell. And I have now fully declared the doctrine I have taught. If you desire a farther explanation on any point, I will not refuse to give it, if you will be pleased to grant me sufficient time. This I ask on account of my bodily weakness; and I am always desirous, if I have erred in any thing, to receive better instruction.”

These letters are indeed interesting; from some passages we may gather that bishop Tonsal was much affected by

* Paying the expense of a wax candle, to be kept burning before the image of a saint, was counted a good work. A story which shows the importance attached to this superstition, was at that time actually read in the public service on one of the festivals. It related that there was a wicked woman who did no good deed in her life except keeping a candle burning before an image of the virgin. When she died, the fiends took her soul for their lawful prey. The virgin interfered; but as no good deeds were recorded of her doing, she needs must go to hell. “But,” said our lady, “she found (or paid for) a candle burning before me, and I will be kind to her, as she was to me,” and ordered an angel to light a holy taper, and set it before her in hell! This kept away the fiends, and troubled them so much, that they offered to allow the soul to return to the body, which was accepted by the virgin. The woman having thus returned to life, remembered her narrow escape, and went and confessed to a priest, and ever after lived a holy life! It is painful to notice such a blasphemous absurdity, but it explains the superstition alluded to, and shows into what awful errors the human mind may fall, when it rejects the light of God’s-revealed word, and the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

Bilney's statements of the truth, he even appears to have sought some explanations more for his own satisfaction, than with reference to the accusations against the reformer. This may also, in some measure, tend to account for the bishop's earnest endeavours to save him; and these kind endeavours from one who appeared seriously inquiring for instruction, would probably have far more weight with the reformer than the violence of Gardiner, or the menaces of the cardinal.

After having abjured, Bilney returned to Cambridge, deeply repenting and sorrowing for his weakness. His state of mind is fully described by Latimer, in one of his sermons preached before king Edward the Sixth; and in another which he preached in Lincolushire some years afterwards. He says, "That same Master Bilney, who was burnt for God's word, was persuaded by his friends to bear a fagot (to recant) at the time when the cardinal was in full power. Now when he came to Cambridge again, for a whole year after he was in such anguish and agony, that nothing did him good, not even the communication of God's word, for he thought that all the scriptures were against him, and sounded to his condemnation. I communed with him many times, for I was well acquainted with him; but all things that any one could bring forward for his comfort, seemed to him to make against him. Yet for all that, afterwards, God endued him with such strength and perfectness of faith, that he not only confessed his faith in the gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, but also suffered his body to be burned for that same gospel's sake which we now preach in England."

Yes, reader, Bilney, and many thousands more, were burned for that faith which was preached by Latimer and the other British Reformers and Fathers of the English church, which for nearly three centuries has been openly declared in our land. May God, in his infinite mercy, grant that his word may have free course and be glorified, and never again be restrained by the power of man.

THE LOLLARDS;

*Or some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England,
from 1400 to 1546.*



Bilney putting his finger into the candle, to prove whether he could endure the flame. (See page 98.)

PART V.

Bilney laments his recantation, and determines again to declare the truths of the gospel.—Is apprehended, and burned at Norwich, as a relapsed heretic.—Latimer at first a zealous papist.—Is converted by Bilney, and preaches the gospel.—His faithful letter to the king.—Appointed to a living.—Accused by the papists.—Defends himself.—Reasons why Latimer had rather be in purgatory than in Lollards' Tower!—He is brought before the archbishop.—Allowed to explain.—Dr. Hubberdin, a warm advocate for popery.—Martydom of Hilton and Bayfield.—Patmore.—Tewkesbury.—Bennet—Form of a curse pronounced against him at Exeter.—Is apprehended, and burned.

AFTER his recantation, Bilney returned to Cambridge, and for two years continued to deplore his infirmity. At length he was enabled, by the grace of God, to resolve to lay down his life for that truth which he had, in a moment of weakness, been persuaded to renounce. Having fully determined upon this course, in the year 1531, he one night took leave of his friends at Trinity Hall, telling them that he would "go up to Jerusalem," alluding doubtless to Acts xix. 21, xx. 22; and immediately departed from

Cambridge to Norfolk. At first, he spoke and exhorted in private, but after a time he preached openly in the fields confessing that he had done wrong, declaring that the doctrines he had abjured were the truth, and earnestly exhorting all men to take warning from his example, and never to listen to the voice of the flesh in matters of religion. At length, coming to Norwich, he gave Tindal's New Testament, and Obedience of a Christian Man, to an "Anchress," a sort of nun, in that city, to whom he had been useful; whereupon he was apprehended, and carried to prison, and kept there till the bishop sent up for a writ to burn him as a relapsed heretic.

The friars and other ecclesiastics eagerly endeavoured to bring Bilney again to their opinions, but in vain; and having been condemned and degraded after the usual manner, he was committed to the sheriffs of Norwich, one of whom, Thomas Nector, was Bilney's intimate friend, but now was compelled to direct his execution.

The day before his death, some friends coming to the prison in the Guildhall, found him taking his meal with a cheerful heart and quiet mind. One of them said he was glad to see him heartily refreshing himself so short a time before his painful departure. To which Bilney replied, that he followed the example of those who, having a ruinous house to dwell in, did prop it up as long as they were able. While conversing with his friends, some of them reminded him, that although the fire would be of great heat to his body, yet the comfort of the Holy Spirit would cool it to his everlasting refreshing. The martyr then put his finger into the flame of a candle which was burning before him, as he had done several times before; "O," said he, "I feel by experience, and have long known by philosophy, that by God's ordinance fire is naturally hot, but yet I am persuaded by God's holy word, and by the experience of some spoken of therein, that in the flame they felt no heat, and in the fire they felt not the being consumed; and I firmly believe, that howsoever the stubble of my body may be wasted by it, yet my soul and spirit shall be purged thereby; a pain for a time, but followed by unspeakable joy." He then referred to Isaiah xliii. 1—3, "Thus saith the Lord, Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through

the rivers, they shall not overflow thee ; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee ; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." On this passage he enlarged, applying it to himself, and friends then present, upon some of whom it made an impression, the comfort of which was never taken from them to their dying day.

The next morning, November 10, 1531, the sheriff's officers led him to the place of execution, without the city gate, called Bishopsgate, in a low valley denominated the Lollards'-pit. As he left the prison, one of his friends briefly exhorted him to be constant, and to take his death as patiently as he could. Bilney replied by comparing himself to a mariner tossed by winds and waves yet enduring those perils, in patient hope of speedily arriving at the desired haven. While passing along the streets, he gave alms to the people till he arrived at the stake. One who was present relates that he was clothed in a layman's gown, with his hair miserably cut and mangled, which was done when he was degraded from the priesthood ; and although " a little simple body in person, yet he was of a good upright countenance." The pile not being quite ready, he addressed the crowd, saying, " Good people, I am come hither to die, even as I was born under that condition. And that ye may testify that I depart out of this life as a true christian man, in a right belief towards Almighty God, I will rehearse unto you the articles of my creed." He then repeated the Apostle's Creed ; and when he came to the words, " I believe in the catholic church," he mentioned that he had once preached in a country church belonging to Trinity Hall, although forbidden by his superiors ; but he hoped that his motives were sufficient to bear him out in having done so ; and concluded without referring to the doctrines of the church of Rome, or mentioning those by whom he was put to death.

Bilney then put off his gown, and went to the stake ; kneeling down, he prayed privately with much earnestness and composure, finishing with the words of the 143d Psalm, " Hear my prayer, O God ; give ear unto my supplications ;" repeating the second verse three times : " Enter not into judgment with thy servant ; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." He then proceeded to the end of that beautiful, and in his case peculiarly appropriate

Psalm. Having concluded, he asked the officers if they were ready; and upon their answering that they were so, he put off all his clothes, except his shirt and hose; and standing upon a ledge which was made that he might be the better seen by the people. the chain was put round him. His friend, Dr. Warner, then came to bid him farewell, but was hardly able to speak for weeping. Bilney gently smiled, and leaning forward over the chain, thanked him for all past kindness, adding, in Latin, "Feed your flock feed your flock, that when the Lord cometh he may find you so doing; farewell, good Master Doctor, farewell." Some friars then drew near, and said, "O, Master Bilney, the people are persuaded that we are the causers of your death, and it is like they will thereupon withdraw their charitable alms from us, except you declare that you are in charity towards us, and acquit us of the same." Bilney neither seeking revenge, nor countenancing superstition, then spake with a loud voice, "I pray you, good people, be never the worse to these men for my sake, as if they were the authors of my death, for it was not they." This little circumstance strongly shows that the people, although accustomed to a blind obedience to their ecclesiastical superiors, had begun to feel averse to these cruel proceedings. The blood of the martyrs ever has been the seed of the church.

The officers then piled reeds and fagots round his body, and set fire to the reeds, which flamed up and scorched his face, he holding up his hands, and beating his breast, sometimes saying, "Jesus," and sometimes, "I believe." The wind being remarkably high, the flame was three times quite blown away, so that for a little while he stood without fire. At length, the wood again kindled, and soon afterwards he gave up the ghost, his body being withered, bowing downward over the chain. One of the officers, perceiving this, knocked out the staple with a halbert, suffering the body to fall down into the fire, then piling wood over it, the remains of the martyr were speedily consumed.

The popish historians have stated, that Bilney again recanted before his death, grounding their opinions upon the mere assertions of sir Thomas More, who, not satisfied with having signed the writ for his burning, endeavoured to defame him after his death, and in the preface of a tract he wrote against Tindal, stated that some persons who were present at the execution of Bilney, heard him read a paper,

revoking his errors. In confirmation of this, he adds that previous to his death, Bilney received the sacrament of the altar.

That Bilney might have partaken of the mass, is not impossible, for he does not appear to have differed from the church of Rome upon *that* point. His preaching was chiefly directed against idolatry, the calling upon saints, false trust in our own merits and good works, and such points as are most opposed to salvation through the blood of Christ. The reader will recollect, Bilney did not derive his instruction immediately from the Lollards, against whom, as we have already seen, it was mainly objected that they did not believe in the popish doctrine of transubstantiation. This then is strong evidence, if evidence were wanting, that the church of Rome is utterly opposed to the great truth of the word of God; namely, salvation through faith in the blood of the Redeemer; and that although a man may admit some of their principal errors, yet if he maintain this truth, which, as Luther observes, is "the test of a standing or a falling church," he is at once deemed an heretic, and cast out to be burned.

It is unnecessary to enter into further discussion of this false accusation; the reader will find it ably and fully refuted by Fox, who shows that no witnesses are named by More, and dwells upon the cruel inconsistency of their putting Bilney to death, if he had recanted his errors; quoting sir Thomas More's own words when applied to for the writ for his execution, as a proof that he did not consider him to have recanted: it is also to be observed, that no such circumstance was recorded in the Bishops' Register. Fox concludes by referring to persons living at the time when he wrote; who either themselves stood by when Bilney was burned, or had the particulars from those who were then present; all of whom, when the times enabled them to speak freely, bore unequivocal testimony to the dying constancy of the martyr. He, in particular, mentions Dr. Turner, the dean of Wells, Thomas Russell, and other citizens of Norwich, who had themselves been present at the execution, and were still living. Fox also refers to Dr. Parker, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, who witnessed the martyrdom of Bilney, and gave the circumstantial narrative recorded by the Martyrologist. Surely, such evidence cannot be doubted, excepting by those who are resolved not to be convinced.

We have already noticed that LATIMER was one of Bilney's disciples: his martyrdom, and the greater part of his history, belong to the events of queen Mary's reign, rather than the period of which we are now speaking; but, like the prophet Elisha, he testified to more than one generation, and we may gather instruction from the earlier, as well as from the later events of his life. When at the university, he was zealous for all the popish superstitions, as he himself declares;* even personally illtreating those who listened to the new doctrines. The words of a writer of those times, when speaking of himself, probably give us an exact picture of Latimer, as he then was: "When I was a papist, I was at this point with God: if I had heard mass on Sundays and holidays, and said our Lady's matins, or our Lady's psalter, kissed and licked devoutly the feet of saints, (images,) and besprinkled myself with water, and had done the superstitious penance enjoined me, then I thought, and assuredly believed, that I had done my full duty unto God; though I never once called to remembrance the benefit of Christ's death, in satisfying and making peace for all the trespasses and sins of my former evil life. Yea, besides all this presumption, I thought further, that if I had done these vain works, and others no better, *that I was no more beholden unto God, than he was to me*; neither gave I him more thanks for pardoning my sins, than one merchant giveth another, for obtaining a pennyworth for a penny. But thanks be unto the Lord, who of his mere mercy, delivered me out of this blind popish heresy." May we not fear, that a similar description would be applicable to many in the present day, even among nominal protestants, as well as papists?

From this awful state God was pleased to deliver him, through the means of Bilney; who, admiring the honest zeal and simple earnestness of Latimer, although in a bad

* As an instance of these superstitions, Latimer relates, that, in celebrating the mass, he was always fearful that he should not have mixed water enough with the wine. The reader may not be aware, that the council of Trent declared that this was commanded by an apostolic tradition, and that, although the omission of the water did not destroy the efficacy of the sacrament, yet the priest committed a mortal sin, if he did not mix water with the wine! Surely this was indeed laying a burden on the conscience too heavy to be borne. On another occasion, we find him confessing he had long thought that if he became a friar, and wore a cowl, he should run no risk of eternal damnation!

cause, and regretting it should be so employed, went to his study, and asked him to hear his confession. This Latimer willingly assented to; when Bilney opened his heart fully; and, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, "this cross bearer became an earnest student of true divinity, at the age of fifty-three!"

Latimer was now desirous to impart to others the knowledge he had received, and manfully withstood those who opposed the simple truths of the word of God, earnestly pleading that the truths of the scriptures might be permitted, till facts should prove them to be injurious. One day, the bishop of Ely came to hear him preach, without any previous warning, when Latimer spoke so clearly and scripturally upon the text, "Christ being come a high priest of good things to come," that the bishop declared he could not but approve what he had said; at the same time, requiring that he should preach a sermon against Luther and his doctrines. Latimer replied, "My lord, I am not acquainted with the doctrines of Luther, nor are we permitted here to read his works. How then can I refute his doctrine without fully understanding what opinions he holdeth? Sure I am, that I have preached before you this day no man's doctrine, but only the doctrine of God, out of the scriptures; and if Luther does no more than this, there is no need to confute his doctrines; but when I understand that he doth teach against the scriptures, I will be ready, with all my heart, to preach against his doctrine as well as I am able."

The bishop, however, was persuaded to prohibit him from preaching in any churches of the university; but Dr. Barns, prior of St. Augustine, being exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, gave him permission to preach in the church of that monastery; and even cardinal Wolsey was induced to license him to preach throughout the kingdom.

The next event in which we find Latimer engaged further proves his courage and reliance on the Lord. We have already noticed, that the clergy condemned Tindal's translation of the Testament, as full of errors, and promised that they would publish a more correct version. This promise, it seems, they never intended to perform; and in May, 1530, a proclamation, which has been already mentioned, came forth, declaring that many of the prelates, and other learned men, having considered whether it was necessary to

publish the scriptures in the vulgar tongue, were of opinion, that "though it had been sometimes done, yet it was not necessary, and that the king did well, not to set it out at that time in the English tongue." Thus for a time all hope of a translation of the bible passed away.

LATIMER was one of the learned men appointed to consider this subject. How far he openly differed from his associates does not clearly appear; but on the 1st of December, in the same year, he wrote a letter to the king, urging him to allow free liberty to read the holy scriptures. This able and faithful composition well deserves perusal. Latimer addresses the king in respectful terms, warning him against those who were deceiving the land; beseeching Henry to hear him patiently, he thus proceeds: "For you be to me and all your subjects in God's stead, to defend, aid, and succour us in our right, and so I should tremble to speak to your grace. But as you be a mortal man, in danger of sin, having in you the corrupt nature of Adam, in which we all are born, so have you no less need of the merits of Christ's passion for your salvation, than I and others of your subjects."

After pointing out from the scriptures the vast difference between the apostles and the prelates of that day, he thus proceeds: "Wherefore, take this for a sure conclusion, that where the word of God is preached, there is persecution of teachers and hearers; and where there is quiet and rest in worldly pleasures, there is not the truth. For the world loveth all that are of the world, and hateth all things that are contrary to it; and St. Paul calleth the gospel the word of the cross, the word of punishment, and the holy scripture doth promise nothing to the favourers and followers of it in this world, but trouble, vexation, and persecution, which worldly men cannot endure." He then spoke of the value of the gospel as a light, "which shall show forth every man's works. And they whose works are evil, dare not come to this light, but endeavour to hinder it, by preventing, as far as they are able, the holy scriptures from being read in our mother tongue." But Latimer especially reminded the king of his promise that the bible should be published in English, and warned him against the counsellors who endeavoured to persuade him from keeping his word; comparing them to the princes of Ammon, who gave such bad advice to Hanun, the son of

Nabash; (see 2 Sam. x.) and exposing the reasons why the cardinal and others had induced him to prohibit the books which so plainly pointed out their evil conduct and hypocrisy. He further states, "I will ask them the causes of all insurrections which have been in this realm heretofore; and whence it is that there be so many extortioners, bribers, murderers, and thieves; which daily break not only your grace's laws, hut also the laws and commandments of Almighty God.* I think they will not say these books are the cause, but rather their pardons, which cause many a man to sin, trusting to them. For as for those malefactors I have just mentioned, you shall not find one in a hundred but he will cry out against these books, and those that have them; yea, and will also be glad to spend his unlawful gains upon fagots, to burn both the books, and them that have them." He also adds, that no one could charge those who had lately suffered for having these books, with any offence against the laws, except having these books in their possession. And that if evil, unruly, and self-willed persons, disregarding the laws of God and man, should be found to have these books in their possession, it no more proved these books to be the cause of their evil conduct, than Christ was the cause of the wickedness of Judas; and he urged that the true exposition of the scriptures was the surest way to lead evil doers to a change of life.† He thus concludes this remarkable and interesting letter: "Wherefore, gracious king, remember yourself, have pity upon your soul, and remember that the day is at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed with your sword. In the which day, that your grace may stand stedfastly, and be not ashamed, but be clear and ready for your account, having your pardon sealed with the blood of our Saviour Christ, which alone can keep us at that day, is my daily prayer to him that suffered death for our sins, which also prayeth to his Father for grace for us continually. To whom be all

* Latimer does not give quite so flattering an account of the state of society in Henry's days before the Reformation, as some late advocates of the church of Rome have done.

† Some Roman catholics of the present day have dared to assert, that crimes have increased since the scriptures have been translated into the vulgar tongue; but history plainly shows the contrary. Ignorance ever has been the cause of crime, and in every Roman catholic country, the lower classes have always been kept in ignorance.

honour and praise for ever. Amen. The Spirit of God preserve your grace."

We cannot sufficiently admire the faithful manner in which Latimer discharged his duty to God and to the king. Let us also notice, with admiration, the power of the Lord, who caused that no harm should happen to his servant from the plain manner in which he had written, but that he should rather have thanks and good will from the king, who, about this time, presented him to the living of West Kingstone, in Wiltshire.

Here he instructed his parishioners with much diligence and faithfulness, and was again attacked by the enemies of the gospel. They accused him of several heretical declarations respecting the virgins Mary, worship of saints, and purgatory. He replied to these accusations with that readiness for which he was ever remarkable; and availing himself of the scholastic form of argumentation of the day, he effectually baffled his adversaries, without swerving from the truth. With respect to the superstitions of the day he said that his usual plan was to refer to the truths upon which the papists built these errors, and to lead people to the true Foundation, only noticing the wood, hay, and stubble, in such a manner, that it would be rightly appreciated by his hearers, and yet so that his enemies would not have an opportunity of charging him with directly gainsaying the doctrines of the church of Rome. The cheerful and ready pleasantry for which he was ever noted, did not forsake him on this occasion. He was accused, among other things, of having asserted that there was no purgatory; and this was attempted to be proved from his having said, "He would rather be in purgatory than in Lollards' Tower." After reasoning seriously on the points objected against him, Latimer availed himself of this attempt to prove from his words more than he had said; and treating it lightly, at once clears himself from the accusation, while in a covert, yet pointed manner, he reproveth both the cruelty of the Romish bishops, and the absurdity of the doctrine. A specimen may amuse the reader.

He says that his words were not to be considered so much denying purgatory, as showing the state and condition of it, and then enumerates twenty-two reasons why he would rather be there than in "Lollards' Tower, the Bishops' prison." The following will suffice:

"In this (Lollards' Tower) I might die bodily, for lack of

meat and drink ; in that (purgatory) I could not. In this I might lose my patience ; in that I could not. In this I might be without surety (assurance) of salvation ; in that I could not. In this I might dishonour God ; in that I could not. In this I might displease God, or be displeased with him ; in that I could not. In this I might be craftily handled ; in that I could not. In this I might be brought to bear a fagot ; in that I could not. In this I might be an inheritor of hell ; in that I could not. In this, my lord and his chaplains might manacle me by night ; in that they could not. In this they might strangle me, and say that I had hanged myself, (alluding, doubtless, to the fate of poor Hunne and others ;) in that they could not. In this they might have me to the consistory, and judge me after their fashion ; in that they could not."

After summing up these arguments, he proceeds : " Consider whether provision for purgatory hath not brought thousands to hell. Debts have not been paid, restitution of evil gotten lands and goods have not been made. Christian people have been suffered to perish, while the money was bestowed in purchasing masses to deliver their souls from purgatory. Thus they have gone to hell with masses, dirges, and ringing many a bell." He adds, " I cannot understand what they mean by the pope's pardoning of purgatory, by way of suffrage ; (prayers ;) and as for that, unless he seek not his own, but Christ's glory, I had rather have the suffrage (prayers) of Jack the scullion, which in his calling exercised both faith and charity, than the pope's mass. For the authority of the keys is to loose from the guilt of sin, and eternal pain due to the same, according to Christ's word, and not by his (the pope's) own private will."

Latimer then stated, that he dwelt within half a mile of the main road, and saw the people come in crowds from the west country on pilgrimage to images, and particularly to the blood of Christ, which the monks pretended to show at the abbey of Hailes, in Gloucestershire. " And they believe," adds he, " that it is the very blood that was in Christ's body, shed upon the mount of Cavalry for our salvation, and that the sight of it putteth them out of all doubt that they are cleansed from their sins, and in a state of salvation, without spot of sin, *which emboldens them to many things*. If you communed with them, either going or coming, you would wonder what faith they were of. For as for

forgiving their enemies, and reconciling their christian brethren, they think not of it; the sight of the blood clears them at that time." He also mentions, that one of his accusers urged the people to these pilgrimages, by quoting the words of the Saviour, denouncing a woe upon those who were not ready to forsake father, mother, &c. for the gospel. He adds that he knows of only two grounds of assurance stated in the scriptures: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God;" and "We know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "But I read not that I have peace with God, or that I am translated from death to life, because I see with my bodily eyes the blood of Hailes. Christ hath left a doctrine behind him, wherein we are taught how to believe, and what to believe. It were little to believe well, and rightly, if nothing tempted us to false faith, and to believe superstitiously."

If the reader will read the account of modern pilgrimages in countries where the popish faith is now prevalent, especially in Ireland, he will fully learn how pilgrimages *embolden to sin*. The pilgrimages to heathen shrines may present scenes more openly horrible and on a larger scale, but not in reality more contrary to the word of God, and scarcely more profligate.

In a letter written about this time to sir Edward Baynton, Latimer refers to the danger in which St. Paul would be for some things in his Epistles, if he were then upon earth; and if his adversaries "had accused St. Paul of the same (the declaration in the text, "Ye are not under the law, but under grace") to my lord of London. If my lord would have heard St. Paul declare his own mind (or explanation) of his own words, he should have escaped; but if he had given sentence, after the relation of the accusers, then good St. Paul must have borne a fagot at Paul's cross, my lord of London being his judge. Oh it had been a goodly sight, to have seen St. Paul with a fagot on his back, even at Paul's cross, my lord of London, bishop of the same, sitting under the cross! St. Paul did not mean that christian men might break the law, and do whatever they would, because they were not under the law; but he meant they might keep the law, and fulfil the law, because they were under Christ, by whom they were made able to fulfil the law, agreeably to the will

of him that made the law, which they never could do in their own strength, and without Christ." He then proceeds to show, that these doctrines did not encourage licentiousness, as was slanderously reported. After bearing testimony to the excellence of Bilney's character, he touches upon his own former blind following of the popish superstitions; among other points, urging, that if the pope had power over purgatory, how cruel and wrong it must be for him to suffer so many souls to continue therein, depriving us, according to his own account, of so many intercessors in heaven, and only undertaking to deliver them when paid for so doing!

In the beginning of the year 1532, Latimer was cited to appear before archbishop Warham. He was several times examined before the council and convocation; a long list of errors was drawn out for him to abjure; but at length, owing to the king's favour, he was allowed to escape, upon acknowledging that it was right to keep Lent, and other customary fasts, and also assenting to another article, admitting that it was laudable and profitable that the crucifix and images of saints should be in the church as a remembrance, and to the honour and worship of Jesus Christ and his saints, not however saying any thing which sanctioned the worship of images. He was also compelled to kneel down, and to entreat forgiveness,* in general terms. The bishops, probably owing to the king's protection, did not push matters to the utmost against Latimer. His own words are, "There be some men that do say I have abjured, and some say that I am perjured, but the truth is, I am neither abjured nor yet perjured."

Among other methods of opposing the gospel, the papists employed several active persons of their number to visit different parts of the kingdom, and preach in defence of the errors of popery. One of these was Dr. Hubberdin. He was chiefly employed in the West of England, and on many occasions was directly opposed to Latimer; we may, therefore, contrast his preaching with that of the reformer, and briefly notice some circumstances related respecting this bigoted opponent of the truth.

* Authors have variously related these latter circumstances; but the above appears to be a correct summary of what really passed, founded principally on the evidence of the Bishops' Registers. Many of the original documents are given in Wilkins' Concilia.

In his preaching, as well as in his common discourse, Hubberdin magnified the power of the pope, exalting him beyond temporal princes, railing in the coarsest terms against Luther, Melancthon, Frith, Tindal, Latimer, and other eminent professors of the gospel. His manner of preaching was worthy of the matter he brought forward: it consisted chiefly of tales and fables, intermixed with a sort of low dialogue, in which he described the characters he introduced. Once he was stopped by some highwaymen, who commanded him to make an oration in praise of thieves and robbery, which he did, and they approved it so highly, that they returned all his money, and gave him two shillings besides, to drink their health! Strype relates that a manuscript of this sermon was extant in his time!

The end of this wretched man was singular, and, in some respects, very awful. One day, as he rode through a village, he saw some young people dancing in the churchyard. Leaving his horse, he entered the church, and causing the people to be assembled, instead of one of his usual pieces of buffoonery, he gave them a sermon upon dancing! In this curious discourse he first cited some texts of scripture, and then some sayings of the fathers, and representing them as all joining in one tune, as he phrased it, in behalf of the sacrament of the altar, against Frith, Luther, Latimer, and other heretics. Not content with this absurd allegory, he represented them as all dancing together to the same effect, and suited the action to the words by jumping about in the pulpit! exclaiming, "Now dance Peter and Paul, now dance Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome," &c. While proceeding in this strain, and stamping and jumping about, the pulpit gave way, and came down with a crash among the congregation. In his fall he broke one of his legs, from the effects of which he shortly after died. The churchwardens being cited to answer for the slightness of the pulpit, replied that it was made for preaching in, not for dancing.

To this man Latimer wrote in a serious and christian manner, warning him of the consequences of his blasphemies, and that it was no use quoting Aristotle, or Plato, or Thomas Aquinas, against the eternal and perpetual word of God. He then notices that Hubberdin called the doctrines of the gospel new learning. This he denied, as they taught nothing but what was manifest in the scripture,

and plain in the ancient doctors. He proceeds, "I pray you was not the scripture before the most ancient doctors, who have written concerning it? Was it not, before they wrote upon it, better received, more purely understood, productive of more effect than it is now, or since they wrote upon it? In St. Paul's time, when there were no writers upon the New Testament but the plain story newly put forth, were there not more converted by two men, than now truly confess the name of Christ? Is it not the same word now as it was then? Is not the very same schoolmaster as taught them to understand it, which, St. Peter says, is the Spirit of God, alive now as he was then? For, if we have not the Spirit of Christ, as St. Paul says, we are not followers of Christ. But you will say, Ye condemn not the scriptures, but Tindal's translation. Therein you contradict yourself; for ye have condemned it in all other common tongues, wherein they are approved in other countries. So that it is plain, that it is the scriptures, and not this translation, that you bark against, calling it the new learning." Reader, is not exactly the same language now used by the papists in our day? Has popery herein changed either its language or its sentiments? Are not the assertions of the present pope, Leo the Twelfth, and his prelates, in the nineteenth century, exactly the same as those advanced by Clement the Seventh with his clergy, including this Dr. Hubberdin, three hundred years ago?

Take a recent instance. The declaration of the Popish, English, and Irish prelates in 1826, states that when the scriptures are left to the interpretation and private judgment of each individual; then *such reading, circulation, and interpretation are forbidden by the catholic church.*

And still more recently the Rev. T. Singer publicly called upon a Romish advocate through the medium of the press, in the following terms:—"Look through Europe, and say, whether the scriptures have as 'free a course' in Roman catholic as in protestant countries? Say whether, generally speaking, the scriptures are read *at all* in Roman catholic countries? You know that, from the influence of the clergy, if they recommended their perusal, their recommendations would be attended to; you know that a slight history of the bible is substituted for these translations of which you speak so boastingly, both in Italy and Germany, and generally in France; and that

they are reserved to make a show in catalogues, or fill up spaces in a library, (a copy sometimes extends to twenty volumes and more) rather than produced for use, and circulated for general edification. In Ireland, too, the very country in dispute, I would ask, whether the scriptures in *any* translation are generally read by the Roman catholics. I know that a reverend gentleman asserted some time since, uncontradicted, that of 800 families in his parish, not one had a bible. I know that the commissioners of inquiry found neither Bible nor Testament in the Roman catholic schools, nor in the libraries of many religious houses. I know that a young man has passed four years at a Roman catholic seminary, studying for orders, and never saw a Testament during that period; and I know that a Roman catholic witness before the commissioners declared on oath, that the lower classes in many parts of Ireland scarcely knew that such a book as the bible existed, except where the Bible Society had been active."

Latimer notices several blasphemous assertions of that wretched man Hubberdin; and prays that God may bring him to repentance; but he despised the warning; and, with his confederates, continued to trouble that excellent servant of Christ to the utmost of their power. Among other methods, they made ballads upon Latimer; one of which is preserved by Strype: the burden of the song is, "It were a pity thou shouldest die for cold;" expressing, of course, their earnest wish that he should be burned as a heretic!

These particulars will not appear tedious when we consider the interesting picture they present of this faithful reformer; and they prove that the doctrines of the Reformation were held by many, before Henry threw off the power of the pope. Such brief extracts, however, but faintly delineate the prudence and simplicity with which Latimer defended himself, and the earnestness with which he bore testimony to the truth. Those who read the letters, and other original documents, can hardly rise from the perusal, without being edified with the cheerful piety of the reformer, feeling their faith strengthened, and an earnest desire excited to look more simply to Christ, and cast all their cares upon him, who careth for all people.

Several persons suffered martyrdom about this period. THOMAS HILTON had been curate of Maidstone, but

left that place, and went several times to Antwerp, to bring over some of the books printed there by the reformers. At length, he was taken at Gravesend, and carried before Warham and Fisher, who, after a long and cruel imprisonment, condemned him to the flames, as Latimer notices in his letter to Hubberdin.

RICHARD BAYFIELD was a monk in the abbey of Bury, and was brought to the knowledge of the truth in the following manner. Two godly men, named Maxwell and Stacy, brickmakers by trade, but citizens of some note in London, were accustomed every year to travel, at their own expense, through Essex, and the adjoining counties, to visit and encourage the faithful followers of Christ, then suffering persecution.

While engaged in this work, they came to Bury; and, as was usual in those days, went to the abbey instead of an inn. Dr. Barnes, afterwards a character of some note among the reformers, was there at the same time; and it happened to be Bayfield's duty, as chamberlain of the abbey, to attend upon these strangers; thus he conversed freely with Barnes and the two citizens. He was much impressed by their words; and at parting, the doctor gave him a New Testament in Latin, to which the citizens added Tindal's translation, and the tract called, "The Obedience of a Christian Man." These books he studied diligently; and, as Fox quaintly expresses himself, "He prospered so mightily therein, that in two years afterwards he was cast into the prison of the abbey!" He was also severely whipped, and put into the stocks with a gag in his mouth. In this painful confinement he was kept three quarters of a year: at length, Dr. Barnes, by his interest with one of the monks, who formerly had been his fellow student, obtained permission to remove him to one of the colleges at Cambridge. Here Bayfield profited by the instructions of Bilney, and others; but fearful of being again involved in trouble, he escaped to London, and found shelter with Maxwell and Stacy. After some time, he was discovered and brought before bishop Tonsal, who persuaded him to recant, which he did, but took an early opportunity of escaping to the continent, where he was very useful to Tindal, and the other refugees. He several times visited London, secretly, to promote the sale of their books; and on one of these visits, was discovered at a book-binder's in Mark-lane, and taken to the Lollards' Tower.

There he found a priest, named Patmore, whom the bishops were endeavouring to persuade to abjure. Bayfield having conversed with the priest, and strengthened him in the faith, was removed to the bishop of London's Coal-house, in Paternoster-row, and there treated with much severity, being kept in a standing posture, handcuffed and fixed against the wall by bands round his neck, middle, and legs, to induce him to disclose the names of the persons to whom he had sold books; but he was enabled to resist, stedfast in the faith, and was condemned by Stokesly, who succeeded Tonsal in the see of London.

Bayfield was accused of not having fulfilled the penance enjoined him, and of having brought from beyond seas divers books and treatises of Luther's, and others. He admitted having brought over many of these works; and being asked why he did so, replied, "It was to the intent that the gospel of Christ might be set forward, and God the more glorified in this realm, among christian people." On the 20th of November, 1531 he was condemned, and committed to Newgate. The next day, he was brought to St. Paul's to be degraded: during that ceremony, bishop Stokesly struck him on the breast with his crosier so violently, as to knock him backwards, and break his head against the stones! When the patient martyr recovered, he thanked God that he was delivered from the malignant church of antichrist, and come into the true church of Christ Jesus militant here on earth; "and, I trust, anon," said he, "to be in heaven, with Jesus Christ and the church triumphant for ever." He was then led to Newgate, and after remaining there an hour, which he spent in prayer, he was taken to Smithfield, and burned. His sufferings were severe; as, for want of a sufficient supply of fuel,* he survived half an hour after the flames were kindled. While his left arm was burning, he rubbed it with his right hand till it fell from his body, and continued in prayer till he expired.

Thomas Patmore, mentioned in the preceding narrative, was the parson, or rector, of Hadham, and had held that

* A correspondent of Erasmus wrote to him, that the price of wood in London was considerably advanced, in consequence of the quantity used in the frequent executions of heretics in Smithfield. This probably was one of those expressions which are not always to be understood literally, but it certainly proves that these burnings occurred very often.

living for upwards of sixteen years without blame or reproach; but was imprisoned by bishop Stokesly, and treated with much severity. He was accused of having been at Wittenberg, and of conversing there with Luther; also of buying and reading various works of the reformers. But the principal offence alleged against him, was having married his curate to his maid-servant; he had also said that it was against God's law to burn heretics. In reply, Patmore appealed to the king, urging that the bishop did not accuse him of heresy; but yet he did not refuse to reply to the accusations against him. As to his curate's marriage, he for a long time contended that it was lawful for a priest to marry, and desired to have the contrary proved from the scriptures. Foxford, the bishop's vicar-general, was unable to do this; but quoted the determinations of the church of Rome, and urged compliance with its opinions, threatening to condemn him as an heretic if he persisted. Patmore, at length, admitted the power of the church. But the bishop and his vicar-general were not yet satisfied; as he maintained that "none shall be saved on account of their own deeds, or think that they have obeyed the law by their own power or righteousness; but, with the psalmist, give all thanks to the mercy and goodness of God, who hath sent his Son to do that for us which it was not in our own power to do; for if it had been in our own power to fulfil the law, there would have been no need of Christ to do for us what we ourselves could have done." This, and other opinions, were so contrary to the spirit of the Roman catholic religion, that although Patmore allowed many of the errors of that church, he was deprived of his living, and all his property, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment. He was kept for two years in Lollards' Tower without fire or candle; at length, his relations procured his release, by applying to queen Ann Boleyn.

JOHN TEWKESBURY was a citizen of London, and acquainted with Bayfield. Tindal's Testament, a tract called "The Wicked Mammon," and a written bible, were discovered in his possession. Being accused to bishop Tonsal, he was examined before that prelate, and the clergy; and reasoned with them upon the doctrine of justification by faith, and other points, in such a manner, that they felt ashamed that a leather-seller should be able to argue so strongly against them. After many examina

tions, Tonsal succeeded in persuading Tewkesbury, like many others, to abjure; but, like Bilney, he bitterly repented; and, after a time, again bore testimony to the truth. Soon after the death of Bayfield, with whom he was acquainted, he was brought before sir Thomas More and bishop Stokesly, and again accused of holding the doctrines contained in the tract called "The Wicked Mammon!" And also for saying that faith only justifieth, that Christ is a sufficient Mediator for us, that there is no purgatory, as the blood of Christ is sufficient to cleanse us, and that the souls of the faithful who departed this life, rest with Christ, and for denying the presence of Christ in the sacrament. Having admitted that these were his sentiments, he was condemned in sir Thomas More's house, at Chelsea, delivered to the sheriffs, and burned in Smithfield.

THOMAS BENNETT was born at Cambridge, and educated at the University in that town, where he took the degree of Master of Arts. Becoming acquainted with Bilney, and other pious characters,* he was brought to the knowledge of the truth; and the more he studied the word of God, the more he was dissatisfied with the corrupt state of religion then prevalent. Desiring to enjoy more freedom of conscience, he went to Devonshire, where he was not known, and settled first at Torrington, and afterwards at Exeter, keeping a school in the Butcher-row for his maintenance. Here he lived for several years, attracting but little notice, owing to his quiet and humble behaviour; and avoiding intercourse with all persons, excepting those who were favourers of the gospel. In due time every tree will be known by its fruits; and this was the case with Bennett. Observing that superstition and persecution increased every day, he conversed with his friends, and told them that he could no longer, with a safe conscience, remain silent, but must bear testimony against the abominations of the church of Rome, yielding himself to lay down his life in this cause, if required; trusting that his death would be more profitable to the church of God than his life could be. Having thus plainly declared his intentions, they promised to pray for him that he might continue a faithful soldier of Christ to the last. He then set his house in order; and, in the month of October, 1530, wrote his opinions upon papers, and affixed them to the doors of

* We cannot but remark the very considerable progress of the gospel at Cambridge, in the early days of the Reformation.

the cathedral. They appear to have related to the anti-christian conduct of the pope, and justification by Christ alone, without the mediation of saints.

These writings caused no small stir in Exeter; strict search was made for the author; and as their contents were generally reported through the city, the bishop caused some one of his clergy to preach every day against these heresies. As the search was unsuccessful, the clergy at length determined to curse the author publicly with bell, book, and candle; which made the citizens of Exeter to deem this a most heinous offence; for the truths of the gospel were then scarcely known in that city, and the Romish priests had filled the ignorant multitude with horror against all that they called "heresy."

Fox relates the particulars of this proceeding at some length, having received them from a person then present. The clergy and friars being assembled in the cathedral, the cross was held up with holy candles of wax fixed thereon, and one of the priests ascended the pulpit in white robes, and preached a sermon from the subject of Achan, as recorded in the book of Joshua, exhorting that the accursed should be destroyed from among them. The bishop then, with solemnity, pronounced the curse, according to the usual form of the church of Rome, similar to what is used at the present day, and in substance the same as is now frequently denounced in Ireland against those parents who venture to send their children to a school where the Bible or Testament is admitted! or who neglect to pay their dues to the priests.

This form of cursing commences by declaring, that, "By the authority of God the Father Almighty, of the blessed virgin Mary, of St. Peter and St. Paul, and of the holy saints," the person accused is excommunicated. It proceeds, "We utterly curse and ban, commit and deliver to the devil of hell, him or her, whatsoever he or she may be. Excommunicated and accursed may they be, and given, body and soul, to the devil. Cursed be they in cities, in towns, in fields, in ways, in paths, in houses, out of houses, and in all other places, standing, lying, or rising, walking, running, waking, sleeping, eating, drinking, and whatsoever thing they do besides. We separate them from the threshold, and from all prayers of the church, from the holy mass, from all sacraments, chapels, and altars, from holy bread, and holy water, from all the merits of God's

priests and religious men, from all their pardons, privileges, grants, and immunities, which all the holy fathers, the popes of Rome, have granted : and we give them utterly over to the power of the fiend ! And let us quench their soul, if they be dead, this night, in the pains of hell-fire, as this candle is now quenched and put out ; (and then one of the candles was put out ;) and let us pray to God, that if they be alive, their eyes may be put out, as this candle is put out ; (another was then extinguished ;) and let us pray to God, and to our Lady, and to St. Peter and St. Paul, and all holy saints, that all the senses of their bodies may fail them, and that they may have no feeling, as now the light of this candle is gone ; (the third candle was then put out ;) except they come openly now, and confess their blasphemy, and by repentance (as in them shall lie) make satisfaction unto God, our Lady, St. Peter, and the worshipful company of this cathedral church. And as this cross falleth down, so may they, except they repent, and show themselves." Then the cross was allowed to fall down with a loud noise, and the superstitious multitude shouted with fear.

This horrible document is transcribed, as it strongly shows the immeasurable distance between the spirit of the church of Rome, and the spirit of christian charity. These curses are continually pronounced for various causes, and frequently with additions to the above form, still more painful to hear.

A writer who lately visited Rome, gives the following account of an anathema still to be witnessed there. The account is as follows :—" On the Thursday before easter, one of the cardinals curses all Jews, Turks, and heretics, by bell, book, and candle. The little bell is rung, the curse is sung from the book, and the lighted taper thrown down among the people. The pope's benediction upon all true believers immediately follows." This refers to the papal bull or decree, which is read every year publicly in presence of the pope.

In former times these anathemas have been applied to almost every object of creation. Pope Calixtus V. included a comet and the Turks in the same anathema. Other formulas of cursing have been directed even against rats and flies !

Bennett was present on this occasion ; and feeling very differently from his neighbours, he treated these denuncia-

tions lightly, so that his conduct excited suspicion. He, however, was allowed to return home; and again writing out the papers, sent his boy to stick them up early the next morning. While the lad was thus employed, a man who was passing by a gate, called "the little stile," on his way to early mass, saw him, and took him to the mayor, and being known as Bennett's boy, his master was taken up, and committed to prison. He was then brought before the bishop and the clergy; who took much pains to induce him to recant. The friars and monks were particularly earnest upon this occasion, and disputed with Bennett for a whole week; but he was enabled to answer them in the words of soberness and truth. The principal points upon which they disputed were the authority of the pope and of the church of Rome. "Doth not the pope," said they, "confess the true gospel, and do not we all the same?" "Yes," said he, "but ye deny the fruits thereof; ye build upon the sands, not upon the rock." Through the whole of his argument he pointed them to Christ as our only Advocate and Mediator. As he continued stedfast in the faith, sentence was pronounced, he was delivered to the sheriff on January 15, 1531, and brought to the place of execution, called Livery-dole, near Exeter; where, with much earnestness, he exhorted the people to seek the Lord and his ways, leaving the inventions of men.

Two gentlemen named Carew and Barnhouse, standing by, advised him to forsake his opinions, and pray to the virgin Mary, and the saints. Bennett meekly replied, "No, no, it is God alone upon whom we must call, and we have no advocate with him but Jesus Christ; who died for us, and now sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to be an Advocate for us; and by him must we offer and make our prayers unto God, if we would have them heard." Barnhouse, enraged at this answer, took a furze bush, and putting it on a pole, set it on fire, and thrust it in the martyr's face, cursing him for a heretic, and declaring he would make him pray to our Lady!

Bennett endured this treatment patiently, only replying, "Alas, sir, trouble me not;" and added, "Father, forgive them." The pile was then kindled; upon which he lifted up his hands and eyes to heaven, saying, "O Lord, receive my spirit;" and patiently endured the flames. The people of this part of the country appear to have been more enthralled by superstition, than in many other counties of

England, and were so strongly excited against this poor martyr, that they strove with each other to throw fagots into the fire!

A great number of persons were compelled to abjure about this time, whose names, and the accusations against them, are recorded in the Bishops' Registers.

John Hewes saw a man kneeling down in the street at Feversham, worshipping a cross which was passing by in a funeral procession, upon which he inquired, "To whom he kneeled." The man replying, "To his Maker." "'Thou art a fool," said Hewes, "it is not thy Maker, but only a piece of wood or copper." He had also spoken against pilgrimages, repeating the words of the vicar of Croydon, who declared that pilgrimages were often made excuses for vice and immorality.

John Wily, his wife, their son, and son's wife, and their two daughters, were troubled for having eaten part of a neck of mutton in broth, on St. James's eve, five years before; to which it was added, that the father had some heretical books in his house; and that the youngest daughter, about ten years of age, could repeat by heart nearly the whole of the 24th chapter of St. Matthew! What would be the fate of the Sunday scholars of our day, had they lived in those times, with the same knowledge of the scriptures as they now possess?

It would be tedious to enumerate the accusations against all those whose names are recorded: they were mostly brought into trouble for having heretical books in their possession, or for opposing the worshipping of images, or the popish doctrine respecting the sacrament of the altar. We may here adopt the words with which Fox concludes one of the accounts just referred to: "BUT WHY STAND I NUMBERING THE SAND! For if all the Register books were sought, it would be an infinite thing to recite all them which, throughout the realm, were troubled for such like matters. But these, I thought it well, for example's sake, to specify, that it might appear what doctrine it is, and how long it hath been in the church of Rome; for which the prelates and clergy judged men heretics, and so wrongfully molested poor simple christians"

THE LOLLARDS;

Or, some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England,
from 1400 to 1546.



Bainham addressing the Papists. (See page 126.)

PART VI.

Bainham.—His dying words.—Petit.—The festival.—Notice of the Legends which it contains—Tracy's Testament.—His body is dug up and burned—Phillips.—Canons.—Death of Warham.—The King appoints Cranmer Archbishop of Canterbury.—False assertions of the Papists respecting him.—His Protest against the power of the Pope.—Sums of money annually remitted to Rome.—Gardiner, Stokesly, Bonner, and others, oppose the Pope's supremacy.—Preaching at Paul's Cross.

JAMES BAINHAM was the son of Sir Alexander Bainham, of Gloucestershire; he received an education suitable to his father's rank, and made considerable progress in the Latin and Greek languages. He was brought up to the law; in which he set a good example to all of his profession, being very liberal to his clients, and willingly giving advice to the needy, to widows, orphans, and all who were afflicted, without money or reward. He was a man of a virtuous disposition, and godly conversation, constant in prayer and reading the scriptures, and abounding in all good works. This conduct exposed Bainham to suspicion, which he increased by marrying the widow of Simon Fish, already mentioned as author of "The Supplication of the Beggars;" and Sir Thomas More caused him to be

imprisoned in his house at Chelsea. His sufferings at first were not severe; but refusing to recant, he experienced harder treatment. The chancellor ordered him to be tied to a tree in the garden, called "The Tree of Truth," and whipped him with his own hand; but as these measures were as unsuccessful as the former, he committed Bainham to the Tower, ordering him to be tortured on the rack. This is a horrible machine, on which the sufferer is laid with his legs and arms extended; and it is worked so that the limbs are stretched to the utmost, frequently so much as to be put out of joint. This instrument of torture has long since been forbidden in our land, but it always has been, and still is, a favourite with the popish inquisition. Sir Thomas More was present on this occasion, and ordered the rack to be worked so severely, that Bainham was lamed by its effects. These cruel measures were designed to make him accuse some gentlemen of the Temple, who were suspected of heresy, and to compel him to discover his books; but the patient sufferer was enabled to bear the torture, and thus baffle his adversaries. His wife was then sent to the Fleet prison, and his goods were confiscated.

After these proceedings, Sir Thomas More sent Bainham to Stokesly, then bishop of London, before whom he was brought, December 15, 1531, and examined upon several articles. The particulars of this examination deserve notice. The *first* inquiry was, whether he believed there was any purgatory for souls departed this life. Bainham answered by quoting 1 John, i. 7—9: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another; and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Being then asked what he thought of purgatory, he answered, that if any such thing as purgatory had been mentioned to St. Paul, he thought the apostle would have rejected it as heresy.

The *second* inquiry was, Whether the saints departed hence, are to be honoured and prayed unto, entreating them to pray for us.

He answered from 1 John ii. 1, 2: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our

sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

And further, being asked what he meant when he used the words of the popish liturgy, "All ye saints of God pray for us," he answered that he meant the saints that were alive, and not those that were dead, as St. Paul exhorteth the Corinthians: "Pray for us," 2 Cor. i. 11. He said he prayed not to the dead, because he thought that those who are dead could not pray for him. And when the whole church was gathered together, they used to pray for one another, or desire one to pray for another, with one heart; and that the will of the Lord might be fulfilled, and not ours. And I pray, (said he,) as our Saviour Christ prayed, "Father, take this cup from me, if it be possible, yet thy will be done."

Thirdly. He was asked, whether he thought that any departed souls were yet in heaven or not? To this he answered, he believed that they were wherever it pleased God they should be.

Fourthly. It was demanded whether he thought it necessary to salvation, for a man to confess his sins to a priest?

To this he answered that it was lawful for one man to confess and acknowledge his sins to another. As for any other than a voluntary confession of this kind, he knew of none. And further he said, that if when he heard the word of God preached, he repented of his sins, he believed his sins forthwith were forgiven by God, and that he needed not to go to confession to a priest, in order to obtain pardon.

The *fifth* and *sixth* inquiries related to the scriptures. He stated that the holy scriptures had not, during the last eight hundred years, been so plainly declared to the people, as during the last six years. He added, that the New Testament, then translated into English, taught the word of God; whereas, formerly, preachers only taught that men should believe as the church believed.

Concerning extreme unction, being desired to say his mind; he answered that it was but a ceremony, neither did he know what a man should be the better for such anointing; the best was, that some good prayers were said thereat.

Respecting baptism, his words were these:

That as many as repent and put on Christ shall be saved, that is, as many as die unto sin shall live by faith with

Christ. Therefore, it is not we that live, but Christ in us. And so, whether we live or die, we belong to God by adoption, not by water only, but by water and faith. That is, by keeping the promise made; for, "Ye are kept by grace and faith, saith St. Paul, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

With respect to Tindal's books, he admitted that he had the English translation of the Testament, and thought he did not offend God by reading it, notwithstanding the proclamation to the contrary, but thought it right that the people should have this book. He also confessed having several other prohibited books and tracts.

Between December and February, Bainham was examined several times, and, by degrees, was persuaded to abjure the opinions above stated, and submit to the church of Rome. He consented to sign an oath of abjuration with much reluctance, but at length, did so, and was then sentenced to pay a fine of twenty pounds, to walk barefooted before the cross in procession to St. Paul's, and to stand before the preacher at Paul's Cross during sermon time, with a fagot upon his shoulder. This being done, he was released on the 17th of February.

Bainham had scarcely been a month at liberty, before he bitterly bewailed his abjuration, and had no rest or peace of mind, till he had lamented his fall to all his acquaintance, and asked forgiveness of God and all the world, before the "congregation," which in those days met secretly in a warehouse in Bow Lane.

On the Sunday following, he went to St. Augustine's church, with an English New Testament in his hand, and "The obedience of a Christian Man" in his bosom, and standing up in his pew before all the people, he declared openly with tears, that he had denied God, and prayed the people to forgive him, and to beware of his weakness, and not do as he had done. "For," said he, holding up the New Testament, "should I not return again unto the truth, this word of God would damn me, both body and soul, at the day of judgment." He then urged those who heard him, rather to meet death at once, than to do as he had done, "for he would not feel such a hell again, as he then felt, for all this world's good." This being noised abroad, he was soon apprehended, and again committed to the tower of London.

On the 19th of April, 1532, Bainham was brought

before the bishop's registrar and his vicar general, and other divines. The vicar general read the articles and abjuration already mentioned, and produced some letters written by him to the bishop and to his brother. After further inquiries, he was sent back to prison. The next day he was again brought before the vicar general, at All Saints' church, at Barking, and examined respecting the sacrament of the altar. The vicar general declared that "our holy mother, the catholic church, determines and teaches, that there remains no bread in the sacrament of the altar after the words of consecration;" and inquired whether he believed this or not. Bainham answered, that St. Paul called it bread in these words: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," 1 Cor. xi. 26.

He was then charged with having affirmed and believed, that every minister who preached the gospel clearly, had as much power as the pope. To which he answered: "He that preacheth the word of God purely, and liveth thereafter, hath the key that bindeth and looseth both in heaven and earth, which key is the holy scripture that is preached; and the pope hath no power to bind and to loose, but by the key of scripture." He was also charged with having affirmed that Christ was but a man, which he positively denied, declaring that he had never said or thought so. It was not unusual for the papists to add some blasphemous tenet to those of which they accused the lollards and gossellers, without the least ground for so doing.

On the 26th of the same month, he was again examined, and a professor of divinity repeated that the church believed the body of Christ was really in the sacrament of the altar. Bainham answered: "The bread is not Jesus Christ, for Christ's body cannot be chewed with teeth; therefore it is but bread." Being further questioned, whether, in the sacrament of the altar, is the very body of Christ, God and man, in flesh and blood, he at length replied: "He is there, very God and man, in form of bread."

Sentence was then passed, and he was delivered to Sir Richard Gresham, the sheriff, who took him to Newgate, and on the last day of April he was burned in Smithfield, at three o'clock in the afternoon. During his imprisonment, he was very severely treated. For nearly a fortnight he was kept in the bishop's coal-house, with irons upon his legs. He was then carried to Sir Thomas More's house,

and chained to a post for two nights; from thence he was taken to Fulham, and treated with severity for a fortnight. Afterwards he was removed to the Tower, and there severely whipped, to make him revoke his opinions.

Respecting his burning, it was well known at the time, that as he was at the stake, in the midst of the flaming fire, when his arms and legs were half consumed, he spake these words: "O ye papists, behold ye look for miracles, and here now you may see a miracle: for in this fire I feel no more pain, than if I were in a bed of down; but it is to me as a bed of roses." Thus the Lord supported his servant in the midst of that fire, which before had appeared so dreadful to him as to induce him to deny the faith. But when by submitting himself to the will of his persecutors he had obtained his liberty, instead of finding comfort and enjoyment, he found a hell within, harder to bear than any bodily sufferings. Bainham was one of the last victims of Sir Thomas More's zeal against heretics;* for he shortly afterwards resigned the office of lord chancellor, and the fury of the persecution was, in consequence, a little abated.

Yet Sir Thomas More in his early days, published a work,† in which he showed that he was fully aware of the corruptions of the church of Rome. In that work he censured the monastic system, the excessive number of ecclesiastics, objected to images, pleaded for the right of private judgment, laid down as a fundamental principle that no man ought be punished for his religion, that every man might be of what religion he pleased, and that no force should be used except that of persuasion,—neither violence nor even reproaches. Such were the opinions of Sir Thomas More in his best days—his practice, when in authority, the sufferings of Bainham and of many others declare. In early life he "thought the interest of religion itself required this indulgence." He then would have "condemned to banishment or slavery," those who only "reproached" another on the score of religion. In later days he flogged with his own hands those who presumed humbly to plead for liberty to believe the doctrines of truth, willing to be reproached as of the sect every where spoken against, and even signed warrants for burning them alive! Let popery boast of such a supporter—it can number many, who, like

* "The Lord forgive Sir Thomas More;" were among the last words uttered by Bainham.

† His Utopia.

Sir Thomas More, have in their later days sought a refuge from doubts, scruples, and fears within the pale of an "infallible" church: it can bring forward some who, reversing the course of the apostle, have persecuted the faith they once believed; but it cannot speak of many who actually died as martyrs for the principles of bigotry and persecution which their better knowledge once had led them to denounce.

While it is painful to observe that such men as Bilney and Bainham should have been induced to listen to the suggestions of the flesh, so far as even for a short time to renounce the truth, yet we cannot but consider their frailty rather confirms, than weakens the testimony they were enabled to give in behalf of the truths for which they suffered. It evidently shows that they were not carried forward by a mere enthusiastic persuasion. They had weighed the danger, had shrunk from it, and started aside: *human* strength could not stand the trial. But a wounded conscience who can bear? *They* could not; and through the power of Jesus, who alone can strengthen, they were enabled no longer "to count their lives dear unto them, having respect to the recompense of the reward!" Then let not the church of Rome attempt to triumph over these witnesses for the truth.

A recent historian of the Roman catholic persuasion speaks of the persecutions which have been described in the following terms:—"Of the numbers brought before the primate, and the bishops of London and Lincoln, almost all were induced to abjure; a few of the most obstinate forfeited their lives." After considering the details just given, which are confirmed by many indisputable and concurring witnesses, and even by the evidence of the bishops' own registers, what can we think of such a mode of expression, when applied to such painful and bloody scenes? Surely, it is strong proof of a wish to conceal the *real* state of facts from the British public.

Again, while regretting the weakness of these professors of the gospel, let us not be hasty in condemning them. "Who art thou, O man, who judgest another?" Who can say how he would have behaved in such a situation? As Fuller justly observes, "It takes more to make a valiant man than being able to call another coward!" But these things have happened for an example unto us. They show us that we cannot stand in our own strength;

then may we be led to look more constantly to the Saviour in whom alone we have righteousness and strength. Let us not forget this, whether called to confess him before men, or whether struggling with sin and unbelief, maintaining that conflict which the believer must endure throughout his life. In either case, let us look to the Author and Finisher of our faith; and may we be found continuing therein "stedfast unto the end."

We have another instance of the personal activity of Sir Thomas More in the case of JOHN PETIT, a respectable citizen and grocer of London, who was intimate with Frith, Bilney, and Tindal, and with them had tasted the sweetness of God's holy word. He was an eloquent and well-informed man, and one of the members of parliament for the city. King Henry appears to have respected him for his integrity on the following occasion. The king had borrowed large sums of money of private individuals, and applied to parliament that a bill should pass, granting these sums to him as gifts instead of loans. To this Petit objected, saying that he could not, with a safe conscience, allow the bill to pass; that he willingly gave to the king all that he had himself lent; but that he knew not the amount of his neighbour's property; perhaps they had themselves borrowed the money, to lend it the king, and would be ruined if it were not returned.

The chancellor and the clergy suspected that Petit was inclined to "the new religion," as they called it, and that he aided in printing their books. One day, the chancellor, accompanied by the lieutenant of the Tower, came unexpectedly to Petit's house. His wife hastened to call her husband, who was then in his closet at prayer; but she was followed to his private room by the chancellor, who, after some conversation, told him that he must go to the Tower, intimating that he was suspected of having some of "the new books." Petit referred to his books, which his lordship had just seen. "Yet," said the chancellor, "you must go with Mr. Lieutenant." Accordingly, he was taken to the Tower, and confined in a damp, close, unwholesome prison, with only a little straw for his bed; and it was not till after much intercession, that his wife obtained permission to send him some bedding. In this confinement Petit suffered much, and, at length, became dangerously ill: while in this state he was brought before the ecclesiastical court, and a priest was ready to give evidence that he had

Tindal's testament in English, and had assisted in publishing heretical books. But, upon being confronted with Petit, the priest asked his forgiveness, saying, "I never saw you before this time; how then should I be able to accuse you?" Upon this he was dismissed, and allowed to return home, but died immediately after from the effects of the confinement to which he had been subjected by the order of Sir Thomas More.

Petit appears to have been highly respected by his fellow-citizens, and his fate excited considerable interest among them. The priests endeavoured to check this by giving out that he was a heretic, and to confirm their assertion, they had recourse to one of those juggling tricks which have often been practised by the church of Rome. He was buried by his own desire in the churchyard; availing themselves of this, the priests poured soap-ashes upon his grave, which hindered the grass from growing; they then called upon the people to remark that God would not suffer the grass to grow upon a heretic's grave in consecrated ground!

Some persons have spoken of the times of popery as happy days, when compared with the present times; but surely such anecdotes as these at once prove the contrary. Let the merchants and opulent traders, as well as the artisan and the labourer of the present day, ask themselves how they would like to live in a country or under a religion where they were exposed to the treatment described in these pages!

We have already seen that the popish ecclesiastics prohibited all "the books of the gospellers," as they called the works which were published in the English language, as comments upon the bible, or explanatory of its contents. It may be well, therefore, to refer to a work called "The Festival," which was reprinted by the Roman catholics in 1532; as its contents will give us some idea of the instructions they wished to give, instead of the truths contained in the scriptures. This book was compiled in the preceding century, chiefly from the lives of the saints; it contains an account of all the festivals in the year, with a sermon upon each, which was read publicly in the churches. An extract, relative to worshipping the cross, has already been given, (page 81.) From the preface, this book appears to have been designed to increase the superstitious reverence of the people for the saints, "showing unto them what the holy saints suffered and did for God's"

sake, and his love ; so that they should have more devotion or faith in God's saints, and with better will come to the church to serve God, and pray to his saints for their help."

In this volume we find the form of a curse against sinners and heretics, very similar to that already given, (pages 117, 118;) it was read four times a year, and the names of individuals inserted, as occasion required. Much is said upon the importance of praying for the dead, "for all the souls that are in the pains of purgatory, there waiting for the mercy of Almighty God,* that God, of his endless mercy, may lessen their pains by means of our prayers, and bring them to the everlasting bliss of heaven." The souls of those who have given book, bell, chalice or vestment, or any other thing to the church, are not forgotten.

The great end of all preaching, as stated by the apostle, namely, Christ Jesus, and him crucified, is entirely neglected, while such tales as the following abound. After some cautions against irreverence in time of divine service, it is related, that St. Augustin saw two women prating together in the pope's chapel, and the fiend sat on their necks writing in a great roll all they talked about! Another story tells of four men, who stole an ox belonging to an abbot, who had recourse to his usual form of cursing and excommunication. Three of the men were alarmed, and confessed their sin, and received absolution; the fourth died without having so done, and in consequence his spirit walked, to the great annoyance of the neighbourhood; at length, "as the parish priest went one night with God's body (the consecrated bread) to a sick man," the spirit met him, and told him why he walked, and entreated that his wife would go to the abbot, and make amends; this having been done, the abbot absolved him,† "and he went to rest and joy for evermore!" By this, and similar narratives, it was taught that a soul which departed without having confessed to a priest, and received absolution from him, could not enter into eternal happiness.

These extracts will probably satisfy the reader's curiosity; several other books of a similar tendency might also be quoted, but such tales are not worthy of notice. It is

* The reader will observe that all the souls in purgatory are said to be certain of bliss at last. This is one reason why Latimer said he had rather be in purgatory than in Lollard's Tower.

† That the Romish church holds that absolution can be granted to the dead, plainly appears by the office for "absolving those who died under sentence of excommunication" in the "Rituale Romanum."

awful to think that vile trash should thus be set forth as truth, and substituted for the doctrines of the gospel, and the precepts of the word of God, while bonds and imprisonment, and even death itself, awaited all those who were found possessing a Testament in their own language, and studying its contents. But we cannot wonder that the scriptures should be prohibited, when we find that such idle tales were sanctioned by the church of Rome; and histories of a very similar nature still are set forth by its authority. The apostle, having set forth Christ Jesus, as giving himself for our sins, that we might be delivered from this evil world, according to the will of God and our Father, declared, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed." If this and other passages, contained in the scriptures, had been allowed to gain access to the minds of the people, these lying legends must have fallen to the ground long before the period now under notice. It is important to refer to works of this nature, as they at once show us why the reading of the scriptures was so strenuously opposed, and why, as is stated in "The Festival," the church of Rome considers that "it is enough for them (the people) to believe as holy church teacheth them." Ought we not fervently to bless God for the reformation, which has broken these bands of superstition, and given us *THE BOOK*, in which is pointed out to the weakest and most uninstructed inquirer, that Holy Spirit of truth who will guide us into all truth; and which tells of a Saviour, able and willing to save all that come unto him?

In the year 1532, another instance occurred of the contemptible spite which the popish ecclesiastics have frequently manifested towards the dead bodies of those they call heretics. At that time it was usual for wills to begin with the following phrase:—"I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, and to our Lady Saint Mary, and to all the saints in heaven." William Tracy, a respectable gentleman of Gloucestershire, having learned the folly of looking to saints for aid which they could not afford, departed from this superstitious form, and when his last will was read, after his decease, it was found to begin in the following manner:—

"First, and before all other things, I commit myself to God and his mercy, believing, without any doubt or mistrust, that by his grace and the merits of Jesus Christ, and by the virtue of his passion and his resurrection,

I have, and shall have, remission of all my sins, and also resurrection of body and soul, according as it is written : ' I believe that my Redeemer liveth, and that in the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and in my flesh shall see my Saviour ;' this my hope is laid up in my bosom. And, touching my soul, this faith is sufficient (as I suppose) without any other man's works or merits. My confidence and belief is, that there is but one God, and one Mediator between God and man, which is Jesus Christ ; so that I take none in heaven nor in earth to be Mediator between me and God, but only Jesus Christ. All others be but petitioners for receiving of grace, but none are able to give influence of grace, and, therefore, I will not bestow any part of my goods with an intent that any man should say or do anything to help my soul, for therein I trust only in the promises of Christ. And touching the distribution of my temporal goods, my purpose is, by the grace of God, to bestow them to be accepted as the fruits of faith, so that I do not suppose that my merit shall be by the good bestowing of them, but my merit is the faith of Jesus Christ only, by whom such works are good. And we should ever consider that true saying, that a good work maketh not a good man, but a good man maketh a good work ; for faith maketh a man both good and righteous ; ' for a righteous man liveth by faith, and whatsoever springeth not of faith, is sin.' " (Rom. xiv.)

The admirable summary of doctrine contained in these extracts, deserves our attention, as it is another proof of the progress which the doctrines of truth had made in England, before the king quarrelled with the pope. Indeed, as we have already seen, this good seed was sown long before ; and, like the good seed in the parable, its growth, although hardly to be perceived, was certain.

The reader will suppose such doctrines were not pleasing to the papists of that day. Tracy died in the year 1532, and his son, as executor, brought his father's will to the archbishop's court, to be proved in the usual manner ; its contents, however, did not pass unnoticed ; it was laid before the convocation of the clergy, the deceased was condemned as a heretic, and an order sent to Parker, the chancellor of the diocese of Worcester, commanding him to cause Tracy's body to be dug up, and cast forth from consecrated ground. The chancellor went beyond his powers, and committed the body to the flames, forgetting,

that although, by ecclesiastical law, he might remove the corpse from the churchyard, and bury it in a dunghill, yet he had no authority to burn it, without applying for a writ in the usual course, as if the accused had been alive. The king, as we have already seen, wished to limit the power of the clergy, and readily countenanced a prosecution against the chancellor, who was removed from his office, and fined a considerable sum.

About this time, THOMAS PHILLIPS was apprehended, and sent to the Tower, upon suspicion of heresy. In searching him, a copy of Tracy's will was found in his possession, and also some butter and cheese was discovered in his chamber, although it was Lent; and such food was at that season forbidden by the church of Rome! A letter was also found which had been given to him when on his way to the Tower, containing exhortations to continue steadfast in the truth, and advising him not to reply to any accusations, unless the accusers were brought forward. Bishop Stokesly considered these circumstances as sufficient proofs of heresy, and required him to abjure. Phillips appears to have followed the advice given in the letter, and refused to relate any particulars, so as to supply them with evidence against himself, but offered to swear to be obedient as a christian man, and to declare that he would not hold any heresies, or favour heretics. The bishop refused to accept of such a general declaration, and Phillips appealed to the king, as supreme head of the church. Upon this the bishop excommunicated him; but there is no account of any further proceedings against him, except that the pope complained to the English ambassador that a heretic, having appealed to the king, was taken out of the bishop's hands, and tried and acquitted in the king's courts. This, we may conclude, alluded to the case of Phillips. Having thus obtained his liberty, he complained to the house of commons of the manner in which he had been treated, which probably was the cause of a petition presented to the king by the commons, in the year 1532, complaining that the clergy harassed the laity by vexatious prosecutions in the bishops' courts, and also that they had made canons which were contrary to the laws of the land. The king sent this complaint to the convocation, and commanded them to give an answer.

The reply was ably and artfully drawn up. The ecclesiastics affirmed that they exercised their power with the

greatest moderation, except upon certain evil-disposed persons, infected, and utterly corrupt with the pestilent poison of heresy; and to have peace with such, they said, would be against the gospel of our Saviour Christ, who declared "he came not to send peace, but a sword!" Respecting their canons they said: "We take our authority for making laws to be grounded upon the scripture of God, and the determination of holy church!" As to the opposition to the law of the land, they said, that as these canons were made by the authority, and were perfectly conformable to the will of God, it would be proper for his majesty and the parliament to change their laws, and bring them into perfect conformity to those of the church!

Such a doctrine still prevails in many popish countries, where the monarch and people are held in subjection to the church of Rome; but it was too bold a sentiment for England, even in those days, although it might have succeeded a few years before. The king sent them two simple propositions, to which he required their assent: 1. That the clergy should make no laws in future, without his sanction. 2. That those already made, should be submitted to the examination of a committee, chosen equally from the houses of parliament and the clergy; and all such as they disapproved, should be immediately repealed. These were hard terms. The clergy resisted for some time, and even offered to submit all their canons to the examination of the king alone. Henry, however, chose to have his will complied with, and the clergy were obliged to submit; which they did, but not without reminding the king that, in his own book against Luther, he had argued for the authority of the church, which they trusted he would not revoke.

The case of Phillips was more distinctly brought forward by the house of commons, who presented an address to the house of peers, requiring that the bishop of London should be called upon to answer for his proceedings: their request was not complied with; but, in 1534, an act was passed, in some respects restricting the power of the clergy in punishing heretics.

Archbishop Warham died in 1532, shortly after the proceedings in convocation above mentioned. He was a man of considerable ability, and a favourer of learning; but he was a bitter persecutor of the lollards, and inclined to be credulous on all points wherein the interests of the

church of Rome were concerned ; as sufficiently appeared from his countenancing the imposture of the Maid of Kent, which we shall have occasion to notice hereafter.

The king deeply felt the importance of having a man of mildness and prudence, and also of firmness and learning, in the see of Canterbury, as matters then stood. These qualities did not appear to be united in any of the bishops ; and he resolved that Dr. CRANMER should be the new primate. With this view, the king directed him to return immediately from Germany, where he was engaged in matters relative to the king's divorce. The reader is doubtless aware, that Henry, when very young, was married, against his will, to Catherine, the widow of his elder brother, prince Arthur. About the year 1527, he began openly to manifest scruples respecting this marriage, which, in fact, had never been considered lawful, except as sanctioned by the power which the pope assumed of dispensing with the laws of God, whenever he thought proper ; thus, according to the word of our Lord, making "the commandment of God of none effect, through the tradition of men." Henry applied to the court of Rome for a divorce, which the pope at first promised to grant, without difficulty ; but finding that this would be displeasing to Charles the fifth, the emperor of Germany, the nephew of queen Catherine, and that Henry would probably marry Ann Boleyn, who was generally esteemed a favourer of the "new doctrines," he endeavoured to evade the fulfilment of his promise,* and threw various delays and impediments in the way of the divorce, so that it plainly appeared he never intended to give his consent. These particulars are merely noticed, to show that this matter entirely depended upon the pope having blasphemously assumed a power superior to the word of God ; and thus the very means by which the Romish pontiffs sought to strengthen their authority, eventually became the cause of overturning their dominion in these kingdoms !

* The pope was anxious to avoid a quarrel with Henry, while he dared not offend Charles, at that time the most powerful monarch in Europe. He endeavoured by all the means in his power to delay a final decision, hoping that some expedient might be found to satisfy both parties. Among other plans, he stated to Sir Gregory Cassali, Henry's envoy at Rome, that he would allow his master to have two wives, if he would not pursue the divorce. In Rapin's "History of England" and Herbert's "History of Henry the eighth," the reader will find a full account of the proceedings in this affair.

CRANMER WAS descended from an ancient family, and acquired much reputation at the university of Cambridge, where he held an important situation, to which he was appointed on account of his learning. Having married the daughter of a gentleman, he resigned his fellowship, but continued to reside at Cambridge, and retained his office of lecturer at one of the colleges. His wife dying in about a year after their marriage, he was again chosen fellow. such was the esteem in which he was held; he was also offered an appointment in cardinal Wolsey's college at Oxford. Cranmer's studies at first were confined to the school learning; but his attention having been drawn to the religious controversies of the day, they brought him acquainted with the scriptures and the truths contained therein, which he studied for three years; and when appointed public examiner in the university, he would not allow those to pass who were ignorant of the leading facts recorded in the bible. In this he engaged the more earnestly, from considering the monstrous power assumed by the pope, of dispensing with the laws of God whenever he pleased. Indeed, it was hardly possible for any man to believe that such a power could be possessed by characters who were guilty of the most scandalous vices, and were among the very vilest of men; for, let it be remembered, even Roman catholic historians admit, that several of these popes, who are blasphemously called "God upon earth," were guilty of vices and crimes far more execrable than the worst which even they impute to Henry the eighth; crimes which it is horrible even to allude to. And yet they contend for the infallibility of these infamous men, and assert that the popes possess a power which the ALMIGHTY has said he will not *himself* exercise, namely, of dispensing with his own word, and changing that will, which he has declared shall not fail, nor be altered. We may also notice, there sometimes have been two, and even three popes at once, each of whom excommunicated and anathematized his rivals, and was considered as infallible by his adherents, until perhaps a general council settled the question, by deposing them all, and thus practically evidencing that none of them were so!

These manifest errors induced Cranmer to reject the pope's authority, and to study the scriptures as the only means whereby the will of God can be learned.* Although

* The Roman catholics assert that Cranmer was the first archbishop of Canterbury who rejected the pope's authority. This is not correct;

the full light of gospel truth did not at once burst upon his mind, and he for many years maintained the doctrine of transubstantiation, with some lesser errors of the church of Rome; yet he appears to have been early brought to the knowledge of the truth on the great and important doctrine of justification by faith. This freed him from many of the errors of popery, and at length he attained that full knowledge which appears in his later writings.

Cranmer was a humble conscientious man, and appears always to have acted with simplicity and integrity; and when appointed to the highest situation in the land, he never failed to oppose whatever he deemed wrong, faithfully warning those who were above him, and acting with mildness towards others whom he considered in error. For, although, during Henry's reign, he did not differ widely from the church of Rome respecting the sacrament of the altar, yet he by no means willingly joined in the proceedings of the persecutors of the lollards.

He was highly respected and esteemed by Henry, to whom he became known by suggesting the propriety of referring to the word of God and its precepts, rather than the authority of the pope. On this account, and for his constant endeavours to promote the reformation in England, he is very obnoxious to the papists; and no one connected with the events of that day has been more violently assailed, or more studiously misrepresented by Roman catholics, than Cranmer.

These slanders have been often refuted; but, according to the constant practice of the advocates of popery, they are repeated over and over again quite as eagerly in the present day, as when they were first asserted by Gardiner, Harpsfield, Sanders, and others. Romish writers have not scrupled to represent this devoted servant of Christ as a dissolute, depraved, ignorant, vindictive, mean, and time-serving character. That he was the *very reverse*, in all respects we do not hesitate to declare! If the reader who peruses this sketch of the history of those times is satisfied, as we trust he will be, that Cranmer has been belied by the writers already referred to, let him inquire further

but they continue to make this assertion, although it has often been clearly proved from history that Chicheley and others, even Warham himself, opposed the pope, and refused to submit implicitly to the papal authority; but this was on temporal grounds.

into the merits of the cause which is thus supported by direct falsehood.

It is true that the cause of God and his truth depends not upon the character of men ; and even if Cranmer were such as the Romish writers represent, it would not be an argument against the reformation. But it is important to point out the real character of Cranmer, as the adversaries of the truth have endeavoured to attack the doctrines of eternal life through him ; and if a simple narrative of facts shows that he has been falsely accused, the whole charge at once falls to the ground.

At that period Henry had determined to free himself and his subjects from the power of the pope, but did not intend wholly to part with the superstitious practices of the church of Rome. He rightly estimated the character of Cranmer, and protected him against the malice of his enemies, never manifesting any displeasure at the manner in which the archbishop often remonstrated against his conduct, or opposed his measures ; to these remonstrances he listened or not, as his inclinations directed him ; yet he could not but respect the motives which evidently directed the conduct of Cranmer. Henry had not designed wholly to renounce the errors of popery ; but God, who rules the hearts of men as he pleases, made him the means of opening the way for the blessed reformation ; by which the inhabitants of our country have become acquainted with the glad tidings of salvation, through Christ alone, and have been enabled to impart the same message of peace to other lands.

Cranmer was unwilling to accept the primacy in such times ; but Henry was not a master whose will could be disobeyed ; however, he humbly declined the office, and purposely delayed his return, hoping that the king might appoint some other in his stead. Henry rightly viewed this conduct as an evidence of the very qualities he hoped to find in Cranmer, and would not be diverted from his purpose. Six months, however, passed away, before the matter was finally settled.

In January, 1533, the king sent to the pope for the usual bulls or decrees, appointing Cranmer archbishop of Canterbury. The pope could not be pleased at the promotion of a man, who was well known as an opposer of his authority, and who also had been in familiar intercourse with many of the German reformers ; but in the critical

state of his connexion with England, he dared not refuse to recognise the appointment.

A great difficulty still remained. When the prelates were consecrated, they were required to take an oath of obedience to the pope, besides the oath by which they engaged to be faithful to the king. These oaths, in some points, contradicted each other; as by the oath to the pope, the prelates became his subjects, rather than subjects of their rightful monarch. Cranmer, also, felt that the church of Rome had fallen into errors on many important points; thus, to swear obedience to all the rules, decrees, ordinances, and laws of the pope, and that he would not be in council, treaty, or any act, in which any thing should be imagined against the pope or the church of Rome, their rights, seats, honours or powers, was contrary to his conscience, and would restrain him from doing what he might consider to be his duty to God, to the king, and to the church of Christ. In this dilemma, the doctors of the canon law proposed that, before he took the oath, he should make a solemn protestation, stating clearly that he did not promise obedience to the pope on any point which was contrary to the law of God, against the authority of the king, and the welfare of the state; and that he did not design to be restrained by the authority of the pope from any measures which might promote the reformation of the christian religion, and especially in the church of England.

There had been many instances of protestations, and mental reservations, made in secret; but such proceedings, though expressly countenanced by the church of Rome,* were not consistent with the simplicity and uprightness of Cranmer. He made this protestation openly, not only repeating it at the time he took the oath, but publicly declaring it three times. First, in the chapter house, before suitable witnesses, when it was inserted in his register as a record; secondly, kneeling at the high altar in the face of the congregation and before the bishops, when he was consecrated; and, lastly, when he received his pall, or investiture, from the pope. Surely Cranmer cannot justly be

* In 1532, archbishop Warham protested against all laws that should interfere with the authority of the pope, and the rights of the church. He delivered this protest into the hands of a notary, in the presence of three witnesses, but it was done privately in an upper chamber of his own palace at Lambeth.

accused of insincerity in this matter; yet the papists have not hesitated to make this a subject of calumny against him.

The king's divorce now was brought to a conclusion; and as this was done against the consent of the pope, it was evident that the next step would be for the king to declare England independent of the authority of the see of Rome. During some years this had been a constant subject of discussion; and by degrees the king, his council, the parliament, and great part of the nation, saw the necessity of such a proceeding. The power assumed by the pope, of dispensing with the laws of God, shocked the minds of many; and it was found that, by taking the oaths of implicit obedience to the pope, in temporal as well as in spiritual authority, the clergy had offended against a law which expressly prohibited any Englishman from becoming subject to a foreign power.

This led to opposing the pope's claims for the large sums of money which were every year exacted from England,* and remitted to Rome on several accounts. In the

* They are thus stated by Muller and other historians, but the exact amounts levied cannot be ascertained. 1. Sums paid for consecrated trinkets; these were a considerable article of traffic. 2. Annates, or a sum of money considered equal to one year's income, and paid by the bishops and inferior clergy, on being appointed to their dioceses and livings. The annates were originally paid by the clergy to assist in defending Christendom against infidelity, but were afterwards collected by the pope for himself; 800,000 ducats, equal to nearly three millions of our money, had been remitted to Rome on this account only, since the beginning of the preceding reign. 3. By appeals; all important controversies being referred to the pope for decision. 4. An annual pension of 300 marks, first given to the pope in the year 852. 5. Dispensations. 6. Indulgences. 7. Pardons; the sums levied by these means were enormous, and supported a vast tribe of idle and rapacious officers, who are described by Chaucer, and other writers. 8. Sums levied whenever a legate was sent to England. 9. Mortuaries due at the death of prelates. 10. Peter pence, first granted by Ina, king of the West Saxons, to pope Gregory the Second, A.D. 626. This was a penny paid for every chimney; and, at a low estimate, amounted to £7,500 per annum, fully equal to £70,000 in our days. 11. The sums spent by English pilgrims on visiting Rome, and other holy places on the continent, which probably were not much less in value than the amount now expended by the British travellers. 12. The Tenth, or the tenth part of the sums received by the clergy as tithes. These enormous exactions, paid without any benefit in return, were a perpetual burden upon the kingdom, and impoverished it in a manner we cannot fully estimate. To the above particulars must be added the annual income of the bishoprics, and other ecclesiastical preferments held by foreigners who always resided abroad. In the reign of Henry

year 1532, the annates, or first fruits, were transferred to the king. Having gone thus far, the next step was to consider whether the pope had any supreme authority in England; and this was discussed in the parliament, and also in the convocation, which was a sort of parliament or council of the clergy.

It is unnecessary to enter into these arguments at length. The doctrine asserted by papists of superior power being given to St. Peter, was fully refuted by showing that St. Paul claimed an equality with the chief of the apostles, whom he expresses to be Peter, James, and John, not Peter alone; and that he withstood the former to the face, when he considered him in the wrong. (Gal. ii. 11.) In the text so often quoted, "Thou art Peter," &c. Matt. xvi. 18. the opponents of the pope's supremacy considered the rock as referring to the confession made by the apostle, or to Christ himself, as the only true foundation of the church; indeed, if applied to Peter, as a person, it proved too much, as then it must also be applied to the popes, as individuals, an assertion almost too gross for the most ignorant to maintain. From reference to the fathers, it plainly appeared that, till the days of Boniface the third, in the seventh century, the bishops of Rome did not assume power over others in spiritual matters; and it was not till the days of Boniface the eighth, A.D. 1294, that the popes assumed temporal authority over kings and emperors, and maintained, in positive terms, that princes and governors had no power except that which they derived from Christ's vicar on earth. This power had never been readily submitted to in any country; and in England it had been frequently resisted; several acts of parliament having restrained that very power; and they had been renewed from time to time, till the preceding century. With respect to the king's authority in ecclesiastical matters, reference was made to many documents and evidences; amongst others, to the letters from the popes to the kings in former times, beginning with the most ancient writing relative to the christian religion in England, in which pope Eleutherius twice calls king Lucius, "God's vicar in his kingdom."

One thing especially deserves our notice. Gardiner, Tostal, Stokesly, and many others, the strongest opposers of the truths of the gospel, and the most violent persecu-
the third, the amount thus received by Italians, was more than three times the amount of the king's revenue.

tors of the lollards, at that time actually wrote and preached expressly against the authority claimed by the pope. Gardiner, in particular, wrote a book, entitled, "True Obedience," in which he positively denies that the bishop of Rome ever had any power granted to him from God, that he should rule over kings and princes! This he proves from the scriptures, as well as from uninspired authorities; and Bonner wrote a preface to the book, strongly approving its contents, and expressly stating that the controversy between the king and the pope did not arise from the king's marriage, but from the tyranny of the pope; whom he styles "a very ravening wolf, dressed in sheep's clothing, calling himself the servant of servants!" Yet afterwards, in queen Mary's days, these men sat in judgment, and condemned others for objecting to his authority! While the papists misrepresent Cranmer's proceedings, which have just been mentioned, they pass over in silence this absolute inconsistency and timeserving conduct of their prelates! Surely, they ought either to admit their arguments, or disown their proceedings. The most strenuous opponent of papal supremacy need not seek for stronger arguments than those contained in the writings of Gardiner and Tostal, nor need submission to kingly authority be inculcated more fully and explicitly than in the words of Stokesley.

Fox gives the arguments of these prelates at considerable length, and then adds: "Judge for thyself, loving reader, by these things, confessed, alleged, allowed, proved, and confirmed by pen, set forth by words, defended, and by oath subscribed by these bishops and doctors, whether Martin Luther himself, or any of his followers, could or did ever say more against the proud usurpation of the bishop of Rome, than these men have done. If they dissembled otherwise than they meant, who could dissemble so deeply?" This is one of the passages for which the Roman catholics never will forgive the honest martyrologist; and as they cannot disprove, they boldly deny the truth of what he has written, hoping that the readers will take their assertions, in preference to examining into the incontestible evidences to which Fox refers, and which place his veracity "on a rock that cannot be shaken."

The adherents of the pope became alarmed at these proceedings, particularly the monks and friars, who probably began to fear, that if the authority of the pope was renounced, they would be endangered; and many of them

travelled from place to place, preaching vehemently in favour of the pope. The Carthusians dedicated an exposition of St. Matthew to the king, flattering him for his learning and zeal for religion, telling him "that he was like to an evangelical lion, and a mystical lion's whelp, sent down from heaven to hunt the heretics." Henry, however, was not to be cajoled by these flattering words; he proceeded stedfastly towards the accomplishment of his purposes, and himself wrote a book against "the tyranny and horrible impiety of the pontiff."

It is extremely difficult to separate the history of the followers of the truth, from the secular history of these times; in reality, we may trace the finger of God in these events; causing "the wrath of man to praise Him." To put down the power of the pope, his name was struck out of the books used in the church service, and the bishops were directed to cause more regular and constant preaching on Sundays and holidays than formerly, and especially at Paul's Cross. It was evident that bigoted papists would not assist in this work; thus those who were inclined to the principles of the reformation were more constantly employed than before, and the glad tidings of the gospel were more freely declared to the people. Schoolmasters were ordered to instruct their scholars in these principles, and books written in their defence were widely circulated.* Dr. Sampson, and others, were also encouraged to write against the papal authority; and the former expressly declared, that "there was no more mention of the bishop of Rome in the holy scripture, than of the archbishop of Canterbury." These measures also partly account for the protection which Latimer, and other known opponents to papal supremacy, received from the king. This protection, however, was not extended to all; for Stokesly, and others, were still allowed to continue their cruel persecutions.

The pastoral spirit and correct principles which influenced Cranmer in the discharge of his office, strongly contrast with the proceedings of the Romanists, and they were shown from

* It is much to be regretted that many who engage in the education of youth do not instruct them particularly in the doctrines of the reformation, and inform them concerning the events connected therewith. The Romanists are more attentive to this point, and avail themselves of the ignorance on these subjects which generally prevails among protestants.

the time he entered thereon. In a few months after his appointment, we find him writing to his friend Cromwell—one with whom his interests were most closely combined—in the following terms, respecting a vacant ecclesiastical office, to which Cromwell had recommended a person, for whose discretion, good learning, and religious life, and other commendable merits and qualities, he undertook to answer. Cranmer wrote: “If there be none so apt and meet in the said house, for the said office, as the law will require, then I will be glad to provide the most meetest that can be found in any other place, of the same rule, habit, and religion, of whose sufficiency and ability I ought, if I do my office and duty, to have good experience and knowledge myself, afore that I will admit or prefer him.” He adds: “Ye do know what ambition and desire of promotion is in men of the church, and what indirect means they do use, and have used, to obtain their purpose; which, their unreasonable desires and appetites, I do trust that you will be more ready to oppress and extinguish, than to favour or further the same; and I remit to your wisdom and judgment, what an unreasonable thing it is for a man to labour for his own promotion spiritual.”

Here we may also notice the anecdote of a northern priest, as manifesting Cranmer's patience and forbearance towards those who personally maligned him. An ignorant priest one day sitting with his neighbours at an alehouse, reviled Cranmer, in the terms usual with his party, asserting that he had been an hostler, and had no more learning than the goslings on the green. Cromwell being informed of this, caused the priest to be committed to the Fleet prison. A relation in London knowing the gentle nature of the archbishop, entreated him in behalf of his kinsman. Cranmer, sending for the priest, examined him, when he proved to be, like most of the Romish priests of the day, utterly ignorant of the scriptures, and devoid of all learning. He could just read the mass service, but without understanding Latin, and as to the bible, he could not even tell the name of the father of David, or of Solomon! Cranmer reasoned with him on his conduct, and lamenting the bad spirit of his party, and that “where malice reigneth in men, there reason could take no place,” procured his liberation upon promises of amendment. Such were many of the characters most warmly opposed to Cranmer.

THE LOLLARDS ;

*Or some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England
between the years 1400 and 1546.*



PART VII.

Harding is detected reading a New Testament, and burned.—Frith.—His arguments respecting the Sacrament.—Refuses to escape.—Is burned with Hewet.—Henry's Marriage with Ann Boleyn.—The Pope's Supremacy set aside.—The Maid of Kent.—More, Fisher, and others, executed as Traitors, for refusing to admit the King's Supremacy.—Cranmer preserves the Princess Mary.—Latimer appointed Bishop of Worcester.—Cromwell appointed Viceregent.—First edition of the whole Bible printed in English.—Ann Boleyn beheaded.—Joy of the Papists on that occasion.—Tindal put to death.—The smaller Monasteries suppressed.

IN the history of THOMAS HARDING, which should have been noticed before, we have a striking instance of the eagerness with which books of the gospellers were sought for, and the danger incurred by those who possessed them. Harding lived at Chesham, in Buckinghamshire, and was accused before the bishop of Lincoln at the time Tylsworth was burned, (see part 2, page 36,) but was then allowed to escape, upon doing penance; among other things, he was enjoined not to leave his parish, except to perform a pilgrimage every year to Atheridge.

During Easter, 1502, when the greater part of the inhabitants of the town were engaged at the church in

their superstitious ceremonies, Harding availed himself of the opportunity, and wandered alone into the adjoining woods, that he might worship God in spirit and in truth, free from interruption. One of the townsmen, happening to pass that way, saw him reading a book of devotion, and hastened to the officers, declaring that he had seen Harding in the woods reading a book ! Upon receiving this information, they ran to his house to search for books : and, after a close examination, they found part of an English bible concealed under the floor. This was enough ; Harding was immediately apprehended, and he and his books were carried to bishop Longland, at Wooburn, who examined him with angry words rather than sound argument. Harding, finding this to be the case, said but little, and fixed his trust upon the Lord. He was then sent to a dungeon in the bishop's prison, known by the expressive name of "little ease," where he remained for some time ; when, being again brought before bishop Longland, he was condemned as a relapsed heretic, and committed to the care of Roland Messenger, vicar of High Wycombe, with a charge to see him burned. Harding was then carried back to Chesham, where Messenger preached on the authority of the pope, and other similar points ; the aged martyr being compelled to stand before the preacher during the sermon. When it was concluded, he was led to the altar, and the priest inquired whether he believed that there was any other substance in the sacrament besides Christ's natural body. Harding replied, "The articles of our belief do teach us that our Saviour Christ was born of the virgin Mary, that he suffered death under Pilate, and rose again the third day ; that he then ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God in the glory of his Father."

This simple scriptural declaration did not accord with the popish idea of the *real presence*, as they call it, and he was taken to a house in the town, that he might be in readiness to be burned the day following. There he remained all night in prayer and meditation. The next morning he was led forth to execution, followed by a great crowd ; many of whom lamented his fate, while some cruel persons rejoiced. When chained to the stake, Harding desired the people to pray for him ; and expressing his forgiveness for all his enemies and persecutors, commended

his spirit to God, and suffered very patiently, lifting up his hands to heaven, and saying, "Jesus, receive my spirit." After the fire was kindled, one of the bystanders threw a billet at his head, which dashed out his brains, and thus put an end to his sufferings. Why he did so, it was hard to say, unless it was to procure the forty days' pardon of sins then usually offered by proclamation to all who brought fagots for the burning of a heretic: many persons were so ignorant of the spirit of Christ, as to cause even their children to bring fagots on these occasions, that they also might partake of the supposed benefits thus offered. In the evening a solemn service was performed, as a mark of rejoicing for the burning of this good man.

JOHN FRITH was born in Kent, and educated at Cambridge, where he was eminent for learning; and by the blessing of God upon the instructions of Tindal, he became acquainted with the truths of the gospel.

About the year 1525, cardinal Wolsey selected several persons from the university of Cambridge and other places, who were distinguished for their abilities, and appointed them to be members of the college he was then building at Oxford, which is now called Christ Church. Frith was one of this number; and several of these persons used frequently to converse together upon the superstitious errors and abuses which had crept into the church of Rome. This being reported to the cardinal, they were accused of heresy, and confined in a dungeon under the college, close to the cellar where the salt fish, (which was then much used for food on fast days,) was kept. The unwholesomeness of the place, the ill savour of the salt fish, and their scanty diet, soon made them ill. After having been confined from February to August, three of the number died, upon which the cardinal ordered that the others should be treated with less severity. Frith continued in the university for some time; but when two of his friends, named Delaber and Garrett, were forced to recant, he thought it was time to depart, and escaped beyond sea.

About two years afterwards he returned to England, but was not long allowed to remain in peace. Sir Thomas More, the lord chancellor, whose displeasure had been excited by Frith's treatise on purgatory, which has been already noticed, (part 4, page 88,) caused him to be sought for. Frith, for a time, escaped, by changing his dress, and

by not continuing long in one place: at length he was betrayed and committed to the Tower.

While in confinement, he underwent several examinations before the bishops and the chancellor, principally respecting the sacrament of the altar; upon which a false friend obtained his opinions in writing, and sent them to the chancellor. His four principal arguments may be stated as follows:—1. That the pope's opinion respecting the sacrament, cannot be considered as an article of faith necessary to be believed upon pain of damnation. 2. That as Christ's natural body was in all respects like unto ours, *sua* only excepted, there can be no reason why it should be in two, or many places at once, contrary to the nature of our body. 3. That we are not to understand Christ's words by what we may conceive to be the meaning of the words, but by comparing one passage of scripture with another. 4. That the manner in which the sacrament is administered by the priests, is quite different from that in which it was administered by Christ himself.

Some of his further arguments were, that it was not the presence of Christ's body in the bread that could save us, but his presence in our hearts by faith. That the patriarchs of old knew nothing of this belief in the sacrament, yet were saved by faith in the Redeemer: and that we were to be saved by the same faith as they, not by a different faith. That the manna of old was a figure of Christ, and was given to nourish the body, as faith in Christ nourishes the soul; yet no one ever said that the manna was the very body of Christ; then, since the manna and the bread were both figures of Christ, why should we be called upon to believe that the bread was changed more than the manna? Frith referred to Augustine, as having expressly stated, that he did not account the sacraments to be necessary for salvation, but only signs and tokens, as seals of God's promises, to stir up the hearts of the faithful, and for a bond of union in the church of Christ.

His reasonings upon this subject are sound and powerful, and caused Gardiner, with others, to resolve upon his destruction; for which purpose they planned that Dr. Curwin should mention Frith in a sermon which he preached before the king, in such a manner as should inform Henry that he was kept in custody by Cromwell, rather for his protection, than with any view of punishment. Their

plan succeeded; and Henry ordered the archbishop of Canterbury, and Cromwell, to examine further into the case, that he might either be brought to recant, or be condemned. Accordingly, Frith was taken to Croydon. The archbishop sent one of his gentlemen, and an inferior attendant, named Perlebean, who put him on board a wherry, and they rowed to Lambeth. While they were on the water, the gentleman began to exhort Frith to consider the danger of his situation, and not rashly cast himself away. He added, that he was sure the archbishop and Cromwell both wished to preserve his life, and would do so if they could; but if he obstinately and openly adhered to his opinions, it was impossible that they could save him.

Frith thanked the gentleman for his good will, but told him that he could not speak contrary to his conscience; that he was fully prepared to defend his opinions from the scriptures, and the ancient fathers, so that if they condemned him, they would also condemn St. Augustine, and many of the fathers, nay, even those who were bishops and popes of Rome in the first centuries. He also declared that death in this cause would be preferable to life, in perpetual bondage, and under the upbraidings of his conscience, adding, "Almighty God, whose cause I now defend, and not mine own, knoweth what he hath to do with his poor servant; by his grace, assuredly I intend never to start from his cause, or otherwise relinquish it, so long as he gives me life."

From Lambeth, they proceeded towards Croydon on foot. The gentleman, still feeling much compassion for Frith, as well as admiration for his abilities, consulted with Perlebean, and they agreed that when they came to Brixton Hill, they would let him escape among the thick woods, which then closely bordered each side of the road, that he might take the nearest way into Kent, where his friends resided; while they would call for assistance, and employ some time, in pretending to search the woods on the other side, towards Wandsworth; intending afterwards to proceed to Croydon, and say that their prisoner had escaped, and they had been unable to find him.

When they came to Brixton, the gentleman told Frith what they designed, and that he would willingly incur the risk of letting him go, rather than aid in carrying him to his death; and endeavoured to persuade him to adopt

this plan, but in vain. He told them that he had formerly desired to escape, that he might prosecute his studies in the scriptures, but having been now taken by the permission of God, and delivered into the hands of the bishops for the sake of the truth, and having already been called to defend it, he could not then flee, without forsaking his God, and deserving eternal condemnation; so that if they left him, and went on to Croydon, he would follow them. He then thanked them for their kind intentions, and went forward, cheerfully spending the time "in pleasant and godly conversation," till they arrived at Croydon.

The next day Frith was brought before the archbishop, and the other prelates who were joined in commission with him by the king's order, and examined for a considerable time respecting his opinions. The particulars of this examination he stated in a letter to his friends. They first inquired whether he believed there was such a place as purgatory, in which the soul might be cleansed from its sins after this life was over. He said that he did not believe there was such a place, for man was made only of body and soul, and the first in this life suffered by the cross of Christ, which he layeth upon every child that he receiveth; as affliction, worldly oppression, persecution, imprisonment, &c., and, lastly, by the reward of sin, even death; while the soul was cleansed by the word of God, John i. 1, which we receive through faith to the salvation both of body and soul; and unless they could show him a third part of man, besides the body and the soul, he could not believe in purgatory.

With respect to the sacrament of the altar, on being asked whether it was the very body of Christ or not, he answered, referring them to what St. Paul states in his epistle to the Corinthians, adding, "Furthermore, in that the sacrament is distributed, it is Christ's body, signifying, that as surely as the sacrament is distributed unto us, so surely is Christ's body, and the fruit of his passion distributed unto all faithful people. In that it is received, it is Christ's body, signifying, that as surely as the outward man receiveth the sacrament with his teeth and mouth, so doth the inward man, through faith, receive Christ's body, and the fruit of his passion, and is as sure of it as of the bread which he eateth."

Being asked whether Christ's natural body, flesh, blood,

and bone, was not contained in the sacrament, and actually there present; he said that he could not think it was. The prelates then reasoned with him from Augustine and Chrysostom: he met them on their own ground, and plainly refuted their arguments from the same authors, declaring, however, that he desired not to meddle with their belief, but only to be allowed to retain his own, and adding, that the cause why he was in danger of suffering death was, "Because I cannot agree with the divines and prelates that it is a necessary article of faith, and that we should believe, under pain of damnation, the substance of the bread and wine to be changed into the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, the form and shape alone not being changed."

His reasonings from Augustine were so strong, that some of the prelates felt disposed to consider the opinions of the ancient father as erroneous, rather than give up those of the church of Rome! It is related, that after the examination, as Cranmer and Heath conversed together, the former spoke with admiration of Frith's ability, but yet could not agree with him. Heath resumed the argument, and went over the passages with so much force as to leave the archbishop nothing further to say, than that he thought Heath would easily be brought to Frith's opinions; some of the chaplains reported that Dr. Heath was as well able to defend Frith's assertions as the reformer himself. Frith having stood forward thus boldly in defence of his doctrines, Cranmer could not prevent the proceedings from going forward, although he does not appear himself to have been a party to his condemnation. He was at that time an advocate for the doctrine of transubstantiation, and laboured to convince Frith of what he considered to be his errors. On the 20th of June, 1533, Frith was brought before the bishops of London, Winchester, and Lincoln, at St. Paul's, and examined again as to his opinions respecting purgatory and the sacrament; he again stated his views; and, refusing to retract them, he was condemned to be burned. The same hypocritical expressions which have already been noticed, were used on this occasion; but still more fully, as the cruel Stokesly declared that he was "following the example of Christ, who would not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live."

On the 4th of July the mayor and sheriffs carried Frith to Smithfield, where he was committed to the flames, and suffered with constancy and courage. When the fagots were kindled, he embraced them, declaring how readily he suffered death for Christ's sake, and for the doctrines of truth, to which that day he gave a perfect and firm testimony with his blood. His sufferings were prolonged by the wind blowing the flame from him to Hewet, his companion; but God gave him strength and patience, so that he rather rejoiced that his companion's pain was shortened, than complained of his own. "This truly," as Fox observes, "is the power and strength of Christ, striving and vanquishing in his saints; may he sanctify us with them, and direct us in all things to the glory of his most holy name. Amen."

ANDREW HEWET was a native of Feversham, and an apprentice to a tailor in Watling-street. A man named Holt, who was foreman to the king's tailor, suspecting Hewet to be a favourer of the gospel, entered into a conversation with him one day; and, having watched him to a bookbinder's house, went and informed the bishop's officers, who immediately searched the house; and, finding Hewet, carried him to prison. By means of a friend he procured a file, and having got rid of his irons, escaped from confinement; but, a few months afterwards, through the information of a pretended friend, he was taken with another man, named Tibauld, also suspected of lollardy, at the house of one Chapman. After repeated examinations, Tibauld was set at liberty, but was obliged to sell his house and land in Essex, the bishop having prohibited him from coming within seven miles of his own home. Chapman was confined five weeks, three of which he was kept in the stocks; for the poor lollards often experienced the same treatment as the apostle and his companion of old, "being thrust into the inner prison, and having their feet made fast in the stocks." See Acts xvi. 24.

Hewet was carried before the bishops, and accused of believing that the bread in the sacrament, after consecration, was only a signification of the body of Christ, and not really the body of Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary. When they required him to state how he believed respecting the sacrament, he answered, "Even as John Frith doth." Stokesly said, "Why Frith is a heretic, and

already condemned to be burned; and except thou revoke thine opinion, thou shalt be burned also with him." His simple reply was, "Truly, I am content withal." He was sent to prison to Frith, and burned with him.

When they were at the stake, Dr. Cook, a parish priest in London, told the bystanders that they should not pray for them any more than for a dog! The people were indignant at hearing this; but Frith smiled, and prayed the Lord to forgive them. Thus these two blessed martyrs committed their souls into the hands of God.

We cannot but remark the very different manner in which Cranmer acted in this matter, when compared with the conduct of his predecessor, Warham. He evidently did not join in persecuting the lollards and promoters of the reformation; but still we must regret to see him in any way countenancing these proceedings. It appears that Cranmer's views at that time were by no means so clear as in the latter part of his life; he then was firm in his belief of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and therefore regarded Frith and others as heretics. But although he was not sufficiently enlightened to see the doctrines of truth as contained in the gospel, in their full extent, yet he had learned enough to induce him to act very differently from the popish prelates of his day.

The following remarks on the conduct of the ecclesiastics is prefixed to Frith's "Revelation of Antichrist."

"Christ said that there should arise false prophets and false Christs, (that is to say, false anointed,) and should deceive many, Matt xviii., and gave his disciples a mark to know them, saying, Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves, Matt. vii. What meaneth he by sheep's clothing? Truly nothing else but that they should come in his name, pretending great humility, Matt. xxiv. But what are they in deed? Verily, ravening wolves: that is to say, beasts of the belly, for their belly is their god, Phil. iii. And why come they to you? Truly, to despoil and rob you of your goods, promising vain pardons, and deliverance from the pope's purgatory, to the intent that they might live idly, and in the lusts of the flesh, by your labours. How shall they be known? Christ saith, By their works shall you know them, Matt. vii. Lay their works to the scripture, and ye should lament their abominable living. But,

alas! you cannot; for they will not suffer you to have it; they keep that meteyard from you, that you should rule all things withal. They burn the gospel of God, and very Christ himself, for he is nothing but his word, as he testifieth himself, saying, I am that which I speak unto you, John vii. And again, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word, John i. And why do they hide this word of light from you? No doubt because their works are evil. For every man that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his works should be reprov'd; but he that worketh the verity cometh to the light, that his works may be openly seen, because they are done of God, John iii. They pretend to keep it from you for pure love, because they should take no hurt of it, neither fall into heresy; but you are jealous (Gal. iv.) over you amiss; yea, they would clean exclude you from Christ, and make you follow them. And because they would the more easily bow you to their yoke, they begin betimes, compelling you, being very children of twelve years, to keep their fasts, which they prescribe; and if you eat two meals in these prescript days, then must you to a priest, and confess a great transgression, submitting yourselves unto him, whatsoever he will enjoin unto you, and call it penance necessary for your soul's health. O Lord God, what subtle illusions have they invented to reign in men's consciences; yea, and to begin so soon with them; truly, this was a far cast of belly wisdom, if it were not the devil himself that imagined it. Paul rejoiceth in Timothy, 2 Tim. iii., (exhorting him to stand stiffly in those things which he had learned,) that of a child he had known the holy scripture, which may instruct him unto health, through the faith that is in Christ Jesus, showing the fruit and profit of it, saying, All scripture which is inspired from God is profitable to instruction, to reprov'ing and correct'ing, and to the bringing up which is in righteousness, so that the man of God may be whole and consummate, prepared unto every good work. If it be thus profitable, I marvel why they do not suffer men to have it. Howbeit, they know very well that when a cloaked lie cometh to the light, it vanisheth away; and even so their coloured kingdom, if scripture were known, would soon be dispersed like vapour, and most vanity."

In May, 1538, Cranmer, as archbishop of Canterbury,

and the principal ecclesiastical authority in England, declared Henry's marriage with queen Catherine to have been unlawful, and pronounced a regular sentence of divorce. Henry, however, had not waited for this measure; his marriage being considered as contrary to the law of God, he accounted it null and void of itself, and, in the November preceding, he was married to Ann Boleyn, by Dr. Rowland Lee. Many historians have stated that Cranmer was present on this occasion, which is incorrect; as letters, and other documents now in existence, prove that he was ignorant of the king's marriage, till a fortnight after it had taken place. This is not a point of much importance, but it clearly refutes one of the many slanders heaped upon him by Roman catholics, who represent him as advising Henry, and complying, in the most servile manner, with all his wishes in this affair. When the pope found that this sentence of divorce had been given, he excommunicated and anathematized Henry. The pope's bull to this effect was published at Dunkirk by his order. Henry appealed to a general council; the negotiations at Rome were again resumed, and further proceedings respecting this bull were suspended for a time.

In the beginning of 1534 the parliament again petitioned the king, complaining of the cruelty of the prelates and their officers, in calling men before them, and accusing them of heresies, but refusing to state the names of the accusers; obliging them to declare their opinions, and then condemning them from their own words thus extorted. This, and other proceedings about that time, tended to advance the king's design of throwing off the pope's authority; and on the 20th of March, a law was passed by the parliament, declaring that the king was to be acknowledged as the supreme head of the church of England; thus, at once taking away the power of the pope. This law also declared that the king might grant authority to visit and examine the abbeys and religious houses; it also gave power to the king and the council to reform all the abuses introduced by the church of Rome. But still the erroneous doctrines and false principles of that church were maintained; and although queen Ann Boleyn, archbishop Cranmer, and Cromwell, then the favourite ministers of Henry, were inclined to favour the principles of the reformation, and endeavoured to restrain the bloody

proceedings of Gardiner, Stokesly, and others, yet the greater part of the laws against the lollards still remained in force. The statute of Henry the fourth, however, was partly repealed; and it was also enacted that heretics should not be taken up, unless accused by two witnesses, and that they should be tried in open court. The horrible form of cursing heretics, which used to be read publicly four times every year, was ordered to be discontinued.

The bigoted papists were much troubled at these things, and countenanced any measures which would hinder the king from proceeding in this course. Among other expedients they encouraged the imposture of the Maid of Kent, which began several years before, and may remind us of some occurrences in our own days. From some circumstances she appears to have been a ventriloquist.

Her name was Elizabeth Barton; she resided at Aldington in Kent, and appears to have been subject to fits, during which she was accustomed to utter many unconnected expressions. Richard Masters, the priest of the parish, made use of her to promote some interested views of his own, and gave out that these were Divine trances, teaching her to say that she had received revelations from God. Dr. Bocking, a monk of Canterbury, assisted Masters; and on one of these occasions they instructed her to say that the Virgin Mary had promised that she should be restored to health by a miracle, if she visited an image of the Virgin in a chapel at Court-at-street, a place also in Masters' parish, on a certain day. This imposture was planned with a view to induce people to go on pilgrimage to that chapel, and make offerings to the image.

On the appointed day she went to the chapel, attended by Masters and Bocking, and about two thousand persons assembled to witness the miracle. She then threw herself into strange postures, pretending to be grievously affected; and after uttering many pious expressions, and declaring that by the Virgin's command she must become a nun, she pretended to be restored to health; and the news of this wonderful miracle was quickly noised abroad!

So far, the imposture was comparatively harmless; but the designs of its promoters extended much further. After she had become a nun, her pretended visions and trances still continued; she spoke much against the "new opinions," and railed loudly against heretics, prophesying

of many evils that should happen if they were not repressed. Books were written, giving an account of her miracles and revelations. She was carried about the country from place to place, and had interviews with the king, bishop Fisher, archbishop Warham, and others; several of whom were disposed to believe what she said, particularly Warham. There is no occasion fully to particularize her blasphemies and impostures; among them was a letter said to be written by Mary Magdalen from heaven; she also pretended to be directed by an angel, to order a New Testament to be burnt. One Helen, of Tottenham, was inclined to play similar pranks, and pretended to have visions; but these the Maid of Kent declared to be delusions of the devil.

All this might have been passed over, or have been only slightly punished, but the imposture assumed a more serious shape. Her patrons persuaded her to say, it was revealed to her that if the king persisted in seeking to be divorced from his queen, he should not be king a month longer, but should "die a villain's death." Bishop Fisher, and many others, countenanced these declarations, and circulated them through the kingdom.

About this time a friar, named Peto, preached before the king, at Greenwich, upon the prophecy of Micaiah against Ahab, and denounced heavy judgments upon him, declaring that dogs should lick his blood, and other similar expressions. Henry bore this patiently, but appointed Dr. Curwin to preach the Sunday following, who justified the king's proceedings, and condemned Peto; when another friar, named Elston, interrupted the preacher, telling him that he was one of the lying prophets, and proceeded till the king himself commanded him to be silent. Henry allowed these friars to escape at that time with a reprimand, but was obliged, in the following year, to banish them, and the rest of their order.

It was now absolutely necessary to interfere; and in November, 1533, the nun and her accomplices were taken up, and examined before the council, when they confessed the whole imposture; and after the sermon at Paul's Cross, on the following Sunday, they acknowledged the truth before all the congregation. They were then committed to the Tower, where they remained for some months, till after the meeting of parliament; when it was judged necessary to proceed further against the conspirators, as

reports favourable to the nun and her revelations were still circulated, and she evidently was made a mere tool in the hands of the papists to oppose the king's marriage to Ann Boleyn. Barton, and six of her confederates, were attainted of high treason, and executed at Tyburn; and the bishop of Rochester, with five others, were found guilty of misprision (or concealment) of treason, and condemned to imprisonment; but the inferior actors in this imposture were pardoned at the intercession of Queen Ann. It was also discovered that the letter of Mary Magdalen, above mentioned, was written by one Hankerst, of Canterbury, and that a door, between the chapel and her room in the nunnery in that city, which was reported to have been opened by a miracle, was contrived for baser ends; but we will not pursue the subject of these pretended miracles any further. We must, however, notice that the nun and her accomplices are called martyrs by Sanders, the popish historian of those times! Such are many individuals whose names are recorded in the Romish martyrology; although they suffered for their crimes, and political offences, not because they were Roman catholics. Widely, indeed, do such martyrs differ from those recorded in the preceding pages of this work, against whom, as we have already seen, nothing could be objected, except that, like the apostle, "After the way which they call heresy, so worshipped they the God of their fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets, exercising themselves to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men."

These details are given the more fully, as they remind us of some of the pretended miracles and prophecies of the present day. It is, however, but just to say, that the false miracles of our times do not appear to be connected with any political operations; whether the prophecies are equally blameless, those can best judge who have witnessed the manner in which they have been circulated.

An oath, promising obedience to the king instead of the pope, and admitting the lawfulness of Henry's marriage with queen Ann Boleyn, was now required, and generally taken without reluctance or scruple. Gardiner, Bonner, and many others, who afterwards again became the strongest advocates for the power of the pope, took this oath without hesitation. A few individuals, however,

refused; they were proceeded against as guilty of high treason, and executed; but we must again remark, that they did not suffer because they were Roman catholics; for their religion, as we have seen, still remained the only one tolerated in the kingdom; but they were considered as guilty of a political offence in refusing to submit themselves to the king's authority, instead of a foreign power, and on that ground alone, suffered the sentence of the law.

Among this number, were bishop Fisher and sir Thomas More, formerly chancellor of England, two eminent characters, who had bitterly persecuted the lollards,* and the promoters of "new opinions." They now, in their turn, tasted the cup of suffering. Both had, in some degree, countenanced the imposture of the nun of Kent, although it does not appear that they were implicated deeply in the conspiracy. They refused to take the oath above mentioned, and were attainted expressly on that account, and beheaded in 1535. The prior, and some monks of the charter-house, were executed as traitors for the same cause, with others accused of conspiring the death of the king.

The Roman catholics have dwelt much upon the abilities, learning, and integrity of sir Thomas More, and we should do wrong not to admit his excellence in all these respects, and that, in understanding and philosophy, he undoubtedly exceeded most of the learned men of that day; yet such is the infatuating effect of popish principles, that even this man, in many respects justly styled "great," as we have seen, most cruelly persecuted the poor lollards, and proceeded against them with a degree of violence, craft, and injustice, which he would have abhorred in matters of a civil nature. Burnet observes: "It cannot be accounted for but by charging it on the intoxicating charms of that religion, that can darken the clearest understandings, and corrupt the best natures." When we find sir Thomas More acting in this manner, what confidence can we feel in all the knowledge and philosophy of the present day, if the mind is not enlightened by Divine truth?

Here again the reader will observe a circumstance, which strongly shows the christian conduct of Cranmer. Sir Thomas More and bishop Fisher offered to consent to "the succession," or admit Henry's marriage with queen

* Sir Thomas More wrote his own epitaph, in which he styles himself "the scourge of heretics."

Catherine being declared void, but refused to take the oath against the pope's supremacy. When they were committed to the Tower, and about to be tried for high treason against the king's authority, Cranmer wrote to Cromwell, strongly urging him to be satisfied with what More and Fisher were willing to do. Surely, this was a proof of his attention to the command, "Love your enemies." Cranmer's intreaties, however, were in vain.

The reader will observe the manner of death by which these individuals suffered: they suffered the punishment inflicted upon traitors, instead of being burned as heretics. Thus it plainly appears that they were not put to death for their religion. They were tried and condemned, not by the bishops and their officers, but by the judges upon the verdict of a jury; after having been arraigned in the ordinary courts of law, and having pleaded not guilty to their indictment, which set forth that they denied the king's supremacy. These circumstances all indicate their case to be widely different from that of the lollards. Yet the papists record them as martyrs for their religion! As Fox observes, "In the pope's kingdom they may go for martyrs, seeing they died in his cause, but assuredly in Christ's kingdom they will not be accounted as such."

These remarks are not made with any design to speak lightly of their sufferings, which doubtless were cruel and severe, and such as we rejoice Roman catholics have long been protected from; but it is right expressly to point out that they suffered as political, not as religious offenders. In fact, Henry's quarrel with Rome was against the pope, not against the Roman catholic religion, to the errors of which he continued firmly attached. Of this he gave a strong proof, when, early in 1535, he issued a proclamation, threatening death without mercy to all who denied or disputed the doctrine of transubstantiation, or any other of the doctrines, rites, or ceremonies of the church of Rome, such as holy bread, holy water, processions, kneeling and creeping to the cross on Good Friday, and similar superstitions. Several Dutch anabaptists were committed to the flames about this time; and the popish religion still maintained its ground in England, excepting that the violence of persecution was a little abated by the influence of queen Ann, assisted by Cranmer and Cromwell.

We also find that Cranmer interfered in behalf of the

princess (afterwards queen Mary.) Blindly attached to the authority of the pope, she refused the oath of supremacy, and her incensed father would have sent her to the Tower to be tried and dealt with as a subject, had not Cranmer interfered, and persuaded him to the contrary. Yes, reader, the bloody queen Mary owed her life to Cranmer, and, as a reward, twenty years afterwards she ordered him to be burnt alive! Popish writers conceal this fact when they talk about Cranmer; for they cannot show such conduct as this of Mary in advocates of the reformation. Henry gave way to Cranmer's entreaties in behalf of the princess, but warned him that he would one day suffer for his kindness. Cranmer could not but be aware that such a result was probable, but the christian feelings by which his conduct was governed prevailed.

About this time, Latimer and Shaxton were promoted to the bishopricks of Worcester and Salisbury, which had been held by Campeggio and Ghinucii, two Italian prelates, who resided at the court of Rome, and consequently neglected the dioceses committed to their charge.

The conduct of their successors was very different. Latimer, in particular, was remarkable for his care in preaching and visiting every part of his diocese, earnestly trying to reform whatever was amiss. Although advanced in life, he travelled continually from place to place, teaching, exhorting, and preaching, to the utmost of his ability. These journies were mostly performed on foot, with few attendants, in a plain dress, with a pair of spectacles, and a New Testament hanging to his girdle. Wherever he went, he preached to the people, and if he found a number assembled together, and no church at hand, he did not hesitate to preach to them in any place which offered, and sometimes used a hollow tree for a pulpit.

As matters then stood, he could not entirely put away the popish ceremonies, but he endeavoured to restrain the abuses which were usual with respect to them. Thus, not being able to forbid the use of holy bread and holy water, he instructed his clergy to prevent the superstitious abuse of them, and when giving holy water, they were to say,

“ Remember your promise in baptism ;
Christ's mercy and blood shedding ;
By whose most holy sprinkling,
Of all your sins you have free pardoning.”

When giving holy bread, they were to say,

“Of Christ’s body this is a token,
Which on the cross for our sins was broken ;
Wherefore of your sins you must be forsakers,
If of Christ’s death ye will be partakers.”

Latimer, as a bishop, was obliged to attend the parliament and the convocation, but he always avoided meddling in state affairs, and never staid in London longer than he could help. Once he was in town on New Year’s Day, at which season it was customary for the bishops and nobility then at court, to make presents to the king ; some of the former gave considerable sums of money, in proportion to their expectations, but Latimer’s gift was more simple, and highly characteristic of himself. It was a New Testament, with a leaf doubled down at Hebrews xiii. 4. “Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge!”

We do not find that Henry’s wrath was excited at the honest faithfulness of Latimer ; and, when shortly after he was accused by Gardiner of having preached a seditious sermon at court, the king sternly required Latimer to answer this accusation ; he replied, stating that he had not sought to preach before the king, and that he was ready to give place to others who might be appointed ; “but,” added he, “if your grace allow me to preach, I would desire to have leave to discharge my conscience, and frame my doctrine according to my audience !” The truth prevailed ; God directed the king’s heart ; he approved the integrity of Latimer, and turned the discourse.

The papists, as may be supposed, sought every opportunity of troubling this good man, and even made ballads upon him, one of which has been preserved ; the burden of some of the verses is, “Wherefore it were a pity thou shouldest die for cold !” a charitable intimation of their earnest desire to see him committed to the flames !

Cromwell was appointed the king’s vicegerent or representative, in all matters relating to the church. He was a man of low birth, but of noble qualities, and had been a faithful servant to cardinal Wolsey, whose cause he advocated to the last ; and at a time when Gardiner forsook his master, although under greater obligations. While at the height of his greatness, Cromwell gave some pleasing instances of generosity and gratitude towards those who assisted him when poor and unknown. He was a firm

friend to Cranmer, and earnestly promoted the reformation, but was seduced by the wealth and honours of this world ; and, in common with all who seek for satisfaction therein, he found them "perish in the using."

We now come to notice the first entire edition of the Bible printed in the English language. Cranmer put forward this important work, as soon as he was promoted to the see of Canterbury ; but it was for a time delayed by the disinclination of the popish prelates towards the work. Among other objections, they urged that all the troubles and extravagant opinions of the anabaptists in Germany arose from the "indiscreet use" of the scriptures ; and to the same cause they imputed the blasphemous opinions held by some Hollanders, who were burned in the preceding year.

When Cranmer had procured the king's permission to print a translation of the scriptures, he divided the New Testament into nine parts, and sent one to each of the nine best Greek scholars in the kingdom. When translated, each part was sent to one of the bishops for examination. Eight complied with this request, but Stokesly returned his part, ("the Acts of the Apostles,") with an angry message, that he disapproved allowing the people to read the scriptures, which, he said, would lead into damnable errors, and disturb the peace of the church. The archbishop having expressed his surprise at such an answer, one of the bystanders, named Lawney, formerly a fellow-prisoner with Frith, said : "I can tell your grace why my lord of London will not bestow any labour or pains on this work. Your grace knoweth well that his portion is a piece of the New Testament, but he, being persuaded that Christ has bequeathed him nothing in his testament, thought it mere madness to bestow any labour or pains where no gain was to be gotten. And besides this, it is the 'Acts of the Apostles,' who were poor simple fellows, and therefore my lord of London disdained to have to do with any of them." The publication was thus delayed for nearly three years.

Meanwhile, Coverdale published an edition, which most probably was printed at Zurich ; it was dedicated to Henry, from whence we may suppose that the king had then allowed the holy scriptures to be read in the English language. This would appear to have been the case from the following passage in a manuscript manual of devotion given by queen Ann Boleyn to her maids of honour :

"Grant us, most merciful Father, this one of the greatest gifts that ever thou gavest to mankind, the knowledge of thy holy will, and the glad tidings of our salvation, this great while oppressed with the tyranny of thy adversary of Rome, and kept close under his latin letters, (the latin bible,) and now at length promulgated, published, and set at liberty by the grace poured into the heart of our prince."

Coverdale's edition of the Bible had scarcely left the press, when queen Ann was no more. She was beheaded on the 19th of May, 1536, having been condemned by the house of peers on the 15th, upon a charge of high treason, for having been unfaithful to the king. Roman catholic historians have asserted her guilt in the strongest terms, while protestant writers have generally considered her to have been falsely accused. She wrote a letter to the king, asserting her innocence, which she maintained to the last; and, as Spelman observes, the only shadow of evidence against her "was the alleged oath of a woman who was dead." She appears to have fallen a victim to popish machinations; but the best proof of her innocence is the fact that, the day after her execution, Henry married Jane Seymour.* Thus perished Ann Boleyn, who was a main instrument in the hands of God, for promoting the reformation. When death approached, she appears to have been supported by the doctrines of truth, and her last words were, "To Christ I commend my soul."

The Roman catholics rejoiced much at her death, for they considered her the principal cause of the king's throwing off the papal authority;† and her influence was always exerted in favour of the reformers; so that few

* The queen having been induced to confess a promise of marriage to another person, before she was married to the king, Cranmer, who, with the archbishop of York, was directed to sit as judge, was obliged, by the laws then in force, to pronounce her union with the king to be invalid. Some historians remark that she had been sentenced to be burned or beheaded, as the king might direct; and that to avoid the more painful death, probably she was induced to make this confession, which afforded ground for a divorce.

† Nor was this idea confined to our country, or to those times. When Dr. Brydone visited Sicily in the year 1770, one of the peasants who lived near Mount Etna, (the famous burning mountain,) told him that he recollected very well, having heard many old people say that the English had a queen who had burnt in that mountain for many years past, and they supposed the English visited the place from devotion, or respect to her memory. The doctor inquired the name of

were burned while she was queen. Cardinal Pole wrote to the king, congratulating him upon having got rid of this "domestic evil," from whom had "descended all disorders," as he styled the restraints imposed on the corruptions of the papists, who now proceeded with greater activity. Soon after her death, the "parson of Hothfield was accused of preaching against the sacrament of the altar, and of saying that our lady was not queen of heaven, but the mother of Christ, and that she could do no more for us than another woman." Several others of the clergy, and even Barlow, the bishop of St. David's were accused of similar expressions; and all books written in favour of the doctrines of the gospel were again sought for, and seized.

We have already mentioned the hatred of the Roman catholics towards Tindal, for his version of the New Testament, and his tracts against the errors of the church of Rome. In the year 1534 he published a new and more correct edition of the Testament, and was proceeding in a translation of the whole Bible. The Romish prelates, however, determined to put a stop to his labours, and sent a person named Henry Phillips to Antwerp, who got introduced to Tindal, and became intimately acquainted with him. Having arranged his measures, Phillips betrayed the reformer into the hands of the emperor's officers, who took him to the castle of Villefort, where he was confined nearly two years.

The English merchants residing at Antwerp exerted themselves in his behalf; they procured letters from lord Cromwell, then secretary of state, and others, to the court of Brussels, soliciting his release; and employed one of their number, named Poyntz, in this business. He had nearly succeeded, when Phillips again interfered, and accused Poyntz of heresy. He was arrested; and, with some difficulty, escaped by night to Antwerp. After several examinations, Tindal was condemned as a heretic, and sentenced to die. Being brought to the place of

this queen, upon which the people said he knew much better than they but at length told him her name was Anna, that she was wife to a king who had been a christian, and that she made him a heretic, and was in consequence condemned to burn for ever in Mount Etna. The doctor asked if her husband was there also. "Certainly," replied the peasant, "and all his heretic subjects too; and if you are of that number, you need not be in such a hurry to get thither, (alluding to his visit to the mountain,) you will be sure of it at last!"

execution, he was first strangled, and then burnt. When fastened to the stake, he exclaimed with a loud voice, "Lord, open the king of England's eyes!"

Thus died William Tindal, in the year 1536, after an imprisonment of a year and a half; during which, his instructions were blessed to the conversion of the keeper of the prison, and some of his family. Even the procurator general of the emperor, who conducted the prosecution against him, admitted that he was a learned, good, and godly man. His translation of the Old Testament was revised and completed under the direction of archbishop Cranmer: from this version was taken the book of Psalms, which is contained in the book of Common Prayer.* We may conclude this brief account of Tindal with the following extract from one of his letters to Frith: "I call God to record against the day we shall appear before our Lord Jesus, to give a reckoning of our doings, that I never altered one syllable of God's word against my conscience, nor would do so this day, if all that is in earth, whether it be honour, pleasure, or riches, might be given to me."

The king was now actively engaged in suppressing the lesser monasteries and abbeys, whose respective revenues did not exceed two hundred pounds per annum. These establishments, amounting in number to three hundred and seventy-six, were suppressed by an act passed in the month of April, on account of the wicked lives of their inmates, a full report of which was made to the parliament; but the greater part of it probably shared the fate of other similar documents, and was destroyed in the reign of queen Mary, by Bonner and his associates; a few fragments, however, remain.† The details of these proceedings are fully given

* A modern Roman catholic writer has borne the following testimony respecting Tindal's translation. He says, "Though it is far from a perfect translation yet few first translations will be found preferable to it."

† In the reign of queen Mary, Bonner, Cole, and Martin, were appointed commissioners, with power to examine the records of the preceding reigns, to search for all things which were done against the authority of the pope, or concerning the examinations of the abbeys, that "further orders might be given about them." Many important documents were thus destroyed; for, as Burnet says, "lest they should have been afterwards confessors, it was resolved they should

in most of the histories of England : it may, however, be here remarked, that the pope, and cardinal Wolsey, had set Henry an example for this work, having suppressed forty monasteries, to increase the revenues of the cardinal's new college at Oxford, long before the commencement of the disputes between Henry and the court of Rome.

Roman catholics have often asserted, that the great increase of the poor in England is owing to the reformation. This statement has been repeated by protestant writers, who ought to have known better ; and the falsehood is unblushingly dwelt upon by others, whose object is any thing except relating the truth. In this case the papists must allow Coverdale to be an unprejudiced witness, as he wrote long before such assertions were made, and he bids his reader " lift up his eyes, and see how great a multitude of poor people run through every town." But other and stronger authority may be referred to, such as even Roman catholics cannot disavow. Sir Thomas More, in his work called *Utopia*, speaks of the increase of beggary, and states that many persons, and among them the wealthy abbots themselves, had converted large tracts into sheep walks, for the profit of the wool ; destroying houses, ruining towns, and suffering the churches alone to remain as a shelter for the sheep.

As a remedy, sir Thomas proposed that " the beggars should be placed in the convents of the Benedictine monks, since it was owing, in a great measure, to the advance of those wealthy abbeys that the number of beggars so much increased." Let the reader bear in mind, that the great increase of beggars, and the progressive impoverishment of the land, here mentioned, took place before the reformation.* This statement is also confirmed by an act of parliament passed in the year 1534, nearly six years before the final dissolution of the monasteries ; it attributes the increase of the poor to the same causes as those mentioned by sir Thomas More, and says, they are thereby " driven to fall to theft, to the utter destruction and desolation of the

then be martyrs." Some documents, escaped this destruction, and, by a singular oversight, this commission itself was allowed to remain !

* Sir Thomas More wrote the "*Utopia*" in the year 1516, before the reformation commenced.

realm." We may also refer to "The Supplication of the Beggars," (see page 81.) The old chronicles of England also relate many circumstances which evidently show that scenes of want and suffering far more appalling than any of recent occurrence, continually were exhibited in the ages when popery ruled in our land.

It is evident that monasteries and abbeys will always tend to increase the number of those who live in poverty and wretchedness. This is the case in Roman catholic countries at the present day. Wherever these establishments are numerous, as in Spain and Italy, greater numbers of beggars are found, than in other lands.

Had these establishments been well conducted, the evil possibly might have been less; and Cranmer strongly urged that their revenues might be applied to charitable purposes; but this did not suit the views of Henry and his courtiers, neither could the system be reformed, as many have imagined, and in the state in which it then existed, it produced the worst effects. A late writer says, "Tolerated upon their then present footing, those establishments could not be. They were the strong holds of popery, the manufactories of Romish fraud, the nurseries of Romish superstition. If religion was to be cleared from the gross and impious fables with which it was well nigh smothered; if the errors and practices which had corrupted it were to be rooted out; if the scandalous abuses connected with the belief of purgatory were to be suppressed; if the idolatrous worship of saints were to be forbidden; if christianity and not monkery was to be the religion of the land; then a radical change in the constitution of the monasteries was necessary. St. Francis, St. Dominic, and their fellows, must dislodge, with all their trumpery, and the legendary give place to the Bible."

Let us bless God that it did give place; we are no longer told that we cannot hope for salvation unless a priest absolve us from our sins, or unless we are buried in the garments of a monk; but the way of salvation is pointed out to every one, even by faith in our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, whose gracious words are set before us, "Come unto ME all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

THE LOLLARDS

*Or, some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England
from 1400 to 1546.*



Pilgrims visiting the shrine of a Popish saint. See page 179.

PART VIII.

Proceedings in the convocation.—Articles agreed upon, to conciliate the papists and the reformers—unsatisfactory to both parties—Purgatory.—Insurrections excited by the Romish clergy.—Cranmer completes his translation of the bible.—The Pope's supremacy—Dissolution of the larger monasteries.—The frauds and vices of the monastic orders.—Thomas à Becket's shrine.—Relics.—Modern relics.—Pilgrimages.—Images destroyed.—Three men hanged for burning an image.—Monastic life.—Blood of Hailes.—Friar Forest.—Observations on the bull of the pope as to the jubilee of 1825.—Jubilees.—Some particulars respecting them.

IN the convocation of the clergy, which met June 21, 1536, the lord Cromwell presided as the king's vicegerent in ecclesiastical affairs. Dr. Gwent produced a list of dangerous errors, and damnable heresies, as he termed them, which he said were publicly preached in many parts of the kingdom, and required that greater care should be taken to stop these proceedings. In this list are enumerated some erroneous opinions which were falsely imputed to the lollards, as well as to the German reformers, but it also includes others, which were opposed to those doctrines of the church of Rome, that have no foundation in scripture, as purga-

tory, transubstantiation, and pardons; also other ceremonies of human invention, such as pilgrimages, processions, holy water, hallowed oil and bread, blessed candles, &c.* This proves that the doctrines of truth were spreading more widely; we may also remark, that although the clergy had renounced the supremacy of the pope, they still were adherents to the church of Rome in every other respect. And it plainly shows that Henry's divorce, and his quarrel with the pope, although, through the providence of God, the means of promoting the reformation, were not of themselves the cause. The clergy of the northern counties were particularly inimical to the doctrines complained of.

The contest between truth and error now became more violent; the bishops were divided in their opinions. Cranmer, Goodrich, Latimer, Shaxton, and others were opposed to Stokesly, Gardiner, Tonstal, Lee, and those who were attached to the principles and practices of Rome. Their clergy were also divided, and similar disputes prevailed among the laity. In this state of affairs, Cromwell declared to the convocation the king's pleasure, that the rites and ceremonies of the church should be reformed by the rules of scripture, adding, that it was absurd to refer to the decrees of popes, rather than to the scriptures, from whence their authority was said to be derived. This was a great step towards reformation; and we may readily perceive that the king's having renounced the supremacy of the pope, led to this desirable result. Cromwell's own opinions were further proved by his introducing to the convocation Alexander Alesse, a Scotchman of learning and piety, protected by Cranmer, who addressed the assembly at considerable length, proving to them that baptism and the Lord's supper were the only sacraments instituted by Christ. Stokesly replied in a long discourse, in which he showed himself better informed in the learning of the schools and the canon law, than in the scriptures. Others also spoke; among them was Fox, bishop of Hereford, who declared, that the world would no longer be deceived by "the sophisticated stuff formerly taught by the [Romish] clergy;" adding,

* These and other ceremonies, adopted by the church of Rome, are mostly derived from the rites with which the ancient heathens worshipped their deities. The reader will find this subject ably treated in "Tracts on Errors of the Church of Rome," by the Rev. G. Hamilton, some of which are published by the Religious Tract Society.

that all nations were now studying the scriptures, not only in translations but also in the original tongues, and would therefore no longer be deceived by those arts which had been successful in the days of ignorance.

A commission was then given to the bishops and some learned men, to draw up articles, which were to be sanctioned by the king's authority, so that all men might be commanded to believe them. After many debates, these articles were agreed upon, each party giving up some of their opinions to preserve the rest. The first part related to doctrines, the second to ceremonies. They may be briefly stated as follows: 1. The people were to be instructed to believe the bible, and the three creeds: all heresies contrary to them were condemned. 2. That baptism was a sacrament instituted by Christ for the remission of sins, without which none could attain everlasting life; "inso-much, that infants and children dying in their infancy, shall undoubtedly be saved thereby, and else not;" but that infants must needs be baptized for the pardon of original sin, and obtaining the gift of the Holy Ghost. 3. That penance was absolutely necessary for salvation; that it consisted of contrition, confession, and amendment of life, with works of charity. In this article there is a mixture of the peculiar doctrines of both parties, very similar to the views held by many professed protestants at the present day. It proceeds:—"To this must needs be joined a faith, trust, and confidence of the mercy and goodness of God, whereby the penitent must hope that God will forgive him, and repute him justified, and of the number of his elect children, not for the worthiness of any work or merit done by him, but for the only merits of the blood and passion of our Lord Jesus Christ; that this faith is got and confirmed by the application of the promises of the gospel. But we also find added: "By the use of the sacraments, and for that end, confession to a priest is necessary," whose absolution, it is stated, was instituted by Christ, to apply the promises of God's grace to the penitent! Therefore the people were to be taught, that the absolution pronounced by the ministers of the church was to be believed as they would believe "the very voice and words of God himself, if he should speak out of heaven. Also, that although Christ and his death be the sufficient oblation, sacrifice, satisfaction and recompense, for the which God the Father pardoned sin, yet they were to bring forth the fruits of penance, prayer,

fasting, alms-deeds, &c. and that these works of charity are necessary works to our salvation, and that by penance, and such good works of the same, we shall not only obtain everlasting life, but also we shall deserve mitigation of afflictions in the present life. 4. Transubstantiation was inculcated in the strongest terms. 5. That justification signifies remission of sins, and acceptance into the favour of God. that is to say, a perfect renovation in Christ. That sinners attain this justification by contrition and faith, joined with charity, and that though this is only promised to us freely for his Son Jesus Christ's sake, yet God requireth of us perfect faith and charity, with all other spiritual graces and motions which must necessarily concur in our justification; and that the good works necessary to salvation were not only outward works, but the inward motions and graces of God's Holy Spirit, to fear and love him, to have full confidence in him, to call upon him, and have patience in all adversities, to hate sin, and desire not to sin again.

The remaining articles related to ceremonies: 1. Of images; these were stated to be warranted by scripture, to stir up devotion, although, "for the great abuses of them, sometimes destroyed and put down;" and therefore they should stand in the churches. But it was acknowledged that the people had fallen into abuses respecting them, in times past, and in burning incense, kneeling, offering, or worshipping them; therefore the people were to be instructed not to do this to the image, but to God and his honour. 2. and 3. Saints were to be honoured and prayed to, that they might pray for and with us. 4. Most of the Popish rites and ceremonies were approved. *Lastly*: as to purgatory, people were to be taught to pray for souls departed, and to commit them in prayer to God's mercy, and also to cause others to pray for them, and say masses, and give alms to others to pray for them, "whereby they may be relieved and holpen of some part of their pain."*

* In Dublin, there are now (1825) several "Purgatorian Penny Societies." Each member pays a penny every week, and thereby becomes entitled to have a certain number of prayers and masses, said after his death for the repose of his soul, provided they shall die a natural death, be six months (previously) a subscriber to the institution, and be *clear of all dues* at the time of their departure! Dr. Moore, in his travels in Italy, mentions a society of persons who attend upon criminals when under sentence of death, and collect money to pay for masses to be said for the purpose of praying them out of purgatory. He witnessed the execution of a criminal who was hung for the *fifth*

But since the place they were in, and the pains they suffered, are left uncertain by scripture, we ought to remit them wholly to God's mercy, and that all abuses, such as that the pope's pardons did deliver out of purgatory, were to be put away.

These articles being corrected by the king, and confirmed by his authority, were signed by the members of the houses of convocation; which included Cromwell the vicegerent, Cranmer, seventeen other bishops, forty abbots and priors, and fifty archdeacons and proctors. The instrument, which still remains, is a singular document. The friends of reformation certainly gained some advantage. The scriptures and the ancient creeds were made the standards of belief, without reference to traditions or the decrees of the pope: thus resuming the principles taught by Justin Martyr in the second century, who expressly states that true religion is contained in the writings of the apostles and prophets, who have taught all things necessary to know; and that we are not commanded to give credit to the traditions and doctrines of men, &c.

The foundation of christian faith was truly stated in these articles; but although not clouded with scholastic absurdities, it was mixed up with the covenant of works. The grossest part of the worship of images was removed, four sacraments were not mentioned, pilgrimages were not enjoined, and indulgences, the most gainful part of the doctrine of purgatory, were done away. But some of the worst doctrines of popery still remained. Justification, as we have already seen, was stated to consist in a mixture of

murder he was known to have committed; and during the time the body was suspended from the gallows, the members of this society went to a neighbouring church, and remained there while a mass was said for the repose of his soul. Dr. M. notices the boxes fixed in churches, and against the walls of convents, for the purpose of collecting money for these purposes, and says, people are reminded of this charity, not only by inscriptions, but also by pictures. "Over the boxes into which you are directed to put your money, views of purgatory are painted in the most flaming colours, where people are seen in all the agonies of burning, raising their eyes to those unmindful relations and acquaintances, who, rather than part with a little money, allow them to remain in those abodes of torments!" Surely this is making merchandise of the souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13. If the prayers of the priests, and the celebration of mass, will deliver souls from a state of torment^d and introduce them to heaven, what must be thought of the practice of the church of Rome which refuses this boon, *unless paid for it?*

faith and works; transubstantiation was confirmed; also the worshipping of saints, reverencing images, and the main points of the doctrine of purgatory, were allowed to continue. Thus we need not wonder to find that each party was dissatisfied with the arrangement; the reformers thought that many vital errors still remained; while the papists lamented for what was removed, and sadly anticipated this to be but a foretaste of future reformation. It reminds us of the image beheld by the prophet Daniel; its head of fine gold, the belly and thighs of brass, while the legs and feet were part iron and part clay; and as that image could not stand against the Stone "cut out of the mountain without hands," so this baseless fabric sunk before clearer views of Divine truth.

A particular account of these articles of agreement has been given, because they plainly show that popery and protestantism cannot be reconciled. There can be no concord between Christ and Belial, yet men have endeavoured, in later times, as well as in the days of Henry, to unite what God has declared to be irreconcilable; and even by persons *professing* to be protestants, many of these tenets are held. But, upon examination, we shall find that although the church of Rome has adopted these doctrines, and made them her own, yet they existed long before her; they were first taught by him who was a rebel from the beginning, a rebel against God, and a despiser of his grace. Not only wood, hay, and stubble is built thereby, upon the only foundation on which our hopes can be fixed, even Christ Jesus, and Him crucified, but they strike at the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ alone, by which, as Luther declared, a church could alone stand, and which, if it once impugned, there was sufficient evidence that it was not a standing but a falling church.

We regret to see such names as Cranmer and Latimer subscribed to such a document; although in some respects it proves a firm stand on their parts against popish errors. But how inglorious is such an opposition when compared with that of Bainham, Frith, Bilney, and Cobham! Even the artificers and mechanics whose sad sufferings are detailed in the pages of this work, shine far more glorious than these great men in this part of their career. But let us not forget that God ruleth over all things, and that he permitted this matter to go on for some good, perhaps to teach

us, as we shall soon perceive, of how little use it is to swerve from the doctrines of truth, hoping thereby to conciliate the advocates of error, and induce them to favour our views.

The publication of these articles was followed, in a short time, by an injunction from the king against the superstitious observance of holidays, which made it lawful for men to pursue their usual labours on the greater part of the festival and fast days kept by the church of Rome.* The clergy were also directed to preach against the pope's authority, and several superstitious observances.

By the dissolution of the smaller monasteries, a great number of monks were compelled to seek some other mode of life. Many of them went from place to place, loudly complaining of the treatment they had experienced. The lower ranks regretted the advantages these abbeys had afforded to them when travelling, when inns and houses of resort for travellers were not general; the idlers objected to the abolition of so many holidays; and ecclesiastics in general, displeased at the injunctions already mentioned, excited the populace to discontent. The power of the pope had been generally received as an article of faith during the last five hundred years. He had frequently deposed kings; and the friars, who held, as it were, the consciences of the greater part of the nation in their hands, lost no opportunity of exciting the people against the proceedings of the king, as rebellion against the pope, who was accounted "God upon the earth." "His holiness" had resorted to measures only adopted in cases of extremity, having excommunicated Henry and all who favoured him, forbidding his subjects to obey their monarch, and ordering the nobility to rise in arms against him! Such were the proceedings of him who pretended to be the vicar of that Saviour who declared, "My kingdom is not of this world!" But this sentence was hardly pronounced, before the pope regretted having been so hasty, and delayed its formal publication. This proceeding, however, was generally known, and doubtless tended to produce the disturbances that ensued.

* To such an extent was this system carried, that it was deemed more lawful to labour on the sabbath-day, than on the festivals instituted in honour of the virgin, and some other saints! In some Roman Catholic countries, even at the present day, it is calculated that nearly one fourth part of the year is lost to the labouring classes by these saints' days and holidays.

These insurrections were not only excited by the clergy, but several priests and monks personally engaged in open rebellion, inflaming the people by the grossest absurdities: for instance, telling them that the christian religion would be taken away, that no man would be allowed to marry a wife, to partake of the sacrament, or even to eat a piece of roast meat, unless he paid heavily for the privilege! The insurrection in Yorkshire was the most formidable; it was called the "pilgrimage of grace;" and the number of rebels amounted to 40,000. They took possession of York and Hull, and advanced to Doncaster, having many crucifixes and banners, with holy emblems, carried before them. One of the latter represented the five wounds of Christ, with the host or wafer used in the sacrament. The dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk were sent against these rebels; a battle was about to ensue, but an extraordinary flood prevented the armies from attacking each other; this gave an opportunity for negotiation, and the rebels were induced to disperse, upon promise of pardon. Some insurrections of less consequence afterwards occurred, but were soon quelled; and many who had been most active were tried, condemned, and executed; several priests and monks were among this number, who are doubtless enrolled by the church of Rome in the list of its martyrs.

Cranmer had now completed his translation of the bible; Grafton and Whitchurch were employed to print it at Paris, that city possessing many facilities for such a work, and they procured permission from the French king. This, however, was soon recalled at the instance of the clergy; and by an order of the inquisition, the sheets already printed were seized, and the parties were charged with heresy. But the English who superintended the printing were allowed to retire to London with their types and presses, and the work at length was completed; when some copies were brought to Cranmer, he exclaimed, that it gave him greater joy than if he had received ten thousand pounds!

By one of the injunctions already mentioned, the king commanded that a copy of the bible, in English, should be purchased at the joint expense of the clergyman and inhabitants of every parish, and placed in the parish church, where it was allowed to be read by all that pleased. As some parishes neglected this command, it was enforced by a second proclamation. The public reading of the scrip

tures was permitted in the year 1537 ; but individuals were not allowed to purchase the bible in English for their own use, and that of their families, until the year 1539.

The papists had thus, for nearly a century and a half, endeavoured to prevent the people from being allowed to read the scriptures in their own language ; and we cannot view the steps which led to this permission, without feeling that " the king's heart is in the hands of the Lord ; he turneth it whithersoever he will." As an instrument in this great work, we must ever revere Cranmer, and feel deeply indebted to his unwearied perseverance, which alone is amply sufficient to account for the malice and rage with which the papists have attacked his memory.

Several other religious works were published about this time. " The King's Primer," printed in 1535, was a collection of twenty-nine small tracts, consisting of the creed, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments in English, with explanations, and several psalms and prayers. " The Bishop's Book," published 1537, called " The Institution of a Christian Man," contained instruction very similar to the articles agreed to by the convocation. It was now become lawful to teach the commandments in the vulgar tongue, for which seven martyrs had been committed to the flames (see page 58) only twenty years before ! In this book, Cranmer and his brethren tell the king, that " they rejoice and give thanks unto Almighty God, with all their hearts, that it hath pleased him to send such a king to reign over them, who so earnestly mindeth to set forth among his subjects the light of holy Scripture, which alone showeth men the right path to come to God, to see him, to know him, to love him, and so to serve him as he most desireth." Although no man could desire to be subjected to such a monarch as Henry, nor do we wish to palliate his vices, or apologize for his errors, yet this permission to read the words of eternal life would reconcile the true followers of Christ to submit the more willingly to his sway, according to the injunctions of the apostle. In this respect, he was indeed the minister of God to them for good.

In the year 1539, we find that Longland, bishop of Lincoln, whose very active proceedings against the lollards have been already noticed, preached before the king at Greenwich, on Good Friday, expressly against the authority assumed by the pope, whose claims he asserted to be

blasphemous, calling upon him to humble himself unto Christ, "our great universal Bishop," who alone was the door, the way, the truth, and the life; the good Shepherd, that laid down his life for his flock. He also referred to the description of Christ, as our High Priest, Heb. vii. 26. as "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," &c.; and showed how very different, in every respect, the pope of Rome was, notwithstanding his vain-glorious assumptions.

Upon the subject of this supremacy, claimed by the pope, we may briefly remark, that the doctrine of the church of Rome, as stated by her learned advocate Bellarmine, is that "the pope is the head of the whole universal church taken together." This is a doctrine, neither derived from the scriptures, nor from the apostles. The churches of Antioch, Jerusalem, Corinth, &c. all were independent of the bishop of Rome. This was the case at the time of the council of Nice, A. D. 325, and that of Constantinople 383, when it was decreed, that no bishop of any diocese (country) should interfere with any churches out of his own district; for instance, that the bishop of Alexandria should govern Egypt. Not long after that time, the churches of Africa refused to be directed by the bishops of Rome; and the title of universal bishop was not applied to the pope till the beginning of the seventh century, when it was assumed by Boniface, not by the counsel or consent of the church, but by the authority of one of the emperors, who was notorious for his cruelty and tyranny.

A further order was now made for the visitation of the remaining monasteries; and the commissioners were enjoined to make strict inquiry into the immoral and superstitious practices, for which the greater part of these houses were notorious. In many places, the monks were much alarmed at the idea of such an investigation, and surrendered their houses, and all their possessions, to the king, without waiting the arrival of the commissioners. This work was not finally completed till the year 1540, when an act of parliament was passed, by which all these houses, namely, 645 convents, 90 colleges, 2374 chantries and free chapels, and 110 hospitals, with their possessions, were annexed to the crown. The yearly rent of their lands was estimated to amount to 160,000*l.* but in reality very far exceeded that sum. The gold taken from the shrine of

Thomas à Becket, at Canterbury, filled two large chests, each of them as heavy as eight strong men could carry.* The plate, gold and silver images, and other property belonging to these establishments, exceeded all computation. Much of the property, however, was concealed and embezzled by the monks. The greater part of these possessions were obtained by the monks and friars from persons on their death-beds, who were often persuaded to leave their families in poverty, and to bestow their lands upon the monastic orders, that their souls might be prayed out of purgatory. Erasmus, himself a Roman Catholic, has described the manner in which these monks encouraged men in vicious conduct while alive, and beset their death-beds, often contending among themselves, and sometimes even proceeding to blows, to obtain preference for their orders in their bequests!

This enormous wealth was quickly dispersed. A small portion only was applied to religious and charitable esta-

* Thomas à Becket was archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of Henry II. and engaged in open rebellion against that monarch. Some hasty expressions of Henry induced four of his courtiers to kill the prelate, unknown to that monarch, for which he had to submit to a severe penance. The monks gave out that miracles were performed by the relics of Becket, and he was soon after canonized by the pope, and extolled far above the apostles. Among other wonders told of him by Romish writers, it was related that the Virgin Mary once paid him a visit, and spoke to him at some length. The following extract will suffice: "Rejoice, because my Son is always obedient to me and my will, and my prayers he always heareth. Whatsoever doth please me, the whole Trinity doth give consent unto." For three hundred years was this worldly-minded, rebellious prelate worshipped as a saint, and two festivals were celebrated in honour of his name, and a day is still set apart for his honour in the Romish service book. Every fiftieth year a jubilee was proclaimed, with great indulgences to all who visited his shrine; and, on one occasion, in the year 1420, it was recorded that 100,000 pilgrims were at once in Canterbury, to visit his tomb. By these arts, the laity were induced to make incredible offerings.

Some particulars of these are also recorded. At Canterbury were three altars, or shrines of note; and in one year the amounts offered were as follows: At Christ's altar 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*; to the Virgin, 63*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.*; but to Thomas à Becket, 832*l.* 12*s.* 3*d.* Nor was this a solitary instance; in the following year, at Christ's altar, not a penny was offered; at the Virgin's, only 4*l.* 1*s.* 8*d.*; but to St. Thomas, 954*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.*: When we calculate the difference in value of money, and also consider the vast increase of wealth and population in our land, in our days, we may say, that this sum, when all circumstances are taken into account, equalled the largest amount contributed to THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY in any one year, since its formation.

blishments. Cranmer and others earnestly endeavoured to promote these good works; but the greater part was squandered among the needy courtiers, or granted to individuals of influence, as an inducement to support the king's measures. Thus many of the laity eagerly encouraged the king in the proceedings, which he had resolved upon, well knowing that all the monastic orders were devoted to the pope, and determined enemies to any reformation. The measure, as Henry observes, "contributed greatly to promote the permanent prosperity of the kingdom, in many respects, as well as the reformation of religion, which could not have been accomplished, while those nurseries of idleness, vice, and superstition remained." The rapid progress of these institutions appears from the detail already given of their wealth; and had they not been thus utterly destroyed, they would doubtless, long ago, have absorbed nearly all the property of the kingdom;* and the laity, whether nobles, gentlemen, merchants, tradesmen, or labourers, would have been their vassals. Speaking after the manner of men, we may venture to say, that even the light of the gospel could not have penetrated the thick darkness of ignorance and superstition, in which these establishments would have enveloped the land; and the vices which so generally abounded within their walls, must have had a most baneful effect; in fact, some of the strongest laws against vice were enacted shortly after the period of which we are speaking, when the inmates of these establishments had become mixed with the general mass of society.

The commissioners made reports of all their proceedings; the greater part of these were destroyed by Bonner, and his associates, during the reign of queen Mary; but a few remain, which fill the mind of the reader with horror, and would induce us to believe that it would be more "tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment," than for a land in which such practices were allowed to prevail. Into such details we cannot enter; but will only remark, that they were, in many instances, confessed by the parties themselves, and in others proved by evidence which cannot be denied.

* Some years ago, it was estimated that the rent of the lands formerly belonging to the abbey of Glastonbury alone, exceeded three hundred thousand pounds per annum: it would now probably amount to half a million!

Many writers have dwelt upon the corruptions of the monastic life, just adverted to, and in the present work various citations may be found in reference to the subject. But the modern advocates of popery often endeavour to set these evidences aside, and in particular to represent the reports of the British commissioners for the visitation of the monasteries as containing malignant falsehoods. This has already been noticed; but we may consider the subject in another point of view, that which its advocates desire should be taken into consideration—namely, that these establishments, or many among them, were not the abodes of vices and crimes. Here we may refer to the evidence of one who had himself been a monk, a moral character, and at the very period treated of in this history. He speaks from the experience of himself and others in monastic life, and says: “I have seen many who most earnestly and conscientiously endeavoured to perform every thing in their power to pacify their consciences. They wore shirts of hair, they fasted, they prayed, they wearied and tormented their bodies in different ways, so that if they had been of iron they would at length have been worn out, and yet the more they laboured the more fearful they became. But especially when the hour of death arrived they were so fearful, that I have seen murderers, condemned to die for the crimes they had committed, go to the place of execution with more confidence than these men whose lives had been so holy. Thus it is most true, that in doing the law they do it not; for the more they seek to satisfy the law, the more they transgress it. Even so we say and judge respecting the traditions of men. The more a man seeks by his own works of righteousness to pacify his conscience, the more he disquiets it. When I was a monk, I endeavoured as far as possible to live according to the strict rules of my order. I was accustomed to confess with great devotion, and to reckon up all my sins, for which I had already felt deep contrition. I returned very often to confession, and thoroughly performed the penance enjoined me. Yet for all this my conscience never was pacified, but was continually filled with doubts, saying, ‘This has not been rightly performed, thou wast not contrite and sorrowful enough, thou didst omit such a sin in thy confession, and so forth.’ Therefore the more I endeavoured to help my weak, wavering, and afflicted conscience, by the traditions

of men, so much the more feeble, doubtful, and afflicted I became. Thus, the more I followed the traditions of men, the more I transgressed them; and I never could attain righteousness by seeking after it according to the means set forth by my order. For, as Paul saith, it is impossible that the conscience should be pacified by the works of the law, and much less by men's traditions, without the promise and gospel of Christ." Such is the evidence of Luther on this important point, showing the utter inefficacy of the monastic life, even in its most moral and religious aspect. Is it said, he forsook that life, therefore his account is of the less weight? Let not such an objection be listened to for a moment. All the efforts of popery to blacken his moral character have utterly failed; and who can tell us the insufficiency of any such scheme, but one who has thoroughly tried it and has found a better way? The testimony of Blanco White, in another part of the present work, is decisive as to modern monasticism, but that of a contemporary was needed to display the monastic life of the sixteenth century, even in its most moral and least exceptionable form.

Although we pass by the darker details, we must notice some of the juggling tricks with which the British monasteries abounded, as similar frauds are practised by the church of Rome at the present day; these also are relics of heathen customs, and have ever been promoted by the monks and friars, for the same reason as Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen, Acts xix. pleaded in behalf of the shrines they made for Diana. Both could say, "Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth." The one sought to destroy the apostle Paul, as opposed to their interests, and the others burned his writings, and persecuted all those who, like the apostle of old, sought to serve the Lord in sincerity and truth.

At the abbey of Reading many pretended relics were discovered; among them were the spear-head which pierced the side of our Lord, and an angel with one wing, which was said to have brought it over to England! The commissioners mention Reading to be "a town of much poor people," and complain of their stealing the moveables of the abbey, a strong proof that these establishments had not lessened the number of the poor, or promoted good order among them! At Bury St. Edmund's were found some parings of the toe nails of their patron saint, coals which had

roasted St. Lawrence, Thomas à Becket's boots, &c. ; but it is needless to enumerate such articles. Many pieces of our Saviour's cross were found, more than sufficient to make a cross of the largest size.* St. Andrew's finger had been pledged in one place for 40*l.* (equal to more than 400*l.* of our money :) the visitors paid the debts of the abbeyes, but did not think it necessary to redeem this and the like precious memorials.

Similar absurdities are still countenanced by the church of Rome, and abound in every country under its influence. In France, Spain, and the Netherlands, eight arms of St. Matthew are exhibited. The following extract is from the letters of an English clergyman who visited the Continent in the year 1823 :—“ At Courtney, a priest gravely showed us a nail, and several pieces of the wood of the cross, the sponge in which the vinegar was offered to our Saviour, a part of the girdle of our Lord, a link of the chain with which St. Peter was martyred, an arm and some of the hair of John the Baptist, a tooth of St. Thomas, some bones of Simeon, and other relics. I asked the priest if all these were matters of faith ; he replied, “ No, but they rested on the *most undoubted historical evidence.*” But we need only refer to the pope's decree, exhorting “ the faithful ” to make pilgrimages to Rome in the year of jubilee, 1825 ; among other things they are invited to behold the cradle in which Christ was laid, and the cross upon which he was crucified, and the fetters of the apostles !

The relics and images which were most celebrated supplied the monks and nuns with the never-ending theme of discourse, when they went about endeavouring to excite the people to visit their respective establishments, and make offerings at their shrines.

Thus pilgrimages were promoted ; and this custom, for which the heathen, both of ancient and modern times, have been so notorious, was sanctioned and urged by the church of Rome in the strongest terms ; and crowds flocked to the shrine of Becket and other similar saints, like the Hindoos

* It is said that there are pieces of wood shown in different parts of Europe, as bits of the true cross, at the present day, enough to supply a town with fuel for a winter. This being lately noticed to a Roman Catholic, he seriously stated, that the true cross had doubtless increased, like the widow's cruse of oil, 2 Kings iv. 4. It has been far more profitable in a pecuniary view !

to the temple of Juggernaut. But it is not necessary to refer to heathen nations. Similar scenes are exhibited even now in Ireland, as well as in Roman Catholic countries on the continent. In the former, strong proofs of the heathen origin of these customs remain; one of the most celebrated places of popish resort is called BAAL, to this day, and is visited by crowds of pilgrims now, as in ancient times; and the ceremonies practised there, in many respects partake of the abominations which the scriptures describe the worshippers of Baal to have practised. These have doubtless continued unchanged from the days of heathenism; for the Romish missionaries, when seeking to convert pagan lands, have ever sought to render their tenets acceptable to the poor benighted idolaters by concealing the real doctrines of the cross, and adopting many of the heathen superstitions in their stead.*

We must, also, notice more particularly a few of the images which were celebrated in our own land. To a crucifix at Boxley in Kent many pilgrims constantly resorted, to behold the miraculous powers it was reported to possess. Sometimes it bowed its head, and even its body, its hands and feet also moved; its eyes appeared to roll, its lips opened, and its brows were sometimes bent with an appearance of anger; all these wonders were said to be produced by a divine power. The fraud was now discovered; for within the image were found various springs, and wires, and other contrivances, as in the automaton figures frequently exhibited in the present day, by which these appearances were produced, according to the impres-

* The abbé Dubois has lately written in defence of this method of proceeding, which he himself adopted, but, as might be expected, he found the result of his experiments most unsatisfactory. We cannot be surprised that he should assert that the labours of protestant missionaries will be equally unsuccessful; but that any who bear the name of protestant, should adopt his opinions, and deride the labours of the devoted servants of Christ, may at first cause some astonishment. In reality, such individuals are themselves Roman Catholics or infidels in their hearts; or perhaps we may more correctly refer the opinions maintained both by the abbé, and those who adopt his sentiments, to one common origin, an unrenewed heart, that is not willing to submit to the humbling doctrines of the cross. The jesuit missionaries in China carried this method so far, that finding the idea of the Son of God being crucified, was offensive to the Chinese, they not only left off teaching this main foundation of the christian religion, but even stated, that the crucifixion was a fable invented by the Jews!

sions which its owners desired to make upon the surrounding multitude.* Hilsey, the bishop of Rochester, produced this image; and, after a sermon, in which he declared the vanity of such superstitions, he explained the various contrivances, and broke it in pieces before the people. Several other images, constructed in a similar manner, were also publicly broken at Paul's Cross, and in other places, that the people might be convinced of the folly of worshipping idols, the work of men's hands.

Other images, which had been the objects of worship of the people in general, were now destroyed. They were many in number, although several had been cast down and destroyed in various places during a few years preceding.

One instance of this kind is particularly recorded. At Dover Court near Harwich, was a crucifix, or rood, which many persons visited from a great distance. Among other wonders told respecting it, this image was said to have power to prevent any man from shutting the church-door where it stood. Four *gospellers*, who resided at Dedham, were much troubled at the blasphemous worship paid to this idol, and determined, if possible, to open the eyes of its deluded votaries. They accordingly went to the church one night, in the year 1532, and finding the door open, as it was always left, to countenance the wonderful tale already mentioned, they took down the idol, without any resistance on its part, and carrying it to some distance, kindled a fire and made a bonfire of the materials.

Robert King, Robert Debnam, and Nicholas Marsh, three of the number, were hanged in chains at three different places for this offence. "Which three persons," Fox says, "through the Spirit of God, at their death, did more edify the people in godly learning than all the sermons that had been preached there a long time before." Their companion escaped with difficulty.

This circumstance is worthy of notice, as it shows that a popular feeling against the Romish idolatry was becoming more prevalent in the land, and also how severely such an offence was punished.

* We may here mention that when the French invaded Italy, in the year 1797, and popery for a time gave way to infidelity, more than thirty pictures of the Virgin are related to have rolled their eyes, and even to have wept! This is gravely stated in a work sanctioned by Romish prelates, containing copies of these pictures!

In later days, about the middle of the last century, a young man was executed in France for having struck an image of the Virgin with his sword. By a recent law in that country, sacrilege is made punishable with death; and under this term, it is said that any thing which is disrespectful to the objects of public adoration, the host, images, &c. may be included.

At Hailes in Gloucestershire a glass bottle was shown, said to be filled with the blood of our Saviour, miraculously remaining in a fresh state; this was sometimes visible, but in general the blood was so obscured that it could not be seen. The devotees who resorted to the shrine were first shown the bottle in this state, and told that it was a proof they were in mortal sin, and that till they had procured the pardon of their transgressions the blood would remain invisible to them. This desirable state of freedom from sin was to be attained by the purchase of pardons, and by the prayers of the monks, for which of course payment was to be made. The scene was continued till the pilgrims were drained of their money. The vial then became clear, and the blood appeared, as a proof that these poor deluded creatures were cleansed from their sins; and they returned home, well satisfied for all their trouble and expense. This delusion was practised in the following manner. The bottle was made with one side thick and the other clear, and placed upon the altar, behind which was a secret place, in which a person stood, and by a contrivance could, unperceived, turn either side to the worshipper. The bottle contained the blood of a duck, which was changed every week. This pretended miracle may remind us of a fraud in some respects similar, practised at Naples in our own days, namely, the blood of St. Januarius, although usually in a solid state, becoming liquid upon being brought near the head of the saint; upon the due accomplishment of which miracle the safety of that kingdom was said to depend! Dr. Moore, who was present at this ceremony in the year 1775, relates the superstitious anxiety which the inhabitants of Naples, rich as well as poor, manifested upon this occasion.

Immense numbers resorted to Hailes Abbey, as the readers will find noticed by Latimer; (see page 108;) and what he states of their conduct may well convince us that

the usual result of such pilgrimages was to encourage men "to sin, that grace may abound." Similar practices are common in the pilgrimages of the present day, yet the papists dare to charge those who oppose their errors respecting the great doctrines of truth, with advocating this false tenet, so destructive to the souls of men. But the protestant religion, so long as it is the religion of the bible, never will be found to encourage such fatal delusions. Speculative and practical antinomians may abound, and some few may endeavour to wrest scripture to their own purposes, but the great mass of individuals who adopt these untruths, will ever be found among those who in fact reject the doctrines of the reformation; and no where do they abound more than within the pale of the church of Rome.

In the preceding pages of this work, we have seen that the lollards always opposed pilgrimages, which they considered as leading to many fatal errors.

One image, celebrated in Wales under the name of Darvel Gatheren, to which multitudes resorted, bringing with them cattle and other offerings, was sent to London; and, by one of the refinements of cruelty so common in those times, it was made an instrument of death to friar Forrest, who was hanged and burned for denying the king's supremacy, and holding some blasphemous opinions. Latimer was sent to be present at his execution, and earnestly exhorted him to repent of his blasphemies, but without success, and the friar died in a frame of mind far different from that of the martyrs already mentioned, for we are told he "so impatiently took his death as never any man that put his trust in God at any time so ungodly or unquietly ended his life." We must regret to see any religious opinions, however erroneous, made at all the cause of a man's sufferings, but we cannot call friar Forrest a sufferer for religion, or impute his death to the reformers.

We are not left in doubt as to the opinions held by the church of Rome respecting pilgrimages at the present day, for they are explicitly stated by the pope in his bull or decree, reminding the "faithful of Christ," that the year 1825 is a year of jubilee, to be celebrated by pilgrimages to Rome, and promising many advantages to all who shall resort to "the holy city." This document is worthy

of notice, as it enables us to judge how far the opinions of the papists in our days differ from those they maintained when the poor lollards suffered the persecutions recorded in these pages. His "holiness," Leo XII. apparently desirous to secure the pecuniary advantages which resulted to his predecessors from this custom, is not sparing in his exhortations upon the subject. He calls this year "the acceptable time, and the time of salvation," and says that he has resolved, "by virtue of the authority given to him by Heaven, fully to unlock that sacred treasure, composed of the merits, sufferings, and virtues of Christ our Lord, and of his virgin mother, and all the saints, which the Author of human salvation has intrusted to his dispensation!" He then says: "It becomes us to magnify the abundant riches of the Divine clemency"—"that by the immense price of the blood of the Lord, and for his sake and virtue, as also by the merits and suffrages of the saints, they might gain the remission of the temporal punishment which the fathers of the council of Trent have taught is not always entirely remitted, as is the case in baptism by the sacrament of penance."*

Can any one who reads such an assertion, wonder that the church of Rome declares that the Scriptures are unfit to be read by the people?

His "holiness" then says, "During this year of the jubilee, We *mercifully give and grant* in the Lord, a plenary indulgence, remission, and pardon of all their sins, to all the faithful of Christ, of both sexes." Here we see one of the worst errors of the church of Rome asserted in the strongest terms, namely, the power of the pope to forgive sins. Is not this "the mouth speaking great things and blasphemies?" Rev. xiii. 5. These quotations cannot be deemed misrepresentations, as they are given from the translation of the bull, published and circulated in England by the Roman Catholics themselves!

But let us see on what terms this pardon of sin was to be obtained in the year 1825! It is offered to all who are "truly penitents, and confessing their sins, and receiving the holy communion, shall devoutly visit the churches of blessed Peter and Paul, and also of St. John Lateran and

* This and the following quotations are taken from the copy of the bull in the laity's directory, published with the authority of the Roman catholic prelates in England.

St. Mary Major at Rome, for thirty successive days, if inhabitants of that city, or for fifteen days, if pilgrims or strangers; and shall pour forth their pious prayers to God for the exaltation of the holy church, *the extirpation of heresies*, (reader, mark that,) the concord of catholic princes, and the safety and tranquillity of christian people.”*

The decree proceeds: “Neither is it allowable to remain indifferent and heartless about acquiring those salutary riches from the eternal treasures of divine grace, which the most holy and indulgent mother the church throws open to you.” How much more free, as well as more efficacious, is the pardon offered in the scriptures! “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath *no money*, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.” But the pope’s pardon cannot be obtained “*without money* ;” even the expense of the journey to Rome must be considerable. May we not proceed in the words of the text just quoted: “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? Harken diligently unto me; incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live,” Isaiah lv. 1—3. These are the gracious words spoken in the name of the Lord; alas. that there should be any one who rejects this offered mercy, and seeks pardon from the pope! Can we wonder that the church of Rome would keep the scriptures from the people?

It has often been noticed that the papists declare that those who are of a different opinion from themselves cannot be saved; and in this bull we find his holiness bewails heretics, in which appellation all who differ in any respect from the church of Rome are included, “as separated from the true church of Christ and the road of salvation!” and exhorts that all “may have one consentient mind with this church, the mother and mistress of all others, *out of*

* We are sometimes told that the church of Rome does not offer pardon of sins, except to those who are penitents; but by penitents, what a protestant understands by repentance is not implied, but the confessing sins to a priest, with outward declarations of sorrow, and submission to the voluntary act of punishment enjoined by the priest; and from the statement contained in this bull, it would appear that this is enough with the sanction of the pope, who thus makes himself a mediator between God and man.

which there is no salvation." (Reader, mark this.) He reminds the ecclesiastics, that "to you it belongs to explain the power of indulgences, what is their efficacy, not only in the remission of canonical penance, (penance enjoined by priests,) but also of the temporal punishment due to the Divine justice for past sin; and what succour is afforded out of this heavenly treasure, from the merits of Christ and his saints, to such as have departed real penitents in God's love, yet before they had fully satisfied by fruits worthy of penance for sins of commission and omission, and are now purifying in the fire of purgatory, that an entrance may be opened for them into their eternal country, where nothing undefiled is admitted." Here then is purgatory brought forward with all its absurdities unaltered; and from the obvious intent of this decree, we perceive, that, as of old, it is still urged as a means of procuring pecuniary advantages to the see of Rome.*

The pope also invites the faithful to behold the cradle of Christ, and other relics, as is already mentioned; but we

* Dr. Moore visited Rome in the year 1775, and gives some particulars respecting the jubilee; he says: "The first jubilee was instituted by pope Boniface VIII. A. D. 1300. Many ceremonies and institutions of the Roman Catholic church are founded on those of the old heathens. This is evidently an imitation of the Roman secular games, which were exhibited every hundredth year in honour of the gods; they drew vast numbers of people to Rome from all parts. Boniface, recollecting this, determined to institute something of the same sort, which would immortalize his own name, and promote the interest of the popish religion in general, and that of the city of Rome in particular. He invented a few extraordinary ceremonies, and declared the year 1300 the first jubilee year; during which, he assured mankind that Heaven would be in a particular manner propitious in granting indulgences and remission of sins to all who should come to Rome, and attend the ceremonies there to be performed at this fortunate period, which was not to occur again for a hundred years. This drew a great concourse of wealthy sinners to Rome, and the extraordinary circulation of money it occasioned was strongly felt as beneficial all over the pope's dominions. Clement VI. regretting that these advantages should occur so seldom, declared there should be a jubilee every fifty years: the second accordingly was A. D. 1350. Sixtus V. once more retrenched the half; and since his time there has been a jubilee every twenty-fifth year." There was not any celebration of this kind in 1800, on account of the invasion of Italy by the French; an attempt was made to renew it by the decree above noticed, but in the present state of Europe it did not produce the effects it had in former times; although a large number of pilgrims and even some crowned heads, visited Rome, to partake of the blessing promised by the pope.

may ask, does *he* really believe they are what they are represented to be?

This extraordinary document concludes with the following anathema against all who shall presume to oppose its contents: "Be it therefore utterly unlawful for any man to infringe, or by any rash attempt to gainsay this our ordinance, promulgation, grant, exhortation, demand, and will. But if any one shall presume to attempt it, let him know that he shall incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul!" Many, we trust, are found who "gainsay" this ordinance of the pope, and do so, fully assured that they incur not the indignation of the Almighty, but "that the Lord will requite them good for his cursing this day." Surely the reader cannot peruse this decree without indignation against him who thus "deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth." Let us earnestly pray that the angel, which even now is thought to be flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to declare to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, may speedily be followed by that other messenger of heaven, who shall be commissioned to declare "Babylon is fallen;" that Babylon which made war with the saints, and overcame them for a season.

The year of jubilee is commenced by the opening of a door into the church of St. Peter's, called the holy door, which is walled up, except during this distinguished year, and can only be entered by crawling upon the knees, in which posture the pilgrims and many others pass through it. This door was opened with great ceremony at the commencement of the last jubilee. Dr. Moore witnessed its being closed in the year 1775, and describes the pope as laying the first brick with his own hands, and the rest, as built up by common workmen. But all these bricks are said to acquire an equal degree of sanctity, and the pieces of brick and mortar when thrown down at the commencement of the jubilee, are scrambled for by the mob with the greatest eagerness. Dr. Moore says: "I have often been assured that those pieces of bricks, besides their sanctity, have also the virtue of curing many of the most obstinate diseases!"

The same writer was also present at the solemn benediction with which the pope concluded the jubilee. An immense multitude filled the spacious place before St. Peter's

church. The pope, in magnificent robes, was seated in a chair, borne on the shoulders of men, who were concealed by the silken drapery with which the chair was adorned, and was thus carried out of a window into a large balcony. Dr. Moore says: "To those who viewed him from the area beneath, his holiness appeared to sail forward from the window, self-balanced in the air, like a celestial being!" After relating some other particulars, he says: "At length his holiness rose from his seat, and an awful silence ensued. The multitude fell upon their knees, with their hands and eyes raised towards his holiness, as to a *benign deity*;"* and adds, "No ceremony can be better calculated for striking the senses, and imposing on the understanding, than the supreme pontiff giving the blessing from the balcony of St. Peter's."

It is painful to detail the sufferings of the lollards and gospellers, and it is scarcely less so to describe such particulars as are stated in the preceding pages. They, however, have too close a reference to these witnesses for the truth to be omitted. They give us some idea of the difficulties which our fathers had to encounter, and also present some particulars respecting popery at the present day. Surely it is right to call the reader's attention to these things; let him consider them, and draw such inferences as the circumstances appear to him to warrant. Much more might have been added, but we gladly return to details of the lives and sufferings of those who, although by birth and education connected with this Babylon, listened to the heavenly voice which said: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not her plagues," Rev. xviii. 4.

* The popes have claimed a power far above that of man, as may be shown from the writings of popish writers. Angelus Politianus thus addressed Alexander VI.: "We rejoice to see you raised above all human things, and exalted even to divinity itself, seeing there is nothing except God which is not put under you." Many passages, equally strong, might be added. Duplessis refers to Erasmus as his authority, that a short time before the reformation a public disputation was held, in which it was asserted that the pope participated in both natures, the divine and human, with Jesus Christ! Surely all respectable Roman Catholics will be inclined to rejoice that such an error was stopped, even though it was done by the reformation.

THE LOLLARDS;

Or, some Account of the *Witnesses for the Truth in England,*
between the years 1400 and 1546.



Cruel sufferings of Lambert, who was burned for denying the doctrine of Transubstantiation. See page 203.

PART IX

The Pope excommunicates Henry, and orders his subjects to rebel against him.—An account of the Pope's Bull on this occasion.—Lambert opposes Transubstantiation.—Appointed to dispute on this subject before the King.—Henry orders him to be burned—His cruel sufferings.—The Sacrament of the Mass.—Assassination of Pockington.—Two madmen burned.—Peke, German, and two others, burned.—Ferberne troubled for having a pig in Lent.—The Law of Six Articles.—Cranmer's bold opposition.—The act is passed, and received with much joy by the Papists.

THE proceedings of Henry VIII. in suppressing the monasteries, with his countenancing the translation of the scriptures, excited much consternation at Rome; and, together with the rejection of the pope's supremacy, determined that court no longer to delay the strongest measures that could be adopted against him.

Several works were published, representing Henry to be the most infamous tyrant that ever existed; comparing him with Pharaoh, Nero, and Julian the apostate, and delineating his character in the same manner as is done by the

Roman catholic writers of our own times. In the falsehoods contained in some histories of the reformation, recently published, there is nothing new; they are only former assertions once more repeated, while the complete refutations they then received, and the numerous documents discovered in the interval, which throw much light on the history of those times, and alone are sufficient to prove the falsity of these statements, are not noticed.

But the pope was not satisfied with proceedings of this description; he now published the sentence which had been pronounced three years before, probably hoping, that as the emperor and the king of France had lately made peace with each other, they might be induced to join in making war against Henry. This document is too remarkable to be passed over, although very similar bulls had been promulgated by his predecessors. It commenced by a declaration, that God had appointed the pope, according to the words of the prophet Jeremiah, to have power over kingdoms and nations, and "especially of the kings of the whole earth;" that he "should root out and destroy," as well as plant and build up, and that it was necessary he should proceed to severe chastisements when milder methods were ineffectual. It then stated, that Henry, king of England, had departed from the faith, and had put away Catherine, his queen, contrary to the prohibition of the church, and married one Anne Boleyn; that he had also made many hurtful laws, and denied the supremacy of the pope of Rome, putting many to death, at the instigation of the devil, because they would not do the same. The king was next summoned to appear at Rome within ninety days, and give an account of his actions; and if he refused so to do, his crown was declared to be forfeited, and the kingdom was then to be put under an interdict.* These penalties were extended to all

* An interdict is a decree of the pope, forbidding the celebration of Divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies of the church. During the reign of king John, Innocent III. was pope; he assumed the right of appointing and dethroning kings, and of interfering with their dominions. Having appointed Langton, a Roman cardinal, to be archbishop of Canterbury, the king objected to this nomination, upon which the pope laid the kingdom under an interdict. Divine service was no longer performed; the churches were closed throughout the land; the rites and ceremonies of religion were all discontinued, except baptism; the dead were buried in the highways, without any funeral solemnities, but, as Stow expresses it, "like dogs in ditches and corners;" and all the clergy were ordered to leave the kingdom, except a few who were allowed

the accomplices and adherents of the king, and "all his and their children, either born, or that may afterwards be born;" expressly declaring, that no one is excepted on account of youth, ignorance, or any other cause whatsoever! The subjects of the king were absolved from their allegiance; and all persons prohibited from any intercourse or trade with him and his people, under pain of excommunication; and it was declared that any articles of provision or merchandize so traded in, might be lawfully seized, and become the property of any one who took them!

All priests, bishops, and other ecclesiastics, were ordered to quit the kingdom within five days after the expiration of the time above mentioned, leaving only a few of their number to baptize infants, and administer the sacrament to such as were about to depart this life in a penitent state of mind.

A still stronger proof follows, of the wide difference between pope Paul, and the apostle Paul. The latter directed the christians, in the days of Nero, to be subject unto the higher powers, Rom. xiii. The former, on the contrary, not only absolved the subjects of Henry from their allegiance, but required all the nobles, clergy, and individuals of every rank, without delay or excuse, to rise up in arms with all their followers, against their monarch, and drive him from his kingdom; while other kings, princes, and people, were forbidden to assist or countenance him, either directly or indirectly, under similar pains and penalties! All "christian princes" were also exhorted "by the mercies of God," to join in attacking Henry, and were permitted to make prize of any property belonging to him and his subjects, and apply it to their own use; nor is this all. for the pope also decreed, that the subjects of Henry should be THE SLAVES of any one who should seize them!!! The prelates were to make this sentence known, within three days of the

to remain to baptize infants, and administer the sacrament to the dying. The people were forbidden the use of meat as in Lent, were prohibited from partaking of entertainments, or even saluting each other, or shaving their beards, and giving the usual attention to their apparel. This was followed by a sentence of excommunication, and a declaration that the king had forfeited his crown. The king of France was encouraged to invade England, and the English were forbidden to obey their monarch, who at length was obliged to make a complete submission to the pope, and surrender his crown to the papal legate. This same pope, Innocent III. passed the decree in the council of Lateran, A. D. 1215 confirming the new doctrine of transubstantiation.

time specified, and to publish it with the formalities of raising the cross, tolling the bells, and extinguishing the candles, as customary in cases of excommunication. (See p. 118.)

This decree had been passed in the year 1535, but as already stated, was not made public till three years afterwards, when it was sent forth with some additional clauses, declaring, that "as Christ had pity upon St. Peter, so the successor of St. Peter desired to act towards those who fell under his censure; that he had therefore suspended the execution of this sentence, till he found that Henry became hardened in his crimes, and not content with the cruel slaughter of priests and prelates, had even destroyed the bones of saint Thomas, archbishop of Canterbury, (Thomas à Becket,) which had performed innumerable miracles, and that he had also destroyed monasteries," &c. The pope now published this decree, commanding it to be executed, and that if it was proclaimed at Dieppe, or Boulogne, in France, or at St. Andrews, or Coldstream, in Scotland, or at Tuam, or Artifert, in Ireland, it should be considered a sufficient publication. It also contained the famous *non obstante* clause, usual in the pope's bulls, which declares that whatever the pope decreed, should take place, notwithstanding any constitutions or ordinances of the apostles which might be contrary to his decrees: thus setting up his words as superior to the word of God, wherein the "ordinances" of the apostles are contained; and thinking "to change times and laws," and to magnify himself above every God. Dan. vii. 25, xi. 36.*

The bull concludes by declaring, that if any persons should attempt to oppose this decree, they would incur the indignation of the omnipotent God, and St. Peter and St. Paul, his apostles! Thus, the reader will perceive, that belief in the infallibility of the pope, necessarily includes a belief that he has the power to depose all kings and monarchs who offend him.

Two centuries earlier, this sentence would have hurled Henry from his throne; such, at least, was the effect of similar decrees against king John, and other monarchs of Europe. But the times were changed; the thunders of Rome had not the power they once possessed, and Henry's mind was too strong to yield to such an assumption of a

* Compare with 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4; and see bishop Newton on the apocryphes, Diss. xxvi.

power, which evidently was contrary to the express declaration of the word of God, from whence it was said to be derived.

The quarrel was now irreconcilable. Paul sent a breve to the king of Scotland, declaring Henry a heretic, an adulterer, a murderer, and a rebel against his lord the pope; and offering the kingdom of England to him if he would go and invade it!* Henry, on his part, took measures to confirm his authority, and a declaration against the pretensions of the pope was signed by the ecclesiastics of the realm. In this document they state the objections which have already been noticed against the assumption of power by the pope, and say, "That the people ought to be instructed that Christ expressly forbad his apostles or their successors to take to themselves the power of the sword, or the authority of kings; and that if the bishop of Rome, or any other bishop, assumed any such power, he was a tyrant and usurper of other men's rights, and a subverter of the kingdom of Christ." This declaration was signed by all the bishops, and twenty-five eminent doctors of divinity and law.

Another paper was signed about the same time, by eight bishops, stating, that they were only ministers of the gospel to instruct the people in the faith, and that from scripture the authority of christian princes over their people, as well as also that of bishops and priests, was clear, and that they had the charge of souls committed to their care, with power to administer the sacrament, and teach the word of God; to which word, christian princes acknowledged themselves to be subject. This was probably drawn up with a view of refuting the calumnies spread abroad at Rome, where it was said that the king had suppressed all ecclesiastical offices, and denied them to be of Divine authority. These, and similar reports, were industriously circulated and believed; even as the lower classes in many Roman catholic countries, at the present day, believe that Protestants are a sort of infidels who have renounced the Saviour, and that they live without any public worship or appearance of religion. †

* A similar decree was issued by pope Pius V. against queen Elizabeth; her subjects were also ordered to rebel against their queen, and the pope wrote expressly to the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, in the year 1570, persuading them to take up arms and dethrone their sovereign! The case of the emperor Frederic, and other monarchs, may also be referred to as similar.

† Mr. Koster, an English merchant, who travelled in Brazil in 1816,

We now come to the proceedings against John Nicholson, usually called Lambert, to which we may refer, as distinctly proving that Henry had not departed from the errors of the church of Rome; but remained a papist both in opinions and practice in almost every respect, notwithstanding the pope had pronounced against him the sentence already mentioned.

Lambert was born in Norfolk, and educated at the university of Cambridge; and with many more was brought to the knowledge of the truth by the preaching and instructions of Bilney. Being persecuted by the papists, he left England, and joined Tindal, Coverdale, and Frith, at Antwerp; where he continued for more than a year, as chaplain to the English merchants at that place. Sir Thomas More, however, sought him out; he was sent over to London, and repeatedly examined before archbishop Warham and others; after some time he was removed to Oxford, where forty-five articles were exhibited against him, to which he was required to give answers in writing, without being allowed the use of any books.

The questions and answers are given by Fox at full length, from the public records of those times; but it is impossible in this little work to attempt giving even a sketch of the close reasoning and sound arguments which occupy more than twenty *folio* pages of small print; the reader must be referred to the work itself, where he will find them fully stated, and the perusal will amply repay his pains. We will, however, notice the twenty-sixth article, as the answer contains some valuable information upon a subject then much discussed. The inquiry was, "Whether thou believest that the heads or rulers, by necessity of salvation, are bound to give unto the people holy scripture in their mother language?"

In his reply, Lambert stated, "that he thought they were bound to see that the people had the means of understanding the holy scriptures; and he did not know how this could be done, unless they were translated into their mother tongue." He then enumerated many instances in

met with a person of considerable rank and property, a major in the militia, who "was much surprised to hear that we had churches in England, which he had never understood before. He said he should not believe henceforwards that the English were pagans, that is, heathens." Many similar instances are mentioned by other travellers.

which this had been done long before. In France, at the request of one of their kings; and in Flanders it was printed with the emperor's permission, also in Germany, and even in Italy! It had been done in England many hundred years before, in the time of the Saxons; the Psalter having been translated by one of the kings, a copy of which he had seen in Crowland abbey. Bede had also translated the gospel of St. John, and promised to complete the Bible. Lambert adds, "Yea, and perhaps he did so, but, I wot not how it cometh to pass, all such things be kept away. They may not come to light, for there are some walking privily in darkness, that will not have their doings known." He also mentions Tindal's Testament, and another olde translation, which had been shown him in manuscript. "But he that showed it me," said he, "durst not be known to have it by him; for many had been punished aforetime for keeping of such, and were convicted therefore of heresy." In this respect, as in many others, we have evidence upon evidence to show that the doctrines and practice of the church of Rome continue unchanged.

The sum of the doctrines Lambert considered to be truth, he stated in the two following propositions: "The first from Acts iv., Christ is the head corner stone of our faith, whereupon it should be set and grounded, neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no name under heaven given among men wherein we may be saved. This is one of the propositions wherein is engrossed or comprehended what I have said, which St. Paul thus otherwise explicates, I Cor. i., Christ is made of God our righteousness, our pureness, our satisfaction, and our redemption. And in another place—there is no other foundation, that any man may put, except that which is already put, that is Christ Jesus.

"The other proposition is written by the prophet Isaiah, and recited of our Saviour in the gospel of Matthew, in these words—Men do worship me in vain, teaching human doctrines, and precepts or laws. Of this Paul writes very largely in divers places, very nigh every where; amongst other, Col. ii., where he warns the Colossians to take heed that no man spoil them, to steal them away by philosophy or vain deception, according to the constitutions of men and ordinances of this world."

On the all-important point of justification he thus wrote

—"It is the usage of scripture to say faith only doth justify, and works salvation, before a man do any other good works." He added, "True faith is of such virtue and nature, that when opportunity cometh, it cannot but plentifully work deeds of charity, which are a testimony and witness-bearer of man's true faith. This declares Augustine upon St. John, where he expounds the text, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments.' Where a little after he speaks thus—'Good works make not a just or righteous man, but a man once justified, doeth good works.'"

In these answers, which were written about a year before the death of archbishop Warham, Lambert refused to state his opinions upon several points, where he knew the papists usually entangled the lollards, unless they would openly bring forward his accusers. The proceedings continued till Warham died. Lambert was shortly after set at liberty, the violence of persecution having been abated by the influence of queen Anne Boleyn and Cranmer.

Lambert then came to London; and desiring to avoid further persecution, changed his name from Nicholson, to that by which he was more commonly known; and kept a school in the neighbourhood of Stocks Market, where the mansion house is now built. In this employment he continued some time; and as he had no opportunity of preaching, he determined to renounce the priesthood, to become a freeman of the grocer's company, and to marry; but God, who disposes of all men as he pleases, had other designs respecting him.

In the year 1538 he heard a sermon preached at St. Peter's church, by Dr. Taylor, afterwards bishop of Lincoln, who suffered imprisonment in the cause of Christ, but who was not then fully enlightened in the truths of the gospel. After the sermon, Lambert sought an opportunity of speaking with the preacher, respecting the doctrines he had stated relative to the sacrament. Taylor excused himself from entering upon a discussion at that time, and desired Lambert to state his opinions in writing, and come to him at some future period. Lambert wrote ten arguments upon this subject; and Taylor, wishing to satisfy this inquirer, consulted several friends, and among others Dr. Barnes, a zealous preacher and favourer of the gospel, but, like Cranmer and many others, still inclined to favour the popish
 a of the real presence, or, at least, to adhere to the

Lutheran opinions upon this subject. Barnes, being anxious that nothing should occur to cause objections to the preaching of the gospel, wished to prevent these disputes upon the sacrament, and persuaded Taylor to lay the papers before Cranmer. Thus a private conversation became the subject of a public dispute. Cranmer summoned Lambert to appear in his ecclesiastical court, and called upon him to defend his assertions, which he appears to have done; and at length injudiciously appealed from the archbishop to the king, as the supreme authority in religious matters; thus, as the event proved, falling into a greater evil, from anxiety to avoid the lesser danger; for if we may judge by his conduct in similar instances, Cranmer would hardly have treated him with much severity. These circumstances strongly remind us of the apostle Paul, and his appeal to Cesar; in each case, (see Acts xxv. 11, xxvi. 32,) this appeal involved the accused in greater difficulties, but was also the means of "making known the mysteries of the gospel" to the earthly monarchs to whom they appealed; but in each case, alas! may we not fear this testimony may only have been to their condemnation?

At that time, Henry was in a situation of much difficulty; his conduct to queen Anne Boleyn had much displeased the German princes, and also had deprived him of the goodwill of many of the best of his subjects; while the destruction of the abbies and his quarrel with the pope, excited the anger of the more ignorant and bigoted of the people, and had even been the cause of rebellions and insurrections, as has already been related.

Gardiner, then bishop of Winchester, was ever on the watch to hinder the increase of gospel truth, and did not neglect this opportunity, but went to the king, reminding him of these circumstances, and exhorting him to embrace this occasion, and by sitting in judgment upon Lambert, to show that he was not a favourer of heretics. This advice was the more readily adopted by the king, as his vanity was flattered, by the opportunity thus presented of publicly exhibiting his learning.

A royal mandate was accordingly issued, commanding all the bishops and nobles to come to London, and assist the king in sitting in judgment upon heretics. On the day appointed, in November, 1538, Westminster Hall was

filled by the prelates and great men thus summoned, with other spectators, who resorted thither in great numbers.

The prisoner was brought to the bar by armed men; and after a solemn pause, the king appeared, clothed in white, and attended by his guards, also in white. On his right sat the bishops, ten of whom were to dispute with Lambert, one being appointed to answer each of the opinions he had given in writing to Dr. Taylor. Behind them were the judges and principal lawyers of the land, clothed in scarlet robes; on the left sat the peers of the realm, and other nobles, in their order. Before this solemn assembly stood the poor schoolmaster, alone as to human assistance, but not forsaken by his God and Saviour; for strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man, he was enabled to face this assembly undismayed. The papists speak much against Henry, but why do they not dwell especially on this scene? The reason is obvious, because the monarch on *this occasion* stood forth the champion of the errors of the church of Rome!

When all was duly arranged, the king looked sternly at Lambert, and commanded the bishop of Chichester to declare the cause of the assembly. When he had made an end of his oration, the king rose; and, leaning upon a cushion of silver tissue, turned towards the prisoner with a frowning brow, and said, "Ho! good fellow, what is thy name?" The humble follower of Christ, bending his knee, said, "My name is John Nicholson, although by many I be called Lambert." "What!" exclaimed the king, "have you two names? then I would not trust you although you were my brother." Lambert replied, "O! most noble prince, your bishops forced me of necessity to change my name." This beginning was a sample of what was to follow. After a few more questions and replies, the king commanded him to declare his opinion respecting the sacrament of the altar.

Then Lambert, beginning to speak for himself, gave thanks to God, that he had inclined the heart of the king, so that he would not disdain to hear, and understand the controversies about religion; for it had often happened, that through the cruelties of the Romish prelates, many good and innocent men had been put to death, without the king's knowledge. But the high and eternal King of kings, in

whose hands are the hearts of all princes, had inspired and stirred up the king's mind to be present, and understand the causes of his subjects; so he did not doubt that God would bring something to pass, to the setting forth of the glory of his name. He was proceeding, when the king, with an angry voice, ordered him to go to the business in dispute, at once.

Lambert, being abashed at the manner in which the king spoke, paused for a while, and the king added, in an impatient tone, "Why standest thou still? answer concerning the sacrament of the altar; dost thou say that it is the body of Christ, or wilt thou deny it?" As the king said these words, he lifted his cap, in token of reverence to what the lollards called the papist's breaden god! Lambert replied, "I answer with St. Augustine, that it is the body of Christ, after a certain manner." The king then said, "Answer me neither out of St. Augustine, nor by the authority of any other; but tell me plainly, whether thou sayest it is the body of Christ or no." Lambert answered, "Then I do deny it to be the body of Christ." The king added, "Mark well, for thou shalt be condemned by Christ's own words, 'This is my body.'"

Having thus stood forth as an accuser, rather than a judge, Henry commanded Craumer* to refute Lambert's assertion. The archbishop addressed the prisoner in a gentle manner; "Brother Lambert, let this matter be fairly discussed between us, so that if I convince you from the scriptures, of the falseness of your argument, you may willingly renounce it; but if you, by scripture, prove it to be true, I do promise that I will willingly embrace your opinions."

The archbishop then stated his argument, it was only addressed to that part of the opinions of the lollards brought forward by Lambert; which was grounded on the improbability of Christ's appearing in two places at once. Against this, he urged that Christ was in heaven, and yet was seen by St. Paul in the air. Lambert answered, by

* Alas! that Cranmer should appear in this character; but the truth must be told, and it is best told in his own words. When on his trial, he was reminded of his arguments against Lambert; to which he simply replied, "I maintained then the papists' doctrine;" he did it, however, in a very different spirit from that manifested by the followers of the pope!

referring to the passage, which did not say that Christ appeared unto Paul in his bodily form, but that a light from heaven did shine around; and he heard a voice, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest, &c.;" and urged further, that in no place in scripture was it stated that Christ appeared unto St. Paul in a bodily form.

Thus they continued to argue for some time; Lambert, being reasoned with by Cranmer in a fair and regular manner, was enabled to answer, so that the king was in some degree affected by his words; and the archbishop was nearly overcome, to the great surprise of the audience; when Gardiner, fearful of the event, interrupted Cranmer, and besought the king to allow him to speak next, although it was not his turn. He then began, but was still less able to overcome Lambert by fair argument than Cranmer; upon which he fell into a rage, and abused him in such terms, as forced the poor prisoner to be silent. Tonstal next spoke; after a long discourse on the almighty power of God, he argued that Christ could perform whatever he said he would do; Lambert denied that Christ had ever, in plain terms, said that he would change the bread into his body, but only spoke of it figuratively; and they might as well say, that he was a door, or a way, or a lamb; referring also to many such expressions.

Next followed Stokesly, who, when on his death-bed, rejoiced that he had sent fifty heretics to the flames. He attempted a philosophical argument, reasoning upon water being changed into air by boiling. This novel method of arguing the subject was received with much applause by the popish bishops, and the spectators in general. But their triumph was of short duration. The argument was grounded on the philosophy of those times, called the learning of the schools. Lambert met Stokesly with his own weapons, and completely foiled him, even upon the principles on which he had grounded his assertion. Enraged at this, the king and the popish prelates burst out into abuse against the poor martyr. The other bishops appointed to speak, spoke in their order; but Lambert, being wearied with standing so long before this formidable assembly, for the dispute lasted for five hours, and finding whenever he gained ground in argument, he was silenced by abuse, heard those who spoke last in

silence, only occasionally quoting passages from St. Augustine, when they referred to the fathers.

Thus the day passed away; at five o'clock darkness came on; it was November: and the king, being tired of this pretended disputation, said to Lambert, "What sayest thou now, after all this pains taken with thee, and all the reasons and instructions of these learned men? Art thou not yet satisfied? Wilt thou live or die? what sayest thou? Thou hast yet free choice." Lambert answered, "I yield and submit myself wholly unto the will of your majesty." Then said the king, "Commit thyself into the hands of God, and not into mine." Lambert replied, "I commend my soul into the hands of God, but my body I wholly yield and submit unto your clemency." Then said the stern monarch, in the very spirit of his ancestor, Henry V. (see Part I. page 14,) "If you do commit yourself unto my judgment, you must die, for I will not be a patron unto heretics." Then, turning to Lord Cromwell, he said, "Cromwell, read the sentence against him." * Cromwell, thus called upon, was forced to comply.

Thus, to use the words of Fox, was John Lambert judged and condemned to death by the king, whose judgment now remaineth with the Lord, against that day, when before the tribunal seat of that great Judge both princes and subjects shall stand and appear, not to judge, but to be judged according to their deeds.

These particulars were related by an eye-witness, who appears to have been Archbishop Grindall.

On the day appointed for this holy martyr to suffer, he was brought out of prison, at eight o'clock in the morning, to Lord Cromwell's house, and taken into his chamber, when Cromwell asked his forgiveness for what he had done. Being informed that the hour of his death was at hand, Lambert was greatly comforted with the prospect of departing to be with Christ, which he said was far better to him than remaining in this troublesome

* Cromwell was at that time the chief friend and patron of the Gossellers, as they were called; and we may here remark the painful results of the crafty contrivances of Gardiner, who so managed as to employ Taylor, Barnes, Cranmer, and Cromwell, in the condemnation of Lambert, although they all were attached to the truths for which Lambert in reality suffered; and themselves, in a few short years, all endured persecution on the same account.

world. Then going out of the chamber into the hall, he saluted the gentlemen who came to attend his execution, and sat down to breakfast with them without any sadness or fear. When breakfast was ended, he was taken to Smithfield, where he was very cruelly treated. For after his legs were consumed and burnt up to the stumps, the wretched tormentors withdrew the fire, leaving but very little under him. Then two men, that stood on each side of him, thrust their halberts into his body, and raised him up as high as the chain would permit; when Lambert, lifting up such hands as he had, his finger ends flaming with fire, cried unto the people in these words, "NONE BUT CHRIST, NONE BUT CHRIST;" and being let down again from their halberts, he fell into the fire, and then ended his mortal life.

A short time previous to the disputation above mentioned, while Lambert was confined in the lollards' tower at Lambeth,* he wrote to the king respecting the sacrament. He argues the subject at some length, both from the scriptures and the writings of the fathers; and concludes by the argument, which is the simplest and perhaps easiest understood, as proving that Christ spoke in a figurative sense; meaning that he is present with the believer, when thus commemorating his death and sufferings; but that it is no more to be supposed, that the bread is changed into his actual flesh and blood, than that when he is spoken of as a lion, or lamb, a door, &c. he actually became such; or that the words of the apostle, "we are buried with Christ," Col. ii. 12, are fulfilled literally.

The reader will have noticed, that Lambert was thus cruelly burned because he refused to believe the doctrine of transubstantiation; we may say, on that ground only, as no other accusation appears to have been alleged against him at his public trial, if it may be so called.

The Roman catholics complain that transubstantiation has been made a test of belief in their religion. But without in the least entering into discussion whether it supplies a proper test or not, it may be observed, that they were the

* This building still remains; it was built by archbishop Chicheley and mostly used as a prison for the clergy suspected of heresy. In an upper room at the top of the tower some iron rings, to which the prisoners were fastened, still remain, and on the walls may be seen some written memorials of those who were there confined.

first to introduce it for that purpose. It was made the test of heresy in the case of the lollards, and those who suffered in the days of queen Mary; and it still continues a prominent doctrine of popery at the present day; a shibboleth by which heretics are discerned.

The council of Trent, which is the highest authority in the church of Rome, thus decreed upon this subject: "If any shall say, that in the mass, a true and proper sacrifice is not offered to God, let him be accursed. If any shall say, in those words, Do this in remembrance of me, Christ did not institute his apostles to be priests, or that he did not ordain that they and other priests should offer his body and blood, let him be accursed. If any shall say, the sacrifice of the mass is only of praise and thanksgiving, or a bare commemoration of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, and not a propitiatory sacrifice, or that it profits him alone that takes it, and ought not to be offered for quick and dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities, let him be accursed." Reader, mark this. It is the doctrine of the church of Rome at the present day!

It is unnecessary to occupy these pages with any of the absurd fables to which this doctrine has given rise; of animals and insects adoring the host, of dogs and mules refusing to eat a consecrated wafer, or of obstinate heretics being converted by seeing the wafer become a raw and bloody piece of flesh in the hands of the priest. Passing by the whole multitude of stories on this subject, with which the popish legends abound, we will only observe, that at every celebration of the mass, "after pronouncing the words of consecration, the priest, kneeling, adores and elevates the sacred host." (*See the Canon of the Mass.*) He then lifts it as high as he conveniently can above his head, and shows it to the people to be adored by them; and they, having notice of this by the ringing of a bell, fall down and humbly adore it! Then having repeated some prayers, breaking the host, he puts a particle thereof into the chalice, saying, "May this mixture and consecration of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ be to us that receive it effectual to eternal life." "Then bowing (towards the host) and striking his breast, he says, Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us, give us peacc," &c. The wine is drank by the priest alone, but the bread is given to the communicants;

and it is a common expression in Roman catholic countries after communicating, to say, "I have received my Maker to-day!"

This doctrine, and the practice grounded thereon, was first preached about the year 750, and did not reach its full extent till the eleventh century. To such an extent has the honouring of this breaden God been carried, that services and litanies have been expressly instituted in honour of it. A book, called "A Form of Adoration of the Holy Sacrament," published at Paris, by authority, in 1669, says, that whoever shall repeat these words, "Praised be the most holy sacrament of the altar," five times after confessing, &c. shall deliver five of his friends' souls, whom he pleases, out of purgatory!"

When we consider the subject attentively, we shall find that one main reason of the stress laid upon this doctrine, is to get rid of the real and spiritual view of our blessed Lord offering himself up as a sacrifice for sin. We read in the epistle to the Hebrews, that, "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, he for ever sat down at the right hand of God, from-henceforth expecting, till his enemies be made his footstool; for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." To lead the mind from the spiritual consideration of that sacrifice, the mass is substituted instead; and in the place of the full and free manner in which the blessings of the gospel, even the blessings of Christ's sacrifice, as spoken of in the scriptures, are offered, we find another sacrifice substituted instead, which has no efficacy without the intervention of a priest, who is paid for the performance of the ceremony. To give currency to this profitable practice, which is connected with purgatory, penance, and the other doctrines of popery, an attempt is made to unite this invention of man with the word of God, and for this purpose the evidence of the senses, as well as the words and meaning of scripture, are to be given up, and the priest, in fact becomes a mediator between God and man!

Papal Rome has derived many of its tenets and practices from pagan Rome, but in this instance she has gone beyond her prototype. Dr. Middleton, who searched deeply into these points, thus expresses himself: "As to that celebrated act of popish idolatry, the adoration of the host, I must confess that I cannot find the least resemblance of it in any

part of the pagan worship; and as oft as I have been standing at mass, and seen the whole congregation prostrate on the ground, in the humblest posture of adoring at the elevation of this consecrated piece of bread, I could not help reflecting on a passage of Tully, where, speaking of the absurdity of the heathens in the choice of their gods, he says, 'Was any man ever so mad as to take that which he feeds upon for a god?' Cicero de Nat. Deor. 3. This was an extravagance left for popery alone; and what an old Roman could not but think too gross even for Egyptian idolaters to swallow, is now become the principal part of worship, and a distinguished article of faith in the creed of modern Rome!" Reader, turn to the works on the sacrament of the mass, published at the present day, even in England, and judge for yourself, whether these expressions are stronger than is requisite?

The papists failed not to flatter the king for the part he took against Lambert; persuading him that he had acquired so much reputation thereby, that people would no longer doubt his steady adherence to what they called the doctrines of the faith; and availing themselves of his desire to be celebrated for his learning, they praised every word he had uttered; and urged him on to further measures of the same nature. Nor did they hesitate secretly to destroy those whom they feared to attack openly.

ROBERT PACKINGTON, a mercer of London, and brother to the Augustine Packington, employed by bishop Tonsal to buy up the copies of Tindal's Testament, (see page 79,) was a man of considerable property, and one of the members of parliament for the City. He resided in Cheapside, and it was his constant practice every morning, summer and winter, at five o'clock, to go to pray at Mercer's Chapel, then called St. Thomas Acres. One misty morning, as he crossed the street from his house to the chapel, he was shot dead upon the spot.

The report of the gun was heard by the neighbours, and by a number of labourers, who were standing at the end of Soper-lane,* waiting to be hired; they saw him leave his house, and cross the street, but the fog was so thick that

* Now Queen-street. If the reader passes along Cheapside early in the morning, he will frequently see labourers standing to be hired, in the manner here mentioned.

the murderer escaped undiscovered. Many persons were suspected; but the real author of the deed remained unknown, till Dr. Incent, dean of St. Paul's, on his death-bed, confessed that he had hired an Italian for forty crowns to commit this murder. This confession was made before witnesses, who related it to others that were living in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Packington had given umbrage to the clergy, by some observations in parliament, respecting their conduct, and was also thought to have had private interviews with the king.

Another individual is mentioned as having been burned this year in Smithfield; and although he can hardly be called a sufferer for the truth, yet, as the Romish prelates condemned him as a heretic, he may be here mentioned, particularly as burning a man, notoriously out of his senses, is an additional proof of their violence and cruelty. His name was Collins, and he was a lawyer by profession; but was driven out of his mind by the unfaithful conduct of his wife. While wandering distractedly from place to place, he entered a church, while the priest was saying mass. Collins, seeing the priest hold the consecrated wafer over his head, in his madness imitated this proceeding, by holding up his dog in like manner. For this he was apprehended; and after examination, was committed to the flames. His dog was burned with him!

In the same year, a man named Cowbridge was burned at Oxford, who also appears to have been mad. "What reason is it," says Fox, "to require reason of a creature mad, or unreasonable, or to make heresy of the words of a senseless man, not knowing what he affirmeth. But this is the manner and property of this mother church of Rome! that whatsoever cometh in their hand and inquisition, to the fire it must go. But to end this matter of Cowbridge, whatsoever his madness was before, or however erroneous the doctrines imputed to him, yet, as touching his end, this is certain, that in the midst of the flames, he, looking up to heaven, soberly and discreetly called upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so departed."

A short time previous, one PEKE was burned at Ipswich, for heresy. When fastened to the stake, furze was heaped round him and kindled, by which he was miserably scorched,

although not deprived of life. Dr. Reading, who stood by with some other ecclesiastics, touched him with a wand, and said, "Peke, recant, and believe that the sacrament of the altar is the very body of Christ, flesh, blood, and bone, after that the priest hath spoken the words of consecration over it; and here I have in my hand a paper to absolve thee." Peke exclaimed, "I defy thee, and it also;" and spat forth blood, with which his mouth was filled, a blood-vessel having burst from anguish. Dr. Reading then cried aloud, "To as many as shall cast a stick to the burning of this heretic, is granted forty days of pardon, by my lord bishop of Norwich."

"Then baron Curson, sir John Audley, with many others of note, there present, rose from their seats, and with their swords did cut down boughs, and threw them into the fire, and so did all the multitude. Witness, Johu Ramsay, and others, who did see this act."

Men may be accustomed to be spectators of cruelties, till they not only behold them unmoved, but even engage in them without emotion; and surely this was the case when Englishmen could join in such deeds as those which have been just described.

About this time also suffered GILES GERMAN, and one JOHN, a painter by trade. While they were under examination, one of the king's guard, named LANGELOT, a man of godly mind and disposition, came into the court, and seemed, by his countenance and gesture, to favour the cause of truth, and the poor men who were troubled for it. Upon this he was apprehended, examined, and condemned with them, and the next morning they were all carried to St. Giles's Fields, and burned.

From these doleful tragedies it is a relief to turn to details less cruel, though strongly pointing out the meddling and vexatious tyranny which the church of Rome exercises over the actions as well as the consciences of men.

During Lent, in the year 1538, the wife of one Thomas Frebarne, of Paternoster-row, longed after a morsel of pig, and her husband was induced to speak to one Fisher, a butterwife of Hornsey, who brought him a pig, but took one of its feet to Dr. Cocks, the dean of Canterbury, at that time dwelling in Ivy-lane, and told him of Frebarne's despising the injunctions of the church, as to the direct

observance of Lent.* The dean related this to the company who dined with him that day; among whom was Mr. Garrett, the garter king at arms, Frebarne's landlord.

Mr. Garrett sent for his tenant, and gave him to the custody of the bishop of London's sumner, ordering that officer to carry him and his pig before the bishop. He was there accused of eating salt beef and calves' heads during the same season of Lent. This Frebarne denied, and shrewdly asked, "My lord, if the heads are eaten in my house, where are the bodies eaten?" "You spake," said the bishop, "against pilgrimages, and will not take holy bread nor holy water, nor yet go in procession on Palm Sunday; thou art no christian man." Frebarne and his pig were then taken to the compter, and the next day carried before the lord mayor and aldermen, at Guildhall, who sentenced him to stand in the pillory, in Cheapside, with half the pig on each shoulder; they then led him back to the compter, with the pig tied round his neck.

Frebarne's wife, fearing lest her husband might be involved in further troubles, exerted herself for his deliverance; and at her request, Dr. Barnes informed Cromwell of this proceeding, who sent for the lord mayor, and spoke to him upon the subject. She also went to one of the sheriffs, named Wilkinson, desiring him to be good unto her, and to get her husband out of prison. The sheriff said to her, "O! woman, Christ hath laid a piece of his cross upon thee, to prove whether thou wilt help him to bear it or no;" and promised to do what he could for her husband, desiring she would come again the next day, which she did, but being overcome with fatigue and anxiety, she swooned away, and remained ill for many weeks.

Cromwell's interference prevented further proceedings; the pig was carried to Finsbury-field, and there burned, by the bishop's order; and Frebarne was set at liberty, upon giving bond to appear to answer this charge, whenever he should be required. His landlord, however, who appears

* A decree issued at Cadiz, in 1825, for the better observing of Lent, forbade all keepers of inns, or eating-houses, from supplying their guests with any suppers during that season, unless they had a licence from the church for that purpose, and then they were only to be supplied with fish! It also contained a variety of other vexatious regulations.

to have been a violent papist, turned him out of his house; and for "four years after he could not get another, to his great hinderance and undoing."

Among the opposers of the gospel, and the persecutors of the lollards, Gardiner now stood pre-eminent. Naturally of a crafty disposition, and of great experience in the practices of courts, he had, in these respects, great advantage over the simple honesty of Cranmer; and the Most High saw fit for a time, to permit him to be the means of checking the progress of the reformation in England. Although Henry had strength of mind enough to refuse compliance with the mandates of the pope, he could not view their effects upon the minds of others with indifference. He saw his kingdom offered to other monarchs, who were willing, as he well knew, to invade England, as in the days of king John, if they could raise a sufficient force, and many among his subjects had shown their readiness to engage in rebellion against him. Gardiner had much influence over the mind of the king, and failed not to improve his advantages, by flattering Henry for his conduct in the case of Lambert, and artfully impressing him with fears of danger, from his own subjects, and from foreign powers. The duke of Norfolk, and other popish nobles, were also at this time in high favour with the king, and joined their influence to that of Gardiner. Henry was also displeased with some of the friends of the reformation, on account of the earnestness with which they urged that all lands, bestowed upon monasteries and abbies by private individuals, should be applied to benevolent and useful objects. These circumstances, and probably others which are unknown to us, determined Henry to prove his conscientious regard for the Roman catholic faith and its ceremonies, by a law of the most sanguinary nature.

The parliament met in April 1539, and in conformity to a message from the king, appointed nine prelates, with Cromwell, to devise a plan, whereby all his subjects might be brought to be of one mind on the subject of religion. This committee met; and being equally divided in opinions, eleven days were spent in fruitless debates.

On the 16th of May, the duke of Norfolk informed the house that their committee could not agree. He then laid before parliament six articles, enforcing the principal errors

of popery, and urged that they should be passed into a law. These articles were —

1. That in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration by the priest, there remained no substance of bread and wine, but that it had become the substance of Christ, God and man, the natural body and blood of our Saviour, as born of the Virgin Mary.

2. That communion in both kinds was not necessary, but that in the flesh, under the form of bread, is the very blood and under the form of wine, with the blood, is the flesh.

3. That priests may not marry.

4. That vows of chastity or widowhood ought to be observed.

5. That it is right and necessary that private masses be continued.

6. That auricular or private confession should be retained.

A law, enacting these articles, was brought into parliament on June 7th, and pressed forward with all the weight of the king's authority, by whom the greater part of the act was drawn up; this alone was sufficient to procure the sanction of parliament; in addition to which, the influence of the popish party was stronger than that of the reformers. Twenty abbots still retained their seats, and were actually present at the debate. The papists knew that such a law could not be carried into effect, without still stronger proceedings than had yet been adopted, and accordingly it was to be enforced by the most severe penalties, as will be presently noticed.

Cranmer boldly opposed this bloody law; and for three days spoke earnestly in defence of the truth, with such eloquence, power, and ability, as commanded the admiration of his adversaries. On this occasion, he clearly showed that he spoke in the cause of God, and not from a desire of opposing the king; and urged such strong reasons against these doctrines, that his adversaries were unable to refute them. But his endeavours were of no avail; although the king could not but respect the conscientious proceedings of the archbishop, on the third day he sent him a special message, desiring him not to oppose the act any longer; and requested that since he could not

consent to its enactments, he would leave the house of peers, (absence from Parliament was not then allowed without permission,) and withdraw to the council chamber, so that the act might pass without his concurrence. Cranmer replied, expressing his sense of duty to his king, but declaring his still higher duty to God; and refusing to leave the house, he opposed the bill to the last.

Nor were others wanting who faithfully declared their opinions upon this subject. Dr. Heynes upon hearing of the principles intended to be established by this act, wrote to one at court, "that it seemed to him the most perilous enterprise, all reasoning in learning of holy scripture, and love of Christ's religion laid apart, and most dangerous to the king and the realm, and the worst example that can be imagined to the bishop of Rome, to determine any thing in this realm to be God's will, and to establish any thing therein for any article of our faith without express witness of holy scripture." The conduct of Cranmer in this business is only one among many instances of the faithful manner in which he adhered to the truth, so far as he, at the time, was enabled to perceive it. Yet Roman catholic writers have not scrupled to represent him as at all times inclined to a mean and servile compliance with the will of his arbitrary master. These facts speak for themselves; and when we compare the honest firmness of Cranmer, with the crafty wiles of Gardiner, we cannot for a moment hesitate in determining which conducted himself in the most conscientious manner, and as becomes the servant of Christ. This is only one of the many instances in which several popish writers have falsified history in the most decided manner.

Concerning these articles Cranmer wrote as follows in the next reign in answer to the Devonshire rebels. "You will have these six articles which never were laws in any region but this; nor in this realm until the 31st year of king Henry VIII., and in some things so enforced by the evil counsel of certain papists, against the truth and common judgment, both of divines and lawyers, that if the king's majesty himself had not come personally into the parliament-house, those laws had never passed. And yet within a year, or little more, the same most noble prince was fain to temper his said laws, and moderate them in

divers points, so that the statute of six articles continued in force little above the space of one year."

The penalties of this law, often called the Bloody Act, and the Whip with Six Strings, were excessive. It was enacted, that after the 12th of July following, any persons who should by word, writing, printing, or otherwise, publish, preach, teach, say, argue or hold any opinion, that the body and blood of Christ were not both in the bread and in the wine, or should by any means contemn or despise the sacrament; they, and all who aided, abetted, or comforted them, should be deemed heretics, and burned, without being allowed to escape, if they abjured; and that all their property should be forfeited to the king. Respecting the five other articles, it was enacted, that whosoever should preach, teach, obstinately affirm, maintain, or defend the doctrines they condemned, and any priest who should marry, should be adjudged guilty of felony, and executed. And that all persons, who by word or writing opposed them, should, for the first offence, forfeit all their property, and be imprisoned; and for the second offence be punished as felons. All marriages of priests were declared void, and to be punished in the same manner as those who wrote or spoke against the articles; and the same punishment was decreed against all those priests who lived with other women,* and also against their wives, &c.

This act gave much pleasure to all who favoured popery, and induced them to allow the act for finally suppressing the monasteries to pass with little opposition! The poor lollards, and all who were attached to the doctrines of the truth, of course were much cast down. The excessive cruelty of the law is obvious, as it endeavoured to reach not only to outward acts, but literally to "the thoughts and intents of the heart."

* Cromwell and others, who were attached to the reformation, with some difficulty procured the insertion of the latter part of this clause; for as originally framed, the act restricted ecclesiastics from lawful connexions, but left them full liberty as to those which were unlawful, both in the sight of God and man; and such, it is said, is, in reality, the practice in Roman catholic countries at the present day. An original letter from Cranmer to Cromwell, dated 30 July, in this year, refers to the case of a priest just brought under his notice at Croydon, of "an offender according to the act in this behalf."

THE LOLLARDS ;

Or some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England, between the years 1400 and 1546.



A citizen of London torn from his family for having a book against Transubstantiation in his possession. (See page 223.)

PART X.

The Act of the Six Articles.—Cranmer's book against it.—Fox's allegations against these errors of Popery.—Five hundred persons in London sent to prison.—Bonner's cruelty to Mekins.—Melancthon's letter to Henry.—The Scriptures permitted to be read in private families.—Cromwell, his execution and dying words.—Cranmer's earnestness that the children of the poor should receive the benefits of education.—Barnes, Garret, and Hierome, burned in Smithfield, as heretics ; and three papists executed at the same time for denying the king's supremacy.

WE have seen that "the law of the six articles" was approved, and even partly drawn up by Henry. The joy with which it was received by the papists, is described in a letter from one of the peers to a friend, of which the following is an extract:—

"And also there is news here. I assure you, never prince showed himself so wise a man, so well learned, and so catholic as the king hath done in this parliament. With my pen I cannot express his marvellous goodness, which is come to such effect, that we shall have an act of parlia-

ment so spiritual, that I think none shall dare to say that in the blessed sacrament of the altar doth remain either bread or wine after the consecration; nor that a priest may have a wife; nor that it is necessary to receive our Maker in both kinds; nor that private masses should not be said as they have been; nor that it is not necessary to have auricular confession. Finally, all in England have cause to thank God, and most heartily to rejoice at the king's most godly proceedings."

Such were the sentiments with which many received this "bloody act;" they are the sentiments of the unrenewed heart of man, desiring to tyrannize over the consciences of his fellow men, and are adopted and naturalized by the followers of popery in this day.

The effects of this act soon appeared: many of "the gospellers" fled to the continent to save their lives, Shaxton and Latimer resigned their bishoprics, and were committed to prison.* Cranmer was greatly dejected, but resolved to continue stedfast in his duty. He, however, determined not to offend against the enactments of the law, so far as he could with a safe conscience comply; and therefore sent his wife to her friends in Germany. The king could not but admire the honest zeal of the archbishop in the cause of truth; and his mind was overruled, doubtless, by a merciful Providence, to protect him against his enemies. And as Cranmer now avoided coming to court, the king sent the duke of Norfolk and lord Cromwell, with some others of the nobility, to dine with him at the palace at Lambeth, and to assure him of his undiminished esteem and favour.

Henry, wishing to know what were the arguments with which Cranmer had opposed the six articles, directed Cromwell and the other lords whom he sent to him at Lambeth, to desire him to state his opinions fully in writing. The archbishop obeyed without loss of time, and caused his secretary, Mr. Ralph Morrice, to copy them fairly in a book. The secretary, having done so, went to deliver his book to his master; for the archbishop had

* When Latimer first put off his rochet, (part of a bishop's dress,) he leaped several times, telling some friends who were in the room that he felt his shoulders relieved from a heavy burden. He was kept a prisoner during the remainder of the reign of Henry.

ordered him to be very careful of this book, as writing it (although by the king's command) was, in fact, an offence against the law. Finding that he was gone to Croydon, the secretary returned to his own chamber to deposit it in a safe place; when he found that the door was locked, and the key had been carried away by mistake. While considering what he should do, Morrice was informed that his father had come to London, and wished to see him. In this dilemma he resolved to take the book with him; and went into a boat, with four of the king's guard, who were also going to London, intending to land at Paul's wharf. When they came to Bankside, they found the king in his barge, with a great number of other boats, seeing a bear baited at the water's edge. The guards dared not pass by the king, and at their entreaty the secretary consented to go with them; by degrees they got so near the bank, that the bear, breaking loose, came into their boat. The guards soon extricated themselves, leaving the poor secretary to his fate; the bear and the dogs came full upon him, and in the scuffle the book got loose from under his girdle, and fell into the river. The confusion now became general; the king commanded the sport should end, and departed.

The secretary, perceiving the book floating with the stream, out of his reach, called to the bearward to secure it, which he did; but before the secretary could get to him, he had shown it to a priest, who, perceiving that it was written against the six articles, told the bearward that whoever claimed it would be hanged.

This fellow was a rank papist; and when Morrice asked for the book, he refused to give it up, saying, "that he trusted both he and his master would be hanged for it." The secretary, anxious to prevent any unpleasant consequences, got one Blague, a grocer in Cheapside, an intimate friend of the bearward's, to invite him to supper the day following, and then offered him twenty shillings if he would give up the book; but this he refused, saying the matter should not be made up so easily.

The secretary, finding no time was to be lost, went to lord Cromwell the next morning, and told him the whole story; and they found the bearward waiting at the court with the book, intending to give it to Gardiner, or some other of the popish party. Cromwell at once

took the book from his hand, and threatening him for keeping any writing belonging to one of the privy council, sent him away without either thanks or reward. He then restored the book to Cranmer, who had it copied again, and it was given to the king.

This anecdote shows how the land was then divided by the disputes between the gospellers and the papists, and the eagerness with which the latter, even down to the lowest among them, sought for every occasion against Cranmer; it also shows the support which the followers of the truth received from Cromwell.

Fox regrets that no particular account of Cranmer's arguments against the six articles, and of the authorities he referred to, was preserved. He endeavours to supply this deficiency, in some degree, from ancient records and other writings; which show not only that these articles are not founded on holy scripture, but also that they are contrary to the opinions and practices of the christian church for many centuries, until the light of truth was gradually obscured by popish errors. These allegations against the six articles, as Fox entitles them, occupy fifty folio pages, and we can, of course, only glance at their contents.

Concerning transubstantiation, he observes that this doctrine began to be received by many of the english clergy, in the time of Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, about the year 1070; but it was not imposed upon the church as an article of faith, or required to be generally received, till the council of Lateran was held at Rome, in the year 1216. This he proves from the writings of Tertullian, Ambrose, Augustine, and many others. A quotation from Bede, who lived A. D. 730, plainly shows that the doctrine was not held by the church of England at that period. The time when this opinion began to prevail in England, is further shown from the life of bishop Odo, who lived A. D. 950, and was an advocate for the real presence. It is related, that as he was breaking the host, or consecrated wafer, blood miraculously dropped from it. This legend is unworthy of notice; indeed the author who relates it, states that it was only visible to a faithful priest, then standing near, and not to the congregation, or those of the by-standers who rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation! It has been, however,

enrolled among the popish miracles, as well as those of our own times, and is equally worthy of credit!

Fox then inserts several letters, written in the Saxon tongue, by Elfricus, archbishop of Canterbury, to Wolfstane, archbishop of York, about A. D. 996, expressly against this doctrine. Elfricus also had written sermons upon the same subject, in the latin language; these were destroyed by the popish clergy;* but some copies in the saxon language escaped their search. Fox copies one of these sermons, preached at Easter upon this subject, and also gives a translation. In this we find many of the arguments used by Frith and others.

Fox then gives an account of Berengarius, who lived at the same time as Lanfranc, and who was the first person deemed a heretic for denying transubstantiation. After repeated examinations before the popes Leo IX. and Nicholas II., he was obliged to recant; and at length, between fear of his life, and trouble of mind, he forsook all his studies, books, and property, and worked as a common labourer for the rest of his life.

After pope Innocent and the Lateran council had asserted the real presence in the sacrament, pope Honorius the Third, A. D. 1129, commanded the host to be elevated and adored: thus the present doctrine and practice of the church of Rome was completed; and shortly afterwards followed the crusades against the albigenses and waldenses, and the general persecutions of the faithful disciples of Christ.

Respecting the second article, Fox shows plainly, from the writings of the fathers, that the cup was given to the laity as well as the bread, during all the first

* In the library of Worcester cathedral was found a latin letter of Elfricus, one passage of which was entirely erased, so that not a word could be made out; but on referring to a copy of this letter, in the saxon language, preserved at Exeter, it was ascertained that the passage thus obliterated, expressly stated, that the consecrated bread was not the same body as suffered for us, nor the blood which was shed for us. The editions of the ancient Fathers, now re-printed in roman catholic countries, are often found to have been altered in a similar manner. Polydore Virgil, whose history of England is much referred to by roman catholics, destroyed all the books he could procure, containing histories of the times respecting which he had written. These proceedings were not difficult before the art of printing was discovered, and had made progress

ages of the church, according to the express commandment of our Lord, "Drink ye all of it," Matt. xxvi. 27.

Respecting the third and fourth articles, against priests' marriages, and in favour of monkish vows, Fox shows, that for above a thousand years priests were allowed to have wives, and though, as monkery began to prevail in the church, some opposed this liberty, yet it was not forbidden till the year 1067; when pope Hildebrand began to require an oath from all bishops, that they would not ordain any persons for the ministry who were married; nor allow them to marry after they had been ordained. Until that period it had always been accounted lawful, and several of the popes were sons of priests, by their lawful wives, even as late as John XV. A. D. 984.

After inserting the arguments of Volusianus and others, on this subject, at great length, and noticing the licentiousness and depravity which ensued from forbidding the priests to marry, Fox states, that an act of the council at Winchester, held by Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, 1104, was the first that prohibited the marriage of priests in England; but, nevertheless, for two hundred years afterwards, they were permitted to marry; and by the law of the land they and their wives and children were considered as entitled to receive, hold, and enjoy, lands or other property, the same as the laity. This is proved beyond dispute by many deeds and other legal instruments of those times, in existence when Fox wrote, eighteen of which he inserts at full length; one of them is dated as late as 1353; he also shows that these instruments, beyond dispute, referred to individuals of the regular priesthood.

As to the fifth article, respecting private masses, this practice appears to have risen in the days of pope Gregory, about six hundred years after Christ. Fox says, "Whereas our salvation and justification standeth by the free gift and grace of God, through our faith in Christ, so by these popish masses, the benefit is made to come through the hands of a priest." "And although by one offering Christ hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14, "the popish mass maketh an oblation and a new satisfaction, daily to be done for the quick and the dead."

As to the sixth article, respecting auricular confession,

Fox shows that it was an abuse, by which that liberty, which permitted a penitent to utter his griefs to others, was declared to be necessary for the pardon of his sins and the salvation of his soul. This doctrine, like the others, was neither commanded in scripture, nor countenanced by the fathers, as he proves by several quotations from their writings; among others, by the following passage from Chrysostom, who, when writing upon repentance and confession, says, "Let the examination of thy sins and thy judgment be secret, and without witness; let God only see and hear thy confession."

The friends of popery went too far; they made this whip of six strings so cruel in its enactments, that it could not be put in force to its full extent. Commissioners were appointed to carry the act into execution throughout the kingdom. Those who sat at London, in fourteen days committed five hundred persons to prison, who were dragged from their families, and accused of offences against this law! The prisons could not contain this vast number, in addition to their other tenants, and several of the companies' halls were used as places of confinement. The dreadful consternation that ensued, may be more easily imagined than described; and the reader must bear in mind that if the charges were proved, execution must follow; for no one was allowed to escape, as formerly, upon abjuring. Although the form of trial was in some respects altered for the better, and the prisoners were only to be condemned upon the verdict of a jury; yet such a trial then was very different from what it is in our days; no counsel was allowed to plead for the prisoner, and the judge endeavoured to find matter of condemnation against him, rather than to watch the proceedings in his behalf.

Of this we have a strong proof, in the case of **MEXINS**, a youth only fifteen years of age. He was brought before Bonner, who succeeded Stokesly as bishop of London, about this period, and accused of speaking against the sacrament of the altar; and although this case did not occur till the year 1541, we may notice it here, as confirming the observations just made. The grand jury at first refused to find the indictment against this lad, alleging that the witnesses did not agree; "therefore," said they, "we do not allow them." "Why so?" said Bonner, "this court hath allowed them." "Then," said one of the jury, "is it sufficient for

us if this court do allow them?" The recorder answered in the affirmative, and told them to reconsider the matter. They did so, and returned into court with the indictment. A few days after, Mekins was brought to the bar, when Bonner thus addressed him: "Mekius, confess the truth, and submit thyself to the king's law, that thy death may be an example to all others." His condemnation and execution followed as a matter of course.

When brought to the stake, he was taught to speak well of Bonner, and the charity he had shown him, and to declare his detestation of all heresies and heretics, especially of Dr. Barnes, from whom, he was taught to say, he had learned his opinions respecting the sacrament; a statement manifestly false, as Dr. Barnes's opinions were, in this respect, nearly those of the church of Rome. Mekins appears to have been a weak-minded lad, willing to say whatever he was told. But many declared that it was a great shame for the bishop, whose duty it was rather to have laboured to save his life, than to procure his execution, seeing that he was so ignorant as hardly to know what heresy meant." As Burnet observes, the conduct of Bonner, in the case of this poor lad, is enough to blemish his memory for ever, had not the deeper stains of his subsequent conduct dashed out all particular spots!

Can we peruse this without being thankful for the reformation? We read of but one such judge in England, since those days, namely, judge Jefferies, and let it be remembered that the monarchs under whom Bonner and Jefferies acted, both were papists. We may further remark that this is the first instance of Bonner's judicial proceedings against the lollards and reformers, mentioned in history; and that it shows he began in the same spirit in which he continued and ended his career. Whatever else may be said of his conduct*, in this respect, most certainly, he was a consistent character.

* When Bonner was appointed bishop of London, to please Henry he obtained a commission, which states, that since from the king all power, ecclesiastical as well as civil, was derived, he did, at Bonner's request, empower him to ordain, and to perform all the other parts of episcopal authority! What will bigoted papists say to this conduct, in one of their most strenuous advocates? What Bonner himself thought, may be judged from this roll having shared the fate of others destroyed by him in queen Mary's reign; but, by a singular inconsistency, he allowed a copy of it to remain in his register.

So great was the consternation of the people, and their dislike of the proceedings under this new law, that the lord-chancellor Audley, with Cranmer, and Cromwell, and the duke of Suffolk, went to the king, and represented the fatal effects that must ensue, in such strong colours, that he commanded the prisoners in London to be liberated. The proceedings of the commissioners were also checked in other parts of the kingdom, as well as in the metropolis, and while Cromwell continued in office this terrible law was not much enforced.

The cruel act to which we have referred, caused much disapprobation among those princes and characters of note in Germany, who had adopted the reformed religion; and several remonstrances were addressed to Henry. Among others, Melancthon wrote a long epistle, earnestly beseeching the king to pause before he suffered the dreadful severities of this act to be put in force; stating powerfully, at some length, reasons against the six articles in question, and urging that it was never unseemingly for a good prince to correct and reform cruel and rigorous laws! In this letter the reformer exposed the crafty proceedings of Gardiner, and thus exclaims, "O, impudent and wicked Winchester, who, under these colourable fetches (pretexts) thinketh to deceive the eyes of Christ, and the judgment of all the godly in the whole world!" He thus proceeds, "It cannot be denied, but that long and horrible darkness hath been in the church of Christ. Men's traditions have not only been a yoke to good men's consciences, but have been falsely accounted as the service of God. Briefly, little difference there was betwixt the christian and heathen religion, as still is yet at Rome to this present day to be seen. The true doctrine of repentance, of remission of sins, which cometh by the faith of Christ, of justification of faith, of the difference between the law and the gospel, and of the right use of the sacraments, was hid and unknown." Towards the conclusion of his letter, Melancthon reminds Henry, that "Christ shall judge all them that deserve either well or evil of his church; and, whilst the use of letters shall remain, the worthy memorial of such noble deserts shall never die, nor be forgotten with the posterity to come." How true is this last observation! we find that the memorial of these blessed martyrs has descended to our times, and will be handed down to generations yet

unborn, notwithstanding the false assertions and endeavours of their adversaries to suppress the truth.

There is reason to conclude that these things made a considerable impression upon the king's mind, and thus the storm did not fall so heavily on the followers of the truth as they had feared, although, in subsequent years, their enemies again persecuted them severely.

The monasteries having been surrendered to the king, Cranmer and Cromwell earnestly endeavoured to secure the application of a considerable portion of their revenues to the endowment of new bishoprics, the foundation of colleges and schools, and other religious and charitable establishments. But the profusion with which the king granted away this property, and the eagerness with which the courtiers sought for these spoils, prevented the accomplishment of any laudable designs, excepting in a very limited degree. The fall of Cromwell also interfered with these intentions. This profusion, however, was overruled for good. For when queen Mary attempted to restore the abbey lands, her views were principally prevented by the influence and power of those nobles to whom large portions had been granted. This circumstance, and the destruction of the houses to their foundations, which Cromwell in general directed, we may conclude, with Fox, "not to be without God's special providence and secret finding; or else," as he adds, "we might have had such swarms of friars and monks in possession of their nests again before this day in England, that ten Cromwells afterwards should not have sufficed to remove them." The lover of antiquities may deplore the destruction of these buildings, but the christian will never regret that they are reduced to that state of absolute ruin, which, in fact, has rendered them so interesting to the antiquary.

Notwithstanding the cloud which now hung over the reformers, Cranmer obtained one most important privilege, namely, the free use of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue, in private families as well as in the churches. Gardiner opposed this; and one day, in the king's presence, challenged Cranmer to show any difference between the authority of the scriptures, and that of the canons of the apostles, which were founded on tradition. Upon this point they disputed for some time, when the king perceived the strength and solidity of Cranmer's reasonings, and

their superiority to Gardiner's flippant arguments; he then interfered, and silenced Gardiner, telling him that Craumer was an old and experienced captain, not to be overcome by novices like himself.

In the year following, 1540, the doctrines of the reformation appear to have gained a little ground. Cromwell addressed the parliament as vicegerent in the king's name: again urging the king's desire for unity among his subjects in religious matters, and a committee was accordingly appointed to draw up an exposition of those doctrines which were necessary for the instruction of a christian man. On the 18th of April, Cromwell was appointed earl of Essex, and appeared to enjoy the king's favour in the highest degree; yet such is the uncertainty of worldly honours, that, on the 13th of June, the duke of Norfolk accused him of high treason, as they sat together at the council; and, arresting him in the king's name, sent him to the Tower.

In the histories of England, the reader will find full accounts of the rise and fall of Cromwell. Although political events had much to do with his disgrace, yet, without doubt, it was chiefly the work of the papists, who were offended beyond measure by the destruction of the monasteries, and other proceedings favourable to the reformation. The king also was now attached to the niece of the duke of Norfolk, one of the most active and powerful of the nobles, and a zealous follower of popery. Here, again, we find an instance of the bold and faithful proceedings of Cranmer; for, on the very next day after the arrest of Cromwell, he wrote to the king in his behalf.

Cromwell was the son of a blacksmith, as has been already noticed. In his youth he was remarkable for his abilities and perseverance, and ardent desire to search after the truth. After passing several years on the continent, he settled at Antwerp, and was employed by the English merchants in that city. While thus engaged, some persons came thither on their way to Rome, about A. D. 1510, being sent by the inhabitants of Boston in Lincolnshire, to purchase the pope's bulls, authorizing them to establish a guild or sort of corporation in that town, which would cause strangers to resort thither. As this business required ability as well as money, they engaged Cromwell to accompany them, and assist in the negociation. At that

time his religious opinions were not fully settled, but he was studying the New Testament; and availing himself of an excellent memory, he learned the whole by heart, while on his journey and during his stay at Rome.

Julius the second was then pope; and romish historians describe him as one of the most luxurious and depraved of men. Cromwell availed himself of this inclination for the pleasures of the table, to save the money of his employers and his own time. He caused some dishes of jelly to be made in an exquisite manner, such as had not been seen at Rome; and, watching an opportunity when the pope was on a hunting party, Cromwell and his companions brought these dishes to the entrance of the pope's pavilion, with "a three man song," after the custom then practised at great feasts in England. His holiness inquired what this song meant; and being told, he ordered the strangers to be called in; and being intreated by Cromwell to taste these dainties, he and his cardinals liked them so well, that the jelly was quickly eaten; and the pope was so well pleased, that he granted their requests without any delay or further expense.

In the life of Cromwell, the reader will find full particulars of this bull, which was renewed by pope Clement, in 1526. It bestows upon the members many ecclesiastical privileges; among others, that every member should be entitled to receive full remission and forgiveness from sins, and the punishment, once in their lives, or at the hour of death! It also gives to every one who contributed to the funds of this establishment, five hundred years of pardon. That all members who caused masses to be said for souls in purgatory, should have remission of their own sins, as well as procure deliverance for those in whose behalf they interceded; and that all the souls of the brothers and sisters of this guild, should be partakers of the benefits obtained by the prayers, alms, fastings, masses, pilgrimages, and "other good deeds of all the holy church militant for ever!" After these great benefits to the partners in this concern, it is hardly worthy of notice that they might eat milk, eggs, butter, and cheese, and also flesh in Lent, or other fasting days, by consent and advice of their confessor and physician, without scruple of conscience! Surely the good town of Boston had enough for their dishes of jelly! even now the inhabitants probably enjoy some temporal ad-

vantages resulting from this flagrant specimen of popish imposture; but how lamentable a picture does it present of the manner in which this mystical Babylon rules over the souls of men, Rev. xviii. 13; for grants of a similar nature would now be made to all who might be willing to purchase, though perhaps not quite so cheaply acquired, and certainly with less open profligacy. Cromwell was zealous in setting forth the advantages of this bull, wherever he and his companions went, and for some time he continued active in the political and military events of those days. But he had learned the New Testament by heart; the word was fastened in a sure place; and the good seed, watered (as we would trust) by the influence of the Holy Spirit, brought forth good fruit. After a time, he was employed by cardinal Wolsey, and continued to be his faithful servant to the last, not forsaking him even in disgrace; and his good conduct induced king Henry to take him into his own service. We may remark, that the cardinal had employed Cromwell, about the year 1515, in suppressing some monasteries, the funds of which were then applied to the support of the cardinal's college at Oxford. Let not the reader forget that Wolsey, with the authority of the pope, employed Cromwell to seize and suppress a number of monasteries, thus setting Henry an example, and affording instruction to Cromwell how to proceed in such a work. When the romish writers abuse Henry and his ministers for these matters, let them not forget who set the example.

The limits of this publication render it impossible to enter into the details of Cromwell's life and conduct, as a minister of state, even with reference to religious matters. We may remark, that he continued a zealous promoter of the reformation, although, in many instances, temporal authority and worldly honours proved snares and hinderances to his course, and "pierced him through with many sorrows." And his signal kindness towards his old benefactor, Frescobald, and others, prove him to have been both generous and grateful.

Gardiner and his associates did not allow Cromwell to remain long in prison. He was never brought to trial, but on the 19th of July, he was attainted by an act of parliament, being accused of many malpractices, but especially of encouraging heretics, and promoting the circulation of heretical books. The storm, although sudden, had not

taken him unprepared, and he was enabled to bear this reverse with christian fortitude.

On the 28th of the same month, Cromwell was beheaded on Tower-hill. When on the scaffold, he addressed the people, calling upon them to bear record that he died in the catholic faith, not doubting any article of his faith, nor any sacrament of the church. Hence roman catholics have represented him as turning to popery, at the last; but this we may positively deny, not only because he did not in the least acknowledge any of its erroneous doctrines, but also from the prayer he offered at the hour of his death, kneeling upon the scaffold, which is too excellent to be omitted.

“ O Lord Jesus, which art the only health of all men living, and the everlasting life of them which die in thee, I, wretched sinner, do submit myself wholly unto thy most blessed will; and being sure that the thing cannot perish which is committed to thy mercy, willingly now do I leave this frail and sinful flesh, in sure hope that thou wilt in betterwise restore it to me again in the last day, at the resurrection of the just. I beseech thee, most merciful Lord Jesus Christ, that thou wilt, by thy grace, make strong my soul against all temptations, and defend me with the buckler of thy mercy against all the assaults of the devil. I see and acknowledge that there is in myself no hope of salvation, but all my confidence, hope, and trust, is in thy most merciful goodness. I have no merits nor good works which I may allege before thee; of sins and evil works, alas! I see a great heap; but yet, through thy mercy, I trust to be in the number of them to whom thou wilt not impute their sins, but wilt take and accept me for righteous and just, and to be the inheritor of everlasting life. Thou, merciful Lord, wert born for my sake; thou didst suffer both hunger and thirst for my sake; thou didst teach, pray, and fast, for my sake; all thy holy actions and works thou wroughtest for my sake; thou sufferedst most grievous pains and torments for my sake; finally, thou gavest thy most precious body and blood to be shed on the cross for my sake. Now, most merciful Saviour, let all these things profit me, who hast given thyself also for me; let thy blood cleanse and wash away the spots and foulness of my sins; let thy righteousness cover and hide my unrighteousness; let the merits of thy passion and bloodshedding be satisfaction for my sins. Give me, Lord, thy grace, that the

faith of my salvation in thy blood waver not in me, but may ever be firm and constant. That the hope of thy mercy, and life everlasting, never decay in me; that love wax not cold in me. Finally, that the weakness of my flesh be not overcome with the fear of death. And grant me, merciful Saviour, that when death has shut up the eyes of my body, yet the eyes of my soul may still behold and look upon thee; and when death hath taken away the use of my tongue, yet my heart may cry, and say unto thee, Lord, into thy hands I commend my soul, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Amen."

Surely, this prayer sufficiently proves that Cromwell did not die a roman catholic; for not one of the doctrines or sacraments peculiar to itself, which that church teaches, as absolutely necessary for salvation, are mentioned therein. When the adherents of the romish faith are found adopting such simple and scriptural language, neither adding their wood, hay, and stubble, nor destroying the foundation of all hope and confidence, in the hour of death, even Christ Jesus, as he is here set forth, then they may be allowed to assume the title of catholic, or universal church; but until that time, they can only be considered as roman catholics. We would trust, that in the church of Rome there are many individuals who have been brought to adopt the truths contained in this beautiful prayer; but such persons lament and deplore the errors of popery. Let the reader compare this prayer with the dying words of bishop Fisher, or rather let him refer to a little tract now sold by the roman catholics in England, and sanctioned by authority, entitled, "*Bona Mors, or prayers for a happy death.*" Here the dying man is directed to call, not only upon Christ for mercy, but on holy Mary, St. Abel, St. Abraham, St. Peter and the other saints of the New Testament; on St. Benedict, St. Francis, all holy monks and hermits, St. Lucy, &c. saying, "Pray for us;" and "All ye saints of God, make intercession for us." Nor is this all; after some earnest prayers to the Saviour, with especial addresses to his five wounds, in that to the wound of his right hand, we find these words: "I supplicate that thou wilt grant me a firm and resolute will, in all things relating to my salvation; bless me with final perseverance in grace, to secure the enjoyment of that glory which was purchased with the price of thy most precious blood; grant, also, my Jesus, a speedy release to the souls

in purgatory." After these, and other similar prayers, we find, "Let us have recourse to the ever immaculate virgin, mother of God, beseeching her to protect us under the shadow of her wings, until the wrath of God be appeased; that she will obtain for us true contrition and perseverance in the holy grace of her blessed Son."

Reader, your last hour must come! Would you, at that dread moment, desire to be found with the words of the dying lord Cromwell realized as the sincere expressions of your soul; or would you rather adopt the prayers and petitions recommended by the roman catholics of the present day, as prayers for a happy death?

Having thus procured the death of Cromwell, the popish party next endeavoured to effect the destruction of Cranmer. Their first attempt was by availing themselves of a mandate, issued by the king, appointing commissioners to examine into some religious questions, and to explain some of the leading doctrines of faith. Having drawn up some articles favouring the old popish superstitions, they went to Lambeth, and earnestly urged the archbishop to give his consent, telling him that it was the king's pleasure they should be drawn up in this manner.

Although ever ready to obey the dictates of his lawful sovereign, on points merely of a worldly nature, Cranmer could not comply on this occasion; he withstood both their flatteries and their threatenings, notwithstanding Cromwell was at that time a prisoner in the Tower. The archbishop stood alone; even his friends Heath, bishop of Rochester, and Skip, bishop of Hereford, taking him apart into the garden, urged him to consent, as the king was determined, and his will could not safely be opposed.

Cranmer would not depart from the course which his conscience told him was right. He pressed them to discharge their consciences by maintaining the truth; warning them that if they consented to the contrary, the king would eventually perceive the truth, and would never again place confidence in them. His advice, however, was in vain. Finding this was the case, he went alone to the king, and stating the truth fully to him, it had such an effect on the mind of Henry, that he sanctioned Cranmer's views, and approved of the alterations he desired to make in the articles drawn up by the popish party; and the effect of his stand for the truth, appeared in the book entitled, "The

necessary Doctrine and Erudition of a Christian Man," which will be noticed hereafter. This unexpected termination of the affair disappointed his adversaries, who had rejoiced to find him determined to go to the king and oppose the royal will; fully trusting that the king would have sent the archbishop to the Tower, of which they felt so sure, that they even laid wagers that such would be the result. God thus was pleased to disappoint the designs of Cranmer's adversaries, and we cannot but admire the integrity and firmness of the archbishop; yet the papists have not scrupled to represent him as a time-server, one ready in all respects to obey the will of Henry, even against his own conscience; but it already has been observed that facts disprove their assertions. Gardiner was thus baffled for a time.

Cranmer now lived more retired, but was attentive to the duties of his see. In this same year, 1540, he was appointed, with assistants, to new model the offices attached to the cathedral at Canterbury, substituting others instead of monks. A part of the revenue was applied to a grammar-school, and some of the commissioners wished to restrict this to the sons of gentlemen; but Cranmer resisted, saying, that poor men's children were often endowed with the gift of God, and ought not to be excluded from the means of learning. His opponents urged, that the sons of ploughmen should be brought up to the plough, and artificers to their father's business. "No," said Cranmer, "utterly to exclude the ploughman's son and the poor man's son from the benefit of learning, as though they were unworthy to have the gifts of the Holy Ghost bestowed on them, as well as upon others, is as much as to say that Almighty God should not be at liberty to bestow his great gifts of grace upon any person, but as man may appoint, and not according to his holy will and pleasure, who giveth his gifts unto all kinds and states of people, and doth many times withdraw these gifts from them and their posterity, if they be not thankful." He proceeded, "And to say the truth, I take it that all of us who are gentlemen born, sprang originally from a low parentage; and it is through the benefit of learning, for the most part, that gentlemen ascend to their rank." He concluded by saying, "The poor man's son, by pains taking, will, for the most part, be learned, when the gentleman's son will not take the pains to get it. And

we are taught by the scriptures, that Almighty God raiseth up the poor man from the dunghill, and setteth him in high authority; and whensoever it pleaseth Divine Providence he bringeth down princes to a low estate. Wherefore, if the gentleman's son be inclined to learning, let him be admitted; if not, let the poor man's child that is apt, enter in his stead." Such was the sound reasoning of archbishop Cranmer, and thus earnestly did he plead that the benefits of instruction should be extended to every rank.

When Cromwell was removed, the followers of the truth were persecuted with renewed activity. It was, indeed, as Fox expresses it, miserable to behold the vineyard of the Lord, and see how "the wild boar out of the wood did root it up, and the wild beasts of the field devour it." BARNES, GARRET, and HIEROME were the three first that suffered; they had been noted and frequently imprisoned as heretics; now the persecutors were again allowed to proceed, and they were committed to the flames in Smithfield, on the 30th of July, only two days after the death of Cromwell.

BARNES was of Cambridge, where he was prior of the augustines, and of considerable note in the university. Having been led to read the scriptures, he cast aside the learning of the schools, and, with many others, was brought to the knowledge of the truth, by the teaching of Bilney.

During the time when cardinal Wolsey possessed full power, Barnes was arrested in the convocation house, at Cambridge, and carried to London, where he was accused before the cardinal of heretical opinions, and of disputing his authority. After a long examination, he was required to say whether he would abjure or burn. Barnes was then in great agony of mind, and had determined to suffer to the utmost; but by the persuasion of his friends he was induced to abjure, which his enemies very unwillingly allowed him to do. The next day he was brought to St. Paul's, with five foreigners, who had been compelled to retract also, and there, with fagots on their shoulders, they were placed aloft upon a scaffold, the church being completely filled with people, and a sermon was preached against Dr. Barnes and the tenets of Luther; the cardinal, with all his chaplains and officers, and thirty-six bishops, abbots, and mitred priors, being present. After the sermon, a fire was kindled before the rood, or image of the crucifixion, and the fagots

were committed to the flames, with many baskets full of books, while the accused confessed the offences alleged against them.

Barnes was then sent to the Fleet prison; and after remaining there six months, was removed to the monastery of augustine friars, at Northampton, preparatory to his being burned, notwithstanding his submission to the church! A friend, however, gave him information of his impending fate, and assisting him to escape, he reached Germany in safety.

Here Barnes remained for some years, till queen Anne Boleyn was crowned, when he returned to England, and preached in London, under the protection of Cromwell; but when Gardiner had obtained influence in the royal council, that bloodthirsty persecutor rested not till he had entangled Barnes and his fellow sufferers in the penalties of the act of the six articles. For this he was the more eager, as Barnes had, from the pulpit at Paul's cross, refuted a sermon preached by Gardiner against the doctrine of justification by faith. At the instigation of that prelate, he was called before Henry, and some of his counsellors. Barnes making his obeisance to the king, "Nay," said the monarch, "yield thee not to me, I am a mortal man;" and therewith, rising up and pointing to the consecrated wafer, and putting off his cap, said: "Yonder is the master of the truth, yield in truth to him, and that truth will I defend; and otherwise, yield thee not unto me." Barnes was then appointed to dispute with Gardiner, which they did, upon the great subject of justification: the doctrines of the latter may be easily gathered from his sixteenth article, which states, "that a man being in deadly sin, may have grace to do the works of penance, whereby he may attain to his justification."

Into the arguments used on both sides, we have not space to enter; but the following extract from Joy's answer to the articles propounded by bishop Gardiner to Barnes, is very important, as it shows that the controversy between the protestants and papists really was upon the great doctrine of justification, though the arguments usually were discussions respecting the sacraments.

"I chanced upon certain articles, entitled to the bishop of Winchester, called Stephen Gardiner, which were written against Dr. Barnes and his two followers, burnt 1541, for

preaching only faith to justify. By these his articles, Winchester would prove that works must justify, that is to say, with our works we must merit the remission of our sins. Which doctrine, as it is contrary to God's word, so is it injurious to Christ's blood. Whose godly name is ONE alone, for all sufficient; even to that same precious hid treasure in the gospel; in whom, saith Paul, are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. For in him dwelleth the most perfect fulness of God verily; and in him are we complete, even perfectly justified, without any interweaving of Winchester's works. This thing do I tell you, saith Paul, lest any man, as now would Winchester, deceive you with his apparent popish persuasions. This full justification, by only faith, Paul expresses clearly in these words also: 'This our everlasting, living Priest and Intercessor, Christ, abideth for ever unto this end, even absolutely, fully, and perfectly, without any lack or breach, to save all them, that through him by faith come to God the Father.' Here are we taught, Christ to have an everlasting priesthood to save perfectly and sufficiently, through our faith only, and that he ever liveth unto this same end. Wherefore for the defence of our so plenteous and perfect redemption, and for the rich favour and mercy of our heavenly Father, and free forgiveness in Christ's passion, through our faith only, and that the glory of his grace, whereby he hath made us his dearly beloved chosen children, through his beloved Son, should be praised, by whom we have redemption through his blood, even the remission of sins, according to the riches of his so plenteous grace, unable to be diminished; to defend this my Lord God's glory, I say, and to warn the simple unlearned, that they be not deceived by such blasphemous bishop's articles, I shall by God's help justly by his word clearly confute them, although he yet teach and preach them unto his own damnation, and deceiving of as many as believe him."

At length, Barnes and his companions were appointed to preach the three public sermons at Easter, then, and still called "the Spital Sermons:" they bore public testimony to the truth of their doctrines, and were committed to the Tower, and, on the 30th of July, two days after the death of Cromwell, were burned without any previous examination or public condemnation. -

When at the stake, Barnes declared his belief, which the

reader will find recorded at length in, "Fox's Acts and Monuments." Referring to the full and perfect satisfaction of Christ, he exclaimed, "Lord, if thou straightly mark our iniquities, who is able to abide thy judgment? Wherefore, I trust in no good work that ever I did, but only in the death of Christ; I do not doubt, but through him, to inherit the kingdom of heaven. Think not that I speak against good works, for they are to be done; and verily they that do them not, shall never come into the kingdom of God. We must do them, because they are commands due of God, to show and set forth our profession, not to deserve or merit, for that is only the death of Christ."

GARRET was curate of the parish of Honey Lane, in London. In the year 1526, he went to Oxford, and was active in circulating copies of the Testament, and many works of Tindal and others, both in latin and english, among the scholars of the university. About the time Frith and his associates were troubled for heresy, (see page 147,) Garret was apprehended, forced to do penance, and imprisoned at Osney abbey. Escaping from thence, he concealed himself till Cromwell came into power, and was at length involved in the accusation against Dr. Barnes, and burned with him.

Anthony Dalaber was a scholar of the university of Oxford, when Garret was apprehended there, and has left a minute and most interesting account of the particulars which then occurred. Our readers will find it in Fox's Acts and Monuments; it is too long for insertion in this place, and would suffer by abridgement, but will well repay the perusal.* The reader will not fail to remark the progress which the doctrines of truth had made in that university, as well as at Cambridge, in spite of the severe persecutions to which all its professors were exposed; and they cannot but notice the sincere affection of these brethren towards each other; it strongly reminds us of the words of a persecutor of old: "See how these christians love one another." Let the pious student now be thankful that his lot is cast in other times: although he must expect to suffer sneers and reproaches from too many around him; for "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution;" yet he is not now exposed to bonds, imprisonment, and the stake.

* It is also reprinted in the *British Reformers*, published by the Religious Tract Society.

as in those days; nor to expulsion, as in later times; but the closer he is enabled to walk with his Saviour, the more he will be preserved from the snares of the world, while he will command the respect and esteem even of such as do not agree in his views. Let those who possess these favourable opportunities rejoice, and let them also beware, lest their love wax cold, while screened from the fire of persecution.

To resume our narrative. Garret died, declaring that he yielded up his soul to Almighty God, "believing," as he added, "that he of his infinite mercy, for his promise made in the blood of his Son, our most merciful Saviour Jesus Christ, will take and pardon me of all my sins."

HIEROME was vicar of Stepney, and a diligent preacher of God's word; whereby he provoked the wrath of the adversaries of the truth. Being appointed to preach at Paul's cross one of the sermons in Lent, he referred to the passage in St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, respecting Hagar and Sarah, but merely enlarged upon the apostle's own explanation of the allegory. Upon this he was accused before the council, as a preacher of erroneous doctrine, for having taught that justification was bestowed of God, without any condition either of baptism or penance. As Fox justly observes, "Who could doubt but that if St. Paul himself had been at Paul's cross, and had preached the same words to englishmen which he wrote to the Galatians, he would at once have been apprehended as a heretic, for preaching against the sacraments of baptism and repentance!" We further read, that one Dr. Wilson disputed with him, contending that good works justified before God.

In Hierome's dying words, we find him thus exhorting the people: "Bear your cross with Christ. Consider what reproof, slander, and reproach, he suffered of his enemies, and how patiently he suffered all things. Consider that all that Christ did was of his mere goodness, and not of our deserving; for if we could merit our own salvation, Christ would not have died for us. But for Adam's breaking of God's precepts, we had been all lost, if Christ had not redeemed us again. And like as Adam broke the precepts, and was driven out of paradise, so, if we break God's commandments, we shall have damnation, if we do not repent and ask mercy. Now, therefore, let christians put no trust nor confidence in their works, but in the blood of Christ, to whom I commit my soul, beseeching you

all to pray to God for me, and for my brethren here present with me, that our souls, leaving these wretched carcasses, may with constancy depart in the true faith of Christ."

Having thus entreated the Lord Jesus to be their comfort and consolation in their affliction, and to establish them with perfect faith, constancy, and patience, through the Holy Ghost, they took each other by the hand, and kissing each other, quietly submitted to the painful death prepared for them. We may here remark that these three martyrs suffered, not merely for opposition to the ceremonial doctrines of the church of Rome, but expressly because they looked for salvation to the blood of Christ, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, to purge their consciences from dead works to serve the living God. See Heb. ix. 14.

This painful scene was heightened by the contrast presented at the same time; for, on the same day, and at the same hour and place, Powel, Fetherstone, and Abel, three papists, were hanged, drawn, and quartered, for denying the king's supremacy! They were drawn to the place of execution, a papist and a protestant upon the same sledge, but were then divided, the one party being executed as traitors, and the others burned as heretics. Such a scene hardly needs a comment. Every protestant must regret that such punishments should have been inflicted; though he must widely distinguish between their case, and those who suffered as heretics. Well might a foreigner then present exclaim, "What a strange nation is this! Here, are hanged the advocates for the pope; there, are burned the opposers of his doctrine." The roman catholics may choose to assert that Henry had forsaken the church of Rome, and that the execution of Powel and his companions was the deed of a protestant monarch, but we can at once refer to the scene itself, and the events which led to the sufferings of Barnes and his fellow labourers, as proving, beyond all possibility of contradiction, that Henry was a roman catholic in every doctrine of the church, and in every sense of the word, except submission to the pope, and withholding the scriptures from the laity.

The romish historians represent Powel and his companions as suffering for their faith, but this cannot be, unless the whole of their religion consisted in implicit submission to the pope, as supreme upon earth; seeing that

it was for this, and for this only, that they suffered; * while Barnes, Hierome, and Garret were expressly committed to the flames, because they would not adopt the popish doctrine of justification by human merits and deserts. Romish writers have extolled these and twenty-one other sufferers in the cause of the pope's supremacy, as equal to the martyrs and saints of God. Do they mean that we are to consider them as a fair specimen of the saints added by the church of Rome to the prophets, and apostles recorded in scripture? Surely such discordant materials never could unite!

The difference between the dying behaviour of those who were burned for the gospel, and of those who were hanged for asserting the pope's supremacy, was very great. The papists conducted themselves with malice and anger towards their fellow sufferers; even declaring, as their own historian relates, that "being carried to execution with the gospellers, was bitterer to them than death itself!" The others, as already noticed, met death with calm fortitude, realizing the promises of the Lord, and declaring their hearty forgiveness of their enemies, and of Gardiner in particular, who was considered the cause of their deaths.

* Stowe, who always is inclined to favour the roman catholics, thus briefly describes the death of these six individuals: "The first of these were drawn to a stake, and there burned; the other three were drawn to a gallows, and there hanged, headed, and quartered. The three first, as appeareth in their attainders, were executed for divers heresies; the last three for treason, as in their attainder was mentioned, to wit, for denying the king's supremacy, and affirming his marriage with queen Catherine to be good; of the which argument, Dr. Powel wrote a book." Surely then we may say that the latter were martyrs for the pope, not for Christ. Some others were executed at Tyburn, for high treason; and about the same period, the countess of Salisbury was beheaded. Roman catholics have called her a martyr, but history proves that she suffered (whether justly or not, is not here a question to be considered) on account of the treasonable designs of her relatives, in which she was said to be concerned.

THE LOLLARDS:

Or, some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in
England, between the years 1400 and 1546.



Malden about to hang his son for objecting to the worship of the
cross. (See page 246.)

PART XI.

Persecutions renewed.—Bonner.—Eagerness of the people to read the Bible.—Porter, his cruel treatment and death in Newgate.—Malden ill-treated by his father for objecting to the adoration of the cross.—Declaration to be read by the curates respecting the Scriptures.—Bernard and Morton.—Evil life of Queen Catherine Howard.—A Convocation.—Papists endeavour to hinder the circulation of the Bible.—An Act of Parliament restricting the perusal of the Scriptures.—Accounts of the translations of the Bible—Coverdale.—The King's book.—Cranmer's hospitality and charity.—Prayers in English.—Cranmer opposes the proceedings of his Popish Clergy.—Their conspiracies against him.—The King protects him.

THE active proceedings against the professors of the gospel, which again commenced after the death of Crom-

well, continued for some time: and commissions were issued to the bishops, sheriffs, mayors, &c. throughout the kingdom, directing them to inquire "for heresies." By one of these instruments, Bonner was appointed, with the mayor, sheriffs, &c. to act as commissioner for London, and he executed his office with much severity. The case of Richard Meeking has been already related; and during the year 1541, a great number of persons were presented, as suspected of heretical opinions.

Fox enumerates the names and accusations of about two hundred individuals; they are similar to those which have been repeatedly mentioned. We may notice William Stokesly, accused for rebuking his wife for taking holy water at the church of Trinity the Less; Mrs. Castle for being "a meddler and a reader of the scriptures in the church;" John Mailer for calling the sacrament of the altar, "the baken god." Alexander Seton, chaplain to the duke of Suffolk, was accused for having preached the doctrines of truth at St. Antholins. In this discourse he had said, "Paul saith, of ourselves we can do nothing, I pray thee, then, where is thy will? Art thou better than Paul, James, Peter, and all the apostles? Hast thou more grace than they? Tell me now, if thy will be any thing or nothing? If it be any thing, tell me whether it be to do good or ill? Paul said he could do nothing, and I am sure thou hast not more grace than Paul and his companions."* Three persons were burnt at Salisbury, and others in different parts of the kingdom.

Bonner showed his natural inclination to oppose the circulation of the scriptures, immediately upon the disgrace of Cromwell. While he was prime minister, Bonner complied in every respect with his wishes, and was considered an advocate for the reformation, and preferred accordingly. But the very day after his patron was committed to the Tower, Bonner met Grafton, who was employed in printing the Bible, and had thus become intimate with him; the

* Seton had been confessor to the king of Scotland, but was obliged to leave that kingdom to avoid the designs of the papists. He was again accused in the year 1544; on which occasion, Gardiner addressed him in the following manner: "Mr. Seton, we know you are learned, and plenteously endued with knowledge in the scriptures, yet think not that ye shall overcome us. No, no, set your heart at rest, and look never to have it said that ye have overcome the bishops, for it shall not be so!"

printer expressing his sorrow at hearing that Cromwell was sent to the Tower, Bonner answered, "It would have been good if he had been dispatched long ago." Struck with this sudden change, Grafton shrunk away. Some days after, he was brought before the council, upon a charge of having printed some verses in commendation of Cromwell, when Bonner related the above mentioned conversation, to induce the lords the readier to believe the other accusation; and the lord chancellor with some difficulty procured that the printer might be set at liberty.

We have noticed, that in the days of Cromwell an order was issued, directing that a large English Bible should be placed in every parish church. Bonner then was anxious to obtain Cromwell's favour; he pretended to rejoice very much at this measure, and promised that he would have six of these Bibles placed in his own cathedral of St. Paul's, which he accordingly caused to be done; so that every person who could read, might at all times have free access to them. A notice was set up near these Bibles, "admonishing all who came thither to read, that they should lay aside vain-glory, hypocrisy, and all corrupt affections; and bring with them discretion, good intentions, charity, reverence, and a quiet behaviour, for the edification of their own souls; but not to draw multitudes about them, nor to make expositions of what they read, nor to read aloud or make noise in time of divine service, nor enter into disputes concerning it."

The people availed themselves of this privilege with an eagerness of which we can form but a faint idea. The scriptures had been a forbidden book, and now the prohibition was removed. Many sent their children to school, to learn to read, that they might carry them to St. Paul's, and hear "wondrous things out of the law of God." Others used to assemble round the desks upon which the Bibles were placed, when they could prevail upon any one with an audible voice, to read aloud; nor did Bonner's injunctions prevent them from sometimes publicly expressing their opinions. The people could not hear the injunction of our Lord respecting the cup in the sacrament, "Drink ye all of it," nor St. Paul's objection against worship in an unknown tongue, without remembering how completely the practice of the church of Rome was opposed to the Bible in these respects. Upon

this, Bonner set up further notices, complaining of these things, and threatening that the Bibles should be taken away, if they were continued.

A young man, named JOHN PORTER, was one of these Bible readers; and by constant and diligent perusal of the scriptures, and by attending the sermons preached by the reformers, he became well acquainted with the truths of the word of God. These proceedings were not interrupted till after the death of Cromwell, when the world began to frown upon the gospellers. Bonner then sent for Porter, and rebuked him sharply for reading aloud; charging him with having made expositions upon the text, and gathering great multitudes about him to make tumults. Porter answered, that he trusted nothing of the sort could be proved, and that he had done nothing contrary to the proclamation, or the advertisements fixed up by Bonner himself.

This defence was of no avail; Bonner committed Porter to Newgate, where he was fettered, both on his legs and arms, and fastened to the wall of his dungeon by a collar about his neck. While in this situation, he sent for a relative of the same name, who was alive in queen Elizabeth's reign, and then related the story to Fox. This man, pitying the condition of his kinsman, applied to Jewit, the keeper, and by entreaty and money obtained Porter's release from the dungeon. He was then kept among other prisoners, who were confined for robberies and murders; and seeing their wickedness, and hearing their blasphemies, he exhorted them to amendment of life, and gave them such instructions as he had learned from his diligent perusal of the scriptures. This conduct, however, was not pleasing to those who imprisoned him; he was carried down to the lower dungeon, loaded with irons, and in about a week afterwards was found dead. Some prisoners who lay in an adjoining cell, heard him groaning piteously, during the night previous to his death, which made them suppose he was put into a horrid engine of torture then used in Newgate, called *The Devil on the Neck*, so contrived, that it caused much pain to the person confined therein; and the more he stirred, the more it pressed him, till, in a few hours, it caused him to die in excruciating agonies.

Such was the state of Newgate in those days, and

such the reward of those who endeavoured to effect a reformation among its wretched inmates, by scriptural instruction. How different the scene now exhibited within those gloomy walls! If this sad tale should be perused by those who have engaged in that blessed work, surely they will feel renewed zeal in their labour of love, and will rejoice at the blessed change which the reformation has produced even in the prisons of our land.

An anecdote is preserved by Strype, which shows the earnestness with which young persons availed themselves of the brief opportunity for reading the scriptures, just mentioned.

Several poor men in the town of Chelmsford joined together, and bought a New Testament; they used to assemble at one end of the church on Sunday, their only leisure day, to read portions of it; and many persons used to come and stand around to hear. William Malden, then fifteen years of age, was constantly to be found among the number who came to hear the glad tidings of the gospel. His father, a bigoted papist, observing this, fetched him away several times, and compelled him to join in repeating the morning prayers in the Latin language. Finding that his father continued this course, William Malden determined to learn to read, that he might be able to peruse the word of God himself. This he accomplished with some difficulty; and then he, and his father's apprentice, joined their little stock of money and bought a Testament, which they concealed in their bed straw, and read whenever opportunity offered.

One night as he sat with his mother, they conversed respecting the bowing down to the crucifix. This he told her was "plain idolatry," and against the commandment of God, which is, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor bow down to them, nor worship them." The mother, enraged to hear him speak thus, exclaimed, "Wilt thou not worship the cross which was about thee when thou wert christened, and must be laid on thee when thou art dead?"* She then

* Roman catholics still adore the cross, as plainly appears from many passages in their church service. On the 3d of May, the following prayer is offered up: "O cross, more splendid than all the stars, celebrated in the world, much beloved by men, more holy than all; who alone wert worthy to bear the talent of the

went and informed the father, who, inflamed with anger at hearing that his son denied that worship was due to the cross, immediately went to his son's room, and pulling him out of bed by his hair, beat him most unmercifully. The lad bore all with patience, considering that it was for Christ's sake, as he said, when he related the anecdote in queen Elizabeth's reign. Enraged at this calmness, the father ran and fetched a halter, which he put round his son's neck, and would have hanged him but for the interference of his mother. Such scenes, doubtless, occurred in many families.

We may here insert the royal proclamation entitled, "A Declaration to be read by all Curates upon the publishing of the Bible in English," to which reference has been made.

"Whereas it hath pleased the king's majesty, our most dread sovereign lord, and supreme head, under God, of this church of England, for a declaration of the great zeal he beareth to the setting forth of God's word, and to the virtuous maintenance of the commonwealth, to permit and command the Bible, being translated into our mother tongue, to be sincerely taught and declared by us the curates, and to be openly laid forth in every parish church; to the intent that all his good subjects, as well by reading thereof, as by hearing the true explanation of the same, may first learn their duties to Almighty God and his majesty, and every of us charitably to use other; and then applying themselves to do according to that they shall hear and learn, may both

world, save this congregation here present, and assembled this day to thy praise! We adore thy cross, O Lord, and call to mind thy glorious passion." On September 14, "O venerable cross, who hast brought salvation to the miserable, with what praises shall we extol thee, because thou hast prepared for us heavenly life." See Hamilton's Tracts on some Errors of the Church of Rome.

The following is from a collection of Catholic Hymns, York, 1823.

Hail, glorious cross! life-giving tree!
Our hope since Christ was nail'd on thee;
In pious souls his grace increase,
To sinners pardon grant, and peace.

Some of the romish books of devotion now used in England, contain the lityny of the holy cross. In this are more than one hundred invocations of the cross. The following specimen will suffice: "Sacred cross, memorial of the death of our Lord, we venerate thee! Sacred cross, key of the kingdom of heaven," &c. "By the sign of the cross, deliver us, O God!" See "The Office of the Holy Cross," Keating, London, 1824, in Devotions on the Passion of our Lord, &c.

speak and do christianly; and in all things, as it beseemeth christian men: because his highness very much desireth that this thing, being by him most godly begun and set forward, may of all you be received as is aforesaid; his majesty hath willed and commanded this to be declared unto you, that his grace's pleasure and high commandment is, that in the reading and hearing thereof, first most humbly and reverently using and addressing yourselves unto it, you shall have always in your remembrance and memories, that all things contained in this book is the undoubted will, law, and commandment of Almighty God, the only and straight mean to know the goodness and benefits of God towards us, and the true duty of every christian man to serve him accordingly. And that, therefore, reading this book with such mind and firm faith as is aforesaid, you shall first endeavour yourselves to conform your own livings and conversation to the contents of the same. And so by your good and virtuous example to encourage your wives, children, and servants to live well and christianly, according to the rule thereof.

“And if at any time by reading, any doubt shall come to any of you, touching the sense and meaning of any part thereof; that then, not giving too much to your own minds, fantasies, and opinions, nor having thereof any open reasoning in your open taverns and alehouses, ye shall have recourse to such learned men as be or shall be authorized to preach and declare the same. So that, avoiding all contentions and disputations in such ale-houses, and other places unmeet for such conferences, and submitting your opinions to the judgments of such learned men as shall be appointed in this behalf, his grace may well perceive that you use this most high benefit quietly and charitably every one of you, to the edifying of himself, his wife, and family, in all things answering to his highness' good opinion conceived of you, in the advancement of virtue and suppressing of vice; without failing to use such discreet quietness and sober moderation in the premises, as is aforesaid; as you tender his grace's pleasure, and intend to avoid his high indignation, and the peril and danger that may ensue to you and every of you for the contrary, And God save the king.”

Bishop Longland renewed his persecutions in the diocese of Lincoln. As Fox observes, “Of his rigorous doings ye

have heard enough, and too much before. His ready diligence in all popish quarrels, as it never lacked before, so now in the execution of these six articles, it was not far behind." Among others, THOMAS BERNARD and JAMES MORTON were burned on the same day, one for teaching the Lord's prayer in english, the other for having a translation of the epistle of St. James; both of which, but just before, had been considered lawful.

While the king was in the north of England, in 1541, information was brought to Cranmer of the evil life of the queen, Catherine Howard. The archbishop stated the particulars to the lord chancellor and other privy counsellors, and at their desire he communicated them to the king in writing. Cranmer was now in a situation of some danger; unless full evidence had been brought forward, he certainly must have been ruined; not only from the great affection Henry manifested to the queen, but also from the rage of the popish party, to whose interests she was warmly attached.

Full evidence, however, was brought forward; and the king was so much affected, as to burst into tears. The queen herself confessed the truth of the accusations, and signed them with her own hand. She was beheaded on the 12th of February; and at the same time was executed lady Rochford, who had been concerned in her ill conduct, and who now died unpitied by every one; as they recollected that she was the chief instrument in causing the death of queen Anne. We shall not pursue this subject further than to observe, that it ought entirely to silence the calumnies of the roman catholics against Anne Boleyn.

This unexpected discovery much weakened the popish party, and probably was the means of saving the life of Craumer, against whom they had directed all their schemes, well knowing that they could not fully succeed in their designs, unless he was removed.

We have seen, that, during the time Cromwell was minister, Henry, although a roman catholic in principle and practice, gave considerable encouragement to the reformers, and that, after his death, the influence of Gardiner, Norfolk, and queen Catherine Howard, had prevailed, so that the persecution against the lollards and gossellers was renewed. From the period just noticeed, to the end of his reign, Henry's conduct was unsteady and fluctuating;

sometimes restraining the designs of the papists, but more frequently impeding the reformation, and even restoring some of the superstitious rites and ceremonies which had been abolished by his special command.

On the 6th of May, 1541, as already mentioned, another proclamation was set forth, again enjoining the parishioners and curates of every parish to provide a Bible of the largest size;* at the same time it fixed the price at ten shillings unbound, and not to exceed twelve shillings well bound, and clasped. It was in conformity to this proclamation, that Bonner set up the Bibles in St. Paul's, as already noticed. This proceeding was much disliked by the popish clergy, who complained that the laity abused this privilege by reading the scriptures aloud, and commenting upon different passages; they also stated that this translation was faulty in many respects, and tended to promote heresies and a variety of opinions.

Henry listened to these complaints, and resolved to limit the reading of the scriptures in the vulgar tongue, although he would not entirely forbid it. A convocation of the clergy met in January, 1542, when Cranmer declared the king's desire that they should consult about the unsettled state of religion, and, among other things, correct the english translation of the Bible. On February the 3d, by the influence of the popish clergy, it was resolved that the Bible should not continue to be used in churches till it was revised; and committees were appointed for that purpose. This was a deep design to stop the progress of scriptural knowledge, as they were determined to delay the revision of the work as long as possible; and to make the matter still more complicated and puzzling, Gardiner produced a list of ninety-nine words in the latin and greek language, which he pretended could not be properly translated; and therefore proposed that they should be retained in the english translation. This was evidently done with a design that the translation, when completed, should not be understood by the people. As a specimen, we may

* Dr. Fulk relates, that the king asked the bishops their opinions respecting this translation of the Bible. Gardiner and his party said there were many faults therein. "Well," said the king, "are there any heresies maintained thereby?" They, answering in the negative, "If there be no heresies," said Henry, "let it go abroad among our people!"

mention, that he wished to say "ejicere," instead of "cast out;" "penitentia," (which is understood by romanists to mean doing penance, or making satisfaction for sins,) instead of "repentance." The papists earnestly wished to preserve the worship of images; he therefore proposed to say "simulacrum" instead of "image;" and in the Old Testament, he proposed the second commandment should run thus:—"Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven simulacrum, with a design to perform divine worship to it!" We may conclude, that this is the manner in which papists would wish to give the Bible to the people, when they are unable entirely to withhold it.

By these, and similar proceedings, Cranmer found that the popish bishops were resolved that the translation of the scriptures should be set aside, and rendered of none effect. He acquainted the king with their design; and procured an order that the revision of the Bible should be referred to the universities, instead of the convocation. Against this the popish prelates loudly protested; but the king had declared his will, and would be obeyed.

The popish party, though defeated, were not overcome; and the next year, 1543, by their influence an act was passed, stating, that the people had abused the liberty granted them to read the scriptures; and Tindal's translation was entirely condemned, as "crafty, false, and untrue." Other translations were permitted; but if they contained any annotations or preambles, the owners were to cut them out, or blot them so that they could not be read. It was also enacted, that no persons should openly read the Bible in english to others, without leave from the king, the ordinary, or the bishop. Noblemen and gentlemen might cause the scriptures to be read to their families and servants; and merchants, or other householders, might read the Bible to themselves privately. But these privileges were not allowed to every person; for all women, except the families of the nobility and gentry, all artificers, apprentices, journeymen, servants, husbandmen, or labourers, were prohibited from reading the Bible or Testament in english, either to themselves or other persons, privately or openly.

Upon this proceeding no comment is necessary; assuredly all those females who so strenuously engage in promoting the blessed objects of the BIBLE SOCIETY, should

remember that such were the measures adopted by the papists in Henry's days; and that the same prohibition is extended to the females in roman catholic countries at the present day. Even in our own islands, the voice of popish advocates has been heard denouncing the word of God as unfit for the perusal of females; thus expressly adopting the principles of Mahomet, which exclude females from examining into religious subjects for themselves. The consequences of such a doctrine must be obvious: "for that the soul be without knowledge is not good." Ignorance must end in the degradation of the mind; and its consequences are too evident to require further observations.

Neither should this prohibition be forgotten by the "poor of this world, who are rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven." Many such there are within our land; let them say whether they would be content to resign that blessed book, which is a light unto their feet, and a lamp unto their path. No, they are well aware that the scriptures "are more to be desired than gold; yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb." Let them attend seriously to the following simple remark of a poor shepherd, written by him, about this time, on the spare leaf of a book called Polydore Virgil's *Treatise on Inventions and Arts*: "When I kepe Mr. Letymers shype, I bout (bought) thys boke, when the Testament was obberggated (prohibited) that sheperdys myght not rede it. I pray God amend that blyndness. Wryt by Robert Wyllyams, keppying shepe upon Seyn-bury Hill, 1546." This act was enforced by the penalties denounced against heresy; and for the third offence, the person offending, if an ecclesiastic, was to be burned; if a layman, his property was forfeited, and he was liable to perpetual imprisonment. But the party was not liable to prosecution for offences committed more than a year before; he was also allowed to bring witnesses to prove his innocence; a privilege never before granted to those accused of heresy. These enactments were, in some degree, a relief to the poor lollards and gospellers, but not to any great extent, as the act of the six articles was declared still to remain in force, and an extraordinary power was given to the king, to alter or suspend any part of this law, as he pleased.

It may be well to introduce in this place a brief account

of the various translations of the whole Bible, printed in the english language, during the reign of Henry VIII. The particulars are given at length by Lewis, in his *History of the English Translations of the Bible*.

Tindal was the first who printed a translation of the New Testament, and he engaged in preparing a version of the Old Testament also; this he did not live to complete; but the Pentateuch, and some other parts, were published separately. To Coverdale, as has been related, (page 163,) we are indebted for the first complete english Bible; it was printed at Zurich, and finished in 1535; and, as already mentioned, was licensed by the king, and a copy ordered to be set up in all churches. The second is called *Matthew's Bible*; this edition was Tindal's translation to the end of the 2nd Chronicles; and the remaining books of the Old Testament, with the Apocrypha, were from Coverdale's edition; it was printed on the continent, in 1537. Cranmer, with Cromwell's assistance, also procured the royal license for this edition; and by an injunction in 1538, the clergy were again ordered to provide a copy of the Bible for their churches. Another edition, revised, was ordered to be printed at Paris, under the superintendence of Coverdale; this was seized by the Inquisition, (see page 177;) the types, however, were removed to London, and an edition printed there, in 1539. This is called *Cranmer's*, or the *Great Bible*, and was printed under his care; it was Tindal's and Coverdale's translation, with some alterations and corrections. Another translation by Taverner, was also printed in 1539. This was not entirely a new version, but many passages were newly translated by Taverner, who was skilled in the Greek language.

The demand for english Bibles soon became considerable; the king's injunctions, that they should be set up in every church, were repeated in 1540 and 1541, and several other editions were printed.

The reader may be surprised to find the king's injunctions so often renewed; but those who were inclined to popery, obeyed them very unwillingly. The writer of a small tract, called, "*The Supplication of the Poor Commons*," printed in 1546, says, "When your highness gave commandment that the bishops should see that there were, in every parish church, one Bible at least, set at liberty, so that every man might freely come to it, and read therein

such things as should be for his consolation ; many would pluck it either into the quire, or else into some pew, where poor men durst not presume to come ; yea, there was no small number of churches that had no Bible at all."

After the prohibition above mentioned, no more copies of the Bible were printed during Henry's life. From a list drawn up by Archbishop Newcome, it appears that the editions of the english New Testament, printed in this reign, amounted to eighteen, those of the whole Bible to fourteen, and of parts of the scriptures to nine. These were all founded upon Tindal and Coverdale's translation, and their names will ever be dear to those who love the truths contained in the word of God.

Of Tindal, a full account has been given ; some particulars respecting Coverdale should be added. He was educated at Cambridge, in the house of the augustine friars, of which Dr. Barnes was the prior, and was among the first who embraced the doctrines of the truth, in that university. Finding it unsafe to remain in England, he went to the continent, and assisted Tindal ; and afterwards engaged in translating and printing his own version of the scriptures. Under Cromwell's protection he returned to England, and continued his biblical labours. We also find Coverdale preaching at Paul's Cross ; and he appears to have been highly esteemed for his piety and abilities, being appointed almoner or chaplain to queen Catherine Parr, the last wife of Henry, who was a favourer of the Reformation.*

With a view to supply the place of the scriptures, thus prohibited, Henry published a book, called "A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian man ;" which has

* In the following reign, Coverdale was appointed bishop of Exeter, and conducted himself in the most exemplary manner. On Mary's accession to the throne, he was imprisoned, and would have suffered with his beloved companions, but the king of Denmark interfered in his behalf, and with much difficulty obtained his release. He then withdrew to Geneva, where he continued till the death of Mary, and was again engaged in a translation of the scriptures, being concerned in that which is commonly known by the name of the Geneva translation, and which was generally used during the reign of queen Elizabeth. He once more returned to England, but did not resume his bishopric, on account of some scruples respecting habits and ceremonies, the details of which are foreign to the design of this work. He continued to preach till his death, in 1566 ; and was generally beloved and respected. Archbishop Grindall, in particular, had a great regard for him.

been already mentioned, and which he designed should supply the place of the Word of God! In Burnet and Strype, the reader will find a full account of this work, which was compiled with much care.

The preface, written in the king's name, stated that having laboured to cleanse his realm from hypocrisy and superstition, he had partly succeeded; but the devil, as in the parable, had returned, accompanied with seven worse spirits; and therefore, to procure uniformity of opinion in religion, he had set forth this book. It began with a declaration of faith. This was stated to stand in two several senses in scripture. One, a persuasion of the truths both of natural and revealed religion wrought in the mind by God's Holy Spirit; and the other, such a belief as begets a submission to the will of God, and hath hope, love, and obedience to God's commandment joined to it, which was Abraham's faith, and that which, according to St. Paul, worketh by charity, and is commended in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Then followed an explanation of the apostle's Creed, in which the romish plea of the supreme power of the church of Rome is shown to be groundless. Next came a discussion respecting the seven sacraments; herein the popish party prevailed. Although Cranmer desired to reduce the number to two, he does not yet appear to have had his mind enlightened as to the absurdities and evil consequences of the doctrine of transubstantiation; the opinions of the church of Rome, however, were a little modified.

An exposition of the ten commandments came next, containing many good rules of morality. Gardiner endeavoured to have them divided according to the romish plan, by shortening the second commandment, and giving it only as part of the first. Cranmer would not consent to this; and, at length, it was allowed to stand as a distinct command, but omitting, "I the Lord am a jealous God," and the words that follow.

Then came an explanation of the Lord's prayer; and it was said, that "it is meet and requisite that the unlearned people should pray in their own language." Free-will was asserted, and an earnest endeavour made to reconcile the doctrine of free-will with the passages of scripture, which set forth plainly, that it is the grace of God alone which worketh in us to do what is pleasing and acceptable in his

sight. Justification was next treated of, but does not appear so clearly set forth as when noticed under the article faith.* Good works were explained as absolutely necessary for salvation; and the last chapter, respecting prayers for the dead, agreed with the articles set forth some years before, (see p. 170.) This book was called the king's book; Cranmer had a considerable share in drawing it up, and, as far as he was able, he set forth the truths of the gospel.

As was the case with respect to the former articles, both parties were glad and displeased. The doctrines of the reformation had evidently gained ground, but many popish errors were again asserted; the general reading of the scriptures was prohibited; and the king's advance in years, and increased peevishness, laid him open to the flatteries of the popish party, while the conscientious scruples of the followers of the truth often excited his displeasure.

The doctrines set forth in this book were ordered to be received by all the people of England as their faith. Let not, however, the papists triumph at this, for they are obliged to receive the opinions of the pope with equally implicit belief; and that not as the opinions of a man, but as superior in authority to the word of God!†

* Upon the subject of justification, Cranmer himself was very clear. Among his papers was found a collection of many texts of scripture respecting this important doctrine, with a great number of passages from the ancient fathers, showing their opinions thereon. At the conclusion, he writes, "This proposition, that we be justified by Christ only, and not by our good works, is a very true and necessary doctrine of St. Paul, and the other apostles, taught by them, to set forth thereby the glory of Christ, and the mercy of God through Christ;" and he adds, "Although all that be justified must of necessity have charity as well as faith, yet neither faith nor charity be the worthiness nor merits of our justification; but that is to be ascribed only to our Saviour Christ, who was offered upon the cross for our sins, and rose again for our justification." Thus the grand doctrine of the gospel was held by Cranmer at this time; and on this account, and for earnestly promoting the circulation of the scriptures, the Papists followed him with unceasing enmity, although upon several points, as well as in many rites and ceremonies, he at that time complied with them.

† Roman catholics are divided as to this point; some consider the pope as infallible, others, that only the decrees of a general council are to be accounted so, while a third party assert, that these decrees are only to be received as infallible, when confirmed by the pope. In either of these cases, the opinions of men are to be considered as the rule of faith. Such is the consequence of departing from the word of God; and so much for the boasted UNITY of the church of Rome.

Henry sought by every means to bring his subjects to uniformity in religion; and published a manual of prayers, which he commanded them to use in their private devotions, strictly prohibiting the use of any other! He adopted a similar plan in other points; for example, finding that some persons kept St. Mark's day as a fast, while others observed it as a feast, he enjoined all his subjects to keep it as a feast, and to eat flesh upon that day. Would that all his mandates had been equally harmless.

In the year 1541, Cranmer, with the consent of the bishops, had issued an injunction to the clergy, restraining the excess and variety of meats, in which many were accustomed to indulge; it was, however, but little observed. This injunction, probably, gave some countenance to the assertions of Cranmer's enemies, who accused him of avarice and niggardliness, by which they alleged that he disgraced his rank and amassed treasure for his family. Sir Thomas Seymour carried this accusation to the king, hoping thereby to forward the designs of those who tried to induce him to seize the church lands, and distribute them among the courtiers. Henry was aware of the falsity of this assertion, and sent sir Thomas to Lambeth, about the usual time of dinner, with a message to the archbishop; and on his return inquired whether he had dined there. Sir Thomas confessed that he had done so, and that he had wrongfully accused Cranmer, never having witnessed greater hospitality, or a more proper provision for all comers; not forgetting the poor who applied for relief at the gates. Nor was Cranmer deficient in more substantial acts of charity. He had his mansion-house, at Bekesburn, in Kent, fitted up as an hospital for sick and disabled soldiers, as well as for others who were sick and destitute; and when recovered, they received money to defray their charges home. This was in addition to the usual alms he bestowed upon the poor. In fact, Cranmer did not attempt to enrich his family at the expense of the church revenues; but all that he received he freely spent, in acts of charity, and the proper expenses of his rank and office, leaving an example worthy of imitation. So far from having amassed private wealth, during his last imprisonment, at Oxford, in the days of queen Mary, he was utterly destitute, and his enemies would not allow any one to bestow alms upon him, and a gentleman of Gloucester, who attempted this, was

committed to prison. After Cranmer's decease, his widow was left destitute, but, as appears from an inscription in Camberwell church, was married to Bartholomew Scott, esq., a gentleman of rank: this shows the respect in which Cranmer and his widow were held.

The convocation which sat in the year 1542, ordered that all the books used in the church service should be examined, and that superstitious prayers, legends, &c. should be erased; also that one chapter of the New Testament in english should be read, both at morning and evening service.

Occasional prayers were also introduced into the public services of the church, more frequently than in former times, and in the english language. Cranmer appears to have been the principal promoter of this important alteration; his object doubtless was, that the people in general might be brought to take an interest in the public service, and not remain, as formerly, scarcely more than mere spectators of what was going forward; which is still the case where the romish religion prevails.

In the year 1543, there was every prospect of a plentiful crop; but just at the season of harvest, it was endangered by heavy and continued rains. Upon this occasion the archbishop directed prayers to be made for a providential change in the weather. It does not clearly appear whether they were in english, but as "every person" was directed to join in these supplications, most probably they were so. And in the year following, we find a mandate of the king, ordering that prayers should be offered up, that God would be pleased "to restore peace, and unite men's hearts throughout christendom;" and since the people were remiss in their attendance on similar occasions, from not understanding the prayers formerly used, on this occasion they were to be in "our native tongue."

In the autumn of the same year, (1544,) the king, being about to embark on an expedition against France, public prayers were again directed to be offered up for the success of his arms; and we find in the royal mandate, that these prayers were to be set forth to the people in the english tongue, that they, "feeling the godly taste thereof, may godly and joyously, with thanks, receive, embrace, and frequent the same."

Thus to archbishop Cranmer do we owe the introduction

of public worship, in a language intelligible to the people at large. For in those days, and even for the most part at the present time, the church of Rome persists in the unscriptural plan of assembling congregations for the public worship of Almighty God, to whom the priest reads the prayers in a language which but few, and, frequently, none of them can understand; thus directly contradicting the injunctions of St. Paul, in the 14th of the first epistle to the Corinthians.*

By this means, the foolish and erroneous doctrines, contained in many of the prayers used by the church of Rome, are concealed from those who hear them, and who probably would be much astonished to hear St. Mary called "The fountain of mercy;" or the following petitions, "O, holy Dorothy, a clean heart create within me!" "O, St. George, save us from our sins, that we may rest in heaven with the faithful for ever!"

The archbishop also succeeded in persuading the king again to prohibit some of the most superstitious of the ceremonies of the church of Rome; especially respecting the grosser idolatrous practices in worshipping images, and creeping to the cross; on which occasion the people joined in the following words, "We adore thy cross, O Lord."

A better manner of preaching was now generally set forward. When popery was at its height, there were few sermons except in the time of Lent; for the discourses on holy-days were usually the vain praises of their saints, or such idle legends as were noticed in the account of the festival, (see page 129.) During Lent, the preaching was more serious and solemn; but it usually was directed to magnify the laws and injunctions of the church, such as fasting, confession, pilgrimages, &c.; and little or no pains were taken to inform the people of the wonderful love of Christ, as the only ground for hope of salvation; whereby they might be brought to hate sin and seek after holiness. The reformers were aware of this, and earnestly sought to instruct the people publicly in the truths of the gospel; on the other hand, Bonner, in his injunctions to the clergy, (1542,) orders that "there

* In Ireland, many of the lower classes are induced to believe that a prayer in latin is more efficacious than one in english, and that the latin is the only language which the devil does not understand!

should be no sermons preached that had been made within the last two or three hundred years !”

In the autumn of 1543, the archbishop held a visitation at Canterbury, the particulars of which are given at some length by Strype, as showing the differences which at that time prevailed upon points of religion; and also illustrating the progress which the gospel was then making, as well as the ignorance of the romish priests. Among others, we find one person, a papist, rebuked for obstinately refusing to learn his paternoster, hail Mary, and the belief, in english. A strange alteration this from the occurrences of the preceeding years, when several were burned for doing what it was now considered wrong to neglect! Kemp, vicar of Northgate, refused to read the Bible in english, or declare to his people what ceremonies were superstitious and unlawful. The curate of Stodmersh had said in the pulpit, “that men should fear God, and love him, but not trust him too much!” Dr. Willoughby, vicar of Chilham, said, that “images had power from God, to help sick people, making vows unto them!” Serles, a noted preacher among the papists, asserted, that “prayer is not acceptable to God, except in the church; and that as Adam was expelled from paradise for meddling with the tree of knowledge, so should we suffer for meddling with the scriptures.” Several other popish ecclesiastics appear to have been noticed for this strict adherence to the old ceremonies; while Turner, curate of Chartham, on the other hand, was accused for not sprinkling the church with holy water, omitting the holy oil in baptism, and neglecting to distribute holy candles among his parishioners. Scory, a preacher of note among the gospellers, was accused for saying, that “only faith doth justify;” and, strange to say, the accuser adds, that he who denies this, would deny, if he durst, that Christ doth justify.

These particulars will suffice; and we may judge from them the trouble which Cranmer had, to promote order in his diocese, by putting down the foolish ceremonies, and ignorant preaching of the papists, and protecting the preachers of the gospel from the accusations of their enemies. He caused all the prebendaries and preachers of his diocese to attend him at Croydon, and there instructed, exhorted, and rebuked them, as he saw occasion. We may contrast this proceeding with the severities practised by the romish prelates.

Cranmer's exertions in favour of the truth, of course, excited much enmity towards him, among the prebendaries and others of his cathedral, who were, for the most part, attached to the church of Rome; and they readily joined in the measures which were promoted by Gardiner, and others, against their archbishop.

Similar attempts had frequently been made, as already noticed, without success; but Gardiner still hoped to ensnare Cranmer, under the act of the six articles. His designs, indeed, were more extensive, and aimed at several of the nobility, and even at the queen, Catherine Parr.

The design against Cranmer was carried on at the instigation of Gardiner, chiefly by the canons and clergy of Canterbury; among the principal who engaged therein, were Thornden, suffragan of Dover, who lived in the archbishop's family, in whom he placed the utmost confidence; and William Gardner, one of the canons, whom Cranmer had "taken as his own child." Strype relates the particulars very minutely; but we need only observe, that these conspirators devised a long accusation against some of the archbishop's chaplains, for offences against the six articles; and also other accusations against Cranmer himself. But the king, perceiving the malice of the papists against Cranmer, determined to interpose, and prevent his enemies from compassing his destruction. With this view he commanded his barge one evening to be rowed near the Lambeth shore; and perceiving Cranmer standing at the palace stairs, to salute him, Henry called the archbishop to come into his barge; when, lamenting the growth of heresies, and the confusions which they caused, he said that he intended to find out the chief encourager of these things, and make him an example. Cranmer entreated the king to consider well what heresy was; and not to condemn those as heretics, who followed the word of God, in preference to human inventions. After some further conversation, the king said, "O my chaplain, now I know who is the greatest heretic in Kent;" at the same time giving him the book containing the accusations against himself and his chaplains. Cranmer was not a little troubled, to see such a number of falsehoods alleged against him, by some of his own clergy, with the assistance of several justices, whom he had obliged in various ways; but, feeling confident of his innocence, he knelt down, and besought the king to appoint commissioners,

to examine into the subject, and punish those who might be found guilty. He acknowledged that he still held the same opinions, as when he openly opposed the six articles; but declared that he had not done any thing contrary to them. The king then inquired about his wife. Cranmer frankly admitted that he had a wife, but said that he had sent her to Germany, as soon as the act of the six articles passed.

The king then told him he would appoint commissioners; and that, having the fullest confidence in him, he would name him to be the chief among them. Cranmer urged that this would appear unfair, as he was the chief party accused; but the king persisted, saying, "If he were driven to accuse himself, he was sure that he would speak the truth;" adding, that he guessed with whom the accusation originated, (meaning Gardiner,) and that if he examined into the matter wisely, he would "find a pretty conspiracy against him." The king also appointed Dr. Belhouse, and the archbishop added Dr. Cocks, his vicar-general, and Hussey, his registrar, to be in the commission. They went to Faversham. The archbishop sent for some of these accusers, and spoke so kindly to them, that Shether, one of the busiest of his enemies, could not forbear weeping. He then left the full examination to Cocks and Hussey. They sat for six weeks; but being secret favourers of the papists, contrived to pursue their inquiries, so as to discover nothing. Morrice, the archbishop's secretary, then wrote to Dr. Butts, the king's physician, and sir Anthony Denny, one of the king's attendants; that unless other commissioners were sent, nothing would be discovered. Upon this, Dr. Leigh and Dr. Rowland Taylor were appointed; and immediately on their arrival at Canterbury, they ordered several persons whom they could trust to search the houses of the suspected persons, and to bring all their papers.

This was immediately done: and in less than four hours the whole conspiracy was detected, by letters from bishop Gardiner, Dr. London, and others. Among these papers were two letters, written by Thornton and Barber, both of them trusted by Cranmer, and admitted by him into his confidence; thus was the declaration of our Lord verified, that those of his own household should be a man's foes for the gospel.

Cranmer called these men into his study; and telling them that his secrets had been betrayed by some in whom he trusted, and that they had accused him of heresy, asked their advice and opinion what he should do to these persons. They both joined in calling them villains and knaves, saying that hanging was too good for such wicked characters. Hearing this, the archbishop exclaimed, "O Lord, most merciful God, whom may a man trust? It is truly said, 'Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm.' There never was a man handled as I am; but, O Lord, thou hast evermore defended me." Then taking the papers out of his bosom, he added, "Know ye these letters, my masters?" They knelt down, and entreated his forgiveness, confessing they had been persuaded to join the conspiracy. "Well," said Cranmer, "may God make you both good men; I never deserved this; ask forgiveness of God, whom you have highly offended." He then dismissed them from his service; but, in other respects, treated them as if they had not been guilty of such treachery.

Cranmer thus practised what he taught to others. In fact, his character in this respect was so well known, that it became a proverb, "Do unto my lord of Canterbury a displeasure, and you will be sure to have him your friend while he liveth." This also appears from the well-known anecdote of his lenity towards an ignorant popish priest from Yorkshire.

These papers were sent to the king; and the chief of the conspirators were committed to prison, but were released after some months' confinement; Cranmer interceding for them, instead of against them. Many particulars respecting the proceedings of these men and their confessions, are given by Strype, from a manuscript in the library of Bene't college. Yet these men were scarcely set at liberty, before they again joined in designs against Cranmer.*

In the commencement of 1544, sir John Gostwicke, member for Bedfordshire, accused the archbishop in the house of commons for heretical declarations against the sacrament of the altar, in his sermons and lectures at Canterbury. The king at once judged this accusation to be

* A striking proof of the little success likely to result from attempts to conciliate men actuated by such principles as influenced their conduct!

false; for Cranmer as yet held the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation;* and finding, on inquiry, that Gostwicke was a stranger to Kent, and had never heard the archbishop preach or teach there, he sent the knight word, that if he did not acknowledge his fault, and get the archbishop to intercede for him, he should be made an example of. Gostwicke, who had been set on by others, upon this intimation lost no time in going directly to Lambeth, and entreated Cranmer's forgiveness; who not only readily accepted his apologies, but went to the king, and obtained his pardon. Thus was Cranmer "easy to be entreated."

Cranmer's troubles, however, were not yet at an end. The members of the council who were attached to popery determined to make another and a stronger attempt; and with the duke of Norfolk at their head, went to the king and told him, "That the archbishop, with his learned men, had so infected the realm with their unsavory doctrine, that three parts of the land were become abominable heretics, which might prove dangerous to the king, and produce the same commotions as had ensued in Germany." They, therefore, desired authority to examine Cranmer, and to commit him to the Tower; alleging that as he was one of the council, men would not dare to come forward against him while he remained at liberty. The king gave them power to do so, and the next day was fixed for his examination.

At midnight Henry sent sir Anthony Denny to bring Cranmer to Whitehall; and then told him of this new accusation, and the permission he had given for his committal to the Tower; adding, "What say you, my lord; have I done well or no?" Cranmer thanked the king for this early intimation, adding, that he was contented to be committed to the Tower, not doubting that the king would see him fairly used.

Henry exclaimed, "What folly is this to permit yourself to be imprisoned, so that every enemy you have may take advantage. Do you not know that when they have you in prison, three or four false knaves will soon be pro-

* The arguments of Frith, Lambert, and others, with the close study of the scriptures, had in some degree shaken Cranmer's attachment to the doctrine of transubstantiation. His subsequent conversations with Ridley, appear to have been instrumental in this respect, and he soon afterwards became fully aware of the error and idolatry of the church of Rome, in respect to this doctrine.

cured to witness against you." The king then told the archbishop, that when he was brought before the council, he should request to be confronted with his accusers; and that if this were denied, and they proposed to commit him to prison, Cranmer should appeal to the king, and produce a ring which Henry gave him.

The next morning Cranmer was summoned to appear before the council, at eight o'clock. On his arrival he was not admitted, but obliged to stand in the lobby, among the servants and footmen. His secretary went to Dr. Butts, and told him of this new proceeding; upon which the doctor joined him; but after a time went to the king, telling him that his majesty might see a strange sight. "What is that?" said the king. "Why," said Butts, "my lord of Canterbury is promoted to be a serving man, for there he hath been waiting among the footmen for this hour at the council-chamber door." "Ha!" exclaimed Henry, "I shall talk with them by and by."

After being kept above an hour in attendance, the archbishop was called in, and told that he was accused of infecting the whole realm with heresy; therefore it was the king's pleasure that he should be committed to the Tower for examination. Cranmer urged to have his accusers produced, using many arguments and entreaties, but without effect. He then appealed to the king, and produced the ring. On seeing this they were completely disconcerted; but immediately rose and went to Henry, as was customary when that ring was sent to them. He blamed them severely for their conduct, declaring his unshaken confidence in Cranmer, and charging them to abstain from such proceedings in future. Thus the archbishop was again providentially rescued from the malice of his enemies. To show that he returned not evil for evil, but contrarywise blessing, we may notice, that when shortly afterwards the duke of Norfolk was condemned for high treason, Cranmer stood forward in his behalf, and exerted himself to prevent the sentence from being carried into effect. These particulars respecting Cranmer, and many others of a similar nature, are proved by undoubted evidence; yet the papists still persist in their endeavours to blacken his character; and protestants have been most blamably deficient in allowing their slanders to pass with so little anxiety for their refutation.

THE LOLLARDS;

*Or some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England,
from 1400 to 1546.*



Anne Askew's cruel sufferings on the rack. See page 284.

PART XII.

Persecution of Testwood, Filmer, and others.—Marbeck.—The first English concordance.—Clark and Kerby burned in Suffolk.—Dr. Crome recants.—Wilmot and Fairfax scourged.—Anne Askew, her boldness for the truth.—Her cruel sufferings on the rack.—She is burned with Lassels, Belenian, and Adams.

THE persecutions of TESTWOOD, FILMER, PEARSON, and MARBECK, of Windsor, claim our attention, as connected with Gardiner's designs against the principal supporters of the reformation.

ROBERT TESTWOOD was a native of London, and well skilled in music; so that the choristers of the chapel at Windsor desired to have him added to their number; but the canons having heard that "he smelled of the new learning," for a long time would not consent. At length he was admitted a chorister, and much esteemed by his superiors, till they found he was inclined to lutheranism and lollardy.

One day at dinner, an old chantry priest, employed to sing mass for the repose of the soul of king Edward III. who had been dead more than two hundred years! began

to find fault with laymen who meddled with the scriptures. Testwood perceiving this was aimed at himself, at length said, "Mr. Ely, by your patience, I think it be no hurt for laymen as I am, to read and know the scriptures." "Which of you," retorted Ely, "that is unlearned, knoweth or understandeth them. St. Paul saith, 'If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head.' Now, sir, what meaneth St. Paul by these coals of fire?" "Why, sir," replied Testwood, "as I have learned, he meaneth nothing else but burning or warm charity; that by doing good to our enemies we should thereby win them." "Ah! sirrah," exclaimed Ely, "you are an old scholar indeed." They then conversed respecting the pope's supremacy; and Ely urged Testwood till he denied the power claimed by the pope. Upon this, Ely rose from table in a rage, calling him heretic, and refused to be reconciled, or to accept any explanation; but consulted with the canons, and they agreed to accuse Testwood to Dr. Sampson, the dean, then absent, as soon as he returned to Windsor.

In less than a fortnight, one evening the dean unexpectedly arrived, and ordered all the canons and ministers to meet him in the chapter-house, at eight o'clock the next morning. Ely conversed with the canons that night, and they agreed to accuse Testwood the next day; but when they were all assembled, to their great surprise the dean addressed them, speaking against the pope's supremacy, arguing both from scripture and reason. He also told them that the parliament had just forbidden the pope to be considered as head of the church, and that any of them who maintained his authority would be dismissed from the college! The canons were at once silenced; but Ely began his complaint against Testwood. Dr. Sampson, perceiving his intention, told him to be silent; and ordered that all the pope's pardons which hung in the church should be thrown into the fire; and as soon as they were burned, he left the chapter-house. This occurred about the year 1538.

Testwood, however, was soon involved in further trouble. One afternoon he was walking in the church, and grieved much to see the large parties of pilgrims, especially from Devonshire and Cornwall, who brought candles and images of wax, to offer to good king Henry of Windsor, as they called him; kissing his spur, and having an old hat, said

to have been worn by that monarch, put upon their heads. He exhorted them against this superstition; and going a little further, found others worshipping and kissing an alabaster image of the virgin. When he saw them thus reverencing it, he lifted up a key, which was in his hand, meaning to strike off a piece of one of the ornaments, but the key glancing aside, broke off the nose of the image. "Lo, good people," said he, "you see what it is; nothing but earth and dust, and cannot help itself; and how then will you have it help you? Brethren, be no more deceived."*

This action, although unintentional, made a great noise, and many came to see the broken image; among them was one Simons, a lawyer, who picked up the nose, and putting it carefully into his purse, declared that "it should be a dear nose to Testwood some day." In fact, the papists were much enraged against him, and sought his life; but Cromwell was then in power, and befriended Testwood, so that they dared not proceed against him for these and other matters which occurred, one of which it is important to notice.

In the time of Franklin, who succeeded Dr. Sampson as dean of Windsor, a paper was affixed to the door of the choir in praise of the virgin Mary; ascribing unto her our justification, our salvation, our redemption, and the forgiveness of sins. This paper Testwood took down; his enemies again tried to bring him into trouble, but were once more disappointed.

HENRY FILMER was churchwarden of Windsor about this time, and ventured to remonstrate with Melster, the vicar, who had been a friar, respecting a sermon, in which he declared, that the virgin Mary had fed St. Bernard with her milk; and related other lying legends of the church of Rome. The vicar took this at first in good part, but Simons, the lawyer, persuaded him to go to the bishop, and complain. Upon this, Filmer and his friends resolved to go to Salisbury also; and being able to travel the fastest, they

* Among the pretended Romish miracles, are several instances in which persons maltreating images of the virgin, have been miraculously punished for their crime! The king Henry above mentioned, was Henry VI., who was always a great favourite with the Romanists, and in all probability would have been made a saint had not the reformation prevented. A manuscript now in the British museum contains an account of several miracles said to have been performed by him.

arrived first; waiting immediately upon Dr. Capon, the bishop, they delivered to him notes of the vicar's sermon, and were thanked by him for what they had done. When the vicar arrived, he was reprov'd for his conduct, and ordered to recant his sermon, which he unwillingly did; and, as well as his friends, returned much displeas'd with Filmer.

ANTHONY PEARSON was a priest; he preached the doctrines of the gospel in that neighbourhood, and was attended by large congregations.

About the year 1540, Dr. London, warden of New College, in Oxford, was appointed one of the prebendaries of Windsor; he was a bitter enemy to the truth, and openly declared his opinions as soon as he came thither. He afterwards joined with Simons, the lawyer, who showed him "our lady's nose," as he called it, and with the assistance of others, in the year 1543, they accused the three individuals already mentioned; with sir William Hobby, Dr. Haynes, the dean of Exeter, a prebendary of Windsor, with many others of note, for offences against the six articles; and obtained the king's warrant to search for books and letters. Strict examination followed, when several persons were apprehended; among them was JOHN MARBECK, who was sent to London and examined before the privy council.

Marbeck had begun a concordance of the bible in English, which was about half finished when it was discovered among his other books, in the search just mentioned. When he was brought before the council, Gardiner sat at the end of the table, and the manuscript was laid before him. The bishop inquired if Marbeck knew why he was sent for; and taking up the book, explained to the lords the nature of a concordance; declaring that it was written in Latin for the assistance of preachers, and that if one was allowed to go forth in English, it would destroy the Latin tongue!

The next day, one of the bishop of Winchester's gentlemen came to Marbeck, in the Marshalsea prison, and warning him of his danger, promised him preferment if he would inform against sir William Hobby, Dr. Haynes, and Anthony Pearson, as heretics. This Marbeck refused to do; declaring that he was not acquainted with any of their secrets. The gentleman told him that perhaps he feared losing their friendship; if so, he need not to fear, as, "they were sure enough, and never like to pleasure him or any one else any more." At this, tears came into Marbeck's eyes.

"Why weepst thou?" asked the gentleman. "Oh, sir," said he, "I pray thee pardon me; these men have done me good, wherefore, I beseech the living God to comfort them as I would be comforted myself." The gentleman then examined him from a Latin concordance, and an English bible, and left him. In about two hours, the bishop's gentleman returned, and again urged Marbeck to accuse Dr. Haynes and Testwood, telling him that they would accuse him: and leaving pen and ink, he departed for a time. Marbeck, full of sorrow, prayed that he might be kept from accusing any christiau brother; and taking up the pen, wrote, that he had nothing to accuse them of, unless reading the New Testament was deemed an offence. This was lawful, at that time, to all, except the poor.

On the following morning, Marbeck was brought to the bishop of Winchester in his palace, near St. Mary Overy's church. Gardiner, with a profane exclamation, inquired what had made him meddle with the scriptures; and examining him, sought in vain to induce him to accuse Dr. Haynes and the others; alleging, that he could not have proceeded so far in his concordance without their help. Marbeck again declared that he had done it without the help of any man, and showed the bishop how he had made out the Latin by the help of an English bible. The bishop finding that he could not induce this good man to accuse his brethren, sent him again to the Marshalsea, ordering that he should be kept in irons, and not be allowed to speak with any one, not even his wife.

She, however, left an infant of three months old at home, and petitioned the bishop, from day to day, to allow her to see her husband, but he refused. At length, on the eighteenth day, she spoke to the bishop at St. James's palace, and her entreaties were strengthened by one of the king's servants, who pleaded earnestly for her. "I promise you," said the bishop, "her husband is a great heretic, and hath read more scripture than any man in the realm hath done!" (Reader, observe this proof of heresy!) "I cannot tell, my lord," said the king's servant, "what he is inwardly, but outwardly he is as honest and quiet a neighbour as any I ever dwelt by." With much difficulty, the bishop consented that she should see her husband.

Some time afterwards, Marbeck was taken to the bishop of London's palace, and examined before Bonner and

others, who were commissioners for executing the act of the six articles. They inquired respecting some extracts from books, which were found among his papers. Dr. Capon then showed part of the concordance to Skip, bishop of Hereford, who, after examining it for some time, said to Dr. Oking, "This man hath been better employed than most of our priests."

He was then questioned further, respecting the concordance, why he had begun such a work, and who had taught him to do it. He told them, that when Matthews' bible was published, he much wished to have one, but being too poor to purchase it, he borrowed one, and began to copy it out. He had proceeded as far as Joshua, when a friend, named Turner, finding him thus employed, advised him to leave that work, and set about a concordance in English, and explained what it meant. Marbeck then related how he borrowed a Latin concordance, and although but little acquainted with that language, contrived to proceed as far as the letter L.

Some of the bishops still would not believe that he had done more than copy it out; upon which he offered, if they would fix upon any words not yet done, and shut him up with a Latin concordance and an English bible, he would engage to complete them in the same manner as the rest. Dr. Oking then wrote down some words, and they rose to go to dinner. As they went, bishop Skip spoke to Marbeck, pointing out a mistake Dr. Oking had made, and comforted him, by telling him that he was not liable by law to be punished for what he had done. After dinner, he was sent again to prison, but allowed to work at his concordance, and by the next day he completed three sheets more. The bishops then professed they were satisfied that he had told the truth.

Marbeck was afterwards examined respecting an epistle of Calvin's, which he had copied; he pleaded that this was no offence against the law of the six articles, as it had been written some years before; and also stated, that during the last six years he had been almost wholly employed as a copyist. These details are given thus at length, as the reader will probably be interested in the particulars respecting the first English concordance. It was afterwards completed, and published.

At length, Marbeck, Filmer, and Pearson, were sent

again to Windsor, and, with Testwood, were arraigned at a special sessions, before bishop Capon and others. By the contrivance of Dr. London and Simons, a jury of the farmers, belonging to the college of Windsor, all papists, was summoned to try them, as they could not depend upon a jury of townsmen.

Pearson was indicted under the act of the six articles, for a sermon preached at Wingfield; in which, among other things, he had told the people, that at the mass they did not eat the body of Christ as raw flesh, but for the refreshing, not of the body, but the soul. He justified from the scripture what he had declared, and solemnly warned Simons, his accuser, that they should both appear at the judgment seat of Christ.

Testwood was indicted for a disrespectful expression respecting the sacrament, which he denied, as a false accusation of his enemies. As a proof, the bishop urged that when the priest elevated the host, Testwood used to look another way because he would not look at it. "I beseech you, my lord," shrewdly inquired Testwood, "whereon did he look that marked me so well?" "Why," said Bucklayer, the king's attorney general, "he could not be better occupied than in marking such heretics, that so despised the blessed sacrament!"*

Filmer was indicted for saying that the sacrament of the altar was but a similitude and a ceremony, and that if God were therein, he had eaten twenty gods in his days. The only witness against him, to prove these words, was his own brother, who had been persuaded and bribed by Dr. London and Simons, to bear evidence, which he did, but no one confirmed what he said.

Filmer denied having used these words; and addressed his brother, saying: "Ah, brother, what cause hast thou to show me this unkindness? I have always been a kind brother to thee and thine, and helped you all in my power, from time to time, as thou knowest; and is this a brotherly part, thus to reward me now for my kindness? God forgive it thee, my brother, and give thee grace to repent!" After this simple, yet touching address, he turned round and intreated that some one would let him see the book of statutes. His wife hearing this, ran to the keeper of the

* By the laws against sacrilege, existing in many countries in Europe, a person is liable to punishment for disrespect to the sacrament.

prison, and obtaining the book, got it conveyed to her husband at the bar.

Bishop Capon, seeing the book in the prisoner's hands, started up in a rage, demanding who had given it to him. Then said Filmer, "O, my lord, I am this day judged by a law, and why should not I see the law I am judged by? The law requires that there should be two lawful witnesses against me; now there is but one, and he is suborned by mine enemies." "Nay," said Bucklayer, "thine heresy is so heinous, and exciteth so much abhorrence in thine own brother, as to force him to witness against thee, which is more than two other witnesses!"

Marbeck was then indicted for some expressions in the epistle of Calvin, already mentioned; to which he again pleaded that he had only copied it out, and had done so long before the act of the six articles was passed.

The attorney general then spoke violently against all the prisoners. Fachel, another of the judges, also spoke against Marbeck; and when the jury had retired, Simons, the accuser, was allowed to go to them. After such a trial, it is not surprising to find that all the prisoners were declared guilty.

The prisoners, being condemned to die on the next day, comforted themselves by reflecting on the death and sufferings of their Lord and Master, trusting that he would not forsake them, but give them stedfast faith, and power to overcome their fiery torments, and of his free mercy and goodness, for his promise' sake, receive their souls. Thus they continued conversing the greatest part of the night. In the morning they were informed that their death was deferred to the morrow, and in the course of the day a pardon was sent for Marbeck; but he was given to understand that he must give information respecting his associates, or be doomed to perpetual imprisonment.

Early in the morning, two of the canons came to the prisoners to confess them. Pearson took the opportunity to press the truths of the gospel upon his confessor, Dr. Blythe, who speedily left him, declaring he would have no more of his doctrine!

As they were led to execution, they desired the people to pray for them, exhorting all to stand fast in the truth of the gospel, and not to be troubled at their sufferings, which would be for them a way to happiness. As Filmer passed

the house where his brother resided, he called to him several times; but receiving no answer, he prayed that God would forgive him, and make him a good man. When bound to the stake, a friend offered them some drink, which they took, desiring him to stand fast in the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Filmer then said, "Be merry, my brethren, and lift up your hands unto God, for, after this sharp breakfast, I trust we shall have a good dinner in the kingdom of Christ, our Lord and Redeemer." Testwood, lifting up his hands and eyes unto heaven, said, "Lord, receive my spirit." Pearson, pulling the straw unto him, laid a good deal round his head, saying, "This is God's hat;* now am I dressed like a true soldier of Christ, by whose merits only, I trust this day to enter into his joy." Thus calmly they resigned up their lives.

Bishop Capon was not satisfied with what he had done, but resolved to proceed much further; and he openly said, "that he trusted, ere Christmas day following, to visit and cleanse a good part of the realm." He accordingly sent Ockam, the clerk of the peace, to the bishop of Winchester, who was then at court, with indictments against sir Thomas Cardine, and several others of the king's attendants, for offences against the six articles. The courtiers obtained private information of this design; and arresting Ockam before he saw Gardiner, took his papers and laid them before the king, who, alarmed at this design against his favourite servants, pardoned them all.

After this matter, the king withdrew his favour from Gardiner, and did not trust him as formerly; he also directed the whole affair to be examined into, and Dr. London, Simons, and Ockam, were condemned to stand in the pillory at Windsor, Reading, and Newbury, for perjury, and a conspiracy against the king's officers. Marbeck survived to the reign of queen Elizabeth; from his testimony much of this narrative was written.

It may be thought unnecessary to give these particulars at such length, but they are important, not only as showing the subtle and secret practices of the papists, against all who favoured the gospel, but also, that even a trial by jury was not a sufficient protection against their machinations. Dampier, and others, suffered at Calais about this period.

* Meaning it was sent him by the providence of God.

We have already had occasion to notice the efforts of the papists against Cranmer about this period, but we may here again notice the cross presentments of the protestants and romanists at his visitation of his diocese in 1543, as showing the manner in which these parties were continually at issue with each other, and it exhibits the unwillingness of the papists to relinquish the grossest errors. Some of the latter had again set up images which had been taken down by authority, holy water and bell ringing were employed to still the thunder, and holy candles were used for the purposes of sorcery. Red hot coals were thrown upon the grave of a chaplain of Cranmer, to show that he deserved to have been burned as a heretic. A preacher, especially authorised, asserted that Moses sent letters from hell and from heaven to teach how men should live, and to describe the state of those places; also, that as the moon was at the full in fourteen days, so Mary was the mother of Christ at the age of fourteen years, and that the infant Saviour was nourished with milk from heaven. In another place he asserted that prayer was only acceptable to God if made in the church; and that an image of Christ had descended from a cross, and had met and kissed a man who was creeping to it. Another declared that it was a light (easy) thing for every one to keep the commandments if he would do so.

The most extraordinary declarations alleged against the protestants did not amount to more than a few expressions exciting men to show their abhorrence of the errors of popery, stronger than perhaps even the circumstances of the times rendered justifiable. Ridley, afterwards the bishop and martyr, was accused for having said that the auricular confession was merely a positive law, ordained as a godly means for the sinner to come to the priest for counsel, but he could not find it in scripture. Others had declared Christ to be the only mediator, to the exclusion of saints, and that none should pray excepting in a tongue which he understood, else he mocked God, and had declared the ceremonials of the Romish church to be beggarly ceremonies. As Strype remarks, these accusations show the trifling way of popish preaching, consisting in ridiculous lying fables and stories, as is used still in popish countries, and with how much more solidity, truth and reason, the sermons of those who favoured the gospel were replenished. At this time there were six preachers appointed in the diocese of

Canterbury by the king's pleasure, "three of the old learning, and three of the new."

Although Henry, in several instances, did not allow the law of the six articles to be executed with full rigour, yet we find some other persons mentioned, who suffered as witnesses for the truth. Among these were CLARK and KERBY, of Suffolk, who were burned at Ipswich in the year 1546.

Before they were brought to trial, the son of sir Humphry Wingfield visited Kerby in prison; and reminding him that the fire was hot, and the pain extreme, exhorted him to seek for mercy before it was too late. Kerby replied, "Ah, master Wingfield, be at my burning, and you shall say, 'There standeth a christian soldier in the fire;' for I know that fire and water, swords, and all things, are in the hands of God, and he will suffer no more to be laid upon us than he will give strength to bear."

They were tried by lord Wentworth and others, appointed as commissioners for executing the law of the six articles, and were required to state whether they believed that after the words Christ spake to his apostles had been repeated by a priest, there were not the very body and blood of Christ,—flesh, blood, and bone, as he was born of the virgin Mary, and no bread remaining.

They answered that they did not so believe; but they believed that the sacrament which Christ Jesus did institute at his last supper with his disciples, was only to put all men in remembrance of his precious death and bloodshedding for the remission of sins, and that there was neither flesh nor blood to be eaten with the teeth, but bread and wine, and yet more than common bread and wine, for it was consecrated to a holy use. In this profession they continued constant, and were condemned to be burned; Kerby at Ipswich, and Clark at Bury.

The next day Kerby was brought to the market place, which was filled with people. Lord Wentworth, and most of the justices of the county, stood in a gallery to witness the execution, with Dr. Rugham, who preached a sermon on the occasion, and demanded of Kerby whether he believed in the sacrament of the altar, to which he answered as at his trial; adding, that by this sacrament the death and sufferings of Jesus, and his blood shed for the redemption of the world, are to be remembered. He then repeated the Te Deum, the belief, and some prayers, in the English

language, while lord Wentworth leaned behind one of the posts of the gallery and wept; several of the justices did the same. The fire was then kindled; and Kerby called unto God with a loud voice, beating his breast, and holding up his hands as long as he was able. Thus he ended his life; the people praising God for his constancy in suffering, he being an unlearned simple man.

On the Monday, Clarke was brought out of the prison at Bury, and conducted to the place of execution at the south gate. As he went, the procession of the host met them; he refused to bow or reverence it, but, on the contrary, rebuked that idolatrous ceremony.

When he came to the stake, he kneeled down, and repeated the magnificat in the English language, making a paraphrase upon that beautiful hymn, and showing how the virgin Mary therein humbled herself to the Saviour, adding, "And what said John the Baptist, the greatest of all men's children? 'Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.'" His sufferings were great; the wood was green, and being put into a pitch barrel, he was smothered with the smoke, and scorched rather than burnt. At length, a bystander struck him on the head with a fagot, and thus terminated his sufferings.

About Easter, 1546, Dr. Crome was brought before the prelates for a sermon preached at Mercer's chapel in the December preceding, in which he exposed the absurdities of popery; and said, that if the doctrine of praying for the souls of the dead were true, and the masses said in the chantries founded expressly for that purpose, could be of service to the souls of the dead, then parliament had not done well in dissolving those institutions; but as none could deny but that it was right they should be dissolved, then followed, as a natural consequence, that masses were of no use to the souls in purgatory.* For having so said,

* The following provision for granting absolution to the dead is a flagrant instance of the abuses introduced into the church of Rome. It is translated from an edition of the "Rituale Romanum," or Romish Service Book, authorized by pope Paul V. printed at Lyons, 1817. "The method of absolving persons who die excommunicated, having shown any sign of contrition.—If the body is not yet buried, it shall be flogged, and then absolved and buried in holy ground. If it has been buried in unconsecrated ground, if possible let it be dug up and flogged, but if it cannot conveniently be dug up, *the grave shall be flogged*, and afterwards absolution shall be given." Surely this is

he was called to account, and at length persuaded to recant his opinions.

Richard Wilmot, and Thomas Fairfax, who suffered "by cruel scourgings" about this period, should not pass unnoticed. While Dr. Crome was in prison, Wilmot, then an apprentice about 19 years of age, was sitting in his master's shop, a draper, in Bow-lane, when one of the king's guard came in upon business; and being asked "what news," related with much glee that Dr. Crome was to recant publicly at Paul's Cross, the following Sunday. Wilmot, hearing this, expressed his regret, saying, that if Dr. Crome did so, he would speak contrary to the word of God, and his own conscience. This led to further conversation respecting the scriptures, in the course of which the guardsman affirmed, "it was never merry since the Bible was translated into English," and asserted that it was necessary to believe whatever priests told them. While thus conversing, Wilmot's master came in with Fairfax, who was servant to a neighbour, and inquired what was the matter. The guardsman accused Wilmot, and the master was very angry with his apprentice for meddling with these matters. Fairfax defended the lad, and the guardsman went away in a rage.

The next day the sword-bearer came for Wilmot and his companion, and took them before the Lord Mayor and Sir Roger Chomley. They were examined separately. Sir Roger spoke against Dr. Crome, and the translation of the Scriptures, to which Wilmot replied, that he was "certified that learned men of God who sought to advance his word, translated the same out of Greek and Hebrew into Latin and English, and that they durst not presume to alter the sense of the scripture of God, and the last will and testament of Christ Jesus." The lord mayor, in a great fury, asked what business he had to read "such books!" After further examination, they were committed to the Counter, preparatory to being examined before bishop Gardiner.

Their masters prevailed upon the lord mayor and the making the gospel of Christ of none effect. The same rite is directed in the edition of the "*Rituale Romanum*," regularly on sale (1825) by the principal Roman catholic booksellers in London. Is not this declaring that the grace of God is not sufficient for salvation, without the sanction of the church of Rome and its superstitious rites?

wardens of the Drapers' Company, to intercede with that prelate for the lads; and at length, with much difficulty, as a favour the cruel persecutor granted that their lives should be spared, but ordered that they should be whipped at a cart's tail for three market days through the city. Having obtained this concession, they returned home, but went again to Gardiner a few days afterwards, when the lord mayor and the wardens kneeled before him, and and upon payment of a hundred pounds, (equal to a thousand at the present time,) with much intercession, he granted that as they were servants of so worshipful a company, they should be punished in Drapers' Hall, instead of the public streets.

The next day Wilmot and Fairfax were brought to the hall. They were stripped and fastened to a ring in the floor, and beaten with rods so severely, that they never fully recovered from the effects of their punishment, and the sense of the danger which they had incurred.

Among those who suffered death at this period, was one whose situation in life, and high connexions, rendered her an object of general notice, while the barbarous treatment she endured, excited universal compassion. It is a narrative especially deserving the attention of those of her sex who read these pages.*

ANNE ASKEW was the daughter of sir William Askew, of Kelsay, in Lincolnshire. She received a more liberal education than was usually given to females in those days, and from early life showed a deep interest on religious subjects. Her eldest sister was engaged to a Mr. Kyme, of Lincolnshire, but died before the marriage took place; and sir William, not being inclined to lose an advantageous connexion, compelled his younger daughter, Anne, to become the wife of Kyme, although she was very unwilling to take him for a husband. By this union, her happiness, and, eventually, her life, were sacrificed, for he was a bigoted papist; while she, by attentive perusal of the scriptures, and the writings of the reformers, had become acquainted with the truth as it is in Jesus. The enmity of her husband being excited, he turned her out of doors, and she came to London, to sue for a divorce. Here she was kindly received by queen Catherine Parr, and some of the ladies of her court, who secretly favoured the truth.

* It is given at length in "The British Reformers."

of the gospel; and from this time, she was generally addressed by her maiden name.

Her husband and the Romish priests marked her for a victim to the sanguinary laws of those days, and she was apprehended in 1545, upon an accusation of holding heretical opinions respecting the sacrament.

Many particulars of her examinations were written by herself, and others were recorded by John Loud, who survived till the year 1579. Her first examination was at Sadler's Hall, before Christopher Dare, one of the commissioners, or inquisitors, in March, 1546. He began by inquiring whether she believed that the sacrament, hanging over the altar, was really the body of Christ? "To this," says she, "I replied by asking, 'Wherefore was St. Stephen stoned to death.'" This learned inquirer into matters of religion confessed "he could not tell." Several other questions were asked; the last was, If she did not think that private masses helped departed souls.* To this she replied, that it was great idolatry to believe in them rather than in the death which Christ died for us.

She was then taken before sir Martin Bowes, the lord mayor, who being appointed to sit as judge in matters of religion, thought it needful to show his learning on these subjects, and asked his brother commissioners to allow him to question her: this being granted, he began thus: "Thou foolish woman, sayest thou that the priests cannot make the body of Christ?" "I say so, my Lord," replied she, "for I have read that God made man; but that man can make God, I never yet read, nor, I suppose, ever shall read it." "No? thou foolish woman!" said his lordship: "after the words of consecration, is it not the Lord's body?" "No, it is but consecrated bread, or sacramental bread," was her reply. "What if a mouse eat it after the consecration," rejoined his lordship; "what shall become

* It is common, even at the present day, for Roman catholics in Ireland, and elsewhere, to leave considerable sums of money to pay for masses to be said after death for the repose of their soul. Large sums are also paid on this account by surviving relatives. From documents recently printed with the names of the parties, the price appears to vary from thirteen pence to two shillings for each mass.

Either the saying a mass benefits the soul of a dead person, or it does not. If it does, surely the church of Rome is cruel indeed to allow any of its poor members to suffer torments for want of this benefit. If it is of no use, why should a charge be made for it?

of the mouse? what sayest thou, thou foolish woman?" "Nay, what say you, my lord, will become of it?" His lordship, thus urged, replied, "I say that mouse is damned." "Alack! poor mouse!" was her reply; which at once discomfited the remainder of his lordship's divinity, and his brother commissioners interposing, proceeded to the points in question.

In the course of the examination, the chancellor told Anne Askew she was much to blame for quoting the scriptures; for St. Paul had forbidden women from talking or speaking of the word of God! She replied, that St. Paul, by what he said, 1 Cor. xiv. meant that a woman ought not to speak in the congregation, by way of teaching, and inquired whether he had ever seen any go into the pulpit and preach. He admitted that he had never seen any. She then said that he ought not thus to blame women, unless they had offended this law.

The lord mayor, at length committed her to the Counter, refusing to take bail, and she was there kept eleven days, without being allowed to see her friends. "But," she says, "there was a priest sent unto me, who said that he was commanded by the bishop to examine me, and give me good counsel, which he did not; but first asked me for what cause I was put in the Counter, and I told him I could not tell. Then he said, It was a great pity I should be kept there without cause, and concluded by saying he was very sorry for me."

The popish inquisition never was formally established in England; but these ensnaring inquiries, and this false hypocritical pretence of pity, must remind the reader of the proceedings of that horrid tribunal, and show that the spirit which actuates that institution is not confined to the countries in which it is established.

After some other insidious questions, the priest asked, "If the host* should fall, and a beast eat it, would the beast receive God or no?" "Since you have taken the pains to ask the question," replied she, "I desire you to answer it yourself; for I will not do it, because I perceive you are come to tempt me." He then said, it was against the order of the schools, that he who asked the question should be required to answer it. She told him she was

* Or sacramental wafer.

but a woman, and knew not the course of proceeding adopted in schools.

On the 23d March, Mr. Britain, her cousin, applied to the lord mayor, to be allowed to bail her, but was referred to the bishop's chancellor, and by him to Bonner, who promised to examine her himself the next day.

The next day came: Bonner sent for Mrs. Askew two hours before the time he had appointed with her friends; and pretending to be sorry for her troubles, exhorted her to tell him all she thought upon these subjects. She begged his lordship to wait till her friends came; and, being further pressed by his chancellor to say why she was brought before Bonner, she intreated him to ask her accusers. When her friends arrived, the bishop again pressed her to utter all the things that burdened her conscience; but she was too well aware of the sure consequences of this inquisitorial trick to be deceived. Bonner then asked her some ensnaring questions, respecting the sacrament of the altar; to which she answered in the words of scripture. He then reproached her* for having "so few words." After a long examination, Bonner wrote a confession for her to sign, expressing a belief in the real presence, but not drawn up in the terms usually adopted in stating the doctrines of transubstantiation: it also declared; that, she believed all things set forth in the king's book, called "The Erudition of a Christian Man." She said, she believed those doctrines so far as they agreed with the holy scriptures; and, at length, being urged by the bystanders, signed the paper in this form: "I, Anne Askew, do believe all manner of things contained in the faith of the catholic church."†

When Bonner saw the words she added, he was in a great rage, and was pacified with much difficulty: at length he allowed her to be released, on her friends becoming bound that she should appear when required.

* Anne Askew was a woman of undaunted spirit. From the account of her examination it appears, that, although she was told that the priests at Lincoln would trouble her, she, nevertheless, returned thither; and, according to the custom of those times, went to the minister, to read the bible placed there. The priests came to her, while thus employed, but went away without speaking.

† Not "the Roman Catholic church."

Soon afterwards she was again apprehended, and examined for five hours before the king and the council, at Greenwich. The next day she was again brought before them, and committed to Newgate.

Here she wrote several papers and letters, which show her abilities and her piety. One is entitled, "The Confession of me, Anne Askew, at the time I was in Newgate, concerning my belief;" and was sent to the council; it is as follows:—

"I find in the scripture, that Christ took the bread, and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take eat, this is my body, which shall be broken for you;' meaning, in substance, his own very body, the bread being only a sign or sacrament thereof; for, after like manner of speaking, he said he would break down the temple, and, in three days, build it up again; signifying his own body by the temple, as St. John declareth it, and not the stony temple itself. So that the bread is but a remembrance of his death, or a sacrament of thanksgiving for it, whereby we are knit unto him by a communion of christian love; although there be many that cannot perceive the true meaning thereof; for the veil that Moses put over his face, Exod. xxxiv. and 2 Cor. iii. I perceive the same veil remaineth unto this day. But when God shall take it away, then shall those blind men see; for it is plainly expressed in the history of Bel, in the Bible, that, God dwelleth in nothing material. 'O king,' said Daniel, 'be not deceived; for God will be in nothing that is made with hands of men.' Oh! what stiff-necked people are these that will always resist the Holy Ghost! But, as their fathers have done, so do they, because they have stony hearts.

"Written by me, Anne Askew, that neither wisheth death nor feareth his might, and as merry as one that is bound towards heaven."

Then follow several passages of scripture.

At length she was brought before the commissioners, at Guildhall; they told her she was a heretic, and condemned by the law, unless she renounced her opinions. To this she replied that she was no heretic, nor deserved death by the law of God; but as to the declaration of faith which she had written to the council, she knew it to be true, and would not deny it. They then inquired if she denied the consecrated bread to be really Christ's body and blood.

She answered, " Yea, for the same Son of God that was born of the virgin Mary, is now glorious in heaven, and will come again from thence at the latter day, like as he went up, Acts i. ; and as for that ye call your God, it is a piece of bread. For a proof of this, let it but lie in the box three months, and ye will find it is mouldy, and so will turn to nothing that is good ;* wherefore I am persuaded that it cannot be God."

They then urged her to confess to a priest : at this she smiled. They asked if it was not right to do so : she replied, that she would confess her sins unto God ; for she was sure that he would hear her with favour. The jury, or inquest, then found her guilty of offending against the law of the six articles

After her condemnation, she addressed the following letter to the king : " I, Anne Askew, of good memory, although God hath given me the bread of adversity and the water of trouble, yet not so much as my sins have deserved, desire this to be known unto your grace, that, forasmuch as I am by law condemned for an evil doer, here I take heaven and earth to record that I die innocent. And, as I said at first, and will say to the last, I utterly abhor and detest all heresies. And, as concerning the supper of the Lord, I believe so much as Christ hath said therein, which he confirmed with his most blessed blood. I believe so much as he willed me to follow and believe, so much as the catholic church of him doth teach. For I will not forsake the commandment of his holy lips. But what God hath charged me with his mouth, that have I shut in my heart. And thus briefly I end for lack of learning. ANNE ASKEW."

After her condemnation she was sent from Newgate to the Tower : on her way she stopped for some time at the Crown tavern, where Rich, one of the council, and Bonner, urged her to recant ; they also brought Shaxton, who endeavoured to persuade her to recant, as he had done. Deeply pained at the sight of one who dishonoured the cause of God by his weakness, she told him it would have been good for him never to have been born. She was then carried to the Tower.

* Even in this state, although it should breed worms, the priest is to swallow it, if possible ; but, of course, it is seldom kept till it is in this condition.

Gardiner and his party were at this time very anxious to procure evidence against queen Catherine Parr, and several ladies of her court, who were known to favour the gospellers, and they determined, if possible, to induce Anne Askew to accuse them.

Rich, one of the council, and Wriothesly, the lord chancellor, accordingly came to the Tower the same afternoon, and examined her, whether she had received any encouragement from the duchess of Suffolk, the countess of Hertford, and others; but she refused to state any thing against them. They commanded her to tell how she was maintained when in the Counter, and who persuaded her to keep firm to her opinions. She said, "There was no creature that did strengthen her, and as to the money, it was procured by means of her maid, who went about, relating her hard case among the apprentices of the city; and some among them, more compassionate than the popish prelates, sent her money, but she knew not who they were." The chancellor and his companion could draw nothing further from her, except that a man in a blue coat, which was the common dress of serving men in that day, left her ten shillings, saying, it was from lady Hertford, and another left eight shillings, saying, it was from lady Denny; but, whether it were so or not, she could not say.

She was then led down into a dungeon, and placed upon the rack, to compel her to accuse some of these ladies. Sir Anthony Knevet, the lieutenant of the Tower, commanded a gaoler to work that horrid instrument of torture; which he did for some time, and then was about to loose her, by his master's order. But, Wriothesly, the chancellor, not satisfied that she should be released, without having made a confession, ordered the lieutenant to rack her again. This he refused to do, "tendering the weakness of the woman;" upon which Wriothesly threatened to inform the king of his disobedience, and he and Rich then threw off their gowns, and worked the rack themselves. But, mark the tender mercies of these wicked men; they first asked her if she were with child. She told them, "Ye shall not need to spare for that, but do your wills upon me." They then proceeded in earnest; and "because she lay still, and did not cry, they racked her till her bones and joints were almost plucked asunder, and she was almost dead."

At length, the lieutenant caused her to be loosed ; she swooned away immediately ; but they recovered her again, and, as she relates, " After that I sat two long hours upon the bare floor, reasoning with my lord chancellor ; with many flattering words, he persuaded me to leave my opinion. But, my Lord God, I thank his everlasting goodness, gave me strength to persevere, and will do so, I hope, to the end." What must have been the feelings of men of rank who could thus " reason" with a tortured female !

She was then carried back to her place of confinement, and Wriothesly and Rich rode back to court, to glory in their deeds. Meanwhile the lieutenant, remembering their threat against him, took boat, and rowed to Whitehall as fast as possible. When there, he gained instant admission to the king, and, kneeling down, stated all that had passed, and how the lord chancellor had threatened him, because he could not find in his heart to rack poor Anne Askew so cruelly as they desired ; he, therefore, implored his majesty's pardon.

The king appeared displeased when he heard how severely they had treated her, and, granting the lieutenant's petition, directed him to return to the Tower ; which he did, to the great joy of his officers, who were anxiously waiting to learn the result.

Anne Askew being now condemned, the papists reported that she had recanted, concealing the words with which she had subscribed the paper. She, therefore, published a confession of her faith, in which she stated her opinions respecting the sacrament, as already related ; it proceeds thus : " Finally, I believe all those scriptures to be true which Christ hath confirmed with his most precious blood ; yea, and as St. Paul saith, Those scriptures that Christ hath left here with us are sufficient for our learning and salvation ; so that, I believe, we need no unwritten* vanities to rule his church with. Therefore, look what he hath said unto me with his own mouth, in his holy gospel, that I have, with God's grace, closed up in my heart, and my full trust is, as David saith, that it shall be a lantern to my footsteps."

She concludes with the following prayer :

" O Lord, I have now more enemies than there be hairs

* Tradition, which the church of Rome declares to be of equal authority with the holy scriptures.

on my head; but, Lord, let them not overcome me with vain words; but fight thou, Lord, in my stead, for on thee cast I my care. With all the spite they can imagine, they fall upon me which am thy poor creature. Yet, sweet Lord, let me not set by them (care for them); for in thee is my whole delight. And, Lord, I heartily desire of thee, that thou wilt, of thy most merciful goodness, forgive them that violence which they do, and have done to me. Open, also, thou their blind hearts, that they may hereafter do that thing in thy sight which only is acceptable before thee, and set forth thy truth aright, without the vain fantasies of sinful men. So be it, Lord, so be it."

The day for her execution was appointed; and, although she had suffered so much from the severities she had endured, that she could not long survive, her enemies would not allow her to depart in peace. She was carried to Smithfield in a chair supported by two men, being unable to walk or stand, from the tortures she had suffered; and, when brought to the stake, she was fastened by a chain which held up her body; but an eye witness describes her as having an "angel's countenance, and a smiling face." Three other martyrs, Lassels, Adams, and Belenian, were burned at the same time.

When all was prepared, Shaxton, to complete his apostacy, preached a sermon. Anne Askew listened to him, confirming his words when he spoke truly, but warning the people when he spoke amiss. An immense multitude assembled to witness their execution, which was deferred till night-fall, to make the scene more awful. Upon a bench under St. Bartholomew's church, sat the lord chancellor, the duke of Norfolk, the earl of Bedford, the lord mayor, and others.

The chancellor sent to Anne Askew a written pardon, from the king, upon condition she would recant. She refused to look at it, declaring that she came not thither to deny her Lord and Master. Similar offers were made to her companions, who, encouraged by her example, also refused to accept them. What must have been Shaxton's feelings at that moment!

"Thus," as Fox says, "the good Anne Askew, with these blessed martyrs, having passed through so many torments, having now ended the long course of her agonies, being compassed with flames of fire, as a blessed sacrifice

to God, slept in Jesus, leaving a singular instance of christian constancy for all men to follow."

Can we read this narrative, without examining what can be the principles of that religion which induced such conduct from men of rank, towards a helpless female of birth, character, and education! And it must not be forgotten, that Wriothesly was not one of those debased, low-minded characters, who, like Bonner, naturally delighted in this work of butchery; but, in many respects, he was the reverse; so that Burnet was disposed to doubt the circumstances of his personal cruelty; but an original journal of occurrences in the Tower, records that she was put upon the rack; and Burnet appears to have overlooked that Anne Askew, herself, wrote to a friend, "the chancellor and Rich racked me with their own hands, till I was well nigh dead." She proceeds, "Then was I brought to a house, and laid in a bed with as weary and painful bones as ever had patient Job. I thank my Lord God, therefore. Then my lord chancellor sent me word, that, if I would leave my opinion, I should want nothing; if I would not, I should go to Newgate, and so be burned. I sent him word, that I would rather die than break my faith. Thus, the Lord open the eyes of their blind hearts, that the truth may take place. Farewell, dear friend, and pray, pray, pray."

More than one of these racks are still preserved; and in the Tower are other instruments of torture, captured in 1588, on board the Spanish armada, designed for the torturing of protestants. When protestant females behold the sad memorials of those days, let them think of Anne Askew and her sufferings; let them bless God for the Reformation, and that the inquisition has no power in our land!

JOHN LASSELS was a gentleman, and one of the attendants of Henry: he appears to have been the person who was the means of discovering the ill conduct of queen Catherine Howard; for which, of course, the popish party bore him no good will. He, with his companions, NICHOLAS BELENIAN, a priest of Shropshire, and JOHN ADAMS, a tailor, all suffered, as offenders against the bloody law of the six articles, and were much encouraged by the heroic example and christian principles of Anne Askew. Had she lived in Greece or Rome, and endured half the sufferings just described, in what historians would call the cause

of liberty and patriotism, she would have been held up to the admiration of succeeding ages, as a pattern of heroism and virtue. Nor is she forgotten while wearing the bright crown, given to those who have sealed their testimony with their blood. The follower of Christ will ever regard her name with feelings of respect and admiration, and pray that if his day should be the same, the like strength may be given to him also.

While Lassels was in prison, he wrote a long letter, pointing out the errors of the papists, with respect to the sacrifice of the mass. It is ably written; but as his arguments are nearly the same with those already given in several parts of this work, it is unnecessary to state them here. The closing paragraph, however, expresses the pious and christian feelings of his mind so strongly, that it ought not to be withheld. He says—

“ Now with quietness I commit the whole world to their pastor and herdsman, Jesus Christ, the only Saviour and true Messiah; and I commend my sovereign lord and master, the king's majesty, king Henry the eighth, to God the Father, and to our Lord Jesus Christ. Also the queen, and my lord the prince, with this whole realm, ever to the inuocent and immaculate Lamb, that his blood may wash and purify their hearts and souls from all iniquity and sin, to God's glory, and to the salvation of their souls. I do protest that the inward part of my heart doth groan for this; and I doubt not but to enter into the holy tabernacle which is above, yea, and there to be with God for ever. Farewell in Christ Jesus. John Lassels, late servant to the king, and now I trust to serve the everlasting King, with the testimony of my blood, in Smithfield.”

THE LOLLARDS;

Or, some account of the Witnesses for the Truth in England, between the Years 1400 and 1546.

PART XIII.

Leland.—Libraries of Monasteries.—Remarks respecting them.—Designs of Gardiner and his Associates against Queen Catherine Parr.—Her conversations with Henry.—She promotes the Gospel.—At Gardiner's instigation the King consents to her arrest.—These designs providentially disappointed.—Writings of Queen Catherine Parr.—Sir George Blage.—Gardiner loses the King's favour.—Increasing infirmities of the King.—His death.—Reflections.

ON new year's day, 1545, Leland presented to the king a report of his proceedings, under a commission which directed him to examine the libraries of the monasteries and colleges which had been dissolved, that he might collect manuscripts relative to English history; and also the writings of ancient authors. Leland was well qualified for such an employment, and visited all parts of the kingdom upon this errand. He stated that he had preserved many important works, and that his journey had brought "many things to light concerning the usurped authority of the bishop of Rome, and his accomplices."

Much has been said respecting the destruction of the libraries of these monasteries, and the probable loss thereby sustained of many valuable writings of ancient authors. This is a frequent subject of complaint with those who are disposed to undervalue or lament the reformation; but, like their other charges, it is almost, if not entirely groundless. Leland states that he preserved many authors, but also says, that the greater part of them had already been printed in Germany and Italy. As to British histories, the chief destruction of them had been made some years before by Polydore Vergil, an Italian by birth, but appointed archdeacon of Wells, who wrote a history of England favourable to romanism, and is reported to have destroyed all the copies of older authors which he could get into his possession, after he had

availed himself of their contents. Doubtless this was to prevent his falsifications of history from being discovered.

There is sufficient evidence to satisfy any candid inquirer that these libraries chiefly consisted of *romish* books of devotion, legendaries or tales of saints, missals, and other superstitious works, enough of which have been preserved to satisfy the most eager desire for such information; and the destruction of the remainder cannot be a matter of deep regret.* These monasteries had, for the greater part, arisen in the dark ages when literature and science were little cultivated, and the monks would, of course, employ themselves in transcribing the works then preferred. It is also a well known fact, that, from the scarcity and expense of parchment, the scribes of the latter ages were accustomed to erase the writing from ancient manuscripts, such as were then least esteemed, in order to transcribe homilies and extracts from the fathers, or legendary tales of the saints in their stead. This practice had been carried to a great extent, and it destroyed many

* Many particulars are related by historians, which confirm these statements; and we may here refer to the catalogue of the library of the monastery of Lochleven, as it existed in the year 1150. This was one of the most ancient, and among the principal monastic establishments in Scotland. The catalogue exhibits the state of the library as it existed before the establishment was fully subjugated to the *romish* yoke; consequently before the *romish* legendaries and superstitious tales had taken the place of the copies of the scriptures, or ancient authors it might have contained. The list is as follows: A Pastoral, explanatory of the duties and privileges of prelates. A Gradual, a Lectionary, and a Missal; these were used in the services of the church. Part of the works of Origen. The sentences of St. Bernard. A collection from the writings of the Fathers. The works of Prosper, an ecclesiastical writer of the fifth century. A work on the Sacrament. A sort of dictionary. A collection of sentences. The only portions of the scriptures they possessed, were the four Gospels, the Acts, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles. They also had a commentary on the latter, and another on the book of Genesis. The last article in the list is a work pointing out the dispensations granted to ecclesiastics, from the rules they ought to obey! This was in the year 1150; we have seen that the succeeding ages were still more enveloped in darkness and superstition; surely, then, it is but reasonable to suppose, that although the quantity increased, the quality would not improve; and we need not deeply lament the loss of such part of these libraries as may have perished, for enough remains to show us the character of *romanism*, and its superstitions.

ancient writings. Some of the most valuable manuscripts of portions of the scriptures, now extant, were written over in this manner.

Gardiuer and his popish associates persevered in their endeavour to accomplish the ruin of queen Catherine Parr; and although they failed in their attempt to procure evidence against her from Anne Askew, they had nearly caused her destruction by other means.

Queen Catherine Parr was the eldest daughter of sir Thomas Parr; she was first married to Edward Burgh, and next to lord Latymer; after his decease she engaged the affections of king Henry, and he made her his sixth queen. She was well educated in general learning, and also was "much given to the reading and studying of the holy scriptures." She usually sent for one of her chaplains every afternoon, to lecture upon some passage of the word of God, to her and the ladies of her court. These proceedings were not concealed from the king, who, for some time, appeared to approve them, which encouraged her to favour the professors of the gospel, and she appointed Coverdale, the translator of the Bible, to be one of her chaplains.

Nor did her zeal for the truth stop here; Henry was always fond of theological discussions, and frequently conversed with her upon these subjects; at length she was emboldened to use these opportunities, and exhorted him to cleanse the kingdom from the dregs of romish superstition which yet remained. He bore this without being offended, either from respect to the cause she advocated, or from his affection towards her, which was very great, and much increased by her kind attention.

The king was now become very corpulent, and, from a painful complaint in his leg, was more froward and hard to please than ever. The queen continued assiduous in her attention, waiting upon him at all suitable opportunities. Religious subjects were still the usual topics of their discourse, and she continued to urge him to further measures of reformation. Having become more irritable than formerly, Henry one day abruptly changed the subject of conversation. Nor was this all; after she had left him, he said, "A good hearing it is when women become such clerks, and a thing much to my comfort, to come in my old days to be taught by my wife."

Gardiner was present; he eagerly caught at these words; and in a fawning flattering manner expressed his regret, that the queen should so far forget herself, as to argue with his majesty upon any subject, especially on matters of religion; in which he possessed wisdom and knowledge far above all other princes, and even superior to doctors in divinity and learned men. He then craftily insinuated how dangerous an example it was for a prince to suffer such conduct from any one. To this he added some reflections upon the tenets of the reformers, as if they led them to rebel against their lawful sovereigns, and insinuated that if the king would protect him, he would engage shortly to disclose such treason, under the cloak of heresy, as would cause the king fully to perceive how dangerous it was to cherish a serpent in his own bosom.

Henry was influenced by the false flatteries of Gardiner, or perhaps wished to ascertain how far that prelate would dare to proceed against the queen. However, he gave permission to draw up articles against her; declaring this determination not to spare her life, if there appeared sufficient cause for her execution.

The romanists proceeded to arrange their plans, purposing first to arrest her sister, the lady Herbert, with two other ladies of her court, and search their apartments for prohibited books, some of which they doubted not to find; they then intended to involve the queen with her ladies, as offenders against the Six Articles, and to procure her committal to the Tower; feeling confident that if they could remove her from court, they should be able to accomplish her destruction.

God, however, was pleased to disappoint the designs of these cruel men, and to effect her deliverance in a remarkable manner. The king himself imparted the design to Dr. Wendy, one of his physicians, but commanded him, at the peril of his life, not to reveal the secret. The fatal moment was at hand, the articles were drawn up; they were submitted to the king, and signed by him; when, by a providential interference, the paper dropped from the bosom of the chancellor, to whose custody it was committed; and being found by a person friendly to the queen, he instantly brought it to her, and she was not a little affected both in body and mind at its contents.

When the king heard of her illness, he sent his physicians to attend her. Dr. Wendy guessed the cause of her distress; and although it was at the peril of his life, he ventured to speak privately to her of the dangerous situation in which she stood; and recommended her to take the first opportunity to show humble submission to the king, and thus try to regain his favour.

While the queen was in this state, the king visited her, and she expressed a fear lest she had, by some means, displeased him; he spoke kindly, so as to encourage her hopes of escape, and she determined to follow the physician's advice.

Accordingly she directed her ladies to destroy all the books they possessed, which could be deemed contrary to the law; and the next evening, accompanied by lady Herbert and lady Lane, she went to the king's apartment. As soon as she entered, he bade her welcome, and contrary to his usual manner, broke off the conversation in which he was engaged, and proposed some questions of a religious nature, which he desired her to explain.

The queen perceived the perilous situation in which she now was; and answered his questions as prudently as she could. She then humbly inquired how it was, that his majesty, being "so excellent in gifts and ornaments of wisdom," should require her judgment upon religious subjects, adding, that although she had answered him to the best of her ability, yet she must, and would submit her judgment to his.

"Not so, by St. Mary," said the king. "You are become a doctor, Kate, to instruct us, as we take it, and not to be instructed or directed by us"

To which she replied, that his majesty had very much mistaken her intentions; and that if she had been sometimes so bold, as to talk with him upon these subjects and apparently to differ in opinion, it was not from a desire to oppose, but from a wish to engage him in discourse, so as to pass away the time, and cause him to forget his pain; while she might receive instruction from his discourse, and profit thereby.

"And is it even so, sweetheart," said the king, "and tended your arguments to no worse end? then we are perfect friends again." He then conversed very pleasantly with her.

Neither Gardiner nor Wriothesly were present on this occasion, being employed in completing their arrangements for the morrow; on which day the queen was to have been taken to the Tower; for they, having the king's approval, determined to apprehend her without delay.

The appointed hour was almost arrived, when the king went into the garden at Whitehall, accompanied by two gentlemen of his bedchamber, and sent for the queen. She came with the three ladies who were to have been imprisoned with her. The king was conversing with them very pleasantly, when the lord chancellor entered the garden, with forty yeomen of the guard, expecting to seize his prey.

The king instantly left the queen, and called Wriothesly to him, who, kneeling down, spoke so softly that his words were not heard by the by-standers; but the king's reply was less gentle, both in tone and manner; calling him, "Arrant knave, beast, and fool," and ordering him to get out of his sight!

After he had departed with all his train, the king returned to the queen, who, perceiving him to be much displeased, entreated him to forgive the chancellor, saying, that though she doubted not his majesty had just cause to be displeased, yet she trusted that ignorance was the cause of his error, and entreated that he would forgive him at her request.

"Ah, poor soul," said the king, "thou little knowest how ill he deserveth this favour at thy hands. On my word, sweetheart, he hath been towards thee an arrant knave; and so let him go." Thus, by the Divine blessing, this good queen escaped the snare laid for her, by the enemies of the gospel; and remained unmolested during the short remainder of Henry's life.

She survived him but a short time. Sir Thomas Seymour, lord high admiral of England, married her, with the design of forwarding his ambitious views. In those unquiet times, it was not possible for one who had filled so distinguished a station to return to private life. This union was not happy; and she died soon after, not without suspicion of being poisoned. After her decease, secretary Cecil, (subsequently lord Burleigh,) found among her papers a work written by her, entitled, the "Lamentation of a sinner, bewailing the ignorance of her blind

life;" &c. It was published by him, as expressed in the notice prefixed to the early editions, "Set forth and put in print, at the earnest desire and request of Catherine, dutchess of Suffolk, and lord William Parr, marquis of Northampton."* It contains many reflections on the superstitions of the day, with such clear statements of gospel truth, as will interest the christian reader in all ages, especially when he considers the royal and noble names connected with this publication. It is true that not many noble, not many mighty, are called; but such there are in all ages; and even in the darkest periods of the church of Christ some have appeared. Among this number we may enumerate queen Catherine Parr. She published a volume of psalms, prayers, and pious discourses, during her lifetime; and several valuable and interesting letters written by her, are given in Strype's Annals, and other collections of papers relative to that period.

Thus queen Catherine and her ladies escaped the plans devised for their destruction, nor were they the only persons aimed at by the popish party. Sir George Blage, one of the king's privy chamber, was apprehended by chancellor Wriothesly the Sunday before Anne Askew suffered; and such was the dispatch used, that he was carried to Newgate on Monday, and from thence to Guildhall, where he was condemned on the same day, and ordered to be burned on the Wednesday following!

He was accused under the Six Articles, as having spoken against the sacrament; he was reported to have said, "What if a mouse should eat the (consecrated)

* It is printed in the Harleian Miscellany; and also in the writings of the British Reformers, as published by the Religious Tract Society. Some extracts have also been printed as a tract, No. 153, under the title of "Meditations of Queen Catherine Parr." One brief extract may be given here, as showing the doctrines this pious queen had held in the days of her attachment to popery. "The blood of Christ was not reputed by me sufficient for to wash me from the filth of my sins; neither such ways as he had appointed by his word. But I sought for such raffraff as the bishop of Rome hath planted in his tyranny and kingdom, trusting, with great confidence, by the virtue and holiness of them, to receive full remission of my sins. And thus I did, as much as I was able, obscure and darken the great benefit of Christ's sufferings, than the which, no thought can conceive any thing of more value." In the Lives of the British Reformers will be found a fuller account of this interesting christian female and her writings.

bread? then by my consent they should hang up the mouse!"* He always denied having ever uttered such words, and afterwards said, the real occasion of his condemnation was, that sir H. Calvert and Mr. Littleton, walking with him in St. Paul's church, on the Sunday after a sermon by Dr. Crome, who was suspected of heresy, Mr. Littleton said, the preacher had declared that the mass profited neither the quick nor dead. "No!" said sir George, "for what then is it of use? belike for a gentleman when he rideth a hunting, to keep his horse from stumbling!" This irreverent speech against the leading superstitions of popery, determined the papists to procure his destruction; he was apprehended in a few hours, and would have been burned, but the king, perceiving the gentlemen of his privy chamber whispering together, commanded them to tell him the reason. The earl of Bedford did so; the king, being enraged that Gardiner and his party should attack those so near to him without his consent, sent immediately for the lord chancellor, and commanded a pardon for sir George to be issued. Being thus rescued, he waited upon the king. "Ah! my pig!" said the king, for so Henry was accustomed familiarly to call him. "Yea," replied sir George, "if your majesty had not been better to me than your bishops, your pig had been roasted ere now!"

On the 8th of July, in this year, another proclamation

* In the "Master Key to Popery," is an account of a priest, in Spain, who, while administering the sacrament to a lady, let the host fall, and it was eaten by her lap dog! All was amazement and confusion; the dog was carried in procession (as the host is carried) into the vestry, and his case was gravely considered. Some were for his immediate execution; but, at length, it was resolved: 1. He should be called "the sacrament's dog." (We have seen that the sacrament is treated as if it were an individual.) 2. When he died, he was to be buried in consecrated ground. 3. That he should not be allowed to play with other dogs. 4. That the lady should present a silver image of a dog, which was to be placed upon the tabernacle, where the host was kept. 5. That she should give twenty pistoles to the convent to which the church belonged where this happened. All this was settled and acted upon for some time; when it came to the ears of Don Pedro Guerrero, the first Inquisitor, who thinking the thing very scandalous, sent for the dog, and the animal was put into the inquisition! Blanco White states, that if a mouse eats a consecrated wafer, it is considered as having eaten the body of our Lord! To such absurdities does the doctrine of the real presence lead.

was issued by the council, with the authority of the king, rigorously forbidding any person from having Tindal's or Coverdale's translation of the scriptures, or any of the writings of the lollards and reformers, many of whom were mentioned by name. As to the heresies contained in these works, the reader is already aware what were the doctrines so denominated; and, as Fox observes, the papists might have gathered what they called heresies out of St. John's gospel and St. Paul's epistles, as well as from these books.

Gardiner and his party went too far in their attempt against the queen; he lost the king's favour; and though he made a timely submission, yet he could not regain his influence. The duke of Norfolk also incurred Henry's displeasure from political causes, and, being attainted by act of parliament, though unjustly, he was ordered for execution, and would have suffered, had not the king's death, the night preceding, prevented it.

On this occasion, Cranmer pursued a line of conduct, which alone ought to silence the slanders of the romanists against that virtuous prelate. Although the duke was his personal enemy as well as a bitter persecutor of the protestants, (one Rogers had been burned by his means just before,) yet Cranmer, knowing he was the victim of an unjust accusation, would not concur in the sentence; and, as his opposition was of no avail, he withdrew to Croydon, and refused to sanction the passing of the act by his presence; while Gardiner continued officious in his attendance at court; and, being forbid to enter the king's presence, used to accompany the other counsellors to the door of the royal apartment, that the world might suppose he was still in favour.

The king was now on his death-bed; and, from the pains he endured, had become so very peevish, that his attendants dared not warn him of the near approach of death, although from several expressions in his will, drawn up about a month before, it is evident that his thoughts were directed to this important subject. At length, on January 27, 1547, sir Anthony Denny had the honesty and courage to undertake this unwelcome office; desiring him to prepare for death, and remember his former life, counselling him to call on God for mercy, through Jesus Christ. Upon which the king expressed his grief for the

sins of his past life, adding, that he trusted in the mercies of Christ, which were still greater. Denny then inquired if any of the clergy should be sent for. The king said, if any were called, it should be archbishop Cranmer; and, finding himself rapidly declining, ordered that prelate to be sent for. He was then at Croydon; and, when he arrived, the king was speechless; but the archbishop desired him to give some sign whether he died in the faith of Christ, upon which he pressed the archbishop's hand, and shortly afterwards expired.

The character of Henry the Eighth has been variously represented, perhaps more so than that of any other monarch. It is scarcely necessary to say that romish writers have described him in the blackest colours. They have, however, as usual, gone too far, and have falsified facts in such a glaring manner, as must be apparent to any one who is at all conversant with history. The jesuit, Parsons, with the notorious Sanders, were the earliest and principal authors of these fabrications; and though refuted at that time from the clearest evidence, their assertions have been and still are repeated, as if they had never been disproved; but this is a usual course with too many romish authors, as will be sufficiently obvious to all who deem it necessary to toil through the fabrications they have given to the world, and to trace the fallacies they advance.

Such is not the design of these pages; they were not written with any view of entering into a defence of the character of Henry, in which the follower of Christ must see much to deplore, although truth requires it to be stated that Henry, does not appear to have been such a monster as the romanists delight to describe him. Whatever has been said in vindication of his character, has arisen from the importance of giving as correct an account as possible of the events connected with the reformation; not that it is necessary to connect that event with the personal character of the monarch who was the principal means, in the hand of God, of accomplishing the deliverance of the followers of Christ, in these realms, from the tyranny of the church of Rome. The restoration of the Jews depended not on the personal character of Cyrus; and the reformation, with its effects, are not to be estimated by the personal character of Henry.

He was possessed of great abilities and strong passions. The former he had cultivated, and his acquirements were far beyond those usually attained by monarchs. But his passions gained strength from the corrupt religion in which he was educated; and encouraged by those who surrounded him, the strong understanding he naturally possessed was blinded, and he was led into the violence he frequently displayed. This caused him to send to the scaffold and the stake those who opposed his regal authority, and those who differed from his religious opinions; but the same strength of mind and impetuosity of temper, led him also to throw off the iron yoke of popery.

Educated in the favourite studies of the church of Rome, which substituted school divinity for the precepts of the gospel, we cannot wonder that the evil passions of Henry VIII. were strengthened rather than diminished; thus he proceeded fearlessly in a course which a better regulated mind, perhaps, would have feared to tread; and when the pope had personally denounced him as unfit to live, he shrunk not from the contest, but pursued it in the decided manner we have seen. For it should ever be remembered that *this* was the cause of the execution of the romanists. The pope had directed all his adherents to assist in dethroning Henry; surely then it is not matter of surprise that those who openly supported that usurped power should be considered traitors, and executed as such; while the safety and influence enjoyed by Gardiner, Bonner, and others, who continued publicly to profess only the religious doctrines of the church of Rome, prove that those alone suffered who advocated her political power and usurpations. They were martyrs for the power of the pope, not for his religion; and so let them be considered.

It is certain, from the concurring testimony of historians, that Henry was highly popular with his subjects to the last; a convincing proof that the majority of the people did not regret the line of conduct he pursued, with reference to the church of Rome, and that in his general proceedings he acted in a manner less hateful than has been commonly represented. His latest views also appear to have become more decided against the doctrines of popery. It is stated that Henry and the king of France were in treaty together respecting the abolition of the mass, by changing it into a communion. Cranmer wrote to his secretary

Morice, "If I should tell you what communication was had between the king's highness and the French ambassador, (the King leaning upon him and me,) concerning the establishment of sincere religion, a man would hardly have believed it. Nor had I myself thought the king had been so forward in those matters as he then appeared."

The following observations from Burnet will illustrate the preceding remarks on the character of Henry.

"He attacked popery in its strong-holds—the monasteries—and destroyed them all; and thus he opened the way to all that came after, even down to our days. So that while we see the folly and weakness of man, in all his personal failings, which were very many, and very enormous, we at the same time see the justice, the wisdom, and the goodness of God, in making him, who was once the pride and glory of popery, become its scourge and destruction! And in directing his pride and passion so as to bring about, under the dread of his unrelenting temper, a change which a milder reign could not have compassed, without great convulsions and much confusion. Above all, we ought to adore the goodness of God, in rescuing us, by his means, from idolatry and superstition; from the vain and pompous shows in which the worship of God was dressed up, so as to vie with heathenism itself; and bringing us into a simplicity of believing, and a purity of worship, conformable to the nature and attributes of God and the doctrine and example of the Son of God.

"May we ever value this as we ought! And may we, in our temper and lives, so express the beauty of this holy religion, that it may ever shine among us, and may shine out from us, to all round about us, and then we may hope that God will preserve it to us, and to our posterity after us, for ever."

THE LOLLARDS ;

*Or some Account of the Witnesses for the Truth in Scotland,
between the years 1400 and 1546.*

PART XIV.

Scotland.—Early Christians.—The Culdees.—Christianity not introduced into Britain by the Church of Rome—encroachments of that Church—it prevails over the Culdees.—Persecutions of the followers of Wickliff in Scotland.—Risby.—Craw.—The Lollards of Kyle:—Corruptions of the Church of Rome in Scotland.—Patrick Hamilton—his Treatise on Faith and Works—he is persecuted and burned.—Forrest.—Gourlay and Stratton.—Dean Forrest, and others.—Russel and Kennedy.—Cardinal Beaton.—Four men and a woman put to death for eating a goose on a fast day.—Wishart—his zeal and usefulness—accusations against him—he is condemned and burned.—Knox—his imprisonment.—Reflections.—Conclusion.

IN the preceding chapters of this work, no particulars have been given respecting the “witnesses for the truth” in Scotland, during the period noticed therein

England and Scotland were then separate kingdoms, and continually opposed to each other ; so that, in matters of internal history, the two countries were little connected ; and until the progress of the Reformation united both portions of our land in opposing the spiritual tyranny of the church of Rome, their religious proceedings had little in common. Some names, however, were added to “the noble army of martyrs,” from the northern as well as the southern portion of our island. The memory of a few still survive, who are, without doubt, enrolled among the followers of the Lamb ; and these pages would not be complete without some particulars respecting their history, which it appeared most proper to give in a separate part, as not being connected with the records of their fellow-martyrs in England.

IN Scotland, as well as in England, the glad tidings of salvation through Christ Jesus were made known by the apostles, or their immediate disciples. During the persecutions of the heathen emperors of Rome, many christians took refuge in the northern parts of our island ; and as Tertullian, who lived in the second century, records, the gospel was diffused in Britain, even beyond those districts which were occupied by the Romans. There

they found refuge and countenance, and druidism and idolatry gradually gave way before the light of truth. Idol worship was abolished, the false teachers were removed, and their places supplied by a succession of spiritual and pious men, who, for many ages, maintained the faith of Christ, and resisted the early encroachments of the church of Rome, when she began to assume spiritual and temporal power.

A particular account of these excellent characters, who are generally known by the name of **CULDEES**, cannot be given in these pages; but if the reader will refer to Jameson and other historians, who have written respecting them, he will find much to interest and gratify him; and will be satisfied, if he has had any doubts upon the subject that the pure doctrines of the truth were held by many in Britain, long before the haughty Augustine and his companions were sent from Rome to our island. Thus a favourite boast of roman catholics in our times, that christianity was introduced into Britain by the church of Rome, is destitute of foundation in truth. Still we should not forget the important fact, that although the church of Rome, in the days of Augustine the monk, had fallen from her original purity in many respects, yet she was by no means the corrupt apostate church which she afterwards became, when, as represented in the Apocalypse, she was "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

That the truths of the gospel had been received from other sources than the church of Rome, was clearly proved by the fact, that the church of Britain, especially the Scottish divines, or Culdees, kept the festival of Easter upon the fourteenth day of the moon, without reference to the day of the week, instead of the Sunday following. This circumstance, which certainly involved no doctrine essential to salvation, became the cause of bitter controversy and persecution from the followers of Augustine against their fellow christians of Britain; thus, even at that early period, popery began to show its intolerance! In England the romanists speedily prevailed; but their encroachments, which included several other points, were more firmly resisted in Scotland; and many left the north of England, where they were settled, and took refuge among their Scottish neighbours, rather than give way to these proceedings

Matters went on from bad to worse, till at length, by degrees, in Scotland, as in other countries, "Darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people." A number, however, still were found, who refused to bow their knees to the Baal of romish superstition and power. Pope John XXII. in his bull for anointing king Robert Bruce, complains that there were many heretics in Scotland. Some, as Alcuin and others, resisted the doctrines of transubstantiation and the popish errors in general, and were declared heretics after their decease; for men were not yet systematically committed to the flames for what the romanists called "heresy."

But gradually the doctrines of the truth, as professed by the Culdees, were driven from the land. Margaret, the queen of Malcolm, in the eleventh century, succeeded in establishing a general conformity with the church of Rome, both in doctrines and mode of worship; for this she was canonized, and declared to be a saint; endued, of course, with power to deliver souls from purgatory, and the other privileges attached by the church of Rome to that rank. She was even chosen for the patroness of Scotland!

The scattered remnant of the flock of Christ was now subjected to persecution. Historians are unable to furnish us with particulars; but that such a people existed is clear from the evidence of popish writers, who, in their accounts of the Waldenses, relate that individuals of that sect, and followers of Wickliff, were found in Scotland as well as in England; doubtless they experienced similar treatment. Knox examined closely, and has left a sketch of these proceedings, to which little can be added. In the records of Glasgow he found mention of JAMES RISBY, an Englishman, a follower of Wickliff, who was accused in Scotland by one Lawrence Linders, and was burned in 1422, for having said that the pope was not the vicar of Christ.

In 1431, one PAUL CRAW, a Bohemian, was apprehended at St. Andrews, and accused of holding the same opinions respecting the sacrament as Wickliff and Huss; of denying that confession should be made to priests, or prayers offered to saints, and of stating that while God gave him strength to resist, he would not consent to these impieties. As in England, the ecclesiastical judges handed him over to the secular power, and he was committed to the flames. Knox adds, "and to declare themselves to be the

generation of Satan, who, from the beginning, hath been an enemy to the truth, and desiring to hide the same from the knowledge of men, they put a ball of brass in his mouth, that he should not give confession of his faith to the people, nor should they understand the defence which he had against their unjust accusation and condemnation."

The romantic mountains and vallies of Scotland still, however, afforded shelter to a scattered remnant of God's heritage; and in her glens, as well as in the vallies of Piedmont, small assemblies were found, who looked to Christ Jesus as the only mediator between God and man. In the year 1494, thirty persons, called "The Lollards of Kyle," a district of Ayrshire, were accused of various heresies before the king and his council, by Blacater, archbishop of Glasgow. Among this number are the names of Campbell of Cesnock, Schaw of Pollamac, Reid of Barskynning, Helen Chamber, lady Polkellie, Isabel Chamber, and lady Stairs.

The articles of which they were accused were preserved in the Register of Glasgow; some of them are as follows, namely, That they objected to the worship of images and relics; that they asserted Christ gave power to Peter and the other apostles, not to the pope; they denied transubstantiation, or that the bread was turned into the actual body and blood of Christ. They said that the pope is not the successor of Peter, except wherein Christ said, "Go behind me, Satan;" that the pope deceives the people by his bulls and indulgences; that the mass profiteth not the souls that are said to be in purgatory; that the pope exalts himself against God and above God; that the pope cannot remit the pains of purgatory; that priests may have wives; that the pope forgives not sins, but only God; that faith should not be given to romish miracles; that we should not pray to the glorious virgin Mary, but to God only, since he alone hears us and helps us.

From these articles it clearly appears that the doctrines held by "the witnesses for the truth," in Scotland, were similar to those maintained in England, and thus it is at the present day. The roman catholics lay much stress upon the outward differences between the church of England and the church of Scotland, and other divisions among protestants, studiously keeping out of sight that in the great truths of the gospel they all unite, and, according to their

respective professions of faith, they all agree to "love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

Let us not forget that these particulars are taken from the records of their enemies, and therefore show the worst charges which could be brought against them. Knox well observes: "By these articles, which God, of his merciful providence, caused the enemies of his truth to keep in their registers, may appear how mercifully God hath looked upon this realm, retaining within it some spark of his light, even in the time of greatest darkness. Neither ought any man to wonder that some things are obscurely, or even doubtfully spoken: but all the faithful ought rather to magnify God's mercy, who, without public doctrine (or teaching) gave so great light." This is the more wonderful when we consider that not only the gospel was not publicly taught, but also that the scriptures were only accessible to a few. The Bible was not yet printed in a language which could be generally read by these people; and written Bibles, or even portions of the scriptures, were too scarce and too costly to be possessed by many. They must have made good use of the means they possessed, and herein they may well shame us. How many there are who possess, not merely one or two Bibles, but, probably even ten or twelve copies of the scriptures may be found within their walls; yet they are actually less acquainted with the truths contained therein than these lollards, who, perhaps, had not one complete copy of the scriptures among them all.

The king (James IV. of Scotland) was inclined to favour the accused, among whom were some whom he personally esteemed.* Thus encouraged, they boldly argued with their accusers, and, at length, were allowed to return home, with an admonition to beware of new doctrines, and an injunction to be contented with what the church believed. This event stayed the hands of the persecutors.

* James the Fourth was an enemy to persecution. Of the manner in which the highest ecclesiastical dignities were bestowed in those days, we may form some idea from the fact that the archbishopric of St. Andrews, the primacy of the kingdom, was bestowed, in 1503, on the king's natural son, a boy of eight years of age. A letter is extant, in which the king thanks the pope for confirming this nomination.

Archbishop Blæcater died shortly after, while on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and the small number of the faithful appear to have enjoyed a respite for nearly thirty years.

M'Crie, in his life of Knox, has drawn an able sketch of the state of Scotland as to religion, just previous to the Reformation. The corruptions of the church of Rome had arrived at their greatest height in that land; and the ecclesiastics, by availing themselves of the doctrines of purgatory and indulgences, had acquired full half the wealth of the nation; this gave them power, and they exercised it without control.

The lives of the ecclesiastics were extremely dissolute, and their ignorance equally gross; even the prelates were unacquainted with the scriptures; and all the religious observances taught to the laity were confined to repeating the aves and credos, confessing to a priest, paying occasionally for a mass, and regularly settling their other exorbitant dues, going on pilgrimage, abstaining from flesh upon Fridays, with similar observances.

Such a system could only be supported by persecution: this was accordingly resorted to; and both secret cruelties and outward violence were practised whenever occasion required. This was popery, as it then prevailed in Great Britain and other countries, in many of which it remains nearly the same at the present day; but in our island a modified system is now held up to view. The roman catholics in the present day admit that their religion is unaltered, but would persuade us that the corruptions and cruelties recorded in history were incidental to those times, and not the result of its doctrines. But an attentive study of history will satisfy us as to the truth of the following observation of M'Crie: "It may be safely said that there is not one of the erroneous tenets or superstitious practices of popery, which was not either originally contrived, or artfully accommodated, to advance and support some practical abuse: to aggrandize the ecclesiastical order, secure them immunity from secular jurisdiction, sanctify their encroachments upon secular authority, vindicate their usurpations upon the consciences of men, cherish implicit obedience to the decisions of the church, and extinguish free inquiry and liberal science."

Then let us beware of listening to partial representations

History shows us what popery has been in our own island, and the accounts of travellers tell us what it is now in other countries.

The lollards of Kyle escaped from the designs of their enemies, as already related, and we do not find any particulars recorded, of sufferings endured by the witnesses for the truth, for more than twenty years. Yet they, doubtless, were subject to persecution, in a greater or less degree ; and, as the Reformation advanced in other countries, those who held similar sentiments became more and more objects of suspicion and hatred with the romish prelates, who had the chief government of Scotland during the minority of James V.

PATRICK HAMILTON is the next whose sufferings are recorded. Descended from the royal family, he attained to honours and promotions during his youth, being appointed abbot of Fern before the twenty-third year of his age. The vanities of this world did not prevent him from seeking " a better country, that is, a heavenly ;" and in pursuit of divine knowledge he went to Germany, where he became acquainted with Luther, Melancthon, and others of the reformers ; but especially with Francis Lambert, under whose instruction he, by the blessing of God, so profited, that he was brought to clear views of the gospel, as appears from his treatise on faith and works, which is entitled ' Patrick's Places.' The doctrines stated in this treatise he openly maintained in the university of Marpurg.

His book well deserves attention : a few extracts may interest the reader.

OF THE NATURE OF THE LAW AND OF THE GOSPEL.

The law showeth us our sin.

The gospel showeth us a remedy for it.

The law showeth us our condemnation.

The gospel showeth us our redemption.

The law is the word of ire.

The gospel is the word of grace.

The law is the word of despair.

The gospel is the word of comfort.

The law is the word of displeasure.

The gospel is the word of peace.

A DISPUTATION BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

The law saith, Pay thy debt.

The gospel saith, Christ hath paid it.

The law saith, Thou art a sinner; despair, and thou shalt be damned.

The gospel saith, Thy sins are forgiven thee; be of good comfort, for thou art saved.

The law saith, Make amends for thy sin.

The gospel saith, Christ hath made it for thee.

The law saith, The Father of heaven is wroth with thee.

The gospel saith, Christ hath pacified him with his blood.

The law saith, Where is thy righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction

The gospel saith, Christ is thy righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction.

The law saith, Thou art bound and obliged (in bondage) unto me, the devil, and hell.

The gospel saith, Christ hath delivered thee from them all.

OF THE FAITH OF CHRIST.

The faith of Christ is to believe in him; that is, to believe his word, and to believe that he will help thee in all thy need, and deliver thee from all evil. Thou wilt ask me, What word? I answer, The gospel. He that believeth in Christ shall be saved. He that believeth the Son hath everlasting life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life." "This I write unto you, that, believing in the name of the Son of God, ye may know that ye have eternal life." "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou believest; but happy are they that have not seen and yet believe in me." "All the prophets to him bear witness, that whosoever believeth in him shall have remission of their sins." "What must I do that I may be saved?" The apostle answereth, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "If thou acknowledge with thy mouth that Jesus is the Lord, and believe in thine heart that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved." "He that believeth not in Christ shall be condemned." "He that believeth not the Son shall never see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon

him." The Holy Ghost shall reprove the world of sin, "Because," saith Christ, "they believe not in me." They that believe in Jesus Christ are the sons of God. Ye are all the sons of God, because ye believe in Jesus Christ. He that believeth in Christ the Son of God, is safe, &c. &c.

It would be easy to lengthen these extracts, but there is only room for the conclusion :

"I condemn not good works, but I condemn the false trust in any works: for all the works that a man putteth confidence in, are therewith intoxicated, or empoisoned, and become evil. Wherefore do good works, but beware thou do them not to deserve any good through them; for if thou do, thou receivest the good, not as the gift of God, but as a debt to thee, and makest thyself equal with God, because thou wilt take nothing from him for nought. What! needeth he any thing of thine, who giveth all things, and is not the poorer? Therefore do nothing to him, but take of him: for he is a gentle Lord, and will give us all things that we need, more willingly than we take it of him. So that if we want any thing, let us blame ourselves. Press not, then, to the inheritance of heaven, through presumption of thy good works; for if thou dost, thou countest thyself holy and equal unto him, because thou wilt take nothing of him for nought, and so shalt thou fall as Lucifer fell from heaven, for his pride."

After some time, Hamilton returned to Scotland, and in public, as well as private, declared the truths set forth in the scriptures, and ably exposed the errors and superstitions of the church of Rome. His preaching produced a great effect upon the people, and alarmed the clergy. Archbishop Beaton invited him to St. Andrews, under the pretence of conferring respecting these doctrines, for which purpose a friar, named Alexander Campbell, had many conversations with Hamilton, and pretended to desire instruction; but his design was merely to ascertain the opinions of Hamilton, and to procure matter of accusation against him. Finding how much the opinions of the reformer were opposed to the errors of popery, the prelates resolved to proceed against him without delay, and having induced the king (then a youth) to proceed on a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Duthack, in Ross-shire, they availed themselves of the opportunity, seized Hamilton in his bed at midnight, and carried him to the castle.

The next day, February 28, 1528, he was brought before the bishops and clergy in the cathedral, and accused of holding the opinions of Luther respecting pilgrimages, purgatory, prayers to saints, intercession for the dead, &c. He did not deny holding these doctrines, but defended them with an ability which made his adversaries more determined upon his destruction; and being condemned as an obstinate heretic, he was ordered for immediate execution, and led to the stake which was prepared before the Old College.

The people were amazed at the sight, and supposed all this was only done to frighten the martyr, but they soon found the proceedings were real. At the place of execution, Hamilton gave some of his clothes to his servant, saying, "These will be of no use to me in the fire, but they may be of service to thee; this is the last advantage you can receive from me, except the example of my death, which I pray thee keep in mind; for, although it is bitter to the flesh and fearful before men, yet it is an entrance to eternal life, which none shall possess who denies Christ Jesus before this wicked generation."

They attempted to kindle the fire with gunpowder, which only made a momentary blaze, and scorched the martyr severely; but he continued unmoved, and the pile at length being kindled, he cried with a loud voice, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! How long shall darkness overwhelm this realm, and how long wilt thou suffer this tyranny of men?" Friar Campbell continued to torment him, saying, "Turn, thou heretic, call upon our lady," &c. As he persisted in so doing, Hamilton said, "Wicked man, thou knowest the contrary, and hast confessed the same to me. I summon thee to appear before the tribunal-seat of Christ Jesus." He then expired, after cruel sufferings. It is remarkable that Campbell died a few days afterwards in a frenzy of despair.

This execution made a considerable noise. The university of Louvain wrote to the university of St. Andrews, highly commending their proceedings; on that account acknowledging that the Scottish university was equal to their own, and exhorting them to continue in this course till the heretics were all destroyed, and especially to have "Inquisitors or espies of books containing that doctrine."

But the Romish clergy soon found that they had com-

mitted a great error in condemning Hamilton to the flames. People of all ranks were eager to inquire respecting the opinions for which he was burned; not a few were convinced of their truth, and embraced them. Alexander Seaton, confessor to the king, was among this number; and during the next Lent, he preached a course of sermons, in which he dwelt on the necessity of faith, repentance, and holiness, without mentioning pilgrimages, worship of saints, purgatory, and the other subjects then usually preached upon. For this he was suspected of heresy; but the archbishop dared not proceed openly against him without the king's consent, which he endeavoured to obtain. James was addicted to a dissolute course of life, for which Seaton reproved him; and finding the king impatient under his admonitions, guessed the reason of the change, and escaped to Berwick. He wrote from thence, offering to return, if he might have a fair trial; but receiving no answer, he proceeded to London, and was admitted into the family of the duke of Suffolk.

The effect of these proceedings was so manifest, that the adversaries of the truth being in consultation respecting the burning of other individuals, a gentleman, named John Lindsay, a by-stander, and familiar with the archbishop, said, "My lord, if ye burn any more, except ye follow my counsel, ye will utterly destroy yourselves. If ye will burn them, let them be burned in cellars, for the smoke of Mr. Patrick Hamilton hath infected as many as it blew upon!"

The kingdom of Scotland was at this time troubled with civil commotions, which in some degree, restrained the cruel proceedings of the prelates. Several, however, were put to death during the ten years following the death of Hamilton, and many others were compelled to fly to foreign countries. To attempt an accurate detail of all who suffered, is needless. Among them was HENRY FORREST, one of the inferior ecclesiastics, who, being suspected of heretical opinions, was imprisoned, and, after a time, a friar, named Laing, was appointed to hear his confession. It is well known that the church of Rome inculcates, that, on no account whatever, is a confessor to divulge what is told him in confession; and this is carried to such an extent, that it is stated that if a person reveals his intention of murdering another, the confessor must not warn that individual of his danger! There, however, appears to be

an exception with respect to heretics, or heretical opinions; certainly there was one in this case; for Forrest having confessed, depending upon secrecy, that he thought Hamilton to be a good man, and wrongfully put to death, he was condemned the same as if he had openly asserted such an opinion, and burned at the north side of the abbey church at St. Andrews! It is also said that he had possessed the New Testament in English.

Many were fined, imprisoned, and forced to recant; among them, a woman of Leith, who was brought into trouble, because, when in labour, instead of crying for help to the virgin Mary, as the midwife bade her, she cried, "Christ, help me, Christ, help me, in whose help I trust!"

NORMAN GOURLAY, and DAVID STRATTON were burned between Edinburgh and Leith, in August 1534, to strike awe into the inhabitants of the opposite coast of Fifeshire, who were generally suspected of heretical opinions. The accusation against the former was, that he said there was no such thing as purgatory, and that the pope was not a bishop, but Antichrist, and had no jurisdiction in Scotland. He was examined by the king, who would have allowed him to escape, but was prevented by the prelates, who affirmed that he had no power so to do. Stratton's principal offence was, that when the vicar came to take the tithe out of some fishing boats which belonged to him, he said the tithe ought to be taken where the stock grew; and casting the fishes into the sea, bade the vicar seek for them there.

James Beaton, archbishop of St. Andrews, died in 1539, and was succeeded by his nephew, David Beaton, a cool, deliberate, and cruel character, who had been long considered by the pope as a proper person to crush all heresies in Scotland, and he proceeded in this work with great vigour.

One of the first called before his tribunal, was sir John Borthwick, who was accused of holding the tenets which have been often stated in the preceding pages, as the opinions of the lollards and gospellers in England, and the reformers in Germany; and especially for having the New Testament, printed in English! Borthwick concealed himself, and succeeded in reaching England, but was condemned as an obstinate heretic, and sentenced to be burned; as he had escaped, his picture or effigy was burned in his stead!

Dean THOMAS FORREST, a canon of St. Columb, and vicar of Dollar, preached every Sunday from the gospel or epistles of the day. It was then a great novelty in Scotland for any man to preach, unless he were a friar; and Forrest was accused as an heretic, who showed the mysteries of the scriptures to the common people in English, to make the clergy detestable in the sight of the people. The bishop of Dunkeld sent for him, and thus addressed him:

“ My joy (beloved) dean Thomas, I am informed that you preach the epistle or the gospel every Sunday to your parishioners, and that you take not the best cow, nor the uppermost cloth from your parishioners, which is very prejudicial to other churchmen. Therefore, my joy, dean Thomas, I would you took your cow, and your uppermost cloth, as other churchmen do. Also, it is too much to preach every Sunday; for, in so doing, you may make the people think that we should preach likewise. It is enough for you, when you find any good epistle, or any good gospel, that setteth forth the liberty (privileges) of the holy church, to preach on that, and let the rest be!”

Forrest replied, “ That with respect to the cow and the cloth, himself and his parishioners were agreed; and as for preaching every Sunday, he could wish that his lordship did the like.”

“ Nay, nay, dean Thomas,” said my lord, “ let that be, for we are not ordained to preach.” “ Your lordship biddest me preach,” added Forrest, “ when I find any good epistle or good gospel; truly, my lord, I have read the New Testament and the Old, and all the epistles and gospels, and among them all I could never find an evil epistle, or an evil gospel; but if your lordship will show me one that is evil, I will omit it.”

The bishop answered, “ I thank God that I never knew what the Old and New Testament was! I wül know nothing but my portass and my pontifical!* Go your way, and let alone these fantasies, or you will repent it.” Forrest answered, “ I trust my cause is just in the presence of God, and therefore I am not anxious as to consequences.” He was not forgotten; but was soon afterwards brought before cardinal Beaton, condemned, and

* Thousands of Roman catholic priests, at the present day, never saw a complete copy of the holy scriptures, and are unacquainted with them, except the extracts contained in their breviaries or service books.

burned upon the Castle Hill at Edinburgh, with two friars, named KELOW and BEVARAGE; SYMPSON, a priest of Stirling, and FOSTER, a gentleman of the same place.

Two others, named RUSSEL and KENNEDY, suffered about the same time, by the sentence of the archbishop of Glasgow. The latter was only eighteen years of age; when he saw the preparations for the cruel death he was to undergo, he would have recanted, but these persecutors refused to allow him to do so. In deep trouble, he sought for strength where it was to be found, and it was given him, so that he was enabled to exclaim: "O eternal God! how wonderful is that love and mercy which thou barest to mankind, and to me the most miserable wretch above all others. For even now, when I would have denied thee, and thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, my only Saviour, and so have cast myself into everlasting damnation, thou, by thine own hand, hast pulled me from the very bottom of hell, and made me to feel that heavenly comfort which takes from me that ungodly fear wherewith before I was oppressed. Now I defy death; do what ye please; I praise my God I am ready."

The Romish clergy who were present disputed with Russel; but when he perceived that they would only answer his reasonings with mockery and revilings, he exclaimed, "This is your hour and the power of darkness; now you sit as judges, and we stand wrongfully condemned: but the day cometh which will show our innocence, and you shall see your own blindness, to your everlasting confusion; go forward, and fulfil the measure of your iniquity." The archbishop hearing this, said that he thought these executions did more harm than good, and would have spared them; but the clergy threatened to report him to the cardinal if he allowed them to escape. He then ordered the execution to proceed. Russel encouraged his companion, saying, "Brother, fear not; more mighty is He that is in us than he that is in the world. The pain we shall suffer will be short and light; but our joy and consolation shall never end. Let us strive to enter in unto our Master and Saviour, by the same strait way that he hath taken before us. Death cannot destroy us; for it is destroyed already by Him for whose sake we suffer." They both suffered with constancy and courage.

These scenes of cruelty were as nothing when compared

with what was intended to follow. The king gave liberty to Beaton to proceed with greater activity; and a list of three hundred and sixty persons, who were to be tried for heresy, including many of the first nobility and gentry of the land, was drawn out; among them was the earl of Arran, the presumptive heir to the crown.

Beaton's ambitious politics, however, had involved the nation in a war with England, the events of which were disastrous, and retarded these bloody projects; at length the king sunk under his troubles and disappointments, and died just after his queen had given birth to a princess, afterwards Mary queen of Scots.

The cardinal endeavoured, by the most nefarious proceedings, to obtain the chief power; but his designs were defeated, and the earl of Arran was appointed regent. Under this prince the romanists were restrained, and after long discussion a law was passed, "That it should be lawful to every man to read the translation of the Old and New Testament." This was a great and unexpected blessing to the followers of the truth. The Bible or Testament became common in almost every house, the owner of which could afford to purchase it; and many even pretended a regard for the scriptures which they did not feel, and boasted that they had studied it secretly for many years, in order to obtain favour from the regent. This was overruled for good, and the doctrines of the gospel made great progress in the land. The calm, however, was of short duration. The earl of Arran was a weak and unsteady character; cardinal Beaton regained the ascendancy, and the regent consented to his measures. The increase of heresy was complained of, and in January, 1544, Beaton, Arran, and others, came to Perth, and proceeded to search for heretics.

ROBERT LAMBE, WILLIAM ANDERSON, and two others, were accused; but the only fact brought home to them, was their having eaten a goose on a fast day, being All-hallow-eve; for this they were condemned as heretics, and executed.

The wife of a burghess of Perth, one of these sufferers, was accused, because, in child-bed, she was not accustomed to call upon the virgin Mary, but only upon God, for Jesus Christ's sake; for this, and for eating the goose, she was condemned to suffer death. She desired to die with her husband, but was not permitted. At the place of execution

she exhorted him to persevere, and suffer patiently for Christ's sake; and spoke thus, "Husband, rejoice, for we have lived together many joyful days; but this day, in which we must die, ought to be most joyful to us both, because we must have joy for ever; therefore I will not bid you good night, for we shall suddenly meet with joy in the kingdom of heaven." She was then taken to the waterside to be drowned; and although she had a child sucking at her breast, the unmerciful hearts of the persecutors continued unmoved. The child was taken from her, and given to a nurse; she then commended her children to the care of her neighbours, and was drowned.

It is unnecessary to add any observations upon this scene of horror! Dreadful as it is, many similar atrocities are recorded in the annals of popery! Let it be remembered, that the particulars just related are confirmed by public records; and an account of them was printed within twenty years of their occurrence. The cardinal proceeded in his career of cruelty, and soon afterwards added another martyr to the list of those who had gone before.

GEORGE WISHART was descended from a respectable family, and early in life was remarkable for his learning. About the year 1540, he was compelled to leave Scotland by the bishop of Brechin, for teaching the Greek Testament to some persons in the town of Montrose, and he escaped to Germany; after which he found refuge at Ben'et's college, in Cambridge. A scholar named Tylney has left a brief and interesting account of Wishart, while residing in that university. After describing the plainness of his dress, and the frequent giving his apparel to the poor, he continues thus: "He was a man modest, temperate, fearing God, hating covetousness, for his charity had never end; he forbore one meal in three, and one day in four, for the most part. He lay hard, upon a puff of straw and coarse new canvas sheets, which when he changed, he gave away. He loved me tenderly, and I him, for my age, as effectually. O that the Lord had left him to me, his poor boy, that he might have finished that he had begun."*

* Dr. Lever, master of St. John's college, Cambridge, gave a description of the mode of life of these pious students, about this period. He said, they usually rose between four and five, and employed themselves in prayer and reading of the scriptures together, till six. They pursued their studies till ten, at which time they went to dinner, and

In the year 1544, Wishart returned to Scotland. His fervent piety, courage, and zeal for the truth, were joined to great meekness, patience, and prudence. After having spent some time with his family, he began to preach very boldly against the corruptions of the church of Rome, and the vices of the clergy. He was attended by crowds, and made considerable impression wherever he went; and, what is of most importance, he was the means of bringing many to the knowledge of the truth.

The clergy, and especially cardinal Beaton, were greatly enraged at Wishart, and determined to put him to death; they at first sought to effect their purpose by assassination, "secretly, for fear of the people." About this time he visited Dundee, where many were then ill of the plague. The inhabitants rejoiced at his coming, and he preached, sometimes in the church and sometimes from the top of the east gate, those of the inhabitants who were well, standing on one side of the gate, while the sick and infected remained on the other. Here Wishart continued for some time, visiting the sick, and attending to their wants both of soul and body. While thus engaged, a friar, named Weighton, undertook to kill him; and knowing it was his custom, after preaching, to remain in the pulpit till the church was empty, he stood at the bottom of the stairs, holding a dagger under his friar's gown. Wishart, who was remarkably quick-sighted, as he came down from the pulpit observed the friar's countenance, and his hand holding something under his gown. Suspecting his design, he sprang forward, and wrenched the dagger from him, saying, "My friend, what would you do?" The noise of this scuffle alarmed some persons who were near the door; they rushed into the church, and would have torn the friar to pieces, had not Wishart taken him in his arms, and nobly exclaimed, "Whoever injures him, shall injure me; he has done me no hurt, but good, for he has shown us what we have to fear; and in time to come we will watch better."

He next visited Montrose; while there, the cardinal were content "with a penny piece of beef among four, having a little pottage made of the broth, with salt and oatmeal, with nothing else." After this slender dinner, they studied, or instructed their companions till five, when they had a supper, "not much better than their dinner." They then studied till nine or ten, "and being without fire, walk or run up and down half an hour, to get their feet warm, when they go to bed."

caused a forged letter to be sent him, which was written in the name of his most intimate friend, the laird of Kinneer, informing him that he had been taken suddenly ill, and desiring to see him without loss of time.

The boy who carried the letter brought a horse, and Wishart set out, accompanied by a few friends. He had not gone far, when he stopped and turned back, saying, 'I will not go, I am forbidden of God. I feel assured there is treachery; go to yonder place, and examine it.' They went, and discovered about sixty armed men lying in wait about a mile and a half from the town, having been placed there by the cardinal to assassinate him. Wishart being told of this, replied, "I know that I shall end my life by the hands of that blood-thirsty man, but it will not be in this manner."

He next proceeded towards Edinburgh, where he was called to a public discussion with the papists. On the road he stopped at Invergowrie. Two of his friends heard him rise during the night, and following him into a yard, they heard him earnestly engage in prayer for above an hour. The next morning they asked why he had done so? After much entreaty, he told them that he felt assured his end was near, and called upon God to support him, so that he might not shrink when the trial was at the hottest.

When Wishart arrived in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, his friends from the west country failed to meet him, according to their appointment. He continued for some time preaching at different towns in the vicinity. After some days, finding that it was probable his enemies would soon take him, he sent away Knox, who was his companion, telling him, "One is sufficient for one sacrifice." Thus the valuable life of that reformer was saved.

That same night Wishart was apprehended at Ormeston, by earl Bothwell, who solemnly promised to protect him, and either procure his complete freedom from the power of the papists, or to restore him to the friends at whose house he surrendered himself.

The earl did not long keep his promise; the cardinal gave him a large sum of money, and the queen dowager promised him her favour, and in a few days Wishart was delivered to his enemies.

From Edinburgh they took him to St. Andrews, where he was confined during the month of February, when

preparation for his trial was made; and, on this occasion, the cardinal and the archbishop of Glasgow, who had been at variance for some time past, were reconciled.

On the 1st of February, 1545, Wishart was brought forth, and guarded by a band of soldiers to the church, where the sub-prior of the abbey preached before the cardinal on the parable of the tares, Matt. xiii. 24, &c., pointing out the necessity of putting down heresy. The sermon being concluded, Wishart was put into the pulpit, and a long list of accusations against him was read. The martyr then kneeled down, and after commending himself in prayer to God, stood up, and requested to be permitted to declare the doctrines he held, and show how they agreed with the word of God, as many blasphemous opinions had been falsely imputed to him. The prelates refused to permit this; and, with their followers, loaded him with opprobrious names. They would have proceeded directly to pass sentence upon him; but the cardinal was persuaded to have the articles of accusation once more read: this was done; but Wishart was not allowed to reply, being always interrupted as soon as he had said a few words. The first accusation will show the spirit in which these articles were drawn up.

Article 1. "Thou false heretic, runagate, traitor, and thief, deceiver of the people, despisest the church, and in like case contemnest my lord governor's authority. And this we know of surety, that when thou preachedst in Dundee, and wast charged by my lord governor's authority to desist, nevertheless thou wouldest not obey, but persevered in the same; and therefore the bishop of Brechin cursed thee, and delivered thee into the devil's hand, and gave thee then commandment that thou shouldest preach no more, yet notwithstanding thou didst continue obstinately."

One more specimen will suffice. After referring to various doctrines of the church of Rome, the 11th article states, "Thou false heretic sayest, It is as lawful to eat flesh upon Friday as on Sunday?" Wishart replied, "I have read, in the epistle of St. Paul, that whosoever is clean, unto him all things are clean; on the contrary, to the filthy, all things are unclean. A faithful man, clean and holy, sanctifieth by the word the creature of God; but the creature maketh no man acceptable unto God; so that a creature cannot sanctify any impure and unfaithful man; but to the faithful man all things are sanctified by prayer

and the word of God." Then the prelates and their party exclaimed, "What need we any witness against him? hath he not here openly spoken blasphemy?"

In answer to other articles, Wishart stated that he had exhorted all men to follow Christ, who is our only mediator, and maketh intercession for us to God his Father. He called upon his accusers to produce any text, proving there was such a place as purgatory. His reasonings were of no avail, and sentence was passed upon him. The cardinal ordered the fire to be prepared, and sent Wishart back to the castle till it was ready. Two grey friars then came to hear his confession; he replied, he would make no confession; but desired to see the sub-prior who had preached. After conferring with Wishart, the sub-prior burst into tears, and asked if he would receive the communion? Wishart answered, he would most willingly, if he might receive it in both kinds. The sub-prior then went to the cardinal, and, after declaring that Wishart was an innocent man, asked whether they would suffer him to receive the communion, which was refused.

The captain of the castle, with some friends, then came to Wishart, and asked if he would breakfast with them; he assented; and all being ready, they sat down. During the meal, he conversed with them concerning the Lord's supper, his sufferings, and death for us; and exhorted them to love and good works.

Then came two executioners. After fastening bags of powder about him, all being ready, they bound his hands, and led him forth to the stake, which was fixed at the west gate of the castle, near the priory. The windows of the castle, opposite the place of execution, were adorned with rich hangings and cushions. Here the cardinal and the other prelates sat, ready to feast their eyes with the sufferings of the martyr, while the cannon of the castle was made ready, and the gunners stood with lighted matches, lest the people should attempt to rescue him. As he came forth, the two grey friars addressed him, saying, "Mr. George, pray to our lady, that she may be a mediatrix for you to her son."* He answered meekly, "Cease, tempt me not.

* The following prayer is from "The Garden of the Soul," London, 1824; a Romish book of devotion, set forth by authority, and generally used by Roman catholics:—

"Remember, O most holy virgin Mary! that no one ever had recourse to your protection, implored your help, or sought your media-

I entreat you ;” and was led to the pile, where he kneeled and thrice said, “ O thou Saviour of the world, have mercy on me. Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into thy holy hands.” He then exhorted the people to love the word of God, and not to forget the things which he, through the grace of God, had endeavoured to teach them ; adding, that his doctrine was not a fable devised of men ; for, “ if I had taught men’s doctrine, I had gotten greater thanks by men ; but for the word’s sake, and the true gospel which was given to me by the grace of God, I suffer this day by men ; not sorrowfully, but with a glad heart and mind. For this cause was I sent, that I should suffer this fire for Christ’s sake. Consider, and behold my visage ; ye shall not see me change my colour ; this grim fire I fear not ; and if any persecution come unto you for the word’s sake, fear not them that slay the body, but have no power to slay the soul.” He then prayed for his accusers. The executioner asked his forgiveness, which he readily gave, and soon afterwards the fire was kindled. The captain of the castle coming near, bade him be of good courage, and beg forgiveness of his sins from God. Wishart replied, “ This fire torments my body, but no wise abates my spirit.” Knox adds, that he then turned towards the cardinal, and said, “ He who in such state, from that high place, feedeth his eyes with my torments, within a few days shall be hanged out at the same window with as much ignominy as he now leaneth there with pride.” The executioner then drew the cord and strangled him, and his body was quickly consumed to ashes.

By this bold and cruel measure, the cardinal thought that he had gained a decisive victory over heresy, and that he should be able entirely to repress it. But the result was very different. Men of all ranks and opinions were distention, without obtaining relief. Confiding, therefore, in your goodness, behold me a penitent sinner, sighing out my sins before you, beseeching you to adopt me for your son, and to take upon you the care of my eternal salvation. Despise not, O mother of Jesus, the petition of your humble client, but hear and grant my prayer.” Another prayer in the same service is as follows:—“ Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord God, that we thy servants may be blessed with continual health of soul and body ; and that by the glorious intercession of blessed Mary, ever virgin, we may both be delivered from present sorrows, and brought to eternal joys, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

These prayers are faithfully and entirely transcribed ; any comment is unnecessary.

gusted at these proceedings ; and even many who were indifferent as to the truths of the gospel, felt that their lives and property were not secure in such a state of affairs. A short time after the death of Wishart, the cardinal was surprised in his castle by a few individuals, actuated by the feelings just mentioned, and having been put to death, his body was shown to the people from the walls of the castle where he sat to behold the burning of Wishart : but details of this nature are best left to the general historian.

We must here briefly advert to the early history of an eminent character just noticed, which belongs to the period under our consideration.

JOHN KNOX was born at Haddington, or at Gifford, a neighbouring village, in Scotland, in 1505. His parents were respectable, and gave their son a liberal education. He afterwards studied at the university of St. Andrews, where he made considerable progress in a short period, under the tuition of John Major, an able divine, who had imbibed principles opposed to the lofty pretensions of the papacy. Knox was ordained a priest in the Romish church at an age earlier than usual, and taught philosophy as a lecturer in the university. While thus employed, he read the writings of several of the fathers, particularly Augustine and Jerome ; by them he was directed to the study of the scriptures, and by degrees was emancipated from the trammels of scholastic divinity. As he publicly advocated scriptural sentiments, he soon became an object of suspicion to the bigoted romanists, and having quitted St. Andrews, sentence was publicly passed against him as a heretic.

Knox was chiefly indebted to Wishart for instruction in the doctrines of truth. At that period the reformers were openly persecuted, and Knox was soon sought for. After concealing himself for some time, early in 1547 he took refuge in the castle of St. Andrews, then held by the protestants, who had lately put to death the romish cardinal Beaton, by whom Wishart and others had been burned.

Here Knox was earnestly called to exercise the office of the ministry, which he undertook with much reluctance, but discharged with much energy and faithfulness.

On the last day of July, 1547, the castle of St. Andrews was surrendered to the French forces then in Scotland. The besiegers, however, engaged that the lives of all persons in the castle should be spared ; also that they should

be carried to France, and afterwards be conveyed to any other country they might prefer. On their arrival in France, the treaty was broken. At the instigation of the pope and the Romish clergy of Scotland, they were detained as prisoners. Knox, with others, was sent to the galleys, kept in chains, and treated with much severity.

The galleys cruised off the coast of Scotland during the summer of 1548, and Knox's health suffered much, but while lying in a fever, he still expressed his confidence that God would deliver them. Balfour, a fellow prisoner, one day pointed out the coast between Dundee and St. Andrew's, asking if he knew it. Knox replied, "Yes, I know it well, I see the steeple of that place where God first opened my mouth in public to his glory; and I am fully persuaded, how weak soever I now appear, that I shall not depart this life, till my tongue shall glorify his name in the same place." Such an event then appeared impossible, but some years after it was literally fulfilled.

During this confinement his mind suffered much as well as his body, but he found relief in earnest supplication, and expressed his feelings at that period, in his *Treatise on Prayer*. He also found an opportunity to write a preface to Baluave's *Treatise on Justification*, which work he divided into chapters, and added notes. This valuable specimen of the doctrine of the Scottish protestants is printed in "*The British Reformers*." In 1549 Knox was liberated, and proceeded to England.

Having now brought down the particulars respecting Scotland to the same period as comprised in the preceding pages respecting England, this brief sketch may be closed by remarking, that, from this time, the reformation in Scotland proceeded as a national measure. Violence, which cannot be defended, was shown on both sides: but when we consider the cruel sufferings endured by those who opposed the church of Rome, we cannot wonder at the destruction of the edifices of romanism, and surely we shall not approve the sentiments adopted by many at the present day. They lament over ruined buildings, and broken shrines, in terms which lead us to conclude that they would welcome back the superstitions of popery, with all its idolatry, persecutions, and horrors, could they but behold the objects they so fondly regard restored to their former splendour. Such are not the feelings of the christian; he laments to behold proofs of the ungoverned pas-

sions of men, but he sees that the wrath of men has been overruled to the glory of God; and while he considers the manner in which the truths of the gospel are at the present day excluded from those countries where romanism reigns predominant, he desires to be thankful that his lot has been cast in a better land, and blesses God for what has been effected by means of **THE REFORMATION**.

Here we may close these details; and surely we cannot do so without feelings of gratitude to the **MOST HIGH**, for the blessings we now enjoy, when we compare them with the sufferings of our ancestors. Our lot is cast in other times; but let us never forget that the mystical Babylon is not yet fallen. It still desires to rule the consciences of men, and to govern their minds with iron sway.

And shall we then consider the history of our forefathers, and their sufferings under this oppression, as of no moment, and cast it aside, "as a tale that is told?" Let us observe what have been clearly shown to be, the signs of a **CORRUPT CHURCH**. That it opposes sense and reason—that it enjoins things contrary to scripture—that it prescribes and practises the worship of created beings—that it pretends to the power of working miracles in support of its doctrines—that its tenets encourage its members to sin—that it is actuated by a cruel and persecuting spirit—and lastly, that it **FORBIDS THE FREE USE OF THE SCRIPTURES**.* Reader! have not the facts recorded in these pages shown that all these marks are applicable to the church of Rome, that she acted under their influence in former times in our own country, and that similar principles are recognised by her at the present day? Let us not refuse to listen to the voice of our ancestors, speaking to us in the records they have handed down; and surely, as the accurate Strype observes, "We of this kingdom may gather hence abundant cause to thank God that hath cast our lot in these days, when, after so many years' pains and struggles, so much blood and opposition—gross ignorance of religion, superstition and idolatry are removed; and the saving knowledge of God and his word, and the free profession of the gospel in its purity, is brought unto us. And herein we may observe, how providentially things fell out by little and little, by unseen causes, and sometimes by unmeet men: to bring to pass our **REFORMATION**."

* See Skelton's Works, ed. 1824, vol. i. p. 63.

