SELECT WORKS

OF

JOHN BALE, D.D.

BISHOP OF OSSORY.

CONTAINING

THE EXAMINATIONS

OF

LORD COBHAM, WILLIAM THORPE, AND ANNE ASKEWE,

AND THE

IMAGE OF BOTH CHURCHES.

EDITED FOR

The Parker Society,

BY THE

REV. HENRY CHRISTMAS, M.A. F.R.S. F.S.A.

LIBRARIAN AND SECRETARY OF SION COLLEGE.

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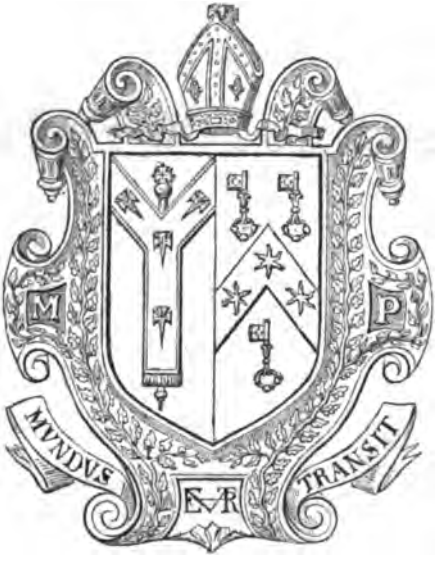

For the Publication of the Works of the Fathers and Early Writers of the Reformed English Church.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

JOHN Bale, one of the most distinguished among the minor lights of the Reformation, was born at the little village of Cove, near Dunwich in Suffolk, on the 21st of November, 1495. His parents appear to have been respectable in character, but in humble circumstances; and it is not a little to their honour that they found means to send their son, first to a Carmelite convent in Norwich for the purposes of study, and afterwards to Jesus College, Cambridge.

Bale was in his youth attached to literature, and his works are very voluminous: indeed the catalogue of them extends to no less than eighty-five separate productions, many of which were published under assumed names. During the earlier period of his residence in Cambridge, he was, as many of the reformers had been before him, and others were after him, a strenuous opponent of "the new learning;" and some of his works were thought to give evidence that at a later period he had not entirely forgotten his old bias: in proof of which it is alleged, on his own authority, that having translated the tragedy of "Pammachius," which was acted at Christ's College, in 1544, it was subsequently laid before the Privy Council as a satire on the Reformation.

There appears however no ground for the imputation. Violent in his temper, and uncompromising in his language, Bale, from the time that he embraced the tenets of the reformers, never ceased his attacks upon the Roman church; and there is not one of his writings that does not bear more or less directly on the religious abuses of his time.

The immediate cause of his own conversion to the reformed faith is stated by himself to have been the instructions he received from Lord Wentworth. His observations are as follows: "I wandered in utter ignorance, and blindness of

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mind, both at Norwich and Cambridge, having no tutor nor patron, till, the word of God shining forth, the churches of God began to return to the fountain of true divinity; in which bright rising of the new Jerusalem, being not called by any monk or priest, but seriously stirred up by the illustrious the lord Wentworth, as by that centurion who declared Christ to be the Son of God, I presently saw and acknowledged my own deformity, and immediately, through the divine goodness, I was removed from a barren mountain to the flowing and fertile valley of the gospel, where I found all things built not on the sand, but on a solid rock. Hence I made haste to deface the mark of wicked antichrist, and entirely threw off his yoke from me, that I might be partaker of the lot and liberty of the sons of God[1]."

Bale had applied himself to the study of the civil law, and declined the degree of doctor in the faculty, in the year 1529. When he embraced the doctrines of the reformers, he cast aside his monastic habit, renounced the vows which he had taken upon his admission to orders, and shortly afterwards entered into the state of marriage. Of his wife little is known save her name, Dorothy, and the fact that the union was a long and happy one.

Great blame has been cast upon Bale on account of this step, and many have insinuated that his affection for this lady was one of the chief causes which led him to desert the Roman church. Bishop Nicholson says, speaking of his conversion, "his wife Dorothy seems to have had a great hand in that happy work:" but it is scarcely consistent for Protestants to look otherwise than with gratitude on those who broke the bands of a tyranny so nefarious, and vindicated the Christian liberty both of themselves and their brethren.

He had to contend first against Lee, archbishop of York, and next against Stokesley, bishop of London; nor would he have escaped punishment for his opinions, had he not obtained

[1] Vocacyon of John Bale, p. 14.

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the patronage of Cromwell, then earl of Essex, who discerning his talents, and finding his views coinciding with his own, took him under his protection, and defended him successfully against his enemies. It is said that the notice of that distinguished statesman was first attracted to Bale by his dramatic productions, which were numerous. Two of these, viz. *The Comedy of John the Baptist*, and *The Tragedy of God's Promises to Men*, were written in 1538, and acted many years afterwards by youths at the market-cross of Kilkenny, on a Sunday afternoon, during the time that Bale held the bishoprick of Ossory. Another, called *The Three Laws, Nature, Moses, and Christ*, became so popular as to be reprinted in 1562, by Colwell. He mentions also among his own works a book of hymns for the church, and a book of jests and tales.

The best known of his lighter productions is his play of *King Johan*, which was republished in 1838 by the Camden Society. It is but partially an historical drama, its great object being to characterise the contest between the papists and the reformers in the reign of Henry VIII., under the figure of the great struggle which took place in that of John.

The fall and death of Cromwell in 1540 changed the position and prospects of Bale; and, feeling that he could no longer be safe in England, he withdrew to Germany with his family [1], and there remained until the accession of Edward VI. in 1547 gave a new turn to public affairs, and raised once more the hopes of the reforming party.

His first reward was the rectory of Bishopstoke in Hampshire, to which he was collated very soon after his return. He now proceeded to the degree of Doctor in Divinity, and in 1551 was promoted to the vicarage of Swaffham in Norfolk. He does not appear, however, to have resided on his new benefice; for in the next year, when he was appointed to the bishoprick of Ossory, we find him still in Hampshire. He had enemies, it would seem, at the court of the new king; for it

[1] See p. 494.

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appears, from the account which he gives of his meeting with Edward VI. at Southampton, that he had been represented to that prince as "dead and buried." "The king having information that I was there in the street, he marvelled thereat, forsomuch as it had been told him a little before that I was both dead and buried. With that his grace came to the window, and earnestly beheld me a poor weak creature, as though he had upon me, so simple a subject, an earnest regard, or rather a very fatherly care[1]." The result of this interview was, that the bishoprick of Ossory was not so much offered to, as urged upon Bale; and he, though now advancing in years, surrounded by a growing and attached family, well provided for in England, and situated in a very pleasant part of the country, felt it his duty to forego his present advantages, and enter upon a new and most arduous sphere of duty. He might perhaps have had some misgivings as to his fitness for the post proposed: certain it is, that he was for a long time unwilling to accept the dignity, nor was it without many entreaties both from the king and the archbishop that he consented.

His entry upon his office was marked by dispute. He was required by the Irish ecclesiastics to submit to be consecrated according to the Romish ritual, on the ground that the reformed ordinal had not received the sanction of the Irish parliament. This he very properly refused, alleging that, as the English and Irish churches were under one temporal head, the king, they ought to be governed by the same laws. His arguments were successful: the ordaining bishops consulted the chancellor, and Bale was consecrated according to the reformed ritual by the archbishop of Dublin, in the cathedral of that city, on Feb. 2, 1553.

The new bishop acted with great zeal and earnestness of purpose, so much so as to give great offence both to the clergy and laity of his diocese, among whom the Reformation was by no means popular: tumults arose and multiplied to so

[1] Vocacyon of John Bale, p. 27.

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great an extent, that Bale found not only his peace, but his life was in danger. In his "Vocacyon of John Bale to the Byshopperycke of Ossorie," he gives a very interesting and graphic account of the persecutions he endured; and if we are sometimes compelled to admit the want of prudence which the bishop displayed, we cannot but honour his uniform energy and diligence. Worn out, however, by his unsuccessful labours, and despairing of effecting any permanent benefit among those now encouraged in their opposition by the death of Edward VI., the suppression of the party which supported Lady Jane Grey, and the avowed favour of the new Queen, Mary, Bale privately retired from his diocese, and took refuge in Dublin.

From this city he escaped on Michaelmas-day, 1553, for the purpose of going to Holland; but the ship in which he embarked was taken by pirates, and he himself sold as a slave. After many vicissitudes he found a quiet abode at Basle in Switzerland, where he remained till the year 1559, when a second time he returned from his exile, with his constitution shattered and his energies decayed.

He evinced no desire to enter again on the possession of his episcopal see, but spent his few remaining years at Canterbury, in the cathedral of which city he was presented to a prebendal stall, and where he was buried. His death took place in the year 1563.

Bishop Bale occupied such a position in connection with the history of the Reformation, that it was in a manner necessary for the Parker Society, in pursuance of its plan, to republish some of his numerous works: but there are others of them, it must be acknowledged, which could not with propriety be presented to the public; and the re-printing of the present portion of them must not be considered as indicating an approval of all he either said or did.

An entire catalogue of his works would occupy more space than can be allotted here. In addition to the accounts

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of Lord Cobham's Examination, and those of Thorpe and Askewe, which are included in the present volume, together with the Commentary on the Apocalypse, published under the title of "The Image of Both Churches," Bale was the author of

"Scriptorum Illustrium Majoris Britanniæ, &c. Catalogus &c. &c. et IX. centurias continens."

This is his most important work.

He wrote also an account of the monasteries as they existed in England at the time of the dissolution: it is entitled "Acts of English Votaries."

"The Pageant of Popes." This work is translated from the Latin of Bale by John Studley. London, 1574, 4to.

A list of his works, with the commencing words of many of them, will be found in Bishop Tanner's "Bibliotheca Brittannico-Hibernica."

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CHRONICLE

OF

THE EXAMINATION AND DEATH

OF

LORD COBHAM.

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A brefe Chronycle concerning the examinacion and death of the Blessed martir of Christ, Sir John Oldecastell the Lord Cobham, collected together by Johan Bale.

Sir. Johan. Oldcastel. ỹ. worthy Lord. Cobham. and. moste. valyaunt.

champyon. of. JESV. Christe.

suffred. death. at. London. Anno. 1418.

In the latter time shall many be chosen, proued, and puryfyed by fyre yet shall the vngodly lyue wickedly styll, and haue no vnderstanding. Daniel. xij.

[*On the reverse page:*]

IMPRINTED

at London, by Anthony Scoloker, And Wyllyā Seres dwelling wythout Aldersgate.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

[The reign which preceded Sir John Oldcastle's troubles is generally supposed to have first introduced into England the custom of burning for heresy. And Willian Sautre, a Lollard, is reckoned the first instance of the infliction of that punishment, A. D. 1401—2. Fox expressly says so: and he is followed herein by bishop Burnet and Mr Collier. But the latter of these had forgot what himself had told us under Hen. III. of a deacon, that, apostatizing to Judaism, was first degraded at a council at Oxford, A. D. 1222, and afterwards sentenced to the stake by the secular power. And there is good evidence of a more early example than even this. A chronicle of London mentions one of the Albigenses burnt A. D. 1210. And Camden, probably, alludes to this, when he says, "*ex quo regnante Joanne Christiani in Christianos apud nos flammis sævire cœperunt.*"

Vol. I. p. 498. Ed. 1640. Vol. II. p. 454. Ex Chron. Wikes, p. 39.

Bale de Script. Brit. Cent. III. cap. lxv. in Append. In Apparat. ad Elis.

It is, however, agreed on all hands, that this severe method of proceeding was brought into England much later than into other countries. This bishop Burnet seems to attribute wholly to the resolution of the people, when he tells us, That England, i. e. the people of England, (for he does not speak of the encroachments of the pope,) was not so tame as to bear the severity of those laws which were settled and put in execution in other kingdoms. He might with as much truth and honour to the nation have imputed it to the clemency of our princes, who were unwilling to exercise such a tyranny over their subjects. So Hoveden, without any refined reasoning: "*Publicani comburebantur in pluribus locis per regnum Franciæ, quod rex Angliæ nullo modo permisit in terra sua, licet ibi essent perplurimi.*"

A.D. 1182. fol. 352. B.

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Sir John Oldcastle was the first nobleman who suffered for the sake of religion: not noble by birth, but by his marriage with the lady Cobham; upon whose account he had the honour of summons to parliament 11, 12, 14 Hen. IV. and 1 Hen. V. See Dugdale's Baronage.

Bale tells us, that at the parliament at Leicester 2 Hen. V. it was enacted, that the Lollards should be hanged for treason, and burnt for heresy; and since Sir John was one of that number, he suffered in both respects. But in the act, as Fox has printed it, we find no mention of this double punishment for Lollardism. The goods indeed of those that were convicted of it were to be forfeited; but that, as Collier has observed against Fuller, does not prove that the Law condemned them as traitors. Besides, Sir John Oldcastle was not only convicted of heresy, but indicted for treason, before this act was thought of, and was at last condemned upon his first indictment. Rapin says[1], it is plain that Lord Cobham did not suffer for treason because he was burnt. By the same way of arguing it might be proved, he did not suffer for heresy because he was hanged.]

[1 sub A. D. 1416.]

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A BRIEF CHRONICLE

CONCERNING THE

EXAMINATION AND DEATH

OF THE

BLESSED MARTYR OF CHRIST,

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE,

THE LORD COBHAM.

COLLECTED TOGETHER

BY JOHN BALE,

OUT OF THE BOOKS AND WRITINGS OF THOSE POPISH PRELATES WHICH WERE PRESENT BOTH AT HIS CONDEMNATION AND JUDGMENT.

THE PREFACE.

In the profane histories of old, orators and poets, both Greeks and Latins, they are much commended and thought worthy of eternal memory, which have either died for their natural country, or dangered their lives for a commonwealth: as we read of Codrus that was king of Athens, of Quintus Curtius the Roman, of Anchurus the Phrygian, Ulysses, Hermas, Theseus, Mencœtius, Scipio Africanus, Mutius Scævola, Valerius Cocles, the two brethren of Carthage, which were both called Philænus, and the three noble Decians, with other divers. In the sacred scriptures of the bible hath Moses, Josue, Gideon, Jepthe, Deborah, Judith, David, Elias, Josias, Zorobabel, Mattathias, Eleazarus, and the Maccabees, their just praises for their mighty zeal and manifold enterprises concerning the children of Israel. Among the papists also (which are a most prodigious kind of men) are they most highly advanced by lying signs, false miracles, erroneous writings, shrines, relics, lights, tabernacles, altars, censings, songs, and holy-days, which have been slain for the liberties, privileges, authority, honour, riches, and proud maintenance of their holy whorish church: as were Antidius, Bonifacius, Benno, Thomas a Becket, John the cardinal, Petrus de Cas-

Plutarch. Propert. Cicero. Catulius. Horatius. Lucanus. Statius.

Exod. xiv. Eccius. xlvi. Judg. xi. 1 Sam. xvii. 2 Mac. vi.

Sigebertus Gemblacensis.

Petrus Equilinus.

Wicelius. Vincentius. Leander Volaterranus.

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Æneas. Joan. Ec.

tronovo, Peter of Milan, Paganus of Bergom, Stanislaus of Cracovia, Steven Collier of Tholouse, Bonaventure of Padua, Julianus the cardinal of Saint Angel; and in our time John Fisher, Thomas More, Friar Forest, Reynolds, and the Charter-house monks which suffered here in England, with an infinite number more. What is then to be thought of those godly and valiant warriors, which have not spared to bestow their most dear lives for the verity of Jesus Christ against the malignant muster of that execrable antichrist of Rome, the devil's own vicar? Of whose gracious number a very special member, and a vessel of God's election, was that virtuous knight Sir John Oldcastle, the good lord Cobham, as will plenteously appear in this process following. He that hath judgment in the spirit shall easily perceive by this treatise, what beastly blockheads these bloody belly-gods were in their unsavoury interrogations; and again, what influence of grace this man of God had from above concerning his answers, specially in that most blind and ignorant time wherein all was but darkness, the sun appearing sackcloth, as St John hath in the Apocalypse.

Heb. xi. Acts v. Rev. vi. John viii.

Sir John Oldcastle and the bishops.

John iii.

Rev. vi.

Most surely fulfilled Christ his[1] promise in him which he made to his apostles: "Cast not in your mind aforehand (saith he) what answer ye shall make when these spiritual tyrants shall examine you in their synagogues, and so deliver you up unto kings and debitees[2]. For I will give you such utterance and wisdom in that hour, as all your enemies shall never be able to resist." This only sentence of Christ adjoined to his godly answer is enough to prove him his true disciple, and them in their foolish questions the manifest members of Satan. I remember that fourteen years ago the true servant of God, William Tyndale, put into the print a certain brief examination of the said lord Cobham: the which examination was written in the time of the said lord's trouble by a certain friend of his, and so reserved in copies unto this our age. But since that time I have found it in their own writings, which were then his utter enemies, in a much more ample form than there; specially in the great process which Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, made then against him, written by his own notaries and clerks, tokened also with his own sign and seal, and so directed unto Richard Clifford, then

Luke xxi. Matt. x. Mark xiii. Luke xii.

Christ's disciple.

The examination of the Lord Cobham.

The great process of Thomas Arundel.

[1 *Christs* old edition for, *Christ his.*] [2 Debitees: deputies.]

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bishop of London, with a general commandment to have it then published by him, and by the other bishops the whole realm over.

Furthermore I have seen it in a copy of that writing which the said Richard Clifford sent unto Robert Mascall, a Carmelite friar, and bishop of Hereford, under his sign and seal, and in a copy of his also directed to the archdeacons of Hereford and Shrewsbury. The year, month, and day of their date, with the beginnings of their writings, shall hereafter follow in the book, as occasion shall require it. Besides all this, Thomas Walden, being in those days the king's confessor, and present at his examination, condemnation, and execration, registered it, among other processes more, in his book called *Fasciculus Zizaniorum Wiclevi*. He maketh mention of it also in his first epistle to pope Martin the Fifth, and in his solemn Sermon *de Funere Regis*. Only such reasons have I added thereunto, as the afore-named Thomas Walden proponed to him in the time of that examination, as he mentioneth in his first and second books *adversus Wiclevistas*, with the manner of his godly departing out of this frail life, which I found in other writings and chronicles.

Thomas Walden. in Fasciculo Zizaniorum Wiclevi.

From whence this Treatise cometh.

Walden. cont. Wiclev. in Prolog. Doct. 7. Lib. ii. cap. lxvi. Edit. Paris. 1532. Tom. I. p. 174.

His youth was full of wanton wildness before he knew the scriptures, as he reporteth in his answer, and for the more part unknown unto me, and therefore I write it not here. His father, the lord Regnolde of Cobham, John Froissart numbereth always amongst the most worthy warriors of England. In all adventurous acts of worldly manhood was he ever bold, strong, fortunate, doughty, noble, and valiant; but never so worthy a conqueror as in this his present conflict with the cruel and furious frantic kingdom of antichrist. Far is this christian knight more praiseworthy for that he had so noble a stomach in defence of Christ's verity against those Romish superstitions, than for any temporal nobleness, either of blood, birth, lands, or of martial feats. For many thousands have had in that great courage, which in the other have been most faint-hearted cowards and very desperate dastards; whereas he persevered most faithfully constant to the end. Many popish parasites and men-pleasing flatterers have written large commendations and encomies[3] of those; but of such noble men as this was, very few or in a manner none at all.

The Christian manhood of Sir John Oldcastle.

Cowards in Christ's battles.

Flatterers of great men.

[3 Encomies: encomiums.]

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Parasites. When I sometime read the works of some men learned, I marvel not a little to see them so abundant in vain flattering praises for matters of no value, yea, for things to be dispraised rather than praised of men that were godly-wise.

Polyd. Angl. Hist. Lib. iv. Polydorus Vergilius, a collector sometime in England of the pope's Peter Pence, and afterward archdeacon of Wells, hath in this point deformed his writings greatly, polluting our English Chronicles most shamefully with his Romish lies and other Italish beggarys. Battles hath he described there at large with no small discommendings of some princes which were godly; but the privy packing of prelates, and crafty conveyance of the spirituality, hath he in every place almost full properly passed over. He was too familiar with the bishops, and took too much of their counsel, when he compiled the twenty-six books of his English history. And not greatly is the land beholden unto him in that work for any large praise of erudition that he hath given it there. A singular beauty is it to a christian religion, when their ancient monuments are garnished among others with men of fresh literature, which therein hath small remembrance or none. Unless it be Gildas, Bedas, Alcuinus, Joannes Scotus, Aldelmus, Neuburgus, and one or two more, none are in that whole work mentioned concerning that, as though England had always been most barren of men learned. This do I not write in dispraise of his learning (which I know to be very excellent), but for the abuse thereof, being a most singular gift of God.

No tales may be told out of school.

No men are learned with him but Italians.

A worthy work were that afore God and man. I would wish some learned Englishman (as there are now most excellent fresh wits) to set forth the English Chronicles in their right shape, as certain other lands have done afore them, all affections set apart. I cannot think a more necessary thing to be laboured to the honour of God, beauty of the realm, erudition of the people, and commodity of other lands, next the sacred scriptures of the Bible, than that work would be. For truly in those they have there yet is vice more advanced than virtue, and Romish blasphemy than godliness; as it may full well appear unto eyes of right judgment in the lamentable history here following, and such other, which hath been long hid in the dark. Mark diligently the sentence of the said Polydorus concerning this good lord Cobham, and thereupon consider his good workmanship in other matters.

Blasphemous trifles are the English Chronicles.

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"In the council of Constance (saith he) was the heresy of John Wicliffe condemned, and two at the same time burned in that city, which were the chief heads of that sect[1]." All this is true, though the feat handling thereof be altogether Italish. Polyd. Angl. Hist. Lib. xxii. Ed. Basil. 1546. p. 441.

But whereas he saith after, that when this was once known to their companions in England, they conspired in their madness against the whole clergy, and finally against the King also, for that he was then a fautor of christian religion, having to their great captains sir John Oldcastle and sir Roger Acton, he maketh a most shameful lie. For how could sir Roger Acton with his company conspire upon that He upholdeth holy Church with lies. Fabianus. p. 578. Ed. Lond. 1811.

[1 In eodem concilio damnata est Joannis Vuytcliffi hæresis; ac Joannes Hus, et Hieronymus Pragensis ejus discipulus, duo id temporis viri qui ejus sectæ capita erat, in ea urbe combusti sunt. Quod ubi reliquis consociis, qui etiam tunc in Anglia erant, patefit, tanquam furiis agitati, primum conjurationes in omnes sacerdotes, deinde in regem, quod pius esset cultor religionis, faciunt, protinusque conventus passim celebrantes, suam superstitionem armis defendendam statuunt: itaque Joanne Oldecastellio, viro forti ceterum impio, cujus rei causa paulo ante ab exercitu regio relegatus fuerat, et Rogerio Actono ducibus, ac bene magna desperatorum hominum comitante caterva, Londinum concurrunt, ut civitate potiti majorem inde sui similium manum cogant, atque regem opprimant. Qua re nunciata, rex omnibus consiliis antevertendum existimat, ut prius in armis sit, quam ea hominum colluvio in urbem irruat; qui celeriter obviam factus, exspectat loco idoneo ad pugnandum, dum illud agmen accedat. Verum perditi homines ubi de regis adventu cognoverunt, ut jamjam victi alii alio turpiter se in pedes dant, quorum aliquot in fuga deprehensi igne illico necantur. Capiuntur non multo post ambo ductores, in carceremque conjiciuntur: sed Joannes ex turri Londinensi noctu aufugit, Rogerius vero merito afficitur supplicio. Ob id tamen non fugiebat principem se nequaquam funditus tanti veneni radices de hominum longe opiniosissimorum pectoribus evellisse: quare publice edixit, ut si uspiam deinceps reperirentur, qui eam sequerentur sectam, patriæ hostes haberentur, quo sine omni lenitate severius ac ocius de illis supplicium sumeretur: ita animum et cogitationem posuerat in ea delenda. Est hæc parva pro nominis Christiani conservatione gesta domi a principio res, quæ sine dubio potuit monstrare victoriam, quæ postea in Galliis parta est. Fuit is annus salutis humanæ MCCCCXV. et cum Henricus regnare cœpit, II, quo Thomas Harundellus Cantuariensis antistes, annum jam tunc sedens tertium et trigesimum, e vita excessit: in cujus locum successit Henricus Chicheleius Menevensis Episcopus, ordine Cantuariensium archiepiscoporum sexagesimus.—Polydor. Vergil. Angl. Hist. lib. xxii. Edit. Basil. 1546, p. 441.]

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occasion, being dead more than four years afore; and Sir John Oldcastle remaining all that season in Wales? John Huss suffered death at Constance the year of our Lord 1415, in July; Hierome of Prague in the year of our Lord 1416, in May; which were the two heads he speaketh of. Sir Roger Acton was burnt with his company in the year of our Lord 1413, in January, as witnesseth Walden, Fabian, and John Major in their chronicles and writings. Now reckon these numbers and years, and mark the proper conveyance of this Romish gentleman, the pope's collector, to clout up that crooked kingdom of theirs. He can by such legerdemain both please his friends in England, and also at Rome.

Acta Concilii Constantiensis.

Judge the ill tree by his fruit.

After that he followeth with lie upon lie, as that they came then to London to destroy the King; that he in his own person met with them there in arms, that they cowardly fled, that some were taken there and burnt out of hand, and that the Lord Cobham and Sir Roger Acton were cast into the Tower of London, upon that occasion. Seemeth it not a matter somewhat like to the purpose, think you, that men should be there burned for making such an insurrection or tumult? I trow he hath cobbled here somewhat workmanly.

They were enemies to holy Church.

Burning was not then for traitors.

And whereas he saith in the end, that the King thereupon made an act that they from thenceforth should be taken as traitors against his own person, which were proved to follow that sect, he maketh an abominable lie. For that act was made only at the bishops' complaint and false suit, in the first year of his reign, and by force of that act those innocent men then suffered. More than four hundred of such manifest lies could I gather out of his Chronicles; much more then might more eyes and judgments do.

Walden. in Serm. de Funer. Reg.

Well stored with lies.

Now let us expend what the true cause should be of this godly man's condemnation and death, all dreams of papists set apart. The truth of it is, that after he had once throughly tasted the christian doctrine of John Wicliffe and of his disciples, and perceived their livings agreeable to the same, he abhorred all the superstitious sorceries (ceremonies, I should say) of the proud Romish church. From thenceforth he brought all things to the touch-stone of God's word. He tried all matters by the scriptures, and so proved their spirit whether they were of God or nay. He maintained such preachers in the dioceses of Canterbury, London, Rochester,

The causes of Sir John Oldcastle's condemnation.

John v. 1 Thess. v. Matt. vii. 1 John iv.

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and Hereford, as the bishops were sore offended with. He exhorted their priests to a better way by the gospel; and when that would not help, he gave them sharp rebukes. He admonished the kings, as Richard the Second, Henry the Fourth, and Henry the Fifth, of the clergy's manifold abuses, and put into the parliament-house certain books concerning their just reformation, both in the year of our Lord 1395 and in the year 1410. Of the first book this is the beginning: *Prima conclusio. Quando ecclesia Angliæ, &c.*, which I have here left out, lest this treatise should be too great. The other book was made by one John Purvey, a master of art of Oxford: beside the eighteen conclusions that master John Wicliffe had put in long afore that.

Walden. in Fasc. Zizan. Wiclevi.

Fabianus. Ed. Lond. 1811. 4to. p. 375.

In the year of our Lord 1391 this noble lord Cobham, with certain other more, motioned the King at Westminster, in the time of his parliament, that it were very commodious to England if the Romish bishop's authority extended no further than the ocean sea or haven of Calais, considering the charges and unquietness of suits there, and that men's causes could not be throughly known so far off. Whereupon the king made this act by consent of his lords, that no man from thenceforth should sue to the pope in any matter, nor publish any excommunication of his, under pain of losing their goods with perpetual imprisonment. This and the afore-named book had cost him, with sir John Cheny and other more, his life in the sixth year after, at the crafty accusement of certain prelates (though it hath in the Chronicles another colour), had not God then most graciously preserved him. Another cause of his death, yet besides all that hath been said afore, was this: he caused all the works of John Wicliffe to be written at the instance of John Huss, and so to be sent into Bohemia, France, Spain, Portugal, and other lands: whereof Subinco Lepus the archbishop of Prague caused more than two hundred volumes, fair written, openly to be burnt afterwards, as witnesseth Æneas Sylvius *de Origine Bohemorum*.

Polyd. in Hist. Angl. Lib. xx. Polydore Vergil makes no mention of Lord Cobham in this matter. Lib. xx. Ed. Basil. 1546. p. 417.

Trevisa in additionibus Cestrensis.

Fabianus. p. 543.

Walden. cont. Wiclev. Lib. ii. cap. lxx.

Acta Concilii Constantiensis.

Hermannus. Shedel.

These causes known, with other more that I could rehearse, consider whether the world, that is always so wicked, was worthy to hold such a noble christian warrior as this was, or nay: consider also the just punishment of the Lord for wicked laws that were then made, with the exceeding

Heb. xi. Isai. x. Nah. iii.

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mischiefs that the spiritualty then used; and weigh the miserable estate that the realm was in soon after for contempt of his eternal word: and thereupon laud his righteousness, and beware of like contempt and plague in these days. In the year of our Lord 1422 departed king Henry the fifth, in his most flourishing time, even in the beginning of the thirty-seventh year of his age, which was about four years after the death of this Lord Cobham. His son Henry the sixth succeeded in his room, and had the governance of this whole realm, being but a babe of eight months old and odd days. What a dolour was this unto men of ripe discretion, naturally loving their country and regarding the commonwealth thereof! Yea, what a plague of God was it, after the scriptures, to have a young child to their king! And, that it should the more manifestly appear to come that way, or of the stroke of God, he was a childish thing all the days of his life.

Walden. in Serm. de Funer. Reg.

King Henry VI. a babe.

Isai. iii. A plague.

Isai. iii. "I shall give you (saith the Lord in his high displeasure) children to be your princes, and young infants without wisdom shall have the governance of you." What wretched calamities the realm suffered afterward for the space of more than fourscore years and three, till the days of King Henry the seventh, it is unspeakable. Since the preaching of John Wicliffe hath the Lord suffered the pompous popish prelates to shew themselves forth in their own right colours, that they might now in the light of his gospel appear as they are in deed, even spiteful murderers, idolaters, and sodomites. Afore his time they lurked under the glittering shine of hypocrisy, and could not be seen in their masteries. The friars with their charming sophistry threw such a dark mist over the universal world, that superstition could not be known for superstition, nor idolatry for idolatry.

The years of that plague.

Prelates, what they now appear.

Friars darkened all with their sophistry.

Unspeakable filthiness of all fleshly occupying was then called priests' chastity, as it is yet, and will be till it come to the highest, that God may take full vengeance. Then was whoredom worshipped in prelates of the church, and sacred wedlock reckoned such a detestable vice as was worthy in a priest most cruel death: as was seen for example in sir William Wyght, which was burnt for the same at Norwich in the year of our Lord 1428.

Rev. xviii.

Walden. in utroque opere.

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Thus was white judged black, and light darkness; so ill was men's sight in those days. By such means (saith the prophet) they "drew wickedness unto them as it were with a cord, and all kinds of sin as it were with a cart-rope." If England at that time had not been unthankful for the singular benefit that God then sent them by those good men, the days of antichrist and his beastly brood had been shortened there long ago, as it is even now, and hereafter like to be more largely. A most orient fresh mirror of christian manhood appeareth this worthy Lord Cobham in our age, the verity now open, which was in her absence a lamp of contempt before worldly-wise men. In him may noble men behold here plainly a most noble stomach and precious faith in the midst of great antichrist's muddy muster. His courage was of such value that it gave him the victory over them by the clear judgment of the scriptures, what though the world's judgments be far otherwise. And as for the cruel death which he most contumeliously suffered, it is now unto him a most plenteous winning; for in the just quarrel was it of his Lord Jesus Christ.

Isai. v.

England for unthankfulness punished.

What the Lord Cobham appeareth now.

1 John v. 1 Cor. xv.

Phil. i. Rev. i.

Might those bloody blusterers have had their full sway now of late, they would have made more Oldcastles, Actons, Browns, and Beverleys; yea, they would have made there a greater havock upon Christ's congregation, than ever did Saul in his raging fury. They meant more than they uttered, when they approached so nigh (as did cruel Haman) to the presence of noble Ahassuerus. But blessed be the eternal Father, which hath given such wisdom godly unto our most worthy King, that he, perceiving their sleights, so abated their tyrannous fierceness. Pray, noble men, pray, yea, with the true clergy and commons, that like as he hath now with duke Joshua the overhand of wicked Jericho by his only gift, and is through that become a whole perfect king within his own realm far above all his predecessors, so that he may in conclusion overthrow her clearly. For as yet the dreadful damsel (tyranny), that was Caiaphas' doorkeeper, dwelleth in the houses of bishops, and daily compelleth poor Peter to deny his master. As many eyes as ever had vigilant Argus had he need to have, that is compassed with such a sort, as are that brood of the wily serpent. Consider

The Devil sleepeth not.

Acts viii.

Esth. v.

A godly governor.

Josh. vi.

Laud God for him.

Matt. xxvi. John xviii.

Walden. in Serm.

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Pray for his grace.

what heavenly things ye have received of the scriptures under his permission, and yet pray once again for his gracious continuance to the more increase of knowledge. Amen.

O Babylon, thy merchants were princes of the earth:
and with thine enchantments were all
nations deceived.
Apocal. xviii.

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THE GREAT PROCESS

OF

THOMAS ARUNDEL,

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY,

AND OF

THE PAPISTICAL CLERGY WITH HIM,

AGAINST THE MOST NOBLE KNIGHT,

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE,

THE LORD COBHAM,

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD M.CCCC.XIII.

WHEREIN IS CONTAINED HIS EXAMINATION, IMPRISONMENT AND EXCOMMUNICATION.

THE PROCESS BEFORE HIS EXAMINATION.

Ex operibus et scriptis Thomæ Waldensi.

After that the true servant of Jesus Christ, John Wicliffe, a man of very excellent life and learning, had for the space of more than twenty-six years most valiantly battled with the great antichrist of Europe, or pope of Rome, and his diversely disguised host of anointed hypocrites, to restore the church again to the pure estate that Christ left her in at his ascension, he departed hence most christianly into the hands of God, the year of our Lord 1387, and was buried in his own parish church, at Lutterworth in Lincolnshire[1]. No small number of godly disciples left that good man behind him, to defend the lowliness of the gospel against the exceeding pride, ambition, simony, avarice, hypocrisy, whoredom, sacrilege, tyranny, idolatrous worshippings, and other filthy fruits of those stiff-necked Pharisees. Against whom Thomas Arundel, then archbishop of Canterbury, so fierce as ever was Pharoah, Antiochus, Herod or Caiaphas, collected in Paul's church at London a universal synod of all the papistical clergy of England, in the year of our Lord 1413, as he had done divers other afore, to withstand their most godly enterprise.

John Wicliffe, a man of God, and his disciples.

Thomas Arundel in magno processu.

[1 Lutterworth is in Leicestershire, but was till lately in the diocese of Lincoln.]

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And this was the first year of king Henry the fifth, whom they had then made fit for their hand.

John xi. Psal. i. Psal. ii.

As these high prelates with their Pharisees and Scribes were thus gathered in this pestilent council against the Lord and his word, first there resorted unto them the twelve inquisitors of heresies (whom they had appointed at Oxford, the year afore, to search out heretics, with all Wicliffe's books), and they brought two hundred and sixty-six faithful conclusions, which they had collected as heresies out of the said books. The names of the said inquisitors were these: John Witnam, a master in the New College, John Langdon, monk of Christ-Church in Canterbury, William Ufford, regent of the Carmelites, Thomas Clayton, regent of the Dominicans, Robert Gilberd, Richard Cartysdale, John Luck, Richard Snedysham, Richard Flemming, Thomas Rodborne, Robert Roudbery, and Richard Grasdale. In the mean season caused they their hired servants to blow it forth abroad throughout all the realm, that they were there congregate for an wholesome unity and reformation of the church of England, to stop so the mouths of the common people. Such is always the common practice of these subtle sorcerers, while they are doing mischief, to blear the eyes of the unlearned multitude with one false craft or other.

Walden. in Fasc. Zizan. Wiclev.

A practice commonly used of that generation.

A like practice sought now of late, but it took not.

After a certain communication they concluded among themselves, that it was not possible for them to make whole Christ's coat without seam (meaning thereby their patched popish synagogue), unless certain great men were brought out of the way, which seemed to be the chief maintainers of the said disciples of Wicliffe: among whom the most noble knight sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, was complained of by the general proctors, yea, rather betrayers of Christ in his faithful members, to be the chief principal. Him they accused first for a mighty maintainer of suspected preachers in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford, contrary to the minds of their ordinaries. Not only they affirmed him to have sent thither the said preachers, but also to have assisted them there by force of arms, notwithstanding their synodal constitution made afore to the contrary. Last of all they accused him that he was far otherwise in belief of the sacrament of the altar, of penance, of pilgrimage, of image-worshipping, and of the ecclesiastical power, than the holy church of Rome had taught many years afore.

Accused for maintaining the gospel of Christ.

Accused for his christian belief.

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In the end it was concluded among them, that without any farther delay process should out against him as against a most pernicious heretic. Some of that fellowship, which were of more crafty experience than the other, would in no case have the[1] matter so rashly handled, but thought this way much better: considering the said Lord Cobham was a man of great birth and in favour at that time with the king, their counsel was to know first the king's mind, to save all things right up. This counsel was well accepted; and thereupon the archbishop Thomas Arundel, with his other bishops and a great part of the clergy, went straightways unto the king as then remaining at Kennington: and there they[2] laid forth most grievous complaints against the said Lord Cobham, to his great infamy and blemish, being a man most godly.

Process against him.

A spiritual practice.

A wolfish generation.

The king gently heard those blood-thirsty raveners, and far otherwise than became his princely dignity he instantly desired them, that, in respect of his noble stock and knighthood, they should yet favourably deal with him; and that they would, if it were possible, without all rigor or extreme handling, reduce him again to the church's unity. He promised them also that, in case they were[3] contented to take some deliberation, his self would seriously common the matter with him.

The king speaketh for him.

His gentle promise.

Anon after the king sent for the said Lord Cobham. And as he was come, he called him secretly admonishing him betwixt him and him, to submit himself to his mother the holy church, and as an obedient child to acknowledge himself culpable. Unto whom the christian knight made this answer: "You, most worthy prince," saith he, "am I always prompt and willing to obey, forsomuch as I know you a christian king, and the appointed minister of God, bearing his righteous[4] sword, to the punishment of ill-doers, and for the safeguard of them that be virtuous. Unto you, next my eternal living[5] God, owe I my whole obedience, and submit me thereunto (as I have done ever) all that I have either of fortune or nature, ready at all times to fulfil whatsoever ye shall in that Lord command me. But as touching the pope and his spiritualty, truly I owe them neither suit nor service, forsomuch

His admonishment.

Rom. xiii. 1 Pet. ii.

A most Christian obedience.

[1 'that,' 1st ed.] [2 'they,' not in 1st ed.]
[3 'were not,' 1st ed.] [4 'bearing the sword,' 1st ed.]
[5 'living,' not in 1st ed.]

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2 Thess. ii. Matt. xxiv. 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 had heard this with such-like sentences more, he would talk no longer with him, but left him so utterly.

And as the archbishop resorted again unto him for an answer, he gave him his full authority to cite him, examine him, and punish him according to the devilish decrees, which they call the laws of holy church.

Ex vetusto exemplari Londinense.

Then the said archbishop, by the counsel of his other bishops and clergy, appointed to call before[1] him the said[2] sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, and to cause him personally to appear, to answer to such suspected[3] articles as they should lay against him. So sent he forth his chief summoner with a very sharp citation unto the castle of Cowling, where as he at that time dwelt for his solace. And as the said summoner was thither come, he durst in no case enter the gates of so noble a man without his licence; and therefore he returned home again, his message not done. Then called the archbishop one John Butler unto him, which was then the door-keeper of the king's privy chamber; and with him he covenanted, through promises and rewards, to have this matter craftily brought to pass under the king's name.

Caiaphas seeketh Christ.

Judas is sent forth.

Another Judas yet is hired.

Whereupon the said John Butler took the archbishop's summoner with him, and went unto the said Lord Cobham, shewing him that it was the king's pleasure that he should obey that citation; and so cited him fraudulently. Then said he unto them in few words, that in no case would he consent to those most devilish practices of the priests. As they had informed the archbishop of that answer, and that it was meet for no man privately to cite him after that without peril of life, he decreed by and by to have him cited by public process or open commandment. And in all the haste possible, upon the Wednesday before the nativity of our Lady, in September, he commanded letters citatory to be set upon the great gates of the cathedral church of Rochester (which was but three English miles from thence), charging him to appear personally before him at Leeds[4], in the sixth[5] day of the same

Judas kisseth and betrayeth.

The malice of the serpent.

Mark this religion of the papists.

[1 'gefore,' 1st ed.] [2 'said,' not in 1st ed.]
[3 'suspect,' 1st ed.]
[4 Leeds or Ledis castle, in Kent, about five miles from Maidstone.

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month and year, all excuses to the contrary set apart. Those letters were taken down anon after by such as bare favour unto the Lord Cobham, and so conveyed aside. After that caused the archbishop new letters to be set up, on the nativity day of our lady; which also were rent down and utterly consumed. The citations taken down.

Then, forsomuch as he did not appear at the day appointed at Leeds, (where as he sat in consistory as cruel as ever was Caiaphas, with his court of hypocrites about him,) he judged him, denounced him, and condemned him of most deep contumacy. After that, when he had been falsely informed by his hired spies and other glossing glaverers[6], that the said Lord Cobham had laughed him to scorn, disdained all his doings, maintained his old opinions, contemned the church's power, the dignity of a bishop, and the order of priesthood, (for of[7] all these was he then accused,) in his moody madness without just proof did he openly excommunicate him. Yet was he not with all this fierce tyranny qualified, but commanded him to be cited afresh, to appear before him the Saturday after[8] the feast of Saint Matthew the apostle, with these cruel threatenings added thereunto; that if he did not obey at that day, he would more extremely handle him. And, to make himself more strong towards the performance thereof, he compelled the lay power, by most terrible menacings of curses and interdictions, to assist him against that seditious apostate, that[9] schismatic, that heretic, that troubler of the public peace, that enemy of the realm, and great adversary of all holy church; for all these hateful names did he give him. Caiaphas sitteth in consistory. False accusations against him. The serpent doth his nature. See here how spiritual they be.

This most constant servant of the Lord, and worthy knight, sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, beholding the unpeaceable fury of antichrist thus kindled against him, perceiving himself also compassed on every side with deadly dangers, he took paper and pen in hand, and so wrote a christian confession or reckoning of his faith (which followeth here- A mirror of christian knighthood. He confesseth his God before men.

It had been the property of the Lords Badlesmere, but reverted to the crown, 2 Edw. III. It was afterwards inhabited by William of Wickham, who greatly enlarged it; by Richard II., and for a short time by Henry IV. Archbishop Arundel procured a grant of this castle, where he frequently resided, and kept his court, whilst the process against Lord Cobham was carrying forward. Wordsworth's Eccles. Biog.]

[5 'xi.' 1st ed.]

[6 glaverer, a flatterer. Nares' Glossary.]

[7 'of,' not in 1st ed.] [8 before, 1st ed.]

[9 'that,' not in 1st ed.]

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after), and both signed and sealed it with his own hand: wherein he also answereth to the four chiefest articles that the archbishop laid against him. That done, he took the copy with him, and went therewith to the king, trusting to find mercy and favour at his hands. None other was that confession of his than the common belief, or sum of the church's faith, called the Apostles' Creed, of all christian men then used: as thus:

The apostles' faith.

THE CHRISTIAN BELIEF OF THE LORD COBHAM.

The common creed of Christians.

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, which was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death under Pontius Pilate, crucified, dead, and buried, went down to hell, the third day rose again from death, ascended up to heaven, he[1] sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and from thence shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the universal holy church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the uprising of the flesh, and everlasting life. Amen.

This faith was not regarded.

A declaration of his belief.

And for a more large declaration (saith he) of this my faith in the catholic church: I stedfastly believe that there is but one God Almighty, in and of whose Godhead are these three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that those three persons are the same self God Almighty. I believe also that the second person of this most blessed Trinity, in most convenient time appointed thereunto afore, took flesh and blood of the most blessed Virgin Mary, for the safeguard and redemption of the universal kind of man, which was afore lost in Adam's offence. Moreover I believe that the same Jesus Christ our Lord, thus being both God and man, is the only head of the whole christian church; and that all those that have been or shall be saved, be members of this most holy church. And this most holy church I think to be divided into three sorts or companies.

1 John v.

Gal. iv. John i. Luke ii.

Christ is the only head of his church.

The church divided in three parts.

Whereof the first sort be now in heaven, and they are the saints from hence departed. These, as they were here conversant, conformed always their lives to the most holy laws and pure examples of Christ, renouncing Satan, the world, and the flesh with all their concupiscences and evils.

[1 'he,' not in 1st ed.]

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The second sort are in purgatory (if any such be by the scriptures) abiding the mercy of God and a full deliverance of pain.

Contrary wrote he: Ad Parliamentum. Ex Waldeno.

The third sort are here upon the earth, and be called the church militant: for day and night they contend against the crafty assaults of the devil, the flattering prosperities of this world, and the rebellious filthiness of the flesh.

This latter congregation by the just ordinance of God is also severed into three diverse estates, that is to say, into priesthood, knighthood, and the commons. Among whom the will of God is, that the one should aid the other, but not destroy the other. The priests first of all, secluded from all worldliness, should conform their lives utterly to the examples of Christ and his apostles. Evermore should they be occupied in preaching and teaching the scriptures purely, and in giving wholesome counsels of good living to the other two degrees of men. More modest also, more loving, gentle, and lowly in spirit should they be, than any other sorts of people.

The church militant divided in three.

What the priests should be.

In knighthood are all they which bear sword by law of office. These should defend God's laws, and see that the gospel were purely taught, conforming their lives to the same, and secluding all false preachers: yea, these ought rather to hazard their lives than to suffer such wicked decrees as either blemish the eternal testament of God, or yet let the free passage thereof, whereby heresies and schisms might spring in the church. For of none other arise they (as I suppose) than of such erroneous constitutions, craftily first creeping in under hypocrites' lies for advantage. They ought also to preserve God's people from oppressors, tyrants, and thieves, and to see the clergy supported so long as they teach purely, pray rightly, and minister the sacraments freely. And if they see them do otherwise, they are bound by law of office to compel them to change their doings, and to see all things performed according to God's prescript ordinance.

Knighthood, what it should be.

Mark here a most christian heart.

The clergy, wherefore supported.

The latter fellowship of this church are the common people, whose duty is to bear their good minds and true obedience to the aforesaid ministers of God, their kings, civil governors, and priests. The right office of these is justly to occupy every man in his faculty, be it merchandise, handicraft, or the tillage of the ground; and so one of them to be as an helper to another, following always in their sorts the just commandments of their Lord God.

What the common people ought to do.

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Belief concerning the sacraments.

Over and besides all this, I most faithfully believe that the sacraments of Christ's church are necessary to all christian believers, this always seen to, that they be truly ministered according to Christ's first institution and ordinance. And forsomuch as I am maliciously and most falsely accused of a misbelieve in the sacrament of the altar, to the hurtful slander of many; I signify here unto all men that this is my faith concerning that. I believe in that sacrament to be contained very Christ's body and blood under the similitudes of bread and wine, yea, the same body that was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of Mary the Virgin, done on the cross, died, that was buried, arose the third day from the death, and is now glorified in heaven. I also believe the universal law of God to be most true and perfect, and that they which do not so follow it in their faith and works at one time or other, can never be saved: whereas he that seeketh it in faith, accepteth it, learneth it, delighteth therein, and performeth it in love, shall taste for it the felicity of everlasting innocency.

The sacrament of the altar.

Belief concerning God's laws.

What God asketh of a Christian.

Finally, this is my faith also, that God will ask no more of a christian believer in this life, but only to obey the precepts of that most blessed law. If any prelate[1] of the church requireth[2] more, or else any other kind of obedience than this to be used, he contemneth Christ, exalting himself above God, and so becometh an open antichrist. All these premises I believe particularly, and generally all that God hath left in his holy scriptures that I should believe: instantly desiring you, my liege lord and most worthy king, that this confession of mine may be justly examined by the most godly-wise and learned men of your realm. And if it be found in all points agreeing to the verity, then let it be so allowed, and I thereupon holden for none other than a true Christian. If it be proved otherwise, then let it be utterly condemned, providod always that I be taught a better belief by the word of God, and I shall most reverently at all times obey thereunto.

A christian desire of the Lord Cobham.

This request was lawful.

Obedience unto his king.

This brief confession of his faith the Lord Cobham wrote (as is mentioned afore), and so took it with him to the court, offering it with all meekness unto the king to read it over. The king would in no case receive it, but commanded it to be delivered unto them that should be his judges. Then desired he in the king's presence, that an hundred knights and esquires

[1 'prelates,' 1st ed.] [2 'require,' 1st ed.]

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might be suffered to come in upon his purgation, which (he knew) would clear him of all heresies. Moreover he offered himself, after the law of arms, to fight for life or death with any man living, christian or heathen, in the quarrel of his faith, the king and the lords of his council excepted. Finally, with all gentleness he protested before all that were present, that he would refuse no manner of correction that should after the laws of God be ministered unto him, but that he would at all times with all meekness obey it. Notwithstanding all this, the king suffered him to be summoned personally in his own privy chamber.

His christian stomach and manhood.

No reasonable offer would serve.

Then said the Lord Cobham to the king, that he had appealed from the archbishop to the pope of Rome, and therefore he ought (he said) in no case to be his judge. And having his appeal there at hand ready written, he shewed it with all reverence to the king. Wherewith the king was then much more displeased than afore, and said angerly unto him, that he should not pursue his appeal: but rather he should tarry in hold, till such time as it were of the pope allowed; and then, would he or nilde he[3], the archbishop should be his judge. Thus was there nothing allowed that the good Lord Cobham had lawfully afore required. But forsomuch as he would not be sworn in all things to submit himself to the church, and so to take what penance the archbishop would enjoin him, he was arrested again at the king's commandment, and so led forth to the Tower of London, to keep his day (so was it then spoken) that the archbishop had appointed him afore in the king's chamber.

His appeal from the archbishop.

The king here worshippeth the beast.

Cobham would not obey antichrist[4].

Then caused he the aforesaid confession of his faith to be copied again, and the answer also (which he had made to the four articles proponed[5] against him) to be written in manner of an indenture in two sheets of paper; that when he should come to his answer, he might give the one copy unto the archbishop, and reserve the other to himself. As the day of examination was come, which was the twenty-third day of September, or the Saturday after[6] the feast of Saint Matthew, Thomas Arundel the archbishop sitting in Caiaphas' Room in the Chapter-house of Paul's, with Richard Clifford bishop of London, and Henry Bolingbroke bishop of Winchester, sir Robert Morley knight, and lieutenant of the Tower, brought

His confession and answer newly copied.

Caiaphas sitteth in consistory.

[3 whether he would or not.] [4 'the beast,' 1st ed.]

[5 proponed, proposed. Nares' Glossary.] [6 before, 1st ed.]

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personally before him the said Lord Cobham, and there left him for the time, unto whom the archbishop said these words.

THE FIRST EXAMINATION OF THE LORD COBHAM.

Antichrist was here in full power

"Sir John, in the last general convocation of the clergy of this our province, ye were detected of certain heresies, and by sufficient witnesses found culpable. Whereupon ye were by form of spiritual law cited, and would in no case appear. In conclusion upon your rebellious contumacy ye were both privately and openly excommunicated. Notwithstanding we never yet shewed ourself unready to have given you your absolution (nor yet do not to this hour), would ye have meekly asked it."

Antichrist manifesteth himself.

Unto this the Lord Cobham shewed as though he had given none ear, having his mind otherwise occupied, and so desired none absolution: but he said, he would gladly before him and his brethren make rehearsal of that faith, which he held and intended always to stand to, if it would please them to license him thereunto. And then he took out of his bosom a certain writing indented, concerning the articles whereof he was accused, and so openly read it before them, giving it unto the archbishop, as he had made thereof an end. Whereof this is the copy.

A sign of God's true servant.

Ex utroque exemplari.

I John Oldcastle, knight and Lord Cobham, will all christian men to understand, that Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, hath not only laid it to my charge maliciously, but also very untruly, by his letter and seal written against me in most slanderous wise, that I should otherwise feel and teach of the sacraments of the church (assigning specially the sacrament of the altar, the sacrament of penance, the worshipping of images, and the going of pilgrimage unto them) far otherwise than either believeth or teacheth the universal holy church. I take Almighty God unto witness, that it hath been and now is, and evermore with the help of God it shall be, my full intent and will, to believe faithfully and wholly all the sacraments that ever God ordained to be ministered in the holy church. And moreover, for to declare me in these four points afore rehearsed:

The articles laid against the Lord Cobham.

O most christian knight.

His belief concerning sacra-

I believe that in the most worshipful sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body in form of bread, the same body

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that was born of the blessed Virgin Mary, done on the cross, dead and buried, and that the third day arose from death to life, the which body is now glorified with the Father in heaven. And as for the sacrament of penance, I believe that it is needful to all them that shall be saved to forsake their sin, and to do penance for it, with true contrition to God, confession of their faults, and due satisfaction in Christ, like as God's laws limit and teach; else can they have no salvation. This penance I desire all men to do. And as for images, I understand that they pertain nothing to our christian belief, but were permitted (long since the faith was given us of Christ) by sufferance of the church, for to be as calendars unto laymen to represent or bring to mind the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, with the martyrdom and good living of the saints. I think also, that whatsoever he be[1] which doth that worship to dead images that is duly belonging unto God, or that putteth his faith, hope, or confidence in the help of them as he should do only in his eternal living God, or that hath affection in one more than in another, he perpetrateth in so doing the abominable sin of idolatry. Moreover in this am I fully persuaded, that every man dwelling on this earth is a pilgrim, either towards bliss or else towards pain; and that he which knoweth not, nor will not know, nor yet keep the holy commandments of God in his living here, (albeit that he goeth on pilgrimage into all quarters of the world,) if he departeth so, he shall surely be damned. Again, he that knoweth the holy commandments of God, and so performeth them to the end of his life to his power, shall without fail be saved in Christ, though he never in his life go on pilgrimage, as men use now-a-days to Canterbury, Walsingham, Compostella, and Rome, or to any other place else.

Consider him here before bishops.

Permitted to bring in idolatry.

Who committeth idolatry.

☞ Mark. Gen. xxiii. Psal. ii.

Saved without pilgrimage.

This answer to his articles thus ended and ready, he delivered it to the bishops, as is said afore. Then counselled the archbishop with the other two bishops, and with divers of the doctors, what was to be done in this matter, commanding him for the time to stand aside. In conclusion, by their assent and information, he said thus unto him: "Come hither, sir John. In this your writing are many good things contained, and right catholic also; we deny it not. But ye must consider that this day was appointed you to answer to other points concerning those articles, whereof as yet no mention is made in this

His answer examined.

What is this else? than quarrelling?

[1 'be,' not in 1st ed.] [2 'else,' not in 1st ed.]

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your bill. And therefore ye must yet declare us your mind more plainly: as thus, whether that ye hold, affirm, and believe, that in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration rightly done by a priest, remaineth material bread or not? Moreover, whether ye do hold, affirm, and believe, that as concerning the sacrament of penance (where as a competent number of priests are) every christian man is necessarily bound to be confessed of his sins to a priest ordained by the church, or not?"

Their bellies only did those belly-gods seek.

After certain other communication, this was the answer of the good Lord Cobham: That none otherwise would he declare his mind, nor yet answer unto his articles, than was expressly in his writing there contained. Then said the archbishop again unto him: "Sir John, beware what ye do. For if ye answer not clearly to those things that are here objected against you, specially at the time appointed you only for that purpose, the law of holy church is, that, compelled once by a judge, we may openly proclaim ye an heretic." Unto whom he gave this answer: "Do as ye shall think it best; for I am at a point." Whatsoever he and the other bishops did ask him after that, he bade them resort to his bill, for thereby would he stand to the very death. Other answer would he not give that day; wherewith the bishops and prelates were in a manner amazed and wonderfully disquieted. At the last the archbishop counselled again with his other bishops and doctors; and in the end thereof declared unto him, what the holy church of Rome, following the sayings of St Austin, St Hierome, St Ambrose, and of other holy doctors, had determined in those matters, no manner of mention once made of Christ: "which determination (saith he) ought all christian men both to believe and to follow."

His christian answer unto their quarrellings.

A tyrannous whore is that mother.

His answer not to their minds.

Antichrist setteth men above God.

Then said the Lord Cobham unto him, that he would gladly both believe and observe whatsoever the holy church of Christ's institution had determined, or yet whatsoever God had willed him either to believe or to do: but that the pope of Rome with his cardinals, archbishops, bishops and other prelates of that church had lawful power to determine such matters as stood not with his word throughly, that would he not[1] at that time affirm.

The Lord Cobham resorteth unto Christ.

With this the archbishop bade him to take good advisement till the Monday next following (which was the twenty-fifth

A delay of these devils to destroy.

[1 'he said,' 1st ed.]

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day of September), and then justly to answer specially unto this point, whether there remained material bread in the sacrament of the altar after the words of consecration, or not? He promised him also to send unto him in writing those matters clearly determined, that he might then be the more perfect in his answer-making. And all this was not else but to blind the multitude with somewhat. The next day following, according to his promise, the archbishop sent unto him into the Tower this foolish and blasphemous writing, made by him and by his unlearned clergy.

A doctrine of devils to blind the simple.

THE DETERMINATION OF THE ARCHBISHOP AND CLERGY.

Ex magno processu Thomæ Arundell.

The faith and determination of[2] holy church touching the blissful sacrament of the altar is this: That after the sacramental words be once spoken by a priest in his mass, the material bread, that was before bread, is turned into Christ's very body; and the material wine, that was afore wine, is turned into Christ's very blood: and so there remaineth in the sacrament of the altar from thenceforth no material bread nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken. How believe ye this article?

The first article.

Holy church hath determined, that every christian man living here bodily upon earth ought to be shriven to a priest ordained by the church, if he may come to him. How feel ye this article?

The second article.

Christ ordained St Peter the apostle to be his vicar here in earth: whose see is the holy church of Rome. And he granted that the same power, which he gave unto Peter, should succeed to all Peter's successors, which we call now popes of Rome: by whose special power in churches particular be ordained prelates, as archbishops, bishops, parsons, curates, and other degrees more; unto whom christian men ought to obey after the laws of the church of Rome. This is the determination of holy church. How feel ye this article?

The third article.

The seed of the serpent.

Holy church hath determined that it is meritorious to a christian man to go on pilgrimage to holy places; and there specially to worship holy relics and images of saints, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all other saints besides approved by the church of Rome. How feel ye this article?

The fourth article.

[2 'of the,' 1st ed.]

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He sees their ignorance and malice.

And as the good Lord Cobham had read over this wretched writing, he marvelled greatly of their mad ignorance; but that he considered again that God had given them over, for their unbelief's sake, into most deep errors and blindness of soul. Again he perceived thereby that their uttermost malice was purposed against him, howsoever he

He put his life in God's hands.

should answer. And therefore he put his life into the hands of God, desiring his only Spirit to assist him in his next answer. When the said twenty-fifth day of September was come, (which was also the Monday afore Michaelmas,) in the said year of our Lord, 1413, Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, commanded his judicial seat to be

Ex utroque exemplari.

removed from the[1] chapter-house of Paul's to the Dominican friars within Ludgate, at London. And as he was there set with Richard, the bishop of London, Henry, the bishop of Winchester, and Benet, the bishop of Bangor, he called in unto him his council and his officers, with divers other doctors and friars; of whom these are the names here follow-

The council of Caiaphas.

ing: Master Henry Ware, the official of Canterbury; Philip Morgan, doctor of both laws; Howell Kyffyn[2], doctor of the canon law; John Kempe, doctor of the canon law; William Carleton, doctor of the canon law; John Wytnam[3], of the New College, in Oxford; John Whyghthead[4], a doctor of Oxford also; Robert Womberwell, vicar of St Laurence in the Jewry;

The pharisees and scribes.

Thomas Palmer, the warden of the minors; Robert Chamberlayne[5], prior of the Dominicans; Richard Dodington, prior of the Augustines; Thomas Walden, prior of the Carmelites; all doctors of divinity: John Stevens also, and James Cole, both

A rabble of antichrists.

notaries, appointed there purposely to write all that should be either said or done. All these, with a great sort more of priests, monks, canons, friars, parish-clerks, bell-ringers, and pardoners, disdained him with innumerable mocks and scorns, reckoning him to be an horrible heretic and a man accursed afore God.

Blasphemous dissimulation of papists.

Anon the archbishop called for a mass-book, and caused all those prelates and doctors to swear thereupon, that every man should faithfully do his office and duty that day; and that neither for favour nor fear, love nor hate of the one party nor the other, anything should there be witnessed,

[1 'that,' 1st ed.] [2 'Kiffin,' 1st ed.] [3 'Witnam,' 1st ed.]
[4 'Whighthead,' 1st ed.] [5 'Chamberlaine,' 1st ed.]

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spoken, or done, but according to the truth, as they would answer before God and all the world at the day of doom. Then were the two aforesaid notaries sworn also, to write and to witness the words and process that there should be uttered on both parties, and to say their minds (if they otherwise knew it) before they should register it. And all this dissimulation was but to colour their mischiefs before the ignorant multitude. Consider herein, gentle reader, what this wicked generation is, and how far wide from the just fear of God; for as they were then, so are they yet to this day.

For a false colour swear they.

All done to deceive the ignorant.

After that came forth before them sir Robert Morley, knight, and lieutenant of the Tower, and he brought with him the good Lord Cobham, there leaving him among them, as a lamb among wolves, to his examination and answer.

Here cometh he before them.

THE LATTER EXAMINATION OF THE LORD COBHAM.

Then said the archbishop unto him: "Lord Cobham, ye be advised (I am sure) of the words and process which we had unto you upon Saturday last past in the chapter-house of Paul's: which process were now too long to be rehearsed again. I said unto you then, that ye were accursed for your contumacy and disobedience to holy church, thinking that ye should with meekness have desired your absolution."

Ex vetusto exemplari Londinense.

The curse of antichrist.

Then spake the Lord Cobham with a most cheerful countenance, and said: "God saith by his holy prophet, *maledicam benedictionibus vestris*, which is as much to say as 'I shall curse where as you bless.'"

Mal. ii.

The archbishop made then as though he had continued forth his tale and not heard him, saying: "Sir, at that time I gently proffered to have assoiled[6] you, if ye would have asked it. And yet I do the same, if ye will humbly desire it in due form and manner as holy church hath ordained."

A wolfish offer of gentleness.

Then said the Lord Cobham: "Nay, forsooth, will I not; for I never yet trespassed against you, and therefore I will not do it." And with that he kneeled down on the pavement, holding up his hands towards heaven, and said: "I shrive me here unto thee, my eternal living God, that in my frail youth

He confesseth himself unto God.

[6 assoil, absolve.]

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I offended thee, Lord, most grievously in pride, wrath, and gluttony, in covetousness and in lechery. Many men have I hurt in mine anger, and done many other horrible sins; good Lord, I ask thee mercy." And therewith weepingly he stood up again and said with a mighty voice: "Lo, good people, lo: for the breaking of God's law and his great commandments they never yet cursed me. But for their own laws and traditions most cruelly do they handle both me and other men. And therefore both they and their laws by the promise of God shall utterly be destroyed."

O Christian knight.

Jer. ii. Rev. xviii.

At this the archbishop and his company were not a little blemished. Notwithstanding he took stomach unto him again, after certain words had in excuse of their tyranny, and examined the Lord Cobham of his christian belief.

Whereunto the Lord Cobham made this godly answer: "I believe," said he, "fully and faithfully the universal laws of God. I believe that all is true which is contained in the holy sacred scriptures of the bible: finally, I believe all that my Lord God would I should believe."

The christian belief of Cobham.

Then demanded the archbishop an answer of the bill which he and the clergy had sent him into the Tower the day afore in manner of a determination of the church concerning the four articles whereof he was accused, specially for the sacrament of the altar, how he believed therein?

A blasphemous determination of antichrist.

Whereunto the Lord Cobham said, that with that bill he had nothing to do. But this was his belief (he said) concerning the sacrament: "That his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sitting at his last supper with his most dear disciples, the night before he should suffer, took bread in his hand; and giving thanks to his eternal Father, blessed it, brake it, and so gave it unto them, saying: 'Take it unto ye, and eat thereof all. This is my body which shall be betrayed for you. Do this hereafter in my remembrance.' This do I throughly believe," saith he; "for this faith am I taught of the gospel in Matthew, in Mark, and in Luke, and also in the first epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians."

Matt. xxvi. Mark xiv. Luke xxii. 1 Cor. xi.

Antichrist alloweth not this faith.

Then asked the archbishop, if he believed that it were bread after the consecration or sacramental words spoken over it?

The Lord Cobham said: "I believe that in the sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body in form of bread, the same that was born of the Virgin Mary, done on the cross, dead,

The sacrament of the altar.

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and buried, and that the third day arose from death to life, which now is glorified in heaven."

Then said one of the doctors of law: "After the sacramental words be uttered, there remaineth no bread, but the only body of Christ." A Member of Satan.

The Lord Cobham said then to one Master John Whyghthead[1]: "You said once unto me in the castle of Cowling, that the sacred host was not Christ's body. But I held then against you, and proved that therein was his body, though the seculars and friars could not therein agree, but held each one against other in that opinion. These were my words then, if ye remember it." All this would not help.

Then shouted a sort of them together, and cried with great noise: "We say all, that is God's body." A blasphemous brood.

And divers of them asked him in great anger, whether it were material bread after the consecration, or not?

Then looked the Lord Cobham earnestly upon the archbishop, and said: "I believe surely that it is Christ's body in form of bread. Sir, believe not you thus?" That is not enough.

And the archbishop said, "Yes, marry do I."

Then asked him the doctors, whether it were only Christ's body after the consecration of a priest, and no bread, or not?

And he said unto them: "It is both Christ's body and bread. I shall prove it as thus: For like as Christ dwelling here upon the earth had in him both Godhead and manhood; and had the invisible Godhead covered under that manhood which was only visible and seen in him: so in the sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body, and very bread also, as I believe. The bread is the thing that we see with our eyes: the body of Christ (which is his flesh and his blood) is thereunder hid, and not seen, but in faith." Neither will scripture nor reason serve. This opinion hath Saint Augustine[2].

Then smiled they each one upon other, that the people should judge him taken in a great heresy. And with a great brag divers of them said: "It is a foul heresy."

Then asked the archbishop, what bread it was. And the doctors also inquired of him whether it were material or not? The pope's divinity.

The Lord Cobham said unto them: "The scriptures make Material.

[1 'Whighthead,' 1st ed.]

[2 Habuit enim illum ecclesia secundum præsentiam carnis paucis diebus; modo *fide* tenet, oculis non videt.—S. Aug. Tract. LI in Johan. Ev. c. 12. Op. Ed. Ben. Paris 1679, Tom. III. pars III. col. 634.]

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no mention of this word material, and therefore my faith hath nothing to do therewith. But this I say and believe it, that it is Christ's body and bread. For Christ said in the sixth of John's Gospel, *Ego sum panis vivus qui de cœlo descendi.* 'I, which came down from heaven, am the living (and not the dead) bread.' Therefore I say now again, like as I said afore: as our Lord Jesus Christ is very God and very man, so in the most blessed sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body and bread."

John vi.

Mark.

Then said they all with one voice, "It is an heresy."

An heresy after the papists.

One of the bishops stood up by and by, and said: "What? it is an heresy manifest, to say that it is bread after the sacramental words be once spoken, but Christ's body only."

1 Cor. x.

The Lord Cobham said: "Saint Paul the apostle was (I am sure) as wise as you be now, and more godly-learned: and he called it bread, writing to the Corinthians. 'The bread that we break (saith he) is it not the partaking of the body of Christ?' Lo, he calleth it bread, and not Christ's body, but a mean whereby we receive Christ's body."

O ignorant beasts.

Then said they again: "Paul must be otherwise understanded. For it is surely an heresy to say that it is bread after the consecration, but only Christ's body."

The Lord Cobham asked how they could make good that sentence of theirs?

Blind Babylonians.

They answered him thus: "For it is against the determination of holy church."

Then said the archbishop unto him: "Sir John, we sent you a writing concerning the faith of this blessed sacrament, clearly determined by the church of Rome, our mother, and by the holy doctors."

A most christian answer.

Then said he again unto him: "I know none holier than is Christ and his apostle[1]. And as for that determination (I wot) it is none of theirs; for it standeth not with the scriptures, but manifestly against them. If it be the church's (as ye say it is), it hath been hers only since she received the great poison of worldly possessions, and not afore."

Poison.

Then asked they him, to stop his mouth therewith, if he believed not in the determination of the church?

And he said unto them: "No, forsooth, for it is no God.

[1 'apostles,' 1st ed.]

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In all our Creed is IN but thrice mentioned concerning belief: IN God the Father, IN God the Son, IN God the Holy Ghost. The birth, the death, the burial, the resurrection and ascension of Christ hath none IN for belief, but IN him. Neither yet hath the church, the sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, the latter resurrection, nor yet the life everlasting, any other IN than IN the Holy Ghost." IN, but thrice in all the creed.

Then said one of the lawyers: "Tush, that was but a word of office. But what is your belief concerning holy church?" Confounded in their own learning.

The Lord Cobham answered: "My belief is (as I said afore) that all the scriptures of the sacred bible are true. All that is grounded upon them I believe throughly; for I know it is God's pleasure that I should so do. But in your lordly laws and idle determinations have I no belief: for ye be no part of Christ's holy church, as your open deeds do shew; but ye are very antichrists, obstinately set against his holy law and will. The laws that you have made are nothing to his glory, but only for your vain-glory and abominable covetousness." He believeth not in the pope.

This they said was an exceeding heresy, (and that in a great fume,) not to believe the determination of holy church. An heresy after the papists.

Then the archbishop asked him, what he thought holy church?

He said unto him: "My belief is that holy church is the number of them which shall be saved, of whom Christ is the head. Of this church one part is in heaven with Christ, another in purgatory (you say), and the third is here in earth. This latter part standeth in three degrees, in knighthood, priesthood, and the commonalty, as I said afore plainly in the confession of my belief." Consider him to be then in shrewd handling.

Then said the archbishop unto him: "Can ye tell me who is of this church?"

The Lord Cobham answered: "Yea truly, can I."

Then said Doctor Walden, the prior of the Carmelites: "It is doubt unto you who is thereof. For Christ saith in Matthew, *Nolite judicare:* 'Presume to judge no man.' If ye here be forbidden the judgment of your neighbour or brother, much more the judgment of your superior." Walden. contr. Wiclev. Lib. ii. Art. 3. cap. 67. Ed. Paris. 1533, p. 175.

The Lord Cobham made him this answer: "Christ saith

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Matt. vii. also in the same self chapter of Matthew, that like as the ill tree is known by his ill fruit, so is a false prophet by his works, appear they never so glorious. But that ye left behind ye. And in John he hath this text: *Operibus credite:* John x. 'Believe you the outward doings.' And in another place John vii. of John: *Justum judicium judicate:* 'When we know the Deut i. thing to be true, we may so judge it, and not offend.' For Psal. lvi. David saith also: *Recte judicate, filii hominum:* 'Judge rightly always, ye children of men.' And as for your superiority, were ye of Christ, ye should be meek ministers, and no proud superiors."

Then said Doctor Walden unto him: "Ye make here no Diversity of judgments. difference of judgments: ye put no diversity between the ill judgments, which Christ hath forbidden, and the good judgments, which he hath commanded us to have. Rash judgment and right judgment, all is one with you. So is judgment presumed and judgment of office. So swift judges always are the learned scholars of Wicliffe."

A perfect answer. Unto whom the Lord Cobham thus answered: "It is well sophistried of you forsooth. Preposterous are your Isai. v. judgments evermore. For, as the prophet Esay saith, 'ye judge ill good, and good ill.' And therefore the same pro- Isai. lv. phet concludeth, that 'your ways are not God's ways, nor God's ways your ways.' And as for that virtuous man Walden. in Præfat. Doct. 7. p. 6. Wicliffe, whose judgments ye so highly disdain, I shall say here for my part both before God and man, that before I knew that despised doctrine of his, I never abstained from sin: but since I learned therein to fear my Lord God, it hath otherwise (I trust) been with me. So much grace could I never find in all your glorious instructions."

A most rank papist. Then said Doctor Walden again yet unto him: "It were not well with me, so many virtuous men living, and so many learned men teaching, the scriptures being also so open, and the examples of fathers so plenteous, if I then had no grace Hieron. in Brev. Minori. to amend my life till I heard the devil preach. St Hierome saith, that 'he which seeketh such suspected masters shall not find the mid-day light, but the mid-day devil[1]'."

[1 Quoniam ergo habemus nos meridiem, propterea et Diabolus transformatur in angelum lucis, et ipse simulat habere se lucem, habere se meridiem. Quando hæretici quasi mysteria aliqua promittunt, quando regna cœlorum, quando continentiam, quando jejunia,

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The Lord Cobham said: "Your fathers, the old Pharisees, ascribed Christ's miracles to Belzebub, and his doctrine to the devil. And you, as their natural children, have still the same self judgment concerning his faithful followers. They that rebuke your vicious living must needs be heretics, and that must your doctors prove when ye have no scriptures to do it." Then said he to them all: "To judge you as ye be, we need no farther go than your own proper acts. Where do ye find in all God's law, that ye should thus sit in judgment of any christian man, or yet sentence any other man unto death, as ye do here daily? No ground have ye in all the scriptures so lordly to take it upon ye, but in Annas and[2] Caiaphas, which sat thus upon Christ and upon his apostles after his ascension. Of them only have ye taken it to judge Christ's members, as ye do, and neither of Peter nor John."

Luke xi. John x.

Doctors when the scriptures fail.

Followers of Caiaphas.

Then said some of the lawyers: "Yes forsooth, sir, for Christ judged Judas."

O most blind beasts!

The Lord Cobham said: "No, Christ judged him not; but he judged himself, and thereupon went forth, and so did hang himself. But indeed Christ said woe unto him for that covetous act of his, as he doth yet still unto many of you. For since the venom was shed into the church, ye never followed Christ, neither yet have ye stand in the perfection of God's law."

Gerald. Camb. Dist. i. cap. 17. Wharton's Anglia Sacr. Vol. 2.

Then asked him the archbishop, what he meant by that venom?

The Lord Cobham said: "Your possessions and lordships. For then cried an angel in the air, (as your own chronicles mention): 'Woe, woe, woe! this day is venom shed into the church of God.' Before that time all the bishops of Rome were martyrs in a manner; and since that time we read of very few. But indeed since that same time one hath put down another, one hath poisoned another, one hath cursed another, and one hath slain another, and done much more mischief besides, as all the chronicles tell. And let all men consider

Ranulph. Cest. in Polychron. Lib. iv. cap. 26.

quando sanctitatem, quando renunciationem seculi, promittunt meridiem. Sed quoniam non est Christi lumen, non est meridies sed dæmonium meridianum.—Brev. in Psalt. in Psalm. xc. Op. S. Hieron. Ed. Ben. Par. 1693—1706. Tom. II. pars II. col. 363.]

[2 'in,' 1st ed.]

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Antithesis of Christ and the pope.

well this, that Christ was meek and merciful: the pope is proud, and a tyrant. Christ was poor, and forgave: the pope is rich, and a most cruel manslayer, as his daily acts do prove him. Rome is the very nest of antichrist; and out of that nest cometh all his disciples: of whom prelates, priests, and monks are the body, and these pilled[1] friars are the tail which covereth his most filthy part."

Rome is antichrist's nest.

Then said the prior of the friar Augustins: "Alack, sir, why do ye say so? That is uncharitably spoken."

And the Lord Cobham said: "Not only is it my saying, but also the prophet Esay's, long afore my time. 'The prophet (saith he) which preacheth lies is the tail behind.' As you friars and monks be like Pharisees, divided in your outward apparel and usages, so make ye division among the people. And thus you with such other are the very natural members of antichrist."

Isai ix. Antichrist's tail.

Then said he unto them all: "Christ saith in his gospel: 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye close up the kingdom of heaven before men: neither enter ye in yourselves, nor yet suffer any other that would enter into it.' But ye stop up the ways thereunto with your own traditions, and therefore are ye the household of antichrist. Ye will not permit God's verity to have passage, nor yet to be taught of his true ministers, fearing to have your wickedness reproved. But by such vain flatterers, as uphold ye in your mischiefs, ye suffer the common people most miserably to be seduced."

Matt. xxiii.

The religion of bishops.

Then said the archbishop: "By our lady, sir, there shall no such preach within my diocese, and God will, nor yet in my jurisdiction, if I may know it, as either maketh division or yet dissension among the poor commons."

A wise prelate.

The Lord Cobham said: "Both Christ and his apostles were accused of sedition-making, yet were they most peaceable men. Both Daniel and Christ prophesied, that such a troublous time should come as hath not been yet since the world's beginning. And this prophecy is partly fulfilled in your days and doings. For many have ye slain already, and more will ye slay hereafter, if God fulfil not his promise. Christ saith also: 'If those days of yours were not shortened, scarcely should any flesh be saved.' Therefore look for it

Luke xxiii. John xvi.

Dan. xii. Matt. xxiv.

Prophecy.

Prophecy.

[1] Bare, as if stripped. Nares' Gloss.]

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justly, for God will shorten your days. Moreover, though priests and deacons, for preaching of God's word, and for ministering the sacraments with provision for the poor, be grounded in God's law, yet have these other sects no manner of ground thereof, so far as I have read." Priests. Deacons.

Then a doctor of law, called master John Kempe, plucked out of his bosom a copy of that bill which they had afore sent him into the Tower, by the archbishop's counsel, thinking thereby to make shorter work with him. For they were so amazed with his answers (not all unlike to them which disputed with Stephen), that they knew not well how to occupy the time, their wits and sophistry (as God would) so failed them that day. Mark this working of Satan. Acts vi.

"My Lord Cobham," saith this doctor, "we must briefly know your mind concerning these four points here following. The first of them is this." And then he read upon the bill: "The faith and the determination of holy church, touching the blessed sacrament of the altar, is this: 'That after the sacramental words be once spoken by a priest in his mass, the material bread, that was before bread, is turned into Christ's very body; and the material wine, that was before wine, is turned into Christ's very blood. And so there remaineth in the sacrament of the altar from thenceforth no material bread nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken.' Sir, believe ye not this?" The first article. O beastly beggary!

The Lord Cobham said: "This is not my belief. But my faith is (as I said to you afore) that in the worshipful sacrament of the altar is very Christ's body in form of bread." O christian knight!

Then said the archbishop: "Sir John, ye must say otherwise."

The Lord Cobham said: "Nay, that I shall not, if God be upon my side, (as I trust he is), but that there is Christ's body in form of bread, as the common belief is." His constancy.

Then read the doctor again. "The second point is this: 'Holy church hath determined, that every christian man living here bodily upon earth ought to be shriven to a priest ordained by the church, if he may come to him.' Sir, what say ye to this?" The second article.

The Lord Cobham answered and said: "A diseased or

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sore wounded man had need to have a sure wise surgeon[1] and a true, knowing both the ground and the danger of the same.

Confession of sin to God only.

Most necessary were it therefore to be first shriven unto God, which only knoweth our diseases, and can help us. I deny not in this the going to a priest, if he be a man of good life

Mal. it. Priests.

and learning. For the laws of God are to be required of the priest which is godly-learned. But if he be an idiot, or a man of vicious living, that is my curate, I ought rather to flee from him than to seek unto him: for sooner might I catch ill of him that is naught than any goodness towards my soul health."

The third article.

Then read the doctor again. "The third point is this: 'Christ ordained St Peter the apostle to be his vicar here in earth, whose see is the church of Rome. And he granted that the same power which he gave unto Peter should succeed to all Peter's successors, which we call now Popes of

Antichrist's kingdom.

Rome: by whose special power in churches particular be ordained prelates, as archbishops, parsons, curates, and other degrees more; unto whom christian men ought to obey after the laws of the church of Rome.' This is the determination of holy church. Sir, believe ye not this?"

Who is next unto Peter.

To this he answered and said: "He that followeth Peter most nighest in pure living is next unto him in succession. But your lordly order esteemeth not greatly the lowly behaviour of poor Peter, whatsoever ye prate of him. Neither care ye greatly for the humble manners of them that succeeded him till the time of Sylvester, which for the more

No succession here.

part were martyrs, as I told ye afore. Ye can let all their good conditions go by you, and not hurt yourselves with them at all. All the world knoweth this well enough by you; and yet ye can make boast of Peter."

Doctor devil.

With that one of the other doctors asked him: "Then what do ye say of the pope?"

Antichrist's body.

The Lord Cobham answered: "As I said before, he and you together maketh whole the great antichrist; of whom he is the great head, you bishops, priests, prelates, and monks are the body, and the begging friars are the tail, for they cover the filthiness of you both with their subtle sophistry. Never will I in conscience obey any of you all, till I see you with Peter follow Christ in conversation."

[1 'chyrurgian,' 1st ed.]

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Then read the doctor again. "The fourth point is this: 'Holy church hath determined that it is meritorious to a christian man to go on pilgrimage to holy places, and there specially to worship holy relics and images of saints, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all other saints besides approved by the church of Rome.' Sir, what say ye to this?" The fourth article. Abominable knaves.

Whereunto he answered: "I owe them no service by any commandment of God, and therefore I mind not to seek them for your covetousness. It were best ye swept them fair from cobwebs and dust, and so laid them up for catching of scath; or else to bury them fair in the ground, as ye do other aged people which are God's images. It is a wonderful thing that saints, now being dead, should become so covetous and needy, and thereupon so bitterly beg, which all their lifetime hated all covetousness and begging. But this I say unto you, and I would all the world should mark it, that with your shrives and idols, your feigned absolutions and pardons, ye draw unto you the substance, wealth, and chief pleasures of all christian realms." What is to be done with images. Saints are covetous beggars.

"Why, sir," said one of the clerks, "will ye not worship good images?" A whelp of Satan.

"What worship should I give unto them?" said the Lord Cobham.

Then said friar Palmer unto him: "Sir, ye will worship the cross of Christ, that he died upon?" Hypocrisy for his part.

"Where is it?" said the Lord Cobham.

The friar said: "I put ye the case, sir, that it were here even now before you?" Idiotish beggary.

The Lord Cobham answered: "This is a great wise man, to put me an earnest question of a thing, and yet he his self knoweth not where the thing[2] self is. Yet once again ask I you, what worship I should do unto it?"

A clerk said unto him: "Such worship as Paul speaketh of, and that is this: 'God forbid that I should joy but only in the cross of Jesus Christ'." Gal. vi.

Then said the Lord Cobham, and spread his arms abroad: "This is a very cross, yea, and so much better than your cross of wood, in that it was created of God. Yet will not I seek to have it worshipped." A christian knight.

Then said the bishop of London: "Sir, ye wot well that he died on a material cross." A brutish bishop.

[2 'it,' 1st ed.]

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The Lord Cobham said: "Yea, and I wot also that our salvation came not in by that material cross, but alone by him which died thereupon. And well I wot that holy St Paul rejoiced in none other cross, but in Christ's passion and death only, and in his own sufferings of like persecution with him for the same self verity that he had suffered for afore."

A very man of God.

Another clerk yet asked him: "Will ye then do none honour to the holy cross?"

O devils incarnate!

He answered him: "Yes, if he were mine, I would lay him up honestly, and see unto him, that he should take no more scaths abroad, nor be robbed of his goods, as he is now-a-days."

Then said the archbishop unto him: "Sir John, ye have spoken here many wonderful words to the slanderous rebuke of all the whole spiritualty, giving a great ill example unto the common sort here, to have us in the more disdain. Much time have we spent here about you, and all in vain, so far as I can see. Well, we must be now at this short point with you, for the day passeth away: ye must either submit yourself to the ordinance of holy church, or else throw yourself (no remedy) into most deep danger. See to it in time, for anon it will be else too late."

Slandered with the truth.

The serpent sheweth his nature.

The Lord Cobham said: "I know not to what purpose I should otherwise submit me. Much more have you offended me than ever I offended you, in thus troubling me before this multitude."

None offence done.

Then said the archbishop again unto him: "We once again require you to remember yourself well, and to have none other opinion in these matters than the universal faith and belief of the holy church of Rome is; and so, like an obedient child, to return to the unity of your mother. See to it (I say) in time; for yet ye may have remedy, whereas anon it will be too late."

A wolfish offer of gentleness.

The Lord Cobham said expressly before them all: "I will none otherwise believe in these points than I have told ye here afore. Do with me what ye will."

O constant Christian!

Finally then the archbishop said: "Well then, I see none other, but we must needs do the law: we must proceed forth to the sentence definitive, and both judge ye and condemn ye for an heretic."

Abominable thieves and murderers.

And with that the archbishop stood up, and read there a

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bill of his condemnation, all the clergy and laity availing[1] their bonnets. And this was thereof the tenor.

THE DEFINITIVE SENTENCE OF HIS CONDEMNATION.

In Dei nomine, Amen. Nos Thomas, permissione divina Cantuariensis ecclesiæ archiepiscopus, metropolitanus, totius Angliæ primas, et apostolicæ sedis legatus, and so forth in barbarous Latin; which I have here translated into English for a more plain understanding to the reader.

Ex magno processu Thomæ Arundeli.

"In the name of God. So be it. We Thomas, by the sufferance of God archbishop of Canterbury, metropolitan, and primate of all England, and legate from the apostolic seat of Rome, will this to be known unto all men. In a certain cause of heresy, and upon divers articles, whereupon sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, after a diligent inquisition made for the same, was detected, accused, and presented before us in our last convocation of all our whole clergy of[2] our province of Canterbury, holden in the cathedral church of Paul's at London; at the lawful denouncement and request of our universal clergy in the said convocation, we proceeded against him according to the law (God to witness), with all the favour possible: and following Christ's example in all that we might (which willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live), we took upon us to correct him, and sought all other ways possible to bring him again to the church's unity, declaring unto him what the holy and universal church of Rome hath said, holden, determined, and taught in that behalf. And though we found him in the catholic faith far wide, and so stiffnecked that he would not confess his error, nor purge himself, nor yet repent him thereof; we yet pitying him of fatherly compassion, and entirely desiring the health of his soul, appointed him a competent time of deliberation, to see if he would repent and seek to be reformed: and since we have found him worse and worse. Considering therefore that he is incorrigible, we are driven to the very extremity of the law, and with great heaviness of heart we now proceed to the final[3] publication of the sentence definitive against him."

Suffered of God as a plague.

An heretic for confessing Christ.

Ezek. xviii. Ezek. xxxiii.

The wolf would appear charitable.

See if they shew not themselves.

[1 i. e. lowering or bowing.] [2 'our whole clergy of,' not in 1st ed.]
[3 'final,' not in first ed.]

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Idiots, knaves, and beasts.

Then brought he forth another bill containing the said sentence, and that he read also in his bauger Latin: *Christi nomine invocato, ipsumque solum præ oculis habentes. Quia per acta inactitata,* and so forth. Which I have also translated into English, that men may understand it.

Ex magno processu Thomæ Arundell.

"Christ we take unto witness, that nothing else we seek in this our whole enterprise, but his only glory. Forasmuch as we have found by divers acts done, brought forth, and exhibited, by sordry[1] evidences, signs, and tokens, and also by many most manifest proofs, the said sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, not only an evident heretic in his own person, but also a mighty maintainer of other heretics

That church is an whore.

against the faith and religion of the holy and universal church of Rome; namely about the two sacraments of the altar and of penance, besides the pope's power and pilgrimages; and that he, as the child of iniquity and darkness, hath so hardened his heart that he will in no case attend unto the voice

A thief is that pastor.

of his pastor; neither will he be allured by strait admonishments, nor yet be brought in by favourable words: the worthiness of the cause first weighed on the one side, and his unworthiness again considered on the other side, his faults also aggravated, or made double through his damnable ob-

A colour of deceit is this.

stinacy: we being loth that he which is naught should be worse, and so with his contagiousness infect the multitude: by the sage counsel and assent of the very discreet fathers,

A sort of unlearned beasts.

our honourable brethren and lord bishops here present, Richard of London, Henry of Winchester, and Benet of Bangor, and of other great learned and wise men here, both doctors of divinity and of the laws canon and civil, seculars and religious, with divers other expert men assisting us, we sententially and definitively by this present writing judge,

As Caiaphas did Christ.

declare, and condemn the said sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, for a most pernicious and detestable heretic, convicted upon the same, and refusing utterly to obey the church again, committing him here from henceforth as a condemned heretic to the secular jurisdiction, power, and

Christ is condemned in his faithful member.

judgment to do him thereupon to death. Furthermore we excommunicate and denounce accursed not only this heretic here present, but so many else besides as shall hereafter in favour of his error either receive him or defend him, counsel

[1 'sondry,' 1st ed., i.e. 'sundry.']

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him, or help him, or any other way maintain him, as very faulters, receivers, defenders, counsellers, aiders, and maintainers of condemned heretics.

"And that these premises may be the better known to all faithful christian men, we commit it here unto your charges, and give ye strait commandment thereupon by this writing also, that ye cause this condemnation and definitive sentence of excommunication concerning both this heretic and his faulters to be published throughout all your dioceses in cities, towns, and villages by your curates and parish priests, such time as they shall have most recourse of people. And see that it be done after this sort: As the people are thus gathered devoutly together, let the curate every where go into the pulpit, and there open, declare, and expound this process in the mother tongue in an audible and intelligible voice, that it may well be perceived of all men, and that upon the fear of this declaration also the people may fall from their ill opinions conceived now of late by seditious preachers. Moreover we will, that after we have delivered unto each one of you bishops (which are here present) a copy hereof, that ye cause the same to be written out again into divers copies, and so to be sent unto the other bishops and prelates of our whole province, that they may also see the contents thereof solemnly published within their dioceses and cures. Finally we will, that both you and they signify again unto us seriously and distinctly by your writings, as the matter is without feigned colour in every point performed, the day whereupon ye received this process, the time when it was of you executed, and after what sort it was done in every condition, according to the tenor hereof, that we may know it to be justly the same."

How spiritual these holy fathers are.

Antichrist sendeth forth his soldiers.

No such voice for the gospel.

None office left undone, pertaining to antichrist.

A crafty knave in that point.

A copy of this writing sent Thomas Arundell, the archbishop of Canterbury afterward from Maidstone the 10th day

Thom. Walden. in Fascic. Zizan. Wiclev.[a]

[a] The "Fasciculus Zizaniorum Wiclevi" is not a work of Walden's, but a collection of tracts on various subjects and by various authors: it exists in MS. in the Bodleian Library, see Cat. MSS. Anglice et Hib. No. 3629. in Lyp. Bodl. No. 163: the contents are there given. The condemnation of lord Cobham will be found in the MS. at fol. 97, b. The contents of the Fasciculus are fully and well given in the catalogue, with the exception that there are omitted,

a. Conclusiones Nic. Herford. fol. 68, b.

b. Acta contra M. Henricum Crompe, monachum, in Magn.

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of October, within the same year of our Lord 1413, unto Richard Clifford, the bishop of London, which thus beginneth: *Thomas permissione divina, &c.*

Richard Clifford.

The said Richard Clifford sent another copy thereof, inclosed within his own letters, unto Robert Mascall, a Carmelite friar, which was then bishop of Hereford in Wales, written from Hadham the 23rd day of October in the same year, and the beginning thereof is this: *Reverende in Christo pater, &c.*

Robert Mascall.

The said Robert Mascall directed another copy thereof from London, the 27th day of November in the same year, inclosed in his own commission also, unto his archdeacons and deans in Hereford and Shrewsbury. And this is thereof the beginning: *Venerabilibus et discretis viris, &c.*

In like manner did the other bishops within their dioceses.

Ex utroque exemplari.

After that the archbishop had thus read the bill of his condemnation with most extremity before the whole multitude, the Lord Cobham said with a most cheerful countenance:

Matt. x.

"Though ye judge my body, which is but a wretched thing, yet am I certain and sure that ye can do no harm to my

Job i.

soul, no more than could Satan upon the soul of Job. He that created that, will of his infinite mercy and promise save

A worthy warrior.

it, I have therein no manner of doubt. And as concerning these articles before rehearsed, I will stand to them even to the very death, by the grace of my eternal God."

And therewith he turned him unto the people, casting his hands abroad, and saying with a very loud voice: "Good

Concil. reg. Stamford, in domo Carmelitarum, sub Will. archiep. Cantuar. fol. 76, b.

c. Hereses et confessio M. Joh. Purvey, extracto de libello suo heretico, fol. 84, b.

d. Testimonia Joh. Purvey; *manu Jo. Bale*, fol. 84, b.

e. Conclusiones, et alia, ad Will. Sautre, spectantes, fol. 89, b.

f. Sententia contra Will. Taylor, fol. 90.

g. Confessio et abjuratio dom. de Cobham, fol. 90, b.

h. Examinatio super hæresibus Will. Whyte, fol. 91.

i. Processus contra dom. de Cobham, fol. 94, b.

k. Examinatio Will. Thorpe, coram Tho. Arundell; *manu Jo. Bale*, fol. 98, b.

l. Ex sermone cujusdam Carmelitæ de quadam ecclesiæ scismate, fol. 103.

m. Collectio errorum in Anglia et Parisiis condemnatorum, fol. 149, b.]

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christian people, for God's love be well ware of these men: for they will else beguile you, and lead you blindlings into hell with themselves. For Christ saith plainly unto you: 'If one blind man leadeth another, they are like both to fall into the ditch.'" Christianly warned. Matt. xv.

After this he fell down there upon his knees, and thus before them all prayed for his enemies, holding up both his hands and his eyes towards heaven, and saying: "Lord God eternal, I beseech thee for thy great mercy's sake to forgive my pursuers, if it be thy blessed will." And then he was delivered to sir Robert Morley, and so led forth again to the Tower of London. And thus was there an end of that day's work. He prayeth for his enemies.

While the Lord Cobham was thus in the Tower, he sent out privily unto his friends. And they at his desire wrote this little bill here following, causing it to be set up in divers quarters of London, that the people should not believe the slanders and lies that his enemies the bishops' servants and priests had made on him abroad. And this was the letter: Ex vetusto exemplari Londinense. Enemies.

"Forasmuch as sir John Oldcastle, knight, and Lord Cobham, is untruly convicted and imprisoned, falsely reported and slandered among the common people by his adversaries, that he should otherwise both feel and speak of the sacraments of the church, and specially of the blessed sacrament of the altar, than was written in the confession of his belief, which was indented and taken to the clergy, and so set up in divers open places in the city of London: known be it here to all the world, that he never since varied in any point therefrom; but this is plainly his belief, that all the sacraments of the church be profitable and expedient also to all them that shall be saved, taking them after the intent that Christ and his true church hath ordained. Furthermore he believeth that in the blessed sacrament of the altar is verily and truly Christ's body in form of bread." A testimonial made by his friends. To stop lying lips. A rehearsal of his belief.

After this the bishops and priests were in much obloquy both of the nobility and commons, partly for that they had so cruelly handled the good Lord Cobham, and partly again because his opinion (as they thought at that time) was perfect concerning the sacrament. As they feared this to grow to further inconvenience towards them both ways, they drew their heads together, and at the last consented to use another The clergy in hate of the people. A practice of false priests.

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practice somewhat contrary to that they had done afore. They caused it by and by to be blown abroad by their feed servants, friends, and babbling Sir Johns, that the said Lord Cobham was become a good man, and had lowly[1] submitted himself in all things unto holy church, utterly changing his opinion concerning the sacrament. And thereupon they counterfeited an abjuration in his name, that the people should take no hold of that opinion by any thing they had heard of him before, and to stand so in the more awe of them, considering him so great a man, and by them subdued.

These are their common feats.

"This is the abjuration," say they, "of sir John Oldcastle, knight, sometime the Lord Cobham."

AN ABJURATION COUNTERFEITED OF THE BISHOPS.

Walden. in Fascic. Zizan. Wiclev. Ms. Bodl. No. 163, fol. 89. b.

"*In Dei nomine, Amen.* I, John Oldcastle, denounced, detected, and convicted of and upon divers articles savouring both heresy and error, before the reverend father in Christ and my good lord Thomas, by the permission of God lord archbishop of Canterbury, and my lawful and rightful judge in that behalf, expressly grant and confess, that as concerning the estate and power of the most holy father the pope of Rome, of his archbishops, his bishops, and his other prelates, the degrees of the church, and the holy sacraments of the same, specially of the sacraments of the altar and of penance, and other observances besides of our mother holy church, as pilgrimages and pardons, I affirm (I say) before the said reverend father archbishop and elsewhere, that I, being ill seduced by divers seditious preachers, have grievously erred and heretically persisted, blasphemously answered, and obstinately rebelled. And therefore I am by the said reverend father, before the reverend fathers in Christ also, the bishops of London, Winchester, and Bangor, lawfully condemned for an heretic.

Mark from whence this gear cometh.

Fine workmanship, I trow.

Alas, good man, thou art slandered.

"Nevertheless yet I now remembering myself, and coveting by this mean to avoid that temporal pain which I am worthy to suffer as an heretic, at the assignation of my most excellent christian prince and liege lord King Henry the fifth, now by the grace of God most worthy king both of England

[1 'lawly,' 1st ed.]

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and of France, minding also to prefer the wholesome determination, sentence, and doctrine of the holy and universal church of Rome, before the unwholesome opinions of myself, my teachers, and my followers; I freely, willingly, deliberately, and thoroughly confess, grant, and affirm the most holy fathers in Christ St Peter the apostle, and his successors bishops of Rome, specially now at this time my most blessed lord pope John, by the permission of God the twenty-third pope of that name, which now holdeth Peter's seat (and each of them in their succession) in full strength and power to be Christ's vicar in earth and the head of the church militant; and that by the strength of his office (what though he be a great sinner and afore known of God to be damned?) he hath full authority and power to rule and govern, bind and loose, save and destroy, accurse and assoil, all other christian men.

A tyrannous whore is that church.

He poisoned his predecessor, to be pope.

Ye lie, false knaves, ye lie.

"And agreeably still unto this, I confess, grant, and affirm all other archbishops, bishops, and prelates, in their provinces, dioceses, and parishes, appointed by the said pope of Rome to assist him in his doings or business, by his decreed[2] canons or virtue of his office, to have had in times past, to have now at this time, and that they ought to have in time to come, authority and power to rule and to govern, bind and loose, accurse and assoil, the subjects or peoples of their aforesaid provinces, dioceses, and parishes, and that their said subjects or peoples ought of right in all things to obey them. Furthermore I confess, grant, and affirm that the said spiritual fathers, as our most holy father the pope, archbishops, bishops, and prelates, have had, have now, and ought to have hereafter, authority and power for the estate, order, and governance of their subjects or peoples, to make laws, decrees, statutes, and constitutions; yea, and to publish, command, and compel their said subjects and peoples to the observation of them.

Antichrist advanceth himself here.

How prove ye that by the scriptures?

Is not this knavery, think you?

"Moreover I confess, grant, and affirm that all these foresaid laws, decrees, statutes, and constitutions, made, published, and commanded according to the form of spiritual law, all christian people and every man in himself is straitly bound to observe and meekly to obey according to the diversity of the foresaid powers: as the laws, statutes, canons, and constitutions of our most holy father the pope incorporated in

No scriptures have they to shew.

What beggarly baggage is this?

[2 'decrees,' 1st ed.]

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his decrees, decretals, clementines, codes, charts, rescripts, sextiles, and extravagants the world over all; and as the provincial statutes of archbishops in their provinces, the synodal acts of bishops in their dioceses, and the commendable rules and customs of prelates in their colleges, and curates in their parishes, all christian people are both bound to observe and also most meekly to obey. Over and besides all this, I, John Oldcastle, utterly forsaking and renouncing all the aforesaid errors and heresies, and all other errors and heresies like unto them, lay my hand here upon this book or holy evangely of God, and swear, that I shall never more from henceforth hold these foresaid heresies, nor yet any other like unto them wittingly. Neither shall I give counsel, aid, help, nor favour at any time to them that shall hold, teach, affirm, or maintain the same, as God shall help me and these holy evangelies. And that I shall from henceforth faithfully obey and inviolably observe all the holy laws, statutes, canons, and constitutions of all the popes of Rome, archbishops, bishops, and prelates, as are contained and determined in their holy decrees, decretals, clementines, codes, charts, rescripts, sextiles, sums papal, extravagants, statutes provincial, acts synodal, and other ordinary rules and customs constituted by them or that shall chance hereafter directly to be determined or made. To these and all such other will I myself with all power possible apply. Besides all this, the penance which it shall please my said reverend father the lord archbishop of Canterbury hereafter to enjoin me for my sins, I will meekly obey and faithfully fulfil. Finally, all my seducers and false teachers, and all other besides whom I shall hereafter know suspected of heresy or errors, I shall effectually present or cause to be presented unto my said reverend father lord archbishop, or to them which hath his authority, so soon as I can conveniently do it, and see that they be corrected to my uttermost power. Amen."

Intolerable yokes lay they.

Never made he such an oath.

This knavery maintain they still.

The blasphemous bible of papists.

Mark this handling.

This charge give they commonly.

THE CRUEL COMPLAINT OF THE CLERGY AND TYRANNOUS ACT THEREUPON MADE.

The devil hath not more ways to mischief.

NEVER came this abjuration to the hands of the Lord Cobham, neither was it compiled of them for that purpose,

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but only therewith to blear the eyes of the unlearned multitude. And when they perceived that policy would not help, but made more and more against them, then sought they out another false practice. They went unto the king with a most grievous complaint, like as they did afore in his father's time, that in every quarter of the realm by reason of Wicliffe's opinions and the said Lord Cobham, were wonderful contentions, rumours, tumults, uproars, confederations, dissensions, divisions, differences, discords, harms, slanders, schisms, sects, seditions, perturbations, perils, unlawful assemblies, variances, strifes, fightings, rebellious rufflings, and daily insurrections. The church (they said) was hated; the diocesans were not obeyed; the ordinaries were not regarded; the spiritual officers, as suffragans, archdeacons, chancellors, doctors, commissaries, officials, deans, lawyers, scribes, and summoners were everywhere despised; the laws and liberties of holy church were trodden under foot; the christian faith was ruinously decayed; God's service was laughed to scorn; the spiritual jurisdiction, authority, honour, power, policy, laws, rites, ceremonies, curses, keys, censures, and canonical sanctions of the church were had in an utter contempt: so that all in a manner was come to nought.

Ex Statuto Parliamenti Regis Henrici V. [Statutes at large, London, 4to, 1763, Vol. I. p. 463. 2 Henry V. cap. vii.]

The clamour of papists.

They cry apace for their bellies.

And the cause of this was, that the heretics and Lollards of Wicliffe's opinion were suffered to preach abroad so boldly, to gather conventicles unto them, to keep schools in men's houses, to make books, compile treatises, and write ballads, to teach privately in angles and corners, as in woods, fields, meadows, pastures, groves, and in caves of the ground. This would be (they said) a destruction to the commonwealth, a subversion to the land, and an utter decay of the king's estate royal, if remedy were not sought in time. And this was their policy to couple the king's authority with that they had done in their former counsel of craft, and so to make it thereby the stronger: for they perceived themselves very far too weak else to follow against their enemies that they had so largely enterprised. Upon this complaint, the king immediately called a parliament at Leicester. It might not in those days be holden at Westminster, for the great favour that the Lord Cobham had both in London and about the city. Yet were they deceived: that they doubted most lighted there soonest upon them.

Christ always troubleth them.

An old practice of theirs yet used.

A parliament at Leicester.

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Robert Fabian. in Chron. [Ed. Sir Hy Ellis, London, 1811, 4to, p. 578.]

Walden. in Fascic. [MS. Bodl. 163, fol. 105. The bill is translated by Foxe Seeley's Ed. Vol. III. p. 353.]

A bill was put in there again by the commons against their continual wasting of the temporalities, like as it had been twice afore by procurement of the said Lord Cobham, both in the days of king Richard the second, *anno* 1395, and also of king Henry the fourth, *anno Domini* 1410. Whereupon was grown all this malice afore specified; but this was then workmanly defeated by another proper practice of theirs. They put the king in remembrance to claim his right in France, and granted him thereunto a dime, with other great subsidy of money. Thus were Christ's people betrayed every way, and their lives bought and sold by these most cruel thieves. For in the said parliament the king made this most blasphemous and cruel act, to be as a law for ever: that whatsoever they were that should read the scriptures in the mother tongue (which was then called Wicliffe's learning), they should forfeit land, cattle, body, life, and goods from their heirs for ever, and so be condemned for heretics to God, enemies to the crown, and most errant traitors to the land. Besides this it was enacted, that never a sanctuary nor privileged ground within the realm should hold them, though they were still permitted both to thieves and murderers. And if in case they would not give over, or were after their pardon relapsed, they should suffer death in two manner of kinds; that is, they should first be hanged for treason against the king, and then be burned for heresy against God, and yet neither of both committed. The beginning of that act is this: *Pro eo quod magni rumores*, &c. Anon after was it proclaimed throughout the realm; and then had the bishops, priests, monks, and friars a world somewhat to their minds. For then were many taken in divers quarters, and suffered most cruel death. And many fled out of the land into Germany, Bohemia, France, Spain, Portugal, and into the wild of Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, working there many marvels against their false kingdom too long to write. In the Christmas following was sir Roger Acton, knight, master John Browne, esquire, sir John Beverlay, a learned preacher, and divers other more, attached for quarrelling with certain priests, and so imprisoned. For all men at that time could not patiently suffer their blasphemous brags.

Fabian. in Chron.

A practice.

Walden. ad Martin. Pap. [Lib. ii. cap. 46. Ed. Paris, 1533, p. 143.] Polyd. Vergil. [Ed. Basil. 1546, p. 441.]

Christ hath less favour than thieves.

Never tyrant more cruel.

Walden. ad Martin. Pap. [Lib. ii. cap. i. De Sacrament. cap. lii.]

Fabian. [p. 578.] Joh. Major. [Ed. Edin. 1740, Lib. vi. cap. ix. p. 288.] Polyd. Vergil. [p. 441.]

A great lie.

The complaint was made unto the king of them, that they had made a great assembly in St Giles's field at London,

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purposing the destruction of the land, and the subversion of the commonwealth. As the king was thus informed, he erected a banner (saith Walden) with a cross thereupon, (as the pope doth commonly by his legates, when he pretendeth to war against the Turk,) and with a[1] great number of men entered the same field, where as he found no such company: yet was the complaint judged true, because the bishops had spoken it at the information of their priests. All this hath Thomas Walden in divers of his works, which was at the same time a white or Carmelite friar, and the king's confessor, and partly it is touched both by Robert Fabian, and by Polydorus Vergilius in their English chronicles, but not in all points rightly, as is to be seen in the preface afore. In the mean season, sir John Oldcastle the Lord Cobham escaped out of the Tower of London in the night, and so fled into Wales, where as he continued more than four years after.

Walden. ad Martin. et in Prolog. de Sacrament. cap. iv.

What Thomas Walden was.

Fabian. p. 577. Polyd. Vergil. in Chron. [p. 441.]

Some writers have thought this escape to come by the said sir Roger Acton, and other gentlemen in displeasure of the priests, and that to be the chief occasion of their deaths: which might well be, but Walden doth not so utter it, which reigned the same self time[2]. In January next following was the aforenamed sir Roger Acton, master John Browne, sir John Beverlay, and thirty-six more (of whom the more part were gentlemen of birth), convicted of heresy by the bishops, and condemned of treason by the temporality, and according to the act were first hanged, and then brent in the said St Giles's field. In the same year also was one John Claydon, a skinner, and one Richard Turmyne[3], a baker, both hanged and brent in Smithfield by that virtuous act, besides that was done in all other quarters of England, which was no small number, if it were now throughly known.

A conjecture of writers.

Joh. Major. [Lib. vi. cap. ix. Hist. Scot. Ed. Edin. 1740, p. 288.]

Robert Fabian. in Chron. [p. 578.]

THE LATTER IMPRISONING AND DEATH OF THE LORD COBHAM.

In the year of our Lord 1415, died Thomas Arundel, which had been archbishop of Canterbury more than thirty-two years, to the great destruction of christian belief. Yet died not his prodigious tyranny with him, but succeeded with

Thomas Arundel died.

[1 'a,' not in 1st ed.] [2 'self same,' 1st ed.] [3 'Turmin,' 1st ed.]

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his office in Henry Chicheley, and in a great sort more of
The Lord Cobham is betrayed.
that[1] spiteful spirituality. For their malice was not yet sated against the good Lord Cobham. But they confedered with the Lord Powys (which was at that time a great governor in Wales), feeding him with lordly gifts and promises to ac-
Matt. xxvi.
complish their desire. He at the last thus monied with Judas, and outwardly pretending him great amity and favour, most cowardly and wretchedly took him, and, in conclusion, so sent him up to London, where as he remained a month or
Condemned is God's true servant.
two imprisoned again in the Tower: and, after long process, they condemned him again of heresy and treason by force of the aforenamed act, he rendering thanks unto God, that he had so appointed him to suffer for his name's sake.

He is led forth to his death.
And upon the day appointed he was brought out of the Tower with his arms bound behind him, having a very cheerful countenance. Then was he laid upon an hurdle, as though he had been a most heinous traitor to the crown, and so drawn forth into St Giles's field, where as they had set up a new pair of gallows. As he was come to the place of
He prayeth for his enemies.
execution, and was taken from the hurdle, he fell down devoutly upon his knees, desiring Almighty God to forgive his enemies. Then stood he up and beheld the multitude, exhorting them in most godly manner to follow the laws of God written in the scriptures, and in any wise to beware of such teachers as they see contrary to Christ in their conver-
Brent was he in chains.
sation and living, with many other special counsels. Then was he hanged up there by the middle in chains of iron, and so consumed alive in the fire, praising the name of God so long as his life lasted. In the end he commended his soul into the hands of God, and so departed hence most christianly, his body resolved into ashes.

What the people and priests did.
And this was done in the year of our Lord 1418, which was the sixth year of the reign of king Henry the fifth, the
Not the pope's servant, but Christ's.
people there present shewing great dolour. How the priests that time fared, blasphemed, and cursed, requiring the people not to pray for him, but to judge him damned in hell, for that he departed not in the obedience of their pope, it were too long to write. This terrible kind of death with gallows, chains, and fire, appeareth not very precious in the eyes of men that be carnal, no more than did the death of Christ

[1 'The,' 1st ed.]

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when he was hanged up among thieves. "The righteous seemeth to die," saith the wise man, "in the sight of them which are unwise, and their end is taken for very destruction." "Ungodly fools think their lives very madness, and their passage hence without all honour. But though they suffer pain before men," saith he, "yet is their expectation full of immortality. They are accounted for the children of God, and have their just portion among the saints. As gold in the furnace doth God try his elect, and as a most pleasant brent offering receiveth he them to rest." The more hard the passage be, the more glorious shall they appear in the latter resurrection. Not that the afflictions of this life are worthy of such a glory, but that it is God's heavenly pleasure so to reward them. Never are the judgments and ways of men like unto the judgments and ways of God, but contrary evermore, unless they be taught of him. "In the latter time," saith the Lord unto Daniel, "shall many be chosen, proved, and purified by fire; yet shall the ungodly live wickedly still, and have no understanding that is of faith." By an angel from heaven was John earnestly commanded to write, that "blessed are the dead which hence depart in the Lord." "Right dear," saith David, "in the sight of God is the death of his true servants." Thus resteth this valiant christian knight, sir John Oldcastle, under the altar of God (which is Jesus Christ), among that godly company which in the kingdom of patience suffered great tribulation with the death of their bodies for his faithful word and testimony, abiding there with them the fulfilling of their whole number, and the full restoration of his elect. The which he grant in effect at his time appointed, which is one God eternal. *Amen.*

John xix. Wisd. iii. Wisd. v. John i. Wisd. iii. Heb. xi. Rom. viii. Isai. lv. Jer. xxxii. Dan. xii. Rev. xiv. Psal. cxvi. Rev. vi. Rev. i. Rev. vii. Rev. xx.

THE CONCLUSION.

BESIDES the causes rehearsed afore in the preface, concerning the dreadful death of this most christian knight, sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, this is also reckoned for one. In the end of the first book, which he put up into the parliament house against the abusions of the clergy, in the year of our Lord 1395, (which was also the 18th year of

Another cause of his death.

Against the clergy.

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king Richard the second,) were these six verses written as a brief conclusion summary of the universal contents thereof:

Verses in Latin.

Plangunt Anglorum gentes crimen sodomorum.
Paulus fert, horum sunt idola causa malorum.
Surgunt ingrati, Giezits Symone nati,
Nomine prælati, hoc defensare parati.
Qui reges estis, populis quicunque præestis,
Qualiter hiis gestis gladios prohibere potestis?

A time of ignorance.

Though the verses be gross and imperfect according to the time then, wherein all fresh literature was clearly extinguished; yet is the sentence of them lively, and of a fresh faithful spirit, even in the zeal of Elias and Phinehas for rebuke of sin. And thus are they in the English:

The verses are here Englished.

Bewail may England the sin of sodomites.
For idols and they are ground of all their woe.
Of Simon Magus, a sect of hypocrites,
Surnamed prelates, are up with them to go
And to uphold them, in all that they may do.
You that be rulers, peculiarly selected,
How can ye suffer such mischiefs[1] uncorrected?

By nothing will they amend.

When this book would not help towards any reformation, but was laughed to scorn of the bishops, then were these verses copied out by divers men, and set upon their windows, gates, and doors, which were then known for obstinate hypocrites and fleshly livers, which made the prelates mad.

The insurrection complained of.

And this is the great insurrection that Walden complaineth of unto pope Martin the fifth, and after him Polydorus the pope's collector, with other papists more, wherein never a one man was hurt. I would marvel much more of the doubleness of Thomas Walden, being then the king's confessor, if I did not know the unshamefaced nature of that lying generation. In his first epistle unto pope Martin, and in the first preface of his fourth book *contra Wiclevistas*[2], he saith that

Ad Martin. Pap. et in Prefat. iv.

[1 'To go,' 1st ed.]

[2 The passage cited by Walden, which is the following, occurs in the letter of archbishop Arundel to the bishop of London, describing the process against Cobham: Assidentibusque nobis venerabilibus confratribus nostris dominis, Ricardo Londou. et Henrico Winton. Dei gratia episcopis, comparuit personaliter dominus Robertus de Morley, miles, custos Turris London. secumque prefatum dominum Johannem Oldecastel, militem, adduxit, et coram nobis collocavit.—After the word *adduxit*, Foxe introduces the explanatory words, "nam parum

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sir John Oldcastle with a great number of heretics conspired against king Henry the fifth, in the first year of his reign, and that he offered him for every monk, canon, friar, and popish priest's head within his realm, a gold noble. And clean contrary unto this, he testifieth in his book called *Fasciculus Zizaniorum Wiclevi*, that he was the same self time, year, month, week, and day a prisoner within the Tower of London. How well these two writings agree, I report me.

Lib. contr. Wiclev.[3]

Fascic. Zizan. Wiclev. [Bodl. MS. 168, fol. 95. b.]

But thus commonly are innocent men lied upon among these blasphemous belly-gods. But he that is essentially true of himself hath promised at one time or other to clear his true servant, not by lies and fables, but by his own pure word. "No secret," saith he, "is so close, but once shall be opened, neither is any thing so hid, that shall not at the last be known clearly." Thus hath sir John Oldcastle a triumphant victory over his enemies by the verity which he defended, all contrary to the blind world's expectation; and they have a foul overthrow, being proved manifest murderers, blind beasts, hypocrites, and liars by the same. Such a sweet Lord is God always to those that be his true servants, blessed be his holy name therefore!

Liars.

John viii.

Matt. x. Luke xii.

Cobham overcometh.

Psal. xxxiii. Luke i.

Confer the causes of this godly man's death with the points that Thomas Becket died for and other popish martyrs besides, and ye shall find them far different and unlike. Thomas Becket was slain at Canterbury, in his prelate's apparel, in the head church, before the high altar, among religious monks and priests, and in the holy time of Christmas, by his own seeking: and all this is glorious unto worldly judgments. Sir John Oldcastle was brent in chains at London in St Giles's field, under the gallows, among the lay-people, and upon the profane working-day, at the bishops' procurement. And all this is unglorious, yea, and very despisable unto those worldly eyes. What though Jesus Christ his master afore him were handled after a very like sort? For he was crucified at Hierusalem, without the city, and without the holy synagogue, accursed out of church, among the pro-

Stephan. Langt. in Vit. Thom. [Lib. iii. cap. xix.]

Walden. Lib. vi. cap. ix. [p. 269.] Joh. Major. Fabian. [p. 578.]

Jesus Christ.

Heb. xiii.

John ix.

ante per regios ministros comprehensus est, et in Turrim clausus." —Reg. Arundel. fol. 142, b. Wilkins, Concil. Vol. III. 354. See also Foxe, Rerum in Ecc. Gest. Ed. Basil. Pars I. p. 102.]

[3 In this latter passage no mention of sir John Oldcastle's name is made: it is merely said, "miles quidam magnus," &c. Ed. Paris, 1533, p. 240.]

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fane multitude, in the midst of thieves, in the place where as thieves were commonly hanged, and not upon the feastful day but afore it, by the bishops' procurement also.

Matt. xxvii. John xix. Acts iii.

Now let us consider the causes of both their deaths, and try them both by the manifest scriptures of the gospel, which of them should seem most to the glory of God, and which most to the glory of men. Thomas Becket died upon his own seeking only, for maintaining the wanton liberties and superfluous possessions of the Romish church here within England; which are both forbidden of Christ, and also condemned by the same scriptures. "He that forsaketh not all that he hath," saith he, "cannot be my disciple." And when a contention befell among the apostles for the superiority, he said also unto them: "The kings of the world have the world's dominion with all pomp and riches belonging to the same; but you shall not so." Sir John Oldcastle died at the importune suit of the clergy, for calling upon a christian reformation in that Romish church of theirs, and for manfully standing by the faithful testimonies of Jesu, as all the aforesaid process declareth. And this is both allowed in the gospel, and also required of every christian believer. "He that confesseth me and my word before men," saith Christ, "him will I confess for mine before my eternal Father. And he that shall deny me and my verity before men, him will I also deny for mine before my everlasting Father which is in heaven."

Heribertus Bossenham in Vita Thomæ.

Luke xiv.

Luke xxiii. 1 Pet. v.

Wherefore the Lord Cobham died.

Matt. x. Mark viii. Luke ix. Luke xii.

Thomas Becket in the time of his death commended himself to the patrons of his church (which were two gilded images of St Saviour and St Mary), and the cause of his church unto St Denys, and had no more but his priest's crown cut off (which is the pope's livery-mark) even by the very shaving, as his story mentioneth.

Sir John Oldcastle in the time of his death commended his soul, with David, Christ, and Stephen, into the hands of God the eternal Father, and his cause to the rightful judgment of his Son Jesus Christ, with desire of merciful forgiveness concerning his enemies, as became a faithful Christian, and had his whole body consumed in the fire. Now pluck from your eyes the corrupted spectacles of carnal or popish judgments, and do upon them that[1] clear sight which ye have by the Spirit of Christ; and, that faithfully done, tell me

Bened. de Burg. Petr. [Ed. Hearne, Oxon. 1735, Vol. I. p. 10.]

Johannes Capgrave. Nova Legenda Anglice. [Wynkyn de Worde, 1527, fol. 291.]

Stephan. Langton, [Lib. iii. cap. xviii. Ed. Brus. 4to, 1673, p. 885.]

How the Lord Cobham died.

No popish martyr is Cobham.

[1 'The,' 1st ed.]

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which of these two seemeth rather to be the martyr of Christ, and which the pope's martyr? "The ways of God," saith Esay, "are not the ways of men. But so far as the heavens are above the vile earth, so far do his judgments exceed theirs." "That which seemeth high and glorious unto men," saith Christ, "is very abomination afore God." By this may ye see that the precious spouse or immaculate church of Christ is no gorgeously painted gentlewoman, nor gloriously glittering madam[2], but all hidden and unknown to the worldly infidels which disdain to seek her in the scriptures.

Isai. lv

Luke xvi.

Psal. xlv.

Nothing is precious unto them, that shineth not unto the eye. A most fit member for Christ's mystical body is he that suffereth with the head thereof: as this good sir John Oldcastle did, when he was with Christ examined of the proud bishops, scorned of the priests, disdained of the world, ill reported, mocked, hated, reviled, accursed, and so committed unto the lay-judgment to be condemned by them unto most shameful and cruel death. Yea, so extremely malicious was that spiteful spirituality against him, that they would not suffer his body to be buried in their great city or holy church (which is spiritually called Sodoma and Ægyptus) to make the prophecy of St John's Apocalypse truly to be verified upon him, and to prove him Christ's member altogether. They both resolved his body into ashes, and also made the river to carry them away, like as they did also with the bones of John Wicliffe, lest any thing thereof should remain; because they would also shew themselves like in tyranny to Julianus Apostata, that so used the body of holy John Baptist afore them. I should make a comparison betwixt this blessed martyr of Christ, sir John Oldcastle, and Peter of Milan, with other of the pope's martyrs, which died for the pope's power, pardons, pilgrimages, ear-confession, and other popish matters more established in the general council of Lateran; but it would ask too much time.

Who is a right member of Christ.

The tyranny of bishops and priests.

Rev. xi.

De Sacramentalibus, cap. lxxxix. & cxxxvii. Fascic. Zizan.

The pope's martyrs.

And as concerning the kind of his contemptuous death or martyrdom. More vile was not his hanging under the gallows in an iron chain, than was the hanging of his Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross in the time of his death; nor than was the hanging of Peter, Andrew, and Philip his holy apostles, bishop Simeon, Dorotheus, Gorgonius, Alexander,

John xix. Petr. Equilin. Johan. Text.

[2 'mayden,' 1st ed.]

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Epipodius, Claudius, Asterius, Menon, Nemesius, Nestor, Agricola, Julia, Zoe the wife of Nicostratus, with many other holy martyrs more. More odious was not his burning in the fire, than was the cruel burning of Barnabas the apostle, Polycarpus the good bishop of Smyrna, Amancius, Agathon, Tyburcius, Getulius[1], Simphronius, Sosthenes, Victor, Dioscorus, Eulogius, Fructuosus, Castus, Æmilius, Fidentius, Hero, Irenæus, Aphra, Hilaria, Apollonia, Anastasia, and many hundreds more.

Brent was he with Christ's martyrs.

When this strong witness of the Lord was among the fat bulls of Basan, and most cruelly assaulted of them, he was thoroughly ascertained in his conscience, for that conflict of faith, to taste his eternal goodness in the lasting land of the living. Yea, such time as he was reproved of his enemies and forsaken of his friends, in manner of a broken vessel, he took a strong stomach unto him, as did the mighty Maccabees, and thought thus in his mind: that though those ungracious tyrants should put him unto death, yet would the eternal King (which is both resurrection and life) raise him up again in the resurrection of life everlasting, among them that have died for his pure laws. Already hath he raised his fame (which lay long dead) by the living spirit of his gospel, for that he was a minister thereof: which is a most evident token that he will hereafter, with his other mystical members, raise him up in perfect glory. When the gospel lay dead, glorious Thomas Becket was a saint, and John Oldcastle a forgotten heretic; but now that the light thereof shineth, we are like to see it far otherwise: for proud Becket hath already hidden his face, and poor Oldcastle beginneth now to appear very notable. Not all unrightly did St Augustine speak it, and other old doctors besides, that many were worshipped here in earth for saints, whose wretched souls are grievously cruciate in hell.

Psal. xxii. Amos iv.

John xii. Psal. xxvi.

Psal. xxx.

2 Mac. vii.

John xi. John vi. Rev. xx.

The gospel unsainteth Becket.

The gospel canonizeth Cobham.

Such time as our most worthy sovereign King Henry the eighth, now living, after the most godly example of king Josias visited the temples of his realm, he perceived the sinful shrine of this Becket to be unto his people a most pernicious evil, and therefore in the word of the Lord he utterly among other destroyed it. If he had upon that and such other abominable shrines brent those idolatrous priests which were

2 Kings xxiii. 2 Chron. xxxiv.

Priests suffered upon amendment.

[1 'Petulius,' 1st ed.]

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(and are yet) their chief maintainers, he had fulfilled that godly history throughout. But that which was not then performed, in hope of their amendment, may by chance light upon them hereafter, when no gentle warning will seem to be regarded. I doubt it not at all, but his most noble discretion perceiveth much more in that wicked generation of the pope's nourishing up, which always hath maintained (and yet do) such manifest errors, than he ever in his life yet uttered. The eternal Father reward his grace for that clear light of health which we poor creatures have received at his only hand under God, though it be not all without the grievous punishment of our bodies. By the process which we have afore here uttered of sir John Oldcastle, we may evidently see that great is the treasure which the Lord hath laid up for the behoof of them that have trusted in him. Wherewith now he maketh dumb the lying lips of them that disdainously reported the righteous, to the honour and praise of his most glorious name. *Amen.*

They dance but in a net.

The Lord preserve his grace.

Psal. xxx. Eccles. i. Wisd. v.

Thus endeth the brief chronicle concerning the examination and death of the blessed martyr of Christ, sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, not canonized of the pope, but in the precious blood of his Lord Jesus Christ. Collected by John Bale, and imprinted *anno Domini* 1544, *et* vi. *die Augusti.*

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THE EXAMINATION

OF

MASTER WILLIAM THORPE.

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The examinacy-

on of Master William Thorpe preste accused of heresye before Thomas Arundell / Archebisshop of Cāturbury / the yere of owre Lorde. M. CCCC. and seuen.

¶ The examinacion of the honorable knight syr Jhon Oldcastell Lorde Cobham / burnt of the said Archebisshop / in the fyrste yere of Kynge Henry the fyfth.

¶ We no more ashamed to heare it / then ye were and be / to do it.

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THE

EXAMINATION OF WILLIAM THORPE[1].

[ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER[2].]

Grace and peace in our Lord Jesus Christ. Read here with judgment, good reader, the examination of the blessed man of God, and there thou shalt easily perceive wherefore our holy church (as the most unholy sort of all the people will be called) make off their examinations in darkness, off the lay people clean excluded from their counsels. For if their lies had been openly confuted, and also that the accused of heresy might as well have been admitted to reason their articles with counsel, whether they were heresy or no, as the accused of treason against the king is admitted to his counsel to confute his cause and articles, whether they be treason or not, they should never have murdered nor prisoned so many good christian men as they have done. For their cloked lies could never have continued so long in the light, as they have done in corners. Their god-men, when they come in the pulpit and preach against the truth, cry, If their learning were good and true, they would never go in corners, but speak it openly. Whereunto I answer, that besides that Christ and his apostles were compelled (for because of the furiousness of their fathers

[1 This *examination* is included among the works of Bale, because he did himself publish it with that of Lord Cobham and without any note attributing it to Tyndale. For this reason, and because Bale collected and collated the examinations of Cobham and Askew, it has been determined in the present edition to include this examination of Thorpe, without regard to the assertion of Foxe that it was the work of Tyndale. The first edition, and which also contains the examination of Lord Cobham, has by the kindness of George Offor, Esq. of Grove House, Hackney, been lent to the Editor for the purpose of collation. It is a work of the highest rarity, if not unique.]

[2 This advertisement to the reader is probably Tyndale's: it is prefixed to the first edition.]

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the bishops and priests, which only that time would be called holy church,) oftentimes for waste secretly, and absent themselves and give place to their malice; yet we have daily examples of more than one or two, that have not spared nor feared for to speak and also to preach openly the truth, which have been taken of them, prisoned and brent, beside other that for fear of death have abjured and carried fagots.

Of whose articles and examination there is no layman that can shew a word. Who can tell wherefore (not many years past) there were seven burnt in Coventry in one day? Who can tell wherefore that good priest and holy martyr sir Thomas Litton was burnt, now this year, at Maidstone in Kent? I am sure, no man. For this is their cast, even when they have put to death or punished any man, after their secret examination, to slander him of such things as he never thought. As they may do well enough, seeing there is no man to contrary them.

Wherefore I exhort thee, good brother, whosoever thou be that readest this treatise, mark it well and consider it seriously, and thou shalt find not only what the church is, their doctrine of the sacrament, the worshipping of images, pilgrimages, confession, swearing and paying of tythes; but also thou mayest see what strong and substantial arguments of scripture and doctrines, and what clerkly reasons, my lord, the head and primate of the holy church in England (as he will be taken), bringeth against this poor, foolish, simple, and madlosell knave, a heretic as he calleth him; and also the very cause wherefore all their examinations are made in darkness. And the Lord of all light shall light thee with the candle of his grace, for to see the truth. Amen.

This I have corrected and put forth in the English, that now is used in England, for our southern men, nothing thereto adding, nor yet therefrom minishing. And I intend hereafter with the help of God, to put it forth in his own old English, which shall well serve, I doubt not, both for the northern men, and the faithful brethren of Scotland.

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WILLIAM THORPE,

THAT CONSTANT SERVANT OF GOD[1].

THUS much briefly being signified by the way, touching these who have been forced in time of this king[2] to open abjuration, next cometh to our hands the worthy history of Master William Thorpe, a warrior valiant under the triumphant banner of Christ, with the process of his examinations before the aforesaid Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, written by the said Thorpe, and storied by his own pen, at the request of his friends, as by his own words, in the process hereof, may appear; in whose examination, which seemeth first to begin A.D. 1407, thou shalt have, good reader, both to learn and to marvel: to learn, in that thou shalt hear truth discoursed and discussed, with the contrary reasons of the adversary dissolved; to marvel, for thou shalt behold here in this man the marvellous force and strength of the Lord's might, Spirit, and grace, working and fighting in his soldiers, and also speaking in their mouths, according to the word of his promise, Luke xxi. To the text of the story we have neither added nor diminished; but, as we have received it copied out, and corrected by Master William Tyndale (who had his own hand-writing), so we have here sent it, and set it out abroad. Although, for the more credit of the matter, I rather wished it in his own natural speech, wherein it was first written; notwithstanding, to put away all doubt and scruple herein, this I thought before to pre-monish and testify to the reader, touching the certainty hereof, that they be yet alive who have seen the self-same copy in its own old English, resembling the true antiquity both of the speech and of the time, the name of whom, as for record of the same to avouch, is Master Whitehead; who, as he hath seen the true ancient copy in the hands of George Constantine, so he given credible relation of the same, both to the printer and to me. Furthermore, the said Master Tyndale, albeit he did somewhat alter and amend the English thereof, and frame it after our man-

This history first set forth and corrected by Master William Tyndale.

[1 This short preface, introductory to Thorpe's "own preface," is from Foxe.]

[2 Henry IV.]

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ner, yet not fully in all words, but that something doth remain savouring of the old speech of that time. What the causes were, why this good man and servant of Christ, William Thorpe, did write it, and pen it out himself, it is sufficiently declared in his own preface, set before his book, which is here prefixed in manner as followeth.

THE PREFACE OF WILLIAM THORPE.

THE Lord God that knoweth all things wotteth well that I am right sorrowful for to write or to make known this sentence beneath written, where that of mine own christian set, in high state and dignity, so great blindness and malice may be known, that they that presume of themselves to destroy vices, and to plant in men virtues, neither dread to offend God, nor lust to please him, as their works shew. For certes the bidding of God and his law, which in the praising of his most holy name he commandeth to be known and kept of all men and women, young and old, after the cunning and power that he hath given to them, the prelates of this land and their ministers, with the covent of priests chiefly consenting to them, enforce them most busily to withstand, and destroy the holy ordinance of God. And therethrough God is greatly wroth and moved to take hard vengeance, not only upon them that do the evil, but also on them all that consent to these antichrist's limbs; which know or might know their malice and their falsehood, and dress[3] them not to withstand their malice and their great pride. Nevertheless four things moveth me to write this sentence beneath.

God's laws must be known and followed.

Four causes.

The first thing that moveth me hereto is this: that whereas it was known to certain friends, that I came from the prison of Shrewsbury, and (as it befell indeed) that I should to the prison of Canterbury; then divers friends in divers places spake to me full heartily and full tenderly, and commanded me then, if it so were that I should be examined before the archbishop of Canterbury, that, if I might in any wise, I should write mine apposing and mine answering. And I promised to my special friends, that, if I might, I would gladly do their biddings as I might.

The first cause.

The second thing that moveth me to write this sentence

The second cause.

[3] Dress: address.]

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is this: divers friends, which have heard that I have been examined before the archbishop, have come to me in prison, and counselled me busily, and coveted greatly that I should do the same thing. And other brethren have sent to me, and required me on God's behalf, that I should write out and make known both mine apposing and mine answering, for the profit that (as they say) over my knowledging may come thereof. But this they bade me, that I should be busy in all my wits, to go as near the sentence and the words as I could, both that were spoken to me, and that I spake; upaventure[1] this writing came another time before the archbishop and his council. And of this counselling I was right glad; for in my conscience I was moved to do this thing, and to ask hereto the special help of God. And so then I considering the great desire of divers friends of sundry places, according all in one, I occupied all my mind and my wits so busily, that through God's grace I perceived, by their meaning and their charitable desire, some profit might come therethrough. For sothfastness[2] and truth hath these conditions: wherever it is impugned, it hath a sweet smell, and thereof comes a sweet savour; and the more violently the enemies dress themselves to oppress and to withstand the truth, the greater and the sweeter smell cometh thereof. And therefore this heavenly smell of God's word will not as a smoke pass away with the wind; but it will descend and rest in some clean soul, that thirsteth thereafter. And thus some deal by this writing may be perceived, through God's grace, how that the enemies of the truth (standing boldly in their malice) enforce them to withstand the freedom of Christ's gospel, for which freedom Christ became man, and shed his heart-blood. And therefore it is great pity and sorrow, that many men and women do their own wayward will, nor busy them not to know nor to do the pleasant will of God.

Truth leaveth always a sweet smell behind it.

The men and women that hear the truth and sothfastness, and hear or know of this (perceiving what is now in the church), ought herethrough to be the more moved in all their wits, to able them to grace, and to set lesser price by themself, that they without tarrying forsake wilfully and bodily all the wretchedness of this life; since they know

Godly counsel given, if it may be followed.

[1 Upaventure: in case.]

[2 Sothfastness or soothfulness: truthfulness.]

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not how soon, nor when, nor where, nor by whom, God will teach them and assay their patience. For no doubt, who that ever will live piteously, that is charitably in Christ Jesu, shall suffer now here in this life persecution, in one wise or another. That is, if we shall be saved, it behoveth us to imagine full busily the vility[3] and foulness of sin, and how the Lord God is displeased therefore: and so of this vility, of hideousness of sin, it behoveth us to busy us in all our wits, for to abhor and hold in our mind a great shame of sin ever; and so then we owe to sorrow heartily therefore, and ever flying all occasion thereof. And then behoveth us to take upon us sharp penance, continuing therein, for to obtain of the Lord forgiveness of our foredone sins, and grace to abstain us hereafter from sin. And but if we enforce us to do this wilfully and in convenient time, the Lord (if he will not utterly destroy and cast us away)will in divers manners move tyrants against us, for to constrain us violently for to do penance, which we would not do wilfully. And trust that this doing is a special grace of the Lord, and a great token of life and mercy. And no doubt, whoever will not apply himself (as is said before) to punish himself wilfully, neither will suffer patiently, meekly, and gladly the rod of the Lord, howsoever that he will punish him; their wayward wills and their impatience are unto them earnest of everlasting damnation. But because there are but few in number that do able them thus faithfully to grace, for to live here simply and purely, and without gall of malice and of grudging; therefore the lovers of this world hate and pursue them that they know patient, meek, chaste, and wilfully poor, hating and flying all worldly vanities and fleshly lusts: for surely their virtuous conditions are even contrary to the manners of this world.

Persecution followeth the true church.

The cause why persecution is suffered to come.

The third thing that moveth me to write this sentence is this: I thought I shall busy me in myself to do faithfully, that all men and women (occupying all their business in knowing and in keeping of God's commandments) able them so to grace, that they might understand truly the truth, and have and use virtue and prudence, and so to deserve to be lightened from above with heavenly wisdom; so that all their words and their works may be hereby made pleasant sacrifice unto the Lord God; and not only for help of their own souls, but also

The third cause.

Edification of others necessary to be considered.

[3 Vility: vileness.]

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for edification of all holy church. For I doubt not, but all they that will apply them to have this foresaid business, shall profit full mickle both to friends and foes. For some enemies of the truth, through the grace of God, shall through charitable folks be made astonied in their conscience, and peradventure converted from vices to virtues: and also they that labour to know and to keep faithfully the biddings of God, and to suffer patiently all adversities, shall hereby comfort many friends.

The fourth cause.

And the fourth thing that moveth me to write this sentence is this: I know by my sudden and unwarned apposing and answering, that all they that will of good heart, without feigning, able themselves wilfully and gladly, after their cunning and their power, to follow Christ patiently, travailing busily, privily and apertly, in work and in word, to withdraw whosoever that they may from vices, planting in them (if they may) virtues, comforting them and furthering them that standeth in grace; so that therewith they be not borne up in vain-glory, through presumption of their wisdom, nor inflamed with any worldly prosperity, but ever meek and patient, purposing to abide stedfastly in the will of God, suffering wilfully and gladly without any grudging whatsoever rod the Lord will chastise them with: then, this good Lord will not forget to comfort all such men and women in all their tribulations, and at every point of temptation that any enemy purposeth for to do against them. To such faithful lovers specially, and patient followers of Christ, the Lord sendeth his wisdom from above to them, which the adversaries of the truth may not know nor understand. But, through their old and new unshamefaced sins, those tyrants and enemies of sothfastness shall be so blinded and obstinate in evil, that they shall ween themself to do pleasant sacrifices unto the Lord God in their malicious and wrongful pursuing and destroying of innocent men's and women's bodies: which men and women, for their virtuous living, and for their true knowledging of the truth, and their patient, wilful, and glad suffering of persecution for righteousness, deserve through the grace of God to be heirs of the endless bliss of heaven. And for the fervent desire and great love that those men have, as to stand in sothfastness and witness of it, though they be suddenly and unwarnedly brought forth to be apposed of their adversaries,

The assistance of God never failed them that are persecuted.

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the Holy Ghost yet, that moveth and ruleth them through his charity, will in the hour of their answering speak in them and shew his wisdom, that all their enemies shall not againsay nor againstand lawfully.

And therefore all they that are stedfast in the faith of God, yea, which through diligent keeping of his commandments and for their patient suffering of whatsoever adversity, that cometh to them, hope surely in his mercy, purposing to stand continually in perfect charity; for those men and women dread not so the adversities of this life, that they will fear (after their cunning and their power) to knowledge prudently the truth of God's words, when, where, and to whom, that they think their knowledging may profit: yea, and though, therefore, persecution come to them in one wise or another, certes, they patiently take it, knowing their conversation to be in heaven. It is a high reward and a special grace of God, for to have and enjoy the everlasting inheritance of heaven for the suffering of one persecution in so short time as the term of this life. For lo, this heavenly heritage and endless reward is the Lord God himself, which is the best thing that may be. This sentence witnesseth the Lord God himself, where as he said to Abraham, "I am thy meed:" and as the Lord said he was and is the meed of Abraham, so he is of all his other saints. This most blessed and best meed he grant to us all for his holy name, that made us of nought, and sent his only most dear worthy Son, our Lord Jesu Christ, for to redeem us with his most precious heart-blood!

THE EXAMINATION OF WILLIAM THORPE, PENNED WITH HIS OWN HAND.

Examination of Thorpe, before Thomas Arundel, archbishop.

KNOWN be it to all men that read or hear this writing beneath, that on the Sunday next after the feast of St Peter, that we call Lammas, in the year of our Lord one thousand four hundred and seven, I William of Thorpe, being in prison in the castle of Saltwood, was brought before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, and chancellor then of England. And when that I came to him, he stood in a great chamber, and much people about him: and when that he saw me, he went fast into a closet, bidding all secular men that followed

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him to go forth from him soon; so that no man was left then in that closet but the archbishop himself and a physician that was called Malveren, parson of St Dunstan's in London, and other two persons unknown to me, which were ministers of the law. And, I standing before them, by and by the archbishop said to me: "William, I know well that thou hast this twenty winter and more travelled about busily in the north country and in other divers countries of England, sowing about false doctrine, having great business, if thou might, with thine untrue teaching and shrewd will for to infect and poison all this land. But, through the grace of God, thou art now withstanded and brought into my ward; so that I shall now sequester thee from thine evil purpose, and let thee to envenom the sheep of my province. Nevertheless St Paul saith: 'If it may be, as far as in us is, we ought to have peace with all men.' Therefore, William, if thou wilt now meekly and of good heart, without any feigning, kneel down and lay thy hand upon a book, and kiss it, promising faithfully, as I shall here charge thee, that thou wilt submit thee to my correction, and stand to mine ordinance, and fulfil it duly by all thy cunning and power, thou shalt yet find me gracious unto thee."

Lollering prelates cannot abide travelling preachers.

The grace of God, and of my lord of Canterbury, be two things.

Your ordinance! and why not God's ordinance, if it please your grace?

Then said I to the archbishop: "Sir, since ye deem me an heretic and out of belief, will ye give me here audience to tell my belief?" And he said: "Yea, tell on." And I said: "I believe that there is not but one God Almighty, and in this Godhead, and of this Godhead, are three Persons, that is, the Father, the Son, and the sothfast Holy Ghost. And I believe that all these three Persons are even in power, and in cunning, and in might, full of grace and of all goodness. For whatsoever that the Father doth or can or will, that thing also the Son doth and can and will: and in all their power, cunning, and will, the Holy Ghost is equal to the Father and to the Son.

"Over this, I believe that through counsel of this most blessed Trinity, in most convenient time before ordained for the salvation of mankind, the second Person of this Trinity was ordained to take the form of man, that is, the kind of man. And I believe that this second Person, our Lord Jesu Christ, was conceived through the Holy Ghost into the womb of the most blessed virgin Mary, without man's seed. And I believe, that after nine months Christ was born of this most

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blessed virgin, without any pain or breaking of the cloister of her womb, and without filth of her virginity.

"And I believe that Christ our Saviour was circumcised in the eighth day after his birth, in fulfilling of the law, and his name was called Jesus, which was so called of the angel, before that he was conceived in the womb of Mary his mother.

"And I believe that Christ, as he was about thirty year old, was baptized in the flood of Jordan of John Baptist: and in the likeness of a dove the Holy Ghost descended there upon him, and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, 'Thou art my well-beloved Son, in thee I am full pleased.'

"And I believe that Christ was moved then by the Holy Ghost for to go into the desert, and there he fasted forty days and forty nights without bodily meat and drink. And I believe that by and by, after his fasting, when the manhood of Christ hungered, the fiend came to him, and tempted him in gluttony, in vain-glory, and in covetise: but in all those temptations Christ concluded the fiend, and withstood him. And then, without tarrying, Jesu began to preach and to say unto the people, 'Do ye penance; for the realm of heaven is now at hand.'

"And I believe that Christ, in all his time here, lived most holily, and taught the will of his Father most truly: and I believe that he suffered therefore, most wrongfully, greatest reprieves and despisings.

"And after this, when Christ would make an end here of his temporal life, I believe that in the day next before that he would suffer passion on the morn, in form of bread and of wine he ordained the sacrament of his flesh and his blood, that is, his own precious body, and gave it to his apostles for to eat; commanding them, and by them all their after-comers, that they should do it in this form that he shewed to them; use themself, and teach and commune forth to other men and women, this most worshipful holiest sacrament, in mindfulness of his holiest living, and of his most true teaching, and of his wilful and patient suffering of the most painful passion.

That is, under the creatures of bread and wine.

"And I believe that thus Christ our Saviour, after that he had ordained this most worthy sacrament of his own pre-

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cious body, he went forth wilfully against his enemies, and he suffered them most patiently to lay their hands most violently upon him, and to bind him, and to lead him forth as a thief, and to scorn him and buffet him, and all-to blow or file him with their spittings. Over this, I believe that Christ suffered most meekly and patiently his enemies for to ding out with sharp scourges the blood that was between his skin and his flesh: yea, without grudging Christ suffered the cruel Jews to crown him with most sharp thorns, and to strike him with a reed. And after, Christ suffered wicked Jews to draw him out upon the cross, and for to nail him thereupon foot and hand. And so, through his pitiful nailing, Christ shed out wilfully, for man's life, the blood that was in his veins. And then Christ gave wilfully his spirit into the hands or power of his Father; and so, as he would, and when he would, Christ died wilfully, for man's sake, upon the cross. And notwithstanding that Christ was wilfully, painfully, and most shamefully put to death, as to the world, there was left blood and water in his heart, as he before ordained, that he would shed out this blood and this water for man's salvation. And therefore he suffered the Jews to make a blind knight to thrust him into the heart with a spear; and this the blood and water that was in his heart Christ would shed out for man's love: and after this I believe that Christ was taken down from the cross and buried. And I believe that on the third day, by the power of his Godhead, Christ rose again from death to life. And the forty day thereafter, I believe that Christ ascended up into heaven, and that he there sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; and the fifty[1] day, after this up-going, he sent to his apostles the Holy Ghost, that he had promised them before: and I believe that Christ shall come and judge all mankind, some to everlasting peace, and some to everlasting pains.

"And as I believe in the Father and in the Son, that they are one God Almighty, so I believe in the Holy Ghost, that is also with them the same God Almighty.

What is the holy church.

"And I believe an holy church; that is, all they that have been, and that now are, and always to the end of the

[1 Foxe, edit. 1563, p. 147, "the tenth day:"—Ed. 1570, p. 631, "the fiftieth day."]

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world shall be, a people the which shall endeavour them to know and to keep the commandments of God, dreading over all thing to offend God, and loving and seeking most to please him: and I believe that all they that have had and yet have, and all they that yet shall have, the foresaid virtues, surely standing in the belief of God, hoping stedfastly in his merciful doings, continuing to their end in perfect charity, wilfully, patiently, and gladly suffering persecutions, by the example of Christ chiefly and his apostles, all these have their names written in the book of life.

"Therefore I believe that the gathering together of this people, living now here in this life, is the holy church of God, fighting here on earth against the fiend, the prosperity of the world, and their fleshly lusts. Wherefore, seeing that all the gathering together of this church before said, and every part thereof, neither coveteth, nor willeth, nor loveth, nor seeketh any thing but to eschew the offence of God, and to do his pleasing will; meekly, gladly, and wilfully, of all mine heart, I submit myself unto this holy church of Christ, to be ever buxom and obedient to the ordinance of it, and of every member thereof, after my knowledge and power by the help of God. Therefore I knowledge now, and evermore shall, if God will, that of all my heart and of all my might I will submit me only to the rule and governance of them whom after my knowledge I may perceive, by the having and using of the beforesaid virtues, to be members of the holy church. Wherefore these articles of belief, and all other (both of the old law and of the new, which after the commandment of God any man ought to believe), I believe verily in my soul, as a sinful deadly wretch of my cunning and power ought to believe; praying the Lord God, for his holy name, for to increase my belief, and to help my unbelief.

The true notes of the true church.

What heresy in this belief, I pray you, my lord?

"And for because, to the praising of God's name, I desire, above all things, to be a faithful member of holy church, I make this protestation before you all four that are now here present, coveting that all men and women that now be absent knew the same: that what thing soever before this time I have said or done, or what thing here I shall do or say at any time hereafter, I believe, that all the old law and new law, given and ordained by counsel of these three Persons

The old Testament and new.

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of the Trinity, were given and written to the salvation of mankind. And I believe, that these laws are sufficient for man's salvation. And I believe every article of these laws, to the intent, that these articles were ordained and commanded of these three Persons of the most blessed Trinity to be believed.

"And therefore, to the rule and the ordinance of these, God's laws, meekly, gladly, and wilfully I submit me with all mine heart; that whosoever can or will, by authority of God's law, or by open reason, tell me that I have erred or now err, or any time hereafter shall err, in any article of belief (from which inconvenience God keep me for his goodness!), I submit me to be reconciled and to be buxom and obedient unto these laws of God, and to every article of them. For, by authority specially of these laws, I will, through the grace of God, be united charitably unto these laws. Yea, sir, and over this, I believe and admit all the sentences, authorities, and reasons, of the saints and doctors, according unto holy scripture, and declaring it truly.

Doctors so to be followed as they follow the word.

"I submit me wilfully and meekly to be ever obedient, after my cunning and power, to all these saints and doctors, as they are obedient in work and in word to God and to his law; and further not (to my knowledge), not for any earthly power, dignity, or state, through the help of God. But, sir, I pray you tell me, if, after your bidding, I shall lay my hand upon the book, to the intent to swear thereby?"

To swear by a book, whether it be lawful.

And the archbishop said to me: "Yea, wherefore else?" And I said to him: "Sir, a book is nothing else but a thing coupled together of divers creatures; and to swear by any creature, both God's law and man's law is against. But, sir, this thing I say here to you before these your clerks, with my aforesaid protestation, that how, where, when, and to whom, men are bounden to swear or to obey, in any wise, after God's law, and saints and true doctors according with God's law, I will, through God's grace, be ever ready thereto, with all my cunning and power. But I pray you, sir, for the charity of God, that ye will, before that I swear (as I have here rehearsed to you), tell me how or whereto that I shall submit me; and shew me whereof that ye will correct me, and what is the ordinance that ye will thus oblige me to fulfil."

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And the archbishop said unto me: "I will shortly that now thou swear here to me, that thou shalt forsake all the opinions which the sect of Lollards hold, and is slandered with: so that after this time, neither privily nor apertly, thou hold any opinion which I shall (after thou hast sworn) rehearse to thee here. Nor thou shalt favour no man nor woman, young nor old, that holdeth any of these foresaid opinions; but, after thy knowledge and power, thou shalt enforce thee to withstand all such distroublers of holy church in every diocese that thou comest in; and them that will not leave their false and damnable opinions, thou shalt put them up, publishing them and their names, and make them known to the bishop of the diocese that they are in, or to the bishop's ministers. And, over this, I will that thou preach no more unto the time that I know, by good witness and true, that thy conversation be such, that thy heart and thy mouth accord truly in one, contrarying all the lewd learning that thou hast taught herebefore." How, where, and when to swear.

And I, hearing these words, thought in my heart, that this was an unleful asking, and deemed myself cursed of God, if I consented hereto; and I thought how Susan said, "Anguish is to me on every side." And in that I stood still and spake not, the archbishop said to me: "Answer one wise or other." And I said: "Sir, if I consented to you thus as ye have here rehearsed to me, I should become an appealer, or every bishop's espy, summoner of all England. For and I should thus put up and publish the names of men and women, I should herein deceive full many persons: yea, sir, as it is likely, by the doom of my conscience, I should herein be cause of the death both of men and women, yea, both bodily and ghostly. For many men and women that stand now in the truth and are in the way of salvation, if I should, for the learning and reading of their belief, publish them therefore up to the bishops or to their unpiteous ministers, I know some deal by experience, that they should be so distroubled and diseased with persecution or otherwise, that many of them (I think) would rather choose to forsake the way of truth than to be travailed, scorned and slandered, or punished, as bishops and their ministers now use, for to constrain men and women to consent to them. Behold the popish proceedings, whereto they tend.

"But I find in no place in holy scripture, that this office

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No marvel why; for Christ and antichrist, how can they agree?

that ye would now enfeoff me with, accordeth to any priest of Christ's sect, nor to any other christian man: and, therefore, to do this were to me a full noyous bond to be bounden with, and over grievous charge. For I suppose that, if I thus did, many men and women would, yea, sir, might justly to my confusion, say to me, that I were a traitor to God and to them, since (as I think in mine heart) many men and women trust so mickle in me in this case, that I would not, for saving of my life, do thus to them. For if I thus should do, full many men and women would (as they might full truly) say that I had falsely and cowardly forsaken the truth, and slandered shamefully the word of God. For, if I consented to you to do hereafter your will, for bonchief[1] or mischief that may befall unto me in this life, I deem in my conscience, that I were worthy, herefore, to be cursed of God, and also of all his saints: from which inconvenience, keep me and all christian people Almighty God now and ever for his holy name!"

It is pretty when Pharaoh judgeth Moses hard-hearted. Where learned you, my lord, to call your brother Raca?

And then the archbishop said unto me: "Oh, thine heart is full hard indurate, as was the heart of Pharao, and the devil hath overcomen thee and perverted thee; and he hath so blinded thee in all thy wits, that thou hast no grace to know the truth, nor the measure of mercy that I have proffered to thee. Therefore, as I perceive now by thy foolish answer, thou hast no will to leave thine old errors. But I say to thee, lewd losel[2], other thou quickly consent to mine ordinance, and submit thee to stand to my decrees; or, by St Thomas, thou shalt be degraded, and follow thy fellow in Smithfield." And at this saying I stood still and spake not; but I thought in mine heart that God did to me a great grace, if he would, of his great mercy, bring me to such an end. And in mine heart I was nothing afraid with this menacing of the archbishop. And I considered there two things in him: one, that he was not yet sorrowful for that he had made William Sawtre wrongfully to be burnt; and, as I considered, that the archbishop thirsted yet after more shedding out of innocent blood. And fast, therefore, I was moved in all my wits, for to hold the archbishop neither for prelate nor for priest of God. And, for that mine inward man was thus altogether departed

He meaneth God's martyr, William Sawtre.

[1 Bonchief: benefit.]
[2 Losel: a lost person.]

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from the archbishop, methought I should not have any dread of him; but I was right heavy and sorrowful, for that there was no audience of secular men by: but in my heart I prayed the Lord God for to comfort me and strength me against them that there were against the sothfastness, and I purposed to speak no more to the archbishop and his clerks than me need behoved. And all thus I prayed God for his goodness to give me, then and alway, grace to speak with a meek and an easy spirit; and whatsoever thing that I should speak, that I might thereto have true authorities of scriptures or open reason. And, for that I stood thus still and nothing spake, one of the archbishop's clerks said unto me: "What thing musest thou? Do thou as my lord hath now commanded to thee here."

The order and manner of his bringing up.

And yet I stood still, and answered him not. And then, soon after, the archbishop said to me: "Art thou not yet bethought, whether thou wilt do as I have here said to thee?"

And I said then to him: "Sir, my father and my mother (on whose souls God have mercy, if it be his will!) spent mickle money, in divers places, about my learning, for the intent to have made me a priest to God. But when I came to years of discretion, I had no will to be priest, and therefore my friends were right heavy to me; and then methought their grudging against me was so painful to me, that I purposed therefore to have left their company. And when they perceived this in me, they spake sometime full fair and pleasant words to me; but, for that they might not make me to consent, of good heart, to be a priest, they spake to me full oftentimes very grievous words, and menaced me in divers manners, shewing to me full heavy cheer. And thus one while in fair manner, another while in grievous, they were long time (as methought) full busy about me, or I consented to them to be a priest.

"But at the last, when in this matter they would no longer suffer mine excusations, but either I should consent to them, or I should ever bear their indignation, yea, their curse (as they said); then I, seeing this, prayed them that they would give me licence for to go to them that were named wise priests, and of virtuous conversation, to have their counsel, and to know of them the office and the charge of priesthood. And hereto my father and my mother consented full gladly,

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and gave me their blessing and good leave to go, and also money to spend in this journey. And so then I went to those priests whom I heard to be of best name, and of most holy living, and best learned, and most wise of heavenly wisdom; and so I communed with them unto the time that I perceived, by their virtuous and continual occupations, that their honest and charitable works passed their fame which I heard before of them.

"Wherefore, sir, by the example of the doctrine of them, and specially for the godly and innocent works which I perceived then of them and in them, after my cunning and power I have exercised me then and in this time to know perfectly God's law, having a will and desire to live thereafter, willing that all men and women should exercise themselves faithfully thereabout. If then, sir, either for pleasure of them that are neither so wise, nor of so virtuous conversation to my knowledge, nor by common fame to any other men's knowledge in this land, as these men were, of whom I took my counsel and information, I should now forsake thus suddenly, and shortly, and unwarned, all the learning that I have exercised myself in these thirty winters and more, my conscience should ever be herewith out of measure unquieted: and as, sir, I know well, that many men and women should be therethrough greatly troubled and slandered; and as I said, sir, to you before, for mine untruth and false cowardness many a one should be put into full great reproof: yea, sir, I dread that many one (as they might then justly) would curse me full bitterly; and, sir, I fear not but the curse of God, which I should deserve herein, would bring me to a full evil end, if I continued thus. And if, through remorse of conscience, I repented me any time, returning into the way which you do your diligence to constrain me now to forsake, yea, sir, all the bishops of this land, with full many other priests, would defame me and pursue me as a relapse; and they that now have (though I be unworthy) some confidence in me, hereafter would never trust to me, though I could teach and live never so virtuously, more than I can or may. For if after your counsel I left utterly all my learning, I should hereby first wound and defile mine own soul, and also I should herethrough give occasion to many men and women of full sore hurting: yea, sir, as it is likely to me if I consent-

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ed to your will, I should herein by mine evil example in it, as far as in me were, slay many folk ghostly, that I should never deserve for to have grace of God, to the edifying of his church, neither of myself, nor of none other man's life, and undone both before God and man.

"But, sir, by example chiefly of some whose names I will not now rehearse, of H., of I. P., and B., and also by the present doing of Philip of Rampington, that now is become bishop of Lincoln, I am now learned (as many moe hereafter, through God's grace, shall be learned) to hate and to flee all such slander that these foresaid men chiefly have defiled principally themselves with. And in it that in them is, they have envenomed all the church of God, for the slanderous revoking at the cross of Paul's, of H. P., and of B., and how now Philip Rampington pursueth Christ's people. And the feigning that these men dissemble by worldly prudence, keeping them cowardly in their preaching and communing, within the bonds and terms which, without blame, may be spoken and shewed out to the most worldly livers, will not be unpunished of God: for to the point of truth that these men shewed out sometime, they will not now stretch forth their lives. But by example, each one of them, as their words and their works shew, busy them through their feigning, for to slander and to pursue Christ in his members, rather than they will be pursued." Philip Rempington made bishop, and a persecutor.

And the archbishop said to me: "These men, the which thou speakest of now, were fools and heretics, when they were counted wise men of thee and other such losels. But now they are wise men, though thou and such other deem them unwise: nevertheless I wist never none that right said, that any while were envenomed with your contagiousness, that is, contaminated and spotted doctrine."

And I said to the archbishop: "Sir, I think well that these men and such other are now wise as to this world; but as their words sounded sometime, and their works shewed outwardly, it was like to move me that they had earnest of the wisdom of God, and that they should have deserved mickle grace of God, to have saved their own souls and many other men's, if they had continued faithfully in wilful poverty and in other simple virtuous living; and specially if they had, with these foresaid virtues, continued in their busy fruitful sowing of God's word; as, to many men's knowledge, Happy be they that continue to the end.

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they occupied them a season in all their wits full busily to know the pleasant will of God, travailing all their members full busily for to do thereafter, purely and chiefly to the praising of the most holy name of God, and for grace of edification and salvation of christian people. But woe worth false covetise, and evil counsel, and tyranny, by which they, and many men and women, are led blindly into an evil end!"

Woe worth false covetousness!

Then the archbishop said to me: "Thou and such other losels of thy sect would shave your beards full near for to have a benefice. For, by Jesu, I know none more covetous shrews than ye are, when that ye have a benefice. For lo, I gave to John Purvey a benefice but a mile out of this castle, and I heard more complaints about his covetousness for tithes and other misdoings than I did of all men that were advanced within my diocese."

It is pity these prelates cannot swear. Covetousness joined with popishness.

And I said to the archbishop: "Sir, Purvey is neither with you now for the benefice that you gave him, nor he holdeth faithfully with the learning that he taught and writ beforetime: and thus he sheweth himself neither to be hot nor cold; and therefore he and his fellows may sore dread that, if they turn not hastily to the way that they have forsaken, peradventure they be put out of the number of Christ's chosen people."

And the archbishop said: "Though Purvey be now a false harlot, I quit mo to him: but come he more for such cause before me, or we depart, I shall know with whom he holdeth. But I say to thee, which are these holy men and wise, of whom thou hast taken thine information?"

A worthy commendation of master John Wicliffe.

And I said: "Sir, master John Wicliffe was holden of full many men the greatest clerk that they knew then living; and therewith he was named a passing ruly man and an innocent in his living: and, herefore, great men communed oft with him, and they loved so his learning, that they writ it, and busily enforced them to rule themselves thereafter. Therefore, sir, this foresaid learning of master John Wicliffe is yet holden of full many men and women the most agreeable learning unto the living and teaching of Christ and of his apostles, and most openly shewing and declaring how the church of Christ hath been, and yet should be, ruled and governed. Therefore, so many men and women covet this learning, and purpose, through God's grace, to conform their

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living like to this learning of Wicliffe. Master John Aston taught and writ accordingly and full busily, where and when and to whom that he might, and he used it himself right perfectly unto his life's end: and also Philip of Rampington, while he was a canon of Leicester. Nicholas Hereford, Davy Cotray of Pakring, monk of Byland, and a master of divinity, and John Purvey, and many other which were holden right wise men and prudent, taught and writ busily this foresaid learning, and conformed them thereto. And with all these men I was right homely, and communed with them long time and oft: and so, before all other men, I chose willingly to be informed of them and by them, and specially of Wicliffe himself, as of the most virtuous and godly wise man that I heard of or knew. And therefore of him specially, and of these men, I took the learning that I have taught, and purpose to live thereafter, if God will, to my life's end. For though some of these men be contrary to the learning that they taught before, I wot well that their learning was true which they taught; and therefore, with the help of God I purpose to hold and to use the learning which I heard of them, while they sat on Moses' chair, and specially while that they sat on the chair of Christ. But after the works that they now do, I will not do, with God's help. For they feign, and hide, and contrary the truth, which before they taught out plainly and truly. For, as I know well, when some of these men have been blamed for their slanderous doing, they grant not that they have taught amiss or erred before time, but that they were constrained by pain to leave to tell out the sooth[1]; and thus they choose now rather to blaspheme God than to suffer a while here persecution bodily, for soothfastness that Christ shed out his heart blood for."

And the archbishop said: "That learning that thou callest truth and soothfastness, is open slander to holy church, as it is proved of holy church. For, albeit that Wicliffe, your author, was a great clerk, and though that many men held him a perfect liver, yet his doctrine is not approved of holy church, but many sentences of his learning are damned, as they well worthy are. But as touching Philip of Rampington, that was first canon, and afterward abbot, of Leicester, which is now bishop of Lincoln, I tell thee, that the day is common,

The testimony for Wicliffe out of the mouth of his own adversary.

Many such vigils have our popish calendars.

Repington became a persecutor, after he was made bishop.

[1 To desist from telling the truth.]

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for which he fasted the even. For neither he holdeth now, nor will hold, the learning that he taught when he was a canon of Leicester; for no bishop of this land pursueth now more sharply them that hold thy way, than he doth."

And I said: "Sir, full many men and women wondereth upon him, and speaketh him mickle shame, and holdeth him for a cursed enemy of the truth."

And the archbishop said to me: "Wherefore tarriest thou me thus here with such fables? Wilt thou shortly, as I have said to thee, submit thee to me, or no?"

And I said: "Sir, I tell you at one word, I dare not, for the dread of God, submit me to you after the tenour and sentence that ye have above rehearsed to me." And thus, as if he had been wroth, he said to one of his clerks: "Fetch hither quickly the certification that came to me from Shrewsbury under the bailiff's seal, witnessing the errors and heresies, which this losel hath venomously sown there." Then hastily the clerk took out and laid forth on a cupboard divers rolls and writings, among which there was a little one, which the clerk delivered to the archbishop. And by and by the archbishop read this roll containing this sentence: "The third Sunday after Easter, A. D. 1407, William Thorpe came unto the town of Shrewsbury, and through leave granted unto him to preach he said openly, in St Chad's church, in his sermon, that the sacrament of the altar after the consecration was material bread; and that images should in no wise be worshipped; and that men should not go on pilgrimages; and that priests have no title to tithes; and that it is not lawful for to swear in any wise."

The sacrament after consecration material bread.

And when the archbishop had read thus this roll, he rolled it up again, and said to me: "Is this wholesome learning to be among the people?"

Wholesome enough for man's soul, though not for your kitchen.

And I said to him: "Sir, I am both ashamed on their behalf, and right sorrowful for them that have certified you these things thus untruly; for I preached never nor taught thus, privily nor apertly."

And the archbishop said to me: "I will give credence to these worshipful men which have written to me, and witnessed under their seals there among them. Though now thou deniest this, weenest thou that I will give credence to thee? Thou, losel! hast troubled the worshipful communalty of

O Shrewsbury! thou hast a cause to repent thee, in that thou wouldest not receive the truth when it was offered thee.

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Shrewsbury, so that the bailiffs and communalty of that town have written to me, praying me, that an archbishop of Canterbury, primate and chancellor of England, that I will vouchsafe to grant them, that if thou shalt be made (as thou art worthy) to suffer open jouresse[1] for thine heresies, that thou may have thy jouresse openly there among them; so that all they whom thou and such other losels have there perverted may, through fear of thy deed, be reconciled again to the unity of holy church; and also they that stand in true faith of holy church may, through thy deed, be more established therein." And, as if this asking well pleased the archbishop, he said: "By my thrift, this hearty prayer and fervent request shall be thought on."

The Romish church must be established by persecuting of true preachers.

But certainly, neither the prayer of the men of Shrewsbury, nor the menacing of the archbishop, made me anything afraid; but in rehearsing of this malice, and in the hearing of it, my heart greatly rejoiced, and yet doth. I thank God for the grace that I then thought, and yet think, shall come to all the church of God here-through, by the special merciful doing of the Lord. And, as having no dread of the malice of tyrants, by trusting stedfastly in the help of the Lord, with full purpose for to knowledge the soothfastness, and to stand thereby after my cunning and power, I said to the archbishop: "Sir, if the truth of God's word might now be accepted as it should be, I doubt not to prove by likely evidence, that they that are famed to be out of the faith of holy church in Shrewsbury, and in other places also, are in the true faith of holy church. For, as their words sound, and their works shew to man's judgment (dreading and loving faithfully God), their will, their desire, their love, and their business, are most set to dread to offend God, and to love for to please him in true and faithful keeping of his commandments. And again, they that are said to be in the faith of holy church in Shrewsbury, and in other places, by open evidence of their proud, envious, malicious, covetous, lecherous, and other foul words and works, neither know, nor have will to know, nor to occupy their wits truly and effectuously in the right faith of holy church. Wherefore all these, nor none that follow their manners, shall any time come verily in the faith of holy church, except they enforce them

If the touchstone might try, truth should be known.

A sure trust in God's truth confoundeth the malice of tyrants.

[1 Jouresse: duresse.]

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more truly to come in the way which now they despise. For these men and women, that are now called faithful and holden just, neither know, nor will exercise themselves to know (of faithfulness) one commandment of God. And thus full many men and women now, and specially men that are named to be principal limbs of holy church, stir God to great wrath, and deserve his curse for that they call or hold them just men, which are full unjust; as their vicious words, their great customable swearing, and their slanderous and shameful works, shew openly and witness. And therefore such vicious men and unjust, in their own confusion, call them unjust men and women, which after their power and cunning busy themselves to live justly after the commandment of God. And where, sir, ye say that I have distroubled the communalty of Shrewsbury, and many other men and women with my teaching: if it thus be, it is not to be wondered of wise men, since all the communalty of the city of Jerusalem was distroubled of Christ's own person, that was very God and man, and the most prudent preacher that ever was or shall be; and also all the synagogue of Nazareth was moved against Christ, and so fulfilled with ire towards him for his preaching, that the men of the synagogue rose up and cast Christ out of their city, and led him up to the top of a mountain for to cast him down there headlong. Also accordingly hereto the Lord witnesseth by Moses, that he shall put dissension betwixt his people, and the people that contrarieth and pursueth his people. Who, sir, is he that shall preach the truth of God's word to the unfaithful people, and shall let the soothfastness of the gospel and the prophecy of God almighty to be fulfilled?"

Shrewsbury! except thou turn from thy wicked ways, thou canst not receive the truth.

Jerusalem troubled by the preaching of Christ.

And the archbishop said to me: "It followeth of these thy words, that thou and such other thinkest, that ye do right well for to preach and teach as ye do, without authority of any bishop. For you presume, that the Lord hath chosen you only for to preach, as faithful disciples and special followers of Christ."

The word of God ought truly to be preached.

And I said: "Sir, by authority of God's law, and also of saints and doctors, I am learned to deem, that it is every priest's office and duty for to preach busily, freely, and truly the word of God. For no doubt every priest should purpose first in his soul and covet to take the order of priesthood

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chiefly for to make known to the people the word of God, after his cunning and power, approving his words ever to be true by his virtuous works; and for this intent we suppose that bishops and other prelates of holy church should chiefly take and use their prelacy, and for the same cause bishops should give to priests their orders. For bishops should accept no man to priesthood, except that he had good-will and full purpose, and were well disposed and well learned to preach. Wherefore, sir, by the bidding of Christ, and by example of his most holy living, and also by the witnessing of his holy apostles and prophets, we are bound under full great pain to exercise us, after our cunning and power (as every priest is likewise charged of God), to fulfil duly the office of priesthood. We presume not here of ourselves for to be esteemed, neither in our own reputation nor in none other man's, faithful disciples and special followers of Christ. But, sir, as I said to you before, we deem this, by authority chiefly of God's word, that it is the chief duty of every priest to busy them faithfully to make the law of God known to his people, and so to commune the commandment of God charitably, how that we may best, where, when, and to whom that ever we may, is our very duty. And, for the will and business that we owe of due debt to do justly our office through the stirring and special help, as we trust, of God, hoping stedfastly in his mercy, we desire to be the faithful disciples of Christ: and we pray this gracious Lord, for his holy name, that he make us able so to please him with devout prayers, and charitable priestly works, that we may obtain of him to follow him thankfully."

If this lesson had been well followed, the world had not been brought to such darkness by blind and dumb priests.

An effectuous prayer, God grant, in all ministers.

And the archbishop said to me: "Lewd losel! whereto makest thou such vain reasons to me? Asketh not St Paul, 'How should priests preach, except they be sent?' But I sent thee never to preach; for thy venomous doctrine is so known throughout England, that no bishop will admit thee for to preach by witnessing of their letters. Why then, lewd idiot, wilt thou presume to preach, since thou art not sent, nor licensed of thy sovereign to preach? Saith not St Paul, that subjects ought to obey their sovereigns, and not only good and virtuous, but also tyrants that are vicious?"

Why he preached without the bishop's licence.

And I said to the archbishop: "Sir, as touching your letter of licence or other bishops', which ye say we should have to witness that we were able to be sent for to preach;

He answereth to the question concerning the letter of li-

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The inconveniences of seeking of the bishop's letter of licence.

we know well that neither you, sir, nor any other bishop of this land, will grant to us any such letters of licence, but we should oblige us to you, and to other bishops, by unleful oaths, for to pass not the bounds and terms which ye, sir, or other bishops, will limit to us. And since in this matter your terms be some too large, and some too strait, we dare not oblige us thus to be bounden to you for to keep the terms which you will limit to us, as ye do to friars and such other preachers; and therefore, though we have not your letter, sir, nor letters of other bishops, written with ink upon parchment, we dare not herefore leave the office of preaching, to which preaching all priests, after their cunning and power, are bound by divers testimonies of God's law, and great doctors, without any mention-making of bishops' letters. For as mickle as we have taken upon us the office of priesthood (though we are unworthy thereto), we come and purpose to fulfil it with the help of God, by authority of his own law, and by witness of great doctors and saints, accordingly hereto trusting stedfastly in the mercy of God. For that he commandeth us to do the office of priesthood, he will be our sufficient letters and witness, if we, by example of his holy living and teaching, specially occupy us faithfully to do our office justly: yea, the people to whom we preach (be they faithful or unfaithful) shall be our letters, that is, our witness-bearers; for the truth, where it is sown, may not be unwitnessed: for all that are converted and saved by learning of God's word, and by working thereafter, are witness-bearers, that the truth and soothfastness which they heard and did after is cause of their salvation. And again, all unfaithful men and women, which heard the truth told out to them, and would not do thereafter; also all they that might have heard the truth and would not hear it, because that they would not do thereafter; all these shall bear witness against themselves; and the truth which they would not hear, or else heard it and despised to do thereafter, through their unfaithfulness, is and shall be cause of their damnation. Therefore, sir, since this foresaid witnessing of God, and of divers saints and doctors, and of all the people, good and evil, sufficeth to all true preachers; we think that we do not the office of priesthood, if that we leave our preaching, because that we have not, or may not have, duly bishops' letters, to witness that we are sent of them to preach. This sentence

The witness of the preachers is the good life of the followers.

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approveth St Paul, where he speaketh of himself, and of faithful apostles and disciples, saying thus: 'We need no letters of commendations, as some preachers do,' which preach for covetousness of temporal goods, and for men's praising. And where ye say, sir, that Paul biddeth subjects obey their sovereigns, that is sooth, and may not be denied. But there is two manner of sovereigns, virtuous sovereigns and vicious tyrants. Therefore, to these last sovereigns, neither men nor women that be subject owe to obey in two manners. To virtuous sovereigns and charitable subjects owe to obey wilfully and gladly, in hearing of their good counsel, in consenting to their charitable biddings, and in working after their fruitful works.

Two kinds of sovereigns. He meaneth prelates that be unvirtuous.

"This sentence Paul approveth where he saith thus to subjects: 'Be ye mindful of your sovereigns that speak to you the word of God; and follow you the faith of them, whose conversation you know to be virtuous.' For, as Paul saith after, these sovereigns, to whom subjects owe to obey in following of their manners, work busily in holy studying, how they may withstand and destroy vices, first in themselves, and after in all their subjects, and how they may best plant in them virtues. Also these sovereigns make devout and fervent prayers for to purchase grace of God, that they and their subjects may, over all thing, dread to offend him, and to love for to please him. Also these sovereigns to whom Paul biddeth us obey, as it is said before, live so virtuously, that all they that will live well may take of them good example, to know and to keep the commandments of God. But in this foresaid wise subjects ought not to obey nor to be obedient to tyrants, while they are vicious tyrants; since their will, their counsel, their biddings, and their works are so vicious, that they ought to be hated and left. And though such tyrants be masterful and cruel in boasting and menacing, in oppressions and divers punishings, St Peter biddeth the servants of such tyrants to obey meekly such tyrants, suffering patiently their malicious cruelness. But Peter counselleth not any servant or subject to obey to any lord, or prince, or sovereign, in any thing that is not pleasing to God."

Two manner of obeying: 1. In following their doings and examples. 2. In suffering their wrongs. Well reasoned, my lord, and like a clerk.

And the archbishop said unto me: "If a sovereign bid his subject do that thing that is vicious, this sovereign herein

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is to blame; but the subject for his obedience deserveth meed of God: for obedience pleaseth more to God than any sacrifice."

And I said: "Samuel the prophet said to Saul, the wicked king, that God was more pleased with the obedience of his commandment than with any sacrifice of beasts. But David saith, and St Paul, and St Gregory[1], accordingly together, that not only they that do evil are worthy of death and damnation; but also all they that consent to evil doers. And, sir, the law of holy church teacheth in the decrees, that no servant to his lord, nor child to the father or mother, nor wife to her husband, nor monk to his abbot, ought to obey, except in leful things and lawful."

Obedience not to be given, except in things lawful.

And the archbishop said to me: "All these allegings that thou bringest forth are not else but proud presumptuousness; for hereby thou enforcest thee to prove, that thou and such other are so just, that ye ought not to obey to prelates. And thus, against the learning of St Paul that teacheth you not to preach but if ye were sent, of your own authority ye will go forth and preach, and do what ye list."

All is presumption that standeth against your masterful ambition.

And I said: "Sir, presenteth not every priest the office of the apostles, or the office of the disciples of Christ?" And the archbishop said, "Yea." And I said: "Sir, as the tenth chapter of Matthew and the last chapter of Mark witnesseth, Christ sent his apostles for to preach. And the tenth chapter of Luke witnesseth, that Christ sent his two-and-seventy disciples for to preach in every place that Christ was to come to. And St Gregory[2] in the common law saith, that every man that goeth to priesthood taketh upon him the office of preaching: for, as he saith, that priest stirreth God to great wrath, of whose mouth is not heard the voice of preaching; and, as other more glosses upon Ezechiel witness, that the priest that preacheth not busily to the people shall be partaker of their damnation that perish through his default. And, though the people be saved by other special grace of God than by the priests' preaching, yet the priests, in that they are ordained to preach, and preach not, as before God, they are manslayers. For, as far as in them is, such priests as preach not busily and truly, slayeth

Priests that preach not be slayers of the people.

[1 Ed. Ben. Par. Vol. I. col. 1156.]
[2 Ed. Ben. Par. Vol. I. col. 1260.]

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all the people ghostly, in that they withhold from them the word of God, that is life and sustenance of men's souls. And St Isidore said, priests shall be damned for wickedness of the people, if they teach not them that are ignorant, or blame not them that are sinners. For all the work or business of priests standeth in preaching and teaching; that they edify all men, as well by cunning of faith, as by discipline of works, that is, virtuous teaching; and, as the gospel witnesseth, Christ said in his teaching: 'I am born and come into this world, to bear witness to the truth; and he that is of the truth heareth my voice.'

"Then, sir, since by the word of Christ specially, that is, his voice, priests are commanded to preach, whatsoever priest that it be, that hath not good will and full purpose to do thus, and ableth not himself, after his cunning and power, to do his office by the example of Christ and of his apostles, whatsoever other thing that he doth, displeaseth God. For lo, St Gregory saith: 'That thing left, that a man is bound chiefly to do, whatsoever other thing that a man doeth, it is unthankful to the Holy Ghost[1];' and therefore, saith Lincoln, the priest that preacheth not the word of God, though he be seen to have none other default, he is antichrist and satanas, a night thief and a day thief, a slayer of souls, and an angel of light turned into darkness. Wherefore, sir, these authorities and others well considered, I deem myself damnable, if I, either for pleasure or displeasure of any creature, apply me not diligently to preach the word of God. And in the same damnation I deem all those priests, which, of good purpose and will, enforce them not busily to do thus, and also all them that have purpose or will to let any priest of this business."

Priests not only sent, but commanded to preach. Whatsoever a man doth, leaving that undone which he is chiefly bound to do, is sin. Yet this bishop plucketh him not by the beard, nor burneth off his hand, as Bonner did.

And the archbishop said to those three clerks that stood before him: "Lo, sirs, this is the manner and business of this losel and such other, to pick out such sharp sentences of holy scripture and of doctors, to maintain their sect and lore against the ordinance of holy church. And therefore, losel, it is that thou covetest to have again the Psalter that I made to be taken from thee at Canterbury, to record sharp verses against us. But thou shalt never have that Psalter, nor none other book, till that I know that thy heart and thy mouth accord fully to be governed by holy church."

[1 Ed. Ben. Par. Vol. I. col. 1261.]

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And I said: "Sir, all my will and power is, and ever shall be (I trust to God), to be governed by holy church."

And the archbishop asked me, what was holy church.

And I said: "Sir, I told you before what was holy church: but since ye ask me this demand, I call Christ and his saints holy church."

And the archbishop said unto me: "I wot well that Christ and his saints are holy church in heaven; but what is holy church in earth?"

Two parts of holy church.

And I said: "Sir, though holy church be every one in charity, yet it hath two parts. The first and principal part hath overcome perfectly all the wretchedness of this life, and reigneth joyfully in heaven with Christ. And the other part is here yet in earth, busily and continually fighting, day and night, against temptations of the fiend, forsaking and hating the prosperity of this world, despising and withstanding their fleshly lusts; which only are the pilgrims of Christ, wandering toward heaven by stedfast faith and grounded hope, and by perfect charity. For these heavenly pilgrims may not, nor will not, be letted of their good purpose by the reason of any doctors discording from holy scripture, nor by the floods of any tribulation temporal, nor by the wind of any pride, of boast, or of menacing of any creature; for they are all fast grounded upon the sure stone, Christ, hearing his word and loving it, exercising them faithfully and continually in all their wits to do thereafter."

And the archbishop said to his clerks: "See ye not how his heart is indurate, and how he is travailed with the devil occupying him thus busily to allege such sentences to maintain his errors and heresies? Certain, thus he would occupy us here all day, if we would suffer him!"

One of the clerks answered: "Sir, he said right now, that this certification that came to you from Shrewsbury is untruly forged against him. Therefore, sir, appose you him now here in all the points which are certified against him, and so we shall hear of his own mouth his answers, and witness them."

Well helped forward, master clerk.

And the archbishop took the certification in his hand, and looked thereon awhile, and then he said to me: "Lo, here it is certified against thee by worthy men and faithful, of Shrewsbury, that thou preachedst there openly, in St Chad's

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church, that the sacrament of the altar was material bread after the consecration. What sayest thou? was this truly preached?"

And I said: "Sir, I tell you truly, that I touched nothing there of the sacrament of the altar, but in this wise as I will, with God's grace, tell you here. As I stood there in the pulpit, busying me to teach the commandment of God, there knelled a sacring bell; and therefore mickle people turned away hastily, and with noise ran fro towards me. And I, seeing this, said to them thus: 'Good men! ye were better to stand here still and to hear God's word; for certes the virtue and the meed of the most holy sacrament of the altar standeth mickle more in the belief thereof that ye ought to have in your soul, than it doth in the outward sight thereof. And therefore ye were better to stand still, quietly to hear God's word, because that through the hearing thereof men come to very true belief.' And otherwise, sir, I am certain I spake not there of the worthy sacrament of the altar."

The virtue of the sacrament standeth in the belief more than in the outward sign.

And the archbishop said to me: "I believe thee not, whatsoever thou sayest, since so worshipful men have witnessed thus against thee. But, since thou deniest that thou saidest thus there, what sayest thou now? Resteth there, after the consecration, in the host material bread or no?"

And I said: "Sir, I know in no place in holy scripture where this term material bread is written; and therefore, sir, when I speak of this matter, I use not to speak of material bread."

Material bread.

Then the archbishop said to me: "How teachest thou men to believe in this sacrament?"

And I said: "Sir, as I believe myself, so I teach other men."

He said: "Tell out plainly thy belief thereof."

And I said, with my protestation: "Sir, I believe that the night before that Christ Jesu would suffer wilfully passion for mankind on the morn after, he took bread in his holy and most worshipful hands, lifting up his eyes, and giving thanks to God his Father, blessed this bread, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying to them: 'Take, eat of this all you, this is my body.' And that this is and ought to be all men's belief, Matthew, Mark, Luke and Paul witness. Other belief, sir, have [illegible] nor will have, nor

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teach; for I believe that this sufficeth in this matter. For in this belief, with God's grace, I purpose to live and die, knowledging, as I believe and teach other men to believe, that the worshipful sacrament of the altar is the sacrament of Christ's flesh and his blood in form of bread and of wine."

And the archbishop said to me: "It is sooth that this sacrament is very Christ's body in form of bread; but thou and thy sect teachest it to be substance of bread. Think you this true teaching?"

And I said: "Neither I, nor any other of the sect that ye damn, teach any otherwise than I have told you, nor believe otherwise, to my knowing. Nevertheless, sir, I ask of you for charity, that ye will tell me here plainly how ye shall understand this text of St Paul, where he saith thus: 'This thing feel you in yourself, that is in Christ Jesu, while he was in the form of God.' Sir, calleth not Paul here the form of God the substance or kind of God? Also, sir, sayeth not the church, in the Hours of the most blessed virgin, accordingly hereto, where it is written thus, 'Thou author of health! remember, that sometime thou took of the undefiled virgin the form of our body?' Tell me for charity, therefore, whether the form of our body be called here the kind of our body or no?"

The papists have no other defence for them but only the church.

And the archbishop said to me: "Wouldest thou make me to declare this text after thy purpose, since the church now hath determined that there abideth no substance of bread after the consecration in the sacrament of the altar? Believest thou not this ordinance of the church?"

And I said: "Sir, whatsoever prelates have ordained in the church, our belief standeth ever whole. I have not heard that the ordinance of men under belief should be put into belief."

Every ordinance of churchmen bindeth not our faith.

And the archbishop said to me: "If thou hast not learned this before, learn now to know that thou art out of belief, if in this matter and other thou believest not as the holy church believeth. What say doctors treating of this sacrament?"

The greatest doctors of the church be apostles. St Paul, the canon of the mass, and St Austin, calleth it bread.

And I said: "Sir, St Paul, that was a great doctor of holy church, speaking to the people, and teaching them in the right belief of this most holy sacrament, calleth it bread that we break: and also in the canon of the mass, after the consecration, this most worthy sacrament is called holy bread; and

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every priest in this land, after that he hath received this sacrament, saith in this wise: 'That thing that we have taken with our mouth, we pray God that we may take it with a pure and clean mind:' that is, as I understand, we pray God that we may receive, through very belief, this holy sacrament worthily. And, sir, St Augustine saith: 'That thing that is seen, is bread: but that men's faith asketh to be informed of, is very Christ's body[1].' And also Fulgence, an ententive doctor, saith: 'As it were an error to say that Christ was but a substance, that is, very man, and not very God, or to say that Christ was very God, and not very man; so is it,' this doctor saith, 'an error to say, that the sacrament of the altar is but a substance.' Also, sir, accordingly hereto, in the secret of the mid-mass on Christmas days it is written thus: *Idem refulsit Deus, sic terrena substantia nobis conferat quod divinum est;* which sentence, sir, with the secret of the fourth ferie, *quatuor temporum Septembris,* I pray you, sir, declare here openly in English[2]."

My lord can revile apace, he can declare but a little. Choke him up, my lord.

And the archbishop said to me: "I perceive well enough whereabout thou art, and how the devil blindeth thee, that thou may not understand the ordinance of holy church, nor consent thereto. But I command thee now, answer me shortly: Believest thou that after the consecration of this foresaid sacrament there abideth substance of bread, or not?"

And I said: "Sir, as I understand, it is all one to grant or believe, that there dwelleth substance of bread, and to grant and to believe, that this most worthy sacrament of Christ's own body is accident without subject. But, sir, for as mickle as your asking passeth my understanding, I dare neither deny it nor grant it; for it is school-matter, about which I busied me never for to know it; and therefore I commit this term, *accidens sine subjecto,* to those clerks which delight them so in curious and subtle sophistry, because they determine oft so difficult and strange matters, and wade and wander so in them, from argument to argument, with *pro* and *contra,* till that they wot not where they are, and

To grant real being of the body without bread, is as much as to grant the accident to be without the subject.

[1 Non hoc corpus quod videtis, manducaturi estis, &c.—August. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. Tom. IV. col. 1066. Accipiant hoc et boni, sed non sint solliciti: loquebatur enim de presentia corporis sive, &c. Op. Ben. Par. Tom. III. pars iii. col. 634.]

[2 Ad Sec. Miss. in Aur. Die Nat. Dom. Ed. Salam. p. 22. 1567.]

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understand not themselves. But the shame that these proud sophisters have to yield them to men, and before men, maketh them oft fools, and to be concluded shamefully before God."

Templum Domini: Templum Domini!

And the archbishop said to me: "I purpose not to oblige thee to the subtle arguments of clerks, since thou art unable thereto; but I purpose to make thee obey to the determination of holy church."

The church stood sound till the fiend broke loose.

And I said: "Sir, by open evidence and great witness, a thousand year after the incarnation of Christ, the determination which I have here before you rehearsed was accept of holy church, as sufficient to the salvation of all them that would believe it faithfully, and work thereafter charitably. But, sir, the determination of this matter, which was brought in since the fiend was loosed by friar Thomas again, specially calling the most worshipful sacrament of Christ's own body an accident without subject: which term, since I know not that God's law approveth it in this matter, I dare not grant; but utterly I deny to make this friar's sentence, or any such other, my belief, do with me, God! what thou wilt."

It is happy he did not fly in his face, as Bonner did.

And the archbishop said to me: "Well, well, thou shalt say otherwise or that I leave thee. But what sayest thou to this second point that is recorded against thee by worthy men of Shrewsbury, saying that thou preachedst openly there, that images ought not to be worshipped in any wise?"

And I said: "Sir, I preached never thus, nor, through God's grace, I will not at any time consent to think nor to say thus, neither privily nor apertly. For lo, the Lord witnesseth by Moses, that the things which he made were right good; and so then they were, and yet they are and shall be, good and worshipful in their kind. And therefore, to the end that God made them, they are all praiseable and worshipful; and specially man, that was made after the image and likeness of God, is full worshipful in his kind, yea, this holy image that is man God worshippeth. And herefore every man should worship other, in kind, and also for heavenly virtues that men use charitably. And also I say, wood, tin, gold, silver, or any other matter that images are made of, all these creatures are worshipful in their kind, and to the end that God made them for. But the carving, casting, nor painting of an imagery, made with man's hand,

Man a worshipful image of God.

Though man accept the painting or carving of

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albeit that this doing be accept of man of highest state and dignity, and ordained of them to be a calendar to lewd men, that neither can, nor will, be learned to know God in his word, neither by his creatures, nor by his wonderful and divers workings; yet this imagery ought not to be worshipped in form, nor in the likeness of man's craft. Nevertheless that every matter the painters paint with, since it is God's creature, ought to be worshipped in the kind, and to the end that God made and ordained it to serve man."

images, yet is it not the right way to learn to serve God.

Then the archbishop said to me: "I grant well that nobody ought to do worship to any such images for themselves. But a crucifix ought to be worshipped for the passion of Christ that is painted therein, and so brought therethrough to man's mind: and thus the images of the blessed Trinity, and of the virgin Mary, Christ's mother, and other images of saints, ought to be worshipped. For lo, earthly kings and lords, which use to send their letters ensealed with their arms or with their privy signet to men that are with them, are worshipped of these men. For when these men receive their lords' letters, in which they see and know the wills and biddings of their lords, in worship of their lords they do off their caps to these letters. Why not then, since in images made with man's hand we may read and know many divers things of God and of his saints, shall we not worship their images?"

The image of the Trinity.

A similitude of the king's seal or letters, to prove the worship of images.

And I said: "With my foresaid protestation I say, that these worldly usages of temporal lords that ye speak now of, may be done in case without sin. But this is no similitude to worship images made by man's hand, since that Moses, David, Solomon, Baruch, and other saints in the Bible, forbid so plainly the worshipping of all such images."

No similitude to be made between earthly things and spiritual, namely when God's word doth express to the contrary.

Then the archbishop said to me: "Lewd losel! in the old law, before that Christ took mankind, was no likeness of any person of the Trinity, neither shewed to man nor known of man; but now, since Christ became man, it is leful to have images to shew his manhood. Yea, though many men which are right great clerks, and other also, held it an error to paint the Trinity, I say it is well done to make and to paint the Trinity in images; for it is great moving of devotion to men, to have and to behold the Trinity, and other images of saints, carved, casted, and painted. For beyond the sea are

So you say, my lord, but God saith contrary, in his commandments.

Painters' devotion and the pope's divinity do well agree.

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Preparation of the painters to make a fair and a devout image.

the best painters that ever I saw. And, sirs, I tell you, this is their manner, and it is a good manner: when that an image-maker shall carve, cast in mould, or paint any images, he shall go to a priest, and shrive him as clean, as if he should then die; and take penance, and make some certain vow of fasting, or of praying, or of pilgrimages doing, praying the priest specially to pray for him, that he may have grace to make a fair and devout image."

And I said: "Sir, I doubt not, if these painters that ye speak of, or any other painters, understood truly the text of Moses, of David, of the wise man, of Baruch, and of other saints and doctors, these painters should be moved to shrive them to God with full inward sorrow of heart, taking upon them to do right sharp penance for the sinful and vain craft of painting, carving, or casting that they had used; promising God faithfully never to do so after; knowledging openly, before all men, their reprovable learning. And also, sir, these priests, that shrive (as you do say) painters, and enjoin them to do penance, and pray for their speed, promising to them help of their prayers for to be curious in their sinful crafts, sin herein more grievously than the painters: for these priests do comfort and give them counsel to do that thing, which of great pain, yea under the pain of God's curse, they should utterly forbid them. For certes, sir, if the wonderful working of God, and the holy living and teaching of Christ, and of his apostles and prophets, were made known to the people by holy living and true, and busy teaching of priests, these things, sir, were sufficient books and kalenders to know God by, and his saints, without any images made with man's hand. But certes the vicious living of priests, and their covetousness, are chief cause of this error, and all other viciousness that reigneth among the people."

The true books and calenders to know God.

Then the archbishop said unto me: "I hold thee a vicious priest and accurst, and all them that are of thy sect; for all priests of holy church, and all images that move men to devotion, thou and such other go about to destroy. Losel! were it a fair thing to come into the church and see therein none image?"

A better sight, my lord, than to see blind stocks there to be worshipped.

And I said: "Sir, they that come to the church for to pray devoutly to the Lord God, may in their inward wits be the more fervent, that all their outward wits be closed from

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all outward seeing and hearing, and from all distroubance and lettings. And, since Christ blessed them that saw him not bodily, and have believed faithfully in him, it sufficeth then to all men (through hearing and knowing of God's word, and to do thereafter) for to believe in God, though they see never images made with man's hand after any person of the Trinity, or of any other saint. The right service of a Christian.

And the archbishop said to me, with a fervent spirit: "I say to thee, losel! that it is right well done to make and to have an image of the Trinity; yea, what sayest thou? is it not a stirring thing to behold such an image?" My lord, your yea will not answer God's nay.

And I said: "Sir, ye said right now, that in the old law, or Christ took mankind, no likeness of any person of the Trinity was shewed to men; wherefore, sir, ye said, it was not then leful to have images: but now ye say, since Christ is become man, it is leful to make and to have an image of the Trinity, and also of other saints. But, sir, this thing would I learn of you: since the Father of heaven, yea, and every person of the Trinity was, without beginning, God Almighty, and many holy prophets that were deadly[1] men were martyred violently in the old law, and also many men and women then died holy confessors; why was it not then as leful and necessary as now, to have made an image of the Father of heaven, and to have made and had other images of martyrs, prophets, and holy confessors, to have been kalenders to advise men and move them to devotion, as ye say that images now do?" Note this, ye worshippers and maintainers of images.

And the archbishop said: "The synagogue of Jews had not authority to approve those things as the church of Christ hath now." The synagogue of antichrist will have authority.

And I said: "Sir, St Gregory was a great man in the new law, and of great dignity, and, as the common law witnesseth, he commended greatly a bishop, in that he forbad utterly the images made with man's hand should be worshipped[2]."

And the archbishop said: "Ungracious losel! thou savourest no more truth than an hound. Since at the rood at

[1 Deadly: mortal.]

[2 The bishop was Serenus, bishop of Marseilles (Marsilia), and the passage in which Gregory's commendation is given will be found as follows.—Greg. Mag. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1705. Vol. II. col. 1006. Regist. Lib. IX. Indict. II.]

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the Northdoor at London, at our Lady at Walsingham, and many other divers places in England, are many great and praiseable miracles done; should not the images of such holy saints and places, at the reverence of God, and our lady, and other saints, be more worshipped than other places and images, where no miracles are done?"

Miracles importing worship to be done to images may well be suspected not to come of God.

And I said: "Sir, there is no such virtue in any imagery, that any images should herefore be worshipped: wherefore I am certain that there is no miracle done of God in any place in earth, because that any images made with man's hand should be worshipped. And herefore, sir, as I preached openly at Shrewsbury and other places, I say now here before you: That no body should trust that there were any virtue in imagery made with man's hand; and therefore no body should vow to them, nor seek them, nor kneel to them, nor bow to them, nor pray to them, nor offer any thing to them, nor kiss them, nor incense them. For lo, the most worthy of such images, the brasen serpent (by Moses made at God's bidding), the good king Ezekias destroyed worthily and thankfully, for because it was incensed. Therefore, sir, if men take good heed to the writing and to the learning of St Augustine, of St Gregory, and of St John Chrysostom, and of other saints and doctors, how they speak and write of miracles that shall be done now in the last end of the world; it is to dread, that for the unfaithfulness of men and women the fiend hath great power for to work many of the miracles that now are done in such places. For both men and women delight now more to hear and know miracles, than they do to know God's word, or to hear it effectuously. Wherefore, to the great confusion of all them that thus do, Christ saith: 'The generation of adulterers requireth tokens, miracles, and wonders.' Nevertheless, as divers saints say, now, when the faith of God is published in Christendom, the word of God sufficeth to man's salvation, without such miracles: and thus also the word of God sufficeth to all faithful men and women, without any such images. But, good sir, 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 in it no shape or likeness of any members of any deadly creature; in what likeness, or what image, may God the Father be shewed or painted?"

A christian man ought not to vow, seek, nor bow, nor pray, nor offer to kiss an image.

For the unfaithfulness of men the devil may work miracles.

The word of God sufficeth us to salvation without miracles.

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And the archbishop said: "As holy church hath suffered and yet suffereth the images of all the Trinity, and other images, to be painted and shewed, it sufficeth to them that are members of holy church. But since thou art a rotten member, cut away from holy church, thou favourest not the ordinance thereof. But since the day passeth, leave we this matter." 'Holy Church' of your own building.

And then he said to me: "What sayest thou to the third point that is certified against thee, preaching openly in Shrewsbury, that pilgrimage is not leful; and over this, thou saidst that those men and women that go on pilgrimages to Canterbury, to Beverley, to Karlington, to Walsingham, and to any such other places, are accursed and made foolish, spending their goods in waste?" The third article. Pilgrimage.

And I said: "Sir, by this certification I am accused to you that I should teach, that no pilgrimage is leful. But I said never thus. For I know that there be true pilgrimages and leful, and full pleasant to God; and therefore, sir, howsoever mine enemies have certified you of me, I told at Shrewsbury of two manner of pilgrimages." Two kinds of pilgrimage.

And the archbishop said to me: "Whom callest thou true pilgrims?"

And I said: "Sir, with my protestation, I call them true pilgrims travelling toward the bliss of heaven, which, in the state, degree, or order that God calleth them to, do busy them faithfully for to occupy all their wits bodily and ghostly, to know truly and to keep faithfully the biddings of God, hating and fleeing all the seven deadly sins, and every branch of them; ruling them virtuously (as it is said before) with all their wits; doing discreetly, wilfully, and gladly, all the works of mercy, bodily and ghostly; after their cunning and power, abling them to the gifts of the Holy Ghost; disposing them to receive them in their souls, and to hold therein the right blessings of Christ; busying them to know and to keep the seven principal virtues: and so then they shall obtain here, through grace, for to use thankfully to God all the conditions of charity: and then they shall be moved with the good Spirit of God, for to examine oft and diligently their conscience, that neither wilfully nor wittingly they err in any article of belief; having continually (as frailty will suffer) all their business to dread and to flee the offence of God, and to love over all thing, and to seek ever to do, his pleasant will. The true pilgrimage is to travail in heavenly things.

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Every good work is a good step to heaven.

Of these pilgrims I said, whatsoever good thought that they any time think, what virtuous word that they speak, and what fruitful work that they work, every such thought, word, and work, is a step, numbered of God, toward him into heaven.

The manner and examples of saints.

These foresaid pilgrims of God delight sore when they hear of saints or of virtuous men and women, how they forsook wilfully the prosperity of this life, how they withstood the suggestion of the fiend, how they restrained their fleshly lusts, how discreet they were in their penance-doing, how patient they were in all their adversities, how prudent they were in counselling of men and women, moving them to hate all sin, and to fly them, and to shame ever greatly thereof, and to love all virtues, and to draw to them, imagining how Christ, and his followers by example of him, suffered scorns and slander, and how patiently they abode and took the wrongful menacing of tyrants; how homely they were and serviceable to poor men, to relieve and comfort them bodily and ghostly, after their power and cunning; and how devout they were in prayers, how fervent they were in heavenly desires, and how they absented them from spectacles of vain sayings and hearings; and how stable they were to let and destroy all vices, and how laborious and joyful they were to sow and to plant virtues. These heavenly conditions and such other have the pilgrims, or endeavour them for to have, whose pilgrimage God accepteth."

And again, I said, "As their works shew, the most part of men and women, that go now on pilgrimages, have not these foresaid conditions, nor love to busy them faithfully for to have. For, as I well know, since I have full oft essayed, examine whosoever will twenty of these pilgrims, and he shall not find three men or women that know surely a commandment of God, nor can say their Pater Noster and Ave Maria, nor their Credo readily in any manner of language. And, as I have learned, and also know somewhat by experience, of these same pilgrims, telling the cause, why that many men and women go hither and thither now on pilgrimages, it is more for the health of their bodies than of their souls; more for to have riches and prosperity of this world, than for to be enriched with virtues in their souls; more to have here worldly and fleshly friendship, than for to have friendship of God and of his saints in heaven: for whatso-

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ever thing man or woman doth, the friendship of God, nor of any other saint, cannot be had without keeping of God's commandments. Further, with my protestation, I say now as I said in Shrewsbury, though they that have fleshly wills travel far their bodies and spend mickle money to seek and to visit the bones or images (as they say they do) of this saint or of that, such pilgrimage-going is neither praiseable nor thankful to God, nor to any saint of God, since, in effect, all such pilgrims despise God and all his commandments and saints. For the commandments of God they will neither know nor keep, nor conform them to live virtuously by example of Christ and of his saints. Wherefore, sir, I have preached and taught openly, and so I purpose all my life-time to do with God's help, saying, that such fond people waste blamefully God's goods in their vain pilgrimages, spending their goods upon vicious hostellers, which are oft unclean women of their bodies; and at the least, those goods, with the which they should do works of mercy, after God's bidding, to poor needy men and women.

Pilgrimage displeasant to God.

Goods evil bestowed in pilgrimage.

"These poor men's goods and their livelihood these runners-about offer to rich priests, which have mickle more livelihood than they need: and thus those goods they waste wilfully, and spend them unjustly, against God's bidding, upon strangers, with which they should help and relieve after God's will their poor needy neighbours at home. Yea, and over this folly, oft-times divers men and women of these runners thus madly hither and thither into pilgrimage borrow hereto other men's goods; yea, and sometime they steal men's goods hereto, and they pay them never again. Also, sir, I know well that when divers men and women will go thus after their own wills, and finding out one pilgrimage, they will ordain with them before to have with them both men and women that can well sing wanton songs, and some other pilgrims will have with them bag-pipes; so that every town that they come through, what with the noise of their singing, and with the sound of their piping, and with the jangling of their Canterbury bells, and with the barking out of dogs after them, that they make more noise than if the king came there away, with all his clarions, and many other minstrels. And if these men and women be a month out in their pilgrimage, many of them shall be an half year after great janglers, tale-tellers, and liars."

The inconvenience that cometh by pilgrimage.

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And the archbishop said to me: "Lewd losel! thou seest not far enough in this matter; for thou considerest not the great travail of pilgrims, therefore thou blamest that thing that is praiseable. I say to thee, that it is right well done, that pilgrims have with them both singers and also pipers; that when one of them that goeth barefoot, striketh his toe upon a stone, and hurteth him sore, and maketh him to bleed, it is well done that he or his fellow begin then a song, or else take out of his bosom a bagpipe, for to drive away with such mirth the hurt of his fellow: for with such solace the travail and weariness of pilgrims is lightly and merrily brought forth."

Well spoken, my lord, for Lincolnshire bag-pipes.

And why then blamed Bonner Philpot, for singing in the stocks?

And I said: "Sir, St Paul teacheth men to weep with them that weep."

And the archbishop said: "What janglest thou against men's devotion? Whatsoever thou or such other say, I say that the pilgrimage that now is used, is to them that do it a praiseable and a good mean to come the rather to grace. But I hold thee unable to know this grace, for thou enforcest thee to let the devotion of the people; since by authority of holy scripture men may lefully have and use such solace as thou reprovest. For David in his last Psalm teacheth men to have divers instruments of music, for to praise therewith God."

A new found way to grace, of the bishop's making.

And I said: "Sir, by the sentence of divers doctors expounding the Psalms of David, that music and minstrelsy, that David and other saints of the old law spake of, ought now neither to be taken nor used by the letter; but these instruments, with their music, ought to be interpreted ghostly: for all those figures are called virtues and grace, with which virtues men should please God, and praise his name; for St Paul saith, "all such things befel them in figure." Therefore, sir, I understand, that the letter of this psalm of David, and of such other psalms and sentences, doth slay them that take them now literally. This sentence, as I understand, sir, Christ approveth himself, putting out the minstrels, or that he would quicken the dead damsel."

Instruments and music of the old Testament, how they are to be applied and used in the new Testament.

And the archbishop said to me: "Lewd losel! is it not leful to us to have organs in the church, for to worship therewithal God?" And I said: "Yea, sir, by man's ordinance; but, by the ordinance of God, a good sermon to the people's understanding were mickle more pleasant to God."

Organs in the church.

A fit comparison, my lord, and like yourself.

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And the archbishop said, that "organs and good delectable songs quickened and sharpened more men's wits than should any sermon."

But I said: "Sir, lusty men and worldly lovers delight and covet and travail to have all their wits quickened and sharpened with divers sensible solace: but all the faithful lovers and followers of Christ have all their delight to hear God's word, and to understand it truly, and to work thereafter faithfully and continually. For, no doubt, to dread to offend God, and to love to please him in all things, quickeneth and sharpeneth all the wits of Christ's chosen people, and ableth them so to grace, that they joy greatly to withdraw their ears and all their wits and members from all worldly delight and from all fleshly solace. For St Jerome (as I think) saith, 'No body may joy with this world and reign with Christ.'"

You swear, my lord.

And the archbishop, as if he had been displeased with mine answer, said to his clerks: "What guess ye this idiot will speak there, where he hath none dread, since he speaketh thus now here in my presence? Well, well, by God, thou shalt be ordained for." And then he spake to me all angerly:

The fourth article concerning priests' tithes.

"What sayest thou to this fourth point, that is certified against thee, preaching openly and boldly in Shrewsbury, that priests have no title to tithes?"

And I said: "Sir, I named there no word of tithes in my preaching. But more than a month after that I was arrested there in prison, a man came to me into the prison, asking me what I said of tithes. And I said to him: 'Sir, in this town are many clerks and priests, of which some are called religious men, though many of them be seculars; therefore ask ye of them this question.' And this man said to me: 'Sir, our prelates say, that we also are obliged to pay our tithes of all things that renew to us; and that they are accursed, that withdraw any part wittingly from them of their tithes.' And I said, sir, to that man, as with my protestation I say now here before you, that I wonder that any priest dare say men to be accursed, without the ground of God's word. And the man said: 'Sir, our priests say, that they curse men thus by authority of God's law.' And I said: 'Sir, I know not where this sentence of cursing is authorised now in the bible. And therefore, sir, I pray you

A paradox without God's word.

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that ye will ask the most cunning clerk of this town, that ye may know where this sentence, cursing them that tithe not, is now written in God's law; for if it were written there, I would right gladly be learned where.' But shortly this man would not go fro me, to ask this question of another body, but required me there, as I would answer before God, if in this case that cursing of priests were lawful and approved of God? And shortly herewith came to my mind the learning of St Peter, teaching priests specially to hallow the Lord Christ in their hearts; being evermore ready (as far as in them is) to answer through faith and hope to them that ask of them a reason. And this lesson Peter teacheth men to use with a meek spirit and with dread of the Lord. Wherefore, sir, I said to this man in this wise: 'In the old law, which ended not fully till the time that Christ rose up again from death to life, God commanded tithes to be given to the Levites, for the great business and daily travail that pertained to their office. But priests, because their travail was mickle more easy and light than was the office of the Levites, God ordained that priests should take for their livelihood, to do their office, the tenth part of those tithes that were given to the Levites. But now (I said), in the new law, neither Christ nor any of his apostles took tithes of the people, nor commanded the people to pay tithes, neither to priests nor to deacons. But Christ taught the people to do alms, that is, works of mercy to poor needy men, of surplus (that is, superfluous of their temporal goods) which they had more than them needed reasonably to their necessary livelihood. And thus (I said) not of tithes, but of pure alms of the people, Christ lived and his apostles, when they were so busy in preaching of the word of God to the people, that they might not travail otherwise for to get their livelihood. But, after Christ's ascension, and when the apostles had received the Holy Ghost, they travailed with their hands for to get their livelihood, when that they might thus do for busy preaching. Therefore, by example of himself, St Paul teacheth all the priests of Christ for to travail with their hand, when for busy teaching of the people they might thus do. And thus all these priests, whose priesthood God accepteth now, or will accept, or did in the apostles' time and after their decease, will do to the world's end. But (as Cisterciensis telleth) in the thousand year

A difference to be put between the old law and the new.

Christ commandeth alms, not tithes, except tithes be alms.

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of our Lord Jesus Christ, two hundred and eleven year[1], one pope, the tenth Gregory, ordained new tithes first to be given to priests now in the new law. But St Paul in his time, whose trace or example all priests of God enforce them to follow, seeing the covetousness that was among the people, desiring to destroy this foul sin through the grace of God and true virtuous living and example of himself, wrought and taught all priests for to follow him as he followed Christ, patiently, willingly, and gladly in high poverty. Wherefore Paul saith thus: 'The Lord hath ordained that they that preach the gospel shall live of the gospel. But we' (saith Paul), that covet and busy us to be faithful followers of Christ, 'use not this power.' For lo, (as Paul witnesseth afterward,) when he was full poor and needy, preaching among the people, he was not chargeous unto them, but with his hands he travailed not only to get his own living, but also the living of other poor and needy creatures. And since the people was never so covetous, nor so avarous (I guess) as they are now, it were good counsel that all priests took good heed to this heavenly learning of Paul, following him here in wilful poverty, nothing charging the people for their bodily livelihood. But, because that many priests do contrary Paul in this foresaid doctrine, Paul biddeth the people take heed to those priests, that follow him as he had given them example. As if Paul would say thus to the people: 'Accept ye none other priests than they that live after the form that I have taught you. For certain, in whatsoever dignity or order that any priest is in, if he conform him not to follow Christ and his apostles in wilful poverty, and in other heavenly virtues, and specially in true preaching of God's word, though such a one be named a priest, yet he is no more but a priest in name; for the work of a very priest such a one wanteth.' This sentence approveth Augustine, Gregory, Chrysostom, and Lincoln plainly."

Tithes, by whom and when they were first commanded in the new law.

Paul, having power to take, yet used it not.

If priests were covetous then, what be they now?

This rule with the rule of begging friars cannot stand together.

And the archbishop said to me: "Thinkest thou this wholesome learning for to sow openly, or yet privily, among

Wholesome enough, my lord, if your

[1 Gregory X. occupied the pontifical chair from Sept. A.D. 1271 to the close of the year 1276. It is difficult to ascertain to what Thorpe refers in this passage, unless it be to various ordinances of Innocent III. and his successors Honorius III. and Gregory IX., tending to restrain the secularization of church property, and especially tithes.]

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taste were to savour it. But it contrarieth not the ordinance neither of God nor of his word.

the people? Certain, this doctrine contrarieth plainly the ordinance of holy fathers, which have ordained, granted, and licensed priests to be in divers degrees, and to live by tithes and offerings of the people, and by other duties."

If priests would not slack in their duty, they should not lack in having sufficient.

And I said: "Sir, if priests were now in measurable measure and number, and lived virtuously, and taught busily and truly the word of God by example of Christ and of his apostles; without tithes, offerings, and other duties that priests now challenge and take, the people would give them freely sufficient livelihood."

Fallax argumentum secundum non causam ut causam.

And a clerk said to me: "How wilt thou make this good, that the people will give freely to priests their livelihood; since that now, by the law, every priest can scarcely constrain the people to give them their livelihood?"

Why the people be slack in their tithes.

And I said: "Sir, it is now no wonder, though the people grudge to give priests the livelihood that they ask. Mickle people know now, how that priests should live, and how that they live contrary to Christ and to his apostles. And therefore the people is full heavy to pay (as they do) their temporal goods to parsons, and to other vicars and priests, which should be faithful dispensators of the parish's goods, taking to themselves no more but a scarce living of tithes nor of offerings, by the ordinance of the common law. For whatsoever priests take of the people (be it tithe, or offering, or any other duty or service), the priests ought not to have thereof no more but a bare living; and to depart the residue to the poor men and women specially of the parish of whom they take this temporal living. But the most deal of priests now waste their parishes' goods, and spend them at their own will, after the world, in their vain lusts; so that in few places poor men have duly (as they should have) their own sustenance, neither of tithes nor of offerings, nor of other large wages and foundations that priests take of the people in divers manners, above that they need for needful sustenance of meat and clothing. But the poor needy people are forsaken and left of priests to be sustained of the parishioners, as if the priests took nothing of the parishioners for to help the people with.

Priests with a sufficiency ought to part the residue to the poor.

Priests did so then, but our priests do not so now.

Whether tithes are to be paid to priests doing not their duty.

"And thus, sir, unto over great charges of the parishioners they pay their temporal goods twice, where once might suffice, if priests were true dispensators. Also, sir, the parishioners, that pay their temporal goods (be they tithes or offerings) to

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priests that do not their office among them justly, are partners of every sin of those priests; because that they sustain those priests' folly in their sin with their temporal goods. If these things be well considered, what wonder is it then, sir, if the parishioners grudge against these dispensators?"

Then the archbishop said to me: "Thou that shouldest be judged and ruled by holy church, presumptuously thou deemest holy church to have erred in the ordinance of tithes and other duties to be paid to priests. It shall be long or thou thrive, losel, that thou despisest thy ghostly mother. How darest thou speak this, losel, among the people? Are not tithes given to priests for to live by?"

Ghostly mother? nay, an unghostly stepdame to all God's children!

And I said: "Sir, St Paul saith, that tithes were given in the old law to Levites and to priests, that came of the lineage of Levi. But our priests, he saith, came not of the lineage of Levi, but of the lineage of Juda, to which Juda no tithes were promised to be given. And therefore Paul saith: 'Since the priesthood is changed from the generation of Levi to the generation of Juda, it is necessary that changing also be made of the law. So that priests live now without tithes and other duties that they claim, following Christ and his apostles in wilful poverty, as they have given them example. For since Christ lived, all the time of his preaching, by pure alms of the people, and by example of him his apostles lived in the same wise, or else by the travail of their hands, as it is said above; every priest, whose priesthood Christ approveth, knoweth well, and confesseth in word and in work, that a disciple ought not to be above his master; but it sufficeth to a disciple to be as his master, simple and pure, meek and patient: and by example specially of his master Christ every priest should rule him in all his living; and so, after his cunning and power, a priest should busy him to inform and to rule whomsoever he might charitably."

By the law none could challenge tithes but the seed of Levi. Our priests be not of the seed of Levi: ergo, by the law our priests cannot challenge tithes. As the priesthood is changed, so is the law changed.

And the archbishop said to me, with a great spirit: "God's curse have thou, and mine, for this teaching! for thou wouldest hereby make the old law more free and perfect than the new law. For thou sayest that it is leful to Levites and to priests to take tithes in the old law, and so to enjoy their privileges; but to us priests in the new law, thou sayest, it is not lawful to take tithes. And thus thou givest Levites of the old law more freedom than to priests of the new law."

Bless, but curse not, saith St Paul.

He goeth near you, my lord, when he toucheth your tithes.

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The difference of the freedoms between the old and new laws.

And I said: "Sir, I marvel that ye understand this plain text of St Paul thus. Ye wot well, that the Levites and priests in the old law that took tithes, were not so free nor so perfect as Christ and his apostles that took no tithes. And, sir, there is a doctor (I think that it is St Jerome)[1] that saith thus: 'The priests that challenge now in the new law tithes, say in effect, that Christ is not become man, nor that he hath yet suffered death for man's love.' Wherefore this doctor saith this sentence: 'Since tithes were the hires and wages limited to Levites and to priests of the old law, for bearing about of the tabernacle, and for slaying and flaying of beasts, and for burning of sacrifice, and for keeping of the temple, and for tromping of battle before the host of Israel, and other divers observances that pertained to their office; those priests that will challenge or take tithes, deny that Christ is come in the flesh, and do the priests' office of the old law, for whom tithes were granted: for else (as this doctor saith) priests take now tithes wrongfully.'"

For what cause tithes were given in the old law.

If you take away tithes, you undo the church.

And the archbishop said to his clerks: "Heard you ever losel speak thus? Certain, this is the learning of them all, that wheresoever they come, and they may be suffered, they enforce them to expugn the freedom of holy church."

And I said: "Sir, why call you the taking of tithes, and of such other duties that priests challenge now (wrongfully), the freedom of holy church; since neither Christ nor his apostles challenged nor took such duties? Therefore these takings of priests now are not called justly the freedom of holy church; but all such giving and taking ought to be called, and holden, the slanderous covetousness of men of the holy church."

And the archbishop said to me: "Why, losel, wilt not thou and other that are confedered with thee, seek out of holy scripture and of the sense of doctors all sharp authorities against lords, and knights, and squires, and against other secular men, as thou dost against priests?"

Thorpe! preach against whom thou wilt, so thou touch not this scab.

And I said: "Sir, whatsoever men or women, lords or ladies, or any other that are present in our preaching specially, or in our communing, after our cunning, we tell out to them

[1 The opinions of St Jerome concerning tithes are to be found in his epistle to Nepotian, Ep. 2, Tom. I. p. 13, and are extremely well elucidated by Dean Comber in his work on tithes. 2nd Edition 1685, pp. 75, 76.]

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their office and their charges: but, sir, since Chrysostom saith that priests are the stomach of the people, it is needful in preaching, and also in communing, to be most busy about this priesthood; since by the viciousness of priests both lords and commons are most sinfully infected and led into the worst; and because that the covetousness of priests and pride, and the boast that they have and make of their dignity and power, destroyeth not only the virtues of priesthood in priests themselves, but also, over this, it stirreth God to take great vengeance both upon the lords and upon the commons, which suffer these priests charitably."

The viciousness and pride of priests infecteth all the world.

And the archbishop said to me: "Thou judgest every priest proud, that will not go arrayed as thou dost. By God, I deem him to be more meek that goeth every day in a scarlet gown, than thou in that thread-bare blue gown. Whereby knowest thou a proud man?"

A spiteful meekness, that is, in scarlet gowns.

And I said: "Sir, a proud priest may be known, when he denieth to follow Christ and his apostles in wilful poverty and other virtues, and coveteth worldly worship, and taketh it gladly, and gathereth together with pleading, menacing, or with flattering, or with simony, and worldly goods; and most, if a priest busy him not chiefly in himself, and after in all other men and women after his cunning and power, to withstand sin."

The signs and marks of proud priests.

And the archbishop said to me: "Though thou knewest a priest to have all these vices, and though thou sawest a priest a fornicator, wouldst thou therefore deem this priest damnable? I say to thee, that in the turning about of thy hand such a sinner may be verily repented."

And I said: "Sir, I will not damn any man for any sin that I know done or may be done, so that the sinner leaveth his sin. But, by authority of holy scripture, he that sinneth thus openly as ye shew here is damnable for doing of such a sin; and most specially, a priest that should be an example to all other for to hate and fly sin. And in how short time that ever ye say that such a sinner may be repented, he ought not, of him that knoweth his sinning, to be judged verily repentant without open evidence of great shame and hearty sorrow for sin. For whosoever (and specially a priest) that useth pride, envy, covetousness, lechery, simony, or any other vices, sheweth not as open evidence of repentance, as he hath given evil example and occasion of sinning; if he continue in any such sin as long as he may, it is likely that sin

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leaveth him, and he not sin. And, as I understand, such a one sinneth unto death, for whom no body ought to pray, as St John saith."

Clerkly spoken, and like a parasite.

And a clerk said then to the archbishop: "Sir, the longer that ye appose him, the worse he is; and the more that ye busy you to amend him, the waywarder he is. For he is of so shrewd a kind, that he shameth not only to be himself a foul nest, but without shame he busieth him to make his nest fouler."

Forget nothing, I pray you, my lord.

And then the archbishop said to his clerk: "Suffer a while, for I am at an end with him; for there is one other point certified against him, and I will hear what he saith thereto."

And so then he said to me: "Lo, it is here certified against thee, that thou preachedst openly at Shrewsbury, that it is not lawful to swear in any case."

And I said: "Sir, I preached never so openly, nor I not have taught in this wise in any place. But, sir, as I preached in Shrewsbury, with my protestation I say to you now here, that by the authority of the Gospel and of St James, and by witness of divers saints and doctors, I have preached openly in one place or other, that it is not lawful in any case to swear by any creature. And over this, sir, I have also preached and taught, by the foresaid authorities, that no body should swear in any case, if that without oath, in any wise, he that is charged to swear might excuse him to them that have power to compel him to swear, in leful thing and lawful. But if a man may not excuse him without oath to them that have power to compel him to swear, then he ought to swear only by God, taking him only that is soothfastness, for to witness the soothfastness."

And then a clerk asked me, if it were not leful to a subject, at the bidding of his prelate, for to kneel down and touch the holy gospel-book, and kiss it, saying, So help me God, and this holy dame; for he should, after his cunning and power, do all things that his prelate commandeth him.

Dome in original. Well said, sir John, of you; your holy mother stroke your head.

And I said to them: "Sirs, ye speak here full generally or largely. What if a prelate commanded his subject to do an unlawful thing, should he obey thereto?"

These prelates would be thought to be good, be they never so bad.

And the archbishop said to me: "A subject ought not to suppose, that his prelate will bid him do an unlawful thing. For a subject ought to think that his prelate will bid him do

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nothing but that he will answer for before God, that it is leful: and then, though the bidding of the prelate be unleful, the subject hath no peril to fulfil it, since that he thinketh and judgeth, that whatsoever thing his prelate biddeth him do, that it is leful to him for to do it."

A communication betwixt a lawyer and a divine.

And I said: "Sir, I trust not hereto. But to our first purpose. Sir, I tell you, that I was once in a gentleman's house, and there were then two clerks there, a master of divinity, and a man of law, which man of law was also communing in divinity. And among other things these men spake of oaths, and the man of law said, at the bidding of his sovereign, which had power to charge him to swear, he would lay his hand upon a book, and hear his charge; and if his charge to his understanding were unleful, he would hastily withdraw his hand from the book; and if he perceived his charge to be leful, he would hold still his hand upon the book, taking there only God to witness, that he would fulfil that leful charge after his power. And the master of divinity said then to him thus: 'Certain, he that layeth his hand upon a book in this wise, and maketh there a promise to do that thing that he is commanded, is obliged there, by book-oath, then to fulfil his charge. For no doubt he that chargeth him to lay his hand thus upon a book (touching the book, and swearing by it, and kissing it, promising in this form to do this thing or that), will say and witness, that he that toucheth thus a book, and kisseth it, hath sworn upon that book. And all other men that see that man thus do, and also all those that hear hereof, in the same wise will say and witness, that this man hath sworn upon a book.' Wherefore, the master of divinity said it was not leful neither to give nor to take any such charge upon a book; for every book is nothing else but divers creatures which it is made of. Therefore, to swear upon a book is to swear by creatures: and this swearing is ever unleful. This sentence witnesseth Chrysostom plainly, blaming them greatly that bring forth a book for to swear upon; charging clerks that in no wise they constrain any body to swear, whether they think a man to swear true or false."

To swear by a book is to swear by creatures.

And the archbishop and his clerks scorned me, and blamed me greatly for this saying. And the archbishop menaced me with great punishment and sharp, except I left this opinion of swearing.

Here now lacked Bonner to scratch him by the face.

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And I said: "Sir, this is not mine opinion, but it is the opinion of Christ our Saviour, and of St James, and of Chrysostom, and of other divers saints and doctors."

Then the archbishop bade a clerk read this homily of Chrysostom, which homily this clerk held in his hand, written in a roll; which roll the archbishop caused to be taken from my fellow at Canterbury. And so then this clerk read this roll, till he came to a clause where Chrysostom saith, That it is sin to swear well[1].

Kither Malveren, or else sir Brian Blowcole.

And then a clerk (Malveren, as I guess) said to the archbishop: "Sir, I pray you wete of him, how he understandeth Chrysostom here, saying it to be sin to swear well."

And so the archbishop asked me, how I understood here Chrysostom.

And certain, I was somewhat afraid to answer hereto, for I had not busied me to study about the sense thereof; but, lifting up my mind to God, I prayed him of grace, and as fast as I thought how Christ said to his apostles: "When for my name ye shall be brought before judges, I shall give into your mouth wisdom that your adversaries shall not against say." And trusting faithfully in the word of God, I said: "Sir, I know well that many men and women have now swearing so in custom, that they know not, nor will not know, that they do evil for to swear as they do; but they think and say, that they do well for to swear as they do, though they know well that they swear untruly. For they say, they may by their swearing (though it be false) void blame or temporal harm, which they should have, if they swear not thus. And, sir, many men and women maintain strongly that they swear well, when that thing is sooth that they swear for. Also, full many men and women say now, that it is well done to swear by creatures, when they may not (as they say) otherwise be believed. And also, full many men and women now say, that it is well done to swear by God, and by our lady, and by other saints, for to have them in mind. But, since all these sayings are but excusations and

Christ promiseth and giveth mouth and utterance.

What it is to swear well.

[1 σὺ δὲ εἰ μηδὲν ἕτερον, αὐτὸ γοῦν τὸ βιβλίον αἰδέσθητι ὃ προτείνεις εἰς ὅρκον, καὶ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ μετὰ χεῖρας λαμβάνων κελεύεις ὀμνύναι ἀνάπτυξον, καὶ ἀκούσας τί περὶ ὅρκων ὁ Χριστὸς ἐκεῖ διαλέγεται φρίξον καὶ ἀπόστηθι. τί οὖν περὶ ὅρκων φησίν; "ἐγὼ δὲ λέγω ὑμῖν μὴ ὀμόσαι ὅλως·" σὺ δὲ τὸν νόμον τὸν κωλύοντα ὀμνύναι τοῦτον ὅρκον ποιεῖς;—Ad Pop. Antioch. Hom. xv. S. Chrysost. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1718—38. Tom. II. p. 159.]

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sin, methinketh, sir, that this sense of Chrysostom may be alleged well against all such swearers, witnessing that all these sin grievously, though they think themselves for to swear, in this foresaid wise, well: for it is evil done and great sin, for to swear truth, when in any manner a man may excuse himself without oath."

And the archbishop said, that Chrysostom might be thus understanded.

And then a clerk said to me: "Wilt thou tarry my lord no longer, but submit thee here meekly to the ordinance of holy church, and lay thy hand upon a book, touching the holy gospel of God, promising not only with thy mouth, but also with thine heart, to stand to my lord's ordinance?" Pope-holy church.

And I said: "Sir, have I not told you here, how that I heard a master of divinity say, that in such case it is all one to touch a book, and to swear by a book?"

And the archbishop said: "There is no master of divinity in England so great, that if he hold this opinion before me, but I shall punish him as I shall do thee, except thou swear as I shall charge thee." It is happy that he called not for a candle, and made a Scevola of him, as Bonner did of Tomkins.

And I said: "Sir, is not Chrysostom an ententive doctor?"

And the archbishop said, "Yea."

And I said: "If Chrysostom proveth him worthy great blame, that bringeth forth a book to swear upon, it must needs follow, that he is more to blame that sweareth on that book."

And the archbishop said: "If Chrysostom meant accordingly to the ordinance of holy church, we will accept him." It is happy that Chrysostom was not here, or else he would have had him by the back.

And then said a clerk to me: "Is not the word of God and God himself equipollent, that is, of one authority?"

And I said, "Yea."

Then he said unto me: "Why wilt thou not swear then by the gospel of God, that is God's word; since it is all one to swear by the word of God, and by God himself?" But that word cannot be touched.

And I said: "Sir, since I may not now otherwise be believed, but by swearing, I perceive (as Augustine saith) that it is not speedful that ye, that should be my brethren, should not believe me: therefore I am ready by the word of God (as the Lord commanded me by his word) to swear." Thorpe refuseth not to swear.

Then the clerk said to me: "Lay then thine hand upon

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the book, touching the holy gospel of God, and take thy charge."

And I said: "Sir, I understand that the holy gospel of God may not be touched with man's hand."

And the clerk said I fonded[1], and that I said not truth.

And I asked this clerk, whether it were more to read the gospel, or to touch the gospel?

And he said, it was more to read the gospel.

Whether the book be the gospel.

Then I said: "Sir, by authority of St Jerome, the gospel is not the gospel for reading of the letter, but for the belief that men have in the word of God: that it is the gospel that we believe, and not the letter that we read; for because the letter, that is touched with man's hand, is not the gospel, but the sentence, that is verily believed in man's heart, is the gospel. For so Jerome saith: 'The gospel, that is the virtue of God's word, is not in the leaves of the book, but it is in the root of reason. Neither the gospel (he saith) is in the writing above of the letters, but the gospel is in the marking of the sentence of scriptures[2].' This sentence approveth St Paul, saying thus: 'The kingdom of God is not in word, but in virtue.' And David saith: 'The voice of the Lord, that is his word, is in virtue.' And after David saith: 'Through the word of God the heavens were formed, and in the spirit of his mouth is all the virtue of them.' And I pray you, sir, understand ye well how David saith, that in the spirit of the mouth of the Lord is all the virtue of angels and of men."

This clerk was well seen in the mass-book.

And the clerk said to me: "Thou wouldest make us to fond with thee. Say we not that the gospels are written in the mass-book?"

And I said: "Sir, though men used to say thus, yet it is unperfect speech; for the principal part of a thing is properly the whole thing. For lo, man's soul, that may not now be seen here, nor touched with any sensible thing, is properly

[1 Fonded: doated.]

[2 Nec putemus in verbis scripturarum esse evangelium, sed in sensu; non in superficie, sed in medulla; non in sermonum foliis, sed in radice rationis. Dicitur in Propheta de Deo, Sermones ejus boni sunt cum eo. Tunc scriptura utilis est audientibus, cum absque Christo non dicitur, cum absque Patre non profertur, cum sine Spiritu non eam insinuat ille qui prædicat.—S. Hieron. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. Tom. IV. p. 231. in Comm. Epist. ad Gal. cap. i.]

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man. And all the virtue of a tree is in the root thereof, that may not be seen; for do away the root, and the tree is destroyed. And, sir, as ye said to me right now, God and his word are of one authority. And, sir, St Jerome witnesseth, that Christ (very God and very man) is hid in the letter of his law: thus also, sir, the gospel is hid in the letter. For, sir, as it is full likely many divers men and women here in the earth touched Christ, and saw him, and knew his bodily person, which neither touched, nor saw, nor knew ghostly his Godhead; right thus, sir, many men now touch, and see, and write, and read the scriptures of God's law, which neither touch, see, nor read effectually, the gospel. For, as the Godhead of Christ (that is, the virtue of God) is known by the virtue through belief, so is the gospel, that is, Christ's word."

The gospel is not the letter, but hid in the letter.

And a clerk said to me: "These be full misty matters, and unsavoury, that thou shewest here to us."

Misty matters for your blind eyes.

And I said: "Sir, if ye that are masters know not plainly this sentence, ye may sore dread that the kingdom of heaven be taken from you, as it was from the princes of priests and from the elders of the Jews."

And then a clerk (as I guess, Malveren) said to me: "Thou knowest not thine equivocations; for the kingdom of heaven hath divers understandings. What callest thou the kingdom of heaven in this sentence, that thou shewest here?"

And I said: "Sir, by good reason and sentence of doctors, the realm of heaven is called here the understanding of God's word."

The kingdom of God taken for the understanding of God's word.

And a clerk said to me: "From whom thinkest thou that this understanding is taken away?"

And I said: "Sir, by authority of Christ himself, the effectual understanding of Christ's word is taken away from all them chiefly, which are great lettered men, and presume to understand high things, and will be holden wise men, and desire mastership and high state and dignity; but they will not conform them to the living and teaching of Christ and of his apostles."

This salt was somewhat too sharp for their rotten flesh to abide.

Then the archbishop said: "Well, well, thou wilt judge thy sovereigns. By God, the king doth not his duty, but he suffer thee to be condemned."

Help down with him, Sir John.

And then another clerk said to me: "Why, on Friday

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that last was, counselledst thou a man of my lord's, that he should not shrive him to man but only to God?"

Note here the crafty practice of this holy church.

And with this asking I was abashed; and then, by and by, I knew that I was subtilly betrayed of a man that came to me in prison on the Friday before, communing with me in this matter of confession. And certain, by his words, I thought that this man came then to me of full fervent and charitable will; but now I know he came to tempt me and to accuse me: God forgive him, if it be his will! And with all mine heart, when I had thought thus, I said to this clerk: "Sir, I pray you that ye would fetch this man hither; and all the words, as nearly as I can repeat them, which that I spake to him on Friday in the prison, I will rehearse now here before you all, and before him."

And (as I guess) the archbishop said then to me: "They that are now here, suffice to repeat them. How saidst thou to him?"

A false brother.

And I said: "Sir, that man came and asked me of divers things, and, after his asking, I answered him (as I understood) that good was. And, as he shewed to me by his words, he was sorry of his living in court, and right heavy for his own vicious living, and also for the viciousness of other men, and specially of priests' evil living: and herefore he said to me with a sorrowful heart (as I guessed), that he purposed fully within short time for to leave the court, and busy him to know God's law, and to conform all his life thereafter. And when he had said to me these words, and moe other which I would rehearse and he were present, he prayed me to hear his confession. And I said to him: 'Sir, wherefore come ye to me, to be confessed of me? Ye wot well that the archbishop putteth and holdeth me here, as one unworthy either to give or to take any sacrament of holy church.'"

Auricular confession.

"And he said to me: 'Brother, I wot well, and so wot many moe other, that you and such other are wrongfully vexed, and therefore I will commune with you the more gladly.' And I said to him: 'Certain, I wot well that many men of this court, and specially the priests of this household, would be full evil apayd[1] both with you and with me, if they wist that ye were confessed of me.' And he said, that he cared not therefore, for he had full little affection in

A crafty train of a popish dissembler.

[1 Apayd: content.]

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them: and, as methought, he spake these words and many other of so good will and of so high desire, for to have known and done the pleasant will of God. And I said then to him, as with my foresaid protestation I say to you now here: 'Sir, I counsel you for to absent you from all evil company, and to draw you to them that love and busy them to know and to keep the precepts of God; and then the good Spirit of God will move you for to occupy busily all your wits in gathering together of all your sins, as far as ye can bethink you, shaming greatly of them, and sorrowing heartily for them. Yea, sir, the Holy Ghost will then put in your heart a good will and a fervent desire for to take and to hold a good purpose, to hate ever and to fly (after your cunning and power) all occasion of sin: and so then wisdom shall come to you from above, lightening with divers beams of grace and of heavenly desire all your wits, informing you how ye shall trust stedfastly in the mercy of the Lord, knowledging to him only all your vicious living, praying to him ever devoutly of charitable counsel and continuance; hoping without doubt, that if ye continue thus, busying you faithfully to know and to keep his biddings, that he will (for he only may) forgive you all your sins.' And this man said then to me: 'Though God forgive men their sins, yet it behoveth men to be assoiled of priests, and to do the penance that they enjoin them.'

"And I said to him: 'Sir, it is all one to assoil men of their sins, and to forgive men their sins. Wherefore, since it pertaineth only to God to forgive sin, it sufficeth, in this case, to counsel men and women for to leave their sin, and to comfort them that busy them thus to do, for to hope stedfastly in the mercy of God. And againward, priests ought to tell sharply to customable sinners, that if they will not make an end of their sin, but continue in divers sins while that they may sin, all such deserve pain without any end. And herefore, priests should ever busy them to live well and holily, and to teach the people busily and truly the word of God, shewing to all folk, in open preaching and in privy counselling, that the Lord God only forgiveth sin. And therefore, those priests that take upon them to assoil men of their sins, blaspheme God; since that it pertaineth only to the Lord to assoil men of all their sins. For no doubt a thousand year

God only forgiveth sin, man only can counsel to leave sin.

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after that Christ was man, no priest of Christ durst take upon him to teach the people, neither privily nor apertly, that they behoved needs to come to be assoiled of them, as priests now do. But, by authority of Christ's word, priests bound indurate customable sinners to everlasting pains, which in no time of their living would busy them faithfully to know the biddings of God, nor to keep them. And again, all they that would occupy all their wits to hate and to fly all occasion of sin, dreading over all things to offend God, and loving for to please him continually; to these men and women priests shewed, how the Lord assoileth them of all their sins. And thus Christ promised to confirm in heaven all the binding and loosing that priests, by authority of his word, bind men in sin, that are indurate therein, or loose them out of sin here upon earth, that are verily repentant.' And this man, hearing these words, said, that he might well in conscience consent to this sentence: 'but,' he said, 'is it not needful to the lay-people, that cannot thus do, to go shrive them to priests?' And I said: 'If a man feel himself so distroubled with any sin, that he cannot by his own wit avoid this sin without counsel of them that are herein wiser than he; in such a case, the counsel of a good priest is full necessary. And if a good priest fail, as they do now commonly, in such a case St Augustine saith[1], that a man may lefully commune and take counsel of a virtuous secular man. But certain, that man or woman is overladen and too beastily, which cannot bring their own sins into their mind, busying them night and day for to hate and to forsake all their sins, doing a sigh for them after their cunning and power. And, sir, full accordingly to this sentence, upon Midlent Sunday (two year, as I guess, now agone), I heard a monk of Feversham, that men called Morden, preach at Canterbury at the cross within Christ-Church abbey, saying thus of confession: as, through the suggestion of the fiend without counsel of any other body, of themselves many men and women can imagine and find means and ways enough to come to pride, to theft, to lechery, and to

Shrift and confession to priests.

A good secular man may be counsellor where a priest falleth.

Morden, preaching of confession.

[1 The passage which seems here referred to is to be found in the second book, "*De Anima et ejus Origine*," in an epistle "*Ad Petrum Presbyterum.*" Absit enim ut erubescam a presbytero discere, si a laico tu non erubuisti prædicanda et imitanda humilitate, si vera didicisti.—S. Aug. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1696. Tom. x. col. 357.]

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other divers vices; in contrariwise this monk said: 'Since the Lord God is more ready to forgive sin than the fiend is, or may be, of power to move any body to sin; then whosoever will shame and sorrow heartily for their sins, knowledging them faithfully to God, amending them after their power and cunning, without counsel of any other body than of God and of himself (through the grace of God), all such men and women may find sufficient means to come to God's mercy, and so to be clean assoiled of all their sins.' This sentence I said, sir, to this man of yours, and the self words, as near as I can guess."

Hearty repentance to God needeth no confession to a priest.

And the archbishop said: "Holy church approveth not this learning."

No, nor any thing else that is good.

And I said: "Sir, holy church, of which Christ is head in heaven and in earth, must needs approve this sentence. For lo, hereby all men and women may, if they will, be sufficiently taught to know and to keep the commandments of God, and to hate and to fly continually all occasion of sin, and to love and to seek virtues busily, and to believe in God stably, and to trust in his mercy stedfastly, and so to come to perfect charity, and continue therein perseverantly: and more the Lord asketh not of any man here now in this life. And certain, since Jesu Christ died upon the cross wilfully to make men free, men of the church are too bold and too busy to make men thrall, binding them under the pain of endless curse (as they say) to do many observances and ordinances, which neither the living nor teaching of Christ, nor of his apostles, approveth."

Christ giveth freedom, the pope giveth thraldom.

And a clerk said then to me: "Thou shewest plainly here thy deceit, which thou hast learned of them that travail to sow popple among wheat. But I counsel thee to go away clean from this learning, and submit thee lowly to my lord, and thou shalt find him yet to be gracious to thee."

And as fast then another clerk said to me: "How wast thou so bold at Paul's Cross in London, to stand there hard, with thy tippet bounden about thine head, and to reprove in his sermon the worthy clerk Alkerton, drawing away all that thou mightest? Yea, and the same day at afternoon thou, meeting the worthy doctor in Watling street, calledst him false flatterer and hypocrite."

And I said: "Sir, I think certainly that there was no

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man nor woman that hated verily sin, and loved virtues (hearing the sermon of the clerk of Oxford, and also Alkerton's sermon), but they said, or might justly say, that Alkerton reproved the clerk untruly, and slandered him wrongfully and uncharitably. For, no doubt, if the living and teaching of Christ chiefly, and of his apostles, be true, nobody that loveth God and his law will blame any sentence that the clerk then preached there; since, by authority of God's word, and by approved saints and doctors, and by open reason, this clerk approved all things clearly that he preached there."

And a clerk of the archbishop's said to me: "His sermon was false, and that he sheweth openly; since he dare not stand forth and defend his preaching that he then preached there."

And I said: "Sir, I think that he purposeth to stand stedfastly thereby, or else he slandereth foully himself, and also many other that have great trust that he will stand by the truth of the gospel. For I wot well, his sermon is written both in Latin and English, and many men have it, and they set great price thereby. And, sir, if ye were present with the archbishop at Lambeth, when this clerk appeared and was at his answer before the archbishop, ye wot well that this clerk denied not there his sermon, but two days he maintained it before the archbishop and his clerks."

And then the archbishop, or one of his clerks, said (I wot not which of them): "That harlot shall be met with, for that sermon; for no man but he and thou, and such other false harlots, praiseth any such preaching."

And then the archbishop said: "Your cursed sect is busy, and it joyeth right greatly, to contrary and to destroy the privilege and freedom of holy church."

True freedom of holy church not destroyed, but increased by true preachers.

And I said: "Sir, I know no men that travail so busily as this sect doth, which you reprove, to make rest and peace in holy church. For pride, covetousness, and simony, which distrouble most holy church, this sect hateth and fleeth; and travaileth busily to move all other men, in like manner, unto meekness, and wilful poverty, and charity, and free ministering of the sacraments: this sect loveth and useth, and is full busy to move all other folks, thus to do. For these virtues owe all members of holy church to their head Christ."

Then a clerk said to the archbishop: "Sir, it is far days,

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and ye have far to ride to night; therefore make an end with him, for he will none make. But the more, sir, that ye busy you for to draw him toward you, the more contumax he is made, and the further fro you."

And then Malveren said to me: "William, kneel down, and pray my lord of grace, and leave all thy phantasies, and become a child of holy church." Take my lord's blessing, and stand up.

And I said: "Sir, I have prayed the archbishop oft, and yet I pray him for the love of Christ, that he will leave his indignation that he hath against me; and that he will suffer me, after my cunning and power, for to do mine office of priesthood, as I am charged of God to do it. For I covet nought else but to serve my God to his pleasing, in the state that I stand in, and have taken me to."

And the archbishop said to me: "If of good heart thou wilt submit thee now here meekly to be ruled from this time forth by my counsel, obeying meekly and wilfully to mine ordinance, thou shalt find it most profitable and best to thee for to do thus. Therefore tarry thou me no longer: grant to do this that I have said to thee now here shortly, or deny it utterly." My lord hath haste for being benighted.

And I said to the archbishop: "Sir, ought we to believe that Jesu Christ was and is very God and very man?"

And the archbishop said, "Yea."

And I said: "Sir, ought we to believe that all Christ's living and his teaching is true in every point?"

And he said, "Yea."

And I said: "Sir, ought we to believe, that the living of the apostles and the teaching of Christ and all the prophets are true, which are written in the bible for the health and salvation of God's people?"

And he said, "Yea."

And I said: "Sir, ought all christian men and women, after their cunning and power, for to conform all their living to the teaching specially of Christ, and also to the teaching and living of his apostles and of prophets, in things that are pleasant to God, and edification to his church?"

And he said, "Yea."

And I said: "Sir, ought the doctrine, the bidding, or the counsel of any body to be accepted or obeyed unto, except this doctrine, these biddings, or this counsel, may be granted

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and affirmed by Christ's living and his teaching specially, or by the living and teaching of his apostles and prophets?"

And why compel you this man to the contrary?

And the archbishop said to me: "Other doctrine ought not to be accepted, nor we owe not to obey to any man's bidding or counsel, except we can perceive that this bidding or counsel accordeth with the bidding and teaching of Christ and of his apostles and prophets."

Thorpe content to submit himself to the ordinance of councils.

And I said: "Sir, is not all the learning and biddings and counsels of holy church means and healful remedies to know and to withstand the privy suggestions and the apert temptations of the fiend; and also ways and healful remedies to slay pride and all other deadly sins, and the branches of them, and sovereign means to purchase grace for to withstand and overcome all the fleshly lusts and movings?"

And the archbishop said, "Yea."

And I said: "Sir, whatsoever thing ye or any other body bid or counsel me to do accordingly to this foresaid learning, after my cunning and power, through the help of God, I will meekly with all mine heart obey thereto."

And the archbishop said to me: "Submit thee then now here meekly and wilfully to the ordinance of holy church, which I shall shew to thee."

And I said: "Sir, accordingly as I have here now before you rehearsed, I will now be ready to obey full gladly to Christ, the head of all holy church, and to the learning and biddings and counsels of every pleasing member of him."

If Bonner had been here, he would not have stroken the cupboard.

Then the archbishop, striking with his hand fiercely upon a cupboard, spake to me with a great spirit, saying: "By Jesu, but if thou leave not such additions, obliging thee now here without any exception to mine ordinance, or that I go out of this place, I shall make thee as sure as any thief that is in the prison of Lantern: advise thee now what thou wilt do." And then, as if he had been angered, he went fro the cupboard where he stood to a window.

And then Malveren and another clerk came nearer me, and they spake to me many words full pleasantly; and another while they menaced me, and counselled full busily to submit me, or else, they said, I should not escape punishing over measure: for they said I should be degraded, cursed, and burned, and so then damned. "But now," they said, "thou mayest eschew all these mischiefs if thou wilt submit thee

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wilfully and meekly to this worthy prelate that hath cure of thy soul. And for the pity of Christ," said they, "bethink thee how great clerks the bishop of Lincoln, Herford and Purvey were, and yet are, and also B., that is a well understanding man, which also have forsaken and revoked all the learning and opinions that thou and such other hold. Wherefore, since each of them is mickle wiser than thou art, we counsel thee for the best, that by the example of these four clerks thou follow them, submitting thee as they did."

See what man is, God giving him up to himself.

The multitude is not to be followed in evil.

And one of the bishop's clerks said then there, that he heard Nicol Herford say, that since he forsook and revoked all the learning and Lollards' opinions, he hath had mickle greater favour and more delight to hold against them, than ever he had to hold with them, while he held with them.

And therefore Malveren said to me: "I understand, and thou wilt take thee to a priest, and shrive thee clean, forsake all such opinions, and take the penance of my lord here, for the holding and teaching of them, within short time thou shalt be greatly comforted in this doing."

As clean from thrift as from sin.

And I said to the clerks that thus busily counselled me to follow these foresaid men: "Sirs, if these men, of whom ye counsel me to take example, had forsaken benefices of temporal profit and of worldly worship, so that they had absented them, and eschewed from all occasions of covetousness and of fleshly lusts, and had taken them to simple living and wilful poverty, they had herein given good example to me and to many other, to have followed them. But now, since all these four men have slanderously and shamefully done the contrary, consenting to receive, and to have, and to hold temporal benefices, living now more worldly and more fleshly than they did before, conforming them to the manners of this world, I forsake them herein, and in all their foresaid slanderous doing. For I purpose, with the help of God (into remission of all my sins, and of my foul cursed living), to hate and to fly privily and apertly to follow these men, teaching and counselling whomsoever that I may for to fly and eschew the way that they have chosen to go in, which will lead them to the worst end, if in convenient time they repent them not, verily forsaking and revoking openly the slander that they have put, and every day yet put, to Christ's church. For certain so open blasphemy and slander as they have spoken

Other men's examples are so to be followed, as they be the followers of Christ.

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and done, in their revoking and forsaking of the truth, ought not, nor may not, privily be amended duly. Wherefore, sirs, I pray you that ye busy you not for to move me to follow these men in revoking and forsaking the truth, and sothfastness as they have done, and yet do; wherein, by open evidence, they stir God to great wrath, and not only against themselves, but also against all them that favour them, or consent to them herein, or that communeth with them, except it be for their amendment: for whereas these men first were pursued of enemies, now they have obliged them by oath for to slander and pursue Christ in his members. Wherefore (as I trust stedfastly in the goodness of God) the worldly covetousness, and the lusty living, and the sliding from the truth of those runagates, shall be to me, and to many other men and women, an example and an evidence to stand the more stiffly by the truth of Christ.

Promotions and great livings choke truth.

"For certain, right many men and women do mark and abhor the foulness and cowardness of these foresaid untrue men, how that they are overcome and stopped with benefices, and withdrawn from the truth of God's word, forsaking utterly to suffer therefore bodily persecution. For by this unfaithful doing and apostasy of them specially that are great lettered men, and have knowledged openly the truth, and now, either for pleasure or displeasure of tyrants, have taken hire and temporal wages to forsake the truth, and to hold against it, slandering and pursuing them that covet to follow Christ in the way of righteousness, many men and women therefore are now moved. But many moe through the grace of God shall be moved hereby for to learn the truth of God, and to do thereafter, and to stand boldly thereby."

Men following the ways of Balaam.

Then the archbishop said to his clerks: "Busy you no longer about him; for he and such other such as he is are confedered so together, that they will not swear to be obedient, and to submit them to prelates of holy church. For now, since I stood here, his fellow sent me word, that he will not swear, and that he counselled him that he should not swear to me. And, losel! in that thing that in thee is, thou hast busied thee to lose this young man; but, blessed be God, thou shalt not have thy purpose of him. For he hath forsaken all thy learning, submitting him to be buxom and obedient to the ordinance of holy church, and weepeth full

Thorpe's fellow refuseth to swear to the prelates.

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bitterly, and curseth thee full heartily for the venomous teaching which thou hast shewed to him, counselling him to do thereafter.

"And for thy false counselling of many other and him, thou hast great cause to be right sorry; for long time thou hast busied thee to pervert whomsoever thou mightest. Therefore, as many deaths thou art worthy of, as thou hast given evil counsels. And therefore, by Jesu, thou shalt go thither, where Nicol Herford and Tom Purvey were harboured. And I undertake, or this day eight days, thou shalt be right glad for to do what thing that ever I bid thee to do. And, losel! I shall assay, if I can make thee there as sorrowful as, it was told me, thou wast glad of my last going out of England. By St Thomas, I shall turn thy joy into sorrow."

And I said: "Sir, there can nobody prove lawfully, that I joyed ever of the manner of your going out of this land. But, sir, to say the sooth, I was joyful when ye were gone; for the bishop of London, in whose prison ye left me, found in me no cause for to hold me longer in his prison, but, at the request of my friends, he delivered me to them, asking of me no manner of submitting."

Arundel going out of England.

The gentleness of the bishop of London.

Then the archbishop said to me: "Wherefore that I yede out of England, is unknown to thee; but be this thing well known to thee, that God (as I wot well) hath called me again, and brought me into this land, for to destroy thee and the false sect that thou art of; as, by God, I shall pursue you so narrowly, that I shall not leave a slip of you in this land."

So promised Winchester in queen Mary's time, but that passed his power to perform.

And I said to the archbishop: "Sir, the holy prophet Jeremy said to the false prophet Anany: 'When the word that is the prophecy of a prophet is known or fulfilled, then it shall be known that the Lord sent the prophet in truth.'"

A notable answer of Thorpe to the bishop.

And the archbishop, as if he had not been pleased with my saying, turned him awayward hither and thither, and said: "By God, I shall set upon thy shins a pair of pearls, that thou shalt be glad to change thy voice."

Such pearls would better beseem, my lord, your golden shoes.

These, and many moe wondrous and convicious words were spoken to me, menacing me and all other of the same sect for to be punished and destroyed unto the uttermost.

And the archbishop called then to him a clerk, and rowned[1] with him: and that clerk went forth, and soon he brought in

[1 Rowned: consulted.]

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the constable of Saltwood castle, and the archbishop rowned a good while with him: and then the constable went forth, and then came in divers seculars, and they scorned me on every side, and menaced me greatly. And some counselled the archbishop to burn me by and by, and some other counselled him to drown me in the sea, for it is near hand there.

At illi clamabant dicentes, Tolle, tolle, crucifige eum.

And a clerk, standing beside me there, kneeled down to the archbishop, praying him that he would deliver me to him for to say matins with him; and he would undertake, that within three days I should not resist any thing that were commanded me to do of my prelate.

And the archbishop said, that he would ordain for me himself.

And then after came in again the constable, and spake privily to the archbishop. And then the archbishop commanded the constable to lead me forth thence with him; and so he did: and when we were gone forth thence, we were sent after again. And when I came in again before the archbishop, a clerk bade me kneel down, and ask grace, and submit me lowly, and I should find it for the best.

Obedience to God and to his law would not serve.

And I said then to the archbishop: "Sir, as I have said to you divers times to-day, I will wilfully and lowly obey and submit me to be ordained ever, after my cunning and power, to God and to his law, and to every member of holy church, as far forth as I can perceive that these members accord with their head Christ, and will teach me, rule me, or chastise me by authority, specially of God's law."

And the archbishop said: "I wist well he would not, without such additions, submit him."

And then I was rebuked, scorned, and menaced on every side: and yet after this divers persons cried upon me to kneel down and submit me; but I stood still, and spake no word. And then there was spoken of me and to me many great words, and I stood and heard them menace, curse and scorn me: but I said nothing.

In patience and silence possess your souls.

Then a while after the archbishop said to me: "Wilt thou not submit thee to the ordinance of holy church?"

And I said: "Sir, I will full gladly submit me, as I have shewed you before."

And then the archbishop bade the constable to have me forth thence in haste. And so then I was led forth, and

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brought into a foul unhonest prison, where I came never before. But, thanked be God, when all men were gone forth then from me, and had sparred fast the prison-door after them, by and by after, I, therein by myself, busied me to think on God, and to thank him of his goodness. And I was then greatly comforted in all my wits, not only for that I was then delivered for a time from the sight, from the hearing, from the presence, from the scorning, and from the menacing of mine enemies; but much more I rejoiced in the Lord, because that through his grace he kept me so, both among the flattering specially, and among the menacing of mine adversaries, that without heaviness and anguish of my conscience I passed away from them. For, as a tree laid upon another tree overthwart or cross-wise, so was the archbishop and his three clerks always contrary to me, and I to them.

Thorpe cast in prison.

Comforted and strengthened of the Lord after his conflict with the bishop.

Now, good God! for thine holy name, and to the praising of thy most blessed name, make us one together, if it be thy will, by authority of thy word, that is true perfect charity, and else not. And that it may thus be, all that this writing read or hear, pray heartily to the Lord God, that he, for his great goodness that cannot be with tongue expressed, grant to us and all other, which in the same wise and for the same cause specially, or for any other cause, be at distance, to be knit and made one in true faith, in stedfast hope, and in perfect charity. Amen.

Besides this examination here above described, came another treatise also to our hands of the same William Thorpe, under the name and title of his testament; which rather by the matter and handling thereof might seem to be counted a complaint of vicious priests: which treatise or testament in this place we thought not meet to be left out.

THE TESTAMENT OF WILLIAM THORPE.

Matthew, an apostle of Christ and his gospeller, witnesseth truly in the holy gospel the most holy living and the most wholesome teaching of Christ. He rehearseth how that Christ likeneth them that hear his words, and keep them, to a wise man that buildeth his house upon a stone, that is, a

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Christ dwelleth in a faithful soul.

stable and a sure ground. This house is man's soul, in which Christ delighteth to dwell, if it be grounded, that is, established faithfully, in his living and in his true teaching, adorned or made fair with divers virtues, which Christ used and taught without any meddling of any error, as are chiefly the conditions of charity.

He is the stone whereon we must build.

This aforesaid stone is Christ, upon which every faithful soul must be builded; since upon none other ground than upon Christ's living and his teaching any body may make any building or housing wherein Christ will come and dwell. This sentence witnesseth St Paul to the Corinthians, shewing to them that no body may set any other ground than is set, that is Christ's living and teaching. And because that all men and women should give all their business here in this life, to build them virtuously upon this sure foundation; St Paul, acknowledging the fervent desire, and the good will of the people of Ephesus, wrote to them comfortably, saying: "Now ye are not strangers, guests, nor yet comelings, but ye are the citizens and of the household of God, builded above upon the foundament of the apostles and prophets. In which foundament, every building that is builded or made through the grace of God, it increaseth or groweth into an holy temple;" that is, every body that is grounded or builded faithfully in the teaching and living of Christ, is therethrough made the holy temple of God.

How we are made the temple of God.

Mark what we have by Christ.

This is the stable ground and stedfast stone, Christ, which is the sure corner-stone, fast joining and holding mightily together two walls. For through Christ Jesus, the mean or middle person of the Trinity, the Father of heaven is pitiously or mercifully joined and made one together to mankind; and through dread to offend God, and fervent love to please him, men be inseparably made one to God, and defended surely under his protection. Also this aforesaid stone, Christ, was figured by the square stones of which the temple of God was made: for as a square stone, wheresoever it is cast or laid, abideth and lieth stably; so Christ and every faithful member of his church, by example of him, abideth and dwelleth stably in true faith, and in all other heavenly virtues, in all adversities that they suffer in this valley of tears.

The property of a square stone.

For lo! when these aforesaid square stones were hewn and wrought for to be laid in the walls or pillars of God's

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temple, no noise or stroke of the workman was heard. Certain, this silence in working of this stone figureth Christ chiefly, and his faithful members, who, by example of him, have been, and yet are, and ever to the world's end shall be, so meek and patient in every adversity, that no sound, nor yet any grudging, shall at any time be perceived in them.

Nevertheless, this chief and most worshipful corner-stone, which only is the ground of all virtues, proud beggars reproved; but this despite and reproof Christ suffered most meekly in his own person, to give example of all meekness and patience to all his faithful followers. Certain, this world is now so full of proud beggars, who are named priests; but the very office of working of priesthood, which Christ approveth true, and accepteth, is far from the multitude of priests that now reign in this world.

Christ an example of all perfect meekness.

For, from the highest priest to the lowest, all, as they say, study, that is, they imagine and travail busily, how they may please the world and their flesh. This sentence with many such others dependeth upon them, if it be well considered: either God, the Father of heaven, hath deceived all mankind by the living and teaching of Jesus Christ, and by the living and teaching of his apostles and prophets; or else all the popes that have been since I had any knowledge or discretion, with all the college of cardinals, archbishops and bishops, monks, canons, and friars, with all the contagious flock of the commoualty of priesthood, who have all my lifetime, and mickle longer, reigned and yet reign, and increase damnably from sin to sin, have been, and yet be, proud, obstinate heretics, covetous sinners, and defouled adulterers in the ministering of the sacraments, and specially in the ministering of the sacrament of the altar. For, as their works shew, whereto Christ biddeth us take heed, the highest priests and prelates of this priesthood challenge and occupy unlawful temporal lordships; and for temporal favour and meed they sell and give benefices to unworthy and unable persons; yea, these simoners sell sin, suffering men and women in every degree and estate to lie and continue from year to year in divers vices slanderously. And thus, by evil example of high priests in the church, lower priests under them are not only suffered, but they are maintained, to sell full dear to the people for temporal meed all the sacraments.

Priests seek the pleasure of this world.

The lives of the popes, and Christ and his apostles.

When priests forget God's truth, ye see whither they run headlong. The great infect the small.

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Fleshly priests.

And thus all this aforesaid priesthood is blown so high, and borne up in pride and vain glory of their estate and dignity, and so blinded with worldly covetousness, that they disdain to follow Christ in very meekness and wilful poverty, living holily, and preaching God's word truly, freely, and continually, taking their livelihood at the free-will of the people, of their pure alms, where and when they suffice not, for their true and busy preaching, to get their sustenance with their hands. To this true sentence, grounded on Christ's own living, and the teaching of his apostles, these aforesaid worldly and fleshly priests will not consent effectually; but, as their works and also their words shew, boldly and unshamefacedly these beforenamed priests and prelates covet and enforce them mightily and busily, that all holy scriptures were expounded and drawn accordingly to their manners, and to their ungrounded usages and findings: for they will not (since they hold it but folly and madness) conform their manners to the pure and simple living of Christ and his apostles, nor will they follow freely their learning. Wherefore all the emperors and kings, and all other lords and ladies, and all the common people in every degree and state, who have beforetime known, or might have known, and also all they that now yet know, or might know, this aforesaid witness of priesthood, and would not; nor yet will enforce them, after their cunning and power, to withstand charitably the aforesaid enemies and traitors of Christ, and of his church; all these strive with Antichrist against Jesus, and they shall hear the indignation of God Almighty without end, if in convenient time they amend them not and repent them verily, doing therefore due mourning and sorrow, after their cunning and power. For, through presumptuousness and negligence of priests and prelates (not of the church of Christ, but occupying their prelacy unduly in the church), and also through flattering and false covetousness of other divers named priests, lousengers and lounderers are wrongfully made and named hermits, and have leave to defraud poor and needy creatures of their livelihood, and to live, by their false winning and begging, in sloth and in other divers vices. And also by these prelates these cockernoses are suffered to live in pride and hypocrisy, and to defoul themselves both bodily and ghostly. Also by the suffering and counsel of these aforesaid prelates and other priests

They hunt after this with tooth and nail.

An exhortation to see priesthood amended.

Prelates and priests negligent in their duty.

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are made both vain brotherhoods and sisterhoods, full of pride and envy, which are full contrary to the brotherhood of Christ, since they are cause of mickle dissension, and they multiply and sustain it uncharitably: for in lusty eating and drinking unmeasurably and out of time they exercise themselves. Also this vain confederacy of brotherhood is permitted to be of one clothing, and to hold together.

And in all these ungrounded and unlawful doings priests are partners, and great meddlers and counsellors; and over this viciousness, hermits and pardoners, anchorites and strange beggars, are licensed and admitted by prelates and priests, to beguile the people with flatterings and leasings slanderously against all good reason and true belief; and so to increase divers vices in themselves, and also among all them that accept them or consent to them.

And thus the viciousness of these aforenamed priests and prelates hath been long time, and yet is and shall be, cause of wars, both within the realm and without. And in the same wise these unable priests have been, and yet are and shall be, the chief cause of pestilence of men, and murrain of beasts, and of barrenness of the earth, and of all other mischiefs, to the time that the lords and commons able them, through grace, to know and to keep the commandments of God, enforcing them then faithfully and charitably, by one assent, to redress and make one this aforesaid priesthood, to the wilful, poor, meek and innocent living and teaching, specially of Christ and his apostles.

Therefore all they that know or might know the viciousness that reigneth now cursedly in these priests and in their learning, if they suffice not to understand this contagious viciousness, let them pray to the Lord heartily for the health of his church, abstaining them prudently from the obdurate enemies of Christ and of his people, and from all their sacraments, since to all them that know them, or may know them, they are but fleshly deeds and false; as St Cyprian witnesseth in the first question of decrees, and in the first cause, Cap. 'Siquis inquit:' for, as this saint and great doctor witnesseth there, not only vicious priests, but also all they that favour them, or consent to them in their viciousness, shall together perish with them, if they amend them not duly; as all they perished that consented to Dathan and Abiram. For nothing

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were more confusion to these aforesaid vicious priests, than to eschew them prudently in all their unlawful sacraments while they continue in their sinful living slanderously, as they have long time done, and yet do. And no body needs to be afraid, though death did follow by one way or other, to die out of this world without taking of any sacrament of these aforesaid Christ's enemies, since Christ will not fail to minister himself all lawful and healful sacraments, and necessary at all time, and especially at the end, to all them that are in true faith, in stedfast hope, and in perfect charity.

But yet some mad fools say, to eschew slander, they will be shriven once in the year, and communed of their proper priests, though they know them defouled with slanderous vices. No doubt but all they that thus do, or consent privily or apertly to such doing, are culpable of great sin; since St Paul witnesseth, that not only they that do evil are worthy of death and damnation, but also they that consent to evil-doers. Also, as their slanderous works witness, these aforesaid vicious priests despise and cast from them heavenly cunning, that is given of the Holy Ghost. Wherefore the Lord throweth all such despisers from him, that they neither use, nor do, any priesthood to him.

No doubt, then, all they that wittingly or wilfully take, or consent that any other body should take, any sacrament of any such named priests, sin openly and damnably against all the Trinity, and are unable to any sacrament of health.

And that this aforesaid sentence is altogether true, 'Unto remission of all my sinful living, trusting stedfastly in the mercy of God, I offer to him my soul.'

And to prove also the aforesaid sentence true, with the help of God, I purpose fully to suffer meekly and gladly my most wretched body to be tormented where God will, of whom he will, and when he will, and as long as he will, and what temporal pain and death he will; to the praising of his name, and to the edification of his church.

And I, that am a most unworthy and wretched caitiff, shall now, through the special grace of God, make to him pleasant sacrifice with my most sinful and unworthy body; beseeching heartily all folk that read or hear this end of my proposed testament, that, through the grace of God, they dispose verily and virtuously all their wits, and able in like

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manner all their members, to understand truly, and to keep faithfully, charitably, and continually, all the commandments of God, and so then to pray devoutly to all the blessed Trinity, that I may have grace, with wisdom and prudence from above, to end my life here in this aforesaid truth, and for this cause, in true faith, and stedfast hope, and perfect charity. Amen.

The end of William Thorpe uncertain.

What was the end of this good man and blessed servant of God, William Thorpe, I find as yet in no story specified. By all conjectures it is to be thought that the archbishop Thomas Arundel, being so hard an adversary against those men, would not let him go; much less it is to be supposed that he would ever retract his sentence and opinion, which he so valiantly maintained before the bishop; neither doth it seem that he had any such recanting spirit. Again, neither is it found that he was burned: wherefore it remaineth most likely to be true, that he, being committed to some strait prison, according as the archbishop, in his examination before, did threaten him there (as Thorpe confesseth himself), was so straitly kept, that either he was secretly made away with, or else he died there by sickness.

The like end also I find to happen to John Ashton, another good follower of Wicliffe, who for the same doctrine of the sacrament was condemned by the bishops; and, because he would not recant, he was committed to perpetual prison, wherein the good man continued till his death, A. D. 1382.

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EXAMINATIONS

OF

ANNE ASKEWE.

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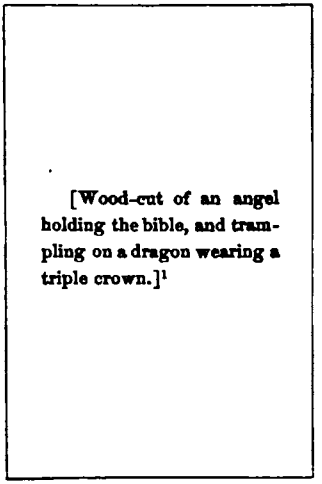
The first Examinacyon of Anne Askewe, latelye martyred in Smythfelde, by the Romysh Popes upholders, with the Elucydacyon of Johan Bale.

The herte of the Lord endureth for ever. Psalme 116.



Anne Askewe stode fast by this herde of God to the ende.

Fauoure is disceytful / and bewtye is a vayne thynge. But a woman that feareth the Lorde is worthye to be praysed. She openeth her mouthe to wysdome / and in her language is the lawe of grace.

Proverb. xxxj.

[1 The original editions have generally cuts in the centre of the titles of the different pieces. One of these has been given as a specimen with Sir John Oldcastle's Examination; but it is not considered necessary to continue it beyond that specimen.]

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JOHN BALE

TO

THE CHRISTIAN READERS.

THE PREFACE OF HER FIRST EXAMINATION.

Among other most singular offices, diligent reader, which the Lord hath appointed to be done in the earnest spirit of Elias by the forerunners of his latter appearance, this is one very special to be noted: "They shall turn the hearts of their ancient elders into the children," Mal. iv.; and the unbelievers of their time to the wisdom of those righteous fathers, as did John Baptist afore his first coming, Luke i.: that is, (saith Bedas, ca. 68. *de Temporum ratione*,) the faith and fervent zeal of the prophets and apostles shall they plant in their hearts, which shall in those days live and be among men conversant, and then will break forth (saith he as a very true prophet) such horrible persecution, as will first of all take from the world those mighty Eliases by triumphant martyrdom, to the terrifying of other in the same faith, of whom some shall become through that occasion most glorious martyrs unto Christ also, and some very wicked apostates for feigning his lively doctrine: for by the said Bedas's testimony, in the beginning of the same chapter, two most certain signs shall we then have that the latter judgment-day is at hand; the return of Israel's remnant unto their Lord God, and the horrible persecution of Antichrist.

Bede's prophecy.

Two sorts.

Two signs.

Confer with this treated scripture and former prophecy of that virtuous man Bedas the world's alteration now, with the terrible turmoilings of our time; and, as in a most clear mirror, ye shall well perceive them at this present to be in most quick working. And as concerning the Israelites or Jews, I have both seen and known of them in Germany most faithful christian believers. Neither is it in the prophecy (Hosea iii.) that they should at that day be all converted, no more than they were at John Baptist's preaching, Luke i.; for, as Esay reporteth, "Though the posterity of

Israelites.

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Jacob be as the sea sand (innumerable), yet shall but a remnant of them convert them unto their Lord God." Esay x. "And though the Lord hath sifted that house of Israel (as bruised corn in a sieve) among all other nations," Amos ix.; yet shall not that remnant of theirs perish, but at that day be saved, through the only election of grace, Romans ix.

Preachers. Now concerning the aforesaid forerunners, in this most wonderful change of the world before the latter end thereof, I think within this realm of England, besides other nations abroad, the spirit of Elias was not at all asleep in good Tyndale. Barnes. William Tyndale, Robert Barnes, and such other more, whom Antichrist's violence hath sent hence in fire to heaven, as Elias went afore in the fiery chariot, 4 Regum ii. These turned the hearts of the fathers into the children, such time as they took from a great number of our nation, by their goodly preachings and writings, the corrupted belief of the pope and his wastrye workers (which were no fathers, but cruel robbers and destroyers, Joan. x.) reducing them again to the true faith of Abraham and Peter, Gen. xv. and Matt. The fathers. xvi. The sure belief in Christ's birth and passion, which Adam and Noe sucked out of the first promise of God, Jacob and Moses out of the second, David and the prophets out of the third, and so forth the apostles and fathers out of the other scriptures, so firmly planted they in the consciences of many, that no cruel kind of death could avert them from Martyrs. it: as we have for example their constant disciples, and now strange witnesses of Jesus Christ, John Lassels and Anne Askewe, with their other two companions, very glorious martyrs afore God, (what though they be not so afore the wrong-judging eyes of the world?) whom the bloody remnant of Antichrist put unto most cruel death at Smithfield, at London, in the year of our Lord M.D.XLVI. in July.

If they be only (as was John Baptist) "great afore the Lord" by the holy scriptures' allowance, which are strongly adorned with the graces of his Spirit, as faith, force, understanding, wisdom, patience, love, long-sufferance, and such-like; Christian martyrs. I dare boldly affirm these four mighty witnesses also to be the same, so well as the martyrs of the primitive or apostles' church. For so strongly had these those virtues as they, and so boldly objected their bodies to the death for the undefiled christian belief, against the malignant synagogue of Satan, as

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ever did they; for no tyranny admitting any create or cor- Bread.
ruptible substance for their eternal living God. If their blind babies, to prove them unlike, do object against me the miracles shewed at their deaths more than at these, as that unfaithful generation is ever desirous of wonders, Matt. xii.; Miracles.
I would but know of them, what miracles were shewed when John Baptist's head was cut off in the prison, Mark. vi.; and when James the apostle was beheaded at Hierusalem? Acto. xii. These two were excellent afore God: what though they were but miserable wretches, light fellows, seditious heretics, busy knaves, and lousy beggars in the sight of noble king Herod and his honourable council of prelates? For had Rochets.
not rochets and side-gowns been at hand, haply they had not so lightly died.

If they allege Stephen, to maintain their purpose, that he Stephen.
at his death beheld heaven open; I ask them again, what they were which see it more than his own person? Sure I am that their wicked predecessors there present see it not: for they stopped their ears when he told them thereof, Acts vii.
If they yet bring forth the other histories of apostles and Legends.
martyrs, I answer them, that all they are of no such authority, as these here afore. The pope's, indeed, were much fuller of miracles than ever were Christ's, as his self told us they should be so, Matt. xiv. Yet wrought friar Forest, Forest. Fisher. More.
John Fisher, and Thomas More, no miracles: what though now many be registered in their lives and legends by the friars of France, Italy, and Spain? Besides that, John Cochleus hath written of them, *ad Paulum Pontificem*, *ad Regem Henricum*, and also in their defence against doctor Sampson. With that Erasmus did also *ad Huttenum*. P. M. *ad Gas-* Writers.
parum Agrippam, Albertus Pighius, Rivius, Fichardus, and a great sort more. And as for the holy maid of Kent with doctor Bocking, though they wrought great wonders by their life, yet appeared none at their deaths. Of his own chosen martyrs Christ looketh for none other miracle but that only they persevere faithful to the end, Matt. x., and never deny his verity afore men, Luke xii. For that worthy victory of the sinful world standeth in the invincibleness of faith, and not in miracles and wonders, as those wavering wits suppose, 1 John v.

Right wonderfully will this appear in the two conflicts

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Anne Askewe. hereafter following, which the faithful servant of Jesu, Anne Askewe, a gentlewoman very young, dainty, and tender, had with that outraging synagogue in two examinations, about the twenty-fifth year of her age, whom [which] she sent abroad by her own handwriting. The handling of her other three companions shall be shewed in other several treatises at leisure.

God's power. For the glory and great power of the Lord, so manifestly appearing in his elect vessels, may not now perish at all hands, and be unthankfully neglected, but be spread the world over as well in Latin as English, to the perpetual infamy of so wilfully cruel and spiteful tyrants. Nothing at all shall terrify us, nor yet in any point let us of our purpose, that our books are now in England condemned and brent by the bishops and priests with their frantic affinity, the great antichrist's upholders, which seek by all practices possible to turn over the king's most noble and godly enterprise. But it will from henceforth occasion us to set forth in the Latin also that afore we wrote only in the English, and so make their spiritual wickedness and treason known much further off. What availeth it Joachim to burn Hieremy's prophecy by the ungracious counsel of his prelates, Hiere. xxxvi.; either yet Antiochus to set fire on the other scriptures? Macha. i.

Books condemned.

Latin.

God will be known. After the apostles were brought afore the council and straitly commanded to cease from preaching, they preached much more than afore. Acto. iv. In most terrible persecutions of the primitive church were the examinations and answers, torments and deaths, of the constant martyrs written, and sent abroad all the whole world over, as testifieth Eusebius Cæsariensis in his Ecclesiastic History. Their copies abound yet everywhere. Great slaughter and burning hath been here in England for John Wicliffe's books, ever since the year of our Lord M.CCC.LXXXII.; yet have not one of them throughly perished. I have at this hour the titles of a hundred and forty-four of them which are many more in number: for some of them under one title comprehendeth two books, some three, some four; yea, one of them containeth twelve. I think not the contrary but, ere the world be at a full end, God will so glorify that twenty times condemned heretic, execrated, cursed, spitted, and spatted at, that all your popish writers, before his time and after, will be reckoned but vile swineherds to him, for the good favour

John Wicliffe's books.

Canonisse.

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he bare to Christ's holy gospel. A very madness it is to strive against God, when he will have the long iniquities known: as the godly wise man Gamaliel said, Acto. v. "If this enterprise that is now taken against you be of God, ye shall never be able with all your tyrannous practices to dissolve it." Gamaliel.

Now concerning that blessed woman Anne Askewe, which lately suffered the tyranny of this world for right witness' sake. In Lincolnshire was she born of a very ancient and noble stock, Sir William Askewe, a worthy knight, being her father. But no worthiness in the flesh, neither yet any worldly nobleness, availeth to God-ward, afore whom is no acceptation of person. Acto. x. Only is it faith with his true love and fear, which maketh us accept, noble, and worthy children unto God, Joan. i.; whereof by his gift she had wonderful abundance. Such a one was she as was Lydia the purple-seller, whose heart opened by the godly preaching of Paul at Thyatira. Acto. xvi. For diligent heed gave she to his word, when it was once taught without superstition, and would no longer be a false worshipper, or idolater, after the wicked school of antichrist; but became from thenceforth a true worshipper, worshipping her Lord God (which is a Spirit, and not bread) in spirit and in verity, according to that word of his, Joan. iv. The gospel of Christ bare she in her heart, as did the holy maid Cecilia, and never after ceased from the study thereof, nor from godly communication and prayer, till she was clearly by most cruel torments taken from this wretched world. Anne Askewe. True nobility. Lydia. Cecilia.

By her do I here, dear friends in the Lord, as did the faithful brethren in France, at the cities of Lyons and Vienna, by a like faithful young woman called Blandina, which was there put to death with three mighty companions more among other (as this was) for her christian belief, about the year of our Lord C.LXX., in the primitive spring of their Christianity. They wrote unto their brethren in the lands of Asia and Phrygia, very far off, her mighty strange sufferings for Christ's faith, which they knew nothing of afore: I write here unto you in England the double process of this noble woman, whereof ye are not ignorant, forsomuch as it was there so manifestly done among you. Coupled I have these two examples together, because I find them in so many points agree. Blandina was Blandina.

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Anne Askewe. young and tender; so was Anne Askewe also: but that which was frail of nature in them both, Christ made most strong by
Companions. his grace. Blandina had three earnest companions in Christ, Maturus, Sanctus, and Attalus, so fervently faithful as herself: so had Anne Askewe three fire-fellows, a gentleman called John Lassels her instructor, a priest, and a tailor called John Adlam, men in Christ's verity unto the end most constant.
Recanters. With Blandina were in prison to the number of ten, which renied the truth, and were clearly forsaken of God for it. How many fell from Christ besides Crome and Shaxton, when Anne Askewe stood fast by him, I am uncertain. But I counsel them, as St John counselled the Laodiceans, in the miserable state they are now in, to buy them through tried gold of Christ, lest they perish altogether. Apoc. iii. If they
The chancel. had not still remained in that chancel, whom Christ commanded John in no wise to measure, Apoc. xi., they had never so shamefully blasphemed, like as Bedas also toucheth in his former prophecy[1].

Courage. Prompt was Blandina, and of most lofty courage, in rendering her life for the liberty of faith: no less lively and quick was Anne Askewe in all her imprisonments and torments.
Racked. Great was the love Blandina had to Christ: no less was the love of Anne Askewe. Blandina never fainted in torment: no more did Anne Askewe in spirit, when she was so terribly racked of Wrisley the chancellor, and Riche, that the strings of her arms and eyes were perished. Blandina derided the cruelty of the tyrants: so did Anne Askewe the madness of
Burned. the bishops and their speechmen. Red burning plates of iron and of brass had Blandina put to her sides: so had Anne Askewe the flaming brands of fire. Full of God and his verities was Blandina: so was Anne Askewe to the very end. Christ wonderfully triumphed in Blandina: so did he in Anne Askewe, when she made no noise on the rack, and so earnestly
Beasts. afterward rejoiced in him. Blandina was given forth to wild beasts to be devoured: so was Anne Askewe to cruel bishops and priests, whom Christ calleth ravening wolves, devourers, and thieves. Matth. vii. and Joan. x. Blandina upon the scaffold boldly reprehended the pagan priests of their error: so did Anne Askewe, when she was fast tied to the stake, with
Shaxton. stomach rebuke that blasphemous apostate Shaxton, with the

[1 De Temp. Ratione, cap. 68. Ed. Col. 1612. Vol. II. p. 101.]

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bishops' and priests' generation, for their manifest maintenance of idolatry.

Blandina at the stake shewed a visage unterrified: so did Anne Askewe a countenance stout, mighty, and earnest. Indefatigable was the spirit of Blandina: so was the spirit of Anne Askewe. The love of Jesus Christ, the gift of the Holy Ghost, and hope of the crown of martyrdom, greatly mitigated the pain in Blandina: so did those three worthy graces the terror of all torments in Anne Askewe. The strong Spirit of Christ gave stomach to Blandina, both to laugh and dance: the same mighty Spirit (and not the pope's desperate spirit) made Anne Askewe both to rejoice and sing in the prison. So bold was Blandina (saith Eusebius[2]), that with a presumption of stomach she commoned[3] with Christ unseen: I suppose Anne Askewe's latter examination will shew her not to be much less. Gentle was Blandina to the christian believers, and terrible to their adversaries: so was Anne Askewe very lowly to true teachers, but scornful and high-stomached to the enemies of truth. Many were converted by the sufferance of Blandina: a far greater number by the burning of Anne Askewe. Though Blandina were young, yet was she called the mother of martyrs: many men have supposed Anne Askewe for her christian constancy to be no less. Blandina prayed for her persecutors: so did Anne Askewe, most fervently. The ashes of Blandina and other martyrs were thrown into the flood of Rhodanus: what was done with the ashes of Anne Askewe and her companions, I cannot yet tell.

Graces.

Spirit.

High stomach.

Mother.

Ashes.

All these former reports of Blandina, and many more besides, hath Eusebius in *Ecclesiastica Historia*, libr. v. cap. 1, 2, and 3, Hugo Floriacensis, Hermannus Contractus, Vincentius, Antoninus, Petrus Equilinus, and other historians more. And as touching Anne Askewe, these two examinations, with her other known handlings in England, are witnesses for her sufficient. Thus hath not the fire taken Anne Askewe all whole from the world, but left her here unto it more pure, perfect, and precious than afore, as it will also John Lassels within short space: so that concerning her it may well be said that Paul verifieth, 2 Cor. xii. "The strength of God is

Authors.

Not all dead.

[2 Hist. Ecc. Lib. v. cap. 1—3. Ed. Cantab. Gul. Reading. 1720. pp. 206—9.]

[3 Commoned: communed.]

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Weakness. here made perfect by weakness." When she seemed most feeble, then was she most strong. And gladly she rejoiced in that weakness, that Christ's power might strongly dwell in her. Thus chooseth the Lord the foolish of this world to confound the wise, and the weak to deface the mighty; yea, things despised, and thought very vile, to bring things unto nought, which the world hath in most high reputation. I think, if this Martyrs. martyr were rightly conferred with those canonized martyrs, which hath had, and yet hath still, censings and singings, massings and ringings, in the pope's English church, cause with cause, and reason with reason, (as haply hereafter they Example. shall,) she should be a great blemish unto them. An example of strong sufferance might this holy martyr be unto all them that the Lord shall after like manner put forward in this horrible fury of antichrist, to the glory of his persecuted church. Amen.

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God save the King.

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THE FIRST EXAMINATION

OF THE WORTHY SERVANT OF GOD,

MISTRESS ANNE ASKEWE,

THE YOUNGER DAUGHTER OF SIR WILLIAM ASKEWE, KNIGHT, OF LINCOLNSHIRE, LATELY MARTYRED IN SMITHFIELD, BY THE ROMISH POPE'S[1] UPHOLDERS[2].

THE CENSURE OF JUDGMENT OF JOHN BALE THEREUPON, AFTER THE SACRED SCRIPTURES AND CHRONICLES[3].

[4]Of no less christian constancy was this faithful witness and holy martyr of God, Anne Askewe, nor no less a fast member of Christ by her mighty persistance in his verity at this time of mischief, than was the aforenamed Blandina in the primitive church. This shall well appear in her two examinations or tyrannous handlings, here following, whom [which] she wrote with her own hand at the instant desire of certain faithful men and women, yea, rather at the secret motion of God, that the truth thereof might be known the world over: as within short space it will be, if the Latin

[1 Pope's, not in first edition.]

[2 The first edition has the following addition to the title: "Anne Askewe stood fast by this verity of God to the end.

Psalm CXVI.

The verity of the Lord endureth for ever.

Prov. XXXI.

Favour is deceitful, and beauty is a vain thing; but a woman that feareth the Lord is worthy to be praised: she openeth her mouth to wisdom, and in her languge is the law of grace."]

[3 Not in the first edition.]

[4 Not in the first edition. Instead of it the following appears:—"Here hast thou (gentle reader) the two examinations of Anne Askewe, which she wrote with her own hand at the instant desire of certain faithful men and women, by the which (if thou mark diligently the communications both of her and of her examiners) thou mayest easily prove the spirits, as S. John the Apostle giveth you counsel. 1 John iiii. Then shalt thou know the tree by the fruit, and the man by his work.

Anne Askewe."]

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Spirit. speech can carry it. Mark well the communication here, both of her and her examiners, so proving their spirits, as St John the Apostle giveth you counsel, 1 John iv. And then shall ye know the tree by his fruit, and the man by his work.

Anne Askewe.

To satisfy your expectation, good people (saith she), this was my first examination, in the year of our Lord, M.D.XLV.[2] and in the month Christopher Dare.[1] of March. First Christopher Dare examined me at Sadler's Hall, being one of the quest, and asked if I did not believe that the sacrament hanging over the altar was the very body of Christ really. Then I demanded this question of him, wherefore St Stephen was stoned to death? And he said he could not tell. Then I answered that no more would I assoil his vain question.

John Bale.

A sacrament (saith St Augustine[3]) is a sign, shape, or similitude, of that it representeth, and no God, nor yet thing Really. represented. This word real, or really, is not of belief; for it is not in all the sacred scriptures. Only is it sophistically borrowed of the pagans' learning by Winchester and his fellows, to corrupt our christian faith. Beware of that filthy poison. The perfect belief of Stephen, Acto. vii.; Paul, Acto. xvii.; and of Solomon, 3 Regum viii. et 2 Parali. vi., was that God "dwelleth not in temples made with hands." Agreeable unto this was the faith of this godly woman, which neither could The box. believe that he dwelleth in the box. God saith, Esay lvi. "Heaven is my seat," not the box. David saith, Psalm cxiii. [Psal. cxv.] "Our God is in heaven," not in the pix. Christ taught us to say, when we pray, Matt. vi. Luke xi. "Our Father, which art in heaven," and not, Our Father, which art in the box. Now discern and judge.

[1 There are no references or notes in the the margin of the 1st ed.]

[2 'a MDxlv.' 1st ed.]

[3 Si enim sacramenta quamdam similitudinem earum rerum, quarum sacramenta sunt, non haberent, omnino sacramenta non essent. —S. Aug. Epist. xxxiii. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1679. Vol. ii. col. 267. f. Hæc enim sacramenta sunt, in quibus non quid sint, sed quid ostendant, semper adtenditur: quoniam signa sunt rerum, aliud existentia, et aliud significantia.—Id. cont. Max. Lib. ii. c. 22. Vol. viii. col. 725.]

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ANNE ASKEWE.

Secondly, he said, that there was a woman which did testify, that I should read, how that God was not in temples made with hands. Then I shewed him the seventh and the seventeenth chapter of the Apostles' Acts, what Stephen and Paul had said therein. Whereupon he asked me, how I took those sentences? I answered, that I would not throw pearls among swine, for acorns were good enough. Temples.

JOHN BALE.

An ignorant woman, yea, a beast without faith, is herein allowed to judge the holy scriptures heresy, and, against all good laws, admitted to accuse this godly woman, the servant of Christ, for an heinous heretic, for the only reading of them. As perverse and blasphemous was this questmonger as she, and as beastly ignorant in the doctrine of health; yet is neither of them judged ill of the world, but the one permitted to accuse this true member of Christ, and the other to condemn her. Wherefore her answer, out of the seventh chapter of Matthew, was most fit for them: for they are no better than swine, that so contemn the precious treasure of the gospel for the mire of men's traditions. Accusers.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Thirdly, he asked me wherefore I said that I had rather read[4] five lines in the bible than to hear five masses in the temple. I confessed that I said no less: not for the dispraise of either the epistle or the gospel; but because the one did greatly edify me, and the other nothing at all: as Saint Paul doth witness, in the ninth[5] chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians, where as he doth say, "If the trump giveth an uncertain sound, who will prepare himself to the battle?" Masses.

JOHN BALE.

A commandment hath Christ given us to search the holy scriptures, John v., for in them only is the life eternal. "Blessed is he (saith Christ unto John) which readeth and heareth the words of this prophecy," Apoc. i. But of the Latin popish mass is not one word in all the bible, and therefore it pertaineth not to faith. A strait commandment have Almighty God given, Deut. xii., that nothing be added to his word, nor yet taken from it. "Put thou nothing unto his words (saith Solomon, Prov. xxx.), lest thou be found, in so doing, a reprobate person, and a liar." St Paul willed nothing God's word.

[4 1st ed. 'to read.'] [5 1st ed. reads, 'fourteenth.']

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to be uttered in a dead speech, 1 Cor. xiv. (as are your mass and matins), but silence always to be in the congregations, where as is no interpreter; for five words (saith he) availeth more to understanding, than ten thousand words with the tongue. This proveth temple-service of the papists all the year to be worth nothing.

ANNE ASKEWE.

The priest. Fourthly, he laid unto my charge that I should say, if an ill priest ministered, it was the devil, and not God. My answer was, that I never spake such thing; but this was my saying, that whatsoever he were, which ministered unto me, his ill conditions could not hurt my faith; but in spirit I received, nevertheless, the body and blood of Christ.

JOHN BALE.

Judas. Christ saith, John vi., "Have not I chosen you twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?" meaning Judas, that false and unfaithful priest. No less saith Peter, 2 Peter ii., of those lying curates, by whom the truth is blasphemed, and the people made merchandise of in their covetousness. If the ill fruit, then, be all one with the ill tree in naughtiness, the work of a devil must be devilish. But God said unto the wicked priests, Esay i., Hier. vi., Amos v., and Mala. ii., that Sacrifices. he abhorred their sacrifices, and also hated them, even at the very heart, willing both heaven and earth to mark it. Into Judas entered Satan, after the sop was given him, John xiii., whereas the other apostles received the body and blood of Christ. The table was all one to them both, so was the bread which their mouths received. The inward receivings, then, in Peter and Judas made all the diversity, which was belief and unbelief, or faith and unfaithfulness; as Christ largely The sixth of John. declareth in the vith of John, where as he shewed aforehand the full doctrine of that mystical supper. Only he that believeth hath there the promise of the life everlasting, and not he that eateth the material bread. Of God are they taught, and not of men, which truly understand this doctrine.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Confession. Fifthly, he asked me what I said concerning confession? I answered him my meaning, which was as St James saith, that every man ought to acknowledge[1] his faults to other, and the one to pray for the other.

[1 1st ed. 'knowledge.']

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JOHN BALE.

This confession only do the scripture appoint us, Jac. v. as we have offended our neighbour. But if we have offended God, we must sorrowfully acknowledge it before him, and he (saith St John, John i.) hath faithfully promised to forgive us our sins, if we so do, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If the law of truth be in the priest's mouth, he is to be sought unto for godly counsel, Mala. ii. But if he be a blasphemous hypocrite, or superstitious fool, he is to be shunned as a most pestilent poison. Priests.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Sixthly, he asked me what I said to the king's book? And I answered him, that I could say nothing to it, because I never saw it. The king's book.

JOHN BALE.

All crafty ways possible sought this crafty questmonger, or else the devil in him, to bring this poor innocent lamb to the slaughter-place of antichrist. Much after this sort sought the wicked Pharisees, by certain of their own faction, or hired satellites, with the Herodians, to bring Christ in danger of Cæsar, and so to have him slain. Matt. xxii., Mar. xii., Luke xxi. Pharisees.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Seventhly, he asked me if I had the Spirit of God in me? I answered, if I had not, I was but a reprobate or cast-away.

JOHN BALE.

Elect are of God (saith Peter) through the sanctifying of the Spirit, 1 Peter i. In every true christian believer dwelleth the Spirit of God. John xiv. Their souls are the sanctified temples of the Holy Ghost. 1 Corinth. iii. "He that hath not the Spirit of Christ (saith Paul) is none of Christ's." Rom. viii. To them is the Holy Ghost given which heareth the gospel and believeth it, and not unto them which will be justified by their works. Gala. ii. All these worthy scriptures confirm her saying. The Spirit.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then he said he had sent for a priest to examine me, which was there at hand. The priest asked me, what I said to the sacrament of the altar; and required much to know therein my meaning. But I desired him again to hold me excused concerning that matter. None other answer would I make him, because I perceived him a papist.

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JOHN BALE.

Mockers. Mocking priests (saith Esay) hath rule of the Lord's people, whose voices are in their drunkenness. Bid that may be bidden, forbid that may be forbidden, keep back that may be kept back, here a little and there a little. Esay xxviii. A plague shall come upon these: for why? they "have changed the ordinances, and made the everlasting testament of none effect." Esay xxiv. "They withhold (saith St Paul) the verity of God in unrighteousness." Rom. i. "They breed cockatrice' eggs, saith Esay, and weave the spider's web. Whoso eateth of A serpent riseth. their eggs dieth; but if one treadeth upon them, there cometh up a serpent."

ANNE ASKEWE.

Eighthly, he asked me if I did not think that private masses did[1] help souls departed. And I said, it was great idolatry to believe more in them than in the death that[2] Christ died for us.

JOHN BALE.

Here riseth the serpent of the cockatrice' eggs, workmanly to fulfil the afore alleged prophecy. If their masses had been of God's creation, ordinance, or commandment; or if they had been in any point necessary for man's behoof, they had been registered in the book of life, which is the sacred bible. But Masses private. therein is neither mention of mass private nor public; several nor common; single nor double; high nor low; by foot nor on horseback, or by note, as they call it. If they be things added by man's invention (as they can be none other, not being there named), then am I sure that the scriptures call them filthiness, rust, chaff, draff, swill, drunkenness, fornication, menstrue, man's dirt, adders' eggs, poison, snares, the bread of wicked lies, and the cup of God's curse. Their original ground Druids. should seem to be taken of the Druids, or pagan priests, which inhabited this realm long afore Christ's incarnation, and had then practised sacrifices, public and private. Look Cornelius, Tacitus, Caius Julius, Plinius, Strabo, and such other authors. That name of privation added unto their mass clearly depriveth it of christian communion, where one man eateth up all, and distributeth nothing.

[1 1st ed. 'did not help.']
[2 1st ed. 'which.']

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How such ware should help the souls departed, I cannot tell; but well I wot that the wounded man between Jerusalem and Jericho had no help of them. Luke x. The Samaritan, which was reckoned but a pagan among them, was his only comfort. In the most popish time was never more horrible blasphemy than this is. This wickedness impugneth all the promises of God concerning faith and remission of sins. It repugneth also to the whole doctrine of the gospel. The application of Christ's supper availeth only them that be alive, taking, eating, and drinking, that is therein ministered. No more can the priest's receiving that sacrament profit another man, than can his receiving of baptism, or of penance, as they call it. If it profiteth not the quick, how can it profit the dead? No sacrifice is the mass, nor yet good work; but a blasphemous profanation of the Lord's holy supper, a manifest wickedness, an horrible idolatry, and a foul abomination; being thus a rite of worshipping without the word, yea, against the express word of God.

For souls.

The priest's receiving.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then they had me from[3] thence unto my Lord Mayor. And he examined me, as they had before; and I answered him directly in all things, as I had[4] the quest afore.

Mayor.

JOHN BALE.

After this sort was Christ led from the examination of the clergy to Pilate. Matth. xxvii. In that the examination of the mayor and the quest was all one, ye may well know that they had both one schoolmaster, even the brutish bishop of London. The ignorant magistrates of England will neither be godly-wise with David and Solomon, nor yet embrace the earnest instructions of God, to be learned in the scriptures, Ps. ii. Sapien. vi.; but still be wicked ministers and cruel servant slaves to antichrist and the devil. Apoc. xvii. More fit are such witless mayors and graceless officers, as knoweth not white from black, and light from darkness, (Esay v.) to feed swine, or to keep kaddows[5], than to rule a christian commonalty. A terrible day abideth them which thus ordereth the innocent. Jaco. ii.

Bonner

Ignorance.

[3 The word 'from,' is not in the 1st ed.]
[4 Instead of 'had,' the 1st ed. reads 'answered.']
[5 A jackdaw, Halliwell. He spells it 'caddow.']

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ANNE ASKEWE.

Beside this, my Lord Mayor laid one thing unto my charge which was never spoken of me, but of them: and that was, whether a mouse eating the host received God, or no? This question did I never ask; but, indeed, they asked it of me, whereunto I made them no answer, but smiled.

JOHN BALE.

Is not here (think you) well-favoured and well-fashioned divinity, to establish an article of the christian faith? Wily Winchester[1] answereth this question, as foolish as it is, in his Wise Detection of the Devil's Sophistry. "Believe," saith he, "that a mouse cannot devour God." Yet reporteth he after, in fol. 21, that Christ's body may as well dwell in a
Peryn. mouse as in Judas. Then followeth friar Fynk, (friar Peryn[2], I should say,) a bachelor of the same school: and he answereth in the end of his third sermon, that the sacrament eaten of a mouse is the very and real body of Christ. And when he hath affirmed it to be no derogation to Christ's presence to lie in the maw of that mouse, he divideth me the one from the other, the sacrament from Christ's body, concluding that though the sacrament be digested in the mouse's maw, yet is not Christ's body there consumed. O blasphemous beasts, and blind blundering Balaamites!

Because these two workmen be scant witty in their own occupation, I shall bring them forth here two old artificers of
Guimundus. theirs to help them; Guimundus Aversanus, a bishop, to help bishop Stephen, and Thomas Walden[3], a friar, to help friar Peryn. The sacraments (say they both) are not eaten of mice, though they seem so to be in the exterior similitudes: for the virtues (saith Guimundus) of holy men are not eaten of beasts, when they are eaten of them. Lib. II., *de Cor-*
Waldenus. *pore et Sanguine Domini.* No, marry, (quoth Walden,) no more is the painter's occupation destroyed when his picture is destroyed. Mark this geer for your learning. But now
Algerus. cometh Algerus, a monk, more crafty than they both, and he saith (Lib. II. cap. 1, *de Eucharistia*) that as well is this meat

[1 Gardiner, Bp. of Winchester. Detection of the Devil's Sophistry, p. 16. Also in Confutation against Cranmer, p. 66. l. 30.]

[2 Three notable and godly Sermons by W. Peryn. Imprynted by Nicholas Hyll. 8vo. London, 1546.]

[3 Doctrinale, Lib. II. cap. 60. fol. LIX. Ed. Paris, 1521.]

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spiritual, as material, because David calleth it the bread of angels, and a bread from heaven. Ps. lxxvii. That which is material in this bread (saith he) is consumed by digestion; but that which is spiritual remaineth uncorrupted[4].

If we would attend well unto Christ's divinity, and let these oiled divines dispute among old gossips, we should soon discharge mice and rats, weak stomachs, and parbreaking drunkards, of a far other sort than this: "he that eateth my flesh (saith Christ, Jo. vi.), and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." This eating is all one with the dwelling, and is neither for mice nor rats, burnt chancels, not drunken priests: for as we eat we dwell, and as we dwell we eat, by a grounded and perfect faith in him. The substance of that most goodly refection lieth not in the mouth eating, nor yet in the belly feeding, though they be necessary, but in the only spiritual or soul eating. No wise man will think that Christ will dwell in a mouse, nor yet that a mouse can dwell in Christ, Faith. though it be the doctrine of these doughty dowsepers; for they shall find no scriptures for it. If these men were not enemies to faith, and friends to idolatry, they would never teach such filthy learning. More of this shall I write (God willing) in the answer of their books. Nota.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then the bishop's chancellor rebuked me, and said, that I was much to blame for uttering the scriptures: for St Paul (he said) forbade women to speak or to talk of the word of God. I answered him that Women. I knew Paul's meaning so well as he, which is (1 Corinth. xiv.) that a woman ought not to speak in the congregation by the way of teaching. And then I asked him how many women he had seen go into the pulpit and preach. He said he never saw none. Then I said he ought to find no fault in poor women, except they had offended the law.

JOHN BALE.

Courteous enough is her answer here to this quarrelling

[4 In illo sacramento Christus est, quoniam corpus est Christi. Non ergo corporalis esca, sed spiritualis est: si ergo spiritualis et non corporalis esca, quomodo corporali secessui obnoxia? Cibus enim spiritualis nobis communis est cum angelis; quia panem angelorum manducavit homo: cibus carnalis communis est nobis cum bestiis. Bestialis defectum patitur digestionis; angelicus gloriam servat incorruptionis.—Lib. II. c. 1. de Sacramento. Op. Algeri in Bibliothec. Patrum. Tom. IV. Paris. 1624.]

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Scripture women.

and (as appeareth) unlearned chancellor. Many godly women, both in the old law and the new, were learned in the scriptures, and made utterance of them to the glory of God, as we read of Elizabeth, Mary, and Anna the widow, Luke i. and ii.: yet were they not rebuked for it. Yea, Mary, Christ's mother, retained all that was afterward written of him, Luke ii.: yet was it not imputed to her as an offence. Christ blamed not the woman that cried while he was in preaching, "Happy

Women.

is the womb that bare thee." Luke xi. The women that gave knowledge to his disciples that he was risen from death to life, discomfited not he, but solaced them with his most glorious appearance. Matth. xxviii. John xx. In the primitive church (specially in St Jerome's time) was it a great praise unto women to be learned in the scriptures. Great commendation

English women.

giveth our English chronicles to Helena, Ursula, and Hilda, women of our nation, for being learned also in the scriptures. Such a woman was the said Hilda as openly disputed in them against the superstitions of certain bishops. But this chancellor, belike, chanced upon that blind popish work, which

Walter Hunt.

Walter Hunt, a white friar, wrote fourscore years ago, *Contra Doctrices Mulieres*, against school-women, or else some other like blind Romish beggaries.

Anne Askewe.

Prison.

Then my Lord Mayor commanded me to ward. I asked him if sureties would not serve me. And he made me short answer that he would take none. Then was I had to the Counter, and there remained seven[1] days, no friend admitted to speak with me.

John Bale.

Christ trodden on the heel.

Here is Christ yet trodden on the heel by that wicked serpent which tempted Eve. Gen. iii. His faithful member for believing in him is here thrown in prison. And no marvel, for it was his own promise: "Ye shall be brought before rulers and deputies (saith he) for my truth's sake," Matth. x. "Ye shall be betrayed of your own nation and kindred, and so thrown in prison," Luke xxi. "If they have persecuted me, think not but they will persecute you," John xv. This serpent is again become the prince of this world, and holdeth the governors thereof captive. John xiv. Sureties would be taken

[1 'xii.' in 1st ed.]

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for a thief or a murderer, but not for Christ's member, the bishop's chancellor being at hand, nor yet her friends permitted to comfort her.

ANNE ASKEWE.

But, in the mean time, there was a priest sent to me, which said[2] he was commanded of the bishop to examine me, and to give me good counsel; which he did not. But first he asked me for what cause I was put into the Counter? And I told him I could not tell. Then he said it was great pity that I should be there without cause, and concluded he was[3] very sorry for me. A friend.

JOHN BALE.

O temptation of Satan! Christ, being in the solitary wilderness alone, was after this flattering sort assaulted first of his enemy. Matt. iv. This Judas was sent afore to give a friendly kiss, the more deeply to trap the innocent in snare. But God's wisdom made her to perceive what he was. A false prophet is soon known by his fruits, among them that are godly-wise. Matt. vii. She considered, with Solomon, that "more to profit are the stripes of a friend than the fraudulent kisses of a deceitful enemy." Prov. xxvii. Judas.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Secondly, he said, it was told him that I should deny the sacrament of the altar. And I answered him again, that that I had said, I had said. The sacrament.

JOHN BALE.

In this brief answer she remembered Solomon's counsel, "Answer not a fool after his foolishness." "Beware of them (saith Christ) which come in sheep's clothing, for inwardly they are most ravening wolves." Matt. vii. "God destroyeth the crafts of the wicked (saith Job), so that they are not able to perform that they take in hand." Job v.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Thirdly, he asked me if I were shriven. I told him, no. Then he said he would bring one to me for to shrive me. And I told him so that I might have one of these three, that is to say, Dr Crome, Sir Gyllam, or Huntington, I was contented, because I knew them to be men of wisdom. As for you, or any other, I will not dispraise, because

[2 'said, that he was commanded,' 1st ed.]
[3 'that he was,' 1st ed.]

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I know ye not. Then he said, I would not have you think, but that I, or another that shall be brought you, shall be as honest as they; for if we were not, ye may be sure the king would not suffer us to preach. Then I answered by the saying of Solomon, "By communing with the wise I may learn wisdom; but by talking with a fool I shall take scathe." Prov. i.

JOHN BALE.

See how this adversary compasseth like a ravening lion to devour this lamb. 1 Pet. v. Now tempteth he her with
Confession. confession, which hath been such a bait of theirs as hath brought into their nets and snares the mightiest princes of the world, both kings and emperors. See here if they leave
Practice. any subtilty unsought to obtain their prey. He reckoned by this to win his purpose, which way soever she had taken. If she had been confessed to him, he had known which way she had been bent. If she had utterly refused confession, he had more matter to accuse her of. O subtil seed of the serpent! This part played your old generation, the Pharisees and priests, with Christ, to bring him in danger of the law. Matt. xxii. and John viii. No christian erudition bringeth this priest, not yet good counsels of the scripture; but, as
The hypocrite. Esay saith, "The hypocrite imagineth abomination against God, to famish the hungry, and withhold drink from the thirsty. Yet shall not the eyes of the seeing be dim, nor ears of the hearing be deaf." Esay xxxii. If the king admit such
Preachers. preachers (as I cannot think it), a sore plague remaineth both to him and to his people.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Fourthly, he asked me, if the host should fall, and a beast did eat it, whether the beast did receive God or no? I answered, Seeing ye have taken the pains to ask this question, I desire you also[1] to take so much pain more as to assoil it yourself; for I will not do it, because I perceive ye come to tempt me. And he said it was against the order of schools, that he which asked the question should answer it. I told him I was but a woman, and knew[2] not the course of schools.

JOHN BALE.

Beastly was that question, and of a more beastly brain propounded, to this woman. Little need shall other men

[1 The words 'to take so much pain more as,' are not in the 1st ed.]
[2 'and I knew not,' 1st ed.]

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have to manifest their blasphemous follies, when they do it so plainly themselves. Who ever heard afore that their host was a god, and might fall and be eaten of a beast, till they now so beastly told the tale? Though St Paul, where as it is rightly ministered, doth call it the body of the Lord, 1 Cor. ii., yet doth he not call it a god. Though Christ saith, "This is my body," (Matt. xxvi., Mark xiv., Luke xxii.), yet saith he not, This is a God; for God is a spirit, and no body. John iv. Where God is eaten, it is of the spirit, and neither of mouse nor rat, as Winchester and Peryn, with other like popish heretics, have taught now of late by their own hand-writings. Our God is in heaven, and cannot fall, nor be eaten of beasts. If they have such a god as may both fall and so be eaten, as this priest here confesseth, it is some false or counterfeit god of their own making. If he may putrefy, or be consumed of worms, mould, rust, or fire, Baruch saith it is an idol, and no god. Baruch vi.

A falling god.

Winchester. Peryn.

An idol.

These witless idolaters have no grace in this age to hide their old legerdemains: they fare like those drunken gossips, which tell more than all, when their heads be full of well-gingered ale. "The proud crown of the drunken Ephraimites (saith Esay) shall be trodden under foot." "The priests and the prophets do stagger, they are so overseen with wine." Esay xxviii. "They stumble in the streets, and have stained themselves with blood." Thren. iv. "All the dwellers of Judah (saith the Lord) shall I fill with drunkenness, both the kings and the priests." "I will neither pardon them, spare them, nor yet have pity on them." Jer. xiii. "And where as that drunkenness is (saith Solomon), there is no counsel kept." Prov. xxxi. In the end this hypocrite, full like himself, allegeth to this woman a manner used of his old predecessors in the schools of falsehood; but from the schools of truth he bringeth nothing to the comfort of her conscience. He declareth full workmanly in this, what he and his generation seeketh by such their spiritual and justifying works, *ex opere operato*.

Like old gossips.

Drunkenness.

Hypocrite.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Fifthly, he asked me if I intended to receive the sacrament at Easter, or no? I answered, that else I were no christian woman, and that[3] I did rejoice that the time was so near at hand. And then he departed thence, with many fair words.

Howell.

[3 1st ed. 'their;' apparently a misprint.]

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JOHN BALE.

This hungry wolf practiseth, by all crafty ways possible, to suck the blood of this innocent lamb. Is not that, think
Spiritually. you, an holy congregation which is thus spiritually occupied? Some godly-wise men will wonder that they be not ashamed. But marvel not of it; for the Holy Ghost saith that the same holy mother, which had hatched them up in oils and
A whore. shavings, is an unshamefaced whore. Apoc. xvii., and Dan. viii. Then, of very nature, must her whelps be shameless children.
Dogs. Such "shameless dogs are they (saith Esay) as be never satisfied." Esay xx. "When they kill you (saith Christ), they shall think they do God good service," John xvi.; so greatly have their malice blinded them, Sapi. ii., which is partly the drunkenness afore spoken of.

ANNE ASKEWE.

And the twenty-third day of March my cousin Brittanye came into the Counter to me, and asked me[1] whether I might be put to bail, or no? Then went he immediately unto my Lord Mayor, desiring him[2] to
Bailing. be so good lord unto me, that I might be bailed. My lord answered[3] and said that he would be glad to do the best that[4] in him lay; howbeit, he could not bail me without the consent of a spiritual officer: so requiring him to go and speak with the Chancellor of London; for, he said, like as he could not commit me to prison without the consent of a spiritual officer, no more could he bail me without consent of the same.

JOHN BALE.

True is it here that is written of St John in the Apocalypse, that "antichrist is worshipped of the potentates and kings of the earth." Apoc. xviii. The mayor of London, which is the king's lieutenant, and representeth there his own person, standeth here like a dead idol, or like such a servant slave who can do nothing within his own city concerning their matters. "Who is like the beast?" saith St John; "who is able to war with him?" "He hath brought all lands and their kingdoms in fear," saith Esay: "the strength of their cities hath he taken away, and restrained the deliverance of
Examples. their prisoners." Esay xiv. The parents of him that was born blind feared this spiritual tyranny or captivity of theirs,

[1 'me,' is not found in the 1st ed.]
[2 'desiring of him,' 1st ed.]
[3 'answered him,' 1st ed.] [4 'that lay in him,' 1st ed.]

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such time as they were examined of the bishops for the sight of their son. John ix. Such as believed in Christ among the chief rulers of the Jews would not be acknown thereof, for fear of like violence. John xii. No new thing is it then in that spiritual generation, but a custom of old antiquity. Both Christ and his apostles have suffered like tyranny under them; but never did they yet minister it to any creature after their example.

A custom.

ANNE ASKEWE.

So, upon that, he went to the Chancellor, requiring of him as he did afore of my Lord Mayor. He answered him that the matter was so heinous, that he durst not of himself[5] do it, without my lord of London were made privy thereunto: but he said he would speak unto my lord in it, and bade him repair unto him the next morrow, and he should well know my lord's pleasure.

JOHN BALE.

"Righteousness judge they sin, and sin righteousness," Esay v.; so imperfect is their sight, John xii., "in that God hath given them up to their own lusts." Rom. i. What an heinous matter is it here holden to believe in Christ after the scriptures, and not after their superstitious manner! For none other cause could they lay to this woman, as ye have heard here afore, and as ye shall hereafter perceive more largely. Whatsoever it be to offend God or man, their offence may be no less than prison and death. The Turk is not more vengeable than is this spiteful spiritual generation. Yet boast they Christ's religion and the holy mother church.

Faith in Christ.

Tyranny.

ANNE ASKEWE.

And upon the morrow after he came thither, and spake both with the Chancellor and with my lord bishop of London. My lord declared unto him that he was very well contented that I should come forth to a communication; and appointed me to appear afore[6] him the next day after, at three of the clock at afternoon. Moreover he said unto him, that he would there should be at that examination such learned men as I was affectioned unto, that they might see and[7] make report that I was handled with no rigour. He answered him that he knew no man that I was[8] more affectioned to than other. Then said the bishop, Yes, as I understand, she is affectioned to Dr Crome, Sir

[5 'on himself,' 1st ed.] [6 'before,' 1st ed.]
[7 'and also make,' 1st ed.] [8 'had more affection to,' 1st ed.]

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Gyllam Whitehead, and Huntingdon, that they might hear the matter; for she did know them to be learned and of a godly judgment.

JOHN BALE.

A foxish favour was this, both of the chancellor and bishop, and such a benevolent gentleness as not only sought her blood, but also the blood of all them which are here named, if they had then come to this examination. For the evening afore, as I am credibly informed, the bishop made boast among his own sort, that if they came thither, he would tie them a great deal shorter. A voice was this full like to him that uttered it: for thereby he appeareth not one that that will save and feed, but such a one as rather seeketh to kill and destroy. John x. "The foxes run over the hill of Sion," saith Jeremy, "because she is fallen from God." Thren. v. "O Israel," saith the Lord, "thy prophets are like the wily foxes upon the dry fields." Ezek. xiii. The poet hath a by-word, that happy is he which can take heed by another man's hurt. I add this here, that ye should beware if ye come in like danger of any such foxish bishop. By one of his day-devils, whom the Caiphas sent to commune with the woman in prison, he knew part of her meaning, and what they were also which favoured her opinions. Yea, he craftily undermined this gentleman which entreated for her, if ye mark it well. Trust not too much in the flatterous fawning of such wily foxes.

A wolf.

Foxes.

A priest.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Also he required my cousin Brittayne, that he should earnestly persuade me to utter even the very bottom of my heart. And he sware by his fidelity, that no man should take any advantage of my words; neither[1] would he lay ought to my charge for any thing that I should there speak: but if I said any manner of thing amiss, he, with other more, would be glad to reform me therein with most godly counsel.

A thief.

JOHN BALE.

O vengeable tyrant and devil! How subtilly seekest thou the blood of this innocent woman, under a colour of friendly handling! God once commanded thee earnestly in no case to compass thy neighbour with deceit, to the effusion of his blood. Lev. xix. But his commandment thou reckonest but a Canterbury tale. By swearing by thy fidelity, thou art not all

Judas.

[1 'Neither yet,' 1st ed.]

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unlike unto Herod, whom Christ, for like practices, first to put John and then him to death, called also a most crafty cruel fox. Luke xiii. Thou labourest here to have this woman in snare, with certain of her friends. But God put in her mind at this time to reckon thee a dog and a swine, Matth. vii., and thereupon to have few words. Herod.

ANNE ASKEWE.

On the morrow after, my lord of London sent for me at one of the clock, his hour being appointed at three. And as I came before him, he said he was very sorry of my trouble, and desired to know my opinion in such matters as were laid against me. He required me also boldly in any wise[2] to utter the secrets of my heart, bidding me not to fear in any point; for whatsoever I did say within his house, no man should hurt me for it. I answered, Forsomuch as your lordship hath[3] appointed three of the clock, and my friends shall not come till that hour, I desire you to pardon me of giving answer till they come. A false liar.

JOHN BALE.

In this preventing of the hour may the diligent perceive the greediness of this Babylon bishop, or bloodthirsty wolf, concerning his prey. "Swift are their feet," saith David, "in the effusion of innocent blood, which have fraud in their tongues, venom in their lips, and most cruel vengeance in their mouths." Ps. xiii. 20. David, in that Psalm, much marvelleth in the spirit that, taking upon them the spiritual governance of the people, they can fall in such frenzy or forgetfulness of themselves, as to believe it lawful thus to oppress the faithful, and to devour them with as little compassion as he that greedily devoureth a piece of bread. If such have read anything of God, they have little minded their true duty therein. "More swift," saith Jeremy, "are our cruel persecutors than the eagles of the air. They follow upon us over the mountains, and lay privy wait for us in the wilderness." Thren. iv. He that will know the crafty hawking of bishops, to bring in their prey, let him learn it here. Judas, I think, had never the tenth part of their cunning workmanship. Mark it here, and in that which followeth. A tyrant. Eagles.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then said he, that he thought it meet to send for those four men More lambs to devour.

[2 'in any wise boldly,' 1st ed.]
[3 'your lordship appointed,' 1st ed.]

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which were aforenamed and appointed. Then I desired him not to put them to the pain; for it should not need, because the two gentlemen which were my friends were able enough to testify that I should say. Anon after he went into his gallery with Master Spylman, and willed him any wise, that he should exhort me to utter all that I thought.

JOHN BALE.

Christ sheweth us in the viith. chapter of Matthew, and in other places more of the gospel, how we shall know a false prophet, or an hypocrite, and willeth us to beware of them. Their manner is, as the devil's is, flatteringly to tempt, and deceitfully to trap, that they may at the latter most cruelly slay. "Such a one (saith David) hath nothing in his tongue but plain deceit. He layeth wait for the innocent, with no less cruelty than a lion for a sheep. He lurketh to ravish up the poor; and when he hath gotten him into his net, then throweth he him down by his authority." Psalm ix. This is the third temptation of this bishop, that the woman should utter to her own confusion.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Archdeacon. In the mean while he commanded his archdeacon to commune with me, who said unto me, Mistress, wherefore are ye accused? I answered, Ask my accusers; for I know not as yet. Then took he my book out of my hand and said, Such books as this is[1] hath brought you to the trouble ye are in. Beware, saith he, beware; for he that made it was burnt in Smithfield. Then I asked him if he were sure that it was true that he had spoken. And he said, he knew well the
A liar. book was of John Frith's making. Then I asked him if he were not ashamed to judge[2] of the book before he saw it within, or yet knew the truth thereof. I said also, that such unadvised and hasty judgment is a token apparent of a very slender wit. Then I opened the book and shewed it him. He said he thought it had been another; for he could find no fault therein. Then I desired him to be no more[3] so swift in judgment, till he thoroughly knew the truth; and so he departed.

JOHN BALE.

Judas. Here sendeth he forth another Judas of his, to betray this true servant of God. Mark the good workmanship hardily, and tell me if they be not of the spring of the serpent. Much are they offended with books, for that they so plainly do mani-

[1 The word 'is' is not in the 1st ed.]
[2 'for to judge,' 1st ed] [3 'no more to be,' 1st ed.]

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fest their mischiefs. John Frith is a great mote in their eyes, for so turning over their purgatory, and heaving at their most monstrous mass or mammetrous[4] mazan, which signifieth bread, or feeding. Notwithstanding, Daniel calleth it Maozim, betokening strength, or defence, Dan. xi., because the false worshippings thereof should be so mightily defended by worldly authority and power. No new thing is it that good men and their books are destroyed now-a-days, when they touch the mischiefs of that generation: for Joakim the king of Judah cut Jeremy's prophecies in pieces with a penknife, and in his madness threw them into the fire, commanding both Jeremy which taught them, and Baruch that wrote them, to be put to death. Jer. xxxvi. When king Antiochus had set upon the altars of God the abominable idol of desolation (which is now the popish mass), Matth. xxiv., the books of God's law commanded he to be torn in pieces and burnt in the fire, sending forth thereupon this cruel proclamation, that whatsoever he was which had a book of the Lord's testament found upon him, or that endeavoured themselves to live after the laws of God, the king's commandment was, they should be put to death. 1 Macc. i.

John Frith.

Books condemned.

Books burnt.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Immediately after came my cousin Brittayne in, with divers other, as Master Haw[5], of Gray's Inn, and such other like. Then my lord of London persuaded my cousin Brittayne as he had done oft before, which was that I should utter the bottom of my heart in any wise.

JOHN BALE.

This is the fourth temptation, or crafty calling upon, to utter her mind, that he might say of her, as Caiphas said of Christ, Matth. xxvi., "What need we any more witnesses? Lo, now you have heard a blasphemy" or an heresy. How say ye now to it, which are her friends? Is she not guilty of death? If they should have said nay unto this, they should have been so in as deep danger as she. This serpentine practice was as well to trap them as her: let it not be unmarked.

Caiphas.

Practice.

ANNE ASKEWE.

My lord said, after that, unto me, that he would I should credit the counsel of my friends in his behalf, which was that I should utter

Satan.

[4 Mammetrous or mawmetrous: idolatrous.]

[5 'Haule,' 1st ed.]

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all things which[1] burdened my conscience. For he assured me[2] that I should not need to stand in doubt to say anything: for like as he promised them, he said, he promised me, and would perform it; which was that neither he, nor any man for him, should take me at advantage of any word that[3] I should speak. And therefore he bade me
Tempter. say my mind without fear. I answered him that I had nought to say; for my conscience, I thanked God, was burdened with nothing.

JOHN BALE.

Still followeth this ghostly enemy his former temptation, and calleth upon mortal utterance, or utterance full of death, that he might cry with Caiphas, Luke xxii., "What need we further testimony? Her own mouth hath accused her." We
Caiphas. are able witnesses thereof, for our own ears have heard it. Thus "lay they wait for blood," saith Solomon, "and lurk privily for the innocent without a cause." Prov. i. "Consent not," saith he, "unto such tyrants, if they entice thee; for though their words appear as honey," Prov. xvi., "yet shalt thou find them in the end so bitter as wormwood." Prov. v. Though that whorish generation pretendeth a colour of gentleness, "yet biteth it at the latter like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder, throwing forth poison." Prov. xxiii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then brought he forth this unsavoury similitude, that if a man had
Surgery. a wound, no wise surgeon would administer help unto it, before he had seen it uncovered. In like case, saith he, I can give you no good counsel, unless I know wherewith your conscience is burdened. I answered, that my conscience was clear in all things, and for to lay a plaister unto the whole skin, it might appear much folly.

JOHN BALE.

Hath he not now (think you) much need of help, which seeketh to such a surgeon? Uncircumspect is that patient, and most commonly unfortunate, which goeth to a common
A murderer. murderer to be healed of his disease. Christ bade us evermore to beware of all such, unless we would be worried. Matth. vii. The nature of these, Lord, saith David, "is not to make whole, but to persecute them thou hast smitten, and to
Botches. add wounds unto wound." Ps. lxviii. Their own botches are

[1 'that,' instead of 'which,' 1st ed.] [2 'insured me,' 1st ed.]
[3 'that' omitted in 1st ed.]

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insanable, Esay i., for the multitude of their mischiefs. Jer. xxx. The priest and the Levite which travelled between Jerusalem and Jericho healed not the wounded man, yet were they no murderers. Luke x. Who can think that he will unburden the conscience, which studieth nothing else but to overload it with most grievous and dangerous burdens? Matth. xxiii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then ye drive me, saith he, to lay to your charge your own report, which is this. Ye did say, he that doth receive the sacrament by the hands of an ill priest, or a sinner, he receiveth the devil, and not God. To that I answered, that I never spake such words; but as I said afore, both to the quest and to my Lord Mayor, so say I now again, that the wickedness of the priest should not hurt me, but in spirit and in faith I received no less the body and blood of Christ. Then said the bishop unto me, What a[4] saying is this! In spirit? I will not take you at that advantage. Then I answered, My lord, without faith and spirit I cannot receive him worthily.

JOHN BALE.

Now sheweth this Caiphas whereabout he goeth, for all his false flattering colours afore. And, seeing he can win none advantage to his purpose of her own communication, he shaketh the bowgets[5] of his provided Judases and betrayers of innocent blood. He bringeth forth such stuff and store as that wicked quest had gathered of her answer to them, to flatter and to please his tyranny therewith. It is to be feared that as far was the fear of God here from them as from him, Psalm xiii.; for as well practised they this mischief against her as he. Mark here the natural working of a very full antichrist. He defendeth sin in his own gene- Antichrist.
ration, and condemneth virtue in Christ's dear member. Malice, pride, whoredom, sodomitry, with other most devilish vices, reckoneth he not to hurt the ministration of a priest; yet judgeth it he an heresy, no less worthy than death, to believe that Christ's flesh and blood is received in faith and spirit. What, though it be Christ's most earnest doctrine, Jo. vi.; 'What a saying, saith this bishop, is this! In spirit? I will not take you at the worst,' saith he; as though it were a most heinous heresy. But most discreet and godly

[4 'what saying,' 1st ed.] [5 bowgets: budgets.]

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was the woman's answer, declaring her a right member of
Priests. Christ; whereas those priests whom he here defendeth are unworthy receivers and members of the devil. Joh. xiii. and 1 Cor. xi. Thus is an antichrist here known by his fruits, for he uttereth blasphemy against God. Dan. vii. Apoc. xiii. He calleth evil good, and good evil. Esay v. and Prov iii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then he laid unto me, that I should say that the sacrament re-
Bread. maining in the pix was but bread. I answered, that I never said so; but indeed the quest asked me such a[1] question, whereunto I would not answer (I said) till such time as they had assoiled me this ques-
Stephen. tion of mine, wherefore Stephen was stoned to death? They said they knew not. Then said I again, no more would I tell them what it was.

JOHN BALE.

O idolous shepherd! saith Zachary; thou seekest not to
Beasts. heal the wounded, but to eat the flesh of the fat. Zach. xi. "The watchmen of Israel," saith the Lord, "are very blind beasts, and shameless dogs. They have no understanding, but follow their own beastly ways for covetousness." Esay lvi. Who ever read in the scripture, or authorised chronicle, that
The box. bread in a box should be Christ's body? Where or when commanded he his most holy body so to be bestowed? What have ye to lay for this doctrine of yours? Are ye not yet ashamed of your unreverent and blasphemous beastliness? Will ye still pluck our christian belief from the right hand of God, the eternal Father, and send it to a box of your brainish devising?

Honorius. The first bearer of it was pope Honorius the third, in the year of our Lord M.CC.XVI., after the manifold revelations of divers religious women: neither was there any great honour given to it of the common people, till a sorry solitary sister,
Eva reclusa. or anchoress, in the land of Leodium, or Luke, called Eva, after certain visions, had procured of pope Urbanus the fourth, in the year of our Lord M.CC.LXIIII., the feast of Corpus Christi to be holden solemn all Christendom over;
Bostius. as testifieth Arnoldus Bostius, Epist. vi. *ad Johannem Palleanydorum.* In all the twelve hundred years afore that was it neither boxed, nor pixed, honoured, nor censed universally. And see what an horrible work here is now for the

[1 'such question,' 1st ed.]

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boxing thereof, and what a great heresy it is to believe that Christ dwell not therein, contrary both to his own and to his apostles' doctrine! Mark also how this God's creature is here handled for it, and how subtilly she is betrayed of the bishop's beagles and limbs of the devil. Judases.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then laid my lord it unto me, that I had alleged a certain text of the scripture. I answered that I alleged none other but St Paul's own saying to the Athenians in the seventeenth chapter of the Apostles' Acts, that God dwelleth not in temples[2] made with hands. Then asked he me what my faith[3] was in that matter? I answered him, I believe as the scripture doth teach me. Then inquired he of me, What if the scripture doth say that it is the body of Christ? I believe, said I, like as the scripture doth teach me. Then asked he again, What if the scripture doth say that it is not the body of Christ? My answer was still, I believe as the scripture informeth me. And upon this argument he tarried a great while, to have driven me to make him an answer to his mind. Howbeit, I would not, but concluded thus with him, that I believed therein, and in all other things, as Christ and his holy apostles did leave them. Temples. A Tempter.

JOHN BALE.

See what an horrible sin here was! She alleged the scripture for her belief; which is a sore and dangerous matter, for it is against the pope's canon laws, and against the customs of holy church. Since king Henry's days the fourth hath it been a burning matter only to read it in the English tongue, and was called Wicliffe's learning, till now of late years. And it will not be well with holy church till it be brought to that point again; for it maketh many heretics against holy church. O incipient papists! these are your corrupted practices and abominable studies, to drive the simple from God; and yet ye think he seeth you not. Ps. xiii. St Paul saith, (Rom. xv.) "Whatsoever things are written in the scriptures are written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort in them might have hope;" and ye will rob us thereof. Christ commanded all peoples, both men and women (Joh. v.), to search the scriptures, if they think to have everlasting life; for that life is no where but in them; yet will you, in pain of death, keep them still from Scriptures. Christ.

[2 'temple,' 1st ed.] [3 'faith and belief,' 1st ed.]

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In God's stead. them. For ye take upon you to sit in God's stead, and think, by that usurped office, that you may overturn all. 2 Thess. ii. But Christ bade us to beware both of you and your chaplains, when he said, "There shall arise false Christs and false prophets, working many great wonders, and saying, Lo! here is Christ, and there is Christ. Believe them not." Matt. xxiv. And therefore alleged this woman unto your questmongers (the dogs that Christ warned us of, Matt. vii.), and now unto you, that saying of St Paul, that God dwelleth Temples. not in temples made with hands, which also were the words of Solomon long afore, 3 Reg. iii., and of Stephen, Actor. vii., in his time. That scripture so much offended you, that you would needs know thereof the understanding. For such texts as agree not with the cloynings of your conjurors, and the conveyances of your sorcerers, must needs be seasoned with Aristotle's physics, and sauced with John Donse's subtleties. Here make ye a wonderful turmoiling to wring out of this woman's belief in that matter, that she might either become a creature of your old god the pope, or else be burnt: yet have she not once removed her foot from the hard foundation, or saving rock, Jesus Christ. 1 Cor. xi. Blessed be his holy name for it.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Few words. Then he asked me why I had so few words. And I answered, God hath given me the gift of knowledge, but not of utterance. And Solomon saith that "woman of few words is a gift of God." Prov. xix.

JOHN BALE.

When Christ stood before Caiphas, he asked him, much after this sort, wherefore he had so few words? Thou answerest nothing, saith he, to those things which are laid against Silence. thee of these men. Nevertheless he held his peace. Mar. xiv. But when he was once thoroughly compelled by the name of the living God to speak, and had uttered a very few words, he took him at such advantage, though they were the eternal verity as he was able through them to procure his death, Bonner. (Matt. xxvi.); like as this bloody bishop Bonner, of the same generation, did at the latter by this faithful woman.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Thirdly, my lord laid unto my charge, that I should say that the

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mass was idolatry. I answered him, No, I said not so. Howbeit, I said, the quest did ask me, whether private masses[1] did relieve souls departed, or no? Unto whom then I answered, O Lord, what idolatry is this, that we should rather believe in private masses, than in the healthsome death of the dear Son of God! Then said my lord again, What an answer was that! Though it were but mean, said I, yet was it good[2] enough for the question. Private masses.

John Bale.

About the latter days of John Wicliffe, in the year of our Lord M.CCC.LXXXII., as Henry Spenser, then bishop of Norwich, was with great number of English warriors besieging the town of Ypres, in Flanders, in the quarrel of pope Urbanus the sixth, the vessels of perdition, the very organs of Satan, the four orders of begging friars, preached all England over, that the most holy father of theirs had liberally opened the well of mercy, and granted clean remission to all them that would either fight, or give any thing towards the maintenance of those wars, in that quarrel of holy church against schismatics and heretics: for then was this popish mass in great controversy, like it is now. Moreover they promised, by virtue of his great pardons, to send the souls departed to heaven; and divers of them said, they had seen them fly up out of the churchyards from their graves thitherwards. Mass.

This most devilish blasphemy, with such other like, provoked the said John Wicliffe, the very organ of God, and vessel of the Holy Ghost, not only to reply then against them at Oxford in the open schools, but also to write a great number of books against that pestilent popish kingdom of theirs, like as Martin Luther hath done also in our time, with many other godly men. And like as those false prophets, the friars, did then attribute unto the pope's pardons the remission of sins, the deliverance from damnation, and the free entrance of heaven, which particularly belongeth to the payment of Christ's blood (1 Pet. i. and 1 Joh. i.); so do these false anointed, or blasphemous bishops and priests now, attribute them again unto their private and public masses, the pope's own wares, as prowling and pilfering as the pardons, with no less blasphemy. The devilishness of this new doctrine of theirs shall be refelled in my books against friar Peryn and Winchester, and therefore I write the less here. John Wicliffe.

[1 'mass,' 1st ed.] [2 'it was good,' 1st ed.]

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ANNE ASKEWE.

Then I told my lord that there was a priest which did hear what I
Chancellor. said there before my Lord Mayor and them. With that the chancellor answered, Which was the same priest? So she spake it in very deed (saith he) before my Lord Mayor and me. Then were there certain priests, as Dr Standish, and other, which tempted me much to know my mind. And I answered them always thus, That I have said[1] to my lord of London, I have said.

JOHN BALE.

By this ye may see that the bishops have every where
Watchmen. their watchmen, lest the king's officers should do any thing contrary to their bloody behoof. This chancellor would not have thus answered hardily so agreeable to her tale, had it not been to their advantage against her, as hereafter will appear. Mark here the fashion of these tempting serpents, Standish and his fellows, and tell me if they be not like unto
Vipers. those viper's whelps which came to John Baptist (Matth. iii.) and to Christ Jesus preaching (Luke xii.) I think ye shall find them the same generation.

ANNE ASKEWE.

A tempter. And then Dr Standish desired my lord to bid me say my mind concerning that[2] same text of St Paul. I answered that it was against St Paul's learning, that I, being a woman, should interpret the scriptures, specially where so many wise learned men were.

JOHN BALE.

It is not yet half a score of years ago, since this blasphemous idiot Standish compared in a lewd sermon of his the dear price of our redemption, or precious blood of Christ, to the blood of a filthy swine, like himself a swine. And for his good doing he is now become a daw (a doctor, I should say) of the pope's divinity, and a scholastical interpreter of the scriptures to his behoof. Here would the swinish gentleman have proved, both that St Stephen died a heretic, and St Paul a schismatic, for teaching that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands (Acts vii and xvii.), if he might have reasoned out the matter with this woman. But she took a swine for a swine, and would lay no pearls before him, as Christ had charged her afore (Matth. vii.); for all their inter-

[1 'that that I have said,' 1st ed.] [2 'the,' 1st ed.]

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rogations are now about the temple and temple wares. (Matth. xxvi.)

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then my lord of London said he was informed, that one should ask of me if I would receive the sacrament at Easter, and I made a mock of it. Then I desired that mine accuser might come forth, which my lord would not. But he said again unto me, I sent one to give you good counsel, and at the first word ye called him papist. That I denied not, for I perceived he was no less: yet made I none answer unto it[3]. Accuser.

JOHN BALE.

No comfortable scriptures, nor yet any thing to the soul's consolation, may come out of the mouths of these spiritual fathers, but dog's rhetoric and cur's courtesy, knavings, brawlings, and quarrellings. When she was in the midst of them, she might well have said, with David, "Deliver me, Lord, from the quarrelous dealings of men, that I may keep thy commandments. I deal with the thing that is lawful and right: O give me not over to these oppressors, let not these proud quarrellers do me wrong." Ps. cxviii. [cxix.] But among all these quarrellings her accusers might not be seen, which were the grounders of them. Dog's rhetoric.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then he rebuked me, and said that I should report that there were bent[4] against me threescore priests at Lincoln. Indeed (quoth I) I said so; for my friends told me, if I did come to Lincoln, the priests would assault me, and put me to great trouble, as thereof they had made their boast. And when I heard it, I went thither indeed, not being afraid, because I knew my matter to be good. Moreover, I remained there six days, to see what would be said unto me. And as I was in the minster, reading upon the bible, they resorted unto me, by two, and by two, by five and by six, minding to have spoken to me; yet went they their ways again, without words speaking. Threescore priests. Priests.

JOHN BALE.

Rebukes in that generation are much more ready at hand than either christian admonishments or gentle exhortations, though they be all spirituals. And that cometh by reason of their lordships, which wanteth due furnishing out, unless they Lordship.

[3 'made I him none answer,' 1st ed.]
[4 'benten,' 1st ed.]

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have tyrannous brags and brawlings. Herein follow they the examples of their natural predecessors, the Jewish bishops, Pharisees, and priests, Joh. vii. and ix. She might full well
Hypocrisy. say that the priests were against her; for hypocrisy and idolatry were never yet with him whose blessed quarrel she took. Mark the fourth chapter of John, and so forth, almost to the end of his gospel. Behold also, how his apostles and disciples were handled of the priests after his glorious ascension, (Acts iv. and all that book following,) and ye shall find it no new thing. "The servant is no better than her master," which suffered of that malignant generation like quarrellings
Wanderers. and handlings. John xv. See here how they wondered upon her by couples, as their forefathers wondered upon Christ for preaching and doing miracles.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then my lord asked, if there were not one that did speak unto me. I told him, Yes, that there was one of them at the last, which did speak to me indeed. And my lord then asked me what he said. And I told him, his words were of[1] so small effect, that I did not now remember them.

JOHN BALE.

So far was not Lincoln from London, but the bishop there had knowledge of this tragedy. Hereby may ye see their
Occupying. spiritual occupying against Christ and his faithful members. Such is the study (saith St John) of that congregation, which is a spirituality, called Sodom, and Egypt. They rejoice in mischiefs among themselves, and send messages one to another, against God's witnesses, when they are vexed by them. Apoc. xi.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Scripture. Then said my lord, There are many that read and know the scripture, and yet do not[2] follow it, nor live thereafter. I said again, My lord, I would[3] that all men knew my conversation and living in all points; for I am so sure of myself this hour, that there are none able to prove any dishonesty by me. If you know any that can do it, I pray you bring them forth.

JOHN BALE.

I marvel that bishops cannot see this in themselves, that

[1 'of small effect,' 1st ed.]
[2 'and yet not follow it,' 1st ed.] [3 'I would wish,' 1st ed.]

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they are also no followers of the scriptures: but peradventure they never read them, but as they find them by chance, in their popish portifoliums and masking books; or else they think all the scriptures fulfilled when they have said their matins and their masses. Christ said to the hypocrite, "Why seest thou the mote that is in thy neighbour's eye, and seest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" Luke vi., Matth. vii. Christ forbade his bishops, under pain of damnation, to take any lordships upon them, Luke xii.: how is this followed of our prelates? He commanded them also to possess neither gold nor silver, Matth. x.: how is this commandment obeyed? If we looked so earnestly to Christ's instructions, as we look to the pope's, to be observed, these would also be seen to, by act of parliament, so well as priests' marriage, whom Christ never inhibited. I doubt it not but this will also be one day seen to. Godly did this woman here, in defending her innocence; for St Peter saith, (1 Pet. iv.) "See that none of you suffer as an evil doer; but in your hard sufferings commit yourselves unto God with well-doing, as unto your faithful Creator."

Followers.

Lordship's possessions.

Marriage.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then my lord went away, and said he would entitle somewhat of my meaning. And so he writ[4] a great circumstance; but what it was, I have not all in memory, for he would not suffer me to have the copy thereof. Only do I remember this final[5] portion of it.

He writeth

JOHN BALE.

Here wrote he certain articles of the pope's Romish faith, willing her to subscribe unto them, and so blaspheme God, or else to burn. His seeking was here to make her worship the first beast, whose deadly wound is healed again. Apoc. xiii. But she would not so have her name rased out of the Lamb's book of life. Apoc. xx. Rather would she contend to the end, hoping by the might of his Spirit at the last to overcome, and so to be clothed with the promised white apparel. Apoc. iii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

'Be it known,' saith he, 'to[6] all men, that I, Anne Askewe, do confess this to be my faith and belief, notwithstanding my[7] reports made afore

[4 wrote,' 1st ed.]
[5 'small,' 1st ed.]
[6 'of all men,' 1st ed.]
[7 Qu. *any?*]

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Holy lechery.

to the contrary. I believe that they which are houseled at the hands of a priest, whether his conversation be good or not, do receive the body and blood of Christ in substance really. Also I do believe it[1] after the consecration, whether it be received or reserved, to be no less than the very body and blood of Christ in substance. Finally, I do believe in this, and in all other sacraments of holy church, in all points according to the old catholic faith of the same. In witness whereof I, the said Anne, have subscribed my name.' There was somewhat more in it, which, because I had not the copy, I cannot remember[2].

JOHN BALE.

New faith.

All the world knoweth, that neither in Christ's time, nor yet in the days of his apostles, was any such confession of faith; neither yet in the church that followed after, by the space of much more than a thousand years. What have christian men's conscience then to do with such a prodigious confession? Are not Christ and his disciples teachers sufficient enough for our christian belief, and their holy doctrines lawful, but we must have unsavoury brabblements? We must now believe in the bawdry of priests, or that their sodomitry and whoredom, for want of marriage, can be no impediment to their god-making. What is it else to be sworn unto the belief of such articles, but to honour their abominable lechery? O most swinish sacrificers of Baal-peor! Psalm cv. You is it, that the apostle Judas in his canonical epistle speaketh of. Ye have turned the grace of God into your lechery, denying our only governor, Jesus Christ. The holy Ghost sheweth us (Apoc. xxi. and xxii.) that none are of the new hallowed city, or congregation of the Lord, which worketh abomination, or maintaineth lies, as ye do them both here.

Canonised lechery.

Priapists.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then he read it to me, and asked me if I did agree to it. And I said again, I believe so much thereof as the body of scripture[3] doth agree to[4]. Wherefore I desire you that ye will add that thereto. Then he answered, that I should not teach him what he should write. With that he went forth into his great chamber, and read the same bill before the audience, which inveigled and willed me to set to my hand[5], saying also, that I had favour shewed me.

Scripture.

[1 'that,' instead of 'it,' 1st ed.] [2 'now remember,' 1st ed.]
[3 'as the holy scripture,' 1st ed.] [4 'unto,' 1st ed.]
[5 'and willed to set my hand,' 1st ed.]

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JOHN BALE.

In every matter concerning our christian belief is the scripture reckoned unsufficient of this wicked generation. God was not wise enough in setting the order thereof, but they must add thereunto their swibber-swill, that he may abhor it in us, as he did in the Jews' ceremonies. Esa. i.; Jer. vii.; Zach. vii.; Amos v.; Mic. vi. But this godly woman would corrupt her faith with no such beggary, lest she in so doing should admit them and their pope to sit in her conscience above the eternal God, which is their daily study. 2 Thess. ii. A virgin was she in that behalf, redeemed from the earth and following the Lamb, and having in her forehead the Father's name written. Apoc. xiv.

Unsufficient.

The pope.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then said the bishop, I might thank other, and not myself, of the favour I found[6] at his hand; for he considered, he said, that I had good friends, and also that I was come of a worshipful stock. Then answered one Christopher, a servant to master Denny, Rather ought ye, my lord, to have done it in such case, for God's sake than for man's.

Favour.

JOHN BALE.

Spiritual will these fathers be named, and yet they do all to be seen of men. Matt. xxiii. Their old conditions will change when the blackamorian change his skin, and the cat of the mountain her spots. Jer. xiii. "If I sought to please men, saith St Paul, I were not the servant of Christ." Gal. i. When this tyrannous bishop can do no more mischief, then flattereth he the world, seeking to have thanks where he hath none deserved. And as concerning the love, or true fear of God (as is here laid unto him), he hath none at all. Ps. xiii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then my lord sat down, and took me the writing to set thereto my hand, and I writ after this manner, 'I Anne Askewe do believe all manner things contained in the faith of the catholic church.' Then, because I did add unto it 'the catholic church,' he flung into his chamber in a great fury. With that my cousin Brittayne followed him, desiring him for God's sake to be good lord unto me. He answered that I was a woman, and that he was nothing deceived in me. Then my

Catholic.

A woman.

[6 'that I found,' 1st ed.]

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cousin Brittayne desired him to take me as a woman, and not to set my weak woman's wit to his lordship's great[1] wisdom.

JOHN BALE.

Was not this, think you, a sore matter to be so grievously taken of this prelate? but that they are naturally given to such quarrellings, Matt. xxiii. This word 'catholic' was not wont to offend them. How becometh it then now a name so odious? Peradventure, through this only occasion: they knew not till now of late years (for it come of the Greek) the true signification thereof; as that it is so much to say in the English as the universal, or whole. Aforetime they took it mean their oiled congregation alone. But now they perceive that it includeth the laity so well as them, no longer they do esteem it. Other cause can I none conjecture, why they should more contemn it than afore.

Catholic.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then went in unto him Doctor Weston, and said, that the cause why I did write there the catholic church was, that I understood not the church written afore. So with much ado they persuaded my lord to come out again, and to take my name with the names of the[2] sureties; which were my cousin Brittayne, and master Spylman, of Gray's Inn.

Weston.

JOHN BALE.

For an holy church will they be taken, and seem much to differ from the lewd lousy laity, or profane multitude of the common people, by reason of their holy unctions and shavings, which came from their pope; most specially because they have nothing ado with marriage, reckoned a most contagious poison to holy orders, as their foresaid Romish faith hath taught, which bringeth up all his children in Sodom and Gomorrah. Jude i.; Apoc. xi. And this point have they learned of their predecessors, the old Pharisees and priests, which were not *sicut ceteri hominum*, as the common sort of men are, but holy, spiritual, ghostly fathers. Luke xviii. Wherefore they will not now be called a catholic, but an holy spiritual church.

Laity.

Sodomites.

ANNE ASKEWE.

This being done, we thought that I should have been put to bail

[1 'very great,' 1st ed.] [2 'my sureties,' 1st ed.]

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immediately, according to the order of the law. Howbeit, he would not suffer it, but committed me from thence to prison again, until the next morrow. And then he willed me to appear in the Guildhall; and so I did: notwithstanding, they would not put me to bail there neither, but read the bishop's witting[3] unto me, as before, and so commanded me again to prison. Many delays.

JOHN BALE.

A very serviture of Egypt is it to be in danger of these papistic bishops, as in this act doth appear, See what cavillations this Pharaoh did seek here to hold this christian woman still under his captivity; so loth is the greedy wolf to depart from his desired prey. Joh. x. These delays, and these sendings from Caiphas to Pilate, and from Pilate again to Annas in Paul's, were not else but to seek more matter against her, and to know more deeply who were her friends and maintainers. They that shall confer the fashions of this termagant bishop concerning this woman with the cruel manners of great Pharaoh in the deliverance of the people of Israel at God's commandment, Exod. v., or with the handling of the Jews' spiritualty concerning Christ, Matt. xxvi. and Joh. xviii., they shall not find them all unlike. Pharaoh. Practice.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then were my sureties appointed to come afore[4] them on the morrow[5] in Paul's church; which did so indeed. Notwithstanding, they would once again have broken off with them, because they would not be bound also for another woman, at their pleasure, whom they knew not; nor yet what matter was laid unto her charge. Notwithstanding, at the last, after much ado, and reasoning to and fro, they took a bond of them of recognisance for my forthcoming. And thus I was, at the last, delivered. Knavery spiritual.

Written by me, Anne Askewe.

JOHN BALE.

"No verity," saith Oseas the prophet, "no mercy, nor yet knowledge of God, is now in the earth; but abominable vices have everywhere gotten the overhand, one blood-guiltiness following another." Oseas iv. Think you that the bishops and priests could take so cruel ways and would work so false feats, if they had the true fear of God, or yet reckoned to feel a righteous judge at the latter day? Suppose it not. Not With priests.

[3 'writing,' 1st ed.]

[4 'before them,' 1st ed.] [5 'next morrow,' 1st ed.]

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only minded they to shew no mercy to this woman, but also to worry all her friends and acquaintance; which is most extreme cruelty and malice.

The other woman, whom they would here most craftily have delivered with this, (as I am credibly informed,) was a popish quean, which they had afore provided both to betray her and accuse her. In more deep danger of the law at that time was this for her false accusement without record, than was the other which was so falsely accused. Fain would the prelates, therefore, have had her at liberty, but they feared much to be noted partial. Mark this crafty point for your learning, and tell me if they be not a subtle generation. More of their spiritual packings and conveyances for the death of this faithful woman and most dear member of Christ, Anne Askewe, shall ye well perceive in the latter part here following by her own confession and handwriting, also to the honour of God and their great dishonour. So be it[1].

Practice.

Subtlety.

"Vain is the conversation which you received by the traditions of your fathers." 1 Pet. i.

"The verity of the Lord endureth for ever." Ps. cxvi.

THE CONCLUSION.

Here hast thou, gentle reader, the first examination of the martyr of Christ, Anne Askewe, with my simple elucidation upon the same, wherein thou mayest clearly behold how bishops and priests so spiritually to be occupied now-a-days, as is the greedy wolf that ravenous runneth upon his prey. For the tyrannous behaviour in their cruel predecessors have they no manner of shame. Neither yet repent they their own blasphemous treason against God and his verity: what though their most wretched consciences do daily accuse them thereof? The kingdom of God, which is a true faith in his word, or a perfect knowledge of the gospel, do they not seek to uphold; but violently they speak ill of it, trouble it, persecute it, chase it, because it is of him, and from within. Luke xvii. The kingdom of the pope, which cometh with outward observation of days, persons, places, times, meats, garments, and ceremonies,

Bishops.

Kingdom of God.

Pope's kingdom.

[1 Here concludes the first edition of Anne Askewe's First Examination.]

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they magnify above the moon, because it is from without, and to their peculiar advantage in the loitering reign of idleness.

They have thought, and yet think, by their terrible turmoilings to turn over all, and to change the most noble enterprise of our king yet once again, leisurely, to the pope's behoof. But the godly-wise man Solomon saith, "There is no policy, there is no practice, no, there is no counsel that can anything prevail against the Lord." Prov. xxi. They reckon that with fire, water, and sword, they are able to answer all books made against their abuses, and so to discharge their invincible arguments, (for otherwise they have not assoiled them as yet;) but truly they are sore deceived therein, as shall well appear. They suppose that by consuming a score or two in the fire they have gotten the field of the Lamb and his host. Apoc. xvii. No, they rather by that means add strength thereunto, and so diminish their own. I dare boldly say unto them, that, by burning Anne Askewe and her three companions, they have one thousand less of their popish belief than they had afore. They think also, by condemning and burning our books, to put us to silence. But that will surely bring double upon them, if they be not ware, Apoc. xviii.; for "if we should be still, the very stones would speak in these days," Luke xix., and detect their horrible treason against God and the king.

A change. Policy. No field. Books.

If they mind to hold their idle offices still, and hereafter to have profit of their old sale wares, as diriges, masses, and such other; my counsel were that they did by them as they now do by their pope, the great master and first founder of them. A subtle silence is among them concerning him, and hath been ever since his first putting down. Ye shall not now hear a word spoken against him at Paul's cross, nor yet against his old juggling feats. And indeed it is a good wise way to set him up again. Winchester and Sampson made a little brag at the beginning, to seem yet to do somewhat; but since they have repented it, and made a large amends for it other ways. Friar Peryn began to write in defence of their monstrous mass; but now of late days and he cannot find therein one blasphemous abuse justly to be reprehended. Men say there be crafty knaves abroad in the world in all ages. Well, this politic silence would do well also, peradventure, in other matters: for the more rufflings they make, and the more murder they do for that idle kingdom of theirs, the

Peryn.

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Take heed. more clear the verity appeareth, and the more vile their sorcerous wares; for the more dirt be shaken, they say, the more it stinketh.

So outrageously to rail in their preachings of the noble Germans. and learned Germans (which of all nations loveth our king most entirely) for secluding their pope and changing their masses, they do not wisely for themselves. They are not so ill-beloved of their country merchants which customably travelleth thither, but they know what is there both said and Peryn's sermons. done against them. By that means came Peryn's book of his three most idolatrous and foxish sermons first of all to my hands, wherein he rhetorically calleth them, in the hot zeal of his Romish father, the erroneous Germans, subtle-witted heretics, obstinate adversaries, new-fangled expositors, perverse sacramentaries, blasphemous apostates, wicked wretches, devilish liars, lewd livers, and abominable believers, with such other like. But certainly I know that they will one day be even with him, and with other like apes of antichrist, for Winchester. it. When the Pope's great dancing bear, a proud pranking prelate of theirs, was the last year with the emperor Charles, at his forth-going against the said Germans, his bragging beagles were not ashamed to boast it in the open streets of Utrecht, in Holland, that the Pope should again have his full sway in England. Of a likelihood they know there some secret mysteries in working. I say yet, beware of that subtle generation, which seeketh not else but to work all mischief.

Gentle and soft wits are oft-times offended, that we are now-a-days so vehement in rebukes. But this would I fain Modesty. know of them, what modesty they would use (as they call it) if they were compelled to fight with dragons, hydras, and other odible monsters; how patient they would be, and how gentle, if a ravenous wolf came upon them, they having able weapon to put him aside. Surely I know no kind of charity to be shewed to the devil. Of none other nature is Moses' serpent, but to eat up the serpents of Pharaoh's Oak-grove. sorcerers, Exod. vii. If we did suffer any longer the oak-grove of Baal to stand about the altar of the Lord, we should much offend his commandment. Judg. vi. If I should hold my peace, and not speak in this age, the verity so blas-Conscience. phemed; my conscience would both accuse me and condemn me of the unconsiderance of my Lord God. More precious is the thing which is in daily controversy and peril (which

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is now God's true honour), than is all this world's treasure here. What Christian heart can abide it, to see the creature, yea, not of God, but of man, worshipped in the stead of God, and say nothing therein?

Solomon saith, there is "a time to speak, as well as a time to keep silence, and a time as well to hate as a time to love," Eccles. iii. "With a perfect hate, Lord, (saith David,) have I hated those bloodthirsty enemies which were in their presumption against thee," Ps. cxxxix. Strongly, and with most mighty stomach, are hypocrites to be invaded, which will not give place to the verity. Mark how mightily Moses resisted Pharaoh, Helias king Achab, Heliseus Joram, Zachary Joas, Daniel the idolaters, John Baptist the Pharisees and Herod, Stephen the Jews, the Apostles the bishops and priests. Christ rebuked his disciple Peter, and bade him come after him, devil, Matt. xvi.; yet called he Judas his friend, Matt. xxvi. Necessary is it that the elect flock of God do hate the unclean fowls, which yet hold their habitation in Babylon, Apoc. xviii. John Wicliffe and John Huss confess in their writings, that they were by strong force inwardly constrained of God to work against the great antichrist. Erasmus boldly uttered it, that God for the evils of this latter age hath provided sharp physicians. "Quench not the Spirit (saith St Paul), despise not prophecies," 1 Thess. v. "I put my earnest words into thy mouth," saith the Lord to Jeremy, "that thou shouldest both destroy and build," Jer. i. Let this suffice ye concerning our rebukes; for they are God's enemies whom we invade.

Hate them. Examples. Wicliffe and Hus. Spirit.

If ye perceive it, and feel it, on the other side, that "the waves of the sea are great also, and doth horribly rage" in these days, Psa. xcii., consider again (saith David) that "the Lord, which dwelleth on high, is a great deal mightier than they:" as he is of power to cease the storm, and make the weather calm, Psa. cvi., so is he able to change a king's indignation (which is but death) into most peaceable favour and loving gentleness, Prov. xvi.; "for the heart of a king is evermore in the hand of God," Prov. xxi. His eternal pleasure it is, that ye should honour your king as his immediate minister concerning your bodies and lives, 1 Pet. ii., and that ye should with gentleness obey the temporal rulers, Rom. xiii.: but such spiritual hypocrites, both bishops and priests, as are continual haters of his heavenly verity, would

Waves. Pray and obey.

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he that we should hold for most detestable apostates and blasphemous reprobates; as did Christ and his apostles, which never obeyed them, but most sharply rebuked them, Matt. xxiii., Acts xx., and 2 Pet. ii.

The grace of that Lord Jesus Christ be ever with them which rightly hate that synagogue of Satan, as did Anne Askewe, Amen.

"God standeth by the generation of the righteous," Ps. xiii.

Thus endeth the first examination of Anne Askewe, lately done to death by the Romish Pope's malicious remnant, and now canonised in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Imprinted at Marpurg, in the land of Hessen, in November, anno 1546.

The voice of Anne Askewe out of the 54th Psalm of David, called *Deus, in nomine tuo.*

For thy name's sake be my refuge,
And in thy truth my quarrel judge.
Before thee, Lord, let me be heard,
And with favour my tale regard.
Lo, faithless men against me rise,
And for thy sake my death practise.
My life they seek with main and might,
Which have not thee afore their sight.
Yet helpest thou me in this distress,
Saving my soul from cruelness.
I wot thou wilt revenge my wrong,
And visit them, ere it be long.
I will therefore my whole heart bend,
Thy gracious name, Lord, to commend.
From evil thou hast delivered me,
Declaring what mine enemies be.

Praise to God.

"Whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die." Joh. xi.

[Wood-cut with the motto *Amor vincit omnia.*]

"He that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into damnation, but pass from death unto life." Joh. v.

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THE SECOND EXAMINATION

OF

ANNE ASKEWE.

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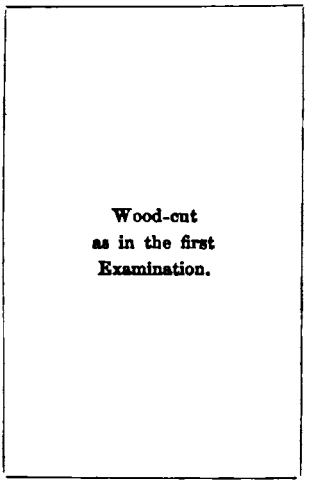
The Lattre Examinacyon of Anne Askewe, latelye martyred in Smythfelde, by the wycked Synagoge of Antichrist, with the Elucydacyon of Johan Bale.



Anne Askewe stode fast by thys verye of God to the ende.

Wood-cut
as in the first
Examination.

Psalme 116.
The verye of the Lorde endureth for euer.

I wyll poure out my sprete vpō all flesh (sayth God) your sonnes and your doughters shall prophecye. And who so euer call on the name of the lorde / shall be saued.

Johel. ij.

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JOHN BALE

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READERS.

In the primitive church, as the horrible persecutions increased, many diligent writers collected the godly answers and triumphant sufferings of the martyrs, as necessary examples of christian constancy to be followed of other. Of this number was Lucas, which wrote the Apostles' Acts. So were after him Linus, Marcellus, Egesippus, Meliton Asianus, Abdius Babylonius, Josephus Antiochenus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Antherus, Phileas, Eusebius, Nicephorus, and a great sort more. Fabianus, not a chair-bishop, but a pulpit-bishop of Rome, ordained in his time for that only office seven deacons and so many notaries, about the year of our Lord CCXXXVI., that they should faithfully register their martyrdoms, to hold them in continual remembrance, as witnesseth Platina, Polydorus, Masseus, and such chroniclers. No less necessary is that office now, though few men attempt it, nor no less profitable to the christian commonwealth, than it was in those terrible days. For now are persecutions all Christendom over, so well as were then. Now are the true Christians vexed of the sitting bishops for their christian belief, so well as then. Now are they reviled, punished, imprisoned, and have all evil spoken against them for Christ's verity's sake, Matth. v., so well as then. Martyrs.

And what can be more comfortable to the sufferers than to know the earnest constancy of their troubled companions in that kingdom of patience, Apoc. i., or to mark in them the strong working of faith, and behold the mighty majesty of God in their agonies? What though they were afore sinners of the world, St Bernard[1] saith in his homilies upon Solomon's Canticles, that the godly sufferance of martyrs hath Sufferers. Bernardus.

[1] The Editor has not been able to discover these words in the works of St Bernard, but something similar will be found in the homilies on Canticles by Gillebert, which are appended to those of Bernard. See Serm. XXIII. Op. Bernard. Ed. Ben. Paris. Vol. II. col. 75.]

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given as good erudition to the christian church as ever did the doctrine of the saints. Then is it meet that some be stirring, and not that all men in these days be idle, concerning that godly office. Many have suffered in this realm of late years by the bold calling on of antichrist's furious advocates, whose latter confessions, causes, and answers, are a great deal more notable and godly, if they be rightly weighed, than ever were the confessions, causes, and answers of the old canonized martyrs, which in the pope's English church have had so many solemnities, services, and censings. Many have also most desperately recanted through their most wicked persuasions and threatenings; in whose vain recantations are both to be seen their blasphemies against God, and manifest treasons against their king.

Barnes and other.

Recanters.

Now in conferring these martyrs, the old with the new, and the pope's with Christ's, I seclude first of all the Britain church, or the primitive church of this realm, which never had authority of the Romish pope. Her martyrs indeed were agreeable to that Christ spake afore in the gospel concerning his martyrs, whereby we should know them; as we evidently find in the lines of Emerita, king Lucie's sister, Amphibalus, Albanus, Aaron, Julius, Dionothus, and such other. "I send you forth," saith he, "as sheep among wolves. Men shall deliver ye up in their councils and synagogues. Ye shall be brought before rulers and kings, and be hated of all men in a manner for my name's sake." Matth. x. "Cast not afore in your minds what answer to make. For I in that hour shall give ye both utterance and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to withstand." Luke xxi. "They shall excommunicate you, or condemn you for heretics. Yea, they shall bring you in such hate of the world, that whosoever killeth you will think he doeth God great service. And this shall they do because they know rightly neither the Father nor yet me." John xvi.

Britain church.

Christ.

Bishops.

Many other like sentences left the Lord Jesus Christ in his holy gospel, that we should always by them discern his true martyrs from the pope's and Mahomet's counterfeit martyrs. In England here, since the first plantation of the pope's English church by Augustine and other Romish monks of Benet's superstition, two kinds of martyrs hath been: one of monastery-builders and chantry-founders, whom the temporal

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princes and secular magistrates have diversly done to death, sometime for disobedience, and sometime for manifest treason; as we have Wallenus of Crowland, Thomas of Lancaster, Richard Scrope, Becket and such other. The images of these have been set up in their temples, like the old gods of the pagans, and have had their vigils, holy-days, ringings, sacrificings, candles, offerings, feastings, and much ado besides, as they had. The other sort were preachers of the gospel, or poor teachers hereof in corners, when the persecution was such that it might not be taught abroad. And these poor souls, or true servants of God, were put to death by the holy spiritual fathers, bishops, priests, monks, canons, and friars, for heresy and lollery, they say. These christian martyrs were never solemnized of them: no, they had not so much as a penny dirge or a groat mass of requiem, no more than had John Baptist and Stephen among the Jews; but they have been holden for condemned heretics ever since.

Martyrs. Other martyrs. No dirge.

Who ever heard any goodness yet reported of Dionothus, with his thousand and two hundred companions, whom Augustine caused to be slain at Westchester in his church's beginning, because they would not preach as he did appoint them, nor baptize after the Romish manner, neither yet hallow the Easter feast as they did? Many a blessed creature, both men and women, have been brent since John Wicliffe's time and afore, for only disclosing the Pharisees' yokes and teaching the gospel's liberty: and them have that bawdy bloody synagogue of Satan defamed, blasphemed, condemned, execrated and cursed to hell as most detestable heretics and dogs; whereas, if they were of Christ, they ought (in case they were their haters or enemies) to suffer them, to say well of them, to do them good, and to pray for them, Matth. v., Luke vi., and not thus to use more tyranny over them than ever did Saracen, Turk, tyrant or devil. A great difference is there of the martyrs whom they make from the martyrs whom they canonise; of them whom they damn from them whom they worship: yea, so great a difference or diversity between them (if ye mark them well), as is between gold and dirt, or light and darkness.

Augustine. Wicliffe. Suffer.

The martyrs whose deaths they have procured by all ages of their bloodthirsty church, hearkened unto Christ, held of righteousness, and sought their Lord God in spirit, Esa.

Martyrs.

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li.; but the martyrs for the most part whom they have with so many Latin wailings, torches, and candle-burnings, magnified in their temples, hearkened to the pope, held of his unrighteousness, and sought out his superstitious idolatries.

Compare. In the conferring of their old canonised martyrs with our newly-condemned martyrs here, Anne Askewe and her other three companions, with such like, their difference will be much more easily perceived. First let us begin with Thomas

Becket. Becket, which was so glorious a martyr and precious advocate of theirs, that they made his blood equal with Christ's blood,

Miracles. and desired to climb to heaven thereby. Many wonderful miracles could that mitred patron of theirs do in those days, when the monks had friar Bacon's books and knew the bestowing of friar Bungay's mists; but now he can do none at all. This Becket in all flourishing doings hearkened to the pope, defended his pompous kingdom, supported his church's excess, and wretchedly died for the sinful liberties of the

Right martyrs. same. Anne Askewe and her sort gave diligent heed to their Lord Jesus Christ, sought the kingdom of heaven in daily repentance, mightily detested all idolatrous worshippings, and in conclusion suffered most triumphant death for the same.

Concerning other martyrs. As Wenefrid, otherwise called

Bonifacius Anglus. Boniface, a monk, and archbishop of Magunce, was slain confirming neophytes, or professing his newly-baptized brood to the Romish pope's obedience; there was found about him a casket full of relics, or dead men's bones, when he was put to death in the year of our Lord 755. Anne Askewe and her fellowship had none other relics about them, when they stood at the stake to be brent in Smithfield, but a bundle of the sacred scriptures inclosed in their hearts, and ready to

Clarus. be uttered against antichrist's idolatries. St Clare of Orchester, contemning lawful marriage, made himself an idle priest, and was beheaded in his own garden by procurement

Clitancus. of a woman. St Clitank of South Wales was in like case stabbed in with a dagger, because a young maiden loved him. The only true honour of God was it, and no worldly cause,

Edwinus. that Anne Askewe and her company died for. St Edwin, being well armed, was slain in battle at Hatfield, in the

Edwardus. north; and St Edward, riding a hunting in the forest of Warham in the west, was killed upon his horse in drinking a cup of wine. And all this was done for the kingdoms of this

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world. The martyrdom of Anne Askewe and her brethren was neither in battling nor hunting, riding nor drinking; but in that right course which Christ prescribed unto his disciples, under the cruel bishops, for his only glory.

St Cadoc of Cowbridge, a bishop, was pierced through with a spear, as he stood at his mass at one of the clock after noon, because he would be of the order of martyrs. St Elphege, archbishop of Canterbury, was stoned to death of the Danes, because he would not pay them three thousand marks, in the year of our Lord M. and XII. Of such martyrs much doubted Lanfrancus, which succeeded him in that office about a fourscore years after, and disputed thereof with Anselmus[1]. The cause of Anne Askewe and her companions was neither madness nor money, but the only seeking of their Lord God aright. As St Indract, with other devout pilgrims of Rome, lay in bed at their inn in Shapwick by Glastonbury, their throats were cut in the night for money, which was reckoned to be in their pilgrims' scrips. St Juthware, a virgin, was beheaded also for laying fresh cheese, or cruds[2], whether ye will, to her breasts. The cause of Anne Askewe and her other fellows, conferred with Christ's scriptures, seemeth a far other matter. Hewald the black, and Hewald the white, two English monks, going from place to place with cruets, chalice and super-altar, to do their daily sacrifices, were done to death in Frisland by the bowers[3] of the country for teaching a strange religion, and are worshipped at Cologne for martyrs. For bearing about Christ's testament, which is most heavenly treasure, and for spreading the wholesome doctrine thereof, was Anne Askewe and her sort brent by the priests' procurement; yet ask they no honour for it.

Cadocus. Lanfrancus. Indractus. Juthwara. Hewaldi duo. Anne Askewe.

Ositha, running away from her husband by the enticement Ositha.

[1 The passage occurs in the life of Lanfranc prefixed to his works, cap. XVI. ed. Bened. p. 15. Intimavit Abbati [Anselmo] Antistes Cantuariensis quasi conquerendo, quod homines illius patriæ colerent quosdam sanctos, quos ille non affectaret, et maxime, ait, quemdam Elfegum hujus sedis archipræsulem: quem non solum inter sanctos, sed et inter martyres numerare contendunt, cum constet illum non pro fide Christi, sed quia ab inimicis, a quibus captus tenebatur, se redimere noluerit, interemptum fuisse. Ad hæc Anselmus hujus reddit rationem. Certum est, inquit, quia, &c. &c. In the issue, Lanfranc. .... B. Elfegum ut vere magnum et martyrem gloriosum devote veneratus est.]

[2 Cruds: curds.] [3 Bowers: archers.]

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of two monks, became a professed nun, and was murdered
Wenefrida. of the Danes. Wenefrida, by counsel of a priest, disdainously refusing the marriage of a prince christened, lost her
Maxentia. head for it. Maxentia also played a part not all unlike to this. Such pild popish martyrdoms, compared to the martyrdom of Anne Askewe and her faithful company, is as is
Guilhelmus. rusty iron compared to pure silver. St William of Rochester, a Scot, leaving both wife and household, idly to trudge on pilgrimage, was stricken in the head with an axe of his own
Thomas. companion by the way. St Thomas of Dover was such a one as was slain of the Frenchmen for hiding the church's jewels, crosses, chalices and copes. No such light corruptible vanities were they that Anne Askewe and her constant
Young saints. brethren died for, but for the precious verity of God. Young St William of Norwich, young St Robert of Bury, young St Hugh of Lincoln, young St Melor of Cornwall, young St Kenelm of Gloucester, young St Eldred of Ramsey, and his brother, with such other like, were but very babes (they say), and were martyred of the Jews, and of other enemies. Wherefore their martyrdoms shall be but babyish in comparison of these, the verity having by them so small furtherance.

Foillanus. Foillanus and his three brethren, going homeward in the night, after they had well bankered with St Gertrude and her nuns, were killed in a wood of one murderer, and their horses sold in the next market-town. Justinianus, St Davy's father in Wales, was slain in a garden of his three monks, because he compelled them to do more labour than he would
Kilianus. do himself. After Kilianus was come home from Rome, he was murdered in his cell, with other holy pilgrims, by a woman,
Ursula. as they lay there asleep in the night. St Ursula also, and her she pilgrims, with their chaplains, nurses, and sucking babes, were but homely handled at Cologne of the Huns and Picts (if that legend be true), as they were coming homewards
Prove the spirits. from Rome. Compare me Anne Askewe and her condemned company with these clouted, canonized, solemnized, censed, matinsed, and massed martyrs, and tell me by the gospel's trial which of them seem most christianlike martyrs. Yea,
Edmundus, Fremundus, and other. bring St Edmund of Bury, St Fremund of Dunstable, St Ethelbert of Hertford, St Oswald of Gloucester, St Oswin of Tynemouth, and St Winstan of Evesham, (which are the best of the English martyrs,) to the touchstone of God's word;

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and ye shall find their martyrdoms and causes full unlike to theirs whom the bishops murder now apace in England.

In all these English martyrs rehearsed here afore ye shall find very few colours or tokens, that Christ said his martyrs should be known by, unless ye take pilgrimings, popes' relics, women, battles, huntings, idleness, monkeries, money, treasure, worldly kingdoms, contempt of marriage, superstitions, and such other vanities, for them. And then will I say, and not lie in it, that ye are much better overseen than learned in the scriptures of God, as your old blind bluddering predecessors hath been. Ye will ask me here, if I reckon England then all barren of christian martyrs. Nay, marry, do I not; for I know it hath had good store since the pope's faith came first into England, to the gospel's obscuration, though their names be not known to all men. Great tyranny was shewed by the heathenish emperors and kings at the first preaching of the gospel in the primitive church of the Britains by the cruel calling on of the pagan priests. But nothing like to that hath been shewed since in the English church by the spiritual tyrant of Rome and his mitred termagants, at the provocation of their oiled swill-bowls and blind Balaamites. For they most cruelly brent those innocents which did but only read the testament of God in their mother-tongue; and do not yet repent them of that mischief, but continue therein.

Tokens. The author. Good store. Britannish. English.

If ye mark well these two examinations of Anne Askewe, ye shall find in her and her other three companions, besides other whom the bishops in our time and afore hath brent, the express tokens that Christ sealeth his martyrs with. They appeared as sheep among wolves. They were thrown in strong prison. They were brought forth into councils and synagogues. Their answers were out of God's Spirit (as herein appeareth), and not out of their own. They were reviled, mocked, stocked, racked, execrated, condemned, and murdered, as is said afore, by a spirituality also, as he promised they should be, Matt. xxiii. and xxiv. Yea, those spiritual tyrants, besides their mortal malice upon the innocent bodies, have most blasphemously uttered in their spiteful sermons and writings, that their souls are damned; as is to be seen in the books of Winchester and Peryn. But let them beware lest they damn not their own wretched souls. For

Tokens. Answers. Tyrants. Winchester. Peryn.

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full sure we are by Christ's strong promise, Luke xii., that their souls they cannot harm with all their pope's black curses. Full sweetly rest they now in the peace of God, where their slanderous and malicious judgments cannot hurt them at all. Sapi. iii. Let those epicures, pigs, damn them with as many blasphemous lies as they can imagine; for other armour they have not: and we shall on the other side canonise them again with the mighty words and promises of Christ, which they shall never be able to resist. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ grant the light of his word so to spread the world over, that the dark mists of Satan may clearly be expelled, to the special comfort of his redeemed church, and glory of his eternal name. Amen.

Epicures, Pigs.

Light

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THE LATTER EXAMINATION

OF THE WORTHY SERVANT OF GOD,

MISTRESS ANNE ASKEWE,

THE YOUNGER DAUGHTER OF SIR WILLIAM ASKEWE, KNIGHT, OF LINCOLNSHIRE, LATELY MARTYRED IN SMITHFIELD, BY THE WICKED SYNAGOGUE OF ANTICHRIST.

THE CENSURE OR JUDGMENT OF JOHN BALE THEREUPON, AFTER THE SACRED SCRIPTURES AND CHRONICLES.

CHRIST willed his most dear apostle and secretary, St John the Evangelist, to signify by writing to the overseer or preacher of the congregation of Pergamos, that there are only his faithful members murdered where Satan inhabiteth or holdeth residence. And for example he bringeth forth his constant witness Antipas, which was there most cruelly slain of that synagogue of his, for confessing the verity. Apoc. ii. That behemoth (saith Job), that leviathan, that Satan, reigneth as a most mighty king over all the spiritual children of pride. Job xlii. A murderer (saith Christ to the spirituality of the Jews) and a blasphemous liar is that father of yours, and hath been from the world's beginning. John viii. These manners hath he not yet left, but continueth them still in his wicked posterity.

St John.

Satan.

In the primitive church (as testifieth Bedas) they persecuted the hairs of Christ's head, which was so pure as the white wool that is apt to receive all colours. Apoc. i. They slew those true believers which his word and Spirit had depured[1] from all false worshippings, and made fit for all tribulations to be suffered for his name's sake. In these latter days they meddle with his feet, which are like unto brass burning as it were in an hot furnace. Apoc. i. For they that believe now agreeably to his word, and not after their corrupted and cursed customs, are consumed in the fire: as hereafter will appear by this godly woman Anne Askewe, which with other more was brent at London, in the year of our Lord M.D.XLVI., for the faithful testimony of Jesu against

Christ's hairs.

Christ's feet.

Fire.

[1 Depured: purified. Halliwell.]

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antichrist: whose latter handling here followeth in course, like as I received it in copy by certain Dutch merchants coming from thence, which had been at their burning, and beholden the tyrannous violence there shewed. First out of prison she wrote unto a secret friend of hers after this manner following.

Copy.

ANNE ASKEWE.

I do perceive, dear friend in the Lord, that thou art not yet persuaded throughly in the truth concerning the Lord's supper, because Christ said unto his apostles: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you." In giving forth the bread as an outward sign or token to be received at the mouth, he minded them in a perfect belief to receive that body of his which should die for the people, or to think the death thereof the only health and salvation of their souls. The bread and the wine were left us for a sacramental communion, or a mutual participation of the inestimable benefits of his most precious death and blood-shedding; and that we should in the end thereof be thankful together for that most necessary grace of our redemption. For in the closing up thereof, he said thus: "This do ye in remembrance of me; yea, so oft as ye shall eat it or drink it," Luke xxii. and 1 Cor. xi. Else should we have been forgetful of that we ought to have in daily remembrance, and also been altogether unthankful for it.

Christ.

Bread.

Remember.

JOHN BALE.

Agreeable to this woman's doctrine here are the scriptures of both testaments; wherein these words *edere* and *bibere*, to eat and to drink, are oft-times spiritually taken for *credere*, to believe or receive in faith. "The poor," saith David, "shall eat and be satisfied. All that seek to please the Lord shall praise him, and their souls shall never perish." Ps. xxi. [xxii.] "They that eat me," saith the verity of God, "shall hunger more and more, and they that drink me shall thirst more desirously for me." Eccles. xxiv. "Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man," saith Christ, "and drink his blood, ye can have no life in you." John vi. These scriptures expound the doctors spiritually, yea, the papists and all. Where as the other three evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, sheweth nothing else of the Lord's supper but the plain history, St John, writing last of them all, manifests there the whole complete doctrine and full understanding thereof, after Christ's own instructions and meaning. Required is it there, that the true receivers thereof be taught of God, and

Edere and *bibere*.

Believe.

Evangelists.

Doctrine.

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learned of the heavenly Father, and not of sinful men's customs.

The work of God, or that pleaseth God, is not there the putting of bread into the mouth and belly, but to believe or exactly to consider, that Christ died for us to cleanse us from sin, to join us into one mystical body, and to give us life everlasting; and that there is none other but he that can procure us that life: for that which entereth the mouth feedeth only the body; but that entereth faith feedeth the soul. "I am the living bread," saith he, "which came down from heaven. He only that believeth in me hath the life everlasting." John vi. "The Spirit is it that quickeneth;" the fleshly understanding, or only mouth-eating, profiteth nothing at all. Here will an obstinate papist peradventure say, that we attribute nothing to the corporal communion. Yes, we reverently grant that, rightly ministered after Christ's institution, it both confirmeth our faith in the necessary considerations of his death, and also stirreth up that brotherly christian love which we ought to have towards our neighbour, besides that this faithful woman hath spoken here of it afore. And these are the only fruits which he requireth of us in that supper or sacramental meeting.

Faith. Christ. Communion. Love.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Therefore it is meet that in prayers we call unto God to graft in our foreheads the true meaning of the Holy Ghost concerning this communion. For St Paul doth say that "the letter slayeth; the spirit is it only that giveth life," 2 Cor. iii. Mark well the sixth chapter of John, where all is applied unto faith. Note also the fourth chapter of St Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians, and in the end thereof ye shall find plainly, that "the things which are seen are temporal, but they that are not seen are everlasting." Yea, look in the third chapter to the Hebrews, and ye shall find that "Christ as a son," and no servant, ruleth "over his house; whose house are we, (and not the dead temple,) if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of that hope to the end." Wherefore, as saith the Holy Ghost, "to day if ye shall hear his voice, harden not your hearts," &c. Ps. xciv.

Letter. Christ.

JOHN BALE.

By the foreheads understand she the hearts, or minds, of men; for so they are taken of St John, Apoc. vii. and xxii. I cannot but[1] think that herein she had respect unto the plate of

Foreheads.

[1 'but,' not in Mr Offor's copy.]

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fine gold which the Lord commanded to be set upon Aaron's forehead, for the acceptation of the people of Israel, Exod. xxviii.;
Hearts. for here would she all men's hearts to be endued and lightened with the most pure Spirit of Christ, for the understanding of that most holy and necessary communion, the corrupted dreams and phantasies of sinful men set apart. She knew by the singular gift of the Holy Ghost, that they are lying masters, procurers of idolatry, and most spiteful enemies to the
Liars. soul of man, that applieth that office to the corruptible lips, which belongeth to an uncorrupted faith, so setting the creature, that is, corruptible bread, in place of the Creator, Christ, both God and man, Rom. i., lamenting it with the righteous at the very heart-root. And in this she shewed herself to be
Member. a[1] member of Christ's mystical body, 1 Cor. xii., religiously careful for her christian brethren and sisters, lest they should take harm of the pope's mass-mongers.

Anne Askewe.

The Sum of my Examination afore the King's Council at Greenwich.

Companions. Your request, as concerning my prison-fellows, I am not able to satisfy, because I heard not their examinations. But the effect of mine was this: I, being before the council, was asked of master
Kyme. Kyme. I answered that my lord chancellor knew already my mind in that matter. They with that answer were not contented; but said, it was the king's pleasure that I should open the matter to them. I answered them plainly, that I would not so do; but, if it were the king's pleasure to hear me, I would shew him the truth. Then they
Soloman. said, it was not meet for the king with me to be troubled. I answered, that Solomon was reckoned the wisest king that ever lived, yet misliked he not to hear two poor common women; much more his grace a simple woman and a faithful subject. So, in conclusion, I made them none other answer in that matter.

John Bale.

Kyme. Concerning master Kyme, this should seem to be the matter. Her father, Sir William Askewe, knight, and his father, old master Kyme, were sometime of familiarity and neighbours within the county of Lincolnshire. Whereupon the said Sir William covenanted with him for lucre to have his eldest daughter married with his son and heir (as, in[2] an ungodly

[1 'a natural,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[2 'in,' not in Mr Offor's copy.]

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manner, it is in England much used among noble men); and An use.
as it was her chance to die afore the time of marriage, to save the money, he constrained this to supply her room: so that, in the end, she was compelled against her will, or free consent, to marry with him. Notwithstanding, the marriage once past, Married.
she demeaned herself like a christian wife, and had by him (as I am informed) two children. In process of time, by oft reading the sacred bible, she fell clearly from all old superstitions of papistry to a perfect belief in Jesus Christ: whereby she so offended the priests (as is to be seen after[3]), that he, at their suggestion, violently drove her out of his house. Whereupon Exiled.
she thought herself free from that uncomely kind of coacted marriage, by this doctrine of St Paul, 1 Cor. vii.: "If a faithful woman have an unbelieving husband, which will not tarry with her, she may leave him. For a brother or sister is not in subjection to such;" specially where as the marriage afore is unlawful. Upon this occasion (I hear say) she sought of the law a divorcement from him, namely, and above all, because Divorcement.
he so cruelly drove her out of his house in despite of Christ's verity. She could not think him worthy of her marriage, which so spitefully hated God, the chief author of marriage. Of this matter was she first examined (I think) at his[4] labour A beast.
and suit.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then my lord chancellor asked me of my opinion in the sacrament. My answer was this: I believe that so oft as I, in a christian congregation, do receive the bread, in remembrance of Christ's death, and with thanksgiving, according to his holy instruction, I receive therewith also the fruits[5] of his most glorious passion. The bishop of Winchester.
Winchester bade me make a direct answer. I said, I would not sing a new song to the Lord in a strange land.

JOHN BALE.

Direct enough was this answer after Christ's single doc- Answer.
trine, but not after the pope's double and covetous meaning, for his oiled querister's advantage. And here was at hand his general advocate, or steward, to look upon the matter,

[3 'afore,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[4 'his instant,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[5 'the fruits also,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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that nothing should perish pertaining to the maintenance of his superstitious vain-glory, if any crafty policy might help it. What offended this godly christian woman here, either Tyrant. in opinion or faith, ye cruel and vengeable tyrants? but that ye must (as David saith) temper your tongues with venomous words, to destroy the innocent, Ps. lxiii. Could ye have brought in against her a matter of more danger concerning your laws, to deprive her of life, ye would have Danger. done it; such is your ghostly charity. But be sure of it, as haughty as you are now, the hard plague thereof will be yours, when the great vengeance shall fall for shedding of innocents' blood, Matt. xxiii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Parables. Then the bishop said I spake in parables. I answered, it was best for him; for if I shew you the open truth (quoth I), ye will not accept it. Then he said I was a parrot. I told him again I was ready to suffer all things at his hands; not only his rebukes, but all that Rebukes. should follow besides, yea, and that gladly. Then had I divers rebukes of the council, because I would not express my mind in all things as they would have me. But they were not, in the mean time, unanswered, for all that; which now to rehearse were too much: for I was Five hours. with them there about five hours. Then the clerk of the council conveyed me from thence to my lady Garnish.

JOHN BALE.

Most commonly Christ used to speak in dark similitudes, or [1] parables, when he perceived his audience rather given to the hearing of pharisaical constitutions, or [1] customs, than to his heavenly verity. Matt. xiii., Mark iv., Luke vii. Which rule this woman, his [2] true disciple, forgot not here, Winchester. in communing with this proud bishop, whom she knew [3] always a most obstinate withstander of that wholesome verity of his. And as concerning mocks and scornful revilings, they have Mockers. been ever in that generation of scorners more plenteous than good counsels to the righteous; and therefore, as a name after their conditions, it is unto them appropriate of the Holy Ghost in many places of the scriptures. "In the latter days," saith Judas the apostle, "shall come mockers, walking in ungodliness, after all [4] their own lusts. These

[1 'and,' Mr Offor's copy.] [2 'being his,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[3 'knew to be,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[4 'all after,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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are they which separate themselves" from the common sort by a name of spiritualty, being in conversation beastly, and having no spirit that is godly. "But, dearly beloved," saith he, "ground yourselves upon our most holy faith," &c. Hypocrites.

ANNE ASKEWE.

The next day I was brought again before the council. Then would they needs know of me what I said to the sacrament. I answered, that I had already[5] said that I could say. Then, after divers words, they bade me go by. Then came my lord Lyle, my lord of Essex, and the bishop of Winchester, requiring me earnestly that I should confess the sacrament to be flesh, blood, and bone. Then said I to my lord Parr and my lord Lyle, that it was great shame for them to counsel contrary to their knowledge. Whereunto, in few words, they did say, that they would gladly all things were well. Sacrament. Godly.

JOHN BALE.

Always have the worldly governors shewed more gentleness and favour to the word of God, than the consecrate priests and prelates: as we have for example in the old law, that Ezekias, the king of Judah, would in no case, at their calling on, put Micheas the true prophet unto death, when he had prophesied the destruction of Samaria for their idolatry, and for the tyranny of their princes and false prophets, Mich. i. and iii. Neither would the princes, at the priests' heady exclamations, murder Jeremy for the Lord's verity preaching, but mercifully delivered him out of their malicious hands, Jer. xxvi. Pilate, in like case, concerning the new law, pleaded with the Jews' spiritualty to have saved Christ from the death, Matt. xxvi., John xviii. So did the captain Claudius Lysias deliver Paul from their mortal malice, after that the high priest Ananias had commanded him to be smitten, and his retinue conspired his death, Acts xxiii. At the priests' only provocation was it, that the heathenish emperors so grievously vexed and tormented the christian believers in the primitive church; as testifieth Egesippus, Clemens Alexandrius, Eusebius, and other old historians. Micheas. Lysias. Cæsars.

ANNE ASKEWE.

The[6] bishop said he would speak with me familiarly. I said, So did

[5 'already had,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[6 'Then the,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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Winchester. Judas, when he unfriendlily betrayed Christ. Then desired the bishop to speak with me alone. But that I refused. He asked me why? I said, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter should stand, after Christ's and Paul's doctrine. Matth. xviii. and 2 Cor. xiii.

JOHN BALE.

Treason. Did she not (think you) hit the nail on the head, in thus taunting this bishop? Yes; for as great offence doth he to Christ, that giveth one of his believing members unto death, as did he that betrayeth first his own body. "That ye have done unto these little ones" (shall he say at the latter day) "which have believed in me, ye have done unto Christ's. mine own person," Matt. xxv. "Whoso toucheth them (saith Zachary) shall touch the apple of the Lord's own eye," Zach. ii. But this believeth not that perverse generation.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Sacrament. Then my lord chancellor began to examine me again of the sacrament. Then I asked him how long he would halt on both sides? Then would he needs know where I found that? I said, in the scripture, 3 Kings xviii. Then he went his way.

JOHN BALE.

Halt. Of Helias the prophet were these words spoken to the people of Israel, such time as they halted between two opinions, or walked unrightly between the true living God England. and the false God Baal, as we do now in England, between Christ's gospel and the pope's old rotten customs. We slenderly consider with St Paul, that Christ will have no fellowship or concord with Belial, light with darkness, righteousness with unrighteousness, the temple of God with images, or the true believers with the infidels, 2 Cor. vi. For all our new gospel, yet will we still bear the stranger's yoke Tepidi. with the unbelievers, and so become neither hot nor cold, that God may spue us out of his mouth as unsavoury morsels (Apoc. iii.), saying unto us, as to the foolish virgins, "Verily I know you not," Matt. xxv.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Burnt. Then the bishop said, I should be burnt. I answered, that I had searched all the scriptures, yet could I never find there that either Christ or his apostles put any creature to death. Well, well, said I, "God will laugh your threatenings to scorn." Ps. ii. Then was I commanded to stand aside.

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JOHN BALE.

Among other signs that the[1] scripture giveth us to know an antichrist by, it sheweth that it[2] shall be an "adversary" (2 Thes. ii.), "an unsatiable dog" (Esa. lvi.), "a pursuing enemy" (Ps. iv.), "an enemy to[3] the sanctuary" (Ps. lxxiii.), "a ravening wolf" (Matt. vii; Lu. x; Jo. x; Acts. xx.), and "a most cruel murderer" (Dan. xi; Jo. x; Apoc. xiii.) "Unto such," saith St John, "it is[4] given to vex men with the[5] heat of fire" (Apoc. xvi.) The wickedness of priests (saith Jeremy) sheddeth innocents' blood; yea, (say they,) ye must be burnt, ye must dwell among the Gentiles, (Threno. iv.), or be committed to prison of the worldly powers, and so put unto death by them. We marvel not, therefore, though these parts be played of proud bishops, considering the Holy Ghost must be found true in his fore-judgments, and that some there must be to do the feats. But truly did this woman conclude with the prophecy of David, Ps. ii. "that God which dwelleth in heaven shall have their tyranny in derision," and bring all their wicked counsels to nought in the clear opening of his word, have they never so many painted colours of false righteousness.

Antichrist. [Ps. lxxiv.] To burn. Priests.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then came master Paget to me with many glorious words, and desired me to speak my mind to him. I might (he said) deny it again, if need were. I said that I would not deny the truth. He asked me how I could avoid the very words of Christ, "Take, eat; this is my body, which shall be broken for you." I answered, that Christ's meaning was there, as in[6] other places of the scripture: "I am the door" (John x.), "I am the vine" (John xv.), "Behold the Lamb of God" (John i.), "The rock-stone was Christ" (1 Cor. x.), and such other like. Ye may not here, said I, take Christ for the material thing that he is signified by; for then ye will make him a very door, a vine, a lamb, and a stone, clean contrary to the Holy Ghost's meaning. All these, indeed, do signify Christ, like as the bread doth his body in that place. And though he did say there, "Take, eat this in remembrance of me;" yet did he not bid them hang up that bread in a box, and make it a God, or bow to it.

Paget. Christ's meaning. Signify. Remembrance.

[1 'holy,' Mr Offor's copy.] [2 'he,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[3 'in,' Mr Offor's copy.] [4 'is it,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[5 'the,' not in Mr Offor's copy.]
[6 'in these,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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JOHN BALE.

Much ado is here made, and many[1] ways are sought out, to bring this woman into their corrupted and false belief, that
Idolatry. the corruptible creature, made with hands, might stand in place of the eternal Creator or Maker, God and man, for the priests' advantage. But all is in vain. In no case would he[2] accept it. But[3] nothing less minded Christ than to dwell in
Not in bread. the bread, or to become a feeding for the body, when he said, "Take, eat; this is my body:" for a contrary doctrine he taught his disciples the year afore his last supper, as we have in the sixth chapter of John, where as he declareth his flesh
Spiritual. to be a spiritual meat, his blood a spiritual drink, and both them to be received in faith, the bread and the wine remaining, as signs of his everlasting covenant. Reason is it, that he
The eater. rather be judged the receiver in[4] that refection, than he which liveth not thereby, which is the soul, and not the body. What needed Christ to have given to those bodies a new bodily feeding, which were sufficiently fed afore with the passover lamb, if he had not meant therein some other thing[5]?

But he sufficiently enough declareth his own meaning, Luke xxii., where he commandeth us to do it in his remembrance, and not to make him again by blowing upon the bread. This sacramental eating and drinking in his
Remembrance. remembrance St Paul more largely declareth, 1 Cor. xi. "So oft," saith he, "as ye shall eat of that bread, and drink of that cup, ye shall shew the Lord's death till he come."
Till he come. If ye earnestly mark that latter clause, "till he come," ye shall well perceive that his bodily presence in the bread is utterly denied there. Moreover, in the aforesaid 22d chapter of St Luke, because we should not be too scrupulous, Christ sheweth what that wine and bread of his supper were, yea, as he left them there, even in these words: "I say unto you,"
Fruit of the vine. saith he, "that henceforth I shall not drink of this fruit of the vine (or eat of this fruit of wheat) till the kingdom of God be come," or, "till I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom," Matt. xxvi., Mark xiv. Here calleth it he the juice of the grape, or fruit of the vine, and not the blood

[1 'subtil,' Mr Offor's copy.] [2 'so,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[3 'But,' not in Mr Offor's copy.]
[4 'which liveth in,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[5 'manner of thing,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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issuing from his body. Yet is that cup (as St Paul saith) "the partaking of Christ's blood, and the bread that we partake there, the partaking of Christ's body," 1 Cor. x. But this is in faith and spirit, as afore in John. Partaking.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then he compared it unto the king, and said, that the more his majesty's honour is set forth, the more commendable it is. Then said I, that it was an abominable shame unto him to make no better of the eternal word of God than of his tenderly conceived fantasy. Far other meaning requireth God therein, than men's idle wit can devise, whose doctrine is but lies *with*out his heavenly verity. Then *he* asked me, if I would con*fer* with some wise man? That *of*fer, I said, I would *not refuse*. Then he told the council. *And* so went I to my ladies ag*ain* [6]. Paget. Idle wit.

JOHN BALE.

* * * * *

first Patron S *F*rances, as we find in the history of his idolatrous feast, and also in the book of conformities of Frances to Christ, written by an Italish friar called Bartholomew Pisanus. In Frances (they say) is expressed the full signification of Christ, by reason of his wounds. And Paget here compareth Christ's presence in the sacrament to the king's presence, I wot not where. And as great pleasure I think he doth the king therein, as though he threw dust in his

[6 In the two copies which have been compared and collated for this edition, the folios 22 and 23 have been pasted together, so that the latter page of the first, and the former page of the latter were concealed, and the top of fol. 23 cut off to the extent of about four lines, which is, it may be feared, lost. The copy in the British Museum remains so pasted; that in the possession of George Offor, Esq. of Grove House, Hackney, who kindly allowed the editor the use of it, the editor has carefully separated, and the contents formerly concealed now appear, with the exception of the four lines above alluded to.—These were evidently cut off, because the commencement of a paragraph of Anne Askew's narration is made thus to coincide with a similar commencement on fol. 22, which is concealed, and the narrative thus appears to be continued without interruption. It would seem as though this had been done to spare the reputation of Paget, who is somewhat roughly handled by Bale. The words or letters in italics are supplied from conjecture, the print being damaged by the paste. The part so concealed commences here with the words "Then he compared" and terminates with the words "our damnation."]

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face, or salt in his eyes; but that such flattering Gn*athos* must do their feats, though they be most blasphemous. Neither head nor tail hath this witless comp*arison* of his, to make good his enterpri*se* with this woman. And much doubt it *is whe*ther he maketh here Christ a *shadow* to the king, or the king a *shadow* to Christ: but he should seem *rather to* take Christ for the *shadow*. *O grace*less papists, when will ye be *godly-wise*? T*hus is* your own damnation[1].

* * * * *

ANNE ASKEWE.

Coxe and Robinson. Then came to me doctor Coxe and doctor Robinson. In conclusion, we could not agree. Then they made me a bill of the sacrament, willing me to set my hand thereunto; but I would not. Then on the Sunday I was sore sick, thinking no less than to die; therefore I desired to speak with Latimer. It would no be. Then was I sent to Newgate. Newgate, in my extremity of sickness; for in all my life afore was I never in such pain. Thus the Lord strengthen you in the truth. Pray, pray, pray.

JOHN BALE.

In bread. What an hurly-burly is here for this new belief, that Christ should dwell in the bread, which is man's creature, and not God's! Christ is "the living bread, which came from heaven," John vi. But this is not sufficient (say the priests), unless ye believe also that he is that dead bread A wafer. which came from the wafer-baker's. And thereunto must ye set your own handwriting, else it will not[2] be allowed in the spiritual court. For he that speaketh great things and Antichrist. blasphemies (which is antichrist), making war with the saints, will have it so. Apoc. xiii. In the apostle's time, and many years after, it was enough for a christian man's righteousness, to believe with the heart that Jesus is the Lord, and that God raised him up from the dead. Rom. x. But now we must believe that he cometh down again, at the Impaned. will of the priests, to be impaned, or inbreaded, for their belly's commonwealth, like as he afore came down at the will of his heavenly Father, to be incarnated, or infleshed, for

[1 About four lines are here wanting: the part of the word damnation is the catch word at the bottom of the page, fol. 23.]

[2 'will it not,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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our universal soul's health. And unto this we must set our handwriting, that we may be known for antichrist's cattle: else shall we to stinking Newgate, by their spiritual appoint- Newgate.
ment, be we never so sick, and, within a while after, to the fire in Smithfield; for Christ's member must with him taste both esell and gall.

ANNE ASKEWE.

The Confession of me Anne Askewe, for the time I was in Newgate, concerning my belief.

I find in the scriptures (saith she) that Christ took the bread, and Bread.
gave it to his disciples, saying, "Eat, this is my body, which shall be broken for you;" meaning in substance his own very body, the bread being thereof an only sign, or sacrament. 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 Temple.
declareth it (Jo. ii.), 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 before the Moses' veil.
children of Israel, that they should not see the clearness thereof, Exod. xxxiv. and 2 Cor. iii., I perceive the same veil remaineth to this day; but when God shall take it away, then shall these blind men see.

JOHN BALE.

Ye will say, peradventure, here, that the similitude of bread and of the temple are not like; for he blessed the bread with thanksgiving. So will ye say another time, for your pleasure and advantage, that he blessed the temple also, Blessed.
and called it both the house of his Father, and also the house of prayer. I pray ye, be as good here to your market-place as ye are to your sale-wares therein, for your own[3] bellies' sake: for the one will not do well to your commodity in idleness without the other. But take good heed of it, if ye list; for Christ hath already called one of them an house Temple.
of merchandise and a den of thieves, by reason of your unlawful occupying therein. Jo. ii. and Lu. xix. He hath also promised to overthrow it (Matt. xxiv.), and not leave one stone thereof standing upon another (Mar. xiii.), because ye have not regarded the time of your visitation, or not accepted his

[3 'only,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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Warning. eternal word of health. A warning might the turning over of your monasteries have been unto you, if ye were not, as ye are, altogether blind.

I cannot think the contrary but he calleth the other also, as ye handle it now-a-days in the pope's old toys of convey-
The mass. ance, "the abomination of desolation," or such an abominable idol as, subverting Christ's true religion, will be your final
Idols. destruction, both here and in the world to come; for idols are called abomination all the scriptures over. Yet shall it endure (saith Daniel) somewhere unto the end of all. Dan. ix. Whereby ye may well perceive that it comprehendeth
Tiberius. not only the triumphant streamers of Tiberius, or golden
Caligula. images of Caligula, which both prevented the subversion of Jerusalem, but some other idol else which should continue. And it followeth in the gospel text, that he should sit in the holy place for the time of his continuance (Matt. xxiv.), and
Masses. not in the pagans' temples. Tell me if your masses be done any where else than in your hallowed sanctuaries, upon your sanctified altars, and in your holy ornaments and consecrate cups? Neither may any do them, unless they be anointed thereunto by your bishops and sorcerers.

Antichrist. Not without the holy place (saith Christ) is that abomination, but in it. Matt. xxiv. "Antichrist," saith St Paul, "shall sit," not without, but "within the very temple of God." (2 Thess. ii.) The papacy is not without, but within the very church of Christ: what though it be no part thereof? (Apoc.
Shun them. xi.) Therefore shall it be meet that we beware, and separate ourselves from them at the admonishments of his holy doctrine, lest we be partakers with you in their promised damna-
The veil. tion. Apoc. xviii. By the veil over Moses's face she meaneth the blind confidence that many men yet have in old Jewish ceremonies and beggarly traditions of men, as St Paul doth call them (Gala. iv.), whereby the verity of God is sore blemished. The spiritual knowledge which cometh by the clear doctrine of the gospel ministereth no such impediments
Darkness. of darkness; but all things are clearly seen to them that[1] are endued therewith. They can be deceived by none of Satan's subtle conveyers, but perceiveth all things, which have ob-
Sight. tained the pure eyes of faith.

[1 'which,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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ANNE ASKEWE.

For it is plainly expressed in the history of Bel, in the bible, that God dwelleth in nothing material. "O king," saith Daniel, "be not deceived." Dan. xiv. "For God will be in nothing that is made with hands of men," Acts vii. O 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 Askewe, that neither wish death, nor yet fear his might, and as merry as one that is bound towards heaven. "Truth is laid in prison." Lu. xxi. "The law is turned to wormwood." Amos vi. "And there can no right judgment go forth." Esay lix.

JOHN BALE.

Mark here how graciously the Lord keepeth promise with this poor servant of his. "He that believeth on me," saith Christ, "out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." John vii. Neither lasheth this woman out in her extreme troubles language of despair, nor yet blasphemous words against God, with the unbelieving; but uttereth the scriptures with wonderful abundance, to his laud and praise. She rebuketh here the most pestilent vice of idolatry, not by old narrations and fables, but by the most pure word of God, as did Daniel and Stephen. And in the end she sheweth the strong stomach of a most christian martyr, in that she neither desireth[2] the death, neither yet standeth in fear of the violence or extremity thereof. What a constancy was this of a woman, frail, tender, young, and most deliciously brought up! But that Christ's Spirit was mighty in her, who bade her be of good cheer; for though the tyrants of this world have power to slay the body, yet have they no power over the soul. Matt. xx. Neither have they power in the end to diminish one hair of the head. Luke xxi. Promise. Faith. A martyr. Tyrants.

She fainteth not in the midst of the battle, (1 Cor. ix.) but persevereth strong and stedfast to the very end, Matt. x; not doubting but to have, for her faithful perseverance, the crown of eternal life. Apoc. ii. "So merry am I, (saith she, good creature, in the midst of Newgate,) as one that is bound towards heaven." A voice was this of a most worthy and valiant witness in the painful kingdom of patience. Apoc. i. She faithfully reckoned of her Lord God, that he is not as Stedfast. Valiant.

[2 'desirous,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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men are[1], Num. xxiii., but most sure of word and promise, Ps. cxliv.; and that he would most faithfully keep covenant with her when time should come. Apoc. ii. She had it most groundedly planted in her heart, that though heaven and earth did pass, yet could not his words and promise pass by unfulfilled. Luke xxi. Ashamed may those carnal Helchesites[2] be, which have not only denied the verity of their Lord God, but also most shamefully blasphemed and dishonoured both it and themselves for the pleasure of a year or two to dwell still in this flesh. They consider not that he, with whom they mock, hath power to send them to hell for their blasphemy. Luke xii. They shall not find it a matter light, for their inconstancy to be vomited out of the mouth of God, as unsavoury morsels, Apoc. iii.: neither shall they prove it a Christmas game to be denied of Christ before his heavenly Father and his angels, for denying here his verity. Matth. x.

Faith.

Helchesites.

Inconstant.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Prayer.

O forgive us all our sins, and receive us graciously. As for the works of our hands, we will no more call upon them; for it is thou, Lord, that art our God. Thou shewest ever mercy unto the fatherless. O if they would do this, saith the Lord, I should heal their sores, yea, with all my heart would I love them. O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols any more? Whoso is wise shall understand this; and he that is rightly instructed will regard it. For the ways of the Lord are righteous; such as are godly will walk in them. As for the wicked, they will stumble at them. Osee xiv.

JOHN BALE.

Oseas.

Idolatry.

All these words alleged she out of the last chapter of Oseas the prophet, where as he pronounced the destruction of Samaria for the only vice of idolatry. In the word of the Lord she declareth herself therein to detest and abhor that vice above all, and to repent from the heart that she hath at any time worshipped the works of men's hands, either stone, wood, bread, wine, or any such like, for the eternal living God. Consequently she confesseth him to be her only God, and that she had at that time trust in none other else, neither for the remission of her sins, nor yet soul's comfort at

[1 'is not as men are, fickle,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[2 Heretics of the 2nd century, who held opinions much resembling those of the Ebionites. Lardner, Vol. VIII. p. 614. ed. 1838.]

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her need. And, like such a one as is unfeignedly converted unto the Lord, she asketh of the spiritual Ephraimites in his word, what she hath any more to do with idols, or why they should so tyrannously enforce her to the worshipping of them, considering that he so earnestly abhorreth them. Finally, two sorts of people she reckoneth to be in the world, and sheweth the divers manner of them: the one, in the spirit of Christ, obeyeth the word; the other, in the spirit of error, contemneth it. And, like as St Paul doth say, "to the one part is it the savour of life unto life; and to the other the savour of death unto death." 2 Cor. ii.

Ephraimites.

Two sorts.

ANNE ASKEWE.

"Solomon" (saith St Stephen) "builded an house for the God of Jacob. Howbeit, the Highest[3] dwelleth not in temples made with hands: as saith the prophet, Esay, lxvi. Heaven is my seat, and the earth is my foot-stool. What house will ye build for me? saith the Lord; or what place is it that I shall rest in? Hath not my hand made all these things?" Acts vii. "Woman, believe me" (saith Christ to the Samaritan), "the time is at hand that ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what; but we know what we worship: for salvation cometh of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, wherein the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in verity." John iv. "Labour not" (saith Christ) "for the meat that perisheth, but for that endureth into life[4] everlasting, which the Son of man shall give you; for him God the Father hath sealed." Jo. vi.

St Stephen.

Temple.

Worship.

Meat.

JOHN BALE.

Here bring she three strong testimonies of the new Testament, to confirm her own christian belief therewith, and also both to confute and condemn the most execrable heresy and false filthy belief of the papists. The first of them proveth that the eternal God of heaven will neither be wrapt up in a clout, nor yet shut up in a box: the second declareth, that in no place of the earth is he to be sought, neither yet to be worshipped, but within us, in spirit and verity: the third of them concludeth, that Christ is a feeding for the soul, and not for the body. Moreover, he is such a meat as neither corrupteth, mouldeth, nor perisheth; neither yet consumeth or wasteth away in the belly. Let not the Romish pope's remnant in England think but in condemning the

Three bulwarks.

Romists.

[3 'highest of all,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[4 'the life,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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faith of this godly woman they also condemn the verity of the Lord, unless they can discharge these three texts of the scripture with other three more effectual; as I think they shall not *nisi ad calendas Græcas.* If they allege, for their part, the saying of Christ, Matt. xxiv., "Lo, here is Christ, or there is Christ," they are confounded by that which followeth, wherein he earnestly chargeth his faithful followers not to believe it, calling the teachers of such doctrine false anointed, deceivable prophets, and sorcerous workmen. Mar. xiii.

Lo here, see there.

Anne Askewe.

The sum of the Condemnation of me, Anne Askewe, at Guildhall.

Heretic. They said to me there, that I was an heretic, and condemned by the law, if I would stand in my opinion. I answered that I was no heretic, neither yet deserved I any death by the law of God: but as concerning the faith which I uttered and wrote to the council, I would not, I said, deny it, because I knew it true. Then would they needs know if I would deny the sacrament to be Christ's body and blood. I said, 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, is but a piece of bread. For a more proof thereof (mark it when ye list) let it lie in the box but three months, and it will be mould, and so turn to nothing that is good. Whereupon I am persuaded that it cannot be God.

Sacrament.

Mould in the box.

John Bale.

Christ condemned. Christ Jesus, the eternal Son of God, was condemned of this generation for a seditious heretic, a breaker of their sabbath, a subverter of their people, a defiler of their laws, and a destroyer of their temple, or holy church, Joh. vii.; Luk. xxiii.; Matt. xxvi.; Mar. xiv.; and suffered death for it, at their procurement, by the law then used. Is it, then, any marvel if his inferior subject here, and faithful member, do the same, at the cruel calling on and violent vengeance of their posterity? No, no; the servant must follow her master, and the foot her head, and may be found in that point no freer than he, Jo. xiii. St Augustine, defining a sacrament, calleth it, in one place, "a sign of an holy thing[1];" in another place,

Member.

Sacrament.

[1 Sacrificium ergo visibile invisibilis sacrificii sacramentum, id est, sacrum signum est.—S. Aug. de Civ. Dei. Lib. x. cap. v. Op. Ben. Ed. Par. Tom. VII. col. 241.]

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"a visible shape of an invisible grace[2];" whose office is to instruct, animate, and strengthen our faith towards God, and not to take it to itself, and so deprive him thereof. Christ's body and blood are neither signs nor shadows, but the very effectual things indeed signified by those figures of bread and wine. But how that dry and corruptible cake of theirs should become a god, many men wonder now-a-days, in the light of the gospel, like as they have done aforetime also; and specially, why the wine should not be accepted and set up for a god also, so well as the bread, considering that Christ made so much of the one as of the other.

No signs.

The wine.

ANNE ASKEWE.

After that they willed me to have a priest, and then I smiled. Then they asked me if it were not good. I said I would confess my faults to God, for I was sure that he would hear me with favour. And so we were condemned, without a quest.

Confess.

JOHN BALE.

Priests of godly knowledge she did not refuse; for she knew that they are the messengers of the Lord, and that his holy words are to be sought at their mouths, Mala. ii. Of them she instantly desired to be instructed, and it was denied her, as is written above[3]. What should she then else do but return unto her Lord God, in whom she knew to be abundance of mercy for all them which do from the heart repent? Deutero. xxx. As for the other sort of priests, she did not amiss to laugh them and their maintainers to scorn; for so doth God also, Psalm ii., and curseth both their absolutions and blessings, Mala. ii. A thief or a murderer should not have been condemned without a quest, by the laws of England: but the faithful members of Jesus Christ, for the spite and hate that this world hath to his verity, must have another kind of tyranny added thereunto, besides the unrighteous bestowing of that law. "Woe be unto you," (saith the eternal God of heaven by his prophet,) or damnation be over your heads, "that make wicked laws and devise cruel things for the poor oppressed innocents." Esay x. "Woe unto him that

Teachers.

Baal's priests.

Tyranny.

Wicked laws.

[2 Signacula quidem rerum divinarum sunt visibilia.—Id. de Catechizandis rudibus. Tom. VI. col. 293.]

[3 'afore,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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buildeth Babylon with blood, and maintaineth that wicked city still in unrighteousness," Abac. ii.; Nahum iii.; Ezek. xxiv.

ANNE ASKEWE.

My belief which I wrote to the council was this: That the sacramental bread was left us to be received with thanksgiving in remembrance of Christ's death, the only memory of our souls' recovery; and that thereby we also received the whole benefits and fruits of his most glorious passion.

Remembrance.

JOHN BALE.

We read not in the gospel, that the material bread at Christ's holy supper was any otherwise taken of the apostles than thus; neither[1] that Christ, our Master and Saviour, required any other taking of them. If so many strange doubts had been therein, and so high difficulties, as be moved and are in controversy among men now-a-days, both papists and other, they could no more have been left undiscussed of him than other high matters were. The disciples asked here neither how, nor what; as doubtless they would have done, if he had minded them to have taken the bread for him. They thought it enough to take it in his remembrance, like as he then plainly taught them, Luke xxii. The eating of his flesh and drinking of his blood therein, to the relieving of their souls' thirst and hunger, they knew to pertain unto faith, according to his instructions in the sixth of John. What have this godly woman then offended, which neither have denied his incarnation nor death in this her confession of faith, but most firmly and groundedly trusted to receive the fruits of them both?

Apostles.

Eating.

The sum of belief.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then would they needs know whether the bread in the box were God, or no. I said, "God is a spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and in truth." Jo. iv. Then they demanded, Will you plainly deny Christ to be in the sacrament? I answered, that I believed faithfully the eternal Son of God not to dwell there. In witness whereof I recited again the history of Bel, and the xivth chapter of Daniel[2], the viith and xviith of the Acts, and the xxivth of Matthew, conclud-

O beastly idolaters!

O constant martyr! Acts vii. Acts xvii.

[1 'Neither yet,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[2 The thirteenth and fourteenth chapters of Daniel contain the apocryphal part, viz. the History of Susannah and that of Bel and the Dragon.]

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ing thus, I neither wish death, nor yet fear his might. God have the praise thereof with thanks!

JOHN BALE.

Among the old idolaters, some took the sun, some the moon, some the fire, some the water, with such other like, for their gods; as witnesseth Diodorus Siculus, Herodotus, Plinius, Lactantius, and divers authors more. Now come our doting papists here, wading yet more deeper in idolatry, and they must have bread for their god, yea, a wafer-cake, which is scarce worthy to be called bread. In what sorrowful case are christian people now-a-days, that they may worship their Lord and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, in no shape that his heavenly Father hath set him forth in, but in such a shape only as the wafer-baker hath imagined by his slender wit! God's creatures were they whom the idolaters took for their gods, but this cake is only the baker's creature; for he alone made it bread, if it be bread: and so much is it a more unworthy god than the other. Far was it from Christ to teach his disciples to worship such a god, either yet to have himself honoured in such a similitude. Nothing is here spoken against the most holy table of the Lord, but against that most abominable[3] idol of the priests, which hath most detestably blemished that most godly and wholesome communion.

Old idolaters. New idolaters. A wafer. The supper.

A glorious witness of the Lord did this blessed woman shew herself in the answer-making to this blasphemous beggary, when she said that God was a spirit, and no wafer-cake, and would be worshipped in spirit and verity, and not in superstition and juggling of the idol priests. Godly was she to deny Christ's presence in that execrable idol, but much more godly to give her life for it. Her alleged scriptures prove that God dwelleth not in temples, but a foul abomination in his stead, as is shewed afore. In that she feareth not the power of death, she declareth herself a most constant martyr, praising her Lord God for his gift. She called to remembrance the promises of her Lord Jesus Christ, that they should see no death which observed his word, Jo. viii.; again, "they that believed on him should joyfully pass through from death unto life." John v. And upon these promises she most strongly trusted. She considered also, with Peter, "that Christ had swallowed up death, to make us

Answer. An idol. Death. Promises.

[3 'that abominable,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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the heirs of everlasting life," 1 Pet. iii.; moreover, "that he had overthrown him which sometime had the rule of death," Hebr. ii. and also "taken away the sharp sting of the death itself." Osee xiii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

My Letter sent to the Lord Chancellor.

To the chancellor. The Lord God, by whom all creatures have their being, bless you with the light of his knowledge. Amen.

My duty to your lordship remembered, &c.

It might please you to accept this my bold suit, as the suit of one which upon due consideration is moved to the same, and hopeth to obtain. My request to your lordship is only, that it may please the The king. same to be a mean for me to the king's majesty, that his grace may be certified of these few lines which I have written concerning my belief; which when it shall be truly conferred with the hard judgment given me for the same, I think his grace shall perceive[1] me to be weighed in an uneven pair of balances. But I remit my matter and cause to To God. Almighty God, which rightly judgeth all secrets. And thus I commend your lordship unto the governance of him, and fellowship of all saints. Amen.

By your handmaid,

ANNE ASKEWE.

JOHN BALE.

Strong. In this bill to the chancellor it appeareth plain, all froward affections sequestered, what this woman was. She is not here dejected with the desperate, for unrighteous handling, mourning, cursing, and sorrowing, as they do commonly: but standing up strongly in the Lord, most gently she obeyeth the powers, she blesseth her vexers and pursuers, and wisheth Obedience. them the light of God's necessary knowledge. Lu. vi. She considereth the powers to be ordained of God, Rom. xiii.; and though their authority be sore abused, yet, with Christ and his apostles, she humbly submitteth herself to them, thinking to suffer under them, as no ill-doer, but as Christ's true servant, 1 Pet. iv. Notwithstanding she layeth forth Her matter. here, both before chancellor and king, the matter whereupon she is condemned to death, that they, according to their bounden duty, might more rightly weigh it, 3 Regum x.: not that she coveted thereby to avoid the death, but to put Their office. them in remembrance of their office concerning the sword, which they ought not vainly to minister, Rom. xiii. and that

[1 'well perceive,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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they should also be without excuse of ignorance in the day of reckoning for permitting such violence to be done, Rom. ii. In the end, yet to make all sure, she committeth her cause and quarrel to God; wherein she declareth her only hope to be in him, and no man. Psalm cxlv. To God.

ANNE ASKEWE.

My Faith briefly written to the King's Grace.

I Anne Askewe, 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 to your grace: That, forasmuch as I am by the law condemned for an an evildoer, here I take heaven and earth to record that I shall die in my innocence. And, according to that I have said first, and will say 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 also so much as he willed me to follow and believe, and so much as the catholic church of him doth teach; for I will not forsake the commandment of his holy lips. But look what God hath charged me with his mouth, that have I shut up in my heart. And thus briefly I end, for lack of learning. Trouble. Heresies. Faith.

ANNE ASKEWE.

JOHN BALE.

In this she dischargeth herself to the world, against all wrongful accusations and judgments of heresy; what though it be not accepted to that blind world, unto whom the Lord said by his prophet, "Your thoughts are not my thoughts, neither are your ways my ways; but so far as the heavens are higher than the earth, so far do my ways exceed yours, and my thoughts yours?" Esa. lv. Heresy is not to dissent from the church of Rome in the doctrine of faith, as Lanfrancus in his book *de Eucharistia adversus Berengarium*[2], and Thomas Walden in his work of Sermons[3] (Serm. 21.), defineth it; but heresy is a voluntary dissenting from the scriptures[4] of God, and also a blasphemous depraving of them for the wretched Discharge. Heresy. What it is.

[2] [Verum, O infelix anima! de hæresi ad perjurium prius transisti; nunc iterum de perjurio ad hæresim remeasti: propterea traditus in reprobum sensum sanctam Romanam ecclesiam vocas ecclesiam malignantium, concilium vanitatis, sedem Sathanæ. Et hoc impio ore garristi, quod garrisse nemo legitur, non hæreticus, non schismaticus, non falsus aliquis Christianus.—Lanfranci de Corp. et Sang. Domini. c. XVI. Ed. Bened. Fol. Par. 1648, p. 242.]

[3] Walden. Sacramentalia, tot. VIII. cap. 43. fol. 137. Ed. Paris, 1535.]

[4] 'verity of the scriptures,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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belly's sake, and to maintain the pomps of this world. Thus it is defined of St Jerome, in *Commentariis Jere.*[1], St Augustine[2] and Isidorus[3] agreeing to the same. Consider, then, whether he be the thief that sitteth upon the bench, or he that standeth at the bar; the popish clergy that condemneth, or the innocent that is condemned. Athanasius, in his book *de Fuga adversus Arrianos*, calleth them the heretics which seeketh to have the christian believers murdered as did the said Arians. This godly woman, her innocence to clear, laboureth not here to an inferior member of the realm, but to the head thereof, the king's own person, whom she believeth to be the high minister of God, the father of the land, and upholder of the people, Sapi. vi., that he might faithfully and rightly judge her cause. But who can think that ever it came before him? Not I, for my part.

Who is the heretic.

The king.

ANNE ASKEWE.

The effect of my Examination and handling, since my departure from Newgate.

On Tuesday I was sent from Newgate to the sign of the Crown, where as Master Rich and the bishop of London with all their power and flattering words went about to persuade me from God; but I did not esteem their glosing pretences. Then came there to me Nicholas Sharton, and counselled me to recant, as he had done. Then I said to him, that it had been good for him never to have been born; with many other like words.

Rich.

Sharton.

JOHN BALE.

After that Christ had once overcome Satan in the desert, where he had fasted long time (Matth. iv.), we read not in the scriptures that he was much assaulted or vexed of the world, the flesh, and the fiend, which are reckoned the common enemies of man. But yet we find in the gospel, that these three ghostly enemies, the prelates, the priests, and the lawyers, or the bishops, Pharisees, and scribes, never left

Satan.

Three ghostly enemies.

[1 Nulla enim hæresis nisi propter gulam ventremque construitur.—Op. S. Hieron. Ed. Ben. Par. Tom. III. col. 543.]

[2 Hæreticus est, ut mea fert opinio, qui alicujus temporalis commodi et maxime gloriæ principatusque sui gratia, falsas ac novas opiniones vel gignit aut sequitur.—S. Aug. de Utilitate Credendi, cap. I. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1685. Tom. VIII. col. 45.]

[3 Sed et quicunque aliter scripturam sanctam intelligit, quam sensus Spiritus sancti flagitat, a quo conscripta est, licet de ecclesia non recesserit, tamen hæreticus appellari potest.—Isidori, Op. Tom. III. p. 361. Ed. Romæ. 1803.]

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him afterwards, till they had thoroughly procured his death. Mark it, I desire you, if it be any otherwise with his dear member. What other enemies tempteth here Anne Askewe, than the bishop of London, master Rich, and Dr Shaxton, besides the great Caiphas of Winchester, with his spiteful (I should say spiritual) rabble, or who else procureth her death? Ye will think, peradventure, concerning master Rich, that though he be an enemy, yet he is no spiritual enemy, because he is not anointed with the pope's grease. But then are ye much deceived; for it is the spirit of blasphemy, avarice, and malice, and not the oil, that maketh them spiritual. And whereas they are anointed in the hand with oil, he is in the heart anointed with the spirit of mammon, betraying, with Judas, at the bishop's calling on, the poor innocent souls for money, or, at the least, for an ambitious favour[4]. Winchester. Spiritual. Mammon.

O Shaxton, I speak now unto thee, and (I think) in the voice of God. What devil bewitched thee to play this most blasphemous part, as to become, of a faithful teacher, a tempting spirit? Was it not enough that thou, and such as thou art, had forsaken your Lord God, and trodden his verity most unreverently under your feet, but with such feats as this is thou must yet procure thee a more deeper or double damnation? Rightly said this true servant of God, that "it had been better for thee and thy fellows that ye never had been born." Ye were called of God to a most blessed office. If ye had been worthy that vocation, as ye are but swine, Matth. vii., ye had persevered faithful and constant to the end, Matth. x., "and so have worthily received the crown thereof," Apoc. ii. But the love of your beastly flesh hath very far in you overweighed the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Ye now shew what ye are indeed, "even wavering reeds, with every blast moved" (Lu. vii.), yea, very faint-hearted cowards and hypocrites, Apoc. iii. Ye abide not in the sheepfold, as true shepherds, but ye flee, like hirelings, Jo. x. Had ye been builded upon the hard rock, as ye were on the fickle sand (Matth. vii.), neither Romish floods, nor English winds, had overthrown you. But now look only, after your deserving, for this terrible judgment of God; "for them" (saith St Paul) "which voluntarily blaspheme the truth, after they have received the gospel in faith, and in the Holy Ghost, remaineth no expiation of sin, but the fearful judg- Shaxton. Double. Unworthy. Hypocrites. Judgment.

[4 'for ambitious favour,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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ment of hell-fire;" for a mock have they made of the Son of God. Hebr. vi. and x.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Rich. Then master Rich sent me to the Tower, where I remained till three of the clock. Then came Rich and one of the council, charging me, upon my obedience, to shew unto them if I knew man or woman of my sect. My answer was that I knew none. Then they asked me Christian ladies. of my lady of Suffolk, my lady of Sussex, my lady of Hertford, my lady Denny, and my lady Fitzwilliams. I said, that if I should pronounce any thing against them, I were[1] not able to prove it.

JOHN BALE.

Babylon. Never was such[2] turmoiling on earth as now-a days[3], for that wretched blind kingdom of the Romish pope. But trust upon it truly, ye terrible termagants of hell, "there is no practice, there is no wisdom, there is no counsel, that can against the Lord prevail." Proverb. xxi. Ye look to be Obedience. obeyed in all devilishness; but ye consider not, that where God is dishonoured by your obedience, there belongeth none A sect. to you. Actor. v. Ye have much ado here with sects, as though it were a great heresy rightly to believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, after the gospel, and not after your Romish father. But where was ever yet a more pestilent and devilish sect than is that Sodomitish sect whom ye here so earnestly maintain with tyranny and mischief? How greedily seek you the slaughter of God's true servants, ye blood-thirsty wolves, as the Holy Ghost doth call you, Ps. xxv.! If the virtuous ladies and most noble women, whose lives ye seek in your mad raging fury, as ravishing lions in the dark, (Ps. ix.), have thrown off their shoulders, for "Christ's easy and gentle burden" (Matth. xi.), the pope's uneasy and importable yoke (Luke xi.), happy are they that ever they were born; for thereby have they procured a great quiet[4] and Health. health to their souls. For "Christ's word is quick, and bringeth nothing else to the soul but life." Hebr. iv. The pope's old traditions and customs, being nothing but the wisdom of the flesh, are very poison and death. Rom. viii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

The king. Then said they unto me, that the king was informed that I could

[1 'that I were,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[2 'there such,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[3 'as is now-a-days,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[4 'quietness,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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name, if I would, a great number of my sect. Then I answered, that the king was as well deceived in that behalf, as dissembled with in other matters.

JOHN BALE.

Great Ahasuerus, king of the Persians and Medes, was informed that the servant of God, Mordecai, was a traitor, which, nevertheless, had discovered two traitors a little afore, and so saved the king's life. Hester iii. But Haman, that false counsellor which so informed the king, was in the end proved a traitor indeed (as I doubt it not but some[5] will be found after this), and was worthily hanged for it; "so falling into the snare that his self had prepared for other." Ps. vii. Albertus Pighius, Cochlæus, Eckius, and such other pestilent papists, have filled all Christendom with railing books of our king, for renouncing the Romish pope's obedience; but thereof ye inform not his grace: no, nor yet defend ye, nor yet excuse,[6] his godly act in that behalf; but ye are, as it appeareth[7], very well contented that he be ill spoken of for it. Mardocheus. Haman. Papists. Crafty.

It is not a year ago since our Winchester was at Utrecht in Holland, where as the said Pighius dwelt, and was for his papistry in great authority: I know certainly the man there was much more easy to please in that cause, than in another sleeveless matter of his own, concerning Martin Bucer. His gallants also warranted there (I know to whom) that the Romish pope, by the emperor's good help, should within few years have in England as great authority as ever he had afore. I doubt not but somewhat they knew of their master's good conveyance; but of this is not the king informed. I could write here of many other mysteries concerning the Observant Friars, and other ranging Rome-runners, what news they receive weekly out of England from the papists there, and in what hope they are put of their return thither again; for I have seen their bragging letters thereof, sent from Emerick to Friesland, and from the country of Cologne into Westphalia. Of this, and such other conveyances, the king is not yet informed, but (I trust) he shall be. Pighius. Bucer. Observants. Letters.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then commanded they me to shew how I was maintained in the

[5 'some of these,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[6 'neither excuse ye, nor yet defend ye,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[7 'as appeareth,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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To accuse. Counter, and who willed me to stick by my opinion. I said, that there was no creature that therein did strengthen me. And as for the help that I had in the Counter, it was by the means of my maid; for, as she went abroad in the streets, she made to the prentices, and they by her did send me money. But who they were, I never knew.

JOHN BALE.

Joseph. Joseph was in prison under Pharaoh, the fierce king of Egypt; yet was he favourably handled, and no man forbidden to comfort him. Gen. xxxix. When John Baptist was in strong durance under Herod, the tyrant of Galilee, his disciples did freely visit him, and were not rebuked for it. Matt. xi.

Paul. Paul being imprisoned, and in chains, at Rome, under the most furious tyrant Nero, was never blamed for sending his

Onesimus. servant Onesimus abroad, nor yet for writing by him to his friends for succour, Philem. 1. Neither yet was Philemon troubled for relieving him there by the said Onesimus; nor yet his old friend, Onesiphorus, for personally there visiting him, and supporting him with his money, like as he had done afore also at Ephesus. Now confer these stories, and such other like, with the present handling of Anne Askewe; and ye shall well perceive our English rulers and judges, in their new Christianity of renouncing the pope, to exceed all other tyrants in all cruelty, spite, and vengeance. But look to have

Prelates. it no otherwise, so long as mitred prelates are of counsel. Be ashamed, cruel beasts, be ashamed; for all Christendom wondereth on your madness above all.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Gentlewomen. Then they said that there were divers gentlewomen that gave me money. But I knew not their names. Then they said that there were divers ladies that had sent me money. I answered, that there was a man in a blue coat which delivered me ten shillings, and said

Ladies. that my lady of Hertford sent it me: and another in a violet coat did give me eight shillings, and said that my lady Denny sent it me. Whether it were true, or no, I cannot tell; for I am not sure who sent it me, but as the men did say.

JOHN BALE.

Christ. In the time of Christ's preaching, what though the holy clergy were not pleased therewith, but judged it (as they do still to this day) most horrible heresy? yet certain noble

Noble women. women, as Mary Magdalene, Johanna the wife of Chusa, Herod's high steward, Susanna, and many other, followed

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him from Galilee, and ministered unto him of their substance concerning his bodily needs. Luke viii. These, with many other more, after he was by the said clergy done to most cruel death for the verity preaching, both prepared ointments and spices to anoint his body (Lu. xxiv.), and also proclaimed abroad his glorious resurrection to his apostles and other, (Jo. xx.) contrary to the bishops' inhibition (Actor. iv.): yet read we not that any man or woman was racked for the accusement of them. A woman among the Macedonians, dwelling in the city of Thyatira, and called Lydia by name, a purple-seller, very rich in merchandise, received Paul, Silas, and Timothy, with other suspected brethren, into her house, and abundantly relieved them there (Actor. xvi.); yet was she not troubled for it. In like manner at Thessalonica a great number of the Greeks, and many noble women among them, believed Paul's forbidden doctrine, and resorted boldly both to him and to Silas (Actor. xvii); yet were they not cruelly handled for it.

Lydia.

Noble women.

Be ashamed then, ye tyrants of England, that your horrible tyrannies should exceed all other, Jews or Gentiles, Turks or idolaters. More noble were these women here rehearsed for thus relieving Christ and his members, than for any other act, either yet degree of nobility; for whereas all other have perished, these shall never perish, but be conserved in the most noble and worthy scriptures of God, the tyrannous bishops and priests[1] there condemned. A thorough christian charity is not lightly terrified with the tempests of worldly afflictions, no more than true faith is changed in men that be christianly constant. Such cannot refuse [2]but consider that it is both glorious to be afflicted for Christ (1 Peter iii.), and also most meritorious to relieve them here in their afflictions (Matth. xxv.) Unto that christian office hath Christ promised the life everlasting at the latter day, whereas mass-hearing is like to remain without reward, except it be in hell, for idolatry and blasphemy. Not unto them that in prison visiteth murderers and thieves (if ye mark well the text) is this reward promised, (for they are not there allowed for Christ's dear members,) but unto them that relieve the afflicted for his verity's sake.

Tyrants.

Prelates.

Faith.

Mass-hearing.

[1 'with their tyrannous maintainers,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[2 'chose but consider,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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Anne Askewe.

Then they said, there were of the council that did maintain me.
The rack. And I said, no. Then they did put me on the rack, because I confessed no ladies or gentlewomen to be of my opinion; and thereon they kept me a long time: and because I lay still, and did not cry, my lord chancellor and master Rich took pains to rack me in their own hands, till I was nigh dead.

John Bale.

Nicodemus. Nicodemus, one of the high council, was sore rebuked, among the seniors of the Jews, for defending Christ's innocence when they went about to slay him (Jo. vii.): and therefore it is no new thing that Christ's doctrine hath supportation among the councils of this world. All men be not of one corrupted appetite, nor yet of one ungracious diet. Christ promised his disciples, that they in one household should find
Friends. both his enemies and friends. "I am come," saith he, "to set man at variance against his father, and daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law. He that loveth his father or mother, his son or daughter, his prince or governor, above me, he is not meet for me."
High treason. Matth. x. I fear me this will be judged high treason. But no matter: so long as it is Christ's word, he shall be also under the same judgment of treason. Let no man care to be condemned with him; for in the end he[1] shall be able to rectify all wrongs.

Mark here an example most wonderful, and see how madly
Frenzy. in their raging furies men forget themselves and lose their right wits now-a-days. A king's high counsellor, a judge over life and death, yea, a lord chancellor of a most noble realm, is now become a most vile slave for antichrist, and a
A tormentor. most cruel tormentor. Without all discretion, honesty, or manhood, he casteth off his gown, and taketh here upon him the most vile office of an hangman, and pulleth at the rack
Wrisley and Rich. most villainously. O Wrisley[2] and Rich, two false Christians and blasphemous apostates from God! What chaplain of the pope hath enchanted you, or what devil of hell bewitched you, to execute upon a poor condemned woman so prodigious
Mammon. a kind of tyranny? Even the very mammon of iniquity, and that insatiable hunger of avarice which compelled Judas to

[1 'for he in the end,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[2 This name is now written Wriothesley.]

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betray unto death his most loving Master. Jo. xii. The winnings were not small that ye reckoned upon, when ye took on ye that cruel enterprise, and would have had so many great men and women accused. But what else have ye won in the end than perpetual shame and confusion? God hath suffered you so to discover your own mischiefs, that ye shall no more be forgotten of the world than are Adonisedech, Saul, Jeroboam, Manasses, Holofernes, Haman, Tryphon, Herod, Nero, Trajanus, and such other horrible tyrants. Wretches. Tyrants.

And as concerning the innocent woman, whom you so cruelly tormented, where could be seen a more clear and open experiment of Christ's dear member, than in her mighty sufferings? Like a lamb she lay still without noise of crying, and suffered your utmost violence, till the sinews of her arms were broken, and the strings of her eyes perished in her head. Right far doth it pass the strength of a young, tender, weak, and sick woman (as she was at that time, to your more confusion) to abide so violent handling, yea, or yet of the strongest man that liveth. Think not, therefore, but that Christ hath suffered in her, and so mightily shewed his power, that in her weakness he hath laughed your mad enterprises to scorn. Ps. ii. Where was the fear of God, ye tyrants? Where was your Christian profession, ye hell-hounds? Where was your oath and promise to do true justice, ye abominable perjurers, when ye went about these cursed feats? More fit are ye for swine-keeping than to be of a prince's council, or yet to govern a christian commonwealth. If Christ have said unto them which do but offend his little ones that believe in him, that it were better they had a millstone tied about their necks, and were so thrown into the bottom of the sea (Lu. xvii.), what will he say to them who[3] so villainously pull at the rack in their mischievous malice? These are but warnings; take heed if ye list, for a full sorrowful plague will follow hereafter. A lamb. Tyrants. Christ. Perjurers. A millstone.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then the lieutenant caused me to be loosed from the rack. Incontinently I swooned, and then they recovered me again. After that I sat two long hours reasoning with my lord chancellor, upon the bare floor, where as he with many flattering words persuaded me to leave Unloosed.

[3 'that,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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Persevera. my opinion. But my Lord God (I thank his everlasting goodness) gave me grace to persevere, and will do (I hope) to the very end.

JOHN BALE.

Practice. Evermore have the old moody tyrants used this practice of devilishness. As they have perceived themselves not to prevail by extreme handlings, they have sought to prove masteries by the contrary. With gay glosing words, and fair flattering promises, they have craftily compassed the servants of God, to cause them consent to their wickedness. And in Temptation. this tempting occupation are Wrisley and Rich very cunning. Notwithstanding, they shall never find the chosen of God all one with the forsaken reprobates. The elect vessels hold the eternal God for their most special treasure, and have him in such entire love, that they had much liefer to lose themselves than him. The wicked desperates have the voluptuous pleasures of this vain world so dear, that Two sorts. they had liefer to forsake God, and all his works, than to be sequestered from them. This godly young woman refer- Praise. reth praise unto her Lord God, that he hath not left her in this painful conflict for his verity's sake, but persevered strong with her, being in hope that he would so still continue with her to the very end, as without fail he did.

Wrisley. Many men wonder[1], now-a-days, that Wrisley, which was in my lord Cromwell's time so earnest a doer against the pope, is now become again for his pedlary wares so mighty a captain. But they remember not the common adage, that honour changeth manners, and lucre judgments. These Innkeepers. great innkeepers (they say) had liefer to have one good horseman to host, than six men on foot; specially if they wear velvet hoods or fine rochettes. What else followeth Christ but beggary and sorrows, which are very hateful to Profit. the world? Where fatness is caught of every man's labour, there is yet somewhat to be looked for. If his christian zeal be such, that he will have no she heretics go[2] unpunished, let him do, first of all, as we read of divers rightful governors among the heathen: let him search his own My lady. house well. Peradventure he may find about my lady his wife a relic of no little virtue, a practice of Pythagoras,

[1 'sore wonder,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[2 'go,' not in Mr Offor's copy.]

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or an old midwife's blessing, which she carrieth closely on her for preservation of her honour. Her opinion is (folks say), that as long as she hath that upon her, her worldly worship can never decay. I pray God this provision in short space deceiveth her not, as it hath done Pope Silvester the Second, and as it did of late years Thomas Wolsey, our late cardinal. This heresy goeth neither to the rack nor to the fire, to Newgate nor yet Smithfield, as continually doth the poor gospel.

Honour.

Cardinal.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then was I brought to an house, and laid in a bed, with as weary and painful bones as ever had patient Job, I thank my Lord God thereof. Then my lord chancellor sent me word, if I would leave my opinion, I should want nothing: if I would not, I should forth to Newgate, and so be burnt. I sent him again word, that I would rather die than break[3] my faith. Thus the Lord open the eyes of their blind hearts, that the truth may take place! Farewell, my dear friend, and pray, pray, pray.

A tyrant.

Sweet woman.

JOHN BALE.

Behold in this last parcel most evident signs of a christian martyr, and faithful witness of God, besides that went afore. She allegeth not, in all this long process, lying legends, popish fables, nor yet old wives' parables, but the most lively authorities the examples of the sacred Bible. She putteth herself here in remembrance, not of desperate Cain, nor yet of sorrowful Judas, but of most patient Job, for example of godly sufferance. For anguish and pain of her broken joints, and bruised arms and eyes, she curseth not the time that ever she was born, as the manner of the unfaithful is; but she highly magnifieth and praiseth God for it. Neither was she perverted with flattering promises, nor yet overcome with terrible threatenings of death. Neither doubted she the stink of Newgate, nor yet the burning fire in Smithfield; but coveted rather death of her body for the sincere doctrine of Christ, than life of the same under the idolatrous doctrine of the Romish pope. She desired God to take mercy of her enemies, and exhorted all christian people instantly to pray for them. If these be not the fruits of a true believer, what other fruits[4] can we ask?

A martyr.

God's creature.

Christ's servant.

A very saint.

[3 'than to break,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[4 'else,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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Anne Askowe's Answer unto John Lassel's Letter.

Death. O friend, most dearly beloved in God, I marvel not a little what should move you to judge in me so slender a faith, as to fear death, which is the end of all misery. In the Lord I desire of you not to believe of me such wickedness; for I doubt it not but God will perform his work in me, like as he hath begun.

JOHN BALE.

Chronicles. I would but know of them which are common readers of chronicles and saints' lives, where they ever read of a more fervent and lively faith than was in this godly young woman? As light a matter esteemed she death as did Eleazarus, that ancient senior, or yet the seven Maccabees with Death. their most worthy mother (2 Maccab. vi. and vii.); for she said it was[1] but the end of all sorrows. She reckoned not, with the covetous man, the remembrance thereof bitter, (Ecclus. xiv.), but, with the righteous, she thought it a most ready No fear. and swift passage unto life. (Jo. v.) The fear of death judged she great wickedness in a christian believer, and was in full hope that God would not suffer her to be troubled therewith. For why? death loseth us no life, but bringeth it in unto us, like as the hard winter bringeth in the most pleasant summer. Who can think that[2] when the sun goeth Harvest. down it utterly so perisheth? Death unto the righteous believer is as a profitable harvest, which, after sweat and labour, bringeth in most delectable fruits. None otherwise thought it Anne Askewe than a very entrance of life, when she had it thus in desire, and faithfully trusted, with Paul, that God would finish in her that he then began, to his own glory. Philip. i.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Racked. I understand the council is not a little displeased that it should be reported abroad, that I was racked in the Tower. They say now, that they did there was but to fear me: whereby I perceive they are ashamed of their own uncomely doings, and fear much lest the king's majesty should have information thereof: wherefore they would no No noise. man to noise it. Well, their cruelty God forgive them. Your heart in Christ Jesu. Farewell, and pray.

JOHN BALE.

Hypocrites and tyrants would never be gladly known

[1 'that it was,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[2 'that,' not in Mr Offor's copy.]

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abroad for that they are indeed; but for that they are not, they look always to be gloriously noised. Wrisley and Rich would yet be judged of the world two sober wise men and very sage counsellors. But this tyrannous example of theirs maketh a most manifest shew of the contrary: yea, and the God of heaven will have it so known to the universal world, to their ignominy and shame. So is he wont to reward all cruel apostates, as he rewarded Julianus, for their wilful contempt of his verity. The martyr of Christ for her patient sufferance shall leave here behind her a glorious report; whereas these forsworn enemies and pursuers of his word have purchased themselves a perpetual infamy by their cruelty and mischief. In excuse of their madness, they say they did it only to fear her. Is it not now (think you) a proper fraying play, when our arms and eyes are compelled to leave their natural holds? Ye meant no light dalliance, when ye would have had so many great women accused, and took the hangman's office upon your own precious persons. O tormentors and tyrants abominable! ye fear lest your temporal and mortal king should know your mad frenzies; but of the eternal King, which will rightly punish you for it with the devil and his angels (unless ye sore repent it), ye have no fear at all. It is so honest a part ye have played, that ye will not have it noised. But I promise you so to divulge this unseemly fact of yours in the Latin, that all Christendom over it shall be known what ye are.

Wrisley and Rich. Julianus. An excuse. Tyrants. No noise.

ANNE ASKEWE.

I have read the process which is reported, of them that know not the truth, to be my recantation. But as sure as the Lord liveth, I never meant thing less than to recant. Notwithstanding this, I confess that in my first troubles I was examined of the bishop of London about the sacrament. Yet had they no grant of my mouth but this, that I believed therein as the word of God did bind me to believe. More had they never of me.

Of Caiphas.

JOHN BALE.

In the end of her first examination is this matter treated of more at large. Here do she repeat it again only to be known for Christ's stedfast member, and not antichrist's. To the voice of him she faithfully obeyed, but the voice of that Romish monster and other strangers she regarded not. Joh. x. As she perceived, when she was before the bishop

Christ's martyr. Bonner.

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of London, that all passed still after their old tyranny, and nothing after the rules of scripture, she suspected their doctrine more than afore, and thought them none other than Christ warned his disciples to beware of. Luke xii. Where-
Wolves. upon she thoroughly covenanted with herself never to deny his verity afore men at their calling on, lest he should again deny her before his eternal Father. Matt. x. For if the
Salvation. confessing thereof bringeth salvation, as St Paul saith it doth (Rom. x.), the denying thereof, on the other side, must needs bring in damnation.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then he made a copy, which is now in print, and required me to set thereunto my hand; but I refused it. Then my two sureties did will me in no wise to stick thereat, for it was no great matter, they
Handwriting. said. Then, with much ado, at the last I wrote thus: "I, Anne Askewe, do believe this, if God's word do agree to the same, and the true catholic church."

JOHN BALE.

Commonly is it spoken of popish priests, that in doing
God's stead. their false feats they sit in God's stead. This point followed the bluddering bishop of London here, which for their old fantasied superstition laboured in this woman to displace the
Builded. sincere verity of the Lord. But so surely was she builded upon the hard rock, that neither for enmity nor friendship would she once remove her foot. Matt. vii. Neither anguish, trouble, torment, nor fire, could separate her from that love
A lamb. of her Lord God. Rom. viii. Though she were for his sake rebuked and vexed, and also appointed as a sheep to be slain, Psalm xliii. [xliv.], yet did she strongly through him overcome, and have (I doubt it not) obtained the crown of life. Apoc. ii.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Then the bishop, being in great displeasure with me, because I
Prison. made doubts in my writing, commanded me to prison; where I was awhile: but afterwards, by the means of friends, I came out again. Here is the truth of that matter. And as concerning the thing that
Eucharist. ye covet most to know, resort to the sixth of John, and be ruled always thereby. Thus fare ye well, quoth Anne Askewe.

JOHN BALE.

In all the scriptures we read not that either Christ, or
Prison. yet his apostles, commanded any man or woman to prison for

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their faith, as this tyrant bishop did here. But indeed we find that Christ's holy apostles were[1] commanded to prison of the same spitefully spiritual generation, Acts iv. v. xii. xvi. Christ willed his true believers to look for none other at their spiritual hands than imprisonments and death. Matt. x. Joh. xvi. And therefore said Peter unto him, "I am ready to go with thee, Lord, both into prison and to death." Luke xxii. Paul greatly complaineth of his imprisonments and scourgings by them. 2 Cor. xi. Divers in the congregation of Smyrna were imprisoned by that fierce synagogue of Satan. Apoc. ii. Esay, prophesying the conditions of the spiritual antichrist, saith among other, that he should hold men captive in prison. Esay xiv. Ezekiel reporteth that he should churlishly check, and in cruelty rule. Ezek. xxxiv. Zachary sheweth that he should eat up the flesh of the fattest. Zach. xi. Daniel declareth that he should persecute with sword and fire; and St John verifieth that he should be all drunk with the blood of the witnesses of Jesu. Apoc. xvii. And therefore in these feats bishops do but their kinds.

Smyrna. Antichrist. With fire.

Thus endeth the Latter Examination.

The Confession of her Faith which Anne Askewe made in Newgate, afore she suffered.

I, Anne Askewe, of good memory, although my merciful Father hath given me the bread of adversity and the water of trouble, yet not so much as my sins have deserved, confess myself here a sinner before the throne of his heavenly majesty, desiring his eternal mercy. And forsomuch as I am by the law unrighteously condemned for an evil-doer concerning opinions, I take the same most merciful God of mine, which hath made both heaven and earth, to record, that I hold no opinions contrary to his holy word.

Trouble. Condemned.

JOHN BALE.

What man of sober discretion can judge this woman ill, indifferently but marking this her last confession? Not a few of most evident arguments are therein to prove her the true servant of God. Her wits were not once distracted, for all her most tyrannous handlings. She was still of a perfect memory, accounting her imprisonments, revilings, rackings, and other torments, but the bread of adversity and

Prove her.

[1 'were oft-times,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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the water of trouble, as David did afore her. Psalm lxxix.

Fruits of faith. As the loving child of God, she received them without grudge, and thought them deserved on her party. She took them as[1] his hand of mercy, and gave most high thanks for

Obedient to God. them. She meekly confessed herself in his sight a sinner, but not an heinous heretic, as she was falsely judged of the world. In that matter she took him most strongly to witness, that though in faith she were not agreeable to the world's wild opinion, yet was she not therein contrary to his heavenly truth. She had afore that proved their spirits, conferring both their judgments (1 Joh. iv.), and perceived them far unlike. Esay lv.

ANNE ASKEWE.

No heretic. And I trust in my merciful Lord, which is the giver of all grace, that he will graciously assist me against all evil opinions, which are contrary to his blessed verity. For I take him to witness, that I have, do, and will do unto my life's end, utterly abhor them to the utmost of my power. But this is the heresy which they report me to hold,

Bread. that after the priest hath spoken the words of consecration there remaineth bread still.

JOHN BALE.

Consider without froward, partial, or wilful affection, the points herein contained, and then judge of what heart or

Prove yet. conscience they have risen. The hope of this woman was only in God. Him she confessed to be of all grace the giver. Alone in his mercy she trusted. She instantly desired him to defend her from all errors. She abhorred all heresies. She detested men's superstitious inventions, and most

Fruits of faith. firmly cleaved to his eternal word. If these, with those that went afore, be not true figures[2] of Christianity, or of a perfect member of God's election, what fruits will we demand? St Paul saith, "No man can confess that Jesus is the Lord" (as she hath done here) "but in the holy Ghost." 1 Cor. xii. David also specifieth that the Lord never forsaketh them that[3] call upon his name, and put their trust in him. Ps. ix. And as

Consecration. touching the priest's consecration, which is such a charm of enchantment which may not be done but by an oiled officer of the pope's generation, she did godly to reject it in that

[1 'for,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[2 'be not fruits of true Christianity,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[3 'them which,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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clouting kind; for in all the bible is not[4], that any man can make of a dry wafer-cake a new saviour, a new redeemer, a new Christ, or a new God; no, though he should utter all the words and scriptures therein. Wafer.

ANNE ASKEWE.

But they both say, and also teach it for a necessary article of faith, that after those words be once spoken, there remaineth no bread; but even the selfsame body that hung upon the cross upon Good-Friday, both flesh, blood and bone. To this belief of theirs say I nay. For then were our common creed false, which saith "that he sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and from thence shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Lo, this is the heresy that I hold, and for it must suffer the death. Bread. Shall come.

JOHN BALE.

Of antichrist read we in the scriptures, that he and his apostles should do false miracles. Matth. xxiv. 2 Thes. ii. and Apoc. xiii. We find also in the selfsame places, that he should exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped as God. Who ever heard of so great a wonder, that a dry cake should[5] become a god to be worshipped? A miracle were this above all the miracles that ever were wrought, and a work above all the works that ever were done, if it were true, as it is most false. Though our eternal God created heaven and earth in the first beginning, and formed all other creatures (Gen. i.), yet read we not of him that he made of his creatures any new god to be worshipped. In that point are our oiled antichrists afore him. And whereas he rested wholly in the seventh day in[6] that office of creation (Gen. ii.), and never took it upon him since that time, as testifieth John Chrysostom, Augustine, Jerome, Bedas, Alcuinus, and all their other doctors; yet will they take upon them to create every day afresh, and when their old god stinketh in the box, remove him out of the way, and put a new in his room. Yea, they can make of bread (which is man's corruptible creature, and ordained only to be eat) such a god as shall stand checkmate[7] with the great God of heaven, and, perad- Antichrist. Miracle. No God. Doctors. Mould in the box.

[4 'is it not,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[5 'might,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[6 'from that office,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[7 'check-mate,' or an equality: see Halliwell's Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words.]

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venture, deface him also. O blasphemous wretches and God-makers. thieves! Be once ashamed of your abominable blindness, and submit yourselves to a just reformation.

ANNE ASKEWE.

The supper. But as touching the holy and blessed supper of the Lord, I believe it to be a most necessary remembrance of his glorious sufferings and death. Moreover, I believe as much therein as my eternal and only Redeemer, Jesus Christ, would I should believe. Finally, I believe all Scriptures. those scriptures to be true whom he hath confirmed with his precious blood.

JOHN BALE.

No goodly institution, nor ordinance of Christ, do this faithful woman contemn; but reverently submitteth herself Without mass. thereunto, in the kind that he did leave them. She protesteth here to believe so much as can be shewn by the scriptures of both testaments. And what is more to be required of a christian believer? Only did she in conscience refuse and abhor the idle observations, the pagan's superstitions, the sor- Idolatry. cerer's enchantments, and the most perilous idolatries, which the Romish pope and his clergy have added to their mass for covetousness. In this (I suppose) she remembered the words of St Paul, 1 Cor. ii., "My talking," said he, "and my preaching, was not with persuasible or enticing words of man's Man's wisdom. corrupt wisdom, but in utterance of the spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." "For that" (saith Christ) "which seemeth high and holy afore men, is filthy abomination before God." Luke xvi.

ANNE ASKEWE.

Yea, and, as St Paul saith, these scriptures are enough[1] for our learning and salvation, that Christ hath left here with us, so that I believe we need no unwritten verities to rule his church with. There- Hope. fore look what he hath laid unto me with his own mouth, in his holy gospel, that have I, 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," Psalm cxviii. [cxix.]

JOHN BALE.

Still are these fruits of inestimable wholesomeness, declaring

[1 'are sufficient for our learning,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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this woman a most perfect and innocent member of Jesus Christ. In this whole process (mark it hardily) she runneth not for succour to the muddy waters or broken pits of the Philistines (Jer. ii.), which are the corrupt doctrines and traditions of men; but she seeketh to the very well-spring of health and fountain of salvation, John iv. All unwritten verities left she to those wavering wanderers which eternally[2] perisheth with them; and in the verities written appointed she to journey, among the true christian believers, towards the land everlasting. In all her affairs most firmly she cleaveth to the scriptures of God, which giveth both spirit and life, John vi. "As the hart in the forest desireth the pleasant water-brooks, so longed her soul and was desirous of the manifest glory of the eternal God," Ps. xli. [xlii.] If her portion be not in the land of the living, Ps. cxli. [cxlii.] yea, if she be not allowed a citizen with the saints, Eph. ii., and her name registered in the book of life, Apoc. xx., it will be hard with many. But certain and sure I am, that with Mary, Martha's sister, such a sure part hath she chosen as will not be taken away from her. Lu. x.

Prove still.

Fruits of faith.

Her God.

A sure part.

ANNE ASKEWE.

There be some that do say that I deny the eucharist, or thanksgiving[3]: but those people do untruly report of me; for I both say and believe it, that if it were ordered like as Christ instituted it and left it, a most singular comfort were it[4] unto us all. But as concerning your mass, as it is now used in our days, I do say and believe it to be the most abominable idol that is in the world: for my God will not be eaten with teeth, neither yet dieth he again. And upon these words, that I have now spoken, will I suffer death.

Eucharist.

Mass, an idol.

JOHN BALE.

All the works of God, and ordinances of Christ, she reverently admitted, as grounded matters of christian belief; but the Romish pope's creatures would she in no case allow to stand up checkmate with them. The mass (which is, in all points, of all that filthy antichrist's creation) took she for the most execrable idol upon earth. And rightly; for none

Obedience.

The mass.

[2 'which will eternally,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[3 'or sacrament of thanksgiving,' Mr Offor's copy.]
[4 'it were,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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other is the child to be reckoned than was his father afore him, be he man or beast. The whelp of a dog is none other than a dog, when he cometh once to his age. "Idols," saith David, "are like them that make them: so they also which put their trust in them," Psalm cxiii. [cxv.] An idol doth Zachary call that proud slaughterous shepherd, Zachary xi. Who then can deny his prodigious ordinances to be the same? What other is the work of an idolatrous worker than an execrable idol? And look what properties any idol hath had, or feats hath wrought yet since the world's beginning, the pope's prodigious mass hath had and wrought the same, with many conveyances more.

Idolaters.

An idol.

Popes.

Monks.

Universities.

The mass.

Profitable.

Necessary.

Of popes hath it received disguisings, instruments, blessings, turnings, and legerdemains, with many strange observances borrowed of the Jews' and pagans' old sacrifices, besides pardons for deliverance of souls. Of monks have it gotten a purgatory, after many strange apparitions, with a long ladder, from thence to scale heaven with. It hath attained also to be a remedy for all diseases, both in man and beast, with innumerable superstitions else. Of the universities[1] have it caught all the subtilties and crafty learnings of the profane philosophers, to be defended by; as is to be seen in the works of their sententioners, like as I have shewed in the Mystery of Iniquity, folio 33. It serveth all witches in their witchery, all sorcerers, charmers, enchanters, dreamers, soothsayers, necromancers, conjurers, cross-diggers, devil-raisers, miracle-doers, dog-leeches, and bawds; for without a mass they cannot well work their feats. The lawyers likewise, which seek in Westminister Hall to get most money by falsehood, can neither be well without it. It upholdeth vainglory, pride, ambition, avarice, gluttony, sloth, idleness, hypocrisy, heresy, tyranny, and all other devilishness besides. It maintaineth the spiritual soldiers of antichrist in all superfluous living and wanton lecherous lusts, with the chaste occupyings of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Miracles of the mass.

What other ghostly fruits it hath, I shall more largly shew in my book, called the "Miracles of the Mass against Peryn." Perchance, some devout mass-hearers will lay for the holiness thereof, that it containeth both epistle and gospel. Truly that epistle and that gospel may well have a name of

[1 'Of universities and their doctors,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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life, as St John saith of the church of Sardis, Apoc. iii.; yet is it in that office of massing none other than the dead or mortifying letter, 2 Cor. iii.: for the spirit that should quicken is clearly taken from it; so that nothing else remaineth thereof to the common people but a dead noise and an idle sound, as it is now in the Romish language. Who can say but it was the scripture that Satan alleged unto Christ upon the pinnacle of the temple? Matth. iv.: yet remaineth it there still, after his ungracious handling thereof, as a false, crafty suggestion, a devilish error, or a shield of his wickedness; and will do evermore. Where are the names of God, of his angels, and of his saints, more rife than among witches, charmers, enchanters, and sorcerers? Yet can ye not say that they are among them to any man's salvation, as they would be in right handling. What it is that serveth an idol, let godly-wise men conjecture, which are not ignorant how angel became a devil.

Dead letter. Satan. An idol.

ANNE ASKEWE.

O Lord, I have more enemies now than there be hairs on my head. Yet, Lord, let them never 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 which are against thee; for in thee is my whole delight.

Enemies. Hate them.

JOHN BALE.

O blessed woman and undoubted citizen of heaven! Truth it is that thou hast had many adversaries, yea, and a far greater number of them than thou hast here reckoned. And the more thou hast had, the greater is now thy victory in Christ. The great body of the beast thou hast had to enemy, which comprehendeth the malignant muster of Satan on the one side, and the earthly worshippers of his blasphemous beastliness on the other side, Dan. xi.; Apoc. xiii., "whose number is as the sand of the sea, infinite," Apoc. xx. But consider again what friendship thou hast gotten for it, on the other part. Thou hast now to friend, for thy faithful perseverance against those idol-mongers, the sempiternal Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, John xiv., with the glorious multitude of angels, the patriarchs[2], apostles, and martyrs, with all the elect number, from righteous Abel

Adversaries. Haters. Friends.

[2 'prophets,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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Favourers. hitherto. Thou hast also here upon earth, and evermore shall have, the favour of all them which have not bowed to that filthy beast, "whose names are registered in the book of life," Apoc. xxi. And as for thy ungodly and cruel enemies, Northfolk. as dust in the wind the Lord will scatter them from the face of the earth, be they never so stout and many. Ps. i.

ANNE ASKEWE.

And, Lord, I heartily desire of thee that thou wilt of thy most merciful goodness forgive them that violence which they do and have Prayer. done to me. Open also thou their blind hearts, that they may hereafter do that thing in thy sight which is only acceptable before thee, and to set forth thy verity aright, without all vain fantasies of sinful men. So be it. O Lord, so be it. By me, Anne Askewe.

JOHN BALE.

Sweet woman. Afore here she confessed with David, that on God she had cast her care, and that in him was all her heart's delight, Ps. lx. She desired him also never to fail her in this hard conflict, but strongly to assist her, and in no case to permit her to be overcome by the flattering world, neither yet to God's true servant. give place to his enemies. And I doubt it not but these are most evident signs that she was his faithful servant. I know certainly that "all the power of hell cannot prevail against so earnest a faith," Matth. xvi. For he hath so spoken it Christ's members. there which cannot lie. Lu. xxii.; 1 Pet. i. In this latter part she sheweth the nature of Christ's lively member, and of a perfect Christian martyr in two points. First, she desireth God to forgive her enemies, as Christ desired him in the time of his passion, Lu. xxiii., and as holy Stephen also did for the time of his death, Acto. vii.: secondly, she desireth their hearts to be opened, that they may truly believe Charity. and be saved, Acto. xvi. This supernatural effect of charity had she only of the Spirit of Christ, which "willeth not the death of a froward sinner, but rather that he be from his A saint. wickedness turned, and so live." Ezek. xxxiii. Thus is she a saint canonised in Christ's blood, though she never have other canonisation of pope, priest, nor bishop.

"The destroyer shall be destroyed without hands." Dan. viii.

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THE BALLAD WHICH ANNE ASKEWE MADE AND SANG WHEN SHE WAS IN NEWGATE.

Like as the armed knight,
  Appointed to the field,
With this world will I fight,
  And Christ[1] shall be my shield.

Faith is that weapon strong,
  Which will not fail at need:
My foes, therefore, among
  Therewith will I proceed.

As it is had in strength
  And force of Christe's way,
It will prevail at length,
  Though all the devils say nay.

Faith in the fathers old
  Obtained righteousness;
Which make me very bold
  To fear no world's distress.

I now rejoice in heart,
  And hope bid me do so;
For Christ will take my part,
  And ease me of my woe.

Thou say'st, Lord, whoso knock,
  To them wilt thou attend:
Undo therefore the lock,
  And thy strong power send.

More enemies now I have
  Than hairs upon my head:
Let them not me deprave,
  But fight thou in my stead.

[1 'Faith,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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On thee my care I cast,
For all their cruel spite:
I set not by their haste;
For thou art my delight.

I am not she that list
My anchor to let fall
For every drizzling mist,
My ship substantial.

Not oft use I to write,
In prose, nor yet in rhyme;
Yet will I shew one sight
That I saw in my time.

I saw a royal throne,
Where justice should have sit,
But in her stead was one
Of moody, cruel wit.

Aborbed was righteousness,
As of the raging flood:
Satan, in his excess,
Sucked up the guiltless blood.

Then thought I, Jesus Lord,
When thou shall judge us all,
Hard is it to record
On these men what will fall.

Yet, Lord, I thee desire,
For that they do to me,
Let them not taste the hire
Of their iniquity.

FINIS.

God save the King.

"God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound things which are mighty; yea, and things of no reputation, that no flesh should presume in his sight[1]." 1 Cor. i.

[1 'yea, and things of no reputation, for to bring to nought things of reputation, that no flesh should presume in his sight.' 1 Cor. i. Mr Offor's copy.]

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THE CONCLUSION.

THUS hast thou, diligent reader, the end of these two examinations and answers of the most christian martyr, Anne Askewe, with other additions besides. Mark in them the horrible mad fury of antichrist and the devil, how they work in this age by their tyrannous members, to bring the last vengeance swiftly upon them. Aforetime hath not been seen such frantic outrage as is now; the judges, without all sober discretion, running to the rack, tugging, hauling, and pulling thereat, like tormentors in a play. Compare me here Pilate with Wrisley, the high chancellor of England, with Rich, and with other which will be counted no small moats; and see how much the pagan judge excelleth in virtue and wisdom the false christened judge, yea, rather, prodigious tyrant. When Pilate had inquired what accusation the Jewish clergy had against Christ, he perceived they did all of malice, and refused to meddle therein, John xviii. In Wrisley and Rich is no such equity; but they rather seek occasion to accomplish the full malice of antichrist.

Antichrist

Compassion.

Pilate.

Wrisley.

Pilate shewed the accused all favour possible: he examined him privately, he gave him friendly words, he bade him not fear to speak, he heard him with gentleness, he counselled with him, that he might the more freely suppress their mad fury, and he promised they should do him no wrong, in case he should utter his full mind. John xviii. Far contrary to this were Wrisley and Rich, which, not all ignorant of the bishops' beastly errors, maliciously, without fear of God, and shame of the world, executed upon this godly woman most terrible tyranny. Pilate spake for the innocent, excused him, defended him, laid forth the law, pleaded for him sharply, required them to shew mercy, alleged for him their custom, declared him an innocent, and sought by all means to deliver him. Matt. xxvii. These perjured magistrates, Wrisley and Rich, not only examined this innocent woman with rigour, but also hated her, scorned her, reviled her, con-

Pilate.

Wrisley.

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demned her for an heretic, and, with unspeakable torments, sought to enforce her to bring by accusation other noble men and women to death.

Pilate. Moreover, Pilate would shed no innocent blood, but laboured to mitigate the bishops' fury, and instanted[1] them, as they were religious, to shew godly favour, concluding that he could by no law of justice judge him worthy to die.

Wrisley. Mark xv. These vengeable tyrants, Wrisley and Rich, insatiably thirsted, not only the innocent blood of this faithful servant of God, but also the blood of the noble duchess of Suffolk, the blood of the worthy countess of Hertford, and the virtuous countess of Sussex, the blood of the faithful

Ladies. lady Denny, of the good lady Fitzwilliams, and other godly women more, such widows and wives as Paul, Peter, and John commendeth in their epistles, besides the blood of certain noble men of the king's high council; and all at the

Pilate. spiteful calling on of the bishops. Slack ear gave Pilate to the priests; he regarded not their displeasure, he detected their protervous[2] madness, by delays he deferred the sentence, and finally washed his hands, as one that was clear

Wrisley and Rich. from their tyranny. Luke xxiii. Swift ear gave Wrisley and Rich, with their wicked affinity, to the puffed up porklings of the pope, Gardiner, Bonner, and such other. They followed their cruel counsel, they imprisoned her, judged her, condemned her, and racked her, at the last, with their own polluted, bloody tormentors' hands, till the veins and sinews burst.

If ye mark the scriptures well, ye shall easily perceive

Pilate. that Pilate was not in fault of Christ's buffetings, beatings, scornings, face-spittings, crowning with thorns, and such other

Priests. extreme handlings; but the malicious bishops and priests, which waged Judas to betray him, hired false witnesses to accuse him, monied the multitude to defame him, feigned false matter against him, compelled the law and terrified the judge to have full[3] mischief accomplished, as our bishops

Pilate. have done in this cruel act, and such other. When the priests would have blemished his name by the ignominious

[1 'to instant, to importune,' Halliwell's Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words.]

[2 forward, presuming.]

[3 'have their full,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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death which he suffered among thieves on the cross, Pilate proclaimed it glorious unto all the world, writing his title in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin,—"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," and would not, at their instant calling on, change it. John xix. Wrisley and Rich, with their ungracious affinity, Wrisley. have in every point followed here the execrable affects of the priests. Favourably Pilate licensed Joseph of Arimathea to take down Christ's body, and to bury it. Matt. xxvii. Wrisley commanded this martyr of God, with her faithful companions, to be burnt to ashes. Pilate was ignorant of Pilate. God's laws, and a pagan; Wrisley and Rich knew[4] both the Wrisley. law and the gospel, and are Christians: the more is it to their damnation to execute such Turkish tyranny.

Now to conclude with Anne Askewe, as the argument of this book requireth. In the year of our Lord 1546, and in the month of July, at the prodigious procurement of antichrist's furious remnant, Gardiner, and Bonner, and such like, she suffered most cruel death in Smithfield, with her three faithful companions, John Lassels, a gentleman which Martyrs. had been her instructor; John Adlam, a tailor; and a priest, so constant in the verity against the said antichrist's superstitions as they, whose name at this time I had not. Credibly am I informed by divers Dutch merchants which were there present, that in the time of their sufferings the sky, abhor- A sign. ring so wicked an act, suddenly altered colour, and the clouds from above gave a thunder-clap, not all unlike to that is written Psalm lxxvi. The elements both declared therein the [Psal. lxxvii. high displeasure of God for so tyrannous a murder of inno- God's hand. cents, and also expressly signified his mighty hand present to the comfort of them which trusted in him, besides the most wonderful mutation which will, within short space, thereupon follow. And like as the centurion, with those that were with Centurion. him, for the tokens shewed at Christ's death, confessed him to be the Son of God, Matt. xxvii.; so did a great number at the burning of these martyrs, upon the sight of this open experiment, affirm them to be his faithful members.

Full many a christian heart have risen, and will rise, Christians. from the pope to Christ, through the occasion of their consuming in the fire. As the saying is, of their ashes will more of the same opinion arise. Many a one saith yet, both

[4 'know,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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Take heed. in England and Dutchland also, "Oh that woman, that woman! Oh those men, those men!" If the pope's generation and wicked remnant make many more such martyrs, they are like to mar all their market in England. It were best for them now-a-days to let men be at liberty for their Ceremonies. holy father's gaudy ceremonies, as they are for bear-baitings, cock-fightings, tennis-play, tables, tumbling, dancing, or hunting; who list and who may: for as little have those traditions of his of the word of God in their proudest out-Tenderlings. shew, as they have. Here will some tender stomachs be grieved, and report, that in our heady hastiness we refuse to suffer with our weak brethren, according to the doctrine of St Paul. But I say unto them, whatsoever they be, which are so scrupulous wanderers, that they most execrably err in so bestowing the scriptures; for abominable is that tolerance of our brethren's weakness, where God is by idolatrous superstitions disobeyed, dishonoured, and blas-Hypocrisy. phemed. A plain practice were this of Satan in hypocrisy to uphold all devilishness.

Papists. On the other side was there another sort, at the death of these blessed martyrs, and they judged of this alteration of the air and thunder-clap, as did the Jewish bishops with their perverted multitude, which, wagging their heads, railed, reviled, jangled, jested, scorned, cursed, mocked, and mowed, at Christ's precious sufferings on the cross. Matt. Priests. xxvii. and Luke xxiii. These were the idle priests[1] at London and their beastly ignorant broods, with old superstiBawds. tious bawds and brethels, the pope's blind cattle. These cried there, like mad moody bedlams, as they heard the thunder, "They are damned, they are damned," their wise preachers outasing[2] the same at Paul's cross. Indeed, full nobly are they overseen in the bible, that judge the thunders to signify damnation. Thunder, saith the scripture, is Thunders. the voice of God. Ecclus. xliii. Thunder is the helping power of the Lord, Job xxvi., and no damnation. Christ called John and James the sons of thunder, Mark iii.; which betokeneth that they should be earnest preachers, and no Thunder. children of damnation. The Lord by thunder sheweth his

[1 'idle-witted priests,' Mr Offor's copy.]

[2 'outasing,' making a tumult. See Halliwell's Dictionary of Archaic and of Provincial Words.]

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inscrutable working. Job xxxviii. Moses received the law, Helias the spirit of prophecy, the apostles the Holy Ghost, and all in thunder. What wicked soul will say they received so damnation?

As the lamb had opened the first seal of the book, the voice that went forth was as it had been thunder, Rev. vi.; which is no damnation, but a sharp calling of the people to God-ward. The thunderings that appeared when the angel filled his censer, Rev. viii., were no damnations, but God's earnest words, rebuking the world for sin. The best interpreters do call those thunderings which came from the throne of God, Rev. iv., such verities of the scripture as terrifieth sinners, and no damnations. Neither were the seven thunderings which gave their voices, Rev. x., any other than mysteries, at their times to be opened. Eucherius Lugdunensis, and other moralisers, call thunders in the scriptures the voices of the gospel, and their lightnings the clear opening of the same. If thunder be a threatening, or a fearful judgment of God (as in Ps. ciii.), it is to them that abide here, and not to them that depart from hence. A token is it also that the horrible tyrants shall be as the meal-dust, that the wind taketh away suddenly. Isa. xxix. If the plague do follow of thunder, as it did in Egypt, when Moses stretched forth his rod, Exod. ix., it shall light upon them which shewed the tyrannous violence to[3] the people of God, as it did upon Pharaoh and his cruel ministers.

Apocalypse. Thunders. Eucherius. For tyrants. Norfolk.

At the mighty voice which was both sensibly heard and understanded of the apostles from heaven, that the Father was and would be glorified by Christ, the people said nothing but, "It thundereth," Joh. xii.; for nothing else they understood thereof. What Anne Askewe and her companions both heard and see in this thunder, to their souls' consolation in their painful sufferings, no mortal understanding can discern. Only was it Stephen (and, peradventure, a few disciples) that saw the heavens opened when he suffered, and not the cruel multitude which ran upon him with stones. Acts vii. Let beastly blind babblers and bawds, with their charming chaplains, then, prate at large out of their malicious spirit and idle brains. We have in abundance the verity of God's word and promise, to prove them both saved and

Mark well. St Stephen. God's word.

[3 'on,' Mr Offor's copy.]

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glorified in Christ. For God ever preserveth them which trust in him. Ps. xvi. "All that call upon his holy name are saved." Joel ii. What reasonable man will think that they can be lost, which have their Lord God more dear than their own lives? "No man shall be able (saith Christ) to pluck my sheep out of my hands; but I will give them eternal life." Joh. x. "Believe (saith Paul to the jailer at Philippos) on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy whole household." Acts xvi. "They that seem in the sight of the unwise to go to destruction, do rest in the peace of God, and are replenished with immortality," Wisd. iii.:—with other innumerable scriptures to the praise of God, whose name be glorified, world without end. Amen.

Not lost.

Finis.

God save the King.

Thus endeth the latter conflict of Anne Askewe, lately done to death by the Romish pope's malicious remnant, and now canonised in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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God save the King.

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THE IMAGE OF BOTH CHURCHES,

BEING AN EXPOSITION OF THE MOST WONDERFUL BOOK OF

REVELATION

OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST.

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The Image
Of bothe churches
after the moste wonderfull and heauenly Reuelacion of Saincte John the Euangelist, contayning a very frutefull exposicion or paraphrase upon the same, Wherein it is conferred with the other scripturs. and most auctorised historyes. Compiled by John Bale an exile also in this life for the faythfull testimonie of Jesu.

Go ye out of Sodome, for the Lorde wyl destroie that cyte. Gen. 19.

Come awaye my people, least ye be partakers of her synnes. Apoc. 18.

Flee from fylthy Babylon and go cleane awaye from the lande of the chaldees. Hiere. 50.

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A PREFACE

UNTO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

So highly necessary, good christian reader, is the knowledge of St John's Apocalypse or Revelation (whether thou wilt) to him that is a true member of Christ's church, as of any other book of the sacred bible. For in none of them all are faithful diligent hearers and readers more blessed, nor more lively so declared, observing the contents thereof, than in this one book. Nowhere it is more clearly specified, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost to be one everlasting God, and Jesus Christ to be the eternal Son of that living Father, which are the first and chief grounds of our christian faith, than here. Nowhere is the durable kingdom and priesthood of the said Jesus Christ more plenteously spread, more plainly proved, and more largely uttered, than in this holy oracle. Nowhere is the doctrine of health more purely taught, faith more throughly commended, nor yet righteousness more highly rewarded, than here. Nowhere are heresies more earnestly condemned, blasphemous vices more vehemently rebuked, nor yet their just plagues more fiercely then threatened, than in this compendious work.

Rev. xxii. 1 Cor. vi. Rom. xii.

Rev. i. Rev. xxii.

Rev. iv. 1 John v. Matt. xvi.

Rev. xiv. Heb. vii.

John vii. Rev. xxi.

Rev. xviii. Rev. xv.

Herein is the true christian church, which is the meek spouse of the Lamb without spot, in her right-fashioned colours described. So is the proud church of hypocrites, the rose-coloured whore, the paramour of antichrist, and the sinful synagogue of Satan, in her just proportion depainted, to the merciful forewarning of the Lord's elect. And that is the cause why I have here entitled this book, The Image of both Churches. Neither here spareth the Holy Ghost their hypocrisy nor pride, their idolatry nor whoredom, their covetousness nor most cruel tyranny, with their other outrageous mischiefs. No, he toucheth them so nighly that we should the better know them, and be the more ware of them, that he sheweth them to be such a spiritual sort as maketh daily

Eph. v. Rev. xxi. Rev. xvii. Rev. ii.

Why this book called the Image of both Churches.

Rev. xi. Rev. xviii. 2 Pet. ii.

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Tim. iii. merchandise of the bodies and souls of men. Let us never look to have a more open mark of that wicked generation; take heed of them if we lust. He that will live godly in Christ, and be a patient sufferer; he that will stand in God's fear, and prepare himself to temptation; he that will be Ephes. vi. strong when adversity shall come, and avoid all assaults of antichrist and the devil; let him give himself wholly to the study of this prophecy.

A brief sum is this book of the whole scriptures. Not one necessary point of belief is in all the other scriptures, that is not here also in one place or other. The very complete sum and whole knitting up is this heavenly book of the universal verities of the bible. All that Moses taught in the law, David in the Psalms, and the prophets in their writings concerning Christ's spiritual kingdom both here and Isai. ix. Rev. xxi. above, meet for this present knowledge, are herein briefly comprehended. So is his eternal victory for us over sin, Ephes. iv. John xvi. Heb. ii. Rev. xii. death, hell, and the devil, with his perpetual clearness, authority, and empire, world without end, compendiously here expressed. He that knoweth not this book, knoweth not what the church is whereof he is a member. For herein is the estate thereof from Christ's ascension to the end of the world under pleasant figures and elegant tropes decided, and nowhere else throughly but here, the times always respected. He that delighteth not to behold the condition of his own city is thereunto no loving citizen. And after the true opinion of August. Rev. xxi. Jer. l. St Austin, either we are citizens in the new Jerusalem with Jesus Christ, or else in the old superstitious Babylon with John v. antichrist the vicar of Satan. He that with diligence shall search that matter, specially in this present revelation, shall throughly perceive the certainty thereof. Consider the dignity and worthiness of this most precious jewel, that the Lord hath Matt. xiii. Rom. xv. left here to our consolation. First, God the eternal Father gave it unto Christ his well-beloved Son in our manhood. Christ now glorified committed it unto the Holy Ghost, which Rev. i. Rev. xxii. is here called an angel or messenger. The Holy Ghost delivered it unto John, the peculiarly beloved disciple of Jesu. And John last of all left it with the universal church to their christian erudition. Mark now if any other treatise of the Gilbertus Porreta. Luke xi. sacred bible had ever so worthy a forward setting forth. This is not that it should be altogether neglected, and not looked

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upon. "No man lighteth a candle (saith Christ), and conveyeth it under a bushel, that men should not see thereby." Never was this gracious gift given of God to be hidden as it hath been of long time, but to be opened to all the congregations. A more necessary doctrine to the christian erudition is not in the whole scriptures, all circumstances considered. For besides all that is afore expressed, it containeth the universal troubles, persecutions and crosses, that the church suffered in the primitive spring, what it suffereth now, and what it shall suffer in the latter times by the subtle satellites of antichrist, which are the cruel members of Satan.

Matt. v. Mark iv.

Jacobus Faber super Dionys.

What this book containeth.

It manifesteth also what premies[1], what crowns, and what glory the said congregation shall have after this present conflict with the enemies, that the promised rewards might quicken the hearts of those that the torments fear. A prophecy is this Apocalypse called, and is much more excellent than all the other prophecies. Like as the light is more precious than the shadow, the verity than the figure, the new Testament than the old, and the gospel than the law, so is this holy oracle more precious than they. That Esay, Hieremy, Ezechiel, Daniel, Oseas, with all the other prophets, warneth aforehand to follow concerning Christ and his church, this mystery declareth effectuously fulfilled. It is a full clearance to all the chronicles and most notable histories which hath been wrote since Christ's ascension, opening the true natures of their ages, times, and seasons. He that hath store of them, and shall diligently search them over, conferring the one with the other, time with time, and age with age, shall perceive most wonderful causes. For in the text are they only proponed in effect, and promised to follow in their seasons, and so ratified with the other scriptures; but in the chronicles they are evidently seen by all ages fulfilled. Yet is the text a light to the chronicles, and not the chronicles to the text.

What it openeth to the reader.

Dionys. Alexandrin. in Chiliaste.

Robertus Tuiciensis. Haymo.

Sebast. Meyer in Præfat.

Unto St John the Evangelist were these mysteries of the whole Trinity revealed (as I shewed afore), such time as he was of the emperor Domitian exiled for his preaching into the isle of Patmos, at the cruel complaints of the idolatrous priests and bishops; and of him so written and sent out of the same exile into the congregations. In one day were all these

Gilbertus Porreta in Prolog. Apocal.

[1 premies: rewards, from *premium*.]

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Haymo in Lib. vi. cap. xviii.

marvels seen, and in the same written, as witnesseth Haymo with divers other expositors, and as seemeth agreeable to the text: which is a great wonder, in token that the Lord, as

Psal. xlv.

David reporteth him, is a very swift writer, which at the

Rev. i. Rev. xxi.

same time earnestly occupied the hand of the said John. Of such a nature is the message of this book with the other con-

August. Bedas.

tents thereof, that from no place is it sent more freely, opened more clearly, nor told forth more boldly, than out of exile. And this should seem to be the cause thereof. In exile was

Rabanus, et alii doctores.

it first written, as a little before is mentioned. In exile are the powers thereof most earnestly proved of them that have faith; as appeareth yet by Justinus the martyr, Meliton

Hieron. in Lib. de Illustr.

the Asian, Irenæus, Hippolytus, Victorinus, and other which were thereof the first expositors in the primitive church,

Francisc. Titelmannus de auctoritate Apocal.

and in the end suffered for it the death of their bodies. And though it were then the last book of the bible, and hath been ever since farthest from knowledge and least regarded of them all; yet was it the first that received any man's exposition, as a book thought most necessary to be known of the Christians.

Rev. xii. Georg. Æmil.

Into the desert sendeth the Lord his church, when the filthy spirit by his spiteful spiritualty speweth out his execrable waters, throwing the third part of the stars into the earth with his tail. He giveth her two eagle's wings to fly thither with, which are the light precepts and examples of Christ, to decline their mischief; for he both fled himself

Psal. lv. Luke iv. Matt. x. John xii.

when occasions were given him, and commanded his disciples to flee from city to city in time of their persecutions. He provideth her there a resting-place for three years and an

1 Kings xvii. Dan. xii. Rev. xi.

half, which are the days of Helias, Daniel, and John. And all this is not that she should there be idle. Flattery, dwelling

Flattery may never tell forth the truth.

at home, and sucking there still his mother's breasts, may never tell out the truth; he sees so many dangers on every side, as displeasure of friends, decay of name, loss of goods, offence of great men, punishment of body, and jeopardy of life, with such other like. The forsaken wretched sort hath the Lord provided always to rebuke the world of sin for

1 Cor. i. Matt. iv. John xvi.

want of true faith, of hypocrisy for want of perfect righteousness, and of blindness for lack of godly judgment: for nought is it not therefore, that he hath exiled a certain number of believing brethren the realms of England; of the

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which afflicted family my faith is that I am one. Whereupon I have considered it no less than my bound duty, under pain of damnation, to admonish Christ's flock by this present revelation of their perils past, and the dangers to come for contempt of the gospel, which now reigneth there above all in the clergy.

I am not the first which hath attempted this office, or taken upon me this odious enterprise, full of rebukes and slanders; and that maketh me the bolder. Justinus, becoming of a profane philosopher a perfect Christian, wrote an exposition upon this Apocalypse; and was slain for the verity in the year from Christ's incarnation 154. Meliton, the bishop of Sardis in Asia (which was one of the seven congregations unto whom John wrote), made also a book of the same, and lived about the same time, in the year of our Lord 160. Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (which was also one of the said congregations), left behind him a commentary upon the same book; and suffered strong martyrdom for the truth, in the year of our Lord 175. Hippolytus, a bishop in Africa, a man of much godly wisdom and learning, wrote upon the same about the year of our Lord 220. In like manner Victorinus, the bishop of Pictavis, about the year of our Lord 270; Ticonius, the African, anno dom. 390; Saint Hierome to Anatolius, anno dom. 410; and Saint Austin also, anno dom. 420; with divers other more. Primasius, bishop of Uticina, wrote five little books upon this Apocalypse unto Castorius, whereof this is the beginning: *Tuis vir illustris et religiose Castori;* (which volume I have read;) and he lived in the year of our Lord 440. Aprigius, bishop of Pacem in Spain, made a notable work upon the same about the year of our Lord 530. So did Cassiodorus Apulus, as Petrus Equilinus calleth him, anno dom. 570, and called his book *Complexiones in Apocalypsim.* So did Isidorus junior, the bishop of Hispalis in Spain, anno dom. 630; with all those that here followeth, of whom I have seen almost so many as have their beginnings here registered.

Protestation of the author hereof.

Hieron. in Lib. de Illustr. Viris.

Sebast. Meyer et Francis. Titel.

Petr. Equil. et Sophron. Græc.

Joan. Tritem. de Script. Eccles.

Ambros. Ansbert.

Bed. et Meyer.

Johan. Tritem. de Script. Eccles.

Ex Benedictinis monachis.

Beda presbyter Anglus, Lib. III. *Apocalypsis sancti Joannis in qua.*

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Alcuinus monachus, Anglus, Lib. I.

Petr. Fquil. et Herman. Shedel. Haymo Hirsueldensis, Germanus, Lib. VII. *Legimus in ecclesiastica historia.*

Strabus Fuldensis, Germanus, Lib. I. *Sicut in secularibus literis.*

Rabanus Maurus, Germanus, Lib. I.

Ambrosius Ansbertus, Gallus, Lib. X. *De illustratione afflatus.*

Johan. Tritem. et Spanhem. abbas. Robertus Tuiciensis, Germanus, Lib. XII. *Ut tu quoque venerabilis colo.*

Joachim Abbas, Calaber, Lib. VIII. *Quia profunda libri hujus.*

Monachus quidam Cantuariensis, Lib. I. *Legitur Genesis* XXVIII. *Vidit.*

Casterton monachus, Anglus, Lib. I. *Posuit castra sua in medio.*

Ex Canonicis Regularibus.

Francisc. Titel. et Sebast. Meyer. Richardus de Sancto Victore, Scotus, Lib. I.

Gaufredus Antisiodorensis, Gallus, Lib. I.

Ex Carthusianis monachis.

Henricus de Hassia, Germanus, Lib. I.

Dionysius Rikel, Germanus, Lib. I. *Ecce puer meus electus.*

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Thomas Waldensus. Ambrosius de septem tubis, Lib. I. *Tempus autem arbitror.*

Ranulphus Cestrensis. Berengarius Turonensis, Gallus, Lib. I.

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Joannes Hus, Bohemus, Lib. I. *Cum finierint testimonium.*

Otho Brunfelsius et Corandus Leontorius. Paulus Burgensis, Judæus, Lib. I. *Licet opinio expositorum.*

Mathias Dorinck, Germanus, Lib. I.

Costasye, doctor Anglus, Lib. I. *Ecce descripsi eam tibi tripli.*

Jacobus Stralen, Germanus, Lib. I. *Vidit Jacob in somno scalam.*

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Ex Carmelitanis.

Joannes Baconthorpe, Anglus, Lib. 1. *Apocalypsis Jesu Christi, &c.*

Joannes Tytleshale, Anglus, Lib. 1. *Est autem Apocalypsis, Grecus sermo.* Joannes Tritemius.

Thomas de Ylleya, Anglus, Lib. 1. *Apocalypsis revelatio dicitur.* Arnoldus Bostius.

Joannes Barath, Hannonius, Lib. 1. *Ego Joannes vidi ostium.*

Joannes de Vernone, Gallus, Lib. 1.

Nicolaus de Alsacia, Germanus, Lib. 1.

Joannes Bloxam, Anglus, Lib. 1. *De apparitione septem sigillorum.* Anglorum Heliades. Joan. Bal. Lib. ii.

Joannes Elyne, Anglus, Lib. 1. *Secundum Isidorum ethimolo.*

Joannes Tilneye, Anglus, Lib. 1. *Septem ecclesiis in Asia.*

Henricus Winchingham, Anglus, Lib. 1. *Apertum est templum Dei.*

Joannes Thorpe, Anglus, Lib. 1.

Joannes Egidius, Gallus, Lib. 1. *Apocalyp. &c. Joanni Evangelistæ.*

Joannes Baynton, Anglus, Lib. 1. *Beatus qui legit verba.*

Ex Augustinianis.

Augustinus de Ancona, Italus, Lib. 1.

Jordanes Saxo, Germanus, Lib. 1. Ambrosius Chorilanus.

Bertrandus parayte, Tolosanus, Lib. 1. Nicolaus Bertrandus.

Augustinus de Roma, Italus, Lib. 1.

Philippus de Mantua, Italus, Lib. 1.

Joannes Capgrave, Anglus, Lib. 1.

Sylvester Meuccius, Venet., Lib. 1. *Pro majori intelligentia.*

Ex Dominicanis.

Jordanes Botergius, Germanus, Lib. 1. Leander Bononiensis.

Hugo Barchinonensis, Gallus, Lib. 1. *Asser pinguis panis ejus, etc.* Antoninus Archiep.

Albertus Magnus, Germanus, Lib. 1. *Confiteor tibi pater.*

Stephanus Bisuntinus, Gallus, Lib. 1.

Nicolaus Gorham, Gallus, Lib. 1.

Bernardus de Trilia, Narbonensis, Lib. 1.

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Paganus Bergonensis, Lombardus, Lib. I.
Nicolaus Bertrandus. Sebastianus. Meyer.
Alvarus de Caturco, Tolosanus, Lib. I.
Fredericus de Venetiis, Italus, Lib. I.
Joannes Annius, Viterbiensis, Lib. I.
Hieronymus Savanarola, Italus, Lib. I.

Ex Franciscanis.

Titelmannus Bernardius Lutzenburgus.
Alexander de Hales, Anglus, Lib. I.
Helias de Hanibalis, Italus, Lib. I.
Petrus Joannis Catalanus, Lib. I.
Joannes Tritemius.
Joanneys Wallys, Anglus, Lib. I.
Petrus Aureolus, Tolosanus, Lib. I.
Nicolaus Lyranus, Germanus, Lib. II. *Oportet te iterum prophetare.*
Astesanus Astensis, Lombardus, Lib. I.
Bernardinus Senensis, Italus, Lib. I. *Beatus qui legit et audit.*
Theodoricus Andree Tolosanus, Lib. I.
Joannes de Rupe scissa, Lib. I.
Franciscus Titelmannus, Germanus, Lib. II. *Superioribus diebus eruditis.*

Ex Neotericis.

The writers of our time upon the Apocalypse.
Martinus Lutherus, Germanus, Lib. I. *Varias prophetias invenimus in.*
Sebastianus Meyer, Bernensis, Lib. I. *De lib. Apocalypseos cum.*
Georgius Æmilius, Germanus, Lib. I. *Mira quædam incst aviditas.*
Franciscus Lambertus, Gallus, Lib. VII. *Israelitis a Mose Dei lege.*
Huldricus Zwinglius, Helvetius, Lib. I.
Joannes Brentius, Suevus, Lib. I.
Joannes Calvinus, Gallus, Lib. I.
Melchior Hofman, Germanus, Lib. I.
And many more.

Doctors are followed agreeing with the scriptures.
Of these commentaries have I taken both example to do this thing, and also counsel to understand the text; to none of them wholly addict, but as I perceived them always agreeing to the scriptures. What chronographers and historians I have herein followed for the times and ages of the christian

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church, besides the scriptures, it will evidently appear thereafter in the margin of this volume. I know there will be great thunderings, lightnings, and earthquakes, at the coming forth thereof; for so is it here oft promised of the Holy Ghost. The boisterous tyrants of Sodom with their great Nimrod, Winchester, and the execrable citizens of Gomorah with their shorn smeared captains, will stir about them. Much pain have they of long time taken, and many have they cruelly burned, as was seen of late years in Coventry, London, and in other places more, to obscure the knowledge thereof. Who can suppose then that they will now sit still, their mischiefs made so manifest? Our worldly-wise brethren also, which are neither hot nor cold, will start a course at the matter. I know somewhat is to be suffered at their hands also: for they always tarry their times, and will not wake that shrewd cur for hurting themselves.

Rev. v. Rev. xi. Rev. xiv. Isai. i. Gen. x. Jer. xxiii. Fabian. et alii in Chronicis. Rev. iii. Eccius. xx. 2 Cor. xi.

Graciously hath the Lord called them, specially now of late; but his voice is nothing regarded. His servants have they imprisoned, tormented, and slain, having his verity in much more contempt than afore. "We looked for peace (saith Jeremiah the prophet), and we fare not the better at all. We waited for time of health, and we find here nothing else but trouble." And no marvel, considering the beast's head that was wounded is now healed up again so workmanly as the fourteenth chapter here mentioneth. The abominable hypocrisy, idolatry, pride, and filthiness of those terrible termagants of antichrist's holy household, those two-horned whoremongers, those conjurors of Egypt, and lecherous locusts leaping out of the smoke of the pit bottomless, which daily deceive the ignorant multitude with their sorceries and charms, must be shewed to the world to their utter shame and confusion.

Gal. i. Isai. lx. Matt. xxii. Jer. viii. Jer. xiv. Psal. cxviii. Rev. xiii. Isai. i. Matt. xiii. Rev. xiii. 2 Tim. iii. Rev. ix. 2 Pet. ii. Jude i.

They know, as did Balaam the sorcerer, that over a gorgeous glittering whore every fleshly man is inordinately wanton, fierce, and greedy. Following his ways therefore, they have always for lucre's sake gloriously garnished their holy mother, the madam of mischief and proud synagogue of Satan, with gold, silver, pearl, precious stone, velvets, silks, mitres, copes, crosses, cruets, ceremonies, censings, blessings, babblings, brawlings, processions, puppets, and such other mad masteries (whereof the church that Christ left here behind

Numb. xxiv. Jude i. Prov. v. Jer. iii. Baruch vi. Rev. ii. Hos. viii. Rev. xviii. Gal. iv. Hos. iv. Ezek. xvi. Psal. cii. Jer. vi.

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him know not one jot), to provoke the carnal idiots to her whoredom in the spirit.

Isai. lviii. Psal. liv. Gen. xii. Matt. xix. Acts v. 2 John iii.

The Lord hath long suffered them of mercy, and withholden from them his rightful hand of their deserved vengeance; yet will they not fall to repentance, nor amend their daily mischiefs. To tell them freely of their wicked works by the scriptures, I have exiled myself for ever from mine own native country, kindred, friends, acquaintance, (which are the great delights of this life,) and am well contented for Jesus Christ's sake, and for the comfort of my brethren there, to suffer poverty, penury, abjection, reproof, and all that shall come besides. A commandment the Lord hath given in this book unto them whom he hath called of mercy from their wretched beggaries, to spare no rebukes, but to pour out double upon that bloody bawd and malicious mother of theirs. Never was this commandment more effectually to be followed than now, his holy word of salvation so presently set at nought, despised and persecuted of her mad moody ministers. Unto heaven are her sins gone up in these latter days, as St John here witnesseth, requiring vengeance for the innocent blood that she hath so cruelly shed. And the Lord hath remembered her wickedness according to his promise; as partly hath been seen in this realm, and in divers other more.

Rev. xviii. Jer. l. Rev. xviii. Rev. xvii.

1 Cor. i. Rom. i. Rev. xviii. Matt. xxiii.

Rev. xviii. Luke xiii.

I doubt not within short space she shall be wholly turned over into the bottomless pit again with all her heathenish ceremonies, superstitions and sorceries, and never return hitherward no more than the great mighty millstone that is thrown into the sea's bottom, Christ so restored unto his right spouse. Wonders will appear concerning this and such other matters to him that shall diligently examine the scriptures and histories alleged in the margin: for only minister I an occasion here unto them of a further search. Nothing will be hidden from him that asketh with meekness, seeketh in faith, and in prayer desireth the glory of the Lord. Evident will those secret mysteries be unto him, which are privily hid unto other under dark ambages[1] and parables. Though this heavenly treasure of health be under lock and key of unknown similitudes, and so be shut up from the untoward and wicked generation for their unbelievers' sake; yet will it be

Rev. xix. Rev. ix. Rev. xiv. Rev. xviii. Rev. xxi.

2 Cor. viii. Mark ix. Luke xi. Matt. xxi.

2 Cor. iii. Isai. vi. Col. ii. Rev. x. Luke viii.

[1 ambages, Lat. obscure phrases, ambiguous expressions.]

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plain enough to the faithful believers instantly calling upon him which hath the key of David to open unto them the door of his infallible verities. They shall be sure to find there that shall richly delight them, and that will greatly replenish the most wholesome desire of their souls, concerning their necessary salvation in Christ.

Jam. i. Rev. iii. Col. iv. Jam. i. Psal. cii. Ephes. i.

The more the figurate[2] speech aboundeth here, the more let them confer it with the other scriptures without all honied colours of rhetoric or of crafted philosophy, specially with those which of their own nature jointly agree to the same. Nothing ought here to be sought of curiosity, but of love towards God, for defence of his most pure doctrine and for avoidance of the crafty snares of the devil. A perfect preparation is it to a constant soul, when the battle is seen afore, the end thereof known, and the remedies learned. Here are we admonished aforehand of two most dangerous evils, neither to agree to those tyrants which battle with the Lamb in his elect members, nor yet to obey those deceitful bishops that in hypocrisy usurp the church's titles. Of such terrible plagues of vengeance as were coming towards the Israelites, the Lord ever warned them afore by his prophets; and none was there that escaped them so clearly, as they did which regarded those warnings, watching evermore the conclusions of them. Much less harm felt they of Antiochus Epiphanes, that had read Daniel's prophecy afore, and marked it, than they which knew it not when that tyrant came upon them. Through diligent expectation in the faith of God's promises received just Simeon and Anna the Saviour of the world in his tender infancy.

Franciscus Lambertus in Præfat.

Georgius Æmilius in Præfat.

Gilbertus Porreta, and Georgius Æmilius.

Isai. iii. Jer. viii. 1 Mac. ii.

1 Mac. i. Dan. xi. 1 Mac. vi. Luke ii.

Mention maketh the Holy Ghost here of Gog and of Magog, two terrible fierce enemies to Christ's congregation, and sheweth aforehand their purposed mischiefs. Let us not suppose it to be a fable, that he so earnestly tells us: neither let us think but that this warning is of love, if we list so to take it and accept it for a truth. Immediately after the apostles' preaching was this prophecy given to the christian church (which hath been always a small congregation), lest they should unbewares, at the subtle suggestions of these two enemies, throw aside the sincerity of Christ's gospel. So glorious are the pretences of Romish pope and Ma-

Rev. xx. Esek. xxxviii. Esek. xxxix. Rev. xiii. Numb. xxiii. 1 John iv.

When this prophecy was given, and to what end.

[2 figurate: figurative.]

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Joan. Œcolampadius in Jeremiam et Danielem.

homet, that they seem unto them which regard not these warnings the very angels of light, and their churches most holy congregations, being very devils with their filthy dregs of darkness. The pope in his church hath ceremonies without number.

Popish ceremonies without number.

No end is there of their babbling prayers, their portasses[1], beads, temples, altar-songs, hours, bells, images, organs, ornaments, jewels, lights, oilings, shavings, religions, disguisings, diversity of feasts, constrained vows, fastings, processions, and prattlings, that a man would think they were proctors of paradise. On the other side Mahomet in his church is plenteous also in holy observations. They wash themselves oft, they frequent their temples, they pray five times in the day, they reverently incline, they lie prostrate upon the ground, they frequently call to God, they are temperate in feeding, not curious in their buildings, they abstain from wine, they abhor idols, they hate them that are proud, and commend all soberness. And these virtues have they to appear most innocent livers. But unto what end this holiness leadeth, the sequel hereof declareth. Daniel maketh these two but one, because they are both of one wicked spirit, and reporteth his blasphemous mouth to utter presumptuous things. Saint John saith also, that the dragon speaketh blasphemies against God in them both. Mark both their voices, and ye shall find these sayings most true.

Guilhel. Tripol. de statu Saracenorum.

Joan. Cuspin. de Orig. Turcarum.

Dan. vii. Œcolamp. in Dan.

Rev. xiii.

The pope maketh his beast; he is the high priest, he is of equal power with Peter, he cannot err, he is head and spouse of the church, and he is Christ's immediate vicar. By this brawling beast he maketh men to believe he may constitute laws, keep under the gospel, distribute kingdoms, sell promotions and benefices, set up a purgatory, provide satisfactions, make new bodies to Christ, redeem dead men's souls, and remit sin for money.

Joan. Œcolamp. in Dan.

Theod. Bibliand. in Christian. Consult.

Mahomet braggeth also, that he is the great prophet, the promised Messiah, the apostle of both testaments, abled both by the law and the gospel, and that he hath his name from the eternal throne of God. He is well contented that Christ be an holy prophet and a most worthy creature; yea, the word of God, the soul of God, and the spirit of God, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of Mary the virgin: but he will in no case grant him to be the Son of God, nor that he died

Joan. Cuspin. et Bibliand.

[1 portass: a breviary.]

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here for man's redemption. Both these two maintainers of mischief allow Moses' law, the Psalter, the prophets, and the gospel; yea, they commend them, advance them, sing them, read them, honour them, and reverently use them in all their doings: yet will they have their own filthy laws preferred above them, the pope his execrable decrees, and Mahomet his wicked Alcoran; else will they murder men without measure. Thus though they outwardly appear very virtuous, yet are they the malignant ministers of Satan, denying the Lord which hath redeemed them. By these may we measure their inferior merchants, having their livery and mark.

Joan. Œcolamp. in Dan.

Theod. Bibliand. in Christian. Consult.

Of these hath our loving Lord premonished us in this heavenly work of his, and graciously called us away from their abominations, lest we should be partakers of their sins, and so receive of their plagues. If we unthankfully neglect it, the more danger is ours. Let no man take the corrections of this book to malice: but if he chance in it as in a clear glass, to perceive himself spotted, let him wash away the deformities; for God's word spareth no man's iniquity. Read my whole Commentary, else judge me not. In no wise rebel I here against any princely power, or authority given of God, but against antichrist's filthy titles.

Matt. xxiii. Rev. xiii. 1 Tim. iv. Rev. xviii. Jer. l.

A christian request of the author.

Antichrist's titles are not of God.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be evermore with thee, good faithful reader, and with all those good men that entirely hunger for his righteousness. Amen.

Thus endeth the Preface of the Image of both Churches, out of Saint John's Apocalypse.

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A BRIEF PARAPHRASE,

OR COMPENDIOUS ELUCIDATION UPON THE

APOCALYPSE OR REVELATION OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST,

GATHERED OUT OF THE PURE SCRIPTURES AND SINCERE WORD OF GOD, BY

JOHN BALE,

AN EXILE ALSO IN THIS LIFE FOR THE TESTIMONY OF JESU.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, 2 which God gave unto him, 3 for to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass: 4 and he sent and shewed by his angel unto his servant John; 5 which bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 6 Happy is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of the prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; 7 for the time is at hand.

The Paraphrase.

Matt. xvi. John xvi. Acts xx. Matt. xxviii. John v.

1. Of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, this is the wonderful Revelation concerning the diverse and doubtful state of the christian church from the apostles' time to the latter end of the world.

Luke x. Phil. ii. Psal. viii. John xvii. 2 Cor. ii. Ephes v.

2. Which Revelation, with all judgment and power, God the everlasting Father hath wholly given unto him, now taken up from the earth, glorified, and set above all the works of his hands;

2 Pet. ii. John xvi. Matt. xiii.

3. Evidently to declare, yea, to make manifest and known unto his true faithful servants, believing in his words, and walking in his ways, the tokens, signs, and marvels, which must, by his unchangeable ordinance, shortly in this after time follow in effect, without premonishment or warning taken of the wicked sort.

Mark xvi. Heb. i.

4. And the said Jesus Christ, sitting on the right hand of the majesty of God, and being much more excellent than the angels, hath according to his former promise sent forth

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his Spirit of truth, most especially unto his dearly beloved apostle and peculiar disciple St John the Evangelist, not only to deduce him into all knowledge and verity, but also to manifest unto him the secret mysteries of things to come. John xv. Acts ii. John xix. Luke xii. John xvi.

5. Which John hath already (as an earnest doer in his master's cause) most constantly witnessed his eternal Godhead in the everlasting word against the Ebionites, which denied him to come in the flesh, and hath faithfully affirmed his natural manhood in all that he saw, being conversant with him, against Carpocras and Cerinthus, which blasphemed the same, to the utter confusion of all such antichrists. Acts iv. John i. Psal. cxviii. 2 John i. John xix. xxi. 1 John i. 1 John ii. 1 John iv.

6. Blessed is he, saith St John, which after meek prayer and godly meditation, having the gift of understanding and grace of interpreting the scriptures, doth sincerely and faithfully, without craft or colour, publish and declare the mystical words of this heavenly prophecy. Blessed are they also, which in a fervent faith hungering and thirsting for the righteousness, and with Simeon and Anna desirous of the glory of God, do lovingly hear and earnestly mark the wholesome words of the same said godly prophecy, and that will diligently apply themselves to observe the rules and take the premonishments of godly doctrine therein written. Rev. xxii. Matt. vii. 1 Cor. xii. 1 Pet. iv. 1 Cor. iv. Ephes. iv. Matt. v. Luke ii. James ii. Matt. vii.

7. For the perilous days are come, that the deceitful swarm of antichrist perverting the truth shall bring the world into pernicious and damnable errors. And the jeopardous time is at hand, that the wrath of God shall be declared from heaven upon all ungodliness of those seducers that withhold his truth in unrighteousness, and set his commandments at nought for their own vile traditions. John xiii. Psal. cxviii. 1 Cor. i. 1 John iv. 2 Thess. ii. Gal. iii. Rom. i. 1 Tim. iv. Matt. xv.

The Text.

1 John unto the seven congregations which are in Asia: 2 Grace be with you, 3 and peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come, 4 and from the seven spirits which are present before his throne, 5 And from Jesus Christ, which is a faithful witness, 6 and first-begotten of the dead, 7 and prince over the kings of the earth. 8 Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 9 and made us kings and priests unto God his Father, 10 even unto him be glory and dominion for evermore. Amen.

The Paraphrase.

1. John the elect apostle of Jesus Christ sendeth these John xiii. xix.

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Mark xvi. Psal. xviii. greetings to the seven churches or christian congregations which are in the land of Asia the less.

Ephes. ii. Rom. viii. 2. Grace (which is the mercy, favour, and acceptation of God) be with you.

Phil. iv. Jer. vii. Exod. xv. Mic. iv. 3. And also peace (which is the tranquillity of conscience in them that believe in Christ) dwell ever among you, from God the Father everlasting, which is essentially in and of himself, and which was before the constitution of the world, and which shall be after the world be finished for ever and ever without end.

1 John v. Rev. v. 4. The same grace and peace again be unto you from God the Holy Ghost, here mentioned under the title of seven spirits, for that he is manifold and plenteous in gifts.

Isai. xl. Col. iii. John iii. John xiv. Isai. lxi. 1 Pet. ii. 5. The third time also the same said grace and peace be unto you from the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, which, being the eternal verity itself, was in preaching his gospel a witness thereof both faithful, true, and perfect, and in no wise could lie, that ye should the rather believe him.

Col. i. 1 Cor. xv. Hos. xiii. Acts i. Phil. ii. 1 Tim. ii. 1 John ii. Psal. lxxi. Matt. xxviii. John xvii. 6. He was the first of all men that ever were in this mortal nature or body of death, recovering again the favour of God lost in Adam; and that, with victory over sin, hell, death, and the devil, ascended into heaven, and became in that flesh glorified, the Son of God, that ye should be the bolder of him, and the rather take him for your only advocate.

Rev. xix. Luke i. Matt. xxv. 7. He is also a most mighty lord over the kings, rulers, and magistrates of this world, having now all power given him in heaven and in earth, with a writing upon his vesture, that he is King of kings and Lord of lords; and that of his kingdom there shall be no end; that the wicked tyrants should the rather fear, lest they feel him a terrible judge at the latter day.

1 John iv. Isai. liii. 1 Cor. xv. 1 Tim. ii. Heb. ix. 1 Pet. i. 1 John i. 8. Forsomuch as he hath so entirely loved us as to be smitten and wounded for our offences, and as to give his life for our wicked wretchedness; yea, forsomuch as he of most natural kindness would be cruelly slain to wash us, purify us, and cleanse us in his own most innocent blood from the most cankered vileness of our sins to provoke us to love him again:

Habak. ii. Rev. v. Rom. xii. Phil. iv. 9. Forsomuch also as he hath made us a living kingdom to God, through faith in him, and consecrated us priests to offer up our bodies by a new christian life as a sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God his everlasting Father:

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10. Unto him, with the said Father and with the Holy Ghost, be perpetual praise, glory, power and dominion for evermore. Amen. 1 John v. 1 Tim. vi.

THE TEXT.

1 Behold, he cometh with clouds, 2 and all eyes shall see him, 3 and they also which pierced him: 4 and all kindreds of the earth shall wail. 5 Even so, Amen. 6 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord almighty, 7 which is, and which was, and which is to come.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. Take heed: for most certain it is, though Christ in his first coming as a merciful Saviour appeared here upon earth poor, simple and ignominious; yet shall he in his latter coming appear in the clouds of heaven with majesty, power and glory, accompanied with the infinite host of angels as a rigorous judge. Zech. ix. Phil. ii. Luke xxi. Jude i. Matt. xxiv.

2. And upon him shall all eyes look: both man and angel shall behold him, and stand before his terrible judgment-seat; no creature good nor bad exempt. Rom. xiv. 2 Cor. v. Zech. xii. John xix.

3. Yea, those cruel tyrants also shall at that hour appear before him, which did not only slay his most innocent body, but also that hath ever since spitefully persecuted his faithful members unto death for the truth's sake.

4. And all kindreds of the earth, that is to say, whoremongers, gluttons, extortioners, idolaters, murderers and tyrants, shall bewail themselves for the sight of him. Matt. xxiii. Ephes. v. 1 Cor. v. Heb. xiii.

5. Whose rightful judgment is not so hateful unto them, but it is as greatly desired of the faithful multitude, saying in their hearts continually, Even so be it, Amen: for they at that hour shall be wholly delivered, glorified, and sealed up with Christ for the everlasting children of God. Wisd. v. Luke xxi. Rev. xxii. Rom. viii. Ephes. i.

6. I am he, saith the Lord God Almighty, which hath begun all things, and finished the same, being signified by Alpha (which is the first letter of the Greek alphabet) and Omega (which is the last), because this present revelation was written in Greek, and unto them which only knew the Greek tongue. Rev. xxi. Isai. xli. Rev. xxii. Isai. xliv. Zach. ix. Rom. i. Gen. xvii.

7. I am the same, saith the said Lord God everlasting, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in one essential Godhead, which is essentially in and of him- 1 John v. Exod. iii. Mic. v.

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self only; which was without beginning, and begun all things, and which shall be without ending, and finish all things; alone able to exhibit all virtue, power, and strength, and alone unable to execute errors, lies, and sin, which is of fragility, weakness, and unperfectness.

Habak. iii.

The Text.

1 I John your brother and companion in tribulation, 2 and in the kingdom of patience, which is in Jesu Christ, 3 was in the isle of Patmos for the word of God, and for the witnessing of Jesu Christ. 4 I was in the Spirit on a Sunday, 5 and heard behind me a great voice, as it had been of a trump, saying: 6 I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. 7 That thou seest write in a book, 8 and send it unto the congregations which are in Asia, 9 unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, 10 and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

The Paraphrase.

Rev. xxii. Luke vi. John xv. Luke xiv.

1. I, the faithful writer of this present revelation, called John the Apostle, your natural loving brother, so entirely coveting your souls' health as mine own, a companion of yours also in adversity, trouble, and persecution, for the truth's sake;

Hieron. in Catal. Script. Eccles.

2. And a partaker with you in the afflicted kingdom, and in the patient cross of sufferance in Christ Jesu;

3. Was now of late in a certain isle of Lycia, called Patmos, exiled for the gospel preaching, and made a vile abject for testifying the name and word of the said Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of the world.

2 Cor. xii. Matt. v.

4. I, being thus carefully afflicted and driven from all solace and bodily comfort, on a certain Sunday or day dedicated to the Lord's remembrance, was in the spirit rapt and clearly taken up from all worldly affects, (so sweetly did the Lord relieve his poor persecuted servant.)

Ezek. iii. Rom. viii. Exod. xix.

5. And I heard certainly with mine ears a loud shrill voice behind me, as I was in this sweet heavenly trance, which was so vehement and stout to my judgment, as it had been the noise of a great trump, uttering these words unto me:

Isai. lvm. Rev. xxi. Isai. xlviii. Rev. xxii.

6. I am the first and the last, the original beginner and the perfect finisher of all things, under Alpha and Omega the first and last Greek letters, as under an allegory to be understood.

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7. With all diligence therefore write that thou shalt see here, and make a perfect register of the same. Exod. xvii. Habak. ii. 2 Cor. xi.

8. And that done, send it lovingly unto the seven christian congregations which are in the land of Asia, committed of the Lord unto thy administration in his word. Mark xvi.

9. Send it unto Ephesus, send it unto Smyrna, direct it unto Pergamos, commit it unto Thyatira: Euseb. Ces. Hist. Eccl. v. 23.

10. And unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea, and finally by them to the seven climates of the universal world. For though it be here to them only limited, yet is it to all people universally meant.

The Text.

1 And I turned back to see the voice that spake to me. 2 And when I was turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks, 3 and in the midst of the candlesticks one like unto the Son of Man, 4 clothed with a linen garment down to the ground, 5 and girded about the breast with a golden girdle. 6 His head and his hairs were white as white wool, and as snow, 7 and his eyes were as a flame of fire; 8 and his feet like unto brass, as though they brent in a furnace, 9 and his voice as the noise of many waters. 10 And he had in his right hand seven stars. 11 And out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. 12 And his face shone even as the sun in his strength.

The Paraphrase.

1. And suddenly I turned back, saith Saint John, earnestly to behold from whence this voice should come, or who should[1] speak these words unto me. John xx. Zech. vi. Job xxiii.

2. And as I had turned myself, anon I beheld seven golden candlesticks, betokening not only the said seven congregations in Asia, but also the universal Christianity of the whole world. For seven in the scripture most commonly signifieth all or the whole of that it comprehendeth. Zech. iv. Gen. ii. Heb. iv.

3. And in the midst of the said seven candlesticks I saw one like unto Christ, which, when he was conversant here among us, not only called himself the Son of Man, but also appeared in shape and apparel as the same. And this betokeneth Christ always to be present and assistant to his congregations, as a Shepherd and Advocate, a Teacher and a Redeemer, to keep them, help them, inform them, and save them. Isai. xii. Joel ii. Matt. viii. Phil. ii. Matt. xxviii. John x. 1 John ii. Acts vii.

[1 Who it should, old edit.]

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Wisd. xviii. Dan. vii. Col. ii. Dan. x.

4. I saw him clothed with a side linen garment down to the ground, signifying his abundant righteousness, wherewith all his faithful believers are in this world largely replenished.

Eccius. xiv. Isai. lxvi. Psal. cii. Cant. vii. John xiii. 2 Thess. iii.

5. He was girded also about the paps with a golden girdle. His paps are his most sweet words and promises replenishing our souls with most sovereign consolation and gladness: and they are speared up together fast unto him with the shining chain of charity or love: which in the whole betokeneth, that he is of righteousness and love fast and sure unto us in his word and promise.

1 Cor. xi. Cant. i. 1 John i. Cant. v. Psal. xl. xviii. Mal. iv. Rev. ii.

6. His head (which is his eternal Godhead) and his ears (which are his infallible verities thereof proceeding) are both so purely white as snow, in the incomprehensible mysteries of his divine majesty, and so perfectly white as wool (which is of a meaner sort) in the lower mysteries of our redemption.

Heb. iv. Rev. xix. Luke xxii. John xix.

7. His eyes (which are his godly wisdom and knowledge) were as a burning flame of fire, most effectual, pure, and quick in working.

Heb. iv. Prov. xxvii. Isai. liii. Acts viii.

8. And his feet (which are his human affections and most sweet desires of our health) were like unto brass, most beautiful, clean and precious to behold, and as though they had been proved, tried and depured[1] in a hot burning furnace. For in them was his frail, tender, and mortal flesh by manifold troubles sore vexed, persecuted, and slain.

Psal. lxvii. Esek. xliii. Dan. x. Rev. v. Phil. ii.

9. His voice (which is his holy testament or gospel) was as the sound or noise of many waters. For many peoples of divers and sundry nations, kindreds, and languages, have confessed and still do confess him God and man by the same, though the one understand not the other.

Psal. cxvii. Baruch iii. Phil. ii. Jer. i. Prov. iii. Isai. xli. John ix. Rom. i. Matt. v.

10. And he had in his right hand (which is his mighty power) seven stars, which are not only the seven preachers of his seven congregations in Asia, but also all the true ministers of his word the world over. For them hath he in his right hand. They are under his governance, will, protection, and custody. So long as he retaineth them, they are wise, godly, and profitable; but if he once throw them forth, then are they blind, wicked, and accursed, yea, and good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot. Blessed are they therefore, which fall not besides that hand.

Rev. xix. Ephes. vi.

11. Out of his mouth (which is his holy Spirit) proceeded

[1 depured: purified.]

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a sharp two-edged sword. This is his strong, mighty, and quick word, or his sacred scripture, so sharp that it pierceth through, even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow; and is a judger of the thoughts and intents of the heart; whom finally nothing shall be able to resist. Heb. iv. Job xix. Matt. x. Jer. xvii. Luke xxi.

12. And his face (which is the eternity of his Godhead, glorified nature, and spiritual kingdom) shone even as the clear sun in his most strength, whose brightness no creature can behold without the pure sight of an uncorrupt faith. For the fleshly carnal man in no wise understandeth things belonging to the Spirit of God, but judgeth them foolishness. Dan. x. Matt. xxvii. Heb. i. John vi. 1 Cor. ii. 1 Cor. i.

The Text.

1 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet, even as dead. 2 And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, 3 Fear not: I am the first and the last, 4 and am alive, and was dead. 5 And behold I am alive for evermore, 6 and have the keys of hell and of death. 7 Write therefore the things which thou hast seen, 8 and the things which are, and the things which shall be fulfilled hereafter. 9 And the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, 10 and the seven golden candlesticks. 11 The seven stars are the angels of the seven congregations; 12 and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven congregations.

The Paraphrase.

1. And when I had thus seen him (saith St John), and diligently marked all these points in him, I fell down at his feet as one almost dead for fear. Consider in this that the nature of the true knowledge of Christ is to throw down and to mortify the flesh with his corrupt affections, and to cast us in fear till his hidden mysteries be throughly perceived. Dan. x. Rev. xxii. Col. iii. Rom. xii. Psal. xliii. Rom. v. Job xiv. Psal. cxxxvii. Jam. iv.

2. And he (saith St John), to comfort my weakness, laid his right hand upon me. He relieved me with his power, grace and help, when he saw me humbled before his face and fearfully astonied at the wonderful brightness of his bright mysteries: and not without his word, for he said unto me, Psal. lxxxvii. Dan. x. Jer. i. Isai. xli. Matt. xvii. Isai. xliv. Rom. vi. John ii.

3. Let not fearfulness overcome thee, nor doubtful dread oppress thee. But take unto thee faith (which is the chief remedy in fear), and know that I am the first and the last, Rev. xxi.

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the maker and the restorer of all creatures. I am he, of whom all things depend, and unto whom all things belong.

4. I am now alive, as thou seest evidently, and the very life itself; yet was I slain now of late, and my body dead and buried.

John xiv. 1 Cor. xv. Rom. vi. 1 Pet. iv. Heb. vii. 1 John ii. Rom. vi.

5. Behold me therefore earnestly; for now in a glorified nature, in a body impassible and immortal, I am alive for ever and ever, ready to make interpellation[1], and to obtain mercy for all the world's sins, death having over me no more dominion.

Isai. xxii. Rev. iii. Matt. xvi. Rom. viii. Rev. xxi. 1 John i.

6. I have in my hands and under my power the keys both of hell and death, that neither hell nor sin, death nor the devil, shall be from henceforth able to prevail against my elect. No condemnation shall be unto them that are surely grafted in me.

Rom. viii. Rev. xii. 1 John i.

7. Take pen and ink therefore, and seriously write the things which thou hast already seen.

John v. Luke xxi.

8. And note faithfully the marvels which are by the power of God accomplished, and the wonders also which shall be fulfilled hereafter.

Rev. iii. Dan. xii. Acts xi.

9. Mark first of all with due circumspection the secret mystery of the seven shining stars, which thou sawest now of late in my right hand.

Zech. iv. 1 Cor. xv.

10. And diligently consider the seven golden candlesticks also.

Dan. xii. Matt. v. Eccles. i. 1 Pet. ii. Phil. ii. John xv. Rev. ii.

11. The seven stars in signification are the messengers of God's word, or the apostolic preachers appointed to the seven congregations in Asia, and in them to all the world. These ought in the church, as the stars in the firmament, to shine in wholesome doctrine and in godly conversation, and, as the lights of the world, neither in life nor preaching to minister any manner of darkness.

John viii. Luke ii. 1 Chron. xxviii. Eph. i. 1 Cor. vi. 1 Pet. i.

12. Consider also the seven golden candlesticks which thou sawest about me, to be the said seven congregations; upon whom I ought to shine, which am the light of the world; in whose works I ought to appear, which am the clearness of the Gentiles. They are called here seven golden candlesticks, as most precious in value, forsomuch as they are precious in the sight of God, and were also redeemed and bought with a great price, even with the precious blood of the undefiled Lamb Jesus Christ.

[1] interpellation: interposition, intercession]

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THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 Unto the angel of the congregation of Ephesus write; 2 These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; 3 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, 4 and how thou canst not forbear them which are evil; 5 and examinest them which say they are apostles, and are not, 6 and hast found them liars; 7 and hast suffered, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 8 Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, for thou hast left thy first love. 9 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, 10 and do the first works: 11 or else I will come unto thee shortly, 12 and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. 13 But this thou hast, because thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, 14 which deeds I also hate. 15 Let him that hath ears hear what the Spirit saith unto the congregations. 16 To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of my God.

The Paraphrase.

1. My dearly beloved servant John (saith the Lord Jesus), my will is, that thou shalt signify by writing unto the messengér or preacher of the christian congregation of Ephesus, which, dwelling in this earthly mansion, is, as was Daniel, full of wholesome desires. She looketh for the kingdom, she seeketh for the glory, she hungereth for the righteousness of God, she thirsteth for the living waters, she longeth for to be delivered from this body of death, she coveteth to be dissolved and to be with Christ; yea, fervently she desireth to rest in the arms of her almighty spouse.

Rev. i. James v. Dan. ix. Luke xix. Matt. v John iv. Rom. vii. Phil. i

2. Tell her therefore that these sayings hath he which holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; which hath in his power all ministers of his word, to retain them, or to cast them out, and remaineth amongst the congregations, to behold their acts, and reward them according to their doings.

Rev. i. Matt. xxviii. John xvii. Luke xiv. John xiv. Rev. xxii.

3. I know thy works (saith he), I perceive thy labour, thy anguish, thy affliction, thy pain; for unto me nothing can be hid. I consider also thy patient sufferance in adversity, and thy troublous cross for my word's sake, thy constant faith, and thy unbroken spirit.

Exod. iii. Heb. iv. Matt. v. Luke vi. Rom. xii.

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4. And I ponder thy fervent and godly zeal, wherein thou canst in no wise forbear them that are wicked and evil, but thou hatest blasphemers, and abhorrest the enemies of God.

Phil. iii. 1 Tim. iii. 1 John i. 3 John. 2 Pet. ii. 2 Tim. iii.

5. I much commend thee for that thou diligently examinest them which call themselves apostles, and are none; which boast themselves to be christian teachers, and are nothing less;

1 John ii. 2 Cor. xi. Rev. i.

6. And by thy diligent search hast not only proved them false and deceitful antichrists, but also thou hast expelled them, lest they should do harm.

7. And though thou hast been grievously vexed and persecuted of those false prophets, yet hast thou patiently suffered, and firmly stood by the truth for my name's sake. Thou hast taken pains, and not fainted in thy labours, so strong hath the Spirit of God been with thee. And all these points in thee I greatly allow.

Gal. vi. 1 Cor. xi. Jude.

Gal. v. Acts v. Ephes. ii. Ecclus. viii. Gal. v.

8. Yet have I somewhat against thee, forsomuch as thou art fallen from thy first charity, the fruits of true faith not being so abundant and plentiful in thee as they were in the beginning of the gospel, nor thou so effectual in working mercy and pity.

9. Call therefore to thy remembrance from what perfection thou art fallen, and repent thy slipperous weakness and slothful negligence, which hath not suffered thee to persevere in thy first calling:

Psal. i. Matt. x. John xv. Eph. iv. Phil. i. Luke xiii.

10. And return [to] thy first works again, walking in that fervent faith, in that godly spirit, and in that sweet love of thy neighbour, that thou didst walk in before, and diminish not, but increase evermore in all goodness.

11. Else will I come shortly unto thee as a strait looker upon thee.

Rom. i. 2 Thess. ii. 1 Tim. iv. 2 Pet. ii.

12. And except thou repent from the heart with full purpose of amendment, I will remove thy candlestick out of her place. I shall take away from thee the sincere doctrine and pure preaching of my word, and suffer men's fantastical traditions, old women's dreams, the spirits of error, the doctrine of devils, the lies of hypocrites, with all blindness, darkness, abomination, and idolatry, there to remain. For where as my word is not sincerely taught, believed, and observed, but uncharitably despised, hated, and persecuted, there shall not

Rev. ix. 1 Cor. i. Rom. i. Rev. i. John xii. Isai. i.

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my church remain, but in her place shall stand up the synagogue of Satan, with blindness and induration. For that congregation is not mine, which hath not my words. No longer is it my church, than it hath my verity. Turn back again therefore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to the prophets and apostles, and exercise the first works, leaving all papistry.

2 Cor. iv. 1 Mac. i. Eph. ii.

13. This warning hast thou of me, for that thou hatest the unseemly deeds of the Nicolaitans, so called of one Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch, and one of the seven deacons ordained by the apostles: whose corrupt custom was among other to defile holy wedlock in making their wives common, and in boasting themselves lawfully so to do by the example of the said Nicolas:

The Nicolaitans. Acts vi. 2 Pet. ii. Jude. Heb. xiii.

14. Whose uncomely acts I hate and abhor also, having matrimony in honour, and the chamber thereof undefiled. This premonishment have I given thee also, lest thou in process of time shouldest fall to apostasy, and utterly decline from the truth.

Eccles. x. Matt. xiii. Mark iv. Luke viii. John xvi. Matt. v. Rom. viii. 1 John v.

15. Let him that hath ears (saith the Lord), which is judgment and discretion in the spirit, diligently hear, and earnestly mark, what the Holy Ghost speaketh, what premonishments he giveth, and what reward he promiseth to the faithful congregations.

16. To him that by the Spirit of Christ and by faith victoriously overcometh the world, sin, hell, death, and the devil, I will give to eat of the tree of life, to have rejoice here in the Holy Ghost, to have comfort, peace, and gladness in me;

Rom. viii. 1 John v. Luke x.

17. And after this life eternal beatitude, which is in the midst of the beautiful paradise, or the triumphant church of my Lord, my God, and my celestial Father, and yours also by me.

Rom. xiv. Eph. ii. John xvii. Gen. ii. Cant. iv. John xx.

THE TEXT.

1 And unto the angel of the congregation of Smyrna write. 2 These things saith he that is the first and the last, 3 which was dead, and is alive: 4 I know thy works, and tribulation, 5 and poverty, but thou art rich. 6 And I know the blasphemy of them which call themselves Jews, and are not, but are the congregation of Satan. 7 Fear none of the things which thou shalt suffer. 8 Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison to tempt you, 9 and ye shall have tribulation ten days. 10 Be faithful unto the death, 11 and I will

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give thee a crown of life. 12 Let him that hath ears hear what the Spirit saith to the congregations. 13 He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

THE PARAPHRASE.

Smyrna. Eccles. xiv. Matt. x. 1 Pet. iv.

1. Apply thee also, my friend John, with all festination[1] to write unto the faithful minister of the congregation of Smyrna, which travelling in this vale of misery, as the odoriferous myrrh, giveth forth the sweet smell of all good Christian works, and distributeth freely the precious treasure of godly examples: she believeth in God, she seeketh his only glory, she followeth his word, she rebuketh sin with patience, she openeth her hands to the poor, she giveth meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, lodging to the stranger, clothes to the naked, comfort to the sick, and relief to the prisoner. She is meek, gentle, obedient, patient, and merciful.

Col. iii. 2 Tim. iv. Prov. xiii. Tobias ii. Matt. xxv. 1 Cor. xiii. Phil. ii.

Rev. i. Acts vii.

2. Inform her therefore that these things saith he, which is the first and the last, the maker and redeemer, the founder and restorer of all creatures;

Luke xxiv. John xx. 1 Pet. ii. 1 Tim. vi. John xii. Wisd. ix.

3. Which was once dead to redeem her from eternal death, and now is alive to restore her to life everlasting. Let her not doubt therefore to suffer here like as he hath suffered: for as he is now immortal, and hath the overhand[2] of death, so shall she be, and have the same.

Gal. v. Acts xiv. Heb. x. Matt. v. Luke vi.

4. I know thy works, saith that Lord, to spring only of faith, and to be fashioned according to the word of God. I perceive thy manifold tribulations, how thou art outwardly afflicted by continual persecution of enemies, and inwardly cruciated in conscience to behold the damnable errors, frowardness, blindness, and utter contempt of God's truth, which reigneth in the wicked.

Matt. v. Isai. lxi. Rom. vi. 1 Cor. iv. Heb. xi. 1 Thess. ii. Tobit xiv. 1 Thess. ii. Jude. Rom. ii.

5. I consider thy poverty in the spirit, that nothing thou esteemest the pride, the riches, the vain glory, and the wanton desires of this world; yet art thou rich, for the kingdom of heaven is thine. For with Abraham, Job, Moses, and Elias, in thy heart thou seekest the only glory of God: and with all these things most highly am I pleased.

6. But this pleaseth me not, that thou for my word's

[1 festination: haste.]
[2 overhand: upper hand.]

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sake art so blasphemed of ungodly hypocrites, which call themselves Jews, and are not; which boast themselves for the peculiar people and chosen children of God, and are nothing less; but are without fail the congregation of Satan, and the tyrannous rabble of ravenous ruffians. Isai. i. John xi.

7. Certain it is, that by such spiritual tyrants thou must sustain opprobrious rebukes, with manifold afflictions and pains. But let neither their subtle sleights nor their cruel snares be troublous unto thy[3] mind. Neither doubt thou their false practices, nor yet their vengeable[4] lies, whom both thou must suffer, with hate, slander, revilings, false witness, spite, shame, and vengeance: considering this, patiently to live in Christ is to suffer persecution, and that among those belly-gods nothing is more to be looked for than the cross of contradiction and death. Isai. i. John xv. Psal. lviii. Jer. xviii. John xiv. Luke xxi. Matt. v. 2 Tim. iii. Phil. iii. 1 Pet. i.

8. And take this for a warning aforehand. The devil doubtless, which is the common adversary and the head captain of their empire, shall with violence bring some of you, not only under the captivity of cruel governors, but also into the thraldom of wicked laws and damnable constitutions; yea, and consequently throw you into prison, chains, sorrow, hunger, thirst, cold, poverty, care, and wretchedness, to tempt your hearts, to try your patience, to prove your sufferance, and to trouble your faith, lest ye should stedfastly stand by Christ's doctrine, to his glory and profit of your brethren. Matt. iv. John viii. Rev. xii. Mark xiii. 1 Mac. ii. Luke xxi. Heb. xi. Wisd. iii. James i. 1 Cor. xi.

9. But let this solace you for the time. Their malice shall not always endure: their mischief will have an end. For though ye have here tribulation, and suffer grievous persecution, be ye sure, it shall no longer continue than ten days. The term of man's life is but short, and, that once finished, God shall wipe away from him all tears, and take away all sorrows and bodily pains. Rev. xix. Jer. li. Wisd. iii. Rev. ii. Job xiv. Isai. xxv. Rev. xii.

10. Persevere therefore stedfastly, and be strong in the Spirit unto the end. Let not faith fail thee unto the departing from this transitorious life. 1 Mac. x. Matt. xxiv. Eph. iii.

11. And I shall replenish thee with the reward of faithful perseverance. I will give thee the crown of eternal life, with full tranquillity, joy, and beatitude. Eccius. ii. Rev. iii.

12. Let him that hath ears of understanding with dili- Mark iv.

[3 Old editions, my.]
[4 vengeable: revengeful, cruel.]

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1 Thess. iv. 2 Pet. ii. Acts i. Matt. x.

gence attend, not what the hypocrites have fantasied for lucre, but what the Holy Spirit of God doth here utter unto the Christian congregations.

Prov. iv. Isai. xxx. 2 Mac. ix. Rev. xiv. Psal. cxvi. Ezek. xxxiii. Rom. viii.

13. He that so constantly persevereth in the truth of God, that neither flattering persuasion, worldly promotion, nor cruel torment can pluck his mind from it, shall never take harm of the second death. For the death of them which truly believeth is precious in the sight of the Lord their God. Neither shall sin be imputed to him that hath faith, nor yet damnation to them which are in Christ Jesu.

The Text.

1 And unto the angel of the congregation in Pergamos write; 2 This saith he which hath the sharp sword with the two edges. 3 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest; even where Satan's seat is. 4 And thou keepest my name, and hast not denied my faith. 5 And in those days Antipas was a faithful witness of mine, which was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. 6 But I have a few things against thee, [7] that thou hast there them that maintain the doctrine of Balaam, which taught Balac to put occasion of sin before the children of Israel, that they should eat of the meat dedicate unto idols, and to commit fornication. 8 Even so hast thou them that maintain the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. 9 But be converted, or else I will come unto thee shortly, 10 and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. 11 Let him that hath ears hear what the Spirit saith unto the congregations. 12 To him that overcometh will I give to eat manna that is hid, 13 and will give him a white stone, 14 and in the stone a new name written, 15 which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it.

The Paraphrase.

1. Fail in no wise, good John, said the said Lord Jesus Christ, consequently to make known to the christian preacher of the congregation of Pergamos, which though she remain here beneath upon earth, yet is she the very high building of God, many times assaulted and stricken of the wicked for confessing his truth, but never yet overthrown nor utterly destroyed. This church is not only high through grace, faith, the word of God, the Spirit of God, the invincible verity, and all other graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost; but also for the glory of the name of God, for the strength of his power, for the secret mysteries of his heavenly judgments, and for the most constant assertion of his godly truth.

Pergamos. Col. iii. Eph. ii. Luke xii. Matt. xvi. Heb. xi. John xvi. Gal. v. Psal. lxxviii. Eph. vi. Rom. xi.

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2. Shew her this heavenly message from him which hath from his mouth proceeding a fine sword, sharp-edged on both the sides; whereby is meant his mighty word, so effectual, quick, and strong in operation, that the infallible judgments thereof do not only condemn, but also destroy utterly all falsehood, filthiness, lies, lewdness, and wickedness.

Rev. i. Heb. iv. Eph. vi. Matt. x. John xvi. Rev. xix. Psal. cxxxviii. 1 Cor. ii. Heb. xi.

3. By my everlasting foresight (saith the Lord) I know thy christian works, and for thy faith's sake I allow them and praise them. I perceive also where thou dost remain and dwell, even where as is the resting-place of Satan, and the very kingdom of the devil; where as God's heavenly word is oppressed, contemned, and blasphemed of the infidels, tyrants, and hypocrites.

Rev. xvi. 1 Cor. i. 2 Pet. ii. Insi. i. Phil. ii. 2 Tim. iii.

4. But I much commend thee, that thou, dwelling among them, and sustaining daily persecution and rebukes, hast so strongly persevered in the truth, that thou hast neither denied my name, nor forsaken my faith:

Luke xii. Acts iv. Acts viii.

5. And specially in those terrible days, wherein that godly preacher and faithful witness of mine, called Antipas, among other was most cruelly murdered and slain, yea, before your faces, to put you the more in fear, lest ye should still confess my name and word, to the hinderance of Satan's kingdom; for there he dwelleth indeed. There is his seat, his throne, his habitacle.

Antipas. Rev. i. John xvi. Job i. Rev. xx.

6. Notwithstanding all these faithful points, yet have I somewhat against thee wherein thou art rebuke-worthy.

Hos. iv. 2 Pet. ii. Jude.

7. For thou art conversant with them that, contrary to their christian profession, support the execrable doctrine of the subtle soothsayer and cursed charmer Balaam, which by pestilent counsel caused king Balac to provoke the children of Israel to work wickedness, and so to have the curse of God, through this occasion: he should set before their eyes the most fair damsels of the Midianites preciously apparelled; and they, once tangled with their wanton beauty, should not only defile the laws of their fathers by the eating of meats dedicate to unclean idols, but also fall into the high displeasure of God for committing with them most vile fornication. Such unwholesome teachers are among thy people; take heed if thou list.

Numb. xxii. Primas. Africa. Numb. xxiv. Jer. ix. 1 Cor. viii. Isai. xxxiv. 2 Pet. ii. 2 Tim. iv. 1 John iv.

8. Thou art also very familiar with such ungodly apostates and false apostles as maintain the uncomely examples

Jude. Acts vi. 1 Tim. iv. Rom. i.

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and teachings of the Nicolaitans, which, corrupting godly marriage, not only permit their own wives to be common, but also they abash not to defile the wives of other men: whose damnable doings I detest and abhor.

Ezek. xviii. Phil. iii. 1 Tim. iv. 2 Pet. ii. Bar. vi. Bel and Drag. 2 Tim. iv. Ephes. iv. Psal. viii. Jude, 18. 1 Pet. ii. 1 Tim. iv.

9. I counsel thee therefore to repent in time, and to be converted from the errors of those covetous gluttons and ravenous lechers, which, condemning holy matrimony, permit all kinds of uncleanness, and nothing more greedily devour than that is offered up to idols in their dedications and feasts. Call back these abuses with sweet teachings, exhortations, desires, and patient rebukes; else will I within a while visit thee to thy displeasure.

Rev. xix. Eph. vi. Jer. ix. Zeph. iii. Hos. xii.

10. Yea, and I will valiantly fight against those Balaamitans, which give false counsel for filthy rewards, and against those Nicolaitans, that change holy wedlock for whoredom; and with the sword of my mouth, which is the invincible verity, shall I judge them, condemn them, and utterly destroy them, with all those shaven Midianites that with their whorish inventions, painted traditions, and ceremonial superstitions, have taken from me my most dear Israelites, bought with my precious blood. With the breath of my mouth shall I consume thee, and bring thee to nought.

2 Thess. ii. Job iv. Luke viii. John x. Matt. xvi.

11. Let him that hath but one ear of just understanding take gentle warning by such charitable premonishments as the Holy Spirit of God giveth unto the christian congregations.

Heb. xi. 1 John v. Matt. xvi. Neh. ix. John v. Psal. xxxiii.

12. To him that through constant faith in the name and doctrine of God neither feareth the world, sin, death, hell, nor the devil, will I give to taste, eat, and savour an hidden manna, a secret sweetness, a wisdom in the Spirit; that he shall feel the goodness thereof, and rejoice to know how sweet the Lord is, and what an heavenly treasure it is to trust in him: which manna is hid from the wise of this world.

Matt. xi. Isai. lv. Rom. ix.

13. I will also give him, for a token of perpetual peace and love, that pure and precious stone Jesus Christ, so white as the lily flower, innocent and clean from all contagious vices, to be his only and whole wisdom, righteousness, light, health, and redemption.

1 Pet. ii. 1 Cor. i. 1 John ii. Psal. lxviii.

14. And in the said white stone Jesus Christ (which is also the book of life) will I give him a new name written. I shall register him for the child of God, and the heir of life

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everlasting. For in him alone must ye be accepted, saved, and glorified. Isai. lxii. John i. Ephes. i.

15. Of this no man is certain, but he that is taught of the Spirit of God. No man can say Jesus is the Lord, but in the Holy Ghost. By the spirit of adoption ye cry Abba, Father. The only Spirit of the Lord ascertaineth your spirit, that ye are the sons of God. Rom. viii. 1 Cor. xii.

The Text.

1 And unto the angel of the congregation of Thyatira write; 2 This saith the Son of God, which hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, 3 whose feet are like brass: 4 I know thy works, and thy love, and thy service, and thy faith, and thy patience, and thy deeds; 5 which are more at the last than at the first. 6 Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, 7 that thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, 8 to teach and to deceive my servants, to make them commit fornication, and to eat meats offered up unto idols. 9 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not. 10 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, 11 and them that commit fornication with her, 12 into great adversity, except they turn from their deeds. 13 And I will kill her children with death. 14 And all the congregations shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts. 15 And I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

The Paraphrase.

1. Delay not consequently, my loving friend John, saith the Lord, expressly to manifest with pen unto the pastor of the elect congregation of Thyatira, which is from these low parts here a sweet-smelling sacrifice unto God of labour and contrition in the old aged man and body of death. For she detesteth the vanities of this world, she forsaketh the fruits of the flesh, she renounceth the concupiscence of the eyes, mortifieth her mortal members, she fleeth her sensual affects, and rendereth up herself unto her Lord God as a living, holy, and acceptable offering. Thyatira. Luke i. Rom. xii. Eph. iv. Ecclus. ii. Gal. v. 1 John ii. Col. iii. Rom. xii. Lam. ii.

2. Give unto that contrite and fervent congregation this comfort. Tell her, that this saith the dearly-beloved and natural Son of God, which hath his eyes of godly wisdom and knowledge so lively and effectual as a flame of fire, that he seeth all things, and nothing can pass from his righteousness in judgment:

3. Whose feet, or charitable affections towards man, are

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Cant. vii. Rev. xix. 1 Cor. ii. Jer. xvii. 1 John iv. Heb. vii. Isai. liii.

like unto brass brent in a furnace. For his most innocent manhood, by his own agreement, suffered here for his sake manifold afflictions and pains.

Heb. iv. Psal. xix. Prov. xxxi. Acts xiv. James i. Luke vi. Gal. vi.

4. Forsomuch as all things are open to mine eyes, and nothing can be hid from me (saith the Lord), I perceive thy fruitful works; I see neighbourly christian love, I consider thy liberal heart and hand to the poor, thy faithful exhortations, thy fervent spirit in the Lord, thy patient sufferance in adversity for the truth's sake, and thy other godly deeds beside.

Phil. i. 2 Cor. viii. Acts xi.

5. I mark it also, that thou shrinkest not in them, but rather goest forward with increase. For now at the last are they more effectual and plenteous than they were at the first; which greatly delighteth me.

Hos. vi.

6. Nevertheless yet I have somewhat to say against thee. For though I judge thee much to be commended, yet find I thee not without fault.

Mark x. Matt. v. 1 Kings xvi. Rev. ii. 2 Kings ix. Rev. xviii. Dan. viii.

7. Thou peaceably permittest without resistance that cruel woman and abominable strumpet Jezebel, which is the malignant church and synagogue of Satan, which is not ashamed to boast herself a prophetess, a publisher of the truth and maintainer of God's service, yea, and the mother of holy church herself,

1 Tim. iv. 2 Thess. ii. 2 Pet. v. 1 Tim. iii. Jer. iii. Jude. Isai. x.

8. Under that pretence to set forth devilish doctrine, to advance pernicious errors, and colour false lies in hypocrisy; to the intent she might therewith not only deceive my faithful servants, but also bring them into such trade of wickedness, that they should not force to commit whoredom in the spirit by falling unto strange worshippings, and to eat of idol-offerings in consenting to wicked laws and blasphemous traditions of old doting hypocrites.

Bar. vi. Matt. xxiii. Job xxiv. Lam. ii.

9. I have given to that wicked congregation many wholesome premonishments and warnings with convenient respite to remember her folly, and repent her detestable ways of living, lest she should perish; but she will in no wise be sorry, repent, nor forsake her accustomed idolatry.

Ezek. xvi. Eph. ii. 2 Sam. xxiv. John iii. Rev. xviii. Dan. viii. Rev. xiii. Rev. xvii.

10. Be in certainty therefore, I will cast her into a bed or couch of carnal quietness. She shall in this life have peace in the flesh, liberty in ungodliness, obedience of the world, and power in darkness, that she shall swim in wanton pleasures and bathe herself in innocent blood; and, to assist

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her in the same, she shall have subject unto her the sceptre, sword, authority, and power of princes, lords, rulers, and magistrates, that none so hardy, under pain of death, to check her, rebuke her, nor once say against her. This pleasant sleeping bed had the ten tribes of Israel under king Jeroboam, Achas, Zedechias, and the other two under Joram, Ochosias[1], and such like, till they were raised of their rest, and led captive into Babylon. Such a delectable resting-couch hath also the greater part of the world under Mahomet and the Romish pope, and shall have still till God root them out, destroy them with the breath of his mouth, and throw them into the fire everlasting.

1 Kings xii. 2 Chron. xxi. 2 Kings xxiv. Nah. iii. Franciscus Lambertus[2]. 2 Thess. ii. Matt. xxv.

11. Let them beware therefore, that as her lovers hath to do with that execrable whore, consenting to her pestilent laws and traditions, defending all godly ordinances, laudable rites, decent orders, civil policies, honest usages, comely fashions, holy ceremonies, necessary customs, and such like, being in very deed most damnable superstitions.

Rev. xvii. Isai. i. Rev. xviii. Jer. vii. Amos v. Mic. vi.

12. For them doubtless will I throw into the anguish of a desperate conscience here, and after this life into the unquietness of eternal damnation. The wicked shall have peace neither here nor there: neither shall their worm die, nor their fire go out, unless they decline from that wickedness, renounce their abominations, and convert to the truth, whiles they are yet here living.

Isai. xlviii. lxvi. Mark ix. Luke xiii. Ezek. xviii.

13. And as touching her superstitious children, which from their beginning have evermore sucked out of her venomous breasts all poison and ungodliness, forsaking, yea, and abhorring, the sweet vein of the living waters, them will I slay with death and condemnation everlasting, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Rev. ix. Bar. vi. Jer. ii. John iv. Matt. xxv.

14. Yea, and it shall then be evident and clear to all congregations in heaven and under heaven, which have been from the beginning, to their utter shame and confusion, that I am he from whom nothing can be hid. They shall perceive

Hos. x. Luke xxi. Isai. ii. Wisd. i. Jer. xvii. Rom. viii.

[1 Ochosias, the Greek form of Ahaziah.]

[2 Franciscus Lambertus, or Francis Lambert, was a Franciscan monk, born at Avignon in 1487. From studying the Scriptures he adopted the principles of the Reformation, and retired to Switzerland in 1522. In 1527 he was made professor of divinity at Marburg, where he died in 1530. He wrote commentaries on the Bible, and several controversial treatises.]

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also that I go so nigh them, that I search out the ground of the heart, and try the very reins or inward affects, so that I know all their privy sleights and practices, be they never so secret.

Deut. v. Jer. ii. Matt. xvi. John ii. Hos. iv.

15. And ground you upon this surely, I shall give unto every one of you, true and false, good and bad, righteous and unrighteous, according to your doings; rewarding them with life everlasting that have done the true works of faith, and them with eternal damnation that have left them undone to follow their own inventions.

The Text.

1 Unto you I say, and unto other of Thyatira, as many as have not this learning, and which have not known the deepness of Satan (as they say), 2 I will put upon you none other burden, 3 but that which ye have already. 4 Hold fast till I come. 5 And whosoever overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, 6 to him will I give power over nations, 7 and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, 8 and as the vessels of a potter shall he break them to shivers. 9 Even as I received of my Father, 10 so will I give him the morning star. 11 Let him that hath ears hear what the Spirit saith to the congregations.

The Paraphrase.

2 Thess. i. John vii. *Thyatira Macedonum civitas.* Prov. xvi. 1 Cor. ii. Dan. ii. 1 Pet. v. Rom. i.

1. And take this of my mouth (saith the Lord) aforehand, both unto you which have the doctrine of the Spirit, and unto other also of them that remain at Thyatira, that notable city of the Macedonians, so many as have not grounded in them that godly learning of the truth, but a trifling doctrine of their own imaginations contrary unto it; whereby they have not perceived the more than subtle crafts of that deceivable Satan, which evermore craftily compasseth to devour: what though their fantastical brains have given them so to think, standing much in their own conceit?

Matt. xi. Mark vii. Col. ii. Gal. iv. Luke xvii. Heb. x.

2. My mind is to yoke you with none other law, nor to burden you with none other traditions, than I have already given you; neither with ceremonies, rites, nor ancient customs, in the observation of days, months, times, nor years, in holidays, fastings, vigils, nor sabbaths; for they were but shadows of things to come.

John xv. Luke x. Matt. iv. Mark viii. 1 Tim. iv.

3. Regard only that sweet yoke and that light burden which ye have received of me. Hold ye fast to the gospel of the kingdom of God so long as ye shall continue here:

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and let the Pharisees' leaven, with old wives' fables, and hypocrites' dreams, pass by.

4. Let my godly ordinance suffice you. Add nothing unto my words of your own brains, lest I find you false liars when I shall come again to my latter judgment, and according to righteousness so condemn you. Deut. xii. Acts iii. Deut. iv. Hos. xii.

5. And whosoever is so earnestly faithful in the word of God, that he overcometh thereby his own lusts, and performeth to the latter end of his life the works that are there commanded to be done, and none other; 1 John v. Matt. x. Deut. xii. John xi.

6. To him will I give power, as to the son and heir of God, over nations or sects of the world, diverse in opinion and faith, as over serpents, scorpions, adders, and lions; Heb. i. Psal. xc. Mic. vii. Psal. ii. Jer. xiii.

7. That he shall not only overcome them with the mighty iron rod of the invincible verity; Wisd. iv.

8. But also, as the weak vessels of a potter, or as most vain fantasies, confound their dreams, destroy their imaginations, and bring their practices to nought, proving their traditions to be most vile draff[1], and most stinking dregs of sin; forsomuch as that which is not of faith is sin. Matt. xv. Rom. xiv. John vi. Mark xvi. 1 John iv.

9. And this power he shall have in no less efficacy and strength than I received it of my heavenly Father.

10. And besides all this I will freely give him myself to reward, which am the clear morning star and shining lantern of life; so that all shall be his that is mine: my birth, my labours, my life, my passion, and death, my resurrection, and ascension, with all their fruits, shall be his own proper good. Rev. xxii. Luke xii. John xvii. 1 Cor. i.

11. Let him that hath reason and discretion set beastly fantasies apart, and diligently note what the Holy Ghost saith here in this dangerous time to the dear congregations of God. 1 John i. Matt. xvii. Rom. viii. 2 Tim. iv.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 And write unto the angel of the congregation of Sardis; 2 This saith he that hath the seven spirits of God, 3 and the seven stars, 4 I know thy works. 5 Thou hast a name that thou livest, and thou art dead. 6 Wake, and strengthen the things which remain, 7 that are

[1 draff: hog's wash, or any coarse liquor. Nares' Glossary.]

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ready to die: 8 for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 9 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, 10 and hold fast and repent. 11 If thou shalt not watch, 12 I will come on thee as a thief, 13 and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 14 Thou hast a few names in Sardis, 15 which have not defiled their garments; 16 and they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy. 17 He that overcometh shall be clothed in white array, 18 and I will not put out his name out of the book of life; 19 and I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels. 20 Let him that hath ears hear what the Spirit saith unto the congregations.

The Paraphrase.

John xxi. Rev. i. 1 Tim. iii. Sardis. 1 Cor. i. Matt. x. 1 Cor. vi. 1 John i. 1 Pet. i. Phil. ii.

1. Thou shalt also so shortly as may coveniently be (saith the Lord to his peculiar servant St John) take pains by an epistle to admonish the watchman or curate of the chosen congregation of Sardis; which though it be of very slender reputation before the eyes of the wise, rich, and strong men of this world, yet is it precious in the sight of God, forsomuch as it was praised[1], bought, and redeemed, by the greatest payment that ever was, even by the precious blood of the undefiled Lamb and immaculate Son of God Jesus Christ. He it was that laboured, hungered, thirsted, and fainted, according to the weakness of the human nature, and finally suffered blasphemies, curses, scorns, lies, persecutions, and rebukes, with the most painful death of his body at the last, to deliver her, make her atonement, and restore her again to the favour of God.

Luke xviii. Matt. xx. John xix. Heb. ix. Mark xvi. Rom. i. 1 Pet. iv. Rev. i. Isai. xl.

2. Find the means that she may know (saith the Lord Jesus), that this is to her the message of admonishment or warning from him which hath in his power to distribute of his pleasure the seven spirits of God, or the universal gifts of the Holy Ghost:

Rev. i. Matt. xxviii. Luke xiv. Mark ix. Rev. xxii. 2 Pet. ii.

3. And hath also in his right hand the seven stars, which are the bishops or preachers of all congregations, with full authority and power to hold them still or to throw them forth; to glorify them, if they be faithful ministers of his word, or to damn them for ever, if they be deceivable hypocrites, and for lucre prefer their own crooked inventions.

Exod. ii. 2 Sam. xii. Heb. iv.

4. Thou workest not so secretly (saith the Lord), but I know thy deeds, and perceive whereabout thou goest: for

[1 praised: appraised.]

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unto me all secrets are open, clear and manifest. When thou thinkest I do not perceive, then see I thee most of all.

5. Thou hast a name of life, an outward shew of virtue and of goodness, and a shining pretence of much holiness; yet art thou before God a dead rotten idol, full of hypocrisy and falsehood. Men think ye a goodly creature, yet art thou nothing less.

Zech. xii. Matt. vii. 1 John iv. Matt. xxiii. Acts xiii. 1 Pet. v.

6. Awake therefore quickly from thy more than idle imaginations and feeble sophisms, and take unto thee faith and spirit. Watch upon thy cure, and see to their profit.

John iv. 2 Tit. iv. Isai. iv.

7. Consider that thy ways in the outward letter have made my people weak, faint, and feeble, and left them at the very point of death. Strengthen them now anew with that which is effectual, strong, sure, lively, true, and necessary, which is the sincere verity and faith, lest thou perish with the wicked.

Ephes. vi. Heb. i. James i. Rev. xviii.

8. For though thou hast the godly gift of prophecy with the grace of understanding and judgment, yet have I found thy works ungodly, and thy doings vile and abominable before God my celestial Father. For thou hast been inwardly corrupt with avarice and ambition, like as was Balaam the deceitful prophet and wicked soothsayer.

1 Cor. xiii. Luke viii. Jude. Isai. lxiv. Rom. i. Numb. xxv.

9. It becometh the judge to know afore what he shall judge, which hath caused me to search out thy carnal and miserable ways. Call therefore unto thy remembrance how thou by the singular gift of God hast received his word, and heard his gospel, which is the kingdom of health, at the very mouth of his apostles.

Job x. 2 Cor. vi. James ii. Matt. vii. Psal. xviii. James i.

10. And forsomuch as thou hast not esteemed it according to the worthiness thereof, nor yet been thankful unto God for such an heavenly gift, but rather swinishly trodden it under thy feet, and currishly persecuted his faithful servants for it; have remorse in thy conscience, and once again set sure hands upon it, embrace it, hold it fast, and faithfully believe it, repent from the heart thy ungodly usages past, and from henceforth live according unto it.

Psal. l. Matt. vii. Luke xiii.

11. If thou wilt not do so, taking of me this gentle warning, and watch as one uncertain of the hour of death, living as thou wouldest die by and by,

Mark i. Acts xvi. Matt. xxiv. 1 Thess. v.

12. I shall (as doth the thief in the night) come upon

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2 Pet. iii. Rev. xvi. Luke xxi. Psal. xlviii. thee unlooked for, with death shall I destroy thee unbewares; so shall hell and damnation swallow thee up for ever.

Matt. xxv. Mark xiii. 13. And thou shalt neither know the day nor the hour, the time nor the minute, that I thus fiercely come upon thee, and justly suppress thee according to thy ungodly deservings.

Luke xiii. Prov. x. 14. And in spite of thy cruel heart, yet are there a few new brethren and lovers of the truth in the city of Sardis, though their number be but small, which are so dear unto God, that he hath registered their names in the book of life.

Luke xii. Matt. x. Dan. xii. 2 Pet. iii. Matt. xv. Gal. iv. Phil. ii. Ezek. ii. 15. These have for no painted speech, glozing promise, suggestion, nor threatening, once soiled their garments with thy dirty ceremonies, nor defiled their conversation with thy beggarly traditions. In the midst of the wicked and froward generation their hearts are towards me and my word.

Rev. vii. Psal. xxxi. 16. Wherefore by promise they shall walk with me in white; their faults shall never be imputed unto them, their sins shall be wiped clean away, I will clear them and restore them to perpetual innocence, and make them partakers with me in everlasting felicity and glory. For doubtless they are worthy, for my will forsaking their own will, and leaving the corrupt ways of men to follow my sincere word.

John xii. Luke x. Matt. xix. Heb. xi.

Matt. x. Rev. xiv. 1 Cor. xv. Deut. xxv. Rev. xx. Ephes. i. 17. He that after this sort overcometh, persevering in the faith thereof to the latter end of his life, shall be sure of these three benefits. He shall be clothed with me in white apparel, made innocent and pure, incorruptible, impassible, and immortal.

18. I will in no wise put his name out of the book of life, nor separate him from the predestinate number of them which shall be saved, but associate him with the righteous.

Luke xii. Matt. x. Rom. viii. 19. And besides all this, I will earnestly witness him, confess him, and allow him by name, before my heavenly Father and all his company of angels, for one of mine, to have the inheritance with me.

Mark iv. Dan. ix. Ephes. i. 20. Let him that hath ears in no case be dull or slack in hearing, but diligently attend, and mark what the Spirit of God doth here utter before the congregations, to their singular warning and comfort.

The Text.

1 And write unto the angel of the congregation of Philadelphia: 2 This saith he that is holy and true, 3 which hath the key of David,

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4 which openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth: 5 I know thy works. 6 Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it. 7 For thou hast a little strength, [8] and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I shall give some of the congregation of Satan, which call themselves Jews and are not, but do lie; 10 Behold, I will make them that they shall come and worship before thy feet, 11 and shall know that I have loved thee. 12 Because thou hast kept the words of my patience, therefore will I keep thee from the hour of temptation, 13 which will come upon all the world, to tempt them that dwell upon the earth. 14 Behold, I come shortly. 15 Hold that which thou hast, that no man take away thy crown. 16 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, 17 and he shall go no more out. 18 And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, new Jerusalem, 19 which cometh down out of heaven from my God: 20 and I will write upon him my new name. 21 Let him that hath ears hear what the Spirit saith unto the congregations.

The Paraphrase.

1. Moreover, defer in no wise, my trusty disciple John, (saith the Lord Jesus,) by writing to signify or make mention to the tidings-bringer, bishop, or overseer of the dearly-beloved church of Philadelphia; which, as beseemeth a christian congregation in this life, is never without brotherly charity and love, but always hath a sweet compassion upon the poor, the needy, the simple, the desolate, the forsaken, the disdained and miserable people of this world. She hath also in her heart a woful pity, and a lamentable dolour, when she seeth men wicked, vain, blasphemous, hateful, beastly, idle, covetous, superstitious, and full of other ungodliness.

John xix. 1 Cor. x. Acts x. Philadelphia. Ephes. v. 1 John iv. Isai. lviii. Ezek. xviii. Prov. xxi. Matt. v. Luke vi.

2. Let this be known to her first of all, that these are the favourable sayings of him which is holy of himself, and alone maketh other holy; which is only true, and the verity itself, without whom no truth can be had:

Lev. xx. 1 Sam. ii. John xiv. Rom. iii. Isai. xxii. Luke i.

3. Which hath also in his hand and power the key of the house of David, which is the faithful kingdom or congregation of God.

John x. Matt. xvi. John xvi. Wisd. xiv.

4. Where as he openeth to the faithful believers by the gospel-preaching, no man can spear[1] them out of the kingdom of God by no excommunication nor curse: where as he doth loosen from the bands of sin by the Holy Ghost, no man can bind to damnation by no interdiction nor sentence, have

John xx. Rev. xiii. Job xii. Mal. ii. Rom. i. 2 Thess. ii. Matt. vi. Psal. lxxii. Isai. xxvi.

[1 spear: fasten or shut. Halliwell.]

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he never so great power given him. And again, if he shutteth up the kingdom from the unfaithful hypocrites, no man can admit them to it by blessings, remissions, nor a thousand years of their pardon: if he seclude them from it, no man can able them to it again by no authority nor power.

Heb. xi. Matt. xvii.

5. I know (saith the Lord) thy doings from the very root, and from whence thy works do spring, even from a sincere faith in my word: wherefore they are to my mind and pleasure.

Luke xxiv. Psal. cxviii. Mark iv. Ephes. i. John xvi.

6. Forsomuch therefore as I find thee thus grounded in faith, be thou certain and sure of it, I have set before thee an open door; I have illumined thy senses, and cleared thy understanding, to know the holy scriptures, and perceive the high mysteries therein written, so admitting thee to my kingdom. And this door can no man shut up again: neither shall the power of this world, nor yet the gates of hell, be able to prevail against this opening.

Matt. xvi. Rev. xii. James iv. Matt. xxiii. Rev. xviii.

7. And this hast thou of me partly for thy meekness. For whereas the wicked do seem to themselves to be witful, strong, learned, rich, righteous, religious, and holy spiritual fathers; thou esteemest thyself but an abject of the world, wretched, weak, blind, poor, sinful, and a miserable doer, as concerning the flesh.

Psal. lxxxiii. Matt. v.

John xiv. Rev. ii. Ephes. v. Luke xii. Acts iv. John v.

8. But thou art she that hath kept my sayings, and by such strength as I have given thee observed also my laws and commandments. It is thou that hast stood by my truth stedfastly, and not denied my name in the time of troublous persecution. Wherefore thou canst in no wise perish before me.

Gal. iv. Rev. ii. Rev. xviii. I Thess. iv. Rev. ii.

9 And as concerning the wicked, behold how I shall order them. I shall not only set them clear from the filthy traditions of that false congregation or synagogue of Satan; but I will also take certain from thence of the best learned, converting them from their errors, and giving them unto thee, which aforetime called themselves Jews, or the chosen children of Abraham, and were not so in deed. They boasted themselves very much to be the anointed Israelites, the consecrated sons of promise, and the holy spiritual people of God, like as the residue doth yet still to this hour; but they lied full falsely. They were for that time false dissembling hypo-

John viii. Rom. ix. Gal. iv. John xiv. Matt. vii. Mark xiv.

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crites and cruel adversaries to the truth, as their companions are still.

10. Be sure that these will I so inwardly move and effectually provoke, that they shall come unto thee to be of thy congregation. They shall gladly submit themselves to thy doctrine, they shall worship God not in outward shadows with bondage, but in spirit and truth with liberty, at thy feet, after thy wholesome instructions and godly admonitions.

Psal. lvi. Rom. xi. Isai. lx. Rev. xxi. Matt. xv. John iv. Acts ii.

11. And whereas they have thought thee aforetime of me to be hated, when thou hast been in persecution, they shall now well perceive and know (my Spirit speaking in thee, and such heavenly secrets coming from thee), that thou standest much in my love, and art greatly in my favour.

Psal. lxx. Wisd. v. Acts ii. Joel ii.

12. And forsomuch as thou hast constantly holden and manfully stood by that word for the which I have suffered much, not only in mine own flesh, but also in thee and in other my servants, for no adversity falling from it, I will preserve thee in the hour of temptation. Thou shalt for no violence decline from the truth; thou shalt for no torment forsake the verity. So mighty a stomach and so strong a heart shall I give thee for the time of thy temptations, that thou shalt not be once moved.

Jer. xxxi. James i. John xix. Luke xxiii. 2 Cor. xii. Luke xxi. Jer. v. Rev. xi.

13. For no doubt of it, this fierce temptation and cruel handling of the boisterous antichrists, Mahomet standing in the way of sinners, and the Romish pope sitting in the most pestilent seat of errors, will come upon all the world by execrable sects of false prophets, liars, hypocrites, blasphemers, and teachers of devilish doctrine, to tempt and allure them which dwell here upon earth, sometime by flattering promotions, sometime by threatenings and penalties, to renounce that verity, and deny that word, to the utter damnation of their souls.

Psal. i. Mark xii. 1 John ii. 2 Pet. ii. 2 Tim. iv.

14. But in any wise take heed and watch in prayer; for I come shortly as a righteous judge, giving to every one according to their hearts' inventions. Consider the life but short in this world, and the reward great, if thou persevere in thy christian profession. Hold fast that godly faith which thou hast taken, with her wholesome fruits.

Acts xx. Jude. Rom. iii. 1 Pet. v. Rev. xxii. Job xiv. Matt. v. 1 Cor. xvi. Luke vi.

15. Stick sure to that heavenly word which thou hast received, lest thou falling from it lose the crown prepared for thee. I have done my part: I have chosen thee to eternal life, and promised thee the inheritance thereof without thy

James i. John xvii. Rom. viii. 2 Pet. ii. Matt. xxi. Rom. viii.

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deservings; beware now lest thou lose it by apostasy, and lest another take it from thee by doing the fruits thereof.

Ephes. vi. Matt. x. Acts vi. Jer. i. Ephes. ii.

16. Desire my Spirit to strengthen thee, that thou mayest persevere and stand fast. For that faithful servant and mighty soldier, which continueth in that verity to the end, will I set up for a strong pillar and sure buttress in the temple of my God, which is the church or faithful congregation of my heavenly Father, prefigured by the temple of Salomon at Jerusalem.

1 Kings vi. Mark xvi. Matt. vii. Ephes. ii. John xv. 1 Cor. iii. Eccius. xv. John xx.

17. And so strong will I build him upon the hard rock, that he shall stand always and never more be removed. No more shall he be a foreigner nor a stranger, but a citizen with the saints, and of the household of God, most surely grounded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

Rev. xxi. Rom. i. Matt. xxv. John xv. 1 Cor. vi. Ephes. ii. James ii.

18. And I shall write upon him, to his singular commodity, the name of my God and Father almighty, and the name of the beautiful city of my God also, called new Jerusalem, renewed in the Spirit. Evermore shall he be called a servant of the Lord, an apostle or witness of God, a lamb of Christ's fold, a sheep of his pasture, a branch of his vine, a member of his church, an imp[1] of his kingdom, a citizen of heaven, and an inheritor of everlasting life.

Titus iii. John iii. Rom. viii.

19. And all this cometh not from beneath; it riseth not of his good works, merits, nor deservings, but it cometh out of heaven from my God. It is only his goodness, grace, liberality, forgiveness, pity, and mercy.

John i. 1 Cor. xv.

20. I will also garnish him, and beautify him with my new name. He shall evermore for his faith's sake be called the son of God, and rise at the latter day in full glory incorruptible, immortal, and clear, in perpetual peace and concord.

Rev. xxi. Mark iv. Rev. ii.

21. He that hath by the gift of God an ear, let him consider wherefore he hath it, and apply it to the right use, discreetly weighing what the Holy Ghost's mind is to the christian congregations in these heavenly premonishments.

The Text.

1 And unto the angel of the congregation which is in Laodicea write: 2 This saith Amen, the faithful and true witness, 3 the beginning of the creatures of God; 4 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot. 5 I would thou wert cold or hot. 6 But be-

[1 imp: young offspring.]

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cause thou art between both, and neither cold nor hot, 7 I will spew thee out of my mouth. 8 Because thou sayest thou art rich and increased with goods, and hast need of nothing, 9 and knowest not how thou art wretched and miserable, poor, blind, and naked; 10 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, 11 that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, 12 that thy filthy nakedness do not appear. 13 Anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, 14 that thou mayest see.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And now last of all, my dear friend John, (saith the Lord Jesus,) forget not to admonish by thy handwriting also the elder of the christian congregation which is in Laodicea, a notable city of the Asians, which pretendeth to be a just people, or a company to whom faith is reckoned for righteousness, and are nothing less[2]. In the sight of men they appear good, and their works seem glorious; yet are they before God no sincere christians, but dissembling hypocrites indeed.

John xix. 2 Thess. ii. *Laodicea civitas Asiæ.* Rom. iv. Matt. vi Luke xi. Isai. i.

2. Cause them to know certainly that this is the charitable warning of him which coveteth all things to be well, perfect and good, and is in very deed a witness faithful and true, yea, the eternal verity itself, for that they should give the more credit to his sayings.

1 Tim. ii. Psal. cxliv. John xiv. Rev. xix. Rev. xxi.

3. Moreover he is the original beginning, not only of the creatures, forsomuch as he was that word by whom God created all things in the beginning; but also of the creatures of God, forsomuch as he, becoming flesh in this latter age, restored them again to the peace and favour of God, for that they should evermore seek unto him in their need as to the very fountain or well-spring of all goodness.

Ecclus. i. John i. James i. Phil. ii.

4. Thy works are evidently open before me (saith the Lord), and I know them in their kind. I see thou art neither cold nor hot. Thou art neither a full infidel, nor a full believer, neither a perfect pagan, nor a perfect Christian. Thou art neither constant in the faith, nor yet all without faith. Outwardly thou art hot, but within thou art cold as ice. Inwardly thou abhorrest the word of God, yet dost thou not outwardly condemn it.

Matt. xi. John iv. Heb. iv. Prov. xxiv. 2 Pet. ii. Gal. iii. Rom. ii. 1 Cor. xiii.

5. I would thou were either cold or hot, either a Christian or none at all, either a perfect lover of the verity, or else a full hater of it; and not a dissembling hypocrite as thou art,

Phil. iii. 1 Tim. i. Gal. ii. Acts xx. Jude. 2 Pet. ii. Isai. v. 1 Tim. iv.

[2 nothing less: i. e. there is no title which they less deserve.]

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judging evil good and good evil, calling darkness light and light darkness, making sour sweet and sweet sour, allowing fables and lies, and contemning the wisdom of God. None is so far from the kingdom of heaven as is a false Christian. Much sooner is he converted to the truth that is all cold, or all without faith, than he that under the colour and pretence of God's laws maintaineth errors and lies.

Matt. iii. Luke iii. 2 Tim. iv. John xvi. Luke xviii. Gal. iv. Rev. ii. Matt. xv. Rom. i. John xviii. Matt. viii. John xii. Matt. xxii. Mic. iii. Luke ix. Heb. vi. Luke xviii. Eccles. vii. Rev. xviii.

6. Forsomuch therefore as I find thee between both, and neither of both, half cold half hot, and neither fully cold nor hot, neither faithfully given to God's word, nor all whole[1] without, but a false glozing hypocrite;

7. I will begin to vomit thee as a morsel out of season, and spew thee out of my mouth as a thing out of kind. Thou shalt not be digested: neither shall my word allow thee, nor my promise admit thee to rest with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But thou shalt be thrown forth into exterior darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. I will cast thee out, detest thee, and abhor thee. For much worse are they that abuse or despise the gift of God, than they which never received it.

Matt. xxiii. Luke xi. John ii. Zephan. i. Rev. xviii. Amos v. Eccles. i.

8. Thou pratest very sore of thy riches, thy merits, good deeds, and deservings. Thou boastest thyself much of thy increase in goodness by deeds of supererogation and works more than need. Yea, thou art not ashamed to think thyself so greatly to abound in learning, wisdom, righteousness, and holiness, that all have need of thee and thou of none, selling to the wretched idiots of the world thy masses, thy diriges[2], thy fastings, thy memories, thy kneelings, thy crouchings, with other idle observations.

Psal. cxliii. Prov. xiv. Rom. v. Ephes. iv. Rev. xvi.

9. But thou rememberest not that thou art wretched of thyself, and wicked of thine own nature. Thou considerest not that thou art miserable and sinful in thy life; poor, without understanding and knowledge; feeble, without the strength of God's Spirit; blind, without judgment and faith; and naked, without verity and all good christian works.

Isai. lv. Matt. vii. Luke xvii. John xix. Psal. xviii.

10. I charitably therefore admonish thee to remember thyself: I counsel thee also, as one minding thee good, to buy of me gold tried in the fire. Come unto me with faith, and

[1 all whole: altogether.]

[2 Diriges: a solemn service of the Romish church, being a hymn beginning *Dirige gressus meos*. Nares' Glossary.]

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ask in the ferventness of soul. If thou be feeble-hearted, say, "Lord, increase my faith." Desire my heavenly word to thy comfort, with understanding to perceive it and know it. It is treasure much more precious than gold; it is sweetness more dulcet than honey. And tried it is most pure and clean by the Holy Ghost. Thou shalt have it without payment. Thy good heart shall only suffice me. Eccius. xxiii. Mal. iii. Isai. lii. Prov. xxiii. 1 Cor. iv.

11. Diligently procure it, that thou mayest be rich in faith and righteousness, in the merit of Jesus Christ, and in the favour of God by them, and that thou mayest be clothed in white raiment of innocency and cleanness, not only before men, but also before God. Rev. vii. 2 Pet. iii. Rom. xii.

12. Be never without verity, faith, righteousness, and charity, with other gifts of the Holy Ghost; lest the filthy nakedness of hypocrisy and sin, for all thy painted colours, appear to thy confusion. Let thine own dirty merits alone, and deck thee with the precious deservings of the Son of God, that thou mayest have thy sins wiped away, clearly forgiven, covered, and never more imputed unto thee by him. Gal. v. 2 Cor. v. Rev. xvii. Isai. lxiv. 1 Pet. i. Psal. xxxi. Rom. viii.

13. And to avoid thy blindness, see thou anoint thine eyes, thy mind, or affection, thy judgment or knowledge, with the eye-salve of clearness, which is Jesus Christ, the sweet-smelling ointment of health.

14. Consider that he alone was born for thee, and died for thee; and take him for thy only wisdom, satisfaction, holiness, and redemption, that thou mayest hereafter see. Let this precious liquor take from thine eyes all filthy corruption: and whatsoever thou shalt hereafter do in word or in deed, do all in the name of that Lord, giving thanks unto God the Father by him. For he is the salve that shall heal thee, and the light that shall clear thee. Psal. xviii. John viii. Cant. i. Isai. lxiii. Acts iv. 1 Cor. i. 1 John ii. Ephes. i. Col. iii. Jer. xvii.

The Text.

1 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. 2 Be fervent therefore, and repent. 3 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. 4 If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in unto him, 5 and will sup with him, and he with me. 6 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit on my seat, 7 even as I overcome and have sitten with my Father on his seat. 8 Let him that hath ears hear what the Spirit saith unto the congregations.

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The Paraphrase.

Prov. iii. Gen. xviii. Heb. xii. 1 Cor. xi. Isai. v. Luke vi. Rom. i.

1. So many as I love I rebuke earnestly, lest they should perish with the wicked. And those that I favour I chasten in this life, lest they should be damned for ever. Who is that man that hath of me here neither chastisement nor rebuke, but is left without restraint, wallowing in the concupiscence and desires of his flesh? A great sign it is of the indignation of God; whereas the other is an evident token of love.

James i. Ephes. iv. Rev. ii.

2. For henceforth therefore be fervent in the truth. Earnestly embrace it, keep it, and follow it. Abhor thy old superstitions, and repent from the heart that thou hast been so long neither hot nor cold.

Cant. v. Rom. viii. 2 Thess. ii. Psal. cvi.

3. Behold I stand at the door of thy heart, as one ready to help thy weakness. And I knock at the portal of thy conscience, as one that would gladly comfort thee. I send forth my heavenly word to succour thee, lighten thee, raise thee up, and save thee.

John x. Mark xvi. John xiv.

4. If any man with a glad heart will hear my voice, or the true preaching of my word, and open the door of his faith, thankfully to receive it, I will come in unto him, enduing with all spiritual delights, as righteousness, peace, love, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Gal. v. Luke viii. John xv. Luke xiv. Matt. iii. 1 Cor. ii.

5. Yea, to him shall I make manifest as to my friend the hidden mysteries of the scripture, and secret counsels of my Father. And he shall finally sup with me and with him in the eternal habitacle of God, where no heart can esteem what he hath prepared for them that love him.

1 John v. Dan. ii. Rev. xxi. 1 Cor. vi. 1 Cor. xv. Rom. iii. Ephes. i.

6. That man, which through the earnest zeal of God's truth destroyeth hypocrisy, and overcometh sin, will I admit to reign with me in the kingdom of my Father, and grant him to sit with me in the seat of everlasting peace, as a dear member of mine own body, declaring him a triumphant conqueror in me, over damnation, hell, death, and the devil, in a glorified nature;

John xii. Rev. xxi. Matt. xiii. Phil. iii. Ephes. i.

7. Even as myself was before, sitting with my celestial Father in the seat of his eternity; and to have with me that health, that blessing, that joy, that victory, that honour, power, and glory, that I have.

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8. Let him that God hath given ears unto, apply them to his mind, and mark what the Spirit hath here spoken to the christian congregations; for thereupon resteth his life or his death, his salvation or his damnation.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 After this I looked, and behold a door was open in heaven; 2 and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet, talking with me, which said, 3 Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be fulfilled hereafter. 4 And immediately I was in the Spirit, 5 and, behold, a seat was set in heaven, and one sat on the seat. 6 And he that sat was to look upon like unto a jasper stone and a sardine stone. 7 And there was a rainbow about the seat in sight like a smaragde[1]. 8 And about the seat were twenty-four seats; 9 and upon the seats twenty-four elders sitting, 10 clothed in white raiment, 11 and had on their heads crowns of gold. 12 And out of the seat proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices. 13 And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the seat, which are the seven spirits of God. 14 And before the seat there was a sea of glass like unto crystal. 15 And in the midst of the seat and round about the seat were four beasts, 16 full of eyes before and behind.

The Paraphrase.

1. After this special injunction of my Lord and Master Jesus Christ (saith saint John), I did cast up mine eyes towards the sky, lifting up my heart to give thanks unto God. And anon, as I seriously beheld the face of the firmament, or majesty of God's works, I saw a door open in heaven; which was a signification to me that God minded to open certain high mysteries of the scripture, and hidden secrets concerning his kingdom or church, unto me his simple servant.

Rev. i. John xiii. Psal. cxx. 1 Thess. iv. Eccles. xliii. Ezek. i. Acts xiv. Luke xxiv.

2. And the first thing that ascertained me of the same from thence, was a mighty great voice, as it had been the stout noise of a trump, or the vehement blast of a horn. The which voice though it were fearful unto my flesh (as commonly the commandment of God is), yet was it solacious unto my spirit, forsomuch as it familiarly talked with me, and said these words:

Ezek. iii. Psal. xxix. Isai. xviii. John vi. Matt. vi. Jer. xxxi.

[1 smaragde: emerald.]

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Ephes. v. Col. iii. Phil. iii. Gal. v. 1 Cor. xii. Rev. i.

3. Come thou up hither. Suspend thine own will, wit, study, practice, and judgment. Condemn that thou hast of nature. Lift up thyself above thyself, ascend in soul by the Spirit and power of God; and I will shew unto thee things wonderful, and such as must without fail be fulfilled in every point hereafter by the unvariable ordinance of God.

Rom. viii. 2 Cor. xii.

4. And as it had been in a thought, I was suddenly by the Lord's power taken up. I was in the spirit indeed, secluded from all carnal imaginations.

Psal. xlv. Wisd. ix. Ephes. i. John xiv. Psal. lxxvii. Acts vii. 2 Kings vii. Luke vii. 1 Cor. vi.

5. And anon I was ware of a beautiful seat prepared in heaven, which moved me to consider that before the constitution of the world almighty God had appointed by his Spirit to reign in his faithful church. For I saw that one sat upon that seat, as upon the beautiful throne of his glory. No where else reigneth God but among his chosen people. He dwelleth not in temples made by hand, he resteth not in houses of man's preparation. Is the kingdom of God anywhere else than within man? Hath God any temple that he more favoureth than man's faithful heart?

Isai. liv. Ezek. xxviii. Dan. vii. Psal. xliv. Dan. iv. Hab. iii.

6. And he that gloriously sat upon that comely seat was like by all similitude to a jasper stone, and resembled also a precious stone called a sardine; betokening that his reign is durable and strong, his power firm and invariable, his glory clear and precious, and that he himself is as the red jasper, beautiful and orient, and as the green sardine, fresh, fair, and never fading, that man should ever be desirous of him: whose will to consider is our felicity, and whose pleasure to follow is our perfectness.

Psal. xvi. Wisd. xv. Luke vi.

The rainbow is the covenant.

Zech. ii. Prov. viii. 1 Sam. iii. Ezek. xxviii. John xvi. 2 Cor. xiii. Phil. iv.

7. And there was a fair rainbow about that glorious seat, in sight like a smaragde or an emerald stone: which signifieth his perpetual covenant of peace and love to all them that have faith, which are so dear unto him as is the apple of his own eye, or as the thing which he desireth most. And no less precious the said covenant is, than the fresh emerald with his amorous hue and beautiful shew of love, that we should the rather covet it. For nothing is more avidiously to be desired than is the sweet peace of God.

The twenty-four seats are virtues.

Gal. v. Isai. xi.

8. And about that exceeding fair seat or empire of the Lord were twenty-four other mean seats appointed, which put me anon in remembrance of charity, patience, stedfastness, love, joy, peace, temperance, justice, knowledge of God,

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meekness, and other fruits of faith, with innumerable gifts of the Holy Ghost, wherein the servants of God have aforetime and still do continually rest.

9. For upon those seats were twenty-four elders, or notable ancient men sitting: which seemeth unto me to be Abel and Noah, Abraham and David, Moses and Elias, Joseph and John Baptist, the prophets and apostles, the preachers and martyrs, with such other like; to whom Christ promised in the regeneration to sit with him upon twelve seats, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. These set numbers in the scriptures of twenty-four, or of twelve, and such like, note certainty in the promise of God towards them which are in themselves without number.

Rev. v. Matt. xix. Heb. xi. Ecclus. xlv. Ephes. iv. Matt. xix.

Number in the scriptures. Dan. vii. Rev. vii.

10. And the foresaid elders, or men of ripe discretion, were clothed in white raiment or apparel of innocency, according to the commandment of the Holy Ghost. For their works were pure and clean before God, rising only of faith, and were never defiled with the filthy traditions of men.

11. They had also upon their heads, as mighty rulers and governors, crowns of fine gold, in token that they had here the governance in his word, and shall hereafter be partakers with Christ in his heavenly kingdom and glory.

Heb. xi. Rev. xiv. What are meant by the crowns.

12. Great is the majesty of the throne of God, and the power much. For from his heavenly seat into the universal world proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices, which are the manifold and divers respects of his word. For a fearful lightning it is, when it rebuketh, throweth down, and condemneth the sinner. It is a terrible thundering, when it feareth, threateneth, and commandeth things contrary to the flesh. And it is a solacious voice again, when it raiseth, relieveth, and quickeneth the desolate conscience with comfortable promises. And full is all the scripture of these, which cometh from Sion, and the sweet word of God which cometh from Jerusalem.

Ezek. i. Psal. xcvi. Rev. xvi. Zech. vi. Acts ii. John xvi. Psal. cxviii. Rom. xvi. John vi. Isai. ii. Joel ii.

13. And there were seven lamps of flaming fire burning before the said throne of God, which are the seven spirits of God, or the universal gifts of the Holy Ghost, prefigured in the scriptures by the seven lights of one candlestick, the seven eyes of one stone, and by seven horns and eyes also of the lamb. These shew light evermore before God's sight. The church without them in no wise can be the throne of God.

Cant. viii. Isai. xl. Zech. iv. Zech. iii. Rev. v. John xv.

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Ezek. xlvii. Rev. i. John xiv. Psal. xl. Mal. iii.

14. And before the said seat there was as it had been a sea of glass, a plentiful understanding of the verity, first given unto Christ by the Father, and then unto the church or congregation by the Spirit of Christ. And this sea was like unto a crystal, clear, beautiful, and pure, without any corruption of human fantasies.

Mal. iii. Ezek. i.

15. In the midst of that heavenly seat, and in the circuit of the same, were four beasts seen, of diverse natures and shapes, not signifying the four greater prophets, nor yet the four evangelists (as no small number of doctors have fantasied), but rather the universal number of all faithful believers and earnest setters forth of the verity in the four quarters of the whole world. And this may be gathered by the noise of their wings in Ezekiel, by their crying of *Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus*, and by their shewing of the mysteries of the opened seals of the book, as hereafter followeth. By whom are to be understood the sincere openings of God's word, and the continual praising of his glorious name. These beasts are in the midst of the seat or congregation of God, when they teach them and exhort them to persist in the truth. They are also in the circuit of the same, when they diligently labour to defend them from the doctrine of devils and errors of hypocrites.

Joannes Baconthorpe, Albertus, and others. Ezek. x. Dan. iii.

Ezek. i. Isai. vi. Rev. v.

Franciscus Lambertus.

Georgius Æmilius. 1 Pet. v. Ezek. v. 1 Tim. iv.

Ezek. i. x. John xv. Matt. xiii. Luke viii. John viii. Haymo. 1 Cor. ii. John vi. John xvi.

16. These beasts were full of fair eyes before and behind: which is a clear knowledge in the mysteries of God's word. The sincere favourers of God's heavenly truth do see many wonderful things, and know many secret marvels, not only concerning matters past, but also of judgments to come. So many eyes have they as they have perceived verities: for they, once made spiritual, by faith discern all things. They are taught of God; and the Holy Ghost doth lead them into all truth.

The Text.

1 And the first beast was like a lion, 2 the second beast like a calf, 3 and the third beast had a face like a man, 4 and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. 5 And the four beasts had each one of them six wings. 6 And round about without and within they were full of eyes. 7 And they had no rest neither day nor night, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. 8 And when those beasts gave glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sat on the seat, which liveth for ever and ever, 9 the twenty-

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four elders fell down before him that sat on the throne, and worshipped him that liveth for ever, 10 and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, Lord, to receive glory and honour and power. 12 For thou hast created all things, and for thy will's sake they are and were created.

The Paraphrase.

1. These four beasts have four divers exterior similitudes, which are not else but the outward tokens, testimonies, and signs of faith, or the fruitful works thereof only proceeding: for faith is never without her wholesome fruits. The first beast was in similitude like unto a lion, strong and mighty in power. And that are they which have laid aside the old man of sin with his feeble faint works, and converted themselves into the ghostly image of Christ, which is the mighty strong lion of the tribe of Juda, for that they might have the victory over sin.

Ambrosius Ansbertus. Rom. iii. Gal. v. Prov. xxx. Prov. xxviii. Col. iii. Rom. viii. 2 Cor. iii. Rev. v.

2. The second beast was fashioned like unto a calf, much used in the old law to be offered up in sacrifice. And such are they which, forsaking themselves and mortifying the corrupt lusts of their flesh, do walk in a new Christian life, and offer up themselves unto God as a living sacrifice, ready to suffer all kinds of persecution and death for his name's sake.

Isai. xl. Exod. xxix. Gal. v. Col. iii. Rom. vi. Rom. xii. 2 Tim. iii.

3. The third beast had a face in favour like a man, having reason, wit, and discretion. And those are they which, through policy of faith and prudence in the Spirit, so wisely and discreetly order themselves in that they go about, that nothing that is against the glory of God, but all things worketh for the best in them.

Eccles. viii. Heb. xii. Rom. viii. 1 Cor. ii. 2 Cor. x.

4. The fourth beast was like unto a flying eagle, which buildeth her nest very high in the hard rock stone: which are those godly persons that, living here in this mortal body, by the counsel of the Holy Ghost have their conversation in heaven. They seek for those things which are above, where as Christ is sitting on the right hand of God; in whom only, as in the sure rock, they build all their whole hope and trust. By these four similitudes is the true congregation of God known from the painted synagogue and counterfeit church of Satan, glorifying herself in vain glory, pomp, cruelty, rape, simony, lies, hatred, sects, murder, idolatry, sedition, and

Job ix. Jer. xlix. Rom. vi. Phil. iii. Col. iii. Heb. x. 1 Cor. x.

Ansbertus and Haymo. Rev. ii. Rev. xviii. Gal. v. Phil. iii.

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tyranny, with other fruits of the flesh; whose god is their belly, and their end damnation. And though these four similitudes be diverse, yet do they respect one congregation, after Ezekiel, which evermore applieth all four unto one beast. And every one of the said four beasts had six wings about him.

Lambertus.

Ezek. i. Ezek. x. Isai. vi. Isai. xl. Heb. xi. Gal. v. Ephes. i. John xv. Rom. ii. Titus ii. Ezek. x.

5. The wings whereby God's people are raised up unto him is faith, hope, charity, justice, mercy, and verity, with such other virtues as evermore accompany them. By these are they lifted up unto heavenly things. By these avoid they the common mischiefs of the world. By these obtain they a plenteous quietness in God, abiding their Saviour and Redeemer Jesus Christ. And whereas in Ezekiel the said wings appearing but four are here found six, we may gather this; that, the gospel now published, the gifts of the Holy Ghost are more high, plentiful, and open under Christ, than aforetime under Moses.

Rom. viii. John i. Ezek. x. 1 Cor. ii. Rev. xxi. 1 Kings iii. Eccles. i.

6. Round about them without and within the said beasts were full of eyes. The servants of the Lord have godly wisdom and knowledge everywhere; inwardly, to consider heavenly things durable, sure, and perfect, and never to perish; outwardly again, to judge earthly things corruptible, wretched, and vain, and shortly to be ended.

Psal. xxxiii. Isai. vi.

Athanasius, Augustine, Fulgentius. Rev. i. Isai. xliv.

7. Neither day nor night could the said beasts cease from the praise of their Lord God, saying, Holy, holy, holy, or, Blessed art thou, almighty Father, blessed art thou, almighty Son, blessed art thou, almighty Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in Trinity, and in substance one Lord God Almighty, which was without beginning, and is of himself only, and shall be for ever and ever, everlasting. And what is this else but that the righteous, fervently praying, giveth continual thanks unto God, rejoicing among themselves in psalms, in hymns, and in spiritual songs, praising him evermore in their hearts?

Primasius. Afer. Col. iii.

Robertus Tuiciensis. Isai. xl. Psal. cxviii. Isai. lxii. Exod. xv. Luke i.

8. And when those four beasts, or faithful, fervent, sincere, and pure believers here believing in the flesh, gave glory, honour, and thanks, from the four quarters of the earth, in professing the verity, in teaching it unto others, and in living according to the same; and that unto him which sat on the seat, which is God Almighty reigning over that congregation,

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which liveth for ever and ever, and hath of his kingdom none end;

9. Anon stepped forth the twenty-four elders, or the whole, perfect, and universal number of them which have rested in the Lord, and they with all meekness fell down before him which sat on the throne. They submitted themselves unto him, acknowledging him for their only Lord. They worshipped him also with due reverence, and gave high thanks unto him as unto their eternal living God. Rev. v. Albertus Magnus.

10. Yea, finally, they threw down their crowns before the throne of his eternal majesty. They confessed their own good works, merits, and deservings to be nothing at all; but their whole health, wisdom, knowledge, virtue, holiness, righteousness, and redemption to be only of his liberal gift and undeserved goodness. Psal. xxviii. Isai. xxvii. 3 Esd. ix. Psal. cxiii. Heb. iv. Gregorius Magnus. 1 Cor. i. Titus iii.

11. And as men most highly rejoicing they cried unto him, saying thus: It is thou, O Lord God, and most mighty Creator, that is alone worthy to receive all glory, all honour, and all thanks for that hath been wrought in heaven and in earth, and none other else but thou. Psal. lxxxv. 2 Mac. i. Rom. xi.

12. For thou hast alone by the unsearchable wisdom created all things, and brought them forth out of nothing. And for the only pleasure of thy will they are now at this present time in substance and fashion, and were created of thee at the beginning, not only to be at thy commandment, but also to be evermore thankful unto thee, and to laud thee and praise thee for ever. Psal. ciii. Gen. xii. Ecclus. iii. John i. Ephes. i.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book 2 written within and on the backside, 3 sealed with seven seals: 4 and I saw a strong angel preaching with a loud voice, 5 Who is worthy to open the book, and loose the seals thereof? 6 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. 7 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. 8 And one of the elders said unto me, Weep not: 9 behold, the lion which is of the tribe of Juda, 10 the root of David, hath obtained to open the book,

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and to loose the seven seals thereof. 11 And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the seat, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, 12 stood a lamb as though he had been killed, 13 which had seven horns, 14 and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God, sent unto all the world. 15 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the seat.

THE PARAPHRASE.

Rev. iv. 1 Pet. v. Isai. vi. 1 Pet. i. Exod. xxxii. Isai. viii. Col. i. Rev. x.

1. After the foresaid vision I saw (saith saint John) in the right hand, or mighty power and will, of him that sat on the throne with majesty, a wonderful book, in the which both man and angel were desirous to look. This book is God's heavenly ordinance, containing not only all that hath been created of God, visible and invisible, but also the universal contents of the holy scripture. This book hath the merciful Lord provided, that men should know him, partly by his creatures, partly by his scriptures. This book he hath in his right hand. For heaven he measureth with his span, and the whole world he comprehendeth under his three fingers. In his hand or power is the universal earth, both hills and valleys. At his only will and pleasure is the sincere understanding of the scriptures, and true interpretation of the same.

Rom. i. Psal. cxvii. Isai. xlviii. Isai. xl. Psal. xlix. Job xxxii.

Psal. cxix. Col. i. Rom. i. Matt. xvi. Psal. xcix. 2 Tim. iii. Luke viii. Rom. xiii. John vi. Gal. iv. John i.

2. This book is written within and without. The world containeth creatures visible and invisible, powers open and hidden, that men in them should read and understand that there is a living God, and that they should acknowledge him and worship him, as the Lord and Creator of all. The holy scripture hath her figure and history, her mystery and verity, her parable and plain doctrine, her night and day, her letter and sense, her voice and word, her flesh and spirit, her shadow and clear light, her death and life, her law and gospel, her Moses and Christ, to bring all men also unto the knowledge of God.

Isai. xxix. 1 Cor. ii. Rom. viii. 1 Cor. i.

Joannes Baconthorpe[1]. Nicolaus Lyranus. Albertus.

3. But that book is surely sealed with seven strong seals from the fleshly understanding of man, not having the Spirit of Christ, that he can neither use the creatures of God aright, nor yet perceive the scriptures according to their true meaning. Much hath the doctors fantasied of these seven clasps

[1 Baconthorpe, or Bacondorp, or simply John Bacon, one of the most learned men of his time, was born about the end of the 13th

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or springs of this book without the authority of God's word, calling them all manner of obscurities and darknesses: whereas in very deed, they are not else but the strong and unvariable decree or set diffinition of God, before the constitution of the world, that none should be able to read rightly therein, nor know the just meaning thereof, without the Spirit of his Son, and unless it be meekly asked in faith. And this one decree of God so oft locketh up these heavenly secrets from man, as it findeth him carnal, covetous, wilful, blind, malicious, proud and false; with such other like. The number of seven doth only respect the opening of the seals in all ages: for in every age hath God opened in truth unto some godly men by his Spirit; with Abel and Enoch, with Noe and Sem, with Abraham and Job, with Moses and Samuel, with David and Helias, with Jeremy and Daniel, with John Baptist and Peter.

Psal. cxix. Prov. viii. Matt. xi. Rom. viii. James i. Luke x. Matt. xiii. Wisd. i.

Joachim Abbas[2]. Gen. iv. Gen. xii. 1 Sam. xvi. Luke iii. Mal. ii. 1 Cor. ix. Acts iv.

4. And I saw (saith St John) a strong angel; which betokeneth every faithful minister of God's word, coveting all men to be taught of God, and sending them only unto Christ, for they are the angels of the Lord of hosts. Which angel cried with a loud voice, with an earnest zeal of the glory of God and with a fervent desire of his neighbour's health:

Mal. ii. Matt. v. Luke vi.

5. Who is worthy to open this book, and to undo the clasps thereof? As though he should say, None but he alone. Seek him therefore that he may open it unto you, else are ye like always to be blind, foolish and unlearned liars before the Lord, seem ye never so wise, eloquent, and well learned in the sight of men.

Psal. xlii. Psal. lxviii. Matt. xv. John ix. 1 Cor. iii. Jer. x.

6. And indeed no man was found able to do it, neither in heaven, nor in earth, nor under the earth: yet was there a diligent search made, and many did attempt it. The angels that by apostasy fell from God, when they were in heaven, wrought masteries about it. And in the earth here the philo-

1 Esd. iv. Gen. xl. Isai. xiv. 2 Pet. ii. Acts xvii. John i. Acts iv. 2 Pet. ii.

century at Baconthorp, an obscure village in Norfolk, whence he took his name. His works are numerous, and Bale seems to think that he anticipated the better opinions of more enlightened times. He died in London in 1346.]

[2 Joachim, abbot of the Cistercians at Corazzo, and afterwards at Flora in Calabria. Though he fell into errors in regard to the Trinity, yet his commentaries on Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the Apocalypse, are in some estimation. He died in 1202.]

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sophers among the Gentiles, the religious fathers among the Jews, the Pharisees and scribes, the lawyers and priests, and among the Christians the false apostles and antichrists, the sophisters and papists, the sects and school-doctors, with all the worldly-wise, have craftily compassed the thing: yea, the messengers of Satan (whose damnation is certain), subtle to persuade and fraudulently to deceive the innocent souls, have also done their part. But what hath followed? After their vain enterprise they have been so astonied at the majesty or sight of the book, that neither were they able to open it, nor yet to look thereupon. So high were the mysteries thereof, so unsearchable the judgments, and so investigable[1] the ways thereunto.

Rom. iii. Psal. lxiii. Jer. xxiii. Isai. xxix. 1 Cor. i. Col. iv. Rom. xi. Wisd. ix.

7. And I fell in sore weeping (saith St John); much dolour was it to my heart to see that none was found worthy, no creature able, neither angel nor man, good spirit nor devil, to open and to read the book, which is clearly to know the will of God therein, nor yet once to look thereupon, that is sincerely to perceive the least verity contained therein. No create understanding could attain unto it: all were ignorant, all dark, all blind.

Matt. v. Isai. lxiii. Rev. xix. Eccius. viii. John xiv. Hos. iv. Wisd. ix. Isai. lvi.

8. And as I was thus mourning, one of the elders, even Jacob by name, comforted me with his prophecy of Juda; Esay, Micheas, and Esdras, bearing witness to the same.

Gen. xlix. Isai. xxxi. Micah v. 3 Esd. iii.

9. These with other ascertained me, that he was the lion of the tribe of Juda, which should overcome the world, and have the victory over death and hell; for indeed they with Abraham saw it afar off, and much rejoiced. He is the strong and invincible lion, that subdued the prince of this world, took from him the prey, and hath divided the spoil.

Hos. xiii. John viii. Heb. xi. John xii Luke xi. Isai. xi. Rev. xxii.

10. He is the very root of David, the ground and original cause of all godly promises made nnto him of deliverance, victory, and reign, and alone in him are they fulfilled. Only hath he obtained by his death, resurrection, and ascension, to make open the hidden mysteries of this book, or whole ordinance of God, and to loose the seven seals thereof, or to take away the universal impediments whereby the said book could in no case be seen; as is carnality, ignorance, darkness, blindness, wilfulness, covetousness, malice, hypocrisy, lies, with such like. So was it afore speared by the decree of God,

Luke i. Col. ii. Matt. xxviii. Mark xvi.

Luke xxiv. 2 Cor. iii. John xii. Ephes. v. 1 Tim. iv. Ezek. xxxvi. Joel ii.

[1] investigable: unsearchable.

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that none could read in it till he removed the untowardness from their hearts.

11. All this I beheld (saith St John), and as I looked farther, I saw that in the midst of the seat (which is the universal congregation of God), and of the four beasts (which are the constant ministers of his word), and also in the midst of the ancient elders (which have been the sincere witnesses of his verity since the beginning),

Isai. xli. Psal. xxi. Rev. iv. 1 Cor. iv. Psal. cvi. Ecclus. viii. Isai. liii. Jer. xi. Isai. liii.

12. There stood a fair, meek, and most innocent lamb, as though he had been newly slain. I knew that Christ was this lamb; for he was wounded for our offences, and took away the sins of the world. He was that meek lamb prefigured in the law, whom the faithful fathers so earnestly desired. He was that gentle lamb that was carried away to be slain, and that opened not his mouth before the shearer. This lamb standeth up evermore for us before God, as our only mediator, advocate, peace-maker, saviour, helper, counsellor, defender, and teacher.

John i. Exod. xii. Isai. xvi. Acts viii. 1 John ii. 1 Tim. ii. Heb. ix. Matt. xxiii. Dan. vii. Psal. lxxiv.

13. This Lamb hath seven horns, which betoken his strong and infinite power, virtue, victory, kingdom, glory, bounteousness, and majesty, with such like, and in the whole his universal reign.

14. He had also seven eyes, which are all the powers, graces, and fruits of the Holy Ghost, called here the seven spirits of God; forsomuch as they are the singular gifts of him which is his essential Spirit. And them he hath sent, by his apostles and other godly preachers, into the seven climates of the earth or universal world, the people with them to be replenished. These are wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, piety, and the fear of God. These are also love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, long-suffering, cleanness, and temperance, with diversity of tongues, interpretation, prophecy, cures, healings, miracles, and judgment of spirits.

Zech. iii. Isai. xi. Rev. i. 1 Cor. xii. Mark xvi. Ephes. iv. Matt. xxviii. Isai. xl. Rev. xxii. Gal. v. Ephes. v. 1 Cor. xii. 1 John iv.

15. And the said Lamb came forth as one through meekness having victory over sin, death and hell; and he reverently took the said book from the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. Which made me anon to consider, that the heavenly Father had given up unto him the whole administration of his spiritual kingdom, with all authority and power in heaven and earth, to open or to spear, to choose or to reject, to take

Phil. ii. Hos. xiii. Luke x. Isai. vi. Matt. xi. John v. Matt. xxviii. John xvii.

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Phil. ii. Matt. xxv. Luke xxiv. John xiv. John xvi. Acts ii. Matt. xxv. Heb. x.

or to refuse, to save or to lose, to reward or to damn. For he it was that first opened the understanding of men that they might perceive the scriptures. He it was that sent the Holy Spirit of God to deduce them into all verity, and gave them grace to instruct all peoples. He it is also that shall throw them into everlasting fire, with the devil and his angels, that resist the same.

The Text.

1 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and the twenty-four elders 2 fell down before the Lamb, having harps, 3 and golden vials full of odours (which are the prayers of the saints); 4 and they sang a new song, saying, 5 Thou art worthy to take the book, 6 and to open the seals thereof: 7 for thou wert killed, 8 and hast redeemed us by thy blood out of all kindreds, and tongues, and people, and nations, 9 and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; 10 and we shall reign on the earth.

The Paraphrase.

John v. Luke x. Heb. xi. Wisd. v. John viii. Ephes. ii. John viii. Heb. xi. Acts iii. Rev. xxii.

1. And when he had received the said book of the hand of God, with full authority and power, the four beasts, or the present protesters of the verity, here living in the world, and the twenty-four elders or ancient witnesses of the same, departed clean from this world, as were the old fathers, the patriarchs, prophets and apostles, meekly submitted themselves before the Lamb, much rejoicing in his triumphant victory for them.

Acts iii. Rev. xxii.

2. They fell down before him, they praised him, they worshipped him, they gave thanks, and recognised him for their merciful Lord and Saviour, having in their hands harmonious harps; which there represented the melody of their faithful souls, or the inward rejoice that they had in faith of the eternal verity of God. For that is the agreeable concord and sweet harmony that he most delighteth in. And as well had they harps that were long afore Christ, as had they that followed him, the effect of his death being equal to them both. So well rejoiced Abraham, which saw him afar off, as did John Baptist which shewed him present.

Rev. xv. Psal. cl. Isai. lxvi. Prov. xxiii. Luke x. 1 Cor. x. Isai. liii.

John viii. John i.

Zech. xiv. Dan. ix. Psal. lxi. Matt. v. Prov. xvii.

3. Each one of them had also in his hand a golden vial full of sweet odours, which is a faithful heart to God, full of sweet desires and wholesome prayers, while they lived

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here. And these vessels of prayer, or hearts of the faithful believers, coveting mercy to themselves and all others, were very precious, pleasant and beautiful in the sight of the Lord, which only desireth the heart.

4. They sang also with their instruments a new song of rejoice, recording the great benefit of God. They uttered the glad tidings of peace. They published the gospel of Christ. They told of his coming. They declared him present and past. This song was ever new unto flesh and blood. It seemed very strange, yea, and foolish, to the children of this world, yet is it the power of God unto salvation for every one that believeth. New it is also, forsomuch as it nothing alloweth in our aged man of sin, but always calleth upon renovation in the spirit.

Psal. cxl. Prov. xxiii. Rev. xiv. Mark xvi. Haggai ii. John i. Mark i. 1 Cor. i. Colosa. iii. Ephes. iv.

5. This was the conclusion of that song: Thou alone, sweet Lord (said they), art found worthy to take the book, to receive power and administration of the kingdom of God.

John xvii. Rev. iii.

6. Thou only art able to open the seals thereof, to take from us all impediments of darkness, hypocrisy, lies, ignorance, wilfulness, blindness, and sin, and to deduce us into all godly knowledge.

Luke xxiv. Isai. xlii. John xvi. Isai. liii. 1 Cor. ii. v.

7. For thou wert not only despised and wounded, but also most cruelly slain for our offences, whereby thou hast obtained our perpetual peace and atonement with God.

8. Thou hast clearly redeemed us out of all spiritual bondage by the price of thy blood; and by the virtue of thy passion and death thou hast gathered us together into one kingdom of God, from all nations of the world, and hast chosen us out of all kindreds, languages, and peoples of the universal earth. Thou hast made us also partakers with thee in thy peculiar unction, that we are now called Christians.

1 John ii. Titus i. 1 Pet. i. Isai. lvi. Psal. cv. Joel iii.

9. Thou hast anointed us kings by the gift of true faith, to have victory over sin, death, and the devil, and consecrate us priests by the grace of thy Holy Spirit, to offer up ourselves an undefiled sacrifice unto our everlasting God: so that we are now the chosen kindred, the kingly priesthood, the holy generation, the peculiar people, that should manifest the works of thee which hast called us out of darkness into thy marvellous light.

1 Pet. ii. Psal. xliv. Acts xi. Rev. i. 1 John v. Heb. ix. Rom. xii. Exod. xix. Deut. xvii. Isai. xl. 1 Pet. ii.

10. And by the benefit of thy only grace and goodness we shall reign prosperously on the earth, not here where as is sorrow, care, penury, scarceness, and death; but our portion

Rev. xxii. 1 John ii. 1 Cor. xv. Psal. cxlii. Rev. xxi.

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shall be in the pleasant land of the living, where as is the peace, joy, tranquillity, comfort, and life everlasting.

The Text.

1 And I beheld, 2 and heard the voice of many angels about the throne, and about the beasts, and the elders. 3 And I heard thousand thousands saying with a loud voice, 4 Worthy is the Lamb that was killed to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. 5 And all creatures which are in heaven, 6 and on the earth, 7 and under the earth, 8 and in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, 9 Blessing, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the seat, 10 and unto the Lamb for evermore. 11 And the four beasts said, Amen. 12 And the twenty-four elders fell upon their faces, 13 and worshipped him that liveth for evermore.

The Paraphrase.

Dan. vii. Matt. xviii. Psal. ciii.

1. Furthermore, saith saint John, I saw an infinite host of angels beholding the face of the heavenly Father.

Luke ii. Heb. i. Rev. xix. Rom. viii. Tobias v. Judith xiii. Psal. xci. Dan. vii. Heb. xii.

2. I heard also the voice of a great number of them about the throne of God, giving laud and praise unto him, and about the beasts and ancient elders. For they are not only the immediate ministers of God, but also the servants of those men which shall be the heirs of salvation. Where should they be else then but about them that fear the Lord, to see to them and preserve them in all their ways, like as he hath given them in commandment?

Psal. ciii. Luke ii. John xx. Luke xv. Dan. iii. Matt. xviii. Isai. liii. 2 Cor. xv. John xvii Rev. iii. 1 Tim. vi. Wisd. iii.

3. And the number of them was a thousand thousands, or a number beyond our estimation. And they cried with a loud voice, signifying their sort, no corporal noise, (forsomuch as they are but spirits,) but a vehement zeal of most perfect love and rejoice for the glory of God, the victory of Christ, the redemption, deliverance, and health of man. It betokeneth also their exceeding gladness in the opening of the verity and conversion of the sinner.

Rev. i. Psal. xxiii. Matt. xxviii. Ephes. i.

4. Worthy is the most meek Lamb (said they), which was cruelly done unto death, and by his death overcome the world, hell, death, and the devil, to take upon him the title of all power, heritage, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, and blessing, and to be called of all creatures most mighty, most rich, most wise, most valiant, most worshipful, most glorious, and most blessed, convenient names for the King over all; yea, finally

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to have the universal authority in heaven and in earth, to govern every where, and all to be subject unto him.

5. I heard also (saith St John) all the creatures that God ever created, as the angels in heaven, the sun, the moon, the planets, the stars, the firmament, the fire, the water, the air; Gen. i. Psal. viii. Psal. cxlviii. Baruch iii.

6. And all that was upon earth, as man, beast, fowl, fish, mountains, valleys, well-springs, floods, winds, weathers, times, trees, herbs, fruits; Dan. iii. Gen. i. Psal. cxlviii. Deut. xiv. Esth. xiii.

7. And all that was under or within the earth, as roots, worms, serpents, vermin;

8. And all that was in the sea, or that moved in the waters, with all that are contained in all these, each one in his kind, saying,

9. The everlasting God, which sitteth upon the eternal throne with power and majesty, be evermore blessed, worshipful, glorious, and almighty. Isai. vi. 1 Tim. i. Rev. xiv. 1 Tim. vi.

10. And unto the Lamb, which is his only Son, Jesus Christ, be blessing, honour, glory, and power from him for evermore. And in this all creatures desireth no longer to be subdued unto the vanity of the wicked, nor yet to serve the same; but to be wholly delivered from the bondage of corruption, and in liberty to serve the children of God, to the glory of him that made them. Rev. i. Rom. viii. 2 Cor. v. Rev. xxi. Heb. i.

11. To this the four beasts, or all the true servants of God here living, answered, Amen; or, so might it be in effect, as we have desired.

12. And the twenty-four elders, as the patriarchs, the prophets, the apostles, with other that hath passed this life, fell down flat upon their faces; they submitted themselves, Psal. cxxxiv. Neh. viii. Heb. xi. Ephes. ii.

13. They worshipped, lauded, and glorified him that liveth for ever and ever, one God in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This signified the angels and saints evermore to be joyous, as any thing is done in the creatures to the manifest glory of God. Rev. vii. Rev. iv. Matt. iii. 1 John v. Isai. lxv.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, 2 and I heard one of the four beasts say, as it were the noise of thunder, 3 Come, and

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see. 4 And I saw, and behold, there was a white horse, 5 and he that sat on him had a bow, 6 and a crown was given unto him; 7 and he went forth conquering, and for to overcome.

The Paraphrase.

John i. Rev. xv. Luke iv.

1. Consequently (saith St John) as I was beholding these wonders, I saw that the Lamb (which is the Son of God) opened the first of the seven seals, declaring the first mystery of the book. These openings betoken not only the manifestation of God's truth for the seven ages of the world, but also for seven several times, and after seven divers sorts, from Christ's death to the latter end of the world. The first seal was removed, and the mystery thereunder contained made open, when the apostles and disciples of Christ, abundantly replenished with the Holy Ghost, did constantly preach the gospel over the universal world.

Primasius. Afer. Joachim Abbas.

Lambertus. Acts ii.

Mark xvi. Psal. xviii. Rev. iv. Ezek. i. Jer. i. Gen. xlix. Psal. xxix. Acts ii.

2. And at the opening of the said seal (saith he), I heard one of the beasts in shape like a lion; by whom are signified the strong witnesses of God's verity, by constancy of faith resembling Christ, the very lion of the flock of Juda, whose voice was mighty and strong as it had been the noise of a thundering, and vehemently it said unto me,

John i. Psal. xxxiii. Zech. vi.

3. Come hither and see, draw nigh and be taught, believe, and thou shalt understand.

Zech. x. Rev. i. Psal. i. Rom. x. Acts ix. Gal. i.

4. And anon I saw evidently that there was a white horse, which signifieth the apostles and first disciples of Christ, for why[1] the scripture doth so call them. These horses were white; they were made pure, righteous, and clean by Jesus Christ, and bare him by their preaching the world over. Such a white horse to the glory of God was Paul, when he bare the name of Christ before the Gentiles, the kings, and the children of Israel.

Matt. xxviii. Acts xv. Luke xxi. Amos ix. Eccius. x.

5. He that sat upon this white horse (which was Christ himself) had in his hand a bow, which figureth the hearts of the foresaid apostles and disciples, out of whom he fiercely sent forth the arrows of his word into his chosen people. Their hearts were in his hand, for that his verities might the more effectually pass forth, and the more surely light upon his elect. For without his Spirit nothing could they do.

Zech. ix. Psal. xlv. John xv.

6. From God the Father unto him was given a crown of

[1 for why: since, because. Nares' Glossary.]

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magnificence, honour, worthiness, and victory, in his resurrection and ascension. Phil. ii. Ephes. iv.

7. And when he had stomached[2] them by the Holy Ghost to shoot forth his word without fear, he went forward with them by his grace, conquering in them the prince of this world, in process of time by their doctrine so to overcome him and all his wicked army. Were the antichrists never so mad, torment they never so sore, flee they never so fast, Christ will overcome them. Let them inhibit his truth, and forbid his gospel, take, spoil, imprison, expel, murder, hang, head, drown, and burn; yet will Christ have the victory over them, though it otherwise seem to the fleshly children of darkness. In many countries, cities, and towns, hath God's word been taught, where as it is now forbid under pain of death. Is Christ therefore the weaker, which chose the weak to confound the strong? No, truly. It hath wrought in them whom he hath called, and rooted in them whom he hath sought: so that the faithful children of Abraham and true Israelites in no wise can perish nor be taken from Christ. Acts ii. Acts v. John xvi. 1 John v. John xvi. Matt. x. Acts iv. Acts v. Acts xii. 1 Cor. xv. Wisd. v. John ix. Acts v. 1 Cor. ii. Gal. i. John xv. John viii.

THE TEXT.

1 And when he opened the second seal, 2 I heard the second beast say, 3 Come and see. 4 And there went out another horse that was red. 5 And power was given to him that sat thereon 6 to take peace from earth, 7 and that they should kill one another. 8 And there was given unto him a great sword.

THE PARAPHRASE.

What the estate of the Christian church was immediately after the apostles' time, it is under mystery declared in the opening of the second seal. For so soon as the said apostles and first disciples of Christ were taken from the world, yea, and partly in their time also, many pernicious errors did spring and increase by crafty teachers and subtle seducers in divers quarters. Some coupled the law with the gospel, and circumcision with baptism, to bring christian liberty into bondage. Some said the general resurrection was past, to subvert the ways of the Lord. Some denied him to come in the flesh. Some brought in ceremonies and beggarly shadows, to yoke us with Jewish superstitions. Some forbad marriage as an unclean thing, to bring in all abominations and Franciscus Lambertus. Luke xxi. 1 John ii. Acts x. 2 Pet. ii. Gal. v. 2 Tim. ii. 1 John iv. 2 John. Gal. iv. 1 Tim. iv. Jude. Gen. ix.

[2 stomached: inclined, encouraged].

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filthiness. Some did inhibit meats sanctified of God, under colour of abstinence to set up hypocrisy. Some called St Paul an apostate from the law. Some taught the gospel carnally, denying Matthew and John, and fantasied gospels upon their own brain under the names of Peter, Andrew, Thomas, and Bartholomew, Matthias, Thaddeus, and Barnabas. And of this sort in the apostles' time was Nicolas of Antioch, Hermogenes, Hymeneus, Philetus, Alexander, Elymas, Carpocras, Cerinthus, Ebion, Helion, with their affinity; and after their time, Basilides, Valentinus, Heracleon, Cerdon, Marcion, Apelles, Tatianus, Menander, Montanus and others.

Ebion. Cerinthus Basilides ex Euseblo Cæsarien. Gelasius. Philast. Guido et Lutzenburgus.

Rev. v. Ephes. v. Eccius. i. Acts xiii. Hist. Eccl. Lib. iii. ca. 30. Eusebius Cæsarien. Hieronymus. Tritemius.

1. In signification of this the Lamb opened this second seal of the book. He removed once again the dark clouds of ignorance; he replenished with his grace and strengthened with his Spirit certain of the Greeks and Gentiles which believed, to confute the errors and condemn the lies of those false teachers and deceivable antichrists. Of this number was Ignatius, Polycarpus, Theophilus Antiochenus, Justinus Martyr, Agrippa, Castorius, Aristides, Quadratus, Meliton, Apollinaris, Theodotion, Irenæus, Apollonius, Melchiades, Rhodon, and divers other. These boldly confessed Christ, they taught his verity, they put aside the darkness, they ministered the light, they confounded the adversaries both with tongue and pen.

Heb. xi. Acts ix. John i. John xv. Rev. iv.

Exod. xxix. Rom. xii.

2. And when the Lamb had thus opened this second seal declaring of the mystery thereof, I heard the second beast (saith St John), which was to my sight a calf, signifying those ministers which had mortified and wholly given up themselves as a sacrifice for the preaching of the same, saying also unto me,

John i.

3. Approach nigher and look, perceive and take heed, mark and bear it away.

Psal. xlv. Zech. i. Acts xx. Matt. xvi. 1 John ii. John xvi. Matt. xxiii. Acts xvi. Matt. x. John xvi. 2 Pet. ii. 2 Cor. xi. John x. Acts xx.

4. And suddenly I saw that there went forth another horse all diverse from the first, for he was outwardly red. This horse resembleth the said false teachers, born and brought up in flesh and blood, and taught of the same. Such went from the apostles, and were not of them; they cursed the true preachers out of their synagogues, they persecuted them from city to city, they accused them as the stirrers up of sedition, they caused the rulers to imprison

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them, scourge them, and slay them, thinking thereby they did God high service. They turned the grace of God into beastliness, and brought in lying sects. These were those false brethren and deceitful masters, whom the scripture calleth strangers, hirelings, thieves, scorners, and ravening wolves not sparing the flock. These were those blood-thirsty doctors and puffed-up prelates, which are partakers with their fathers in the blood of the prophets; whose succession for a token of the same is clothed in red scarlet to this day. Such a red horse was Bar-jesu, which resisted Paul and Barnabas at Paphos. So was Alexander the coppersmith, which did Paul much displeasure. So was Demetrius, which moved sedition against him; so was Ananias the high priest, that commanded him to be smitten; so was Tertullus the orator, that accused him to the deputy; so was Diotrephes, that sought the pre-eminence, and reproved John.

John xi. Matt. xxiii. Rev. xviii. Acts xiii. 2 Tim. iv. 1 Tim. i. Acts xix. Acts xxiii. Acts xxiv. 3 John.

5. And power was given to him that sat upon this horse. By the sufferance of God to try his elect, the wicked rulers and princes of this world, persuaded and set forth by these bloody beasts, have exercised all cruelty, fierceness, and tyranny,

Ezek. xxiii. Wisd. iii. 1 Kin. xxii. Eusebius Cæsarien.

6. To take from the earth the sure peace of God and Christian unity, which made of the Jews and Gentiles one people, and knit us all together through faith and baptism, as members of one body in Christ Jesu. This peace have they broken, this unity of faith have they torn, this coat of Christ without seam have those soldiers divided; and abusing the power, which is the high ordinance of God, they have maintained the manifold sects of division.

Phil. iv. Ephes. ii. Ephes. iv. Rom. xii. 1 John ii. John xviii. Rom. xiii. 2 Pet. ii.

7. Of whom one hath killed another, as in the destruction of Jerusalem the unchristian gentile slew the unfaithful Jew. And now in the church of antichrist one bishop poisoneth another, one priest another, one religious another.

Josephus. Platina. Baptista Panecius Job xxxiv. Exod. xiv.

8. And unto this terrible horseman was there given a great sword. Long hath the Lord suffered those tyrants to reign, much mischief to work, great cruelty to use. Much was the persecution, tyranny, and murder, under Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Aurelius, Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerian, Aurelian, Diocletian, Maxentius, Julian, and such like, and much christian blood in their time was shed.

Eusebius Cæsarien. Hermannus contractus.

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The Text.

1 And when he opened the third seal, 2 I heard the third beast say, 3 Come and see. 4 And I beheld, and lo, a black horse. 5 And he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. 6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, 7 A measure of wheat for a penny, 8 and three measures of barley for a penny; 9 and oil and wine see thou hurt not.

The Paraphrase.

Albertus Magnus. Matt. x. Luke vi. Regino. Prumiensis. Carolus Bovillus.

Under trope or secret mystery of the third seal opening, is specified the estate general of the christian church after the time of the martyrs and strong witnesses of Jesu, which were most cruelly afflicted and slain for confessing his name and truth. Not that the martyrs were only at that time, and not afore and after, but forsomuch as they did then most abound. For in the Roman church, besides other, were slain all the ministers of the word, or bishops, as they call them, from the time of Peter unto the days of Sylvester, to the number of thirty-five; not one of them escaped. After their time, as the tyranny of rulers was stilled, and their raging cruelty pacified, there arose another fashioned sort, all diverse from the other, given to bodily ease and delights of the world. More desirous were they to rest than to labour, to sleep than to work, to take than to give, to banquet than to preach, to dally than to die. Then strove they among themselves for the primacy; then sought they ambitiously to reign over all. Not one martyr was then among them, unless he were a stinking martyr made among themselves. Bnt all were confessors. For preaching was laid apart, and pride had taken up his room. Yet were they not long without contradiction: for then arose heresies and schisms, sects and divisions, and were spread the world over, like as the histories mention. The Sabellians, Arians, Eunomians, Macedonians, Priscillians, Nestorians, and Eutychians, then diversely erred in faith and opinion of the Godhead. The Manichees despised the old Testament. The Donatists held it necessary to be re-baptized. The Pelagians taught that men might merit heaven without grace, with such like. Then schisms were plenteous among bishops every where. In the church of Rome were many altercations about the election,

Lambertus Shafnaburgensis.

Carolus Bovillus. Sigebertus Gemblacensis. Benno Cardinalis. Wernerus Carthusiensis.

Ado Viennensis et Beda. Cirillus. Augustinus. Cyprianus Hieronymus. Sigebertus Gemblacensis. Vincentius. Antoninus.

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much strife and division was for the papacy, betwixt Liberius and Felix, Damasus and Urcisinus, Bonifacius and Eulalius, Symmachus and Laurentius, Bonifacius and Dioscorus, Constantine and Philip, Eugenius and Sisinius, Formosus and Stephanus, Sergius and Christophorus, Benedict and Leo, Gregory and John, with divers more: in the which some were noted of heresy, some accused of incontinence, some called insolent, some rustical, some rude; some were accursed, some deposed, some slandered, some exiled, some poisoned, some strangled. Some had their eyes thrust out, some were most spitefully murdered. No colour, cautel, craft subtile nor violence unsought to fulfil their mischievous purpose. Platina. Naucl. et alii. Abbas. Urspergensis. Jacobus Bergomensis. Hermannus Schedel.

1. The Lamb therefore, opening the third seal, disclosed the mystery thereof unto John:

2. Which heard the third beast in similitude of a man, betokening such preachers as hath wisdom in the spirit, saying unto him, Rev. iv. Rom. viii. Ambrosius Ansbert.

3. Draw nigh and perceive, consider and wait.

4. And anon he was ware, and beheld a black horse, in figure representing the aforesaid heretics and unpure ministers, ambitious prelates, and false teachers, full of errors, lies, pride, and uncleanness. Upon these and such other rideth Satan the world over; for he is their master, lord, king, and father. Such christophers[1] of the devil were Phassur and Semeias in the old law, Annas and Caiaphas in the new law; Mahomet and the pope in our time, with all such prelates, priests, monks, doctors, and other spiritual dowsipers[2] as set forth themselves with arrogancy, pride, pomp, glory and magnificence of this world, not sincerely preaching God's word. Zech. vi. Matt. xxiv. 2 Pet. ii. Job xii. John viii. Jer. xx. John xviii. Marsilius Patavinus. Joannes Hus in Apoca.

5. He which sat upon that horse, or that reigneth in this congregation, hath in his hand a deceitful pair of balances of abominable judgments, weighing all things according to the doctrine of error and lies of hypocrites, not proving the spirits, whether they be of God or no. John xiv. Hos. xii. Prov. xi. 1 Tim. iv. 1 John iv.

6. And after this vision I heard (saith St John) a voice among the four beasts. No time hath there been, wherein the faithful believers and constant witnesses of the verity in this life hath not resisted the masters of lies, and confounded their errors, preserving the undefiled scriptures. In those Rev. iv. Matt. xxviii. Acts i. 2 Pet. ii. 1 Cor. ii. Eusebius Cæsariensis. Cassiodorus[3].

[1 christophers: supporters.] [2 dowsipers: grandees.]

[3 Cassiodorus (Marcus Aurelius), called the senator, died *circa*

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Rom. ix. Isai. lxiv. eternal blessing, and neither of our works, nor yet of our good deeds; for the best of them are defiled.

Rev. v. Dan. vii. Isai. ix. Rev. iv. Matt. xviii. 9. And all the angels or ministers of heaven compassed the throne according to their office. They assisted the true faithful church, which is the seat of God.

10. The twenty-four elders they compassed also; so did they the four beasts: for ministers they are to the saints departed, and servants to them that be yet alive.

Phil. ii. Rev. v. Psal. xci. 11. They fell down flat on their faces before the throne: they meekly acknowledged themselves the creatures of God, and servants to his congregation.

Lambertus. Luke ii. Coloss. i. Dan. vii. 12. And they worshipped not the seat, but God which sat on the seat. Most highly they magnified him and praised him for restoring their least number, saying, So be it evermore as we shall now desire.

Rev. v. 1 Tim. vi. Neh. viii. 3 Esdras ix. 13. Everlasting praise and glory, perpetual wisdom and thanks, continual honour and power, with might which cannot be measured, be referred unto our eternal God of all his creatures for ever and ever, yea, for all that he hath wrought in them. Amen.

The Text.

1 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, 2 What are these which are arrayed in long white garments, and whence came they? 3 And I said unto him, 4 Lord, thou wotest. 5 And he said unto me, 6 These are they which came out of great tribulation, 7 and made their garments large, 8 and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 9 Therefore are they in the presence of the seat of God, 10 and serve him day and night in his temple. 11 And he that sitteth in the seat will dwell among them. 12 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst, 13 neither shall the sun light on them, 14 neither any heat. 15 For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the seat, shall feed them, 16 and shall lead them unto fountains of living water. 17 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

The Paraphrase.

Haymo. Ansbertus. Sebastianus Meyer. 1. And one of the ancient elders (saith St John) made answer unto that, which I was inwardly most desirous to know concerning this innumerable multitude, saying unto me by manner of question,

Rev. vi. Isai. xxxix. Matt. xx. Luke ix. Rom. viii. 2. What are these comely persons, which are thus beautifully apparelled in long white garments, large and fair? And from whence came they, as thou supposest?

3. And I, as one ignorant of the mysteries of God of

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Ezek. xiv. Matt. xxiii. Hosea iv.

4. And they were cast into the earth. So occupied their earthly hearts this wilfulness and anger with thirsting of innocent blood, that all grace in them was extinguished, and all goodness clean consumed.

Jude. Luke xiii. Matt. vii.

5. The third part of the trees was brent, and all the green grass came to nought. Though the chosen people were ever the lesser number, and the wicked the much greater (as in Zachary), yet are they not here so noted, forsomuch as in the sight of the Lord the infinite table of infidels are nothing to the small flock of faith. Consider also that in Zachary's time the Jews were the people of God, which were nothing in comparison to the Gentiles: but now are the Gentiles his people, which ever exceeded them in number. The third part of the trees withered in their wickedness were found without fruit in the Gentiles.

Zech. xiii. Psal. xxxiii. Luke xii.

Hosea xi. Rom. ix. Isai. liv. 1 John i.

Acts xiii. Jer. ii. John iv. Matt. xxi. Luke xi. Primasius. Haymo. Franciscus Lambertus.

6. All the Jews, which sometime were the green grass by the manifold gifts of God, and by Christ's coming of them, were then brent up clean. True faith went from them, and their own malice blinded them. Though this were verified of them only which were at the first seal-opening, and the first trumpet-blowing, yet doth it touch the bloody antichrists, hypocrites, and ungodly rulers, withstanding God's word to this present day, the poor Christians being green, and bringing forth fruit in patient sufferance.

The Text.

1 And the second angel blew, 2 and as it were a great mountain burning with fire 3 was cast into the sea. 4 And the third part of the sea turned to blood, 5 and the third part of the creatures which had life died, 6 and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

The Paraphrase.

The second angel. Mal. ii. Rev. ii.

1. The second angel blew his trumpet at the second seal-opening, which signifieth the preachers declaring the secret ministries of God's verity immediately after the apostles' time.

Eusebius Cæsariensis.

Zech. iv. 1 John ii. 1 Tim. iii. Acts xx. 2 Pet. iii. Isai. xvi.

2. And as they were at the pleasure of the Lord so doing, a monstrous thing in a manner of a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea. A cruel sort of false disciples and wicked brethren arose up from among them, all earthly-minded to covetousness, puffed up with pride and ambition, inflamed also with anger, spite, and vengeance: they

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boisterously entered in among the people, so mutable and fickle as the sea, which changeth with every wind. These are the mountains that swell up, thinking much of themselves. These are the rising hills that boast so much of their good works, of whose overthrow by God's word both Isaiah and John Baptist did prophesy. Such fiery mountains were Jannes and Jambres, that maliciously resisted Moses; so were Phassur and Semeias, which vexed the prophet Jeremy. Such burning hills were Caiphas and Annas against Christ; Diotrephes, Herpocras, Ebion, and Cerinthus, against John the Evangelist; Demetrius, Bar-jesu, Hymeneus and Alexander, against Paul; with such like moody prelates resisting the truth to this present day. Such smoky mountains of contradiction doth daily withstand Christ in the edifying of his christian Church, as rebuked Zorobabel in the building of the Jews' temple.

Ezek. vi. Luke xviii. Isai. xl. Luke iii. 2 Tim. iii. Jer. xx. John xviii. 3 John. Acts xix. Acts xiii. 2 Tim iv. Heb. xii. Zech. iv. Isai. xvii. Rom. xvi.

3. They stir up the sea, they move the weak people, and make them blind as ashes. In their hate they provoke the princes to cruelty and malice. They cause them to punish the poor preachers, and to put aside the truth, lest they should fall unto it.

Rev. xx. Acts xvi.

4. By reason of this burning hill falling into the sea, the third part of the water turned into blood; the third part of the people, seduced by them became hateful murderers. Not only they accused God's servants, but as blood-thirsty beasts they consented to their deaths, not considering that he which doth but only hate his brother is an homicide.

Luke xi. Rev. xvii. Acts vi. Matt. x. John xvi. Matt. v. 1 John iii.

5. The third part of the creatures which had life died. Of those which seemed to be faithful among them, a great number were worse than nought. Dissembling with faith, they betrayed the truth, and wrought much wickedness. Many martyrs were then everywhere.

Acts xix. Rev. iii. 2 Tim. iii. Eusebius Cæsariensis.

6. So that the third part of the ships were destroyed also. Many churches or private congregations called parishes, for fear of losing their goods, and for doubt of imprisonment and death, refused the faith, and fell clean from the truth, and so were perished and lost. For ships in the scripture betokeneth them.

Eucherius. 1 Tim. vi. Luke viii. Acts v.

THE TEXT.

1 And the third angel blew, 2 and there fell a great star from hea-

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ven, 3 burning as it were a creshet[1]. 4 And it fell into the third part of the rivers, and into fountains of waters. 5 And the name of the star is called Wormwood. 6 And the third part of the waters was turned to wormwood; 7 and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

The Paraphrase.

The third angel. Dan. xii. Jude.

1. When the third angel blew his trumpet at the third seal-opening, there fell from heaven a great mighty star burning like a creshet[1].

2 Tim. iv. Philastrius Brixiensis. Augustinus.

2. As the preachers of that time opened the truth of God, many great doctors and excellent learned men, as Arius, Macedonius, Eutyches, Valens, and such other, declined from the sincere faith, and fell to blasphemous opinions concerning the Godhead.

Luke xvi. Hosea ix. 2 Tim. iv. John vi. Rev. ii. 1 John ii. 1 Tim. iv.

3. These seemed glorious to the earthly-minded people, they appeared notable and famous to the blind forsaken sort; yet was their learning madness, and their doctrine fables and lies. But this is here to be noted, that they which are true teachers remain still in heaven, they persevere in the christian church; whereas the others are fallen clean from thence by apostasy and errors, so that they are none of Christ's.

2 Cor. iv. Isai. lv. 1 Tim. ii. Luke xii. 1 Cor. ii. Amos v.

4. This star fell into the third part of the rivers, which are the scriptures perverted, and into the fountains of waters, which are God's own very words depraved. These have the false doctors, yea, pernicious heretics, infected with their errors, corrupted with their lies, and with their false interpretations made them bitter and unsavoury.

Jer. ix.

5. For the name of the star was Wormwood, whose nature is to withdraw all sweetness. These with their bitter heresies and their noisome doctrine destroyed the pits of Abraham; they troubled the text, they mixed the truth with falsehead, they poisoned the waters, they took away the lovesomeness of them, they left them unpure and unperfect (not that they can be so of themselves, but of their false working), they made them unpleasant, unprofitable, yea, and most perilous unto many.

Gen. xxvi. Primasius. Bedas. Jer. ii. 1 Cor. v. Psal. xviii. Matt. xv. 2 Thess. ii.

Jer. xxiii. 2 Cor. ii. 2 Pet. ii. Lam. iii.

6. For it followeth: When the third part of the waters (which are the scriptures corrupted by them) were turned into wormwood, or bitterness of errors,

Haymo.

7. Many men died of them. They perished by those

[1 creshet, cresset, or cressit, an open lamp suspended on a pole.]

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doctrines, because they were made bitter. Yet were not all men cast away; for two parts were left undefiled, and many that drunk the poisoned waters evomited them again. Only were they lost that retained them still. The pure waters are here doubled unto the waters infected: for double in value is the verity before God, and the true minister thereof worthy double honour, whereas the other is nothing at all.

Ambrosius. Anabertus. Jer. ii.

Psal. xvii. 1 Tim. v.

The Text.

1 And the fourth angel blew, 2 and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; 3 so that the third part of them was darkened. 4 And the day was smitten, 5 that the third part of it should not shine, and likewise the night. 6 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, 7 and saying with a loud voice, 8 Woe, woe, woe to the dwellers of the earth, 9 because of the voices to come of the trumpets of the three angels which were yet to blow.

The Paraphrase.

1. At the fourth seal-opening the fourth angel stood forth and blew his trumpet. Never was the time yet so perilous but some true preachers hath been in it. Were there never so many heresies abroad, yet have there reigned some godly ministers; what though they were unknown to the world? Many sincere fathers were in the desert wilderness, when most mischief was in doing among the cruel tyrants; which, privily resorting to cities, taught them whom God had appointed to be saved. Of this number was Paulus, Antonius, Hilarion, Macarius, Pambo, Theonas, Ephraem, and such like; and long since their time Anastasius, Persa, Theophylactus, Fulgentius, Beda, Alcuinus, Strabus, and such other many. Notwithstanding all that they taught and wrote was not gospel. All was not without superstition, though they lived in much pureness of life.

The fourth angel. Matt. xx. Luke xx. Mark xii. Matt. xxviii. Hieronymus. Ruffinus. Cassianus. Heraclides.

Baptista Mantuanus. Joannes Tritemius. Franciscus Lambertus.

These blew the trumpet as they had received that time. But the false hypocrites and the antichrists so prevailed more and more under Mahomet and the Romish pope, that all Christianity and spiritual holiness was turned into superstitious sects. None was well christened that had not a monkish disguising. None was thought spiritual, unless he were shaven on the crown. Then brought they in many new ways of salvation, to prove Christ but a second Saviour,

Joannes Œcolampadius in Danielem. Joannes Wiclevus de antichristo et membris. Platina. Naucleus. Otho. Brunselsius Erasmus. Lutherus.

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as pardons, pilgrimages, masses, and Friday fastings. Then was God able to help no disease, but images were sought up everywhere; St Job for the pox, St Roch for the pestilence, St Germain for the ague, St Apolline for the teethache, St Gratian for thrift losing, and St Barbara for gunshot: that lady in that place, and that lady in that: this rood here, and that rood there: and he that did miracles here could do nothing there. Thus was all changed into devilishness; and their preachers for lucre confirmed always the same; which were many more in number than were the true messengers of God.

Joannes Olney. Carthusianus. Vincentius. 2 Tim. iii. 1 Kings xviii. 2 Tim. iv.

2. In this most corrupted and dolorous age, the fourth angel blowing his trumpet, the poor forsaken disciples shewing the truth, the third part of the sun was smitten; so was the third part of the moon, and also the third part of the stars. Good creatures, they found the third part of God's heavenly word sore blemished by the hypocrites, the christian church piteously disfigured by the antichrists, and the inferior ministers thereof darkened by tyrants and cruel magistrates.

John xv. Luke xxi. Isai. xlii. 2 Cor. ii. 2 Tim. iv. Lam. iv. Acts viii.

3. By their wicked stroke the light of God's verity was hidden, and appeared less by the third part than it was afore. Less was Christ the Sun of righteousness known, less was the christian church faithful, and less were the preachers godly. More ignorance was at that time than afore, more superstition, hypocrisy, and falsehead; wherefore the third part of them all was darkened.

John xii. Hos. iv. Mal. iv. Rev. ii. Isai. lvi. 2 Pet. iii. Rom. i. Jer. vi.

4. At that time also, by reason of them, the day was so smitten, that the third part thereof shewed no clearness; and so was the night likewise.

Albertus Magnus. Joannes Wicievus in supplemento trialogi.

5. In no case might Christ shine in the curates and religious, which took themselves for the day; nor yet christian fruits in the common people, which were esteemed the night. Only were their will-works allowed, and their dirty traditions thought godly. The true trumpet-blowers, or ministers of the word, were then compelled by cruel commandments, and the commons by cruel laws enforced in no case to meddle with the truth, lest their abominable doings were espied. In this therefore mark, what a detestable thing false doctrine of hypocrites is; for it bringeth in all darkness and ignorant blindness, and it shadoweth under pretence of virtue all wickedness and sin.

Waldensus in fasciculo nisaniorum. Bedas. Haymo. Sebastianus Meyer.

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6. And then (saith St John) I beheld an angel flying through the midst of heaven, as it had been an eagle; which betokeneth certain peculiar servants of God, illumined with some knowledge, and leading an high conversation in the church. Such were Joachim Abbas, Cyrillus of Carmel, Angelus of Jerusalem, Theolesphorus of Cusentia, Reinhardus, and others; and since their time, Petrus Johannis, Robertus de Uscecio, Johannes de rupe scissa, Arnoldus de Villanova, Hieronymus Savonarola, with such like.

Rev. vii. Hos. viii. Mal. iii. Phil. iii. Baptista Mantuanus. Joannes Erghom. Nauclerus.

7. These, perceiving the light of God's verity and the true teachers thereof daily diminishing, considering also the mighty increase of darkness, with a loud voice they cried: earnest writings they sent the world over, under the title of revelation and prophecy;

Joachim Abbas, super oraculo Cyrilli. Baptista Mantuanus.

8. Saying by the threatenings of scripture, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabiters of the earth." More wickedness is coming, more blindness, and more darkness to the ungodly infidels and earthly-minded people. It will still be worse and worse to the foolish ignorant sort through the errors, lies, and abominable superstitions of the false antichrists and cruel chaplains of Baal.

Zech. xii. Ephes. iv. Rev. xxii. 2 Tim. iii. Jude. 1 Kings xviii.

9. And this rebuking cry was because of the voices of the other three angels were yet to blow with the trumpet, whose blasts they should also more deeply yet contemn. By prophecies and scriptures have many godly men perceived aforehand, with Paul, the fall of faith, the increase of errors, and that divers should decline from the truth; and earnestly they have premonished the governors of it. Yet have they neglected the warning, and utterly despised them for it, leading the people into the depth of all errors and filthy abominations.

Franciscus Lambertus. Waldenses. 1 Tim. iv. Acts xx. 2 Tim. iii. Wiclevus. Matt. xxii. Rev. xx.

THE NINTH CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 And the fifth angel blew, 2 and I saw a star fallen from heaven unto the earth. 3 And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. 4 And he opened the bottomless pit, 5 and there arose a smoke of the pit, as it were the smoke of a great furnace. 6 And the sun and the air were darkened by the reason of the smoke of the pit. 7 And

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there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth. 8 And unto them was given power, 9 as the scorpions of the earth have power.

THE PARAPHRASE.

The fifth angel. Albertus Magnus. Luke xii. Matt. xx. Acts v.

1. The fifth angel, which blew his trumpet under the fifth seal-opening of the Lamb, were they which had the word of God for that age of Christ's church, and that published it to his elect. And these doth not only seem to be few in number, but also they appear to have taught privily in private congregations and houses.

Isai. xiv. Psal. xiii. Jer. vi. Isai. xxiv. Hos. iv. Baruch vi.

2. For when this trumpet was blown, John beheld a star fallen down clean from heaven into the earth, no part thereof reserved, neither of the star in heaven, representing the spiritual church, nor yet of the earth from the star, betokening the worldly people. Neither were the spiritualty of Christ's church nor yet the laity, clear from their poisons anywhere. This glittering star, or shining multitude of prelates, pastors, and religious fathers, were fallen away from the doctrine of the Spirit, from the living word of the Lord, and from the right conversation of Christ, into the earth of their own decrees and laws, nothing savouring but carnal traditions, dumb dark ceremonies, and doctrine of devils, fashioning their lives all after the same. Then sought they up Plato, Averroes, and Avicenna. Then was Aristotle thought necessary to interpret the scriptures. Then was there an infinite table of sophisters and school-doctors, of reals and nominals, of sententioners and summists, of colliginers and canonists, of Scotists, Thomists, Olcamists, Albertists, Baconists, Anconists. And every man thought his own wisdom best, which God hath proved stark foolishness all, and most idiotish dotage. When the blind world supposed they had the truth by this fallen star, they had nothing less. Under the fifth seal-opening this darkness was not seen, but the sixth now discloseth all. Only the slain sort complained that time, desiring their blood to be revenged; whereas answer was made them, that many more yet should be killed to fulfil their number. And it was proved true. For none in those days once hissed against them but suffered death for it. Yea, of emperors and kings that offended them, some were accursed, some deposed, some slain, some poisoned. Neither

Jer. ii. 1 Cor. ii. 1 Pet. iii. Matt. xv. Gal. iv. 1 Tim. iv.

Agrippa de vanitate Scientiarum.

Erasmus. Sarcerius de scholastica theologiæ vanitate. Œcolampadius in epistolis.

Franciscus Lambertus, lib. iii. in Apocalypsim. Rev. vi. Rev. xx.

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spared they power nor yet noble blood. In England here they slew king Edward, poisoned king John, and famished king Richard the second. By their own history they burned sir Roger Acton, knight; sir John Oldcastle the lord Cobham; and sir Reynold Peacock, bishop of Chichester, they imprisoned to death, besides an infinite number of poor simple souls, no lawful cause known, but lies of their own forging. Yea, and the articles that they died for then, they affirm now to be good. But no marvel, though they did such mischief in those days.

Joannes Carion in Chronicis. Ranulphus Cestrensis. Fabianus. Joannes Major. Polydorus. Agrippa contra Lovanienses. Zech. ix. Prov. i.

3. For to the star was given the key of the bottomless pit. After they were fallen from the wisdom of God to the corrupt dreams of men, following rather the creatures than the maker of them, he gave them over unto their own imaginations and fantasies.

Matt. xvi. Rom. i.

4. Then had they power in darkness, by their carnal, beastly, and devilish divinity, to open the well of damnation. For what is the wisdom of the flesh else but death? What are their practices but fighting weapons against life? They had licence to deceive, and leisure to do mischief in outward things, as had Satan upon the body of Job. But no doubt the goodness of God yet preserved the inward souls of many simple Jobs for time of the dangerous world.

Luke xxii. Heb. xiii. Luke xi. Rom. viii. Gal. v. Rev. xiii. Dan. vii. Job i. Psal. cvi. James v.

5. And when they had opened the bottomless pit with the key of their false doctrine, there went up a black filthy air, as it had been the smoke of a great furnace. There arose all errors, lies, heresies, superstitions, idolatry, covetousness, pride, incontinence, falsehead, hypocrisy, with all other filthiness, which are the fruits of hell, and they went abroad the world over. Thus hath these cursed apostates, the pope and his chaplains, the keys in deed, not of heaven, but of hell. They may open, but they cannot spear again, unless they spear from heaven, as they do always. They may hurt, but they cannot heal; they may destroy, but they cannot help; they may well damn, but they cannot save. For the nature of their key is only to make blind, obstinate, foolish, hard-hearted, and evermore worse and worse. He only giveth light, grace, faith, and health. He taketh away all darkness and sin, which hath the key of David. For he alone hath trodden down the winepress, having the whole victory over death, sin, hell, and the devil. He hath power only

Luke xi. Rev. xiv. Rev. xix. 1 Tim. iv. Gal. v. Rev. xviii. Rev. xx. Isai. i.

Matt. xvi. Luke xi. Matt. xxiii. Luke x. John x. 2 Pet. ii. Matt. xv. 2 Tim. iii. John xiv. Rev. iii. Isai. lxiii. Habak. iii. 1 Cor. xv.

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to spear up both death and hell. The fire of God's wrath they be not able to quench: the smoke of the devil's malice and continual wickedness they be not able to keep down. Eve could not withstand one simple suggestion of Satan. A small taste of this smoke lost Adam with his whole posterity. And now these antichrists have filled the world with it. For what is it else, but wicked persuasions; a learning of devils, and a doctrine contrary to the doctrine of God; poisoning all, destroying all, and leading unto hell?

Rev. vi. Wisd. ii.

Gen. iii. 2 Cor. xi. Rom. v. 2 Thess. ii. Matt. xxiv. 1 Tim. iv. Gal. v. Luke xii.

6. The sun by this smoke was darkened; so was the wholesome air. The gospel they defiled with their false interpretations. God's word they corrupted with their glosses, commentaries, and postils[1]. They mingled the scriptures with the dirty dregs of their own laws, traditions, and old rotten customs of their popish fathers; so that in the church no good air could be had, no sweet smell of the truth could be found. There was much idol-worshipping, strange crying, and lip-labouring, censing, fooling, and charming, crossing, mowing[2] and juggling, gazing, kneeling, and knocking, but no true gospel-preaching.

2 Cor. ii. Rev. xix. Lutherus adversus Catherinum. Isai. iii. 2 Cor. ii. Joannes Agricola super Lucam.

7. Out of this pestilent smoke came innumerable locusts, a very monstrous vermin and horrible to behold, creeping over all the earth. These were the disguised swarms of cardinals, mitred bishops, doctors, shaven priests, abbots, monks, canons, friars, nuns, sisters, and hermits, in red, white, russet, grey, black, blue, and all other colours. Of these were the Benedictines, the Bernardines, Gerondines, Gilbertines, Celestines, Scopetines, Grandimontensers, Camaldulensers, Cruniacensers, Premonstratensers, Carthusians, Carmelitans, Ambrosians, Rhodians, Gregorians, Purgatorians, Guilhelmites, Jesuits, Johannites, Hieronymites, Ninivites, Cellites, Taborites, Templars, Hospitallers, Crucigers, Augustinians, Dominicans, Franciscans, Brigidans, Basilians, of Josaphat's valley, and of the dark alley, and such other, with innumerable swarms of them everywhere. Peter prophesied afore of this smoky multitude, when he gave warning that there should come into the christian church false teachers, which privily should bring in damnable sects, denying the Lord that bought them, and many should follow their damnable ways, through whom the

Rev. xix. Nahum iii. Amos vii. Wiclevus in speculo militantis ecclesiæ.

Sabellicus. Mantuanus. Ægidius Faber. Paleonidorus. Polydorus. Franciscus Lambertus in regulam minoritarum, et alii.

2 Pet. ii. Matt. xxiv. Acts xx. 2 John. Jude. Isai. i. Rom. ii.

[1 postil: a comment, or gloss.]
[2 mowing: making faces like a monkey, grimacing.]

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way of truth should have ill report. But few have marked that warning.

8. And unto these noisome locusts was power given, but yet none other power than have the scorpions of the earth, whose crafty nature is first to creep softly, then grievously to sting, and last of all to venom. This pestilent vermin God hath suffered for the wickedness of his people, first flatteringly to creep, to dissemble, gloss, and speak fair, promising prosperity, victory, long life, and heaven, after this departing. And by such means got they under the emperors, kings, governors, and all the world besides.

Exod. x. Ezek. ii. Haymo. Albertus. Job xxxiv. Matt. vii. Heb. xxvii. Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc. Gregorius in lib. dialogorum.

9. Then did they sting their consciences with terrible dreams and visions, and with fearful revelations of purgatory and of hell, to build them up fair houses, and to live in wealth and pleasure. Finally, they venomed their faith with their poisoned counsels and promises, and so took they from them the true hope in Christ, making merchandise of them through covetousness and fair words. Thus clustering together like locusts, they have left nothing green, but all they have withered and destroyed. No works might then be used of God's prescription, but such as were fantasied by them for advantage, as mass-founding, chantries-building, priest-singing, image-gilding, kissing of relics, praying to dead men, and such like. And when they were once frank and fat, they stood up together proudly against the Lord and his word.

Odilo Cluniacensis Abbas.

2 Pet. ii. Rev. xviii. Exod. x. Deut. xxviii. Sebastianus Franc. in secunda parte Chronicorum.

Jer. v. Psal. ii.

THE TEXT.

1 And it was said unto them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any tree, 2 but only those men which have not the seal in their foreheads. 3 And to them was it commanded, that they should not kill them, 4 but that they should be vexed five months. 5 And their pain was as the pain that cometh of a scorpion, when he hath stung a man. 6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; 7 and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. Yet were they commanded that they should in no case hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, nor tree. Though they were permitted by the sufferance of God to do much mischief, yet could they harm none but such as wanted faith. He ordained from the beginning always to save his. Never could Satan hinder the soul of Job; only did

Rev. vii. Prov. xi. John vi. Numb. xxiv. Acts xx. John xvii.

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Job ii. Coloss. i. Rom. viii. Gal. v. John xviii. Jer. xv. Mark xvi.

he vex the outward carcase and goods. Where as faith is growing, true hope in Christ springing, and works of charity fructifying, they shall do no hurt by the promise of God. Where the gift of the Spirit aboundeth, they can in no wise prevail. If any hinderance doth fall, it is where faith is wanting.

Rev. vii. Rev. xix. Ephes. v. Franciscus Lambertus, lib. iii. in Apoc.

2. For only had they power upon those men which had not the seal of God in their foreheads. They only are in peril that have not the sure faith. And the more want they have thereof, the more is their scath when it cometh.

3. Yet had those locusts in commandment, that in no wise they should kill them whom they had noyed. For the will of God is, that no wicked person should perish, unless he resisted the Holy Ghost, but rather to turn from sin and to live.

Ezek. xviii. Ambrosius Ansbertus. Matt. xxiii. Gal. iv. Hos. xi. John ix. Joannes Eckius.

4. Only was it permitted that they should be vexed five months. Only for their lifetime were they suffered to overload their poor consciences with their beggarly traditions, to trouble them with their trumpery, to grieve them with their curses, and to torment them with their threatenings of their purgatory and their hell. Though they, blinded for want of the scripture, erred in all popish devilry, and for lack of true knowledge had not the token of faith; yet perished they not wholly, no more than did Nicodemus and Gamaliel, which were but carnal men: but their ends the Lord reserved to his own merciful goodness, for confessing the name of Jesus Christ.

Rev. vii. John iii. Acts v. Franciscus Lambertus.

Eccius. xxxix. Ephes. iv. Wisd. xvii. Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc. Wisd. xvi. Hos. x. 2 Tim. iii.

5. Yet were they sore vexed for the time, and their pain was as the stinging of a scorpion, when he hath hurt a man. A pricking of a more than half desperate mind, a fear of a wonderfully troubled conscience, yea, and a great doubt of salvation had they, till God shewed his mercy upon them, opening their faint hearts, and strengthening them with his inward power.

Hos. iv.

6. And in those days shall men seek death, and yet shall not find it. For the grief of their loaded consciences they shall in confessions take counsel of them, which is very poison and death; yet shall God so preserve them, it shall be no death unto them. For no damnation can be unto them which are in Christ Jesu. Lot dwelled in Sodom, yet perished he not with Sodom.

Rom. viii. Gen. xix. Luke xvii.

Rev. vi. Mark ix.

7. They shall desire to die, and yet death shall flee from them. When they feel the terrible gnawing of inward

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fearfulness, they shall seek up their stinking remedies, and require their dirty merits; which is clean to die from Christ, and to forsake his living waters for their filthy puddles of hypocrisy and devilishness. Yet, by the singular grace and unspeakable mercy of God, that they seek shall flee clean from them, and that they have not sought for shall save them, which is the only blood and death of Jesus Christ. Thus shall they have life unlooked for, and be taken up with Enoch from the wickedness of this world, and see the God of gods in Sion without their deserving.

Wiclevus in lib. de confessione. Jer. ii.

Jer. xxxi. Joannes Huss de antichristo. 1 Pet. iii. Tit. iii. Gen. v. Psal. lxxxiv.

The Text.

1 And the similitude of the locusts was like unto horses prepared unto battle. 2 And on their heads were as it were crowns like unto gold. 3 And their faces were as it had been the faces of men. 4 And they had hair as the hair of women. 5 And their teeth were as the teeth of lions. 6 And they had habergeons, as it were habergeons of iron. 7 And the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots, 8 when many horses run together to battle. 9 And they had tails like unto scorpions, 10 and there were stings in their tails. 11 And their power was to hurt men five months. 12 And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, 13 whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue Apollyon. 14 One woe is past, and behold two woes come yet after this.

The Paraphrase.

1. And the locusts in similitude were like unto horses prepared unto battle, full of stomach, strife, contention, anger, and hate, rigorous in examination, fierce in excommunications, moody in disputations, mad, hasty and cruel against the verity; and evermore grudging amongst themselves one sect against another.

Wisd. xvi. Rom. i. Waldenus in fasciculo sanctorum.

2. Upon their heads they had counterfeit crowns in manner of gold. Glorious names of dignity had they, and shining titles of high preeminence undeserved. Most holy fathers, most gracious lords, and most reverend masters commonly were they called. They made large their phylacteries, and set abroad their skirts; they sought the highest places in the synagogues, and salutations of reverence in the streets. They were not as other men be. The simplest holy-water priest among them was "sir" at the least, which is no less than lord. By presumption, pride, and ambition, they exalted themselves aloft, as the cedar trees of Libanus, above emperors,

Isai. xxviii. Matt. xxiii. James iii. Luke xxii. 3 John. Matt. xxiii. Luke ii. Mark xii. Luke xviii.

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2 Tim. iii. 2 Thes. ii. Psal. xxxvi. Isai. xiv. Obad. i. Isai. xxviii. Phil. iii. Psal. i.

kings and princes. Yea, they set their seats in heaven, and became God's vicars to damn and save at their pleasure. But woe be to the proud crown of this drunken generation, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is but dust, and shall be their shame and confusion!

Coloss. ii. Rev. iii. Josephus. Matt. vi. Luke xi. Matt. xxiii. Mark xii.

3. Their faces were not unlike to the faces of men. And outward pretence they had of wisdom, grace, and godliness, yet was there nothing less within them. Very prudent, wise, and learned they seemed in their communing, discreet in behaviour and sober in their living; yet were they but painted tombs, full of all sins and filthiness. The counterfeit goodness they shewed outwardly was only to be seen of the world.

Haymo. 2 Tim. iii. Jude. 2 Pet. ii. Rom. i. Ezek. iv. Ecclus. xxi. 1 Tim. v. Acts xx.

4. Hair they had on their heads, most like to the hair of women. All wavering were their minds, inconstant, fickle and foolish. Their hearts were given to uncleanness, their flesh to voluptuous desires and pleasures, so that in them reigned all beastly abominations. All execrable lusts flowed in them as the water of the ocean sea.

5. Their teeth were as the teeth of lions. For they were wholly given to greediness, raving, fierceness and cruelty; not sparing, but devouring the flock, not saving, but losing, not helping, but destroying. These were those wild beasts that trod down the vineyard of the Lord, those unreasonable boors that have rooted up all, and those blood-thirsty wolves that have rent the poor lambs in pieces.

Cant. ii. Psal. lxxix. Matt. x. Jer. xxiii. Haymo. Albertus.

Luke xxi. 1 Tim. i. Matt. xii. Heb. vi.

6. Habergeons had they upon them like jacks[1] of iron mail; which signifieth their obstinate malice, their hard froward stubborn hearts against the verity of God. For wilfully they resisted it, blaspheming the Holy Ghost with the Pharisees and scribes, whose sin shall never be remitted in this world nor in none other.

Joannes Huss de anatomia antichristi. Wiclevus, lib. ii. de sermone Domini in monte. Sebastianus Meyer in Apocalypsim.

7. And the sound of their wings was as the stout noise of chariots, when many horses bustle together towards a battle. The wings of these abominable locusts, that set them aloft so far above themselves, are their dignities, offices, riches, liberties, privileges, laws, and such like, which boldeneth them in all things, be it never so unjust.

8. The noise of these is great, the note, the rumour, the

[1 Jacks: a horseman's defensive upper garment, generally quilted and covered with strong leather. Nares.]

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fame, is mighty the world over, as well in chronicles and writings as in the speech of the people. Yea, under the title of God they bolster their wickedness to make it the stronger. All must be God's dignities, God's service, God's laws, God's religions, when it is stark devilishness. They make what laws they list, they command and forbid, they set up and pluck down, they both curse and bless, yea, they do all mischief, and all in his name. Be it never so ungodly, cruel, and false, yet must it forth in the name of God. Thus mightier wings they have than had the great eagle in Ezekiel. Neither could Pharaoh in Egypt, nor Nabuchadnezzar in Babylon, nor Antiochus in Jewry, do that they might do here in Christendom.

Rev. xiii. Isai. x. Micah iii. Rom. xvi. John xvi.

Ezek. xvii. Exod. v. Dan. iii. 1 Macc. i. Deut. viii. Jer. li. Isai. ix.

9. For they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were sharp stings in their tails. Their study, labour, and practices were ever for a false conclusion. The end of their fair compassed crafts was always to maintain their errors and lies.

Wiclevus, libel. de sermone Domini in monte.

10. And this had a very sharp sting; for death was towards them that withstood their gins. Destruction of body and goods was evermore at hand.

11. Yet was their power only to hurt men for five months' space, to harm them in this sensible life divided in five parts. No power had they upon the souls hence departed. Then could they not hinder with all their censures, black curses, suspensions, degradings, interdictions, excommunications, and all such terrible thunderbolts, with book, bell, and candle. Farther extended not their violence than upon the poor bodies. The souls were in God's hands, whose mercy is never far off.

Primasius, lib. iii. in Apo. Job ii. Matt. x. Joan. Huss de regno antichristi.

Luke xii. Wisd. iii.

12. A king they had over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit; for he is the head captain of all the children of pride, the master of errors, and the father of lies. Needs must the devil be their king, whilst his smoky doctrine hath nourished them, fed them, and set them forth in their colours. Sure we are that they are strangers to God, for the heavenly Father never planted them. Well, such people, such governor; such swarms, such stinking leader.

Rev. xx. Job xli. John viii. Luke xi. 2 Thess. ii. 1 Tim. iii. Psal. xvii. Matt. xv. Jer. ii.

13. The name of this their captain in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, and in the Greek tongue Apollyon; and

Hieronymus. Erasmus.

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Matt. iv. Gen. iii. Luke xi. Matt. xii. Franciscus Lambertus.

both signify a spiteful destroyer. His nature is to persuade all evil, to infect the mind, to corrupt the heart, to pluck away faith, to make the soul blind, to rob man of all goodness, to separate him from God, and to damn him with himself for ever. Woe is that wretched army that hath such a captain, and that forsaken multitude which hath such a king.

Bedas. Haymo. Albertus Magnus.

14. One woe is past. One cursed season of execrable blasphemy, darkness, and devilishness, under the fifth seal-opening; and the fifth trumpet-blowing is at an end. But look to it well; for two other woes yet shall come after this, under the sixth and seventh, as hereafter will appear.

The Text.

1 And the sixth angel blew, 2 and I heard a voice from the 3 four corners of the golden altar, which is before God, 4 saying to the sixth angel which had the trump, 5 Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. 6 And the four angels were loosed, 7 which were prepared an hour, for a day, for a month, and for a year, 8 for to slay the third part of men. 9 And the number of horsemen of war were twenty times ten thousand. 10 And I heard the number of them. 11 And thus I saw the horses in a vision, 12 and them that sat on them, having fiery habergeons of a yellow and brimstone colour.

The Paraphrase.

The sixth Angel. Bedas Anglus in Apocalyps. Sebastianus Meyer.

1. Consequently the sixth angel stood forth and triumphantly blew his trumpet. Constantly the sincere preachers of this present age have taught Christ and his verity under this sixth seal-opening, wherein they have disclosed the detestable errors and shameful abominations of the other age afore.

1 Kings vii. Rev. viii. Matt. xvii. John i. Heb. ix. John i. Coloss. ii. Rom. v. 1 Cor. v.

2. And as this trumpet was blown, I heard (saith St John) a sweet voice from the four corners of the golden altar, which is before the eyes of God. The altar which is most precious, most dear, and most acceptable unto God the Father, is Jesus Christ, full of grace and verity. Upon him was offered one pleasant offering, whose abundant sweetness hath relieved all faithful believers. And nothing is accepted before God to this present day, unless it be offered upon him. None altar else alloweth he for the sacrifice of peace, neither Mary, nor John, Peter, nor James. Upon him we offer, when we trust

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only in him, and also when we live according to true faith in him, restraining our old Adam with his fleshly desires. Heb. ix. Rom. xii. Coloss. iii. 1 Pet. ii.

3. The four corners of this altar is the gospel, which he hath left by his apostles in the four quarters of the universal world. The voice is the joyful tidings or message thereof. And this signifieth Christ not only to have his church within the dominion of Rome under bondage, but also in all other parts of the world in liberty. All these four corners have but one voice. The gospel everywhere taught hath but one heavenly message of mercy and peace from God the Father, one glad tiding of health and salvation from Jesus Christ, and one sweet smell of the grace of God and of victory in Christ from the Holy Ghost. Matt. xxviii. Mark xvi. Rom. x. Matt. xvi. Gal. iv. Rom. viii. Ephes. i. John xvi. Rom. i. 1 Cor. xv. John xiv.

4. And this one voice commanded the sixth angel which had the trumpet, or the true faithful preachers under the sixth seal-opening, which had the administration of the word at the only gift of God, Franciscus Lambertus, lib. iii. in Apoc.

5. To go forth and to loose the four angels which are bound in the great river of Euphrates. Many hath the Lord anointed with his Spirit in this age to preach deliverance to the captive, to open the prison to them that were in bondage, and to declare the acceptable year of health; by whose preaching he hath now unshackled the children of the dead and set them at liberty to preach his name in Sion, and to worship him in Jerusalem. Many that afore were fettered with fantasies, yoked with unadvised vows, and overcharged with intolerable burdens among bishops, priests, monks, canons, friars, and nuns, are now graciously delivered, and with a free conscience confess the verity of God. Luke iv. Isai. lxi. Amos ix. Jer. xxxi. John v. Psal. x. 2 Chron. vii. Baruch vi. Matt. xxiii.

6. So that many among the four angels, or a great number of them that were sometime antichrists, hypocrites, tyrants, and murderers, are now loosened from Euphrates, the great flood of wavering fantasies and of the fickle pleasures of this world. For though they were sore bound in their conscience and life, yet wanted they there no wanton delights to nourish and feed all fleshliness. They lacked nothing that might maintain their pomp, vain-glory, covetousness, pride, gluttony, and lechery, but they had it in abundance. And though the nature of God's word be as of a key to open unto them that believe, and to spear unto them that believe not, yet is it said here to open unto both; but yet in divers Heb. ix. Lutherus adversus pseudo-episcopos. Franciscus Lambertus in Apoc. Idem Lambertus de causis execrationis multorum seculorum. Acts iv. John viii.

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respects: for in the chosen sort it openeth to love, in the other it openeth to hate. The one bringeth forth honey by it with the bee, the other venom with the spider. The one is made more meek and gentle, the other waxeth more cruel and mad: as Paul saith, "Unto some it is the savour of life unto life, and unto some again it is the savour of death unto death." For hard is that word to the execrable angels, or children of Satan, calling them from Euphrates: they can in no wise abide it. Yet were the four angels loosened from thence, and have lost a great part of their pleasures. Since the gospel came in, the antichrists have lost the profits of their bulls, pardons, confessions, privy-tithes, idol-offerings, purgatory-masses, bell-christenings, church-hallowings, with other loose ends. The hypocrites have lost their more than princely habitations, their monasteries, convents, hospitals, prebendaries, and chantries, with their fat feeding and warm couches; for ill gotten good will home again. The tyrants and murderers have not now their pleasures in all points as they had aforetime; what though their cruelty be still as much as it was, and rather more? For the people is not now to their mind as then. And as these angels are loosened in this quarter of the world, so shall they be in all other quarters, the Lord appointing their times. One corner of the altar hath given his voice; I doubt it not but the other three will shortly do the same.

Acts xix. John vii. 2 Cor. ii. Luke ii. John vi. 2 Thess. ii. Mal. iii. Rev. vii.

Joannes Wiclevus in sua confessione, et in libello ad parliamentum regis.

Franciscus Lambertus, lib. iii. in Apoc. Otto Brunfelsius, et alii.

7. The four ill angels were prepared (saith St John) for an hour, for a day, for a month, and for a year. At no time are the antichrists unready to do mischief, the hypocrites to deceive, the tyrants to persecute and kill. Since Christ's time to this day never ceased they, but still evermore they have been doing. Yet hath their fierceness been more and longer at one time than at another, more vehement in some places than in some. And at this time their continuance is somewhere long, somewhere short. Somewhere is their cruelty more, somewhere less. Their days are not always alike, nor their lives of one length.

Dan. xii. John vii. Joachim Abbas in Apoc. Rusebius Cæsariensis.

Joannes Nauclerus. Jacobus Bergomensis.

8. Notwithstanding, for their time they shrink not, but still they go forward to slay the third part of men. None other can the tyrant be but a tyrant, nor the antichrist but an antichrist. None other part can the hypocrite play but his own, nor yet the spiteful murderer. Ever seek they to kill

Joannes Huss de anatomia antichristi.

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the innocent people: evermore practise they to bring out of the way the righteous servants of God, taken here for the third part of men or in the smaller number, forsomuch as here is neither blood nor fire, wormwood nor smoke. Matt. xxiii. John xvi. Sebastianus Meyer. Rev. viii.

9. And the number of their horsemen, like unto the horsemen of armies in war, was twenty times ten thousand, or ten score thousand. An innumerable multitude have they sent forth the world over to deceive and blind, to destroy and kill. Horsed they are with their beastly laws and decrees, and armed with their fierce authority and cruel power. And who is not now an horseman of theirs, and a cruel Saul, making havoc of Christ's poor congregation? Everywhere they buy them and sell them, betray them and accuse them, persecute and imprison them, indict them and burn them. Ticonius Afer ex Primasio et Ansberto. Joannes Brentius. Acts viii. 2 Pet. ii. Matt. x. Dan. xii.

10. And I heard the number of them (saith St John), or knew certainly aforehand that the truth in those days should have many such enemies: I understood it in spirit, I believed it, and surely marked it up for a warning to them that should come after. Ambrosius Ansbertus, lib. iv. super Apocalypsim.

11. Consequently, I saw the setting forth of them. I beheld in a vision the horses, frank, fat, and fierce, which were none other than the aforesaid locusts that crept out of the smoke from the bottomless pit. In the fifth opening or blast of the trumpet, which was the rank time of their going forth, they were but locusts, lean, bare, and needy: in their beginning the antichrists and hypocrites, as bishops, priests, monks, canons and friars, were poor, abject, and untidy. But under the sixth they grew unto great horses: they were so pampered with possessions, fatted with pleasures, and boldened with authority. And when they were once come into the estimation of the world, then waxed they high, heady, fierce, proud, and cruel. Then were they horses of pleasure for princes and worldly magistrates, to carry them at their own lusts; for they were unbridled: no laws had they for them. The sceptre, crown, sword, and power, might then pass none otherwise in emperors and kings than they had fantasied. A fault then done against them could be no less than both heresy and treason. If they said but "Burn," then must they be but drawn, hanged, and burned—no remedy. For that that toucheth them, toucheth the prince's honour also, to make the matter more grievous. They should not else be both partners in the ven- Haymo. Rev. ix. Thomas Naogeorgius in Pammachio. Joannes Wiclevus, lib. ii. de sermone Domini in monte. Benno Cardinalis. Joannes Carion. Thomas Waldenus. Fabianus. Polydorus, lib. xxii. Chro. Matt. xxiii. Luke xi. Wisd. ii.

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Psal. cxvi. Rev. vi. Ephes. ii.

geance of God for innocent blood-shedding. Yea, hurt they not the righteousness in all their mischief, though it so appeareth unto them, forsomuch as their death is precious in the sight of the Lord, and their dwelling-place the altar of God Christ, full of rest and peace.

Exod. vii. 1 Kings xxii. Psal. ii. 2 Tim. iii. Coloss. ii. Waldensus in fasciculo zizaniorum.

12. And the men that sat on these horses had fiery habergeons of a yellow and brimstone colour. The princes and rulers, provoked by the crafts of these false prophets and deceivable teachers to rise against Christ and his word, are armed with cruelty in unrighteousness, with a false charity, and with a counterfeit wisdom. In the examination of causes they will oft-times seem favourable, loving, and wise, when in effect they are nothing less. For move them once with the truth or the quick learning of the Spirit, and then will they do as doth the brimstone that is touched with fire. They flame out their malice, they spit forth their wickedness, and their filthy judgments stink the world over. Many such sweet savours of their politic wisdom, or rather fleshly foolishness, have they left behind them in their chronicles and histories, that unwholesomely savoureth yet to this day. And this have they of their unbridled horses, their ghostly fathers, confessors, and counsellors, over whom themselves have neither power nor authority, but as they list.

Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc. Sabellicus. Platina. Blondus Carsulanus. Wernerus. Cornelius Agrippa.

The Text.

1 And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions. 2 And out of their mouths went forth fire, and smoke, and brimstone. 3 And of these three was the third part of men killed; 4 that is to say, of fire, smoke, and brimstone, which proceeded out of the mouths of them. 5 For their power was in their mouths, 6 and in their tails. 7 For their tails were like unto serpents, 8 and had heads, and with them they did hurt. 9 And the remnant of men, which were not killed by these plagues, 10 repented not of the deeds of their hands, 11 that they should not worship devils, 12 and images of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood, 13 which neither can see, neither hear, neither go. 14 Also they repented not of their murder and of their witchcraft, 15 neither their whoredom, neither of their theft.

The Paraphrase.

Haymo, lib. ii. in Apocalyp. Joannes Huss de regno antichristi.

1. The heads of these horses were in similitude as the heads of lions, which betokeneth their proud, bold, and mighty malice against God's verity. In the other age, when they

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were but locusts, they had the faces of men; for some reason yet appeared in their laws and doings, though they stood not all with God's word. But since they grew up in courage, and became furious horses, they have laid away those faces, and now taken to them fierce lions' heads. Now is there nothing in them but open malice, cruelty, and spite. Now are they termagants altogether and very devils incarnate, where their dirty traditions be not kept. So eager they are, their horsemen cannot restrain them, their princes cannot rule them in such a matter, unless they will be torn in pieces; as many of their predecessors have been aforetime, both emperors, kings, and other governors.

Wiclevus, lib. ii. de sermone Domini in monte.

Lambertus Shaftnaburgensis. Sigebertus Gemblacensis. Otho Phrysingensis.

2. For out of their mouths goeth fire, smoke, and brimstone: God's word they preach not, for they are become horses. Their office is now to carry whither it shall please them, and to lead the princes at their lust. Now roar they like lions, with their great grandsire Satan, seeking whom they devour. Now breathe they forth of their execrable mouths the hot fire of their threatenings and curses. Now vomit they abroad the filthy smoke of their vanities and fables. Now spew they out the stinking brimstone of their lives and errors.

Isai. lvi. Matt. xxiv. 2 Pet. ii. 1 Pet. v. Ephes. vi. John xvi. Acts ix. Luke xxi. 2 Tim. iii. 1 Tim. iv.

3. So that they have killed with these three plagues the third part of men; but yet none other else than those which have given credence to their errors, believed their fables and feared their curses.

4. For none other were slain, but they only which tasted of the fire, smoke, and brimstone that went out of their mouths. None other else were lost and deprived of the life which is in Christ Jesu, but such devout dottrels[1] and worldly-wise people, as they taught and brought up in false worshippings.

Joannes Hussius de regno, vita, et moribus antichristi. Coloss. iii. 1 Cor. i. Baruch vi.

5. No doubt of it but the power of these cruel beasts was most in their mouths. The strength of the deceivable teachers, to beguile the wretched idiots and blind asses of the world, is evermore in their speech, in their sermons, confessions, and privy counsels. Therewith do they infatuate them, blind them, and kill them.

Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc.

Joannes Wiclevus de confessione Latinorum.

6. Much power have they also in their tails behind;

[1 Dottrels: a bird said to be so foolishly fond of imitation as to be easily caught. Hence used for a silly fellow, a dupe. Nares' Glossary.]

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which is not only their hypocritish life, but also their pestilent traditions, laws and customs: with these do they sore infect and grievously poison.

Franciscus Lambertus, lib. iii. in Apoc. Otho Brunfelsius in locis communibus. Matt. xxiii. 2 Tim. iii. Mark vii.

7. Let no man think their noyance to be light nor their grievance small, considering that their tails are like unto serpents, and have heads wherewith they hurt. Not only doth their doctrine for their lifetimes sting, venom and corrupt the silly souls; but also their examples, constitutions and usages, left behind them to be performed of other which followeth, to the overlading of their conscience also, doth poison them unto death. They infect their belief, and provoke them to trust in vain things, and are jeopardous everywhere.

Joannes Huss in quædam loca Apocalypseos. Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc. 1 Tim. iv. Psal. xix. Matt. v. 1 John ii. Jer. xiii. Rev. xvi. Luke xxi.

8. O horrible beasts, and most cruel monsters! Noyful are they both in the head and in the tail, before and behind, coming in and going out. Nowhere are they good, if they once appear. Let him that will not perish shun their company, considering that no man can dwell with them without great peril. In their mouths is venom, in their tails is poison. Both their laws and their lives, their counsels and their ceremonies, their holiness and blessings, are all hypocrisy, sin, and pestilent doctrine of devils. Only are the laws of the Lord holy, true, and perfect, converting the poor in spirit, and giving wisdom unto children. The antichrists and the hypocrites thus put from their sweet Euphrates, wherein they swimmed in all pleasure, wealth, and ease, what is more in this age to be looked for than terrible war? Consider that here, in this prophecy, they are no less than cruel horses and vengeable beasts, having before them lions' heads with fire, smoke, and brimstone, and behind them serpents' heads to sting, venom, and kill. Ponder this also, that they have power to carry the princes and magistrates at their pleasure, for they are unmuzzled. Yea, what though some notable governors have gotten victoriously of them the primacy of their own realms, to be the supreme, highest, and immediate heads of their clergy here in earth under God (which is a wonder); yet are they scarce able to put aside one corrupt custom or dirty ceremony of theirs. But all their devilishness must needs stand still under the colour of laudable rites, decent usages, and politic orders. For why? they are perilous

Primasius Afer, lib. iii. in Apocalyp. Franciscus Lambertus, lib. iii. in Apoc.

Let open experience be herein an able witness. Beda. Albertus Magnus, visione iii.

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beasts, and their mouths yet open; wherein they have both fire, smoke, and brimstone, which are most terrible things, and in their tails poison, which is most dangerous. What a fearful blast is this to them which more fear men than God! 'If your grace do suffer this new trade still to go forward, ye shall procure ye the malice of all regions, the hate of all princes, and the cruelty of all peoples. They shall invade your realm, consume your substance, and destroy your commons, with such like. Whereas, if ye take another way, ye shall have their benevolence, love, and favour.' Thus dally they with their head rulers, and neither make them faithful Davids, wise Solomons, manful Josaphats, valiant Jehus, godly Josiases, nor holy Hezekiahs, but very fearful and faint-hearted Cains, thinking that every man which cometh by the way will kill them. This will be the rule of this present age, no doubt of it. For unto kings hath not God given it to subdue these beasts. Only is it reserved to the victory of his living word. Only shall the breath of his mouth destroy them, grind them to dust, and throw them into hell-fire. Let the faithful believer therefore, considering the mischief of this time, wherein nothing is like to be certain and sure in land, shire, city, town, no, nor yet house, appoint himself to persecution, loss of goods, exile, prison, sorrow, and death of body for the truth's sake, thinking that his portion is in the land of the living. For now are the perilous days under the voice of the sixth trump, these mad, fierce, raging beasts being abroad: whereas, under the seventh, the carnal church rejected, and the antichrists overthrown[1], the right Israel of the Jews and Gentiles, tokened with faith, shall be peaceably restored into the possession of God. In the mean season let them that live now pray, and have their whole hope and comfort in the Lord.

Eccius. xvi. Dan. vi. Cornelius Agrippa, in querela super calumnia.

Isai. lv. 1 Kings iv. 2 Chron. xxxiv. Eccius. xi.

Gen. iv.

Rev. vi. Isai. xi. 2 Thess. ii. Matt. xxi. Luke xii. Franciscus Lambertius, lib. iii. in Apoc.

Psal. cxlii. Dan. xii. Wiclevus et Joan. Hussius. Gal. vi. Rev. vii. Acts i. James v.

9. And the remnant of men (saith St John), that were not killed with these plagues, which are they whom God hath called in this age by the true preachers from their detestable doctrine and erroneous ways unto the sure knowledge of his godly verity and gospel; these remember not the singular benefit of God, they magnify not his holy name for their deliverance from these most dangerous plagues of no less damnation in themselves, but remain altogether unthankful.

Sebastianus Meyer in commentario super Apoc. 1 Pet. ii. Rom. i. Heb. ii. 2 Tim. iv.

[1 overthrowe, old ed.]

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Rev. ii. Heb. xii. Franciscus Lambertius in Apocalyp. Rom. xiv. 1 Cor. viii.

10. They repent not from the heart the deeds of their hands. They have no remorse in conscience of their old wicked works. No, they amend not their lives, nor yet fashion themselves to the true trade of the gospel; but rather they are slanderous unto it, by undiscreetly using the liberties thereof, ministering occasions of falling unto the weak.

Theodorus Bibliander in consultatione.

11. They see the people in divers points of idolatry run headlong to the devil; yet do they not brotherly admonish them by the scriptures of the dangers thereof. They shew them not that the worshipping of images,

12. Which are made of dead things, as gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, is the very worshipping of devils.

Baruch vi. Psal. xcv. Wisd. xv. Psal. cxiii. Matt. v. Rom. xv. 1 John iii. Luke x.

13. They tell them not that they be sinful men's works, and can neither see nor hear, speak nor go. They will be called christian brethren; yet is it not dolour unto them to see their brethren perish, for whom they ought to jeopard their lives. They must seem Samaritans, yet will they not heal the wounds of them that are more than half dead: yea, is it not to be feared that for doubt of punishment and loss of their goods they look back again toward Sodom with Lot's wife, consenting to their abominations? Let them not think, that so do, but a double plague followeth them. More worthy is he to perish that throweth himself willingly into a peril, knowing it afore, than he which never knew it.

Matt. xiii. Gen. xix. Luke xvii. Rev. xviii. Chrysostomus. Cyrillus. Rom. i. Rev. xxii.

Heb. xi. Rev. i. 1 Tim. v. John xii. Luke viii. Acts v. 2 Thess. iii. Matt. xiii.

14. Neither repented they (saith St John) of their murder, their witchcraft, their whoredom, nor their theft. They see of their own congregation in poverty, penury, prison, and exile, and they know it is for none other than the testimony of Jesu: yet[1] have they no mind to help them; no courage have they to comfort them; they dare not be acknown[2] to favour that sort. When any trouble cometh, they are none of them. They are well contented to have Christ in dalliance; but if he put them once to pain, or ask ought of them, then bid they him adieu, they can no skill[3] of him, they know him not, the farther off the better. Thus are they become neither hot nor cold, ready to be spued out of the mouth of God. None other are they than murderers, that succour not their brethren. Worse are they than

Rev. iii. 1 John iii. James ii. 1 Tim. v.

Dan. xiv. Baruch vi. Rev. xvii. Sebastianus Meyer.

[1 yea, old ed.] [2 acknown: acknowledged, known.]
[3 they can no skill: they have no knowledge.]

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infidels, that help not the household of faith. The witchcrafts of the hypocrites they know by the evident scriptures, yet will they not flee from them.

15. They know the open whoredom of the Babylonish strumpet, they know her theft and robbery, evermore spoiling God of his honour; yet will they run to it, seek it, and take part of it with the unfaithful. What is he else that runneth with a thief, but a thief also? Alack, they tread under their feet the precious gift of God. Like unprofitable servants, they hide his godly treasure underneath the ground; and, like unreasonable dogs, they turn again to their vomit. The heavenly Father of his eternal mercy grant such to amend! For a much greater plague abideth them than the other, though it be not here named: for many stripes are due to that servant which knoweth his Lord's will, and doth it not; yea, to sin against knowledge is against the Holy Ghost and irremissible.

Psal. l. Heb. vi. Matt. xxv. Luke xix. 2 Pet. ii. 2 Cor. i. Rom. i. 2 Thess. ii. Luke xii James iv. Matt. xii.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 And I saw another mighty angel 2 come down from heaven, 3 clothed with a cloud, 4 and the rainbow upon his head; 5 and his face as it were the sun, 6 and his feet as it were pillars of fire. 7 And he had in his hand a little book open. 8 And he put his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth; 9 and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth. 10 And when he had cried, seven thunders spake their voices. 11 And when the seven thunders had spoken their voices, 12 I was about to write. And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, 13 Seal up these things which the seven thunders spake, 14 and write them not.

The Paraphrase.

In the midst of this most vengeable time, wherein the antichrists and hypocrites most fiercely stir about them, to vex all the world with their fiery blasts, their filthy smoke, and their stinking brimstone, to restore again their pleasant Euphrates, the Lord hath sent to the comfort of his certain peculiar and chosen learned men, most constantly to defend his verity. And them this present revelation compareth to a strong angel.

Joannes Huss de regno antichristi. Rev. ix. Bedas. Franciscus Lambertus in Apocalyp.

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Eobanus Hessus. Joannes Hilten. Melancthon. Waldenus. Jer. i. Acts ix. 3 Esd. iii.

1. I saw (saith St John) another mighty strong angel come down from heaven. With a stout power came this angel from God to withstand the furious beasts in this sixth age of Christ's church, wherein they rage so sore. God hath raised some godly persons now, by whom many things are opened, that aforetime were hid, except it were to a few poor souls in corners. Constant are these and earnest, yea, invincible warriors by the word of God: for who can be more strong than they which fight with an invincible weapon? which is the verity of God. That valiant conqueror hath victory in them, which promised to give them such mouth and wisdom as all enemies should not be able to resist.

Matt. x. Luke xii.

Franciscus Lambertus. John xx. Rev. viii. Isai. xiv. Matt. xv.

2. This angel, or ministers signified by him, descended down from heaven with Christ their master, as messengers sent of God. The apostates and antichrists fall down from heaven with their captain Lucifer, like stars of darkness. And as wicked seed, not planted of God, they rise up in the world.

Petrus Berthori. John xv. Matt. v. Luke vi. Mal. ii. Phil. ii. Acts xx. John ix. John xii. John xvi.

3. This angel was clothed with a cloud, betokening these godly supporters of the Lord's truth to be compassed with many hard showers and troublous crosses of opprobrious rebukes, scorns, slanders, lies, and open blasphemies, to the uttermost trial of their weak flesh. And this cloud hideth from the world all that is in them spiritual and godly, like as it did in Christ, that to many they seem not that they are in deed. Because they are despised of the crafty generation, and evil spoken of by the hypocrites, the simple idiots and deceived multitude doth judge them ill doers; yea, they suppose them very heretics, and so do spitefully call them: whereas, in very deed, they are the angels of God and most high chosen messengers. The apostles, thus used also of the world, were named clouds of Isaiah the prophet, very long before they preached the gospel. "What are these" (saith he) "that fly like clouds?" These were, and are, they that everywhere pour down the sweet dew and rain of the mysteries of God, and seasonably moisten the ground of faithful hearts, causing them to bring forth their fruits in due season.

Mal. ii. Acts iv. Isai. lx. Augustinus et Beda. Eccius. xxxix. 1 Cor. iii. John xv.

Ecclus. xliii. Psal. civ. Isai. xxxiii. Gen. ix.

4. Upon the head of this angel was the rainbow. And in this are they noted to be the angels of the covenant, and the messengers of peace; forsomuch as the rainbow was

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the sign of God's covenant concerning the flood. Their message is that Christ is the only Saviour of the world, and that none can perish believing in him. No damnation is there to them which are in Christ Jesu: no, though they never know one ceremony or popish constitution of theirs; though they never hear mass nor go procession, though they never be greased, shaven, nor disguised, though they never have beads, Latin primers, portifoliomes[1], nor other signs of hypocrisy, yet are they promised to have atonement with God. Most rightly hath this angel the rainbow on his head: for all the study, practice, and diligence of the faithful ministers is to declare the free mercy of God and most friendly benevolence in Christ without any point or jot of men's deservings, lest they should perish with the Pharisee for trusting in their own works.

Acts iv. Heb. vii. Rom. viii. Gal. iv. Tit. iii. Isai. i. Wiclevus. Ephes. ii. Coloss. i. Joannes Œcolampadius in Esaiam. Rom. iv. Luke xviii.

5. The face of this angel was as the bright sun. Their outward shew is altogether Christ, which is the sun of righteousness. None other light shew they but his: none other doctrine declare they but his holy gospel, neither decrees nor decretals, fathers, constitutions, nor synodals; but them they leave to the dark bloody stars which are fallen from heaven. Only teach they the shining charity of God, the fervent zeal and burning desire towards man's salvation. Neither advance they ceremonies nor rites, holy days nor offerings, diriges nor masses, purgatory nor relics. And as concerning their lives, more God desireth not of the christian minister, than to expend his whole study, labour, and time for the lightening of others. He neither commandeth them to be shaven nor disguised, to be popish priest nor monk, to say matins nor even-song, to fast Friday nor vigil, to abhor marriage nor meats: only he willeth them to edify his flock with none other learning than his godly truth. This is their only office.

Phil. ii. Mal. iv. John xii. Rom. i. Henricus Bullingerus. Rev. vi. 1 John iv. Martinus Lutherus, de traditionibus humanis. Matt. v. Isai. i. Wiclevus in trialogo. 1 Tim. iv. 1 Tim. v.

6. The feet of this angel were in similitude as pillars of fire. Strong sustentacles[2] and sure stays hath God made the upholders of his true church. Fervent affections hath he given them, constant stomachs, and so invincible a power, as no violence can resist. Doughty and strong is the adminis-

Rev. iii. Gal. ii. 2 Tim. iii. Jer. i. Luke xxi. 3 Esd. iii. Psal. xxiii. Isai. iii. Nahum i.

[1 Portifoliomes: portiforium (low Lat.), a portable book of prayers: breviary.]

[2 Sustentacles: supports.]

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tration, where the verity remaineth; for it bringeth with it the majesty of God. "Oh, how beautiful (saith Isaiah) are the feet of the embassadors of the Lord, which bring the message of peace, and the tidings of health unto Sion!"

Hom x.

1 Cor. xii. Rev. iv. Luke xxiv.

7. He had in his hand a little book open. In their administration are the scriptures evident and clear, opened by the Lamb, and much godly knowledge too, received of other by them. Blessed be the Lord which hath opened that book. Now may the cripple stand up, the blind see their way, the poor feed and be satisfied. Desire therefore with faithful David from the very heart to have understanding, and to know the testimonies of God. Ask meekly and have; seek wisely and find; knock gently, and the door will be opened. Very like is it that the Lord God doth mind plenteously to spread the doctrine of his Spirit in this sixth age of his church, this book being thus opened; and that all the world shall receive it, rebel the hypocrites never so sore. When the gospel appeared in Christ's time, the Jews were the first that received it, after them the Greeks, and last of all the Latins. Now in this latter time it openeth to the Latins by the administration of this mighty angel and his affinity, and from them is gone to the Greeks; for many of them now of late have graciously received it, as we have heard. And last of all shall it return again to the Jews, as now very apt also to receive it, that Christ's prophecy may be found true, the last to be the first, and the first last. For he that hath dispersed Israel shall bring him again to his fold, as Jeremy recordeth. Thus shall the glory of God be within few years seen the world over, to the comfort of many.

Isai. xxxv. Matt. xi. Psal. cxix. James i. Matt. vii. John xiv.

Acts i. Rev. iv. Matt. xxiv. Rev. vii. Matt. xv. Eusebius Cæsariensis. Franciscus Lambertus in Apoc.

Martinus Lutherus. Brunfelsius. Luke xi. Matt. xx. Jer. xxxi. Haggai ii.

8. This angel set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth. As well shall the weak people receive this verity as the strong, the poor as the rich, the low as the high, the sick as the whole, the sinner as the righteous, the beggar as the king, the unlearned as the learned, the labouring man as the priest, and much rather: for the right foot is towards them. The isle that is speared up with the main sea, yea, and they also which be upon the sea, shall so well have it as the open wide country, or as they which dwell upon the most pleasant land. From none shall the book be speared. Everywhere shall the truth be open, as well by writings as words, and as well by books as preachings.

Ambrosius. Ansbertus. Jer. xxxi. Isai. lxi. Mark xvi. John vi. 1 Cor. i.

Franciscus Lambertus. in Apoc. Matt. xxiv. Jer. xxxi. Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc.

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Upon both shall this angel tread. Both sorts of people shall be subjects to that verity, which those godly messengers shall bring, submitting themselves as footstools unto it. Some ungodly rulers there be both by sea and by land, both in the isles and in the open country, that will none of this angel with his open book. In no wise will they suffer him to set footing within their regions, but command under pain of death, that no man teach his doctrine nor hear it, that no man print his books, buy them, sell them, read them, hold them, favour them, nor bear them upon him. But all is in vain. Let them wax mad, swell, and fret themselves to death, yet will he tread upon their ground. Let them persecute, fetter, stock, famish, slay, hang, head, burn, drown, yea, and very quick, with all other mischief and tyranny; yet will the truth abroad.

Psal. xcii. Joannes Œcolampadius in Dan. Otho Brunfelsius in annotationibus evangeliorum. Joachim Abbas in Jerem. Lutherus adversus pseudo-episcopos.

9. For the angel crieth with so loud a voice, as the lion when he roareth. So mighty and strong is the word that they preach, and the verity that they shew, as was the sharp living word that Christ spake, which was the invincible lion of Juda. And so mighty is that as made both heaven and earth, so strong as destroyeth the power of hell, so sharp as divideth the soul from the spirit and the joints from the marrow, and so weighty as, when it falleth, it grindeth to powder all pride, power, magnificence, wisdom, riches, and vain policy of this world, none shall be able to abide it.

Rev. xix. Heb. iv. Rev. v. Gen. i. Matt. xvi. Heb. iv. Ephes. vi. Matt. xxi. 1 Cor. i.

10. And when the angel had cried, and uttered this terrible noise, seven thunders spake their voices. The fearful judgments of the wrath of God which are infinite, and can neither be numbered nor yet measured of the creatures, opened their terrible mysteries, which shall at their times appointed of him light upon the children of unbelief. The tyrants, which have resisted the heavenly verity of the Lord, will once be punished as was the host of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Once will he fearfully visit their multitude in the thunder of his ire. Once shall the terrible sound of his crack strike the earth smooth, revenging the contempt of his word. In Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and other christian regions, the angel hath shewed the book open, and roared out the voice of the gospel with stomach as doth the lion; yet will it not be taken, but some they have beaten for it, and some

Haymo, lib. iii. in Apocalyp. Franciscus Lambertus. Psal. ix. Rom. i. Rev. vii. Heb. x. 2 Chron. xxxii. Isai. xxxvi. Joel ii. Zeph. i. Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc. Matt. xxiii. Luke xi. Franciscus Lambertus.

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most spitefully murdered. Let them not think but after the lightning the thunder-clap will follow. The verity opened and thus despised, most grevious plagues of dearth, war, or pestilence will shortly fall by the great vengeance of God. Principles have been seen in some quarters of the world; let them not think but much more is coming, and will not cease till Christ hath made of his enemies his footstool.

Matt. xxiv. Luke xxi. Otho Brunfelsius. Psal. cx.

Albertus Magnus in Apoc.

11. And when the seven thunders had spoken their voices, or shewed their certainty that they should so surely, as God liveth, come to pass at their time appointed;

12. I was about (saith St John) to take pen and ink in hand, and to write them. I thought to register them in a book to the admonishment and warning of them that should follow. And anon I heard a very earnest voice from heaven, saying unto me in this manner:

Robertus Tuitiensis in Apoc. Bedas. Haymo.

Franciscus Lambertus.

13. Seal up those things which the seven thunders spake, and in no wise write them. Register the thunders, but not the voices. Note the figures, but utter not the mysteries till God appoint it. It is not for all men to know the times, which God hath in his power. Many secret things heard Paul, which were lawful for no man to utter. The outward sound of God's secrets may be heard of all men, but the inward working is reserved to his Spirit. The Lord always with his Holy Ghost so informeth them inwardly, that they perceive the effect of many things, the other heareth but a noise. Forsomuch as the voice of God's thunderings is unsearchable, and his secret judgments the most mighty depth, they are not open but to such as he electeth.

Acts i. Matt. xxiv. 2 Cor. xii. Chrysostomus. Augustinus. John xvi. Matt. xiii. Luke viii.

Rom. xi. Psal. xxxv. Isai. vi. Haymo in Apoc. Psal. lxvii. Luke xxiv. Otho Brunfelsius in Evangel.

14. Therefore was John commanded in no case to write them, or to open the secret meaning of them. That point the Lord reserveth peculiarly to himself, to open to whom, what, or how much him lusteth. Much wide are they which think that they can of their own wit and industry declare such causes, unless God openeth unto them by his word or some evident sign, as he hath done in this age most plenteously to many. Less can we not gather of these thunders, when the message of God is despised, abused, forsaken, neglected, trodden under foot, or damnable lies preferred unto it, than that his wrath must follow. Somewhat hath been seen already, much more will appear when they give full sound.

Joannes Huss in quasdam loca Apoc. Franciscus Lambertus. Mal. ii.

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The Text.

1 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea, and upon the earth, 2 lift up his hand to heaven, 3 and swore by him that liveth for evermore, 4 which created heaven and the things that therein are, 5 and the earth, and the things that are in it, 6 and the sea, and the things which are therein, 7 that there shall be no more time, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, 8 when he shall begin to blow, 9 even the mystery of God shall be finished, 10 as he preached by his servants the prophets.

The Paraphrase.

1. And the angel (saith St John) whom I saw in this wonderful revelation, thus standing with one foot upon the sea, another upon the land, after the sort afore named,

2. Lift up his hand towards heaven, so strongly to affirm his message to be true, as the Lord liveth, and to promise it so infallible just, as God sitteth in heaven. Joachim Abbas in Apoc. Sebastianus Meyer in Apoc.

3. What do the true preachers else in this age but maintain their doctrine by the mighty word of God, after the example of Christ and his apostles, which alleged the law, prophecies and psalms, to confirm their sayings with? They neither allege decree nor decretal, constitution nor synodal, legend nor fable, monks' rule nor saints' life, doctors nor fathers, Gregory nor Anselm, Thomas nor Duns, Plato nor Aristotle, nor such like filthy dregs. But they come to the very true touchstone with John; they prove the spirits whether they be of God or no, considering that all men are liars and have erred, one except. Luke xxiv. Acts ii. Martinus Lutherus in postil. 1 Thess. v. 1 John iv. Psal. cxiii. Psal. xiii. Heb. i. Gen. i.

4. He sware by him that liveth in himself with incomprehensible majesty, power, and glory for evermore, which in the beginning created the heaven above with the invisible things that are therein contained;

5. Which formed the ponderous earth beneath, and the visible creatures that are therein remaining; Isai. xiv. Amos iv. Eccles. xviii.

6. Which fashioned the flowing seas, and the corruptible things that are therein continuing: Psal. cxxxv. Franciscus Lambertus in Apoc.

7. With an earnest constant spirit he protested, and by the strong word of God he affirmed, so taking him to witness, that there shall be no more time, no more leisure, no more sinful occupying here from henceforth, but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel. This oath is none other than a Joachim Abbas.

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Sebastianus Meyer. Mark xvi. Matt. xiii. Luke xxi. 2 Pet. ii. Rev. ii.

sure assertion, that all shall be finished in this seventh age of the church. This would not be hidden from the congregations. Necessary it is that both good and bad knew it: the faithful, to be ascertained that their final redemption is at hand, to their consolation; the unfaithful, to have knowledge that their judgment is not far off, that they may repent and be saved. Not unlike is this oath to the oath in Daniel of time, times, and half a time: whereof, the time was from him to Christ; the times were the ages from Christ to the seventh seal-opening, or the seventh trumpet-blowing; the half time from thenceforth, wherein the days shall be shortened for the chosen's sake. So much mischief shall not the enemies do then: their tyranny shall be assuaged.

Dan. xii. Rev. xii. Joannes Baconthorpe in Danielem. Matt. xxiv. Rev. viii. Rev. xii.

8. For when the seventh angel shall begin to blow, or the ministers of that age sincerely declare the word,

John iv. 1 Cor. xiii. Dan. xii.

9. Even the mystery of God shall be finished, and the full meaning thereof fulfilled;

Jer. xxxi. Franciscus Lambertus in Apoc. Psal. xxxii. Acts i.

10. Like as he aforetime both taught and promised by his peculiar chosen servants the prophets. No time shall be after this, but that which will be of all times the end. But when that time shall begin, we know not till God shall open it by his seventh angel. Of the thing we are certain and sure, but the time of it is evermore in God's hand; that is, sealed up in the book till he shall please to open it. The righteous shall not see it till it cometh, but rest still in their lot with Daniel. And the ungodly shall have no understanding then: they shall build and plant, buy and sell, riot and banquet, as in the days of Noah and of Lot; yea, they shall give themselves to all filthy lusts and covetousness. And unbewares shall death come upon them. The terrible judge shall call them to account, and to the everlasting fire condemn them. Thus shall their days also be shortened, when they think nothing less; for that time shall be but half after Daniel.

Mark xiii. Dan. xii. Luke xvii. Gen. vii. Gen. xix. 1 Thess. v. Matt. xxv. John v. Rev. xii. Dan. xii.

THE TEXT.

1 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, 2 Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel, 3 which standeth upon the earth. 4 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, 5 Give me the little book. And he said unto me, 6 Take it and eat it up; 7 and it shall make thy belly bitter, 8 but it shall be in thy mouth as sweet as honey. 9 And I took the little book out of his hand, and did eat it up; 10 and it was in my

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mouth as sweet as honey. 11 And as soon as I had eaten, my belly was bitter. 12 And he said unto me, 13 Thou must prophesy again unto the people, 14 and to the heathen, and tongues, and to many kings.

The Paraphrase.

1. And the voice (saith St John) which I heard afore from heaven, spake unto me again. God's holy Spirit touched me, moved me, and compelled me; it graciously admonished me, taught me, and said thus unto me:

Mal. ii. John xvi. Rom. viii. Rev. i. Bedas et Haymo in Apocalyp. John v. Acts xvii. Matt. xiii.

2. Go thy ways forth, John, and take the little book which is now open in the hand of the angel. Every man having grace with John is here commanded to have God's word. Christ willed all faithful believers to search the scriptures, to understand the prophecies, and to perceive the mysteries of them. And, for the performance of his will therein, he hath sent in this age this peculiar angel, beside the common preachers, betokening these singular learned men, whom now he hath endued with most high knowledge. Of their hand he mindeth us to receive the scriptures, and not of the blazing star, nor yet of the smoke locusts. Their faithful, sincere, and godly interpretations he willeth us to take, specially in books, forsomuch as in person they can in no wise be everywhere present, and for that it is a book here named. For by them in these days doth he make open his saving health, and in the sight of all people declare his righteousness. Let them therefore, whose hearts God moveth to instruct other in the ways of the Lord, diligently peruse the labours of such, whom he hath so plenteously replenished with his Spirit. But in thus doing let them not too much depend upon no man's person, but prove all things by the scriptures, lest they fall into errors, as other have done afore for so doing. Very lightly is he deceived, that measureth the verity by man's judgments. In the search therefore of godly mysteries, not the wit nor the learning of the man is to be sought, but rather the right meaning of God working in the man.

Franciscus Lambertus in Apocalyp. Luke x. Rev. ix. Otho Brunfelsius. Henricus Bullingerus. Luke ii. Isai. xl. Joel ii. Psal. cxviii. Franciscus Lambertus. John v. 1 John iv. Matt. xv.

Joannes Chrysost. Augustinus. Cyrillus. Albertus Magnus. Isai. xvi. Matt. xi.

3. This angel standeth upon the sea and upon the land. As well is the true messenger of God for the weak as for the strong, for the low as for the high, for the poor as for the rich, for the simple as for the learned, for the sick as for the whole, and for the foul as for the fair: yea, and rather for them than the other, having his right foot upon the water.

2 Tim. iv. Gal. vi.

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Josh. x. Rom. vi. Psal. cxviii. Eucherius Lugdunen.

4. And I (saith St John), obeying the voice of the Lord, or the heavenly motion of his Spirit, went unto the angel, and instantly desired him to give me that little sweet book.

Joannes Hus in aliquot loca Apoca. Franciscus Lambertus.

5. None other is this book than the holy scripture, whose opening is a power and right interpretation thereof. This he receiveth open at his hand, which diligently readeth or heareth any sincere declaration of it by any faithful minister. None other is this book fit for, nor none other retaineth it in this age, but meek Johns, or men of a gentle spirit, having the grace of God, and obeying his heavenly voice. For the wicked must ever be blind: wisdom shall not enter into a froward soul, nor dwell in the body that is given to sin. John went to the angel, and received the book; for he that will seek shall find.

Heb. xxxv. Ephes. iv. Wisd. i. Jer. xl. Matt. vii. 4 Esd. iv. Ezek. iii. Haymo.

6. For the angel said unto him, Take it unto thee, and eat it up clean. The belly shall it make very bitter, but it will be in the mouth so sweet as honey. With good heart ought the scriptures to be received of all men, in faith devoured, and in a pure love digested; in continual study and meditation thereof each man after his calling to persevere, the king in his reign, the judge in his office, the merchant in his occupying, the labourer in his work, the mariner upon the sea, and the bishop in his cure. Nothing but idleness worketh that man, which hath it not grafted within him, though he both fast and pray. Vain are all policies, acts, constitutions, and laws without it. For it is the life of our soul, the lantern of our feet, the light of our passage, and rule of our works.

James i. John viii. Psal. cxix. Ephes. iv. 2 Pet. i. Wiclevus de Ecclesia. Rom. xvi. Matt. vi. Heb. xi. John vi. Psal. cxix.

7. Bitter it is in the belly, and sweet in the mouth. When the knowledge of truth is once received, and surely settled in the heart, it engendereth a spirit of indignation, and a zeal of God very bitter against all wickedness. It maketh us with Jeremy to detest all vice, and with Ezekiel to abhor all sin. It provoketh us also, with Moses, Elias, David, and the prophets, grievously to complain of the world's abominations, and with Christ and his apostles dolorously to lament the sore decay of the wicked.

Luke viii. Rev. ii. iii. 1 Kings xix. Jer. ix. Ezek. xxxiv. Exod. xxxii. Psal. xiii. Lam. i. Luke xix.

8. Yet is nothing so sweet in the mouth as it is. Nothing was to Paul so delicious, when he once savoured it; no, nothing so pleasant. Neither colours of rhetoric, paintings of poets, wisdom of philosophers, nor holy traditions of fathers, could then delight him. All were but darnel, tares, stubble, chaff,

Acts ix. Psal. xix. 2 Tim. ii. 1 Cor. ii. Gal. iv. Matt. xiii. Jer. vii. 2 Cor. xi. Rom. i.

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filth, rust, dreams, lies, and unprofitable vanities. Nothing was in his mouth then but that delectable verity, and that sweet gospel of God: that took he with him as the vessel of election in many an hard journey, and bare it forth before the Gentiles, the kings, and the children of Israel; yea, and for that to die he thought it then advantage. Acts ix. Gal. ii. Phil. i. Ezek. iii. 4 Esd. xiv.

9. And I took the little book (saith St John) out of the angel's hand; with meekness I received the scriptures of God. I did eat it up clean, I digested them in faith. Acts xvii. Psal. xix. Psal. cxix. Cant. ii.

10. And it was in my mouth so sweet as honey. Oh, how delicious (saith David) are thy sayings unto my throat! More dulcet than honey are thy words, Lord, to my mouth.

11. So soon as I had eaten it (saith St John), so soon as I had incorporate it in my mind, and rooted it in my soul, my belly was bitter, my heart was grieved much to see the evils of the world, my spirit was troubled to see the abusions of men, and much I pitied the loss of their souls. Westmerus de Tropis scripturarum. Luke vi. Rom. ix. Dan. xii.

12. Yet did not the angel so leave me, but he said thus unto me: Thou must prophesy again among the people.

13. As thou hast received, thou must render; as thou hast been taught, thou must teach again, lest thou, hiding the treasure of thy Lord, become an unprofitable servant. 2 Cor. vi. John xv. Matt. xxv. 2 Tim. iv. Matt. xxviii.

14. Thou must publish the truth to the unbelievers, thou must open it to people of divers nations and languages, and finally manifest it to kings of many regions, that they see their people instructed in the same. As a trumpet therefore exalt thy voice, shew freely the joyful message of salvation. Refuse none that will come unto it, poor nor blind, halt nor lame. Consider that no man lighteth a candle to hide it, but to set it up that men may see by it. None other are fit to prophesy, but they which have devoured the book. They must now declare the gospel in this latter age of the church by the appointment of the Lord. For necessary it is that by the strength thereof all pride of this world and blasphemy against God be destroyed. Mark xvi. Acts ix. Wisd. vi. Isai. xxxviii. Luke xiv. Matt. v. Luke xi. Rom. x. Isai. lii. Rev. vii. Heb. i. 2 Thess. ii.

In the next volume[1] shall follow the rest.

[1 i. e. the Second Part, which immediately follows.]

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The Secod part of the Image of both churches, after the most wonderful and heauenlye reuelacion of Sayncte Jhan the Euangelyst, etc. Compyled by John Bale.

The same disciple whome Jesus loued hath wytnessed and written theese thynges, and knowe that his testimonye is treme Joannes xxi.

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THE SECOND PART

OF THE

IMAGE OF BOTH CHURCHES.

A SMALL PREFACE

UNTO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

In the first part or volume of this work (which containeth the first ten chapters) are all these godly matters of St John's Revelation in course comprehended. First of all is the high legacy and message of the said St John unto the seven congregations of Asia in the first chapter mentioned: wherein they are also unto seven golden candlesticks compared, and their preachers unto seven shining stars in the right hand of Christ.

In the second and third chapters are the said seven congregations severally each one by itself described and warned, to the universal premonishment of the whole christian church in the seven parts or climates of the world. Mark those three chapters diligently, and ye shall perceive that the true christian church is alone governed by the preaching of God's word, an only office of Christ commanded, and not by dead ceremonies commanded by the pope, of whom there is no specialty[1].

Consider how those preachers throughout all this book are compared unto stars and angels, their congregations called the right Spouse of Christ. The other be assembled[2] unto most filthy locusts, breeding of the smoke of the pit bottomless, unto hateful birds, foul spirits, and devils; their church called the proud synagogue of Satan, and the most execrable whore of Babylon.

In the fourth chapter is heaven made open, and the secrets

[1 Specialty: distinct mention, or prerogative.]
[2 Assembled: resembled.]

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thereof manifested unto the christian believer, whom John also representeth this whole book over. For not only are the mysteries thereof in the universal church performed, but also in the particular churches of nations, and in the private consciences of men.

In the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters, the Lamb Christ openeth the seven seals of the book of the most hidden mysteries of God, for the seven ages of the christian church. In the mean season are the true servants of God sealed unto salvation, solaced in their troubles, and relieved in their sorrows, notwithstanding the great violence of the truth's adversaries.

In the eighth and ninth chapters the seven angels blow their trumpets, signifying the preachers to shew forth their messages appointed of God for the seven ages of the church, many wonderful plagues following in the people for their unbelief's sake, they obstinately resisting it, or else unthankfully receiving it.

In the tenth chapter cometh the mighty angel from heaven with a book in his hand all open, and John devoureth the same: which betokeneth the earnest preachers of this latter age of the church, wherein the true servants of God shall greedily receive and also digest the scriptures. Take this for a brief sum of all that is spoken in the other volume; the residue shall follow hereafter in course.

In the margin of that first part or volume put I many allegations both of the scriptures and doctors. And thereunto was I first provoked by this saying of Saint Jerome in a certain epistle of his *ad Paulinum monachum:* "The Apocalypse of St John (saith he) hath so many mysteries as it hath words[1]," or for every word a mystery, whether ye will.

I minded also there by my labours to ease the readers for search of the places, and to signify unto them that I did nothing therein without authority. And undoubtedly the gathering of those places was so laborious unto me, as the making of the commentary; which nevertheless I thought well bestowed for the comfort of my brethren.

But two cruel enemies have my just labours had in that

[1 Apocalypsis Johannis tot habet sacramenta quot verba.—Hieron. Epist. secund. ad Paulin. Monach. Op. ed. Bened. Par. 1706. T. VI. Pars ii. col. 574.]

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behalf; of whom the one hath them falsified, the other blasphemed: which hath caused me to leave them out in all that here followeth. The printers are the first, whose heady haste, negligence, and covetousness, commonly corrupteth all books. These have both displaced them, and also changed their numbers, to the truth's derogation; what though they had at their hands two learned correctors which took all pains possible to preserve them?

The other is Momus or Zoilus, yea, rather one which playeth both parts under the cloak of a Christian[2]. This cruel carper and malicious quarreller leaveth no man's work unrebuked, minister it never so much godliness. But like as rust, moths, maggots, cankers, caterpillars, with other vile vermin, corrupteth all that is to the use of man; so doth this enemy, to destroy both name and work, only for the advancement of his own precious person.

His working tools are such unsavoury sophisms, problems, elenches, corollaries, quiddities, subtilties, second intentions, intrinsical moods, with other prodigious sorceries, whom he sometime sucked out of his mother's breasts, the university. These hath he not yet all, as unsavoury morsels, evomited for Christ, defining rather with Aristotle than with Paul in his daily disputations.

Of this royal rabbi is Peter judged a fool, and John an unlearned idiot. Yet shall his reader find small learning at his hand, unless he take an heap of barbarous terms, and unsewed together sentences, for matters of excellent learning. But surely John will one day come from Ephesus to visit this proud Diotrephes, and shew him of his arrogant brags, to his displeasure, unless he leave off in time. All Aristotle's provision shall not help him.

Satan upon the pinnacle of the temple never bestowed his alleged scripture more perversely, than this Momus interpreted certain of my allegations, nor yet farther from their right understanding: but I forgive it him with this forewarning for this time, though it be not the first lewd point that he hath played, in the case he so leave his quarrelling. My second allegation upon the preface, 1. Corinth. vi.[3], is not set there to

[2 The Editor has not been able to ascertain, or even conjecture upon any grounds of probability, who is intended under this character.]

[3 See page 251.]

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authorise the Apocalypse, as he most falsely and all contrary to my meaning hath interpreted it; but affirmeth that the christian believers are Christ's members, which ought of necessity by the Holy Ghost's appointment to hear and to read the words of the said book: for I know that the Epistle unto the Corinthians was written of Paul ten years at the least before St John's Apocalypse. No less is he than a false prophet, that resisteth Jeremy rebuking Babylon for her wickedness. Too much it were to answer his other quarrellings, and too tedious unto the christian readers; and therefore I pass them over, lest I should be too plenteous in answering a fool according to his foolishness.

Thus by these cruel handlings of these two ungracious enemies have I just occasion to leave out the allegations in the margin, observing this wholesome counsel of Christ concerning such as they be: "Give not that is holy unto dogs, nor yet that is precious unto swine." For the one of his churlish nature teareth and devoureth, the other like a swine treadeth it under his filthy feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with thee evermore, good christian reader, and with all them that seek of the scriptures the saving health in them contained without quarrelling. Amen.

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THE SECOND PART

OF THE

IMAGE OF BOTH CHURCHES,

AFTER THE MOST WONDERFUL AND HEAVENLY REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST, &c.
COMPILED BY JOHN BALE.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

Unto John was delivered, after that he had thus devoured the book, a reed, not unlike to the mete-wand of six cubits long and a span, which was given unto Ezekiel, nor very far different from the measuring line in Zachariah. And what is this else, but that the administration of God's heavenly verity is secretly of him committed unto them which have afore received it, and in faith digested it, that they should therewith rightly measure, discern, and judge all things? None other is it to prophesy again in this sixth age, but thus to mete the temple, the altar, and the worshippers therein, and to prove them in length, breadth, height and depth.

The Text.

1 And then was given me a reed 2 like unto a rod, 3 and it was said unto me, Arise, 4 and mete the temple of God, 5 and the altar, 6 and them that worship therein. 7 And the quire, which is within the temple, cast out, 8 and mete it not; 9 for it is given unto the Gentiles. 10 And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty-two months[1].

The Paraphrase.

1. And there was given me (saith St John) a reed. Both received I the wisdom of God, and also a mouth to utter it; so that my tongue became the pen of a ready writer. Forsomuch as I abhorred iniquity, the Lord anointed me inwardly with the oil of gladness, and gave me stomach to utter his word.

2. The reed which God delivered me was like unto a rod. For his word is the rod of the right order, and the sceptre

[1 .xii. months, old ed.]

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of his kingdom. With this rod spread he out the heavens, and laid forth the first foundation of the earth. This rod of his power hath the Lord now graciously sent us out of Sion, by men having his special grace as by John, to have dominion here in the midst of his enemies.

3. For unto John it was said for this age, Arise from vain study, from cares of the body, from consideration of earthly causes;

4. And mete the holy temple of God, which is his congregation or church. Prove all beliefs, whether they be right or no. Examine their works, whether they spring of God's commandments or of men's traditions. And in so doing try by the scriptures the corn from the chaff. Mark out the people of God from the synagogue of Satan, and delay not to nourish them with the sweet fruits of the Spirit.

5. Measure the altar also, which is Jesus Christ, upon whom the full sacrifice of redemption was offered. For many false Christs are abroad in the world to seduce the people. The pope boasteth himself for God's own vicar, Mahomet calleth himself the great prophet of the Lord. And both they, to subdue the gospel, hath set up new laws; the pope his detestable decrees, and Mahomet his abominable Alcoran. Both they have wrought such wonders and such signs in superstition, as might deduce into error (if God were not merciful) the very elect persons. The monks say that Christ is in the desert, the priests say he is in the box; but admonish my people, that in no case they believe it. The canons say he is here, the friars say he is there; but counsel my flock that they go not forth: for God dwelleth in nothing that is made with hands. In the faithful heart is Christ only found: there remaineth he, that is his dwelling-place.

6. Therefore now, last of all, measure them also that worship in the temple. Consider them only to be his people, which seek him in spirit and in verity, and that worship not in outward shadows, nor in the elements of this world, nor yet with observation of days and times. They are not his sons, that for the leaven of the Pharisees, which is the doctrine of hypocrites, forsake the bread of children, which is his living word. They are not his lambs, but vile goats, that rather attend to the voice of strangers than to the true shepherd, Christ.

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7. And therefore the quire, which is within the temple, cast out. The prelates, priests, and religious, which are not of the common sort, seclude from Christ, from his church, and from the company of true worshippers. Throw forth the bond-woman and her son, the Roman church with her children, and Mahomet with his rabble: for the bond shall not inherit with the free.

8. Measure not out that chancel of charmers, that college of Balaam's brethren, those marked[1] Madianites, and cursed Ishmaelites. Allow them not by the scriptures, commend not their counterfeit righteousness. Admit them not for the members of Christ, but judge them to be the synagogue of Satan. And spear them out of the kingdom of God with the key of David. For they are those swine that tread pearls under their feet, and those cruel dogs that turn again to devour men. Meddle not with that quire, have not to do with that wicked generation.

9. For it is given unto the Gentiles. Wholly are those antichrists addict to the superstitious rites of the heathen in their sacrifices, their ceremonies, their observations, their holy days, their vigils, fastings, prayings, kneelings, and all other usages, contrary to the admonishment of Christ, that they should in no wise enter into the ways of the Gentiles. Wherefore God hath detested them with his own mouth, and clean given them over unto their own filthy lusts. Now reign they all in their own wisdom, thinking evermore their own fleshly fantasies best: wholly they are become Gentiles.

10. And the holy city, of whom glorious things are spoken, they shall tread under foot the space of forty-two months. Not the earthly Jerusalem is this city, builded of men, and made holy by the outward observations and ceremonies of the Jews, as many expositors have fantasied; for of that (like as Christ prophesied) is not left one stone standing upon another: but this city is the sure building of God, grounded upon the strong foundation of the apostles and prophets, even upon the hard rock-stone, Jesus Christ. This is the pleasant possession, the wholesome household, the sure hold, and the delectable vineyard of the Lord of hosts. This is the living generation of them which fear, love, and seek their Lord God in faith, spirit and verity, and not in outward

[1 See Rev. xiii. 17.]

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shadows. These are the children of promise, the true offspring of Abraham, the chosen house of Israel, and the kingdom of the Holy Ghost. Pure, clean, and holy, hath Christ made this city, by none other thing but the only shedding of his precious blood.

11. This city tread they under foot, that keep down the truth of the gospel, that persecute and slay God's people for it, that defeat his word for their own traditions, that bring in the Jewish ceremonies, the Gentiles' superstitions, Pagans' customs, and heathen usages, yoking men with importable burdens of false worshippings for their own filthy lucre and advantage. Notwithstanding thus must they do still by the sufferance of God, till the forty-two months be finished; which is not else but the time, the times, and the half time, or the thousand, two hundred and sixty days, in that God shall shorten the time for his chosen's sake. Thus, after St Paul also, before the Lord's coming there must be a departing. The quire or chancel must be cast out, that the man of sin, the son of perdition, and the adversary exalting himself above God, may be known in his own colours. It may not be moten[1], or allowed by God's word, but rejected as that plant which the heavenly Father hath not planted; that the mystery of iniquity may be uttered and perceived of them which shall be saved. It must be given to the Gentiles, or addict to their superstitions, with all lying power, signs, and wonders, in all deceivable doctrine, by the subtle working of Satan. They must also be permitted to do all mischief in unrighteousness upon the citizens of God, till he utterly consume them with the mighty breath of his mouth.

The Text.

1 And I will give power 2 unto my two witnesses, 3 and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. 5 These are two olive trees, 6 and two candlesticks, 7 standing before the God of the earth.

The Paraphrase.

1. And I will give power, saith the Lord, unto my two faithful witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days against those enemies to the comfort of my people: so that, though my city be trodden down by

[1 moten: meted or measured.]

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their cruel laws of persecution to death, yet shall it not be forsaken; and though my people be overloaden with their heathen superstitions and blasphemous worshippings, yet shall they not be lost nor left all without succour.

2. They shall have my two witnesses with them to solace them in their troubles, and to comfort them in their cares. Both Moses and Christ, both the law and the gospel, both the prophets and the apostles, shall stand upon their side and be upon their part; yea, for so much time as their enemies shall vex them, and for so much space as their adversaries shall trouble them, even a thousand two hundred and sixty days, which make three years and a half, and is more than the forty-two months by fourscore days and four: which signifieth that the enemies shall not evermore keep down his word, but their days shall be shortened for his elect's sake. The school-doctors with their sophistry have fantasied the said two witnesses to be Enoch and Elias, and that they should come then from paradise terrestrial for the same purpose, because that Enoch was taken away of God, and Elias was carried hence in a fiery chariot; neither understanding what paradise is, nor yet knowing what it is to be taken from hence. Paradise is the sweet rest of God appointed unto them that depart hence in faith. The peculiar translations of Enoch and Elias were not only for a confirmation or strengthening of the faith of the fathers for their times, but also that they should be figures of Christ's ascension. And what godly-wise man can give more to the figure than to the verity? More were not they privileged from death than was Christ, though God would not then have it so openly known, to declare his wonderful power. Unlike is it that God should call witnesses from the dead, not promising it by his word, having power also from stones to arise up Abraham's children, and to give the spirit of Elias to whom he pleaseth, like as he did to John Baptist, and as he doth now to many other more in our age, as all the world may see and hear. These witnesses are two, forsomuch as the truth of the Lord in the mouth of two or three godly persons ought to stand.

3. These two witnesses, or faithful protesters of the aforesaid two testaments, hath continued with the people of God since the death of Stephen, for the more part secretly,

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and unknown to the world. But now they are come abroad by the appointment of God, to the utter confusion of the great adversary and man of sin, as Paul doth call him. And unto them in this sixth age of the church the Lord hath given the great power of his living word, or the spirit of his invincible verity, in much more ample wise than aforetime, for the abatement of the said enemies or synagogue of perdition.

4. Clothed they shall be in sackcloth (saith the Lord); no pomp shall appear in their apparel, no glory of the world in their behaviour. Neither shall they be accompanied with a guard of ruffling rutters[1]. Neither shall they with Annas and Caiphas sit upon life and death. Neither shall they bless in the street with mitre, cross, and cope; neither claim the higher seats in side gowns, shaven crowns, and tippets. Neither shall there be sack friars, nor Franciscans, monks, canons, nor hypocrites. They shall not disfigure themselves to seem religious, nor say long prayers to appear holy; but in a sober conversation, avoiding superfluity, they shall constantly witness the truth of God to the universal world, to his glory and their edification. For sackcloth in the scriptures is a sign of sobriety, sadness, and temperance, as in Elias and John Baptist.

5. These witnesses are two sweet olive trees, shedding forth the fatness of the scriptures and dulcet savour of the Spirit. God hath so blessed them that their lips are full of grace. He hath anointed them with the oil of gladness above their fellows; of myrrh, balm, and aloes, they delectably smell. None other things utter they but his infallible verities.

6. They are also two shining candlesticks, setting forth the light, or clearly opening the hidden mysteries of the scriptures, to the comfort of the Gentiles and glory of the Israelites. They are not the light itself, but only instruments ordained to bear witness of that light: for there is but one light for all. Only are they the vessels of election, as was Paul, to carry that light the world over.

7. They stand in the presence of the God of the earth, or the Lord of all, as men of most high acceptation before him, ready to do his will and to fulfil his commandment and pleasure, having the oil of his Spirit and the light of his eternal verity.

[1 ruffling rutters: troopers, rioters.]

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The Text.

1 And if any man will hurt them, 2 fire shall proceed out of their mouths, 3 and consume their enemies. 4 And if any man will hurt them, this wise must he be killed. 5 These have power to shut heaven, 6 that it rain not in the days of their prophesying, 7 and have power over waters to turn them to blood, 8 and to smite the earth 9 with all manner plagues, as often as they will.

The Paraphrase.

1. If any man will attempt to do them scath, or presumptuously seek by crafty colours, subtle reasons, and deceitful arguments, upon dangers, doubts, doctors, old customs, and authority of fathers to hinder their office, blemish their message, and darken their light, such fire shall proceed out of their mouths as shall consume their enemies.

2. The eternal word of the Lord that they shall declare (which is the consuming fire) shall utterly destroy them: so that nothing shall be seen of that they were afore; neither cut shoe nor cord, cowl nor grey coat, boot nor black hood, rochet nor scapular, mitre nor crosier, sandal nor frock, shaven crown nor anointing. For all these are their enemies.

3. Consumed are they to their salvation, that with Matthew become of publicans true apostles, and with Paul of fierce persecutors charitable teachers. Contrariwise are they consumed to their damnation, which, being overcome by the manifest verity, wilfully persist in their devilish errors with Antiochus and Pharaoh, with the scribes and Pharisees.

4. For it followeth, "And if any man will hurt them, this wise must he be killed." Either must he be mortified from the old Adam, and changed into a new man in Christ; or else by the said word must he both be judged and condemned for the utter adversary of God, with Satan his ancient captain. So must he be killed. And no death will be found like unto that death, come they once to the feeling of it, though they account it now very light.

5. For these witnesses have power, as had Elias, to shut up heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophesying, but yet none otherwise than by the aforesaid word. For the word of God is the very key of David, which openeth the kingdom of God to them that faithfully believe, and that

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speareth it up also from them which dwelleth in unfaithfulness. For it is said, in the days of their prophesying. This power therefore is of the word, and not of the men. The word speareth and openeth, looseneth and bindeth, saveth and damneth. "He that believeth (saith Christ) shall be saved; he that believeth not is judged already." No moisture of grace nor godly wisdom can light where sturdy frowardness is rooted. The days of their prophesying in figure are none other than the aforesaid time, times, and half time, or the three years and six months of Elias.

6. In those days shall it not rain upon the wicked; they shall have no grace to receive the verity. In parables and figures shall that be hidden from them, that shall be evident enow unto the faithful. With ears shall they hear, and not understand; with eyes shall they see, and not discern. So blind will their hearts be. For such speak the prophets in figures, Christ in parables, and the apostles in mysteries. Then open truth of this revelation shall not the wicked perceive, till they taste the plagues thereof. Such is the nature of God's wisdom, that though it be not in glorious words, fine painted terms, nor in persuasible reasons of man's wit, but in plain simple speaking; yet can it not be known of the worldly-wise. The sweet dew thereof will not be received of them in the aforesaid days of prophecy; but he that is blind shall be blind still.

7. These witnesses have also power over waters, to turn them into blood. When they interpret and sincerely declare the pure verities of God, which are those wholesome waters that restrain the damnable dryness of the soul, that refresh the conscience, and cleanse the heart of the sinner; they cannot choose but earnestly condemn the perverse judgments, the covetous laws, and hypocritish works of the ungodly: and then is all unclean unto them, then is all bloody. The gospel, which was a stumbling-stone to the Jews, and made foolishness unto the Gentiles, is also now unto them naughty new learning, seditious doctrine, and abominable heresy: yea, and they judge them worthy to be burned that do teach it. Thus is it abhorred of them that shall perish, and nevertheless to them that believe it is the power of God unto salvation.

8. Finally, they have power to smite the earth with all

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manner of plagues, as oft as they will. Very earth are they that regard not God's truth, as the Lord said unto Adam after his offence, "Earth thou art, and unto earth shalt thou return." Nothing they esteem but that which is earthly; nothing they desire but that is carnal. The froward creature will in no case know that is of the Spirit. The light is hateful unto sore eyes. Very painful is bread to the mouth that is not whole. A great mote was Christ to the Jews, as his true preachers are unto the blind world yet to this day; for they smite the earth.

9. They touch their living, they rebuke their falsehood, they condemn their wickedness; they reprove them of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. They force not to tell to him of their unfaithfulness, fraud, and hypocrisy of their philosophers, prelates, and religious. No greater plague is it unto the ungodly than to hear of their evil doings; no greater pain, nor yet greater punishment, than to have their faults opened, and their cloning[1] colours condemned. That fretteth them at the very heart. Death must be sought out for such preachers. No wonder is it, though this be here written for this age of the church: for never were more earnest witnesses than are now, and more are like hereafter to follow, till the man of sin be fully known, and his kingdom clearly overthrown.

The Text.

1 And when they have finished their testimony, 2 the beast that came out of the bottomless pit 3 shall make war against them, 4 and shall overcome them. 5 And their bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city, 6 which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, 7 where our Lord is crucified.

The Paraphrase.

1. And when they have once finished their testimony (saith the Lord), the beast that came out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them. No sooner shall the witnesses of God's verity in all ages be taken from the world, than he hath prefixed. After none other sort shall they be sent hence, than he hath appointed by his eternal decree. John Baptist

[1 cloning or cloyning: a cloyner was, a person who intruded on the profits of young sharpers by claiming a share. Halliwell.]

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was not imprisoned nor beheaded, till he had done his office. Christ was not taken, condemned, and crucified, till his hour was come. Paul was not put unto death, till he had fulfilled his course.

2. The beast of the bottomless pit is the cruel, crafty, and cursed generation of antichrist, the pope with his bishops, prelates, priests, and religious in Europe, Mahomet with his doting dousepers in Africa, and so forth in Asia and India; all beastly, carnal, and wicked in their doings.

3. These make war against God's witnesses, when they hate them, curse them, blaspheme them, and persecute them; when they withstand them with their crafts, impugn them with their lies, and vex them with their devilishness, as necessary it is they should do. For if they have troubled the head, they must vex also the members. If the householder be called Beelzebub, the household must suffer the same. No better is the servant than his Lord, nor the messenger than he that sent him.

4. They shall also overcome them, not with the scriptures, but with their beggarly customs, constitutions, laws, decrees, and traditions. They shall scourge them or disgrade them in their synagogues. They shall deliver them up to justices, deputies, and rulers, making them their butchers and slaves, so washing their own holy hands from the shedding of innocents' blood.

5. They shall kill them also by their counsel, to fulfil the measure of their fathers, that all righteous blood may light upon them which have been shed upon earth. Yet shall they not hurt their souls, but through faith they shall have victory both over them and the devil.

6. And their bodies shall lie in the streets of the great city. In this world shall their carcases remain, where as they have rule and dominion: here shall they be judged and condemned. At their pleasure shall it be to hang them, head them, or burn them. And though they lay no hands upon them for soiling their consecrate fingers, yet must it be done by their ghostly counsel, and ordered also after their spiritual appointment. None other is it to lie in the streets of their great city, than after such laws as they have practised to be brought unto death.

7. For spiritually is their city called. A glorious name

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usurp they, as though they were none of the world. They will be called the holy church, good ghostly fathers, godly divines, and spiritual men, not considering of what spirit they are spiritual. They are those into whom the unclean spirit hath entered with seven other spirits worse than himself; with the spirit of falsehood, the spirit of filthiness, the spirit of lies, the spirit of witchcraft, the spirit of error, the spirit of blindness, and the spirit of cruelty. And of these only with such like are they spiritual, and of no godly Spirit, as their fruits declare. And therefore the Spirit of God doth judge here this great city not to be called Jerusalem, but stinking Sodom, and most miserable Egypt; the prophecies and other scriptures agreeing to the same: for look what filthiness and abomination was in Sodom, what idolatry and devilishness was in Egypt, the same is now reigning in this painted spiritualty, and is accounted there great holiness.

8. Among this consecrated multitude, or smeared sort, is Christ yet crucified, as he was among the Jews which knew him not, and yet boasted themselves outwardly for the peculiar chosen people of God. Not only is Christ among them persecuted, scourged, punished, and put unto death in his members, but also he is proved of them an unsufficient Saviour without their daily doings. Their masses must be satisfactory sacrifices, profiting both the quick and the dead; and that must men believe under pain of death and damnation. Thus crucify they Christ again, and make a mock of him, as witnessed Paul, and yet do they call him their Lord; not unlike to the tormentors, which crowned him with thorns, and saluted him with, *Ave rex Judæorum*.

The Text.

1 And some of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and of the nations, 2 shall see their bodies three days and an half, 3 and shall not suffer their bodies to be put in graves. 4 And they that dwell upon the earth 5 shall rejoice over them and be glad, 6 and shall send gifts one to another; 7 for these two prophets vexed them that dwelt on the earth.

The Paraphrase.

1. And as they lie thus dead in the streets, or are condemned as heretics, and despised as wicked doers, some of the people perverted by these enemies, some of the kindreds

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or sects of division, some of the tongues or blasphemous babblers, and some of the nations of all wicked workers, shall behold their bodies three days and an half.

2. They shall for all ages abhor them, hate them, revile them, and spitefully report them. In their chronicles shall they write them for seducers of the people, and in their stories register them for damnable heretics: for the three days and a half divided into seven halves betokeneth the seven ages of the Church, wherein they have and shall still both persecute and blaspheme.

3. And these wicked sorts of people, kindreds, tongues, and nations, or of false justices, priests, lawyers, and religious, shall not suffer their bodies to be put in graves: but by these witnesses once judged heretics by the clergy, and so condemned by the laity, either shall their bodies be resolved into ashes by fire, or else consumed by the fowls of the air. Seldom shall ye see a known heretic buried among them, but most commonly burned. Examples of this have been lately seen here in England by Thomas Hitton, Thomas Bilney, John Frith, George Bainham, William Tyndale, John Lambert, Robert Barnes, William Jerome, Thomas Garare, Richard Spenser, and in Patrick Hamilton of Scotland, with many other more; and long afore our time, in Sir John Oldcastle the lord Cobham, Sir Roger Acton, knight, Sir[1] Reynold Pecock, bishop of Chichester, Master John Ashton, Sir William Thorpe, Sir William Sawtre, Sir Richard With, Sir John Ball, Sir William Tailor, and Sir William White, priests, with divers other. The body of Formosus was first taken up by Stephen the sixth, bishop of Rome, and disgraded: after was it beheaded, mangled, and thrown into the flood of Tyber by Sergius the third. St Herman after twenty years from his burial was taken up and burned at Ferrara in Italy by Boniface the eighth. The bones of Master John Wicliffe were taken up and burned, also the fortieth year after his death, as Walden witnesseth in his book *De Sacramentalibus*, tit. IX. Cap. lxxxix.[2] So was of late years, in

[1 Sir, a title formerly applied to priests and curates in general: for this reason, *dominus*, the academical title of a bachelor of arts, was usually rendered *Sir* in English at the universities. Nares' Glossary.]

[2 XL anni sunt ex quo mortuus est impius Witcleffe, et hoc anno incineratus est.—Sacramt. Waldeni. Paris 1523. fol. cxcix.]

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Worcester diocese, the body of Master William Tracy, Esq., and in London the body of Richard Hunne, Merchant Taylor. Moreover John Colet, dean of Paul's in London also, was not far from the same for reading of Paul's Epistles by his life, had not other weighty matters been in the way. Such heretics shall not rest in their city, they shall not be buried among them. They shall not be shrined, canonised, nor allowed for saints; for they builded no monasteries, they set up no chantries, they subdued no princes, nor yet died for the liberties of holy church. They stood not in defence that priests, doing idolatry, theft, murder, witchcraft, whoredom, [3]with other abominations, should remain unpunished; but rather to the contrary, and that they should worship but one God, live by their labours, take wives of their own, and teach nothing but God's laws.

4. And they that dwell upon the earth (saith the Lord), or have their felicity here with the rich glutton, shall rejoice over them and be glad.

5. They shall clap their hands, when these godly witnesses be brought out of the way. Thy shall common, riot, and banquet, having among themselves joy without measure that the heretics be gone; so hateful is the light to their eyes, and the verity to their wicked hearts.

6. And they shall send gifts or presents one to another for gladness, as for example: My lord bishop hath had a sum of money of the priests for doing his part so well. My lord abbot and master doctor have had pheasants, plovers, and partridges, pigs, geese, and capons, for disputing their matters so valiantly. Master parson hath been commended for scolding, and Sir Saunder Smell-smock[4], our parish-priest, for bearing false witness. Master friar hath had trental, and father limitour[5] a bushel of malt or a cheese for playing the knave also; and hardly my lord chief justice hath not been without his reward, nor yet master chancellor, neither master scribe. What made Thomas More for his time with so prodigious tyranny to persecute the truth, and since, Godsalve of Norwich, Warthon of Bungay, Hales and Baker of

[3 A word omitted.]

[4 Sir Saunder Smell-smock: one given to low women. Halliwell.]

[5 Limitour: a friar licensed to beg within a certain district. Nares.]

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Kent, with such other like, but *auri sacra fames*, as Virgil doth call it? Thus do they laugh and triumph when they have wrought mischief, and much it delighteth them when they have done ungodly things.

7. For these two prophets (saith the Lord) vexed them that dwell on the earth. A great trouble it is to them to have their faults seen, a sore vexation to have their crafts known, and an exceeding displeasure to be put from their pleasant Euphrates by the preaching of such busy heretics. Much was Herod offended with John, the bishops with Christ, the prelates and religious with Paul; and a sore grief it was to their hearts when they rebuked their vices.

The Text.

1 And after three days and an half 2 the spirit of life from God entered into them. 3 And they stood up upon their feet, 4 and great fear came upon them which saw them. 5 And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. 6 And they ascended up into heaven in a cloud, 7 and their enemies saw them. 8 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, 9 and the tenth part of the city fell. 10 And in the earthquake were slain names of men seven thousand. 11 And the remnant were feared, 12 and gave glory to God of heaven. 13 The second woe is past; 14 and behold, the third woe will come anon.

The Paraphrase.

1. And after three days and an half (saith St John) did the spirit of life by the power of God enter into them. In the midst of their joy and triumph, when they think themselves well quieted, the heretics thus taken away, another storm falleth upon them much worse than the other. Many more arise out of their ashes, to their confusion and to the chosen's comfort. And the same witnesses they are again, giving the same testimony, though they be not the same persons.

2. The same living spirit have they, confessing the same verity, that had the other. No long time can Christ's congregation be without faithful tests, he promising to be with them to the end of the world.

3. These witnesses stood up upon their feet. In the time full past is this spoken for the certainty of the thing,

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though much of it be to come: for so certain is it, as it were all finished. An earnest stomach shall they have, and with much boldness shall they speak. "The righteous shall stand up (saith the Book of Wisdom) in great ferventness of spirit against them that have extremely handled them, and taken away their labours, persecuted them, and blemished their doctrine."

4. And great fear came upon them which saw them. When the antichrists see they cannot prevail, much are they inwardly anguished, vexed, and tormented. Then doubt they their fall, then fear they their utter destruction. They tremble and quake, when they see their laws will no longer stand, nor their insurrections no longer help them, looking for a terrible day. "With horrible fear shall they wonder (saith the aforesaid Book of Wisdom) at the coming of the sudden health, groaning for sorrow, and mourning for very anguish of mind and saying within themselves, These be they whom we sometime had in derision unwisely; we thought their lives to be madness, and their ends to be without honour: and now they are reckoned among the children of God, and their portion is among the saints. Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness hath not shined unto us. We have wearied ourselves in the paths of wickedness, but the way of the living Lord have we not known."

5. And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. The antichrists shall hear this noise, they shall know them to be in the favour of God, and great heaviness it shall be unto them. For this voice is the free election of God according unto grace, and not after man's deserving. And it cometh from heaven, as doth all other good gifts, from the Father of light. It calleth up them that afore walked somewhat after the flesh, and durst not for fear of punishment witness the verity. It commandeth them to arise unto God, to be more perfect, more spiritual, more godly, and to have their conversation in heaven. They attend unto the voice, they obey it, and do after it. For it followeth:

6. And they ascended up into heaven in a cloud. By the power of God they are taken up. From worldly affects are they changed to the pure love of God, and from carnal

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prudence to the wisdom of the Spirit. In a cloud are they rapt. Compassed are they with this flesh, the ill desires taken from them. Everywhere resemble they Christ, and are daily better and better. They cease not of their progress; no pain can separate them from the love of Christ, till they perfectly come to the sight of the God of gods in the supercelestial Sion.

7. And their enemies saw them. The antichrists know that they are God's servants, the hypocrites perceive they have heavenly knowledge. Yea, many times they so report them both in their words and writings. In many of their chronicles they affirm, that Berengarius, Joannes Scotus the elder, John Wicliffe, John Huss, Jerome of Prague, Thomas Thedonensis, a white friar of Britain burned in Rome, Hieronymus Savonarola, a black friar burned in Florence, and divers other more, were men of most excellent wits, of most high learning, of most godly conversation, of a most perfect life, fervent, constant, and unmoveable in the time of their deaths. Bilney, Bainham, Beyfeld, Frith, Tyndale, Barnes and other, are yet reported (yea, of some which to this hour hate their opinions) to have died charitably and godly. Yet believe they never the better, they come never the sooner to God. Their malice hath so blinded them, and the cloud of ignorance so darkened their knowledge, that still they blaspheme and most cruelly persecute.

8. And in the same hour (saith St John) there happened a great earthquake. A terrible contradiction ariseth ever from the carnal synagogue, and from among the earthly-minded hypocrites, when the verity is taught, as it was aforetime in Christ, and in his apostles, specially in Paul, and now of late days in many other poor preachers. When new witnesses arise, then wax they more mad, fierce, and fell, than they were afore. Then imprison they, then punish they, then make they acts, and command, in pain of death, no more to speak in that name. Yet do they rather lose than win, fall than rise, disprofit than profit.

9. For the tenth part of their city fell to the ground. Their building upon sand will in no case endure. That God hath not planted must up by the roots. Their holy whorish church (which is here called Sodom and Egypt) is ruinously decayed. Their monasteries of monks, their houses of friars,

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their colleges of idle priests, with their nuns, canons, and chantries, in many places are down. Tithes are not as they have been, nor trentals, nor other devotions. Images are not sought, nor pardons in confession. The people incline to new learning, and go from their old belief of holy church. They that were monks, priests, and friars, are now become gospel-teachers. Such as afore were dead, stand up now against them boldly. This fallen part is here the tenth; for it is the Lord's by the law. It is the same sheep that afore was lost, and now is brought to Christ's fold. These were called away from thence by the witnesses; the other stand yet still, and are every day worse and worse.

10. In the earthquake were slain names of men, to the number of seven thousand. An innumerable multitude hath been sent out of the way by these antichrists in their fury, but yet nothing have they slain but their names. Only have they hurt their bodies; upon their souls have they had no power, no more than had Satan upon the soul of Job. Yet have not their names perished before God; for of him are they written in the book of life. In no case are the wicked of the godly here put unto death, though some do so understand it, but rather of the wicked the godly: for they never retail their wrongs, but rather pray for their enemies.

11. And the remnant or residue were feared (saith St John), and gave glory to God of heaven. Of such as were left in their earthquakes or terrible persecutions, some remained in prison; some were beggared, some were exiled, some fled, some lost their estimation and friends, and yet gave praise unto God.

12. In all their adversities they glorified the name of the heavenly Father and Lord. Thus have we here what is done already, and what is yet to come under this sixth trumpet-blowing (whereunder we are now), which all belongeth to the second woe.

13. And, these things once accomplished, the second woe will be past. And then look by and by for the third woe; for it will follow anon after without fail, yea, so soon as this second woe is done.

14. In the latter age of all shall this third woe reign, such time as Gog and Magog most extremely shall rage.

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And the universal judgment shall signify that woe, as hereafter more evidently will appear. But consider that these woes are to the infidels: the faithful feareth them not; but, receiving the word in a pure heart, they bring forth fruit in patient sufferance.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Now followeth in order the seventh trumpet-blowing, or the pure declaration of Christ's joyful tidings for the last age of the church, under the seventh seal-opening, with the wonders and marvels that thereafter ensue.

The Text.

1 And the seventh angel blew, 2 and there were made great voices in heaven, 3 saying, The kingdoms of this world are our Lord's and his Christ's, 4 and he shall reign for evermore. 5 And the twenty-four elders, which sat before God on their seats, 6 fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, 7 We give thee thanks, Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come. 8 For thou hast received thy great might, and hast reigned. 9 And the nations were angry, 10 and thy wrath is to come, 11 and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, 12 and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets and saints, 13 and to them that fear thy name, small and great, 14 and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth.

The Paraphrase.

1. And the seventh angel blew, saith St John. The seventh sort of sincere preachers shall utter their message according to the will of God; they shall declare his pleasure as he hath appointed them. For though it be spoken here as past and done, for the certainty of the thing, yet is it not fulfilled in effect. The word of God was without beginning, and his promise everlasting; yet is it not all performed in his creatures, but many things are yet to come.

2. After this blast of the angel were made great voices in heaven. Many (the congregation or kingdom of God, his gospel once purely published by the preachers,) shall speak godly things to the edification of others. The simple, poor weaklings, idiots, and infants shall utter the hidden wisdom of God to the confusion of the great wise men and sage seniors

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of this world. Yea, the stones in the street, the outcasts of the world, the forsaken people, shall wonderfully praise the Lord.

3. And these shall be their sayings, when they shall see the antichrists confused and not able to speak again: The kingdoms of this world, that were sometime wicked, cruel, and unfaithful, are now become the Lord's and his Christ's, of his only grace and goodness. Now fall they to the word, that afore thought it foolishness; now cleave they to the truth, that sometime did abhor it: now have they in hand the gospel, that afore did persecute it as seditious learning and heresy.

4. And in this congregation shall he reign evermore. Continually is he with them that in faith retaineth his verity. All this shall they utter with no small rejoice. For doubtless after the seventh seal-opening, and the gospel-preaching, then a peaceable time shall be, and figured it is by the half hour spoken of afore. For it shall not continue to the end. Long may not Christ's church be unpersecuted: but yet this peace for the time shall not only be an inward peace in the conscience (as is always among the faithful), but an outward quiet also, or a season without persecution abroad.

5. And the twenty-four elders (saith St John), or the great number of saints departed (which sit before God on their seats, or rest in his sweet peace in such graces of the Spirit as he gave them by their life-time, as charity, stedfastness, love, joy, peace, meekness, righteousness, and such other like), fell down flat upon their faces.

6. Most humbly have they ever submitted themselves, referring unto God the Father the benefit of their creation, and unto Jesus Christ his Son the free gift of their redemption: yea, specially at this time, being under the altar of God, and knowing by his mere goodness the number of their brethren shortly to be fulfilled, and themselves with them to be at a glorious liberty, after their ghostly sort, they laud him, saying,

7. From the very depth of our spiritual hearts we render unto thee most high thanks, Lord God Almighty, eternal Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which art one essential God, and wast without beginning, and shalt be without ending.

8. For thou hast taken upon thee thy great might. Now hast thou shewed thy wonderful power. Ever hast thou

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reigned among thy people, but never so graciously, so plenteously, and so gloriously for our behalf.

9. The heathen evermore were angry, when thy truth appeared. Mad were the wicked antichrists, when thy glory shined, and their pride diminished. They fretted for anger, they swelled for wodeness[1], yea, they slew thy servants and burned up thy people.

10. But now is thy wrath towards them: now will thy anger break out, now will thy vengeance appear: now shall thy terrible judgment without mercy be declared from heaven upon all ungodliness of those cruel enemies that withheld thy truth in unrighteousness.

11. Now shortly ensueth the time of the dead, wherein they shall be judged, some to joy, some to heaviness, some to glory, some to pain.

12. Now approacheth the glad season, wherein thou hast appointed to reward the true servants, the prophets, and the faithful believers, made saints by the only death of thy Son, and all them that yet fear thy name, with eternal felicity.

13. None wilt thou seclude from this thy liberal goodness, for no weakness nor poverty; but so well the small as the great, the low as the high, the poor as the rich, the sick as the whole, the unlearned as learned, shall taste of thy inestimable clearness.

14. Only shalt thou destroy them that destroy the earth, compelling both it and all that therein is, not to serve thee their heavenly Creator, but their own stinking desires, lusts, and corrupt affections, thy glory not once esteemed nor regarded. Herein may we conjecture that the seventh seal once opened, and the seventh trumpet blown, the last judgment-day is not far off. Blessed is he that watcheth for the Lord's coming.

THE TEXT.

1 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, 2 and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament. 3 And there followed lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and earthquake, 4 and much hail.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And the temple of God (saith St John) was opened in heaven. Evident will the godly and spiritual estate of the

[1 wodeness: madness.]

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true christian church seem in those days, the gospel sincerely preached. In faith shall men seek their living Father, and not in dead images, nor other corruptible things. In spirit and verity shall they worship him, and not in dumb ceremonies nor outward shadows. Speared is God's temple, when his true worshipping is hid; and opened it is again, when that is clearly seen. Till Christ's coming in the flesh nothing thereof appeared: with the key of David opened he the mysteries thereof; whereby through faith the conversation of many is now and hath been ever since in heaven.

2. This temple thus open, anon the ark of God's holy testament was seen therein. Christ sheweth himself in his own colours, when the gospel is truly received; which is that ark, wherein all the riches of God's covenants and the precious treasure of his promise is reposed, to man's behoof; and specially those by whom we are reconciled and saved. By him are we only brought to God's favour again, and graciously redeemed: yea, all the sort of us have received of his abundant and overflowing fulness. The sight of this ark in the temple is none other than a clear knowledge of him in his congregation. So oft are his mysteries evident, as this temple is opened: so many times are they known as his word is truly taught.

3. And no small fruit is to be thought to come thereof. For there followed lightnings, voices, thunderings, and earthquakes. Divers respects hath the verity of God, according to diverse audiences. In manner of lightning it moveth some, making of earth heaven, and of sinners godly people. A sound or a noise only it is to some men, not regarding the fruits thereof. To some it is an occasion of anger, spite, and madness, and to some of open blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. For what else doth the clergy, maliciously withstanding it, but wilfully work against knowledge? And what doth the undiscreet laity, blinded up then, but babble they wot not what?

4. And a great hail also followed, which betokeneth the vehement and sharp judgments of God towards such enemies of his verity. The most terrible tempest of his ire abideth them. The Lord shall break into the land (saith the prophet Isaiah) like a sore tempest of hail that breaketh down strong holds or castles. And the proud crown of the drunken Eph-

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raimites shall be trodden under foot. Not only is the last age appointed to these thunderings and earthquakes, but they began also so soon as Christ appeared in the flesh. No sooner was the young babe born, but Herod for madness sought to slay him in his very infancy. The Pharisees and scribes, the bishops, priests, and lawyers, swelled at his preaching, and never left till they had slain him. And this rule with the prelates and hypocrites hath continued ever since, and still shall do till the latter day. Only is there and shall be a moderation, that sometime it is not so extreme as at some; for if it were always alike, there should none be left.

The Text.

1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, 2 a woman clothed with the sun, 3 and the moon under her feet, 4 and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. 5 And she was with child, 6 and cried, travailing in birth, 7 pained, ready to be delivered.

The Paraphrase.

1. And there appeared (saith St John) a great token in heaven. For no wonder is this token here to be taken, as in other places of the scripture, but for a type or figure, containing under mystery great things.

2. A woman was seen clothed with the sun, yea, of John: for to God's only elect is the verity shewed to advantage. Not Mary, Christ's mother, is this woman, though many hath so fantasied in their commentaries; but it is the true christian church, of whom Mary is a most notable member.

3. This woman the church, (as Salomon's canticles specify), is fair, lovely, pleasant, sweet, wholesome, delectable, undefiled as the moon, excellent in clearness as the sun, and glorious as an army of men with their banners and streamers. This woman is beautifully decked with the shining Sun of righteousness. None is of her, that hath not done on[1] Jesus Christ, being renewed in their hearts by faith. Her children are not they that persecuted God's word, no more than was Annas and Caiphas, Joannes and Alexander.

3. This woman seemed to have the moon under her feet. To the church or congregation of God are all other creatures subject. All moveable things hath the Lord subdued unto her. She is the right heir and inheritor of them through

[1 done on: put on.]

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Christ, they with her to be delivered from the bondage of corruption and to serve in liberty.

4. Upon her head was also a crown of twelve stars; which betokeneth not only the twelve apostles declaring the glory of Christ's kingdom immediately after his death, but all other godly ministers of the word also, which have done the same ever since. Only reigneth the true christian church by the word of God, by the sincere scriptures, by the doctrine of the apostles, and neither [by] superstitions nor ceremonies, neither by councils nor customs, by doctors nor fathers, by mitres nor rochets, by tippets nor hoods, by shaven crowns nor side gowns, by crosses nor copes, by bells nor torches, by shrines nor gilt images, nor yet by twelve couples in a livery with golden chains and guarded coats. Her beauty consisteth only in faith, and in the observation of God's holy commandments. Her true ministers or preachers, as very chosen stars, shew forth his glory to the edification of others, and not their own pomp and magnificence.

5. And she was as is the woman with child. She cried travailing in birth, and was pained as one ready to be delivered. With Christ is the church big, when her members are in full faith: in the heart is he evermore conceived, and delivered forth such time as he is declared unto others. For this cause Christ called them his mother which had faith, and thereupon did the will of his Father. Of faith in the first promise that Christ should destroy the serpent was he first conceived in Adam and Eve, and so grew forth in righteous Abel, in Seth, Enos, Enoch, Noe, Sem, Tarah, Melchisedech, Abraham and Lot. And as the promises waxed stronger (as in Abraham, Moses, David, and the prophets), and the people of God more in number, so waxed the woman bigger and bigger, till the fulness of her time was come that she should be delivered: which was such time as Christ appeared to the world, taught, and was conversant here among men. And this course hath she kept ever since, and shall do to the latter day in them that believe. Thus hath she had Christ in her womb since the beginning.

6. And being full of his heavenly Spirit, she had cried in the patriarchs and prophets, in the apostles and faithful ministers, as one travailing in birth. Her cry was the mighty and strong declaration of Christ's doctrine, the fervent zeal and desire of the glory of God, and of all men's health in Christ.

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She travaileth evermore anew, like as did Paul, till Christ be fashioned in her christian members. With all her strength she laboureth, that the promised Seed may increase in the faith of all men.

7. Finally she is pained with labours, dolours, blasphemies, troubles, and terrible persecutions, and never is delivered without them. Never is Christ earnestly received, till some of her members do suffer. The constant spirit and invincible standing by the truth in them hath converted many. And like as the pained woman in all her agonies is much comforted by the hope of a child; so are God's faithful witnesses, trusting that by their patient and glad sufferance Christ should be received and rightly fashioned in many. Yea, this causeth them to rejoice in all adversity, and little to esteem their pains.

The Text.

1 And there appeared another wonder in heaven: 2 for behold a great red dragon, 3 having seven heads, 4 and ten horns, 5 and seven crowns upon his heads, 6 and his tail drew the third part of the stars, 7 and cast them to the earth.

The Paraphrase.

1. After this (saith St John) appeared in heaven another token or marvel, all diverse from the first. The true church (which is God's kingdom) was never yet without contradiction, nor without the crafty assaults of enemies. Adam was not so soon created, but he was immediately assaulted of Satan. Christ entered not so soon the world, but he was by and by persecuted. "The devil goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

2. For behold, there was seen a great red dragon, betokening the said devil with his whole retinue, full of deceit, craft, malice, poison, pride, and fierceness, to enforce the poor weaklings to consent unto his falsehood. All red his body seemed, in token that they which are of him are all full of cruelty, spite, and blood-shedding, afflicting the constant believers for withstanding his assaults. Seldom is he out of the earth, as witnesseth Job, but commonly in the company of men, impugning the faithful. And no power is able to match him, unless it cometh from above.

3. The said dragon had seven heads, signifying all the crafty wiles and subtle suggestions that he hath practised and

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used against Christ and his word under all the seven seals opening, and the seven trumpets blowing. Very easy it is to conjecture what manner of heads they were, marking other places of the scripture. A serpent's head should seem to be the first, considering that in the serpent he deceived our first parents with his venomed crafts. This head so maliciously poisoned man, that God repented him of his creation, and destroyed his whole kind in the flood, eight persons only reserved. After the flood had he the head of a calf for the second, in signification of the shameful idolatry, and wicked worshipping that then began in Nimrod, and so continued in the heathen. The third was the head of a lion, full of pride and oppression, expressed first in the cruel reign of the Assyrians and Chaldeans, and after in the proud bishops and priests. The fourth was a bear's head, full of ravine and cruelness, betokening the fierce kingdom of the Medes and Persians. Consequently his fifth head was like a leopard's head of many colours, full of fickleness and changeableness: and that was the unconstant reign of the Greeks. His sixth was the head of a beast far unlike all other beasts, which signifieth the kingdom of the Romans with their monstrous laws more than need. The seventh is not unlike to a man's head, including all carnal wisdom, with all devilish policies and crafts: and this is the very papacy here in Europe, which is the general antichrist of all the whole world almost, which hath already subdued and destroyed the empire of Rome: for he is called the apostate and man of sin. By this only head is the dragon named the envious man. The whole body followeth the heads. As the devil is malicious, wicked, fierce, cruel, tyrannical, false, execrable, and deceitful, so are all his members. In the prudence of the flesh after him they walk in idolatry, hypocrisy, and all other filthiness. And like as afore Christ's coming these heads were in the serpent, in the golden calves, in the kingdom of Babylon, in Nimrod, in Pharao, in Antiochus, and in the Pharisees and scribes, bishops, lawyers, and priests; so have they been since his time under the seven seals opening, and the seven trumpets blowing, after the same sort. Under the first he had a serpent's head in the Jews, most maliciously and subtilely withstanding Christ and his apostles, pretending the zeal of God and his laws. Under the second he had a calf's

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head in the idolators which slew the constant witnesses of Christ's verity. Under the third, the head of a proud lion, in the bold rabble of heretics, presuming against God's word to affirm ungodly things. Under the fourth, the head of a bear, in the greedy multitude of holy hypocrites and spiritual antichrists, which hath ravished up the substance of this world, usurping the empire of the same: for then began the papacy with Mahomet's mischief. Under the fifth head of a leopard, in the diversity of pestilent sects, or execrable locusts, of whom every one rejoiceth in his own colour and invention: for then did they sore increase. Under the sixth, the head of a beast unlike to all others, in the tyranny of wicked governors blinded and persuaded by the priests to slay God's servants for the upholding of their stinking generation: for then was and is yet done much murder upon such as confessed the truth. Under the seventh or last seal-opening shall he have yet still the head of a man, in fleshly policies, and falsehood of the pope and his prelates, in the doctors and priests, till God utterly shall destroy them with the breath of his mouth.

4. The said dragon had also ten horns, or all subtle ways wherewith to impugn the feeble weak nature of man, or to provoke him evermore to rebel against God's commandments.

5. Upon his seven heads he had seven crowns, signifying thereby that both he and his members have not only possessed the aforenamed vices, but also they have over the world reigned in them, and yet do to this day. In pride, falsehood, malice, craft, cruelty, wickedness, and all other mischiefs, triumph they yet.

6. And his tail drew towards him the third part of the stars, and in conclusion threw them down to the earth. By worldly promotions, lucre, favour, and other flattering fantasies, hath he tangled many learned men, and plucked them clean from Christ's true church and from the life of the gospel, so provoking them wholly to give themselves to the study of erroneous doctrine and lying prophecies, to seduce the worldly multitude, and keep them in perpetual blindness.

7. So that they are now cast into the earth. They are become all carnal, filthy and ungodly in all their wisdom, study, and works, in all their counsels, preachings, and teachings. Now are they the wicked apostles of Satan; no longer may they shine in the firmament.

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The Text.

1 And the dragon stood before the woman, which was ready to be delivered, 2 for to devour her child as soon as it were born. 3 And she brought forth a man child, 4 which should rule all nations with a rod of iron. 5 And her son was taken up unto God, and to his seat. 6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, 7 where she had a place prepared of God, 8 that they should feed her there, 9 a thousand, two hundred and threescore days.

The Paraphrase.

1. Before the aforesaid travailing woman stood this dragon, ready to devour her child, so soon as it were born. Evermore is the devil waiting his prey, where as the gospel is sincerely taught, lest any thereby should become the children of God.

2. He seeketh all crafts, policies, and engines, to take the word from the heart, lest they believing it should be saved. Thus sought he to devour Christ after the latter, appointing Herod to slay him soon after his birth; and when he saw that way would not take, yet left he not off till the Jews had slain him. Not thus yet satisfied, he laboured by the bishops to extinguish the faith of his resurrection, lest that should profit unto life. Moreover, whereas the apostles and other godly men have given Christ unto others in manner as they received him, he hath left no cautels[1] unsought by his malignant members ever since to deprive God's people thereof.

3. Such a man-child (saith St John) brought this woman forth, as with an iron rod should rule all nations. Never is the true church idle, but conceiveth Christ at the gospel preaching, retaineth him in faith, and bringeth him forth in teaching others the same. No woman child is he, impotent, weak, and feeble; but a man child, bringing with him always a strong, mighty, and invincible Spirit, where as he is unfeignedly received. For he is the mighty Lord that is valiant in battle.

4. With the iron wand of his word invincible shall he govern his meek-spirited flock, that none other laws shall they require. With the same also shall he subdue all power which are not of him, and drive them down to the bottom of hell. For by faith only in him is the victory over the world.

[1 cautels: deceits.]

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5. This child was also taken up to God and unto his throne. Whereas the devil thought to devour him, and to wrap him up for ever under death, he put him beside his purpose. Victoriously he arose up from death to life, he ascended unto heaven, and now sitteth upon the right hand of God the Father Almighty. And where as he is now, there shall his faithful followers and ministers be hereafter; for that is his is also theirs, birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension.

6. The woman fled after this into the wilderness. What else doth the just people of God but flee the contagiousness, vanity, tumult, fornication, idolatry, and filthiness of this world, seeking God in the solitary heart, and not in outward fantasies? "I got me away far off (saith David), and remained in the desert." Monks, nuns, canons and friars, have fled into monasteries, convents, and houses, but nothing after this sort; for in all voluptuous pleasures have they there lived. The unfeigned solitary man, after Jeremy, continueth peaceably with himself, and hath his heart above.

7. In the said wilderness had she a place prepared of God: which is none other but God's protection, defence, and safeguard promised in the scriptures; that the Lord should preserve us as he did his chosen people of Israel, when he went before them in a cloud upon the day, and in the night in a pillar of fire. David boasted himself that God was his refuge, and that he dwelled under the defence and shadow of the Highest. So long as the Lord is my governor (saith he) I can want nothing. He feedeth me, he sustaineth me, I doubt no danger, for he is with me. His staff stayeth me, his word and promise is my whole comfort.

8. And there will the Lord feed her (saith St John) for the space of a thousand, two hundred and sixty days. None other are fed with the scriptures and promises of God, (which is the bread of children not to be given to dogs,) but they which fly into this desert from the dragon, forsaking both head and tail, both suggestions and laws, both customs and constitutions: for all are devilish. None other escaped the plague of Sodom, but they which fled clean from thence. Lot's wife but looking back only towards it again was turned into a salt stone.

9. The numbered days here are none other but the afore written time of the two witnesses, the time of Elias's preaching,

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the time of John's preaching, the time of Christ's preaching, or the time of the gospel preaching from Christ's ascension to the latter end of the world. That is the very time of the feeding of his church. And not open is this feeding here, but secret in the wilderness, among a sort unknown to the world, having the poverty of spirit without shaving, anointing, or hypocrites' apparel. And not only hath the Lord thus nourished his people in this spiritual respect, but also in body: when they have been grievously handled, spoiled of their goods, imprisoned, and exiled, graciously hath he relieved them, and provided for them both solace and comfort at the hands of them whom they never saw afore: so that the just hath not felt himself forsaken, nor his children seeking bread.

The Text.

1 And there was a great battle in heaven. 2 Michael and his angels 3 fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, 4 and prevailed not, 5 neither was their place found any more in heaven. 6 And the great dragon, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, 7 was cast out, 8 which deceived all the world. 9 And he was cast into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him also.

The Paraphrase.

1. And there happened at that time (saith St John) a great battle in heaven. In the church is evermore variance and strife without ceasing betwixt the Spirit and the flesh, the good and the bad, the faithful and the unfaithful. None other is this battle but a very contradiction, a diversity in faith, study, opinion, will, and work, about the laws or commandments of God, and also about the laws and traditions of men. This battle is weighty in cause, multitude, and continuance. The cause thereof is Christ, the gospel, faith, righteousness, man's health, God's high honour, and such other like on the one party. Upon the other party the cause is error, hypocrisy, lies, idolatry, avarice, pride, cruelty, filthiness, with all such other. So great is the multitude, that none is found out of it: none is there but are in this army. Either they are good or bad, faithful or unfaithful, righteous or unrighteous. The righteous are of the host of Michael, the unrighteous are upon the dragon's side. Continued hath this battle from the first beginning, and so shall still to the latter end. Yea, though the dragon be bound or tied up under the

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seventh seal-opening, that he rage not then as he hath done afore; yet shall the spirit of wickedness and a mind to do mischief reign inwardly still in his members: for a Satan can be but a Satan, and a devil but a devil.

2. Michael and his angels fought valiantly with the dragon. Spiritual are they which have done on Christ after the mind of Paul, and spiritual is their armour. Their girding is verity, their breast-plate righteousness, their shield a sure faith, their weapon the word of God, their helmet the hope of health, and, for stedfastness of their feet, their shoeing the gospel. By interpretation is Michael to say, 'who is as God?' or, 'who is like unto God?' And he betokeneth the constant ministers and sincere teachers of the gospel. The angels of Michael are all they that in a sure faith confess the eternal magnificence of God, and that none is like unto him. Contrariwise the dragon's angels are the hypocrites, lying prophets, and erroneous teachers.

3. These fight with the dragon, and the dragon and his angels with them. For he that is not with Christ is against him. With the righteous is Michael; for ministering spirits are the angels ordained for the comfort of them which shall be saved. And commanded they are to wait upon the faithful, to preserve and defend them. The wicked sort have the devil and his chaplains to fight for them, the righteous have Michael and his angels. The wicked fight with errors and lies, the righteous with the only verity of God.

4. As vengeable and as fierce as they are, yet prevail they not, neither is their place found any more in heaven. Faith hath the victory by the promise of God, though the blind world seeth it not. Overcome are the wicked when their enterprises take not, and clean overthrown when their beggary is contemned. And never is the full victory gotten, no more than it was in Christ, till the tabernacle of this body be laid aside. At that day is the crown gotten, whom the Lord hath laid up for the righteous. And like as there is daily fighting, so is there in some daily victory. Daily are the angels of darkness overthrown, daily are they cast out of heaven, which is the true church. Daily are they condemned by the word of God, and judged for rebels against the Holy Ghost; whose sin is never forgiven.

5. No place have they any more with the chosen, no

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election nor acceptation afore God. The more light they have had, and the more they have tasted of the truth, now forsaking it, and rebelling against it with the devil, the farther they are from God, and the more nigh unto damnation. Never believed he truly, that so had received the word. Let none think to be saved unless he persevereth to the end.

6. And the great dragon, or captain of all the unfaithful sort, that old crooked serpent which deceived Adam, and is called the devil, or malicious accuser, yea, and also Satan, the most cruel adversary, with all his clients and spiritual adherents, are certain and sure to be cast out.

7. With the righteous shall they have no portion for all their glorious titles. With the godly shall not their names be registered for all their holy unctions. But with the prince of this world they shall be thrown forth.

8. For he by them, and they by him, hath deceived all the world, in lying tokens and wonders, and in the operation of errors, to the utter damnation of all them that consenteth to their wickedness.

9. And he was cast into the earth, and his angels also were cast out with him; which is not else but that they are reserved to eternal damnation. For serving the creature rather than the Lord, that made all, God hath forsaken them, and given them over to their own shameful lusts. All grace and goodness hath he taken from them, and in all darkness hath he left them. Nothing is now behind but hell-fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. The church thus first bringing forth Christ among the Jews, and so by their cruelty driven out into the wild desert of the Gentiles, hath been there fed of God in persecution ever since, and shall be still till the term come out of the aforesaid thousand, two hundred and sixty days; whose end is in the Lord's hands.

The Text.

1 And I heard a loud voice which said, 2 In heaven is now made salvation, and strength, 3 and the kingdom become our God's, 4 and the power his Christ's. 5 For he is cast down which accused them before God day and night. 6 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, 7 and by the word of their testimony: 8 and they loved not their lives unto the death. 9 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. 10 Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, and of the sea; 11 for the devil is come down unto you, 12 which hath great wrath, 13 because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

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THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And I heard a mighty great voice (saith St John); which is the whole agreement of all the sacred scriptures. And the voice said thus unto me,

2. Now is there in heaven salvation. In the church is the health of soul, now that the idolatry with other abominations is thrown forth, and she clean delivered from their beggary. Now appeareth the power of the Lord, that his gospel is truly preached.

3. Now is it become our God's kingdom, that their doctrine is not of men.

4. Now hath it the whole strength of his Anointed. All Christ's labours, merits, and deservings, his nativity, passion, resurrection, and ascension, is now her own good. Christ's victory is theirs, his crown, his sceptre, his seat, and kingdom is theirs: yea, the possession of his Father's right hand is theirs.

5. For the enemy of our brethren is thrown down, which cruelly accused them before God day and night. The adversary Satan, which quarrelled before the Lord against patient Job, and vexed him sore in his substance and flesh, never ceasing to this day to trouble the righteous with antichrists and tyrants, is now overcome by the victory of faith, and his power greatly diminished in his members. Now is the kingdom of God increased, much people being unfeignedly converted with Christ.

6. Conquered him they have by no power of their own, neither merits nor works, but through the inestimable strength which is in the blood of the immaculate Lamb Jesus Christ, and through the invincible word of his verity, which they to the world have testified.

7. In the witness thereof have they constantly suffered, and through faith in them have they with him obtained victory over the world, sin, hell, death, and the devil. Not their own bodies have they spared to win this conquest.

8. But much more have they loved Christ and his truth than themselves, accounting it advantage to give their lives for him.

9. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and all you that in them do dwell. Ye angels above ordained for man's comfort,

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ye saints departed from the miseries of this world, ye faithful believers remaining in this life, and ye fervent favourers of the Lord's verity, be glad that your brethren have gotten the victory of the devil and his angels to the glory of Christ.

10. But woe unto the wretched inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! No small danger is towards them that hath heard the voice of the Lord, and still yet will follow the course of this world. No light peril hangeth over their heads that are inconstant, fickle, and wavering, giving back with every blast for the pleasure of their flesh.

11. Take heed of it therefore; for unto you that are such the devil is come down with his subtle suggestions and crafts, with his wily cautels and engines. Among you doth he remain, watching to have his prey, as he did among the children of Israel, when they were become unfaithful.

12. Tares will he sow to destroy the good seed; for his wrath is great to see himself thus dejected, and his hate is exceeding, beholding his kingdom decayed. Among you must he wreak his anger, for he cannot harm the faithful. Through his envy came death first into the world. If ye will escape his snares, look ye give no place unto him, but in faith resist him manfully.

13. He waxeth now mad, and fretteth with himself. He mindeth to make havoc and to do much mischief, because he knoweth that his time is short. No long season shall he have from henceforth to deceive. The latter day he perceiveth not to be far off, wherein great torments abide both him and his: and that maketh him so wode; that maketh him so insatiably desirous to noy, not caring what spite he worketh against God: and no wicked will leaveth he unsought, to perform his cruel intent. Woe unto them therefore that in these days taketh no heed! Woe unto them that slumber in wanton pleasures, when most danger is, and the devil most busy, not attending to the call and warning of God.

The Text.

1 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, 2 he pursued the woman, which brought forth the man child. 3 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, 4 that she might fly into the wilderness 5 into her place, where she is nourished for a time, times, and half a time, 6 from the presence of the serpent. 7 And the

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dragon cast out of his mouth water after the woman, as it had been a river, 8 that he might cause her to be caught of the flood. 9 And the earth helped the woman, 10 and the earth opened her mouth, 11 and swallowed up the river, which the dragon cast out of his mouth. 12 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, 13 and went and made war with the remnant of her seed, 14 which keep the commandments of God, 15 and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, 16 and he stood on the sand.

The Paraphrase.

1. And when the dragon or most furious serpent, the devil, the head master of pride and father of lies, saw that he was thrown down unto the earth by the valiant host of God; or such time as he perceiveth the idolatry, superstition, pomp, hypocrisy, and other abominable filthiness, destroyed by the word of God in his malignant synagogue of proud painted prelates;

2. Then persecuteth he the poor woman which brought forth the man child. Then vexeth he the true congregation that teacheth none other but Christ, and confesseth none other Saviour, health, and Redeemer. Them doth he torment and punish by his mitred Mahounds[1] and his shaven Sodomites, subduing unto them for that purpose the power of kings and might of magistrates. Then sitteth Annas in consistory, and Caiphas in sessions upon life and death. Then bringeth the woman her child forth in pain. By the martyrdom or death of godly witnesses is Christ delivered, and left here behind in the hearts of many.

3. And unto the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, or the two testaments of God, containing the prophecy and gospel, with the love of God and our neighbour. And these mighty wings were given her, that she might fly with them into the wilderness. Evermore, when dangerous persecution is, the members of Christ's congregation (which are left here behind) hath authority of the old law to flee from it with Jacob, Moses, David, and Elias, of the new law also with Christ and his apostles. "If they pursue ye in one city (saith the Lord), flee you into another;" not only to save your bodies, but to fructify in the people. Get ye into the desert. Teach them that were not taught afore. If ye cannot be suffered openly to preach, instruct men privately in houses

[1 Mahounds: Mahometans.]

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Play not the sluggard in the Lord's vineyard. Be not niggards over his free treasure; but as ye have plenteously received it, so liberally distribute it again.

4. From the face of the dragon hath the woman thus power to fly into the wilderness by the scriptures, when her child is delivered and taken up to the throne of God for the unthankfulness of the people, that they have not in faith received him. And in much danger are they left, having the devil and his angels thrown down among them with their wiles and crafty snares. In much more peril are they than they were afore.

5. A place hath she in this desert appointed of God, wherein she is nourished for a time, for times, and for the half-time; which is not else but his special protection among them that be poor in spirit, and are judged outcasts of the world. There is the true church nourished with the pure word, not mixed with the leaven of Pharisees. There is the faithful congregation at all times fed, without the traditions of hypocrites. Only are they relieved with the verity, and satisfied with the living promises, and have been since the time of Christ; yea, since the time of Daniel, and afore. And this feeding-time of the Lord in secretness hath been sometime shorter, sometime longer, and sometime shortest of all, according to the times of persecution and of blindness in the enemies.

6. To flee from the presence of the serpent have they evermore had commandments of the Lord, and to shun the suggestions of his angels. Warned they have been in no wise to go forth, when they say, Christ is here and there, forsomuch as their crafts are such as would (if it were possible) deceive the very elect.

7. And the dragon (saith St John) did cast out of his mouth water after the woman. A doctrine of hypocrisy, errors and lies, hath always passed from the synagogue of Satan. None other fruits hath gone from them, than wavering superstitions, idolatry, and heathen ceremonies: these hath flowed forth like a great river; daily have they augmented, and continually increased. Innumerable are the cumbrous and unprofitable burdens of their fantasies and dreams, wherewith they noy men's consciences, drown their small faith, and overload their souls.

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8. This stinking water did the serpent vomit out by his ravenous antichrists, which are his insatiable mouth, to stop the passage of the woman. He poured it forth in abundance, that he might cause her to be caught of the flood. Such is always the mischievous nature of the devil and his angels. Vengeable assaults have they, and innumerable crafts to deceive the innocent, not knowing them. Our first mother Eve was thus trapped in the beginning, and so had been drowned with Adam her husband, had they not had faith in the promised Seed. An innumerable multitude had been, and are yet to this day, swallowed up of this flood, and without great difficulty none escapeth it. Exceeding is the compass, study, and practice of this false generation. Evermore pour they out their poison; they dispute their matters with errors and lies, with counsels and customs, having upon their side the darkened powers.

9. Yet is the Lord merciful to his poor congregation, that they are not drowned with all this filthy flood. None of it once toucheth their hearts. No part of their faith doth all this riffraff hinder. This dirty baggage accumbreth not their souls. Only are they satisfied with the wholesome doctrine of Christ's Spirit. And the earth did help the woman, saith St John. The carnal multitude, the wise men of this world, the very reprobates from God, all dry without the true faith, drank up this filthy water.

10. They opened their mouths wide, and swallowed up the great river clean, which the dragon cast out of his mouth. This erroneous doctrine was evermore pleasant unto them. Much more have they always delighted in lies and old wives' dreams than God's truth. Thereto have they given their ears, with all avidious greediness and superstitious devotion have they embraced them. But the living waters of the Lord savoureth not in their mouths, their own broken cisterns do please them best. Better is to a swine a filthy puddle than a sweet running water: nowhere will he drink, but where he may wallow his carcase. No doctrine pleaseth them, unless it maintaineth their sin.

11. In drinking up this flood yet ease they this woman. In such multitude is Christ's small flock not missed, not looked for, nor yet many times in their abominations perceived to be absent. So gracious to them is the Lord, that in no wise

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are they harmed with those unwholesome waters. They are not caught of that pestilent flood. It overwhelmeth not their faith.

12. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, saith St John. Frantic and mad is the synagogue of Satan, when their wanton ware is forsaken, abhorred, and despised. Then fret they for anger, then swell they for wodeness. Then whet they their teeth upon the innocent souls, and would tear them in pieces for very spite: then imagine they new cautels and wiles, and thereupon procure they new laws to be made, to trap them in snares, that they escape no way.

13. For the dragon in his wrath made war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God. All manner of ways hath this serpent assayed to destroy Christ's true church. The apostles he vexed with the Pharisees and priests for the first age. With false brethren and tyrants troubled he their successors for the second age. For the third with innumerable heresies did he accumber them. For the fourth with damnable sects of hypocrisy did he oppress them. For the fifth brought he the world into a damnable peace of idolatry and superstition. And for the sixth, seeing he cannot yet prevail, he maketh open war upon the remnant of her seed.

14. Now doth his synagogue of prelates, priests, hypocrites, and tyrants, make wicked laws against them. Now do they persecute them for keeping the commandments of God in marriage, in receiving meats with thanksgiving, and in not going out to seek Christ here and there in their masses and mutterings, in their outward colours and shadows.

15. Now put they them to death, which have the testimony of Jesus Christ, preaching him for an only teacher necessary, for an only mediator and advocate, for an only Saviour and Redeemer, for our only righteousness, wisdom, and health. For their war is only against them that keep God's commandments, and that have the witness of Jesu. Neither is it against bawds nor whores, against murderers nor thieves, against idolators nor hypocrites, sorcerers nor Sodomites, advouterers nor gluttons, idiots nor liars, idle priests nor vagabonds, schismatics nor traitors: none of these seek they out; none of these accuse they at their sessions, but the only readers of the gospel and poor favourers of God's truth.

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16. Upon the sea-sand stand they evermore with their grand captain, to fight this battle. None other laws have they to ground themselves upon, but their own traditions and customs, with such fantastical acts as they daily make, or procure to be made of princes for their own wicked purpose. And as their laws are beggarly and weak, so is their usurped authority, so are their proud titles, so are their mitres, their anointings, and pompous functions. All are sand, dust, and rotten powder before God, not grounded upon his word. All are unprofitable chaff. Yea, theirselves are a ground unfruitful, sandy, and unsure; fit for the dragon to stand upon to fight against Christ's members. For they are the very seat of Satan, and his continual dwelling-place; and that he cannot do by himself, he bringeth evermore to pass by them. Innumerable also are their devilish practices, their wiles and their subtilties, to uphold their master, as are the sands of the sea.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

By the monstrous, ugly, and most odious beast rising out of the sea, with seven heads and ten horns, is meant the universal or whole Antichrist, comprehending in him all the wickedness, fury, falsehood, frowardness, deceit, lies, crafts, sleights, subtilties, hypocrisy, tyranny, mischiefs, pride, and all other devilishness, of all his malicious members which have been since the beginning. "The exceeding presumption of them that hate thee, blessed Lord (saith David), ariseth day by day." Continually thine enemies grow, always they increase, and evermore they prosper in this world. Not from the stedfast or sure ground (which are the Lord's people) ariseth this beast, but out of the wavering sea, or from the fickle fellowship and moveable multitude of the ungodly. For the wicked sort, after Isaiah, are the raging sea that cannot rest, whose water foameth with the mire and gravel. No peace is among the ungodly (saith the Lord), no unity, no charity nor mutual christian love. It pleased therefore the Holy Ghost to provoke John after his secret vision to describe this mighty Antichrist thus in his right colours, according to that he had seen, to the forewarning of Christ's people.

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The Text.

1 And I saw a beast rise out of the sea, 2 having seven heads and ten horns, 3 and upon his horns ten crowns, 4 and upon his head the names of blasphemy. 5 And the beast which I saw was a cat of the mountains; 6 and his feet were as the feet of a bear, 7 his mouth as the mouth of a lion. 8 And the dragon gave him 9 his power, 10 and seat, 11 and great authority.

The Paraphrase.

1. I beheld (saith St John) an execrable beast, very odious and hateful to look upon, rising out of the ravenous roaring sea. For the wicked advance themselves as the green bay-tree in ungodliness, and the synagogue of proud hypocrites riseth up aloft, setting up their Christs, as doth the fat cedar-trees of Lebanon. All beastly are they, as was Elymas the sorcerer, full of filthiness, guile, and falsehood, yea, the very whelps of the devil subverting the ways of God. None other is this beast here described, than was the pale horse in the fourth age, the cruel multitude of locusts in the fifth age, and the horses of incomparable wodeness for the sixth.

2. Seven heads and ten horns had this cruel beast, not unlike therein to the aforesaid red dragon or serpent: for, look what pestilent suggestions in errors and lies, and what deceivable power in signs and wonders, hath reigned in the devil for all ages, the same also hath reigned in the wicked members of his bestial body, in the furious bishops, lawyers, doctors, priests, hypocrites, and false magistrates; for their heads are their universal crafts, and their horns their tyrannous authorities, usurped primacies, or malignant magistrates. Thy strong mighty power, Lord, (saith David,) hath broken the dragon's heads in the raging waters: thou hast smitten in pieces the heads of the great Leviathan. Enhance not your horns so high, ye stiff-necked antichrists; for the horns of the ungodly will the Lord pluck down, and exalt the horns of the righteous in the house of David his servant. More are the horns here in number than are the heads: for greater is the power than is the suggestion, the usurped authority than the craft, the majesty than the error, and much more mischief may work.

3. This beast had upon his ten horns ten crowns, signifying his victory, dominion, and primacy over the universal world, and that he through the wickedness of the people is the unworthy captain and prince thereof. In this only

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point differeth the dragon from the beast, the devil from his members, or Satan from his carnal synagogue. He had seven crowns upon his seven heads: they have ten crowns here upon their ten horns. For that he hath but in simple suggestion, they have in double power of coaction. Whereas he doth but dallyingly persuade, they may enforce and compel. Whereas he doth but easily move, they may by rigorous authority constrain. When he hath proponed an error, they may by their power establish it for an infallible truth, and make of it a necessary article of the christian belief, as they have done of purgatory, pardons, confession, saints-worshipping, Latin service-hearing, and such like. When he hath once made a lie (as he is the father of all lies), they may authorise it for an unwritten verity, like as they have done many. Much more mischief may they do, being his spiritual instruments, than he can do alone; as largely appeareth by their works. Never could Satan have put Christ unto death, had he not entered into Judas, and so betrayed him; had he not entered into the bishops and lawyers, and so condemned him. Never had the apostles, nor all other godly preachers since their time, been sent out of the way, had not those mitred Mahomets and priests wrought still their old feats.

4. Upon this beast's head was written the names of blasphemy against the Lord and his Christ: which are none other than the proud glittering titles, wherewith they garnish their usurped authority to make it seem glorious to the world, having within them contained the great mystery of iniquity. What other else is pope, cardinal, patriarch, legate, metropolitan, primate, archbishop, diocesan, prothonotary, archdeacon, official, chancellor, commissary, dean, prebend, parson, vicar, my Lord abbot, master doctor, and such like, but very names of blasphemy? For offices they are not appointed by the Holy Ghost, nor yet once mentioned in the scriptures. What other is it but abomination, the pope to write himself the most holy father, the general vicar of Christ, the supreme head of the christian church, and the only distributor of the treasures of God; the bishops and priests also to call themselves their churches' bridegrooms, sitters in God's stead, forgivers of sin, and our Lady's chaste knights? None other are they, so abusing their flock in leaving the just office of sincere preaching under such vain titles, after

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the mind of Zachary, but very shameful idols indeed. Their decrees, decretals, constitutions, canons, rules, statutes, provincial and synodal, traditions, laws, fatherly customs, and usages, not grounded upon God's commandments, are very devilishness and hypocrisy, blaspheming the name of God. For why? to have the name of blasphemy upon their heads is none other, than under a glorious title to maintain that thing which is blasphemous, glorifying themselves in the same. The ungodly (saith David) with mock have disdained the Lord, and with open mouth have uttered wickedness against God.

5. And the strange fashioned beast (saith St John), whom I saw in this vision, was like in similitude to a cat of the mountain[1], full of many coloured spots in token of inconstancy, variety, and fickleness.

6. His feet were as the feet of a bear, fierce, rough, and ill-favoured, in signification of cruelty, stubbornness, and uncleanness.

7. And his mouth seemed as the mouth of a lion, declaring him to be full of pride, ravine, and excess. To such beasts as here are mentioned compareth Daniel under hidden mystery certain mighty kingdoms of the world: as to the lioness (which here is called a lion for the more cruelty now used than was in those days) the proud kingdoms of the Assyrians and Chaldeans; to the bear the cruel kingdoms of the Medes and Parthians; and unto the cat of the mountain the unstedfast kingdom of the Greeks. Of pride, spoil, and robbery are the Assyrians and Chaldeans condemned by Esay, Nahum, and Abakuk the prophets. The Medes and Parthians held captive the people of God, as witnesseth Hester, Paralipomenon[2], and Esay. The Greeks most spitefully were bent against them under the cruel king Antiochus, as in the Maccabees is evident. No abomination nor mystery of iniquity, as Paul calleth it, was ever found in these kingdoms, but now reigneth manifold in the detestable papacy or monstrous kingdom of antichrist, as all the world may see. Nowhere was ever more pride, vanity, and cruelness, idolatry, whoredom and filthiness, hypocrisy, falsehood, and fickleness, extortion, vain-glory, and covetousness, sorcery, superstition, and unfaithfulness. More than all the unfaithful kingdoms under heaven,

[1 Cat of the mountain: leopard.]
[2 Paralipomenon: Chronicles.]

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have this sodomitical spiritualty defiled with their witchery the holy temple of God, which is the christian church. They have most shamefully abused God's chosen people, which are the vessels ordained to his glory. They have holden his free servants most miserable captive under their wicked decrees and traditions. The cruelty of Pharao, Antiochus, and Caiphas, compared to their tyranny, is but as it were a play, dalliance, or shadow. In them is all lechery and uncleanness, all raging lusts and wantonness, all fleshly abuses and beastliness, no natural order observed. Nothing in a manner are the cruel constitutions, made against the Jews by suggestion of Haman and by Antiochus, to their wicked laws and ordinances; for they were only against the body, theirs are against men's souls: so that [in] the papistical kingdom of antichrist are to be seen both the lion, the bear, and the cat of the mountain; they not only participating with all unfaithful regions, but also doubling with them in all abominations under the sky. The mouth they have of a lion, roaring out evermore blasphemies, curses and bitterness. The feet of a bear signifieth their ravenous affections, running unto all pernicious evils, very swift also to the shedding of blood. As cats of the mountain, they are spotted with diverse fickle fantasies, in sects, observations, ceremonies, rites, laws, and customs, nowhere stedfast and uniform, but everywhere variant and foolish. And worthy they are to be forsaken of God, and to be left to the spirit of errors and lies to their damnation, that so contemn the verity of God.

8. Moreover the dragon (saith St John), which is Satan the devil, gave over unto this beast, or cursed generation of antichrist, being his bestial body, all his whole power, his blasphemous seat, and his mighty authority. To give them his power is no more but to fill them with crafts, subtilties, wiles, malice, fraud, and deceit, and to make them apt to seduce the simple, or to able them to all falsehood and witty guile. To admit them his seat is to leave them here a kingdom of vain-glory, hypocrisy, and abominable idolatry. To grant them his full authority is to work in them all lying signs and wonders through deceivable doctrine, strongly to delude the unbelievers to their greater damnation.

9. To this power of the dragon is no power comparable upon earth: no power is able to suppress it, [save that which]

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cometh from above, and is given unto us from the Father of light, as is the strong gift of faith. Thus is this great antichrist a king with Satan over all the children of pride. With Lucifer he usurpeth the seat of God, sitting in the consciences of men, evermore boasting himself to be in God's stead, seducing the people of the world, and finally overcoming them by bringing them into all kinds of error.

10. And as concerning the seat, like as Christ our Lord sitteth in the throne of God reigning with his eternal Father in meekness, so sitteth he in the throne of Satan with his father the devil in all pride and blasphemy. As touching the power, like as Christ had his power of God, so hath he his power of the devil. Like as Christ is full of grace and verity, and of his fulness all they have received that truly have believed in him; so is this antichrist full of hate, falsehood, and all other iniquity, of whose errors and lies the unbelievers have tasted. Like as the Holy Spirit of Christ hath wrought in his lovers the mystery of truth and goodness; so hath the erroneous and unclean spirit of this antichrist wrought the mystery of his wickedness in Christ's enemies, since his death and ascension.

11. And finally, as concerning authority, like as Christ being man took power of God to do such miracles as none else could do, so did he of the devil, being his wretched body, to work prodigious marvels and wonders in hypocrisy among the unfaithful multitude, by the secret sufferance of God: so that, in all perverting power, supremity, and authority, he followeth his father Satan, yea, in every point. For like as he deprived simple Job, a man that feared God, of his substance, cattle, children, and servants, and vexed him in his flesh with most grievous botches; so doth this greedy leviathan, this malicious murderer, the man of sin, and body of the devil, with his devouring locusts, rob the poor people of their sweat, labours, travail, and necessary living, sparing neither sick nor succourless, poor, widow, nor fatherless, no goods gotten by theft, manslaughter, extortion, bribery, pillage, idolatry, bawdry, and all other ungodliness, coming to them amiss in their private confessions. And (that is most to be lamented) they defile their souls with all superstitions, false belief, and devilishness, leaving their consciences all doubtful, desperate and comfortless. Finally, to conclude, like as in the body of

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Christ dwelleth the whole fulness of the Godhead corporally; so dwelleth there in this body of Satan the whole fulness of falsehood, craft, subtilty, malice, with power to work all manner of mischief, effectually, really, substantially, and corporally.

The Text.

1 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death, 2 and his deadly wound was healed; 3 and all the world wondered at the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast, 5 and they worshipped the beast, 6 saying, 7 Who is like unto the beast? 8 Who is able to war with him?

The Paraphrase.

1. And one of his heads (saith St John) seemed unto me as it had been wounded unto death: and it was not in deed; for his deadly wound was healed again. Evident it is that in John's time Rome, the mother of all whoredom, had subject unto her the seven climates or universal parts of the world, with all their powers, governors, kings, possessions, popes, false-worshippings, and such like: whom some writers suppose meet to be taken for the seven heads of this beast. But I find another thing in it, the body of these seven heads being but one, and still continuing so. For though all were at that time under her, yet is it not so now, and yet still remaineth this beast. Therefore I do take it for one universal antichrist (as I did afore), comprehending in him so well Mahomet as the pope, so well the raging tyrant as the still hypocrite; and all that wickedly work are of the same body. The seven heads of the beast may so well be his presumptuous doings for the seven ages of the church, as any thing else, and yet no prejudice done to that hath been said afore. What should ail this wounded head here, not to signify his supremacy suppressed, his usurped authority and power diminished, and his whole prodigious occupying condemned in this latter age of the church? I suppose nothing more manifest, unless we have eyes and will not see. Are not now in many parts of Germany, and in England also, the pope's pardons laid aside; his power put down, his name abolished, his purgatory, pilgrimages, and other peltries utterly exiled; and so like to be within short space in other regions also? If this be not a deadly wounding of one of the beast's heads, I think there is

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none. If this be not an apparent likelihood of his fall, there is none to be looked for.

2. But the healing again of this mortal wound is like to mar all, and make the last error worse than the first. In many places where as the gospel hath been preached, the bishop of Rome deposed, sects, shrines, and sanctuaries destroyed, monasteries, priories, and friaries turned over, remaineth still their poison with those same instruments wherewith they have wrought all mischief. Still continueth their more than Jewish ceremonies, their prestibulous[1] priesthood, their vowing to have no wives, and their sodomitical chastity. Still remaineth their foul masses, of all abominations the principal, their prodigious sacrifices, their censing of idols, their boyish processions, their uncommanded worshippings, and their confessions in the ear, of all traitory the fountain, with many other strange observations, whom the scripture of God knoweth not. Nothing is brought as yet to Christ's clear institution and sincere ordinance, but all remaineth still as the antichrists left it. Nothing is tried by God's word, but by the ancient authority of fathers: now passeth all under their title. Though the old bishops of Rome were of late years proved antichrists, and their names rased out of our books, yet must they thus properly for old acquaintance be called still our fathers. If it were naught afore, I think it is now much worse: for now are they become laudable ceremonies, whereas before time they were but ceremonies alone. Now are they become necessary rites, godly constitutions, seemly usages, and civil ordinances, whereas afore they had no such names. And he that disobeyeth them shall not only be judged a felon and worthy to be hanged by their new forged laws, but also condemned for a traitor against his king, though he never in his life hindered, but rather to his power hath furthered, the commonwealth. To see this also with such like put in execution, the bishops have authority every month in the year, if they list, to call a session, to hang and burn at their pleasure. And this is ratified and confirmed by act of Parliament to stand the more in effect. If this be no healing of antichrist's wounded head, never is like to be any. When men shall defend free-will, and allow their popish mass to be a sacrifice satisfactory for the quick and the dead, labour they any other

[1 prestibulous: deceitful.]

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(think you) than the healing of this wound? He likewise that in an open audience maintaineth our own works to justify, by *Dimitte nobis*, and other not rightly understanded scriptures, doth he any other than prepare a salve for the same? Nay, surely. No less also doth he that setteth men to open penance at Paul's cross, (for holy water making, for procession and censing, with other poppetish gauds,) constraining them to promise the advancement of the old faith of holy church by such fantastical fopperies; as Bonner bishop of London did now of late, to the laughing game and wonderment of all the world. Alas, how is the people abused! None other do they but mock christian princes with flattery, that give them old popish titles and blasphemous names of antichrist; as to call them most christian kings, and defenders of the catholic faith, (meaning the pope's old traditions,) to heal the head of the beast. This is surely none other but with the said beast to receive authority, seat and power of Satan. Let them therefore take heed lest they be found the same antichrists that they have condemned, and so throw themselves double under the same plague. Necessary it is they beware what they drink, or what titles they take upon them at their appointment, lest they, forgetting themselves, be found drunken by taking excess of the Babylonish cup, and so perish with the wicked. Mark diligently this word "head," and ye shall well perceive how wonderfully the story agreeth with the mystery.

3. And all the world (saith St John) wondered at the beast. All foolish, carnal, and worldly people, not understanding the wisdom of God's holy Spirit, depend all upon their beastly baggage, thinking all that they do to be godly, meritorious, and spiritual. They magnify it, praise it, and have it in most high estimation, yea, they have it in much more price than any thing that is of God. In no wise will they from their old frenzy, such is their exceeding blindness. For when they hear tell their customs shall continue, their governors agreeing to the same, they clap their hands for joy, and sing *Gaudeamus* with the priests.

4. Yea, they worship the dragon which gave such power to the beast. With their hearts they rejoice, trusting upon longer continuance, when they see his head restored again in their rulers, the godly teachers burned, and the preachers put to silence.

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5. They worship also the beast, so many as worshipped the dragon. For as they which worship Christ worship his Father also, so they that worship antichrist, agreeing to his laws and decrees, do also worship the devil, of whom he received his pride. They wonder with the Jews, that seek cavillations to contemn Christ's doctrine, as do the filthy family of the doting dodypoles[1], priests, and unlearned lawyers. They worship with the heathen, that admit their power and allow their facts, as doth the foolish multitude, that never will be godly-wise. None other judgment remaineth in these days to these wonderers and worshippers of the newly restored head of the beast, than did unto them that with double devotion agreed to the abominations of Mahomet and the pope.

6. And this will be their saying, as followeth in the text, spoken in the time past for the certainty of the thing, as the manner of the scripture is:

7. Who is like unto the beast, in outward glittering works, or in the external observations of counterfeit religion?

8. Who is able to war with her, the worldly powers now so deeply maintaining her quarrel? All seek the papists, that they can in the world imagine, to uphold the glory, magnificence, and beauty of their holy whorish church, or malignant muster. No cautels nor crafts leave they unsought nor unsearched out, to cause the people to esteem her of incomparable power. No small labour took Standish in hand in Whittington College[2], when he made his more than foolish book of reproach against Barnes being dead: nor no less diligence the wise poet, John Huntington, when he registered in his genealogy of heretics without grace, wit, or learning, the names only of such godly men as were the pope's enemies, no heretic against God once mentioned. No more did Thomas Smith, Richard Dallison, William Stawn, Steven Prowet, friar Adrian, Quarry the pardoner, with such other blind popish poets and dirty metrists, when they uttered their beastly[3] rhymes and poesies. And sure I am that many more be yet abroad of the same wicked zeal and

[1 dodypole: a blockhead.]

[2 In Coverdale's Remains, Park. Soc. Ed. p. 322, there is a notice of Standish's Work.]

[3 This word is substituted for another.]

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spirit, to the great blasphemy both of God and his truth, now that the beast's wound is made whole again by so many new acts, so many new titled bishops, so fresh sale of benefices, masterships, and dignities, spiritual offices, degrees, and authorities, as plenteous as ever was in Rome. And lest we should be deprived of our new pleasant Euphrates, and so be compelled by the word of God to follow the monks, canons, nuns, and friars in their banishments; we have procured certain acts to be made for our commodity, and those only to be published among the people once in a quarter, or so oft as shall please us, to blemish all godly preachings of the scriptures. Thus seek we ourselves and not God, our own strength and not his, our own glory and not Jesus Christ's. But let us not think that he sleepeth with Baal, the false god, knowing the most hidden thoughts of the heart; but that he will within short space send forth his lightnings and scatter us, bringing our heathenish devises to nought. For the kingdom of one faith in us and the pope thus manifestly in certain points divided must surely decay.

The Text.

1 And there was given unto him a mouth 2 to speak great things and blasphemies. 3 And power was given unto him to do forty-two months. 4 And he opened his mouth unto blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 5 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, 6 and to overcome them. 7 And power was given him over all kindreds, tongues, and nations. 8 And all that dwell upon the earth worshipped him, 9 whose names are not written in the book of life 10 of the Lamb, 11 which was killed from the beginning of the world. 12 If any man have an ear, let him hear. 13 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity. 14 He that killeth with a sword must be killed with a sword. 15 Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

The Paraphrase.

1. To this beast (saith St John) was given a mouth, not of God, but of Satan, to speak great mighty things and blasphemies. So well is this spoken of the one as the other, so many as hath done on the antichrist's livery, title, power, authority, or name. When the verity of the Lord was opened before them, they gave no thanks for it, but became vain in

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their thoughts: wherefore God gave them over into a lewd mind, darkening their hearts; so that now, thinking themselves wise, they appear more foolish than afore.

2. Now speak they great things in their convocations, scenes and sermons, and all are sore blasphemies against God and his Christ. Now must they serve God by most strait commandment with old Romish beggary, though he most highly abhorreth it, and no scriptures may be read in the time thereof: for the scriptures must only pass as we will have them. How should the beast's head else be healed again? or how should our church be known else to be his own image? O beastly abomination and most hellish decree! Now must Christ be taken for no Saviour at all without our deservings. The supper of the Lord, that was sometime a mutual participation of Christ's body and blood, must now be a new crucifying of him, one traitor playing all parts, Judas, Annas, Caiphas, Herod, Pilate, and the Jews. Matrimony must be judged uncleanness, though it be the earnest institution of God. No popish vow may be dissolved, though it be well known a matter so devilish, as hath made an hundred thousand Sodomites. The Eucharist may not be received in both kinds, though it be the express commandment of Christ so to be used. Without the blind bussings of a papist may no sin be solved, for that is the upholding of their kingdom, with many other like blasphemies. Certain other great things are uttered by this mouth, which now I pass over, lest I should be tedious to the reader. Howbeit this one great blasphemy that is spoken I cannot leave untouched; whereas they boast themselves yet still alone to be the holy church, by the only virtue of their unctions and shavings received first of the pope, the laity secluded; and under this most falsely usurped title they will still be taken for the redeemers of men's souls, (for they say that their masses are satisfactory sacrifices for the quick and the dead, justifying, relieving, and saving them both from damnation, *ex opere operato*;) and over that abominable swarm of antichrist's filthy ministers make they now their kings the heads most blasphemously, only to be by them upholden now in all their mischiefs. Truth it is that the king is the politic head, supreme governor, and great stay, under God, of the people to his charge committed, and after that sort, their mighty

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monarch also by the scriptures, which they have afore this time denied, worshipping them for most holy saints, which have most presumptuously rebelled in that behalf; but over that whorish church of theirs (whom Christ never planted) is Satan the only head, by the Holy Ghost's sore judgments here: for to the beastly brood gave the dragon his power, his seat, and his mighty authority. God forbid therefore that any christian prince should at their false suggestions admit so blasphemous a title! The devil (saith Job) is the only head over all the children of pride. That voice therefore may be blasphemous, as coming from the mouth of the serpent, if it be not taken good heed to.

3. And power was given to the beast to do these things for the space of forty-two months, which is the three years and an half of Elias, the time, times, and half time of Daniel, and the thousand two hundred and sixty days of John. Not only for this age of the church, but also for all other ages, and by other heads also, hath the mouth of this beast uttered great things in blasphemy, lies in hypocrisy, and wonders under a deceitful power. But as concerning this latter healed head of the beast, the time thereof will be short, as hereafter shall appear in the seventeenth chapter.

4. He opened his mouth (saith the text) in reproofs against God, speaking ill of his name, of his tabernacle, and of them them that dwell in heaven. This is in a manner all one with that was spoken afore in the tenth chapter, of the temple, the altar, and of them that worship in the temple, save only that his name is here for his temple; in token that when his temple is blasphemed (which is his congregation), his name is blasphemed by the same; so is his tabernacle Jesus, in whom bodily dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead; so are also they that dwell in heaven, whereby is meant the true church, from whom the angels are not secluded, being their fellow-servants. These dwellers be they that have their conversation in heaven under an undefiled faith, that seek those things which are above, and not upon earth, that worship the Father in spirit and verity, and that persevere true Christians to the end. Many entereth this heaven of the Lord, but all continue not in it to the end of their lives; the more is the pity.

5. Power was also given unto this beastly antichrist to

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make battle with the saints, and to overcome them. Continually do they with violence vex by their carnal policies, authority, and laws, the sincere witnesses or preachers of the Lord, sanctified of him through faith in his holy word as were his apostles; like as did the malicious clergy of the Jews; yea, they did resist them with their more than tyrannous proclamations, commissions, and commandments, with cruel Pharao, Aman, and Antiochus, to prove Christ in them the sign of contradiction and stone of reproach. They seek here, they hunt there, and never leave raging till they have closed them up in prison.

6. Yet are they not so contented, till they have overcome them in the sight of the blind world, though not before God. Either shall they be compelled shamefully to recant, or, if they persist in the verity, to suffer most painful death. By one way or other they must be overcome, to hold the people in error. The Gardiner of Winchester was not ashamed now of late (as I heard it credibly reported) to say unto one that was accused of his malignant multitude, when he was no longer able to withstand the manifest truth: "Master Seyton, we know ye 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." Indeed it is truth: for neither Christ nor his apostles did ever yet overcome you. Their victory over you is not in this world, your kingdom being here. But be certain and sure of it, ye shall be overcome to your much more rebuke at the latter day, when all wrongs and injuries shall be revenged; which is not far off. Your lordly estimation (which may not be hindered here) will appear there not very precious. Yet do ye well to hold up a proud peacock's head as long as ye may. Lose not an inch of your height hardly, but with your gogly eyes look up like a man with a guard at your tail, like a sort of tormentors in a play; and with your lying judgments overcome these beggarly vagabonds, and burn them also rather than fail, to fulfil the measure of your holy fathers.

7. And authority was given to this beast upon every kindred, people, tongue, and nation. For none these antichrists spare, neither high nor low, rich nor poor, sick nor

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whole, learned nor unlearned. But a jurisdiction they must have over them, though it be usurped. Once in the year must they have them in confession, to know which way they are bent. That salve have they gotten in again, to heal up their wounded head. Be he native or be he stranger, be he a ruler or be he a commoner, he must obey them, no remedy, or else stand forth at the sessions with Christ among thieves. Not in one region, or where as one manner of language is used, have they this authority; but in every land, in every shire, in every town, and in every family must they have to do, corrupting every man's faith.

8. For all that dwell upon earth must worship this beast. They must agree to the great things, no remedy: they must blaspheme God as they do. But blessed be the Lord, none doth that in their hearts but they only that dwell upon the earth, that have their felicity here, that seek the prosperity of this world, and regardeth none other life than therein is. The lambs of Christ's fold give heed to his voice, they regard his call, they follow his word, they walk in his light: they seek for no holiness but only in him, neither in water nor bread, ashes nor palms, robes nor relics, masses nor anointings. He is their only sufficient wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption. His word is their living water, the food of their souls, the lantern that shall guide them, and the life that will not fail them. None other doctrine do they covet, nor yet other precepts of living. Though they be here in the earth, yet dwell they not upon it. No continuing city have they here, but they seek unto another of much more beauty and pleasure, not builded of men; and for that they are ready rather to render up their life, than to renounce the verity. Only they which dwell here doth worship the beast, loving themselves better than God, and their flesh better than his truth, having their whole trust in the many merits and dirty deservings of these beastly hypocrites, and nothing at all in his sweet promises.

9. And therefore are not their names written of the Lamb in the book of life, which Lamb was slain from the beginning of the world. Christ hath not allowed them by his word and promise. With the righteous are they not registered, as members of one mystical body in him. In the similitude of his death are they not grafted unto him, as the

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branches unto the vine, to be partners of his resurrection. Their portion is not in the land of the living with him. They are none of those whom the Father hath given him, to participate with him in one spirit. Predestinated they are not unto life by him, nor so written up in the foreknowledge of God. Chosen they were not of the Lord before the world's constitution, to be his undefiled children in Christ.

10. He is the meek Lamb that was slain. He alone taketh away the sins of the world. In him only is the life, for he is the life itself. Yet is he the life of none other, but of those that only believe in him.

11. In that he was killed from the world's beginning, is signified, that he died for all them which were create to be saved, and that his only death is all their health, raise, and remedy, by the promise of God. For all they have eaten of one spiritual meat, and drunk of one spiritual rock, though it came in the flesh long after them. He only trod down the head of the serpent. Since the beginning hath he been slain in his members also, as manifest it is in righteous Abel, Jeremy, John Baptist, and such other like. They that are not written of the Lamb in the book of life for the children of God, are registered in the book of death for the children of perdition, reserved to eternal death for their infidelity, with the devil and his angels.

12. He that hath an ear (saith the text) let him take good heed. He that hath an understanding, let him be admonished by that which followeth here. Or, he that hath received the wisdom of the Spirit, let him judge hereof according unto it. Thus doth the Holy Ghost advertise the faithful to consider, that whatsoever things are written, they are written unto our learning.

13. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; and he that killeth with a sword must with a sword be slain. This warning giveth the Lord, take it if they list: for he will have his right judgments known. He that vexeth or afflicteth the just believers in body by outward punishments, he shall be afflicted in the spirit with an inward darkness or blindness of the soul, that he may be the more captive to sin and to Satan. God will deliver him up into a lewd mind, and will give him strong delusion, to believe all manner of lies, that he might be damned.

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14. He that killeth the poor innocent for his faith with the iron sword, or slayeth him with any other torment, with the sword of the Spirit (which is the Lord's word) shall he be both judged and condemned. "The word that I have spoken (saith Christ), shall judge them at the latter day." And this is in manner all one with that was said in the eleventh chapter afore: "If any man will hurt them, fire shall proceed out of their mouths, and consume their enemies."

15. Nevertheless to the Christian is persecution necessary. For here in this life is the patience of the saints proved, and their faith required. Here was Abraham tempted and Job sore vexed, and both they were found God's true faithful servants. Here were the apostles contemned, rejoicing that they were found worthy for Christ's sake to suffer rebuke. The righteous the Lord trieth as gold in the furnace. He chasteneth every servant that he loveth, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth. Only is it faith that all the evils of this world by patience overcometh, and so obtaineth the victory. The fruit which riseth to eternal life is peaceable sufferance in faith. And that must be here in this life, where as we are unperfect, to make us perfect.

The Text.

1 And I beheld another beast 2 coming up out of the earth. 3 And he had two horns like a lamb, 4 and he spake as did the dragon. 5 And he did all that the first beast could do, 6 in his presence. 7 And he caused the earth, and them which dwell therein, 8 to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 9 And he did great wonders, 10 so that he made fire come down from heaven 11 in the sight of men; 12 and deceived them that dwelt on the earth by the means of those signs which he hath power to do in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwelt on the earth, that they should make an image unto the beast, which had the wound of a sword and did live.

The Paraphrase.

1. And I beheld (saith St John) in this secret revelation of my Lord another beast arising out of the earth. A figure is this of all false prophets and ungodly preachers: beastly are they evermore, vain, carnal and corrupt in their studies, abominable in the practising of their wicked hearts, not seeking God, but their bellies; not Christ's glory, but their own pride and vain glory.

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2. From the earth they arise, all given to earthly wisdom. The only affects[1] of this world do move them to teach, and no good zeal of the truth. Either are they tickled with ambition, pricked with avarice, or else stirred with malice to envy. These are the common affects of the wicked. This a going up have they from wickedness to wickedness, and shall have still, till the Lord destroy them; like as have the just believers from virtue to virtue in the Spirit, till such time as they see him face unto face in the everlasting Sion. From the world's beginning hath this beast risen up in Cain, the first murderer, in the fleshly children of men, in Cham the shameless child of Noe, in Ismael and Esau, in Jannes and Jambres, in Balaam and Baal's prophets, in the Benjamites and Bel's chaplains, in Phasur and Semeias, in Judas, Annas and Caiphas, in Bar-jesu and Diotrephes; and now, since their time, most of all in Mahomet's doctors and the pope's quiresters[2]. Yea, still they are aloft in their beastly beggary, and will be till their mischief be finished. Who seeth not now-a-days, that hath light in the Spirit, the malignity, hypocrisy, fraud, craft, and deceit, in certain false prophets at Paul's cross in London, and in other places else?

3. This beast had two horns like the Lamb at a blush[3], but all counterfeit and false in very deed; for he spake as did the dragon. The horns of Christ are his high kingdom in the world. Only ariseth his church by faith in the glad tidings and promises of God: that word is the sceptre of Christ's power, and the rod of right order, where as he reigneth. None other strange sceptres are there, neither traditions nor customs. Seven horns hath Christ, for in him was the fulness of the verity: this beast hath but two, and yet they are but false and counterfeit. They seem to be Christ's and are not: these are the corrupted letter of the two testaments, falsely interpreted, and for a carnal purpose alleged. And therefore it is but apparent, hypocritish, and deceitful; yea, and clean repugnant to the Lord's meaning, not having the judgment of his Spirit. This letter without the Holy Ghost is dead, and nothing pertaineth unto Christ: he is the verity and life; this is but a fable or fiction. His word is Spirit and life; this is but a brass-pot sounding, or a Latin candlestick

[1 affects: affections.] [2 quiresters: choristers.]
[3 blush: resemblance, look. Halliwell.]

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tinkling, fantastical and faint, sophistical and sleighty. Though the same be like Christ's, yet are they none of his, but the very horns of the beast; for they uphold antichrist's kingdom, and not his; a worldly glory, and not his; for his kingdom is not of this world. No longer are they his words, his laws, nor his testimonies than they maintain his right honour. No newly practised worshippings alloweth he for his, but utterly abhorreth them all as things raw and unsavoury.

4. And therefore it followeth, that beast spake as did the dragon. The doctrines and teachings of these false apostles and deceitful masters are lies in hypocrisy, and the very doctrine of devils, under title of the verity repugnant to the same: not unlike to that the serpent said unto the woman, "Ye shall not die if ye eat of the forbidden fruit, but ye shall be surely as Gods, knowing both good and evil." They do as did Satan in the desert. Always they persuade us, either of stones to make bread, or else throw ourselves downward, or else to worship the devil, that is, to change the good creatures of God from their right use, as trees into idols, silks, velvets, cloth, gold and silver into superstitious ornaments, chaste marriage into stinking whoredom and sodomy, with such like; to decline from the duties commanded of God to their idle observations, so making his commandments of none effect for the vain traditions of men; and, finally, to fall unto forbidden worshippings or abominations of idolatry, of whom they are full. And for these they have with Satan also their mangled scriptures to lay for them, to prove that the help of dead saints is necessary, their masses, merits, and work more than need expedient, and the fire of purgatory a fearful thing, with the devil and all of such fantasies. These are the prelates of antichrist's church, the two-horned monsters or great bellied bishops, rightly described here of the Holy Ghost in this two-horned beast: these beastly buzzards are not ashamed both to say and write, that in their mitres they bear the figure of both testaments, whose verity they impugn with tooth and nail. Very truly they say that they carry the figure; for indeed it is but a shadow they bear: not to glorify God, but their own beastly bodies with pearl and stone, like Mahounds[1] in a play; for his truth they most cruelly persecute.

[1] Mahounds: Mahomet. The term was often used for an idol or pagan deity. Halliwell.]

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These are the very false prophets, the instruments of Satan, the deceivers, wolves, wagelings[2], Judases, dreamers, liars, idols, adversaries, adders, whelps, foxes, destroying the Lord's vineyard, deceitful workmen, desperate shepherds, blind watchmen, dumb dogs, devils incarnate, wicked seed, unsatiate beasts, whose god is their belly, and glory their confusion. To all these and to many other such doth the Holy Ghost compare them, for that they have with their errors and lies turned the sweetness of the scriptures into bitterness, scarcely leaving one place thereof undefiled with their filthy dregs.

5. This beast (saith St John) did all things that the first beast could do, even before his own face. The same lying power to deceive in hypocrisy hath this beastly brood that the great antichrist hath, the same wily crafts, and the same beastly kinds of idolatry; and so doth use them. The same abominations maintain they the world over, that the pope maintaineth at Rome, and Mahomet in Barbary of Turkey: yea, the same superstitions and sorceries, the same execrable traditions and beggaries, the same ceremonies have they that he hath, the same unctions, the same orders, and the same masses; the same idle observations with unknown cloyning, clattering and wawling[3], are still used in England, like as they were used afore, and no less blasphemy to God.

6. To do such things in the first beast's presence is to do them where his power and authority is reigning, or where as is the seat of Satan; which is every place that admitteth strange worshippings.

7. Both the earth, and them that dwell in the earth, compel they to worship this first beast. Not only enforce they them to wicked idolatry, that never would know the truth, but also many of those which hath great knowledge in the same. Oh, how many are in England, and in other regions also, that in these days work against faith, knowledge, and the Holy Ghost, admitting the priests' abominations! Rather had they to dwell still in the earthly beggary, with the blasphemy of God, than either to be out of favour, or to lose their offices, to have their goods hindered, or to hazard their lives; so sweet are these wanton worldly pleasures. Rather had they to perish with the sons of Eli and Samuel,

[2 wagelings: hirelings.]

[3 wawling: to squeak, to cry out. Halliwell.]

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for abusing the ordinances of the Lord, and with Core, Dathan, and Abiram, for rebelling against them, to sink unto hell, than with Christ to take pains or poverty. But let not them think to be worthy of Christ, that better love their own carnal commodity than his heavenly verity.

8. Well, the beast must they worship whose wound is made whole. His old rusty rules new burnished, and his old Romish rags new patched, by a newly confirmed authority, must they embrace in pain of death. The Lamb shall not yet be suffered to appear; still, for a time, must these terrible termagants have more worship than God, their traditions preferred to his most pure word: and why should it not be so? have they not now a new reformed church, in whom the beast's wounded head is newly restored? So long as it is like the pope's church, it must follow his rules, and cleave to his ordinances. It shall not follow Christ in faith and in doctrine, till it appear like that church which he left here behind him when he ascended: and that is not like to be yet.

9. First must there be wrought great wonders. Fire must be compelled to come down from heaven in the sight of men by this two-horned beast. The disciples of antichrist with their bifurked[1] ordinaries must violently pluck from the true Christian church (whose reign is not of this world) the eternal word of the Lord.

10. Then must they take from them the consuming fire that Christ sent down into the earth of men's hearts, to dry up all malice and sin. Yea, they must deprive them of the cloven fiery tongues, which the Holy Ghost poured upon the apostles to the comfort of all the world. The treasure that Christ hath left here to succour us they must hide under the ground, and the candle that he lit us to see over the house convey underneath the bushel.

11. And these wonders shall they work in the presence of men. Already have they taken in England from the bibles the annotations, tables, and prefaces, to perform this their damnable enterprise. They have straitly forbidden the reading thereof for time of their Romish service. Some have they burned, and some put to silence, and all in the face of the people. Yea, they raise the maids of Ipswich and of Kent, to work wonders and marvels, and now of late

[1 bifurked: two-forked, double-sided.]

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the foolish northenmen to fight for their church. What practices they have had in that ear and that ear, to fetch away the true favourers and preachers of the gospel at divers times, he that well considereth may say that the Holy Ghost hath here rightly described them, calling them workers of wonders: the discreet citizen of London, master Packington, was slain with a gun at St Thomas of Acres (as they call it) not without their privy legerdemain. But this, with other of their miracles, I intend to declare more at large in another treatise, the Lord sending me life. It is not long ago also, since Alexander Seyton, an excellent learned man, with poor master Tolwyn, recanted at Paul's cross; nor yet long afore, since good doctor Crome was compelled to do the same. And now, last of all, to take the scripture clean away, they have sought out great faults in the translation of it, and thereupon taken them away from the common people's reading. Great pains they take to put it down, but they never sweat in the setting up of it. Thus mind they to work their wonders, till they have buried it all in the earth: they lack now but four knights to hire, to keep it down still, that it rise no more up. O very imps of hell, and limbs of the devil, how vain are your studies, and how wicked your practices! I have no doubt, but within short space God will destroy the counsels, and dissipate the strength of them that please men. Yet let no man marvel, though they do these feats for the time: for if the Gospel were taught without check, in a while should nothing remain of that generation, neither mitre nor rochet, shaven crown nor anointing; and that know they well enough. For the word of the Lord is the breath of his mouth that shall destroy them, and the devouring fire that shall consume them.

12. By the means of these signs (saith the text), which this beast had power to do in the sight of the other beast, or where his abusions do reign without check, he deceived them that dwelt on the earth. Many in this age are wonderfully abused through the deceitful working of Satan in these horned whoremongers, but yet none other than are earthly-minded. Of some men indeed the eyes are bleared with their crafts, of some men the weak judgments blemished with their subtilties, for want of discerning the scriptures: some men are tangled with doubts, some troubled with error, some tormented with fear, considering that for this new learning (as they will have it called) some have been hanged, as were the three

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poor young men of Suffolk for the rotten rood of Dover court; some burned, some beheaded for things of nought, as is known [to] all the world. These things daseth[1] their wits, and amazeth their minds, and earth is the cause of all this. Were it not that they much more loved this world's pleasures than God, it should never be so.

13. All the persuasions of antichrist's prelates and preachers hath evermore been, and are now still unto such earthly inhabitants, that they should make an image like unto this beast: which is always to choose such an emperor with other worldly governors as shall be for their commodity. He must by the worldly people be compelled to take authority, sceptre, and crown at their hands, so sworn to maintain their fleshly liberties. He must also be fashioned by their wicked doctrines and false counsels in confessions, like them in all superstitious living, and in the tyrannous murder of innocent christian men: where such an head ruler is appointed, there is his own figure made; and where such a head governor is constituted, there is his own image set up. For we must consider that this revelation is in all points no story, specially here, as many writers have thought it to be, in supposing an antichrist to be born at the latter end of the world. But it is a mystery, comprehending in it but one general antichrist for all, which hath reigned in the church in a manner since the ascension of Christ. And in this one point are all the commentators that I have seen most foully deceived; yea, the best learned of them. I know well, if there be any yet to come, he shall be but a member of this. Again, to our purpose.

14. Specially must they make a right image of that beast, which had the wound of a sword, and did live. This betokeneth, that in these days they shall stir about them, and leave no cautels unsought, neither any false counsels unfet from other realms to do their feats with, and to fashion the christian governors to their minds, as Winchester did the last time he was in France: after whose coming home many great wonders were wrought in England, and fire was made to come down from heaven. Consider the story afore, for the story declareth the mystery. That wounded head now healed must be upholden.

15. He had a grievous wipe with the sword (which is

[1] daseth: dazzles, stupifies.]

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the living word of the Lord), when he lost his monks, canons, and friars, his purgatory, pilgrimages, and shrines. Yet was he not all dead: for though their cowls, coats, and rochets were off, yet had they still the same popish hearts, and the same superstitious frowardness, that they were wont to have. This might have been found true, if it had been searched when certain popish priests of master Wharton's retinue, not far from Bongay in Suffolk, did calk for Cromwell, and for other else, if the world had not changed to their minds. I write not this, thinking they can harm by their calking where as faith is resident, but only to shew that their hearts are yet alive, and how virtuously they are occupied. Many things I consider at this instant point, concerning prince Edward, whom I doubt not but the Lord hath sent for the singular comfort of England: not that I temerously define any thing to come concerning him, considering it only in the Lord's power; but I desire the said Lord to preserve his bringing up from the contagious drinks of these false physicians. And this is to be prayed for of all men, if ye ponder well the text, and mark their wonderful workings, where the beast's head is restored.

The Text.

1 And he had power to give spirit unto the image of the beast, 2 and to make that the image of the beast should speak, 3 and should cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed. 4 And he made all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, 5 to receive a mark in their right hands, 6 or in their foreheads; 7 and that no man might buy and sell, 8 save he that had the mark, 9 or the name of the beast, 10 either the number of his name.

The Paraphrase.

1. For power they have to give spirit to the image of the beast. It is surely given them of the devil, when they have once fashioned out the beast's right image, or made of an emperor a tyrant, or set in the place of a godly governor a cruel murderer up of God's people, by flattering praises to encourage them to all mischief, and by wicked counsel to prick them forward, to make cruel acts of murder for upholding their beastly generation. The spirit that they do minister unto princes evermore is not the correction of sin,

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the amendment of life, redress of the commonwealth, provision for the poor, nor the seeking of God's glory; but by flattering praises to uphold them in their evils, much after this sort of speaking: 'Your majesties or graces are called most virtuous, most valiant, most worthy, most wise, most mighty, and best learned among all christian potentates; they are all but ashes, in comparison to your worthinesses. If it be your majesties' pleasure to do this or that within your own dominion, who shall be so bold to withstand you? No, though God's holy laws be an hundred times against it. Support the old religion of holy church against the heretics, and ye cannot choose but prosper in all your affairs. Let it be treason against your own persons, according to the acts of the emperor Sigismundus and of king Henry the fifth, if they do but once speak against her corrupt customs. Make cruel constitutions apace, and proclaim them abroad, to shew yourselves the pope's lively images.

2. Our office it is to cause the beast's images to speak. Let therefore your voices be heard. Be no dumb idols, but speak with bold stomachs. In his spirit make utterance without God's word of his old Romish rules. Send forth your proclamations to be published everywhere, concerning his masses, his confessions, his ceremonies, and his whorish chastity. Let all things be blown forth under your titles, names, and authorities, to be observed under pain of death. If other realms report that ye abuse the duty of emperors or kings (which is the office of God), esteem not their sayings, but stand well in your own conceits. Interpret the scriptures at your own lusts and pleasures, as your law-master of Rome hath done afore your time.

3. Cause so many to be killed, as will not worship the image of the beast, or obey such wicked laws against the verity of God, as hath been made by those emperors that were the pope's eldest sons, by the kings of France which were his younger sons, or by other princes else which were the defenders of his church: let none escape your hands that inveigheth against our kingdom, but make havoc of them on every side as of heretics and traitors, to prove the Holy Ghost true here in his fore-judgments. For that is your office, not appointed of God, but of Satan. And in our commission from him also we have it, to be no slack movers of you thereunto. So

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hath Christ told afore this revelation unto St John the evangelist. This is the ghostly counsel that wo the horned beasts have in commission to give unto you from the mouth of the dragon.' When such an image or idolous prince is thus upset or constituted by authority (his oath once made that he shall always defend them), he may in no wise speak but out of that spirit that their conjurors (confessors I should say) have put into him. He may make no laws but at their spiritual appointment, like as the emperor Charles doth now in these days. Much after this sort became the emperor Nero this beast's image immediately after Christ's ascension by the subtle sleights of that spiritual sorcerer, Simon Magus, at Rome, to withstand the christian preachers, Peter and Paul; as largely witnesseth Egesippus in his third book, *De Hierosolymorum excidio*, the second chapter. This Simon Magus by flattering praises crept first into his favour, promising him health, long life, increase of power, and enlargement of his empire, with continual victory over his enemies, in case he would follow his counsel: upon this became he not only his chief counsellor, but also the high bishop of his soul, and conservator of his body, the preservation of his whole health and life to him committed only. All things after that were done by his counsel to stop the apostles' preaching, he taken for the emperor's most familiar friend, and a man most profitable to the commonwealth of the Romans, and they soon after suppressed and put unto most cruel death.

4. And he made all (saith St John) both great and small, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hands, or in their foreheads. When this new-raised image of the beast, or sworn power to antichrist, is once raised up or admitted by their authority, be he king or emperor, prince or other potentate, he must strongly defend that synagogue of the devil with whole majesty, crown, and sceptre. By their only counsel must he then make laws (for they must give him spirit), and send his commandments abroad that their holy decrees be observed. Commissioners and visitors must out under that authority, as well to the clergy as laity. Then must all be sworn to it and to obey it, both high and low, both gentleman and yeoman, both owner and farmer, both citizen and townsman, both merchant and ploughman, both master and servant, both native dweller and denizen: yea, both priests in their colleges, monks in their abbeys, canons in

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their convents, and friars in their cloisters, must after their sort do the same. This rule hath been always for the commodity of that kingdom, where as the powers have been thus by them perversed. Much were it to shew the manifold examples in that behalf. Charles the fifth, now emperor, to make this good, and to shew himself to be the said beast's image, caused such acts to be published throughout his whole dominion against the christian doctrine, wherein all they [are] declared heretics, schismatics, and excommunicates, which take not the pope for St Peter's only vicar and head of the christian church, none excepted, neither king nor Corvoster, as there are now divers of the contrary opinion. The articles of the Lovanians under his privilege, and the acts of the Parisians under the French king's authority, proclaimed in this present year of our Lord one thousand five hundred and forty-five, will make all this matter good.

5. And what is this else, both in their clergy and commons, but to receive a mark in their right hands or foreheads? For in admitting those articles and acts they grant to obey those blasphemous doctrines that shall both corrupt their life and faith, both their works and conscience. For in consenting unto errors in their faith they spot their foreheads, having so their consciences marked with a hot iron. In full granting also to do them in effect they defile their hands, performing such works as are unpure before God. If they were gone quite from Christ that wrapped themselves again with the works of the law, appointed of God before his coming, much more are they gone from him that tangle themselves with such works of bondage as he never knew; as are all their idle observations, having no express commandments of the word of God. "Only look we (saith St Paul) in spirit to be justified through faith, which by love is mighty in operation."

6. And for them that so believe is this disjunctive, 'or,' put between their hands and foreheads. For all they that outwardly keep these heathenish observations, have not their consciences defiled with them, for their inward faith's sake, though they perform the outward works, doubting the terror of the laws. Yet would I counsel them not therein to trust, but at the word of the Lord to go from it. For though Lot dwelt in Sodom, yet at the Lord's voice he departed from thence.

7. This image made also that no man might buy or sell,

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save he only that had the mark or the name of the beast, or at the least the number of his name. The acts of Justinian the emperor shall make this good; so shall the constitutions of Adelstane and Edgar, and many other kings here in England, which for the order and commodity of the clergy made many politic laws; specially king Inas, governor of the west Saxons, which first gave the Peter Pence unto Rome, and made himself a monk there. But, in this spiritual generation, among themselves is none allowed for a merchant unless he come in by simony. None was made bishop, pastor, nor curate, but paid for it their taxed sums, bishops to the pope, and the priests to the bishops, besides Item in bribes. None might else be allowed to utter to advantage the wares of the beast, or distribute the rites of that holy whorish church.

8. Neither were any made free of that mart, unless they had the mark of the beast; which is not only the outward sign of their head, shaving and anointing of their fingers, but also the inward print of their consciences, received by profession made to that wicked monster. For like as true faith in Jesus Christ is the mark of a perfect Christian, so is a false belief in popish traditions a token of antichrist's member. "By their fruits (saith Christ) shall ye know them." For the one followeth the rule of God's word, the other hath counterfeit works of men's prescription.

9. Else must they have the name of the beast to be called spiritual men, or the holy consecrate number, as his holy fatherhood is called.

10. Or at the least they must have the number of his name, which is a note of magnificence and worthiness. Less can they not be called than lords, so many as are sworn to that spiritual market. The most ragged runagate and idle idiot among them is no less than a sir, which is a lord in the Latin, as sir John, sir Thomas, sir William. In this Latin only hangeth their great lordships. Among their unknown Latin hours, their masses, and their diriges, lieth their plenteous patrimony in their portasses and mass-books. Not he that leaveth all with poor Peter, may be called from the fishing, nor with Matthew from the custom-house, to do these offices; but he that catcheth all, with Judas and Simon Magus, must come from simony to do them. Not he that is called of God, as was Aaron, shall have cure of soul, but he that

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offereth to Corban with Annas and Caiphas. Such a world hath it been, and is yet still in the world abroad among them.

The Text.

1 Here is wisdom: 2 let him that hath wit 3 count the number of the beast; 4 for it is the number of man. 5 And his number is six hundred, sixty and six.

The Paraphrase.

1. Here is wisdom to be had, saith St John. Let him that hath wit count the number of the beast, for it is the number of man. And his number is six hundred, sixty and six.

2. Forsomuch as Christ hath willed us diligently to search the scriptures, and the Holy Ghost here doth commit the judgment of this secret to the wit of man; some writers have deducted this number out of certain Greek words, betokening this great antichrist, because this present revelation was first written in the Greek language: as out of *Antemos*, which signifieth one contrary to God's honour; out of *Arnume*, which signifieth a denier of God; and out of *Teitan*, which betokeneth the sun. All these three vocables, though they seem diverse, yet contain they, after the Greek rules, neither more than less than this set number. And all this may stand both with scripture and reason. For he that is not with Christ is against him, calling that is good ill, and that is ill good, ministering darkness for light. Such lying masters as had brought in sects of perdition have denied the Lord that bought them. They are not the light, as they boast themselves to be (for all they love to be called spiritual); but they are the fallen stars, and very apostates from God, and Satans transforming themselves into the angels of light by divers kinds of hypocrisy.

3. Some expositors, leaving the Greek, have practised the same thing by these two Latin words, *Dic lux*, containing in numeral letters the same set number: which signified that they call themselves the light, or men of a spiritual sort, being nothing less; for they indeed are the same self darkness, that will in no wise receive the light, but rather persecute it with most spite and cruelty. After this sort might I bring in

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diabolus incarnatus, or *filius perditionis*, 'the devil incarnate or the son of perdition;' for both they are the names of this beastly antichrist by the scriptures, the one wanting in[1] the numeral letters but four of the number, and the other but six, which might be supplied in the other letters. But among all these this word *Arnume*[2] most rightly toucheth the mystery, which is as much to say as, 'I deny.' Evidently seemeth he to have the mark of the beast, or to be sealed with the number of his name, that saith when he heareth the manifest verity, 'I will never admit it while I have a day to live; it is against good order, it standeth not with laudable custom, our doctors agree not thereunto, our holy canons allow it not, it hath not the holy fathers' consent,' with such like. What are these else but the voices of an antichrist? Full of such voices was the pope's legate, Gaspar Contarini, at the last council of Raynesburg; so was that frantic papist, John Eckius, and our Winchester, the winker of wiles, largely declaring themselves to be deeply of the same profession and mark.

4. But I find yet another thing in it. For it is called here the number of man, whose number lieth all in six. God created all things for man's commodity in six days, and in the seventh rested. After this creation continued man the space [of] six ages, till the coming of Christ, which brought with him the sabbath of the Spirit. And this is signified by the greater number, which is the six hundred. For not unlike is it to the time, times, and half time of Daniel and John, and to the years, months, and days of Elias, and John also, as we had afore. Since Christ's ascension hath the church continued by six other ages of much less time, comprehended in the six seals, in the latter end of whom we are now. And this shall conclude with such a sabbath of peace in the freedom of God's word, as hath not been since the beginning. Satan shall be tied up, and the true believers shall occupy in much quietness, the beast condemned with all his false prophets. And this is the number of the sixth. But this peace shall not thus in quietness long continue; for long cannot Christ's church be without persecution. Satan shall be loosed again, and the believings of the beast shall set up their bristles, and persecute the saints afresh. Again shall they plant and build, ravish and keep whores, riot and ruffle, as though they should long

[1] Old ed. *is.*

[2] i. e. ἀρνοῦμαι.

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continue. But suddenly shall the latter judgment-day of the Lord light upon them unbewares, the perpetual sabbath of joy shining to the elect flock of Christ. And this is the least number of all, compared here unto six; and may well be signified by the forty-two months afore, which is rightly six sevenths, in the which they shall tread down the holy city or congregation of the Lord once again. This latter account was found out by a certain unnamed disciple of John Wicliffe, and I suppose it most agreeing to the truth. The second sabbath here, or liberty of God's truth, hath had his shew in England already, if ye mark it well. And whether it will yet appear more open or nay, it is in the Lord's hands: let us pray and hope, for it hath great likelihood of a much farther appearance.

5. Since the world's beginning hath the mystery of iniquity wrought in Cain and in his posterity, and so continued in the beastly members of antichrist, and so shall do still to the latter day. Therefore is it no less than the number of man, six hundred sixty and six. Thus is he tokened with all wickedness, that admitteth the false faith of this beast, and followeth the same in his living by the subtile persuasions of the bishops and their liege prophets; and is sealed up to eternal damnation, unless the Lord call him in time. Not only in England is healed the beast's wounded head, but also in other certain regions. But, forsomuch as it is most lively done there, and this book written in that language, I have only brought forth here examples thereof in that purpose.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

In this present chapter declareth the Lord unto John, and unto his faithful servants by him, the degree, estate, and condition of his true believing church, now after he hath afore lively described the bestial church of antichrist and of his horned spiritualty by the aforenamed two monstrous beasts. And this is, that his lovers should know what they be which are of his household, and what an helper they have of him in the midst of their adversities, to the comfort of their souls. And though they be here among those raging tyrants in terrible agonies and pains, persecutions and troubles, he is never

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absent from them, nor will not be till he hath rewarded them with unspeakable joys.

THE TEXT.

1 And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood in the mount Sion, 2 and with him an hundred and forty-four thousand, 3 having his Father's name written in their foreheads. 4 And I heard a voice from heaven, 5 as the sound of many waters, 6 and as the voice of a great thunder. 7 And the voice that I heard was 8 as the harpers that play upon their harps. 9 And they sang as it were a new song 10 before the seat, 11 and before the four beasts, 12 and the elders. 13 And no man could learn that song 14 but the hundred and forty-four thousand, 15 which were redeemed from the earth. 16 These are they which were not defiled with women, 17 for they are virgins. 18 These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. 19 These were redeemed from men, 20 being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb: 21 and in their mouths was found no guile, 22 for they are without spot before the throne of God.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. I looked (saith St John) on the other side, and in a thought as it were I beheld that a Lamb stood upon mount Sion; even the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, that alone took away the sins of the world. Alone doth he govern his faithful church, as the only and immediate head thereof, having none other to assist him in that office. For who is the king over Sion, but he? Who shall reduce Israel again to his fold, but he? Only is he with his congregation, to aid them with his word, to hold them with his Spirit, and to strengthen them with his grace.

2. And with him were present an hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. So many as have in heart received his word, and in faith digested his verity, are the very children of Abraham, and are marked up for the sons of God by the seal of the Holy Ghost.

3. For power have they given them to be God's children, that believe in his name. And this is it, to have his name written in their foreheads; for their faith declareth them God's sons. Let this set number be none impediment to the reader to be taken here for the universal multitude of the faithful, as well of the Gentiles as of the Jews that believe, though it otherwise appeareth in the seventh[1] chapter of this

[1 Old ed. .VII.]

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book: for so well is the Gentile that hath faith a perfect Israelite, as is the christian Jew: yea, much rather was Zacheus for his faith judged Abraham's child, than was Simon for fulfilling the works of the law: for God is not partial; whatsoever he be that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. And so is it meant here. And therefore is not the difference written here, as in the other place; but all is joined in one, to comprehend all under one. And, as touching the equal certainty in number, both here and there, like as it is there certainly known unto God, even so is it here, though it be unto us both innumerable and uncertain; not as concerning the number itself, but the common understanding thereof in the scriptures. For if the number of one seventh be an infinite number there, much more of many sevenths.

4. And I heard a voice from heaven (saith St John); which is all one with the aforesaid Sion, and is the universal congregation of Christ, all clear from the superstitions of men. For from Sion cometh the law of the Lord, after Isaiah, and the word of God from Jerusalem.

5. This word is as the noise of many waters, when it is in the mouths of many divers peoples, of divers nations and languages, one not understanding another, and yet knowing it each people among themselves.

6. Very like is it also to a great thunder crack, mighty, fearful, and terrible to the flesh. "Very hard is thy word, Lord, (saith Christ's disciples;) who is able to abide it?"

7. And the voice that I heard (saith John) was much after the noise that the harpers make when they play upon their harps. Full of agreement are the holy scriptures, yea, full of sweet harmony and concord. More precious are the verities of the Lord than is gold, and their melody more sweet than honey.

8. With them rejoiced David before the ark of the Lord. In them took Paul a stomach, and confounded the Jews at Damascus.

9. And sweetly they uttered with their voices a song, that seemed all new, before the seat of the Lord, before the four beasts, and before the ancient elders. This song is the word of the Lord, all new, both to the good and to the ill: the faithful it reneweth in the spirit of their minds, provoking

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them to do on a new man in Christ; the hearts of the unfaithful is so hardened, that they in disdain and spite do call it new learning, as did the ignorant multitude at Capernaum, and the worldly-wise men at Athens.

10. Before the seat of the Lord was this song uttered, which is the godly disposed multitude. For, like as the heart of an hypocrite is the very seat of Satan, so is the heart of a faithful man the seat of God and habitacle of the Holy Ghost.

11. Before the four beasts was it opened also by this number of godly teachers; which beasts are the private congregations of the Lord, remaining here yet in the flesh, in the four quarters of the world.

12. Finally, before the elders was it sung also: for none other doctrine is it, nor gospel of glad tidings, than hath been since the beginning, nor than hath been thankfully received of our old ancestors, the patriarchs, the prophets, and the apostles, and the faithful fathers.

13. And no man could learn that new song, but the aforesaid hundred and forty-four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. O mighty, wonderful, yea, and terrible sentence of the Lord! None that take themselves for the people of God, can be accepted afore him for the true seed of Abraham, nor for the just ministers of his word, unless they be tokened afore with the Holy Spirit of his promise, and so predestinate to the life everlasting.

14. None can sincerely do that godly office to the profit of others, unless he be wholly taken from all fleshly and worldly affects. "No man can come unto me (saith Christ) unless it be given him of my Father."

15. The wilful Jews believed not, because they were not the sheep of his mark. Neither is it of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of the only mercy of the Lord: necessary is it therefore, that his Spirit draweth, moveth, and inclineth the heart. Else cannot the song be sweet, neither in him that singeth, nor yet in the hearer. The notes of this new song are God's heavenly verities, registered in the faithful hearts.

16. And they that did sing them to the praise of the Lord, were not defiled with women. With no strange doctrines, nor yet profane worshippings, is their faith contami-

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nate, that unfeignedly have done on Jesus Christ. Not the spousage of their souls have they broken by no filthy traditions of men. Only have they with David sought the testimonies of God, and thought none like unto them. Only did they cleave to his precious laws, esteeming all other but chaff, and very whoredom in the spirit.

17. Therefore are they virgins, married unto Christ in faith, as were the Corinthians by Paul's preaching, whom he wished to continue a chaste virgin unto Christ. Never is the maidenhead of the soul lost, till erroneous doctrine be received from the messengers of antichrist, the bishops, and hypocrites.

18. The virgins, or uncorrupted believers, do follow the Lamb, wheresoever he be come. They go after Christ, that believing his word, do fashion their lives unto it: like as they follow antichrist, that fashion their works to his doctrine. They walk in his steps, that forsake themselves with him, that bear the cross of persecutions with him, or that suffered death for the truth with him; and not they that seek themselves, sinning here in all pomp, voluptuousness, and tyranny. From this place fetch the blind papists a great argument for their wiveless chastity, and that none followeth Christ but they in this muster, because they are unmarried. Neither may Abraham, Moses, nor David, Zachary, Peter, nor Philip, walk in this number, because they had wives. So perilous a thing it is to have a wife. It is great marvel they admit Mary, Christ's mother, to it, because she had a husband. O ignorant asses, and very beastly idiots! I think you follow Judas, which had neither wife nor child, unless he had them sitting by other men's fires, as many of you have yet at this same day. What is virginity before God more than is marriage? No more than is circumcision in comparison to uncircumcision; and that is nothing. No more maketh the one than the other to a christian life. Only is it faith effectually working by love, that the Lord requireth of us. Only respected he the faith of Mary, and not her virginity. They which live in matrimony after the word of God are accepted afore him for virgins, and so are named of St Paul.

Another cavillation they have, that none which hath offended afore can be of this number; but they consider not what is

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spoken here afore, that they were redeemed from the earth, and that the Spirit of the Lord hath purified their hearts through faith. Neither have they grace to remember that Christ's innocency is reckoned for a whole and perfect righteousness unto them that believe in him, but they must bring in such trifles as are their own beggarly merits.

19. And therefore it followeth also, these faithful believers (saith St John) were redeemed from men, being the first-fruits to God and to the Lamb. By none other were they redeemed than by Christ: for of all the elect number he is the only righteousness, wisdom, holiness, and redemption. From the corrupt, blind, and froward multitude hath he called them, taken them, and cleared them; and of deformed sinners hath he made them fair, of vile pure, of wretched glorious, of blind perfectly seeing, of liars true sayers, of obstinate gentle, of ill good, and of unfruitful profitable. For he it is that taketh away the stony heart, and giveth a soft heart for it, so making us Abraham's children. Thus are we redeemed from men, when we are taken by his goodness from such corrupt usages as man's nature is inclined unto.

20. And for none other purpose, but to be the first-fruits unto God, as were the altar offerings in the old law in the hands of the high priests. Forsomuch as the number are but a few, or a certain taken out from the universal multitude, and are the portion of the Lord (as were the said offerings), pertaining unto Christ the only bishop of our souls; they are his first-fruits; yea, and his own very mystical members, and all but one offering unto God the Father by him. For he is the only Lamb that died for them, his own body being the only oblation and sacrifice.

21. And in their mouths was found no guile. For none other words uttered they, but his pure testimonies; none other taught they but his undefiled laws; none other persuaded they to be observed of others, but his immaculate gospel or easy burden of Christ: no importable yokes laid they upon men's shoulders, neither of ceremonies, fastings, nor mass hearings.

22. For they are without spot before the throne of God. Both before them that are faithful and have right judgment in the Spirit (which are the very seats of God) appeareth their doctrine pure, and also their life innocent before God

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himself. Neither are they spotted with filthy traditions, nor yet with uncomely examples. And as concerning their former sins, they shall not be imputed unto them: they are remitted in Christ, and so forgotten afore God. Though this that here hath been spoken be concerning the whole christian multitude and her preachers, yet doth it most specially touch the Jews or Israelites, that shall in this latter age be converted unto Christ. And so do I counsel the reader to understand it. For the mount Sion after the flesh was theirs. Not defiled are they with unmarried women, which are the whorish laws and unclean superstitions of the Gentiles: upon none other harp have they commonly harped, but upon the scriptures, though it hath not been to the pleasure of God, till now in this latter age, wherein they shall wholly turn unto Christ.

The Text.

1 And I saw an angel 2 fly in the midst of heaven, 3 having an everlasting gospel to preach unto them that sit and dwell on the earth, 4 and to all nations, kindreds, and tongues, and people, 5 saying with a loud voice, 6 Fear God, 7 and give honour to him; 8 for the hour of his judgment is come. 9 And worship him that made heaven and earth, 10 and the sea, and the fountains of water.

The Paraphrase.

1. Another angel saw I (saith St John) fly in the midst of heaven. For Christ was the first angel or messenger of the everlasting covenant of the Father. This angel here mentioned is none other than he that had the seal of the living God in the seventh chapter, and he that was clothed with a cloud in the tenth chapter. And he betokeneth these fervent ministers whom God hath sent in this latter time, to admonish his people to fly from the errors of antichrist and return to his heavenly verities.

2. He flieth in the midst of heaven. An earnest, fervent, and faithful course take they in the midst of God's congregation (which is his heavenly kingdom here, to whom this revelation is written), like as did Paul, Silas, and Barnabas, Timotheus, Titus, and Clemens, with other of the apostles, sincerely to declare his word. Mighty stomached are they in God's cause, both in their words and writings.

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3. And an everlasting gospel had this angel preached unto them that sit and dwell upon the earth, and to all nations, kindreds, and people. His eternal testament and covenant of peace hath the Lord given unto them, to preach deliverance to the captive, health to the wounded, life to the dead, and remission to the sinful; yea, to utter that word that is stronger than is heaven or earth, and that shall never fail him that truly believeth.

4. The sound of this gospel must go the world over, as in the apostles' time. Everywhere must it be spread to the increase of faith; among all nations of the earth, among all kindreds of the Israelites, among all languages of the world, and among all kinds of people, of what sort soever they be, whether they sit upon the earth or dwell upon the earth, whether they be high or low, governors or subjects, masters or servants, owners or farmers, so that they sit not nor dwell not within the earth, or have their felicity here: for that is holy should not be given unto dogs, nor yet pearls laid before swine.

5. And he cried with a loud voice. With a mighty fervent spirit do they beat it into the heads of men, both by words, writings, and all they can make, to have the fear of God, and to give him his due honour. And this is the doctrine they teach, and the counsel they give:

6. Fear ye God in all that ye do, for the first point of godly wisdom is to dread lest we offend him. Be constant in the word, and fear no displeasure of men. For no more can they do in their anger but slay the body, and bring it to the rest of God: no power have they over the soul. Fear him only therefore, that when he hath destroyed both, may throw them into hell.

7. Give honour unto him, worship him and serve him alone. Praise him, and glorify him above all; but yet after none other sort than he hath appointed, which is in faith, spirit, and verity, and not in outward shadows, with observation of times. He truly honoureth him that trusteth in him, that believeth his word, and that in spite of all antichrists confesseth it afore all men. After this sort therefore fear him, and worship him, nothing doubting the assaults of enemies.

8. For the hour of his judgment is come. At hand it

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is, that all the antichrists and hypocrites shall by the invincible word of God be judged, condemned, and destroyed. From heaven shall his wrath be declared upon all their ungodliness. With the spirit of his mouth shall the Lord consume them, and not long after will the great day of his indignation toward them light suddenly upon them.

9. With all faithful obsequy worship him therefore, that created heaven and earth in wonderful strength and beauty;

10. That made the sea, and the fountains of water, with all that in them doth move, whose power is eternal. Knowledge none other God but him; none other helper, redeemer, nor saviour but Christ: for all other Christs, not sent of him, are but antichrists. Only bow your knees unto him, for only is his strength everlasting. Only obey his laws, for only are his laws clean.

The Text.

1 And there followed another angel, saying, 2 She is fallen, she is fallen, even Babylon, that great city; 3 for she made all nations drink of the wine of her whoredom.

The Paraphrase.

1. And there followed another angel, saith St John: which betokeneth another sort of preachers, whose office is here appointed them of the Holy Ghost, to declare unto the people the certainty of the fall of the adulterous, cursed, and malignant church of hypocrites, here figured by wretched Babylon. For though all the true prophets and preachers have but one word of God in their mouth, yet passeth it diversely from them. Unto each of them is given a diverse utterance of the Spirit to edify. One is soft, meek, and gentle, as was David, John and Peter; another is boisterous, hardy, and vehement, as was Elias, Esay, and Paul: and all this worketh the selfsame one Spirit. This diversity of teachers was never more plenteous in the world than now in our time, figured here by these two angels. Praised be the Lord therefore!

2. And the tenor or ground of this latter sort of preachers is this: "She is fallen, she is fallen, even miserable Babylon, that great city of whoredom, because she made all nations to drink of the wrathful wine of her fornication." So sure is it that the execrable church of antichrist shall be overthrown, and utterly destroyed, as it were now performed in deed.

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Nothing shall be unrooted out, that the heavenly Father hath not planted. Sooner shall heaven and earth perish, than this promise be unfulfilled.

3. For with the stinking worthiness of her superstitious worshippings hath she poisoned all nations and people under heaven. The great governors and learned lawyers of the world hath she made in manner of beastly drunkards, witless, faithless, and graceless, by their prostibulous doctrine. And this shall be declared more at large in the seventeenth chapter following, where as she is more plenteously described.

The Text.

1 And the third angel followed them, 2 saying with a loud voice, 3 If any worship the beast and his image, 4 and receive his mark in his forehead, or on his hand, 5 the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, 6 which is poured in the cup of his wrath; 7 and he shall be punished in fire and brimstone, 8 before the holy angels, 9 and before the Lamb.

The Paraphrase.

1. The third angel also (saith St John) followed them in the third kind of preaching of the same-self message, that in the mouth of two or three faithful witnesses all verity might stand.

2. And by this angel are they signified, that by the word of God stiffly impugn their wicked laws and ungodly ordinances; whose manner of earnest preaching is this:

3. If any man worship the beast, which is the great antichrist, and his image, which are those governors that take upon them his blasphemous titles, names, authority, or defence; if any man also receive his mark in his forehead, believing their laws to be a christian doctrine, or have the print of his seal upon his right hand, which is to fashion his outward works after the same; the same man shall drink of the wine of God's wrath, which are the dregs of the pure wine poured in the cup of his high displeasure. He shall taste of the everlasting damnation, that is reserved in the latter curse or fearful sentence of their most terrible Judge. To worship the beast and his image is to accept them in conscience, and in the outward obedience with full consent of the heart, for that they blasphemously pretend without God's authority; as the pope for God's vicar or forgiver of sins, Mahomet for the

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great prophet of the Lord, the rulers of the earth for the pope's elder or younger sons, for most christian kings, and defenders of the faith of that holy church.

4. To receive the beast's mark in their foreheads and hands is both to agree to such decrees, traditions, laws, constitutions, acts, and proclamations, as they under those titles have made, only for their own covetousness and pomp, and neither for the glory of God nor yet for the right maintenance of the christian commonwealth, as I have declared afore; and also to be sworn to the same, to subscribe to it, to give counsel or aid to it, to maintain it by learning, to minister in it, to execute under it, to accuse, punish, and put to death for it, or to think it lawful and godly, with such like.

5. These marked worshippers shall taste of the cup of God's indignation, of calamity, sorrow, and wretchedness in the days of their fall here, and, after the last judgment, of unspeakable pains and most grievous torments in everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

6. "The dregs that the Lord hath poured out (saith David) shall the wicked of the earth drink." Clean contrary are these angels to the horned ministers of antichrist. For they maintain the pope's errors, these the only verities of Christ. They labour for the glory of their pope, these seek the only honour of God. They prate that their holy church shall continue, these say it shall down with shame. They require worship to the beast and his image, these will report it blasphemous, and the reward thereof damnation. Mark in these two sorts the preachers of our time, and judge which are of God. Against both beasts in Christ's quarrel shall these angels contend. Against the pope and his bishops, Mahomet and his doctors, will these godly ministers reply (whom the Lord hath sent in this latter age for that purpose), condemning by the scriptures their authority, jurisdiction, and power, declaring also the plagues that will fall upon them for withholding the truth of God in unrighteousness.

7. For these antichrists and their worshippers, with so many as bear their token, shall be punished in fire and brimstone before the holy angels and before the Lamb. Fire shall be kindled (saith Moses) in the anger of the Lord, and shall burn unto the bottom of hell. Upon the ungodly (saith David) shall he rain snares: fire, brimstone, storm, and

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tempest shall be their portion to drink. The vehement indignation and mighty judgment of God shall light upon them, as upon Sodom and Egypt, and shall both devour them and consume them.

8. And this shall be in the sight of angels; which are not only the spirits of heaven, but also the church of the faithful. Yea, the righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the destruction, and shall wash his hands in the blood of the wicked.

9. In the presence of the Lamb shall it be also. For he is evermore with his flock, and shall be unto the end of the world, wherein he shall sit and condemn them.

The Text.

1 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up evermore. 2 And they have no rest day nor night, 3 which worship the beast and his image, 4 and whosoever receiveth the print of his name. 5 Here is the patience of saints. 6 Here are they that keep the commandments 7 and the faith of Jesu.

The Paraphrase.

1. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up evermore, as the flame of a furnace with most horrible stink, for a perpetual sign of their punishment; like as it did from Sodom and Gomorrah, when the Lord overthrew them.

2. So that they have no rest, neither day nor night, so many as worship the beast and his image, receiving the print of his name.

3. Both in this life are they cruciate with a troublous and doubtful conscience, and also after this life with unspeakable pains. For neither shall their worm die, nor yet their fire be quenched, all flesh abhorring them.

4. Thus shall they be with the beast tormented, which have the spirit of the beast. For like as all the faithful (which have been from the beginning) belong to one mystical body in Christ, and shall be preserved by him; so doth the wicked pertain to one mystical antichrist, having all one spirit with him, and so shall with him perish.

5. Here is the patience of the saints. In this life are their troubles: no pleasure is for them in this world, but hate, rebukes, slanders, lies, persecutions, and death of their bodies. Their life upon earth is continual affliction, but glorious is the fruit of their labours. "Manifold are the

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misfortunes of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them of all."

6. Here are they vexed that kept the commandments and the faith of Jesu. Here are they had in derision, that behave them in patience, afflictions, need, anguish, labour, stripes, imprisonment, and such like.

7. Here are they chastened of the Lord with many sore storms, that they should not be damned with this world. Much have they here to suffer of enemies, that only cleave to the word of God in life and doctrine.

THE TEXT.

1 And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, 2 Write: 3 Blessed are the dead which hereafter die in the Lord, 4 (even so saith the Spirit), that they may rest from their labours; 5 but their works shall follow them.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And I heard a voice from heaven (saith St John) saying unto me:

2. Write with thy pen, or mark surely this sentence following for them that here suffer in the truth's quarrel.

3. Blessed are the dead, or they which are already departed, and that also shall hereafter depart, in the Lord. This voice from heaven is the infallible scriptures, ascertaining the faith of John of the sweet rest of the saints in the hands of God; and that their end is not without honour, as the vain sort suppose, but they are counted among the dear children of God. Let them therefore that suffer in this age be earnestly spirited, and not fear the torments of the enemies in Christ's cause.

4. For from henceforth the Spirit saith that they rest from their labours. In a wonderful quietness dwell they, by the very sentence of the Holy Ghost, and shall never more feel of any woe. God hath clean wiped away all tears from their eyes, all sorrows and pains from their bodies, the first dangers being past. Happy are they therefore, and most godly fortunate, that are slain for Christ, because they will not worship the beast and his image, nor corrupt their faith with their wicked laws, but in a pure christian belief depart from hence to the Lord. Their portion is in the land of the living.

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5. For certainly their works do follow them. The promised reward of God for constantly standing by the verity, for the fruits of their christian patience, and for other exercise of their faith, is evermore to their glory present with them; not as deserved of them, but of Christ, in whose faith they wrought here, and for the promise' sake, that they should be God's heirs together with Christ. The lively word also, which they earnestly received here and so rooted in their faith, will never suffer them to perish, nor to be hurt of the second death.

The Text.

1 And I looked, and behold, 2 a white cloud, 3 and upon the cloud one sitting like unto the Son of man, 4 having on his head a golden crown, 5 and in his hand a sharp sickle.

The Paraphrase.

1. I looked yet further (saith St John), and evidently before me appeared a white cloud, which betokeneth the true ministers of God's word, whom the Holy Ghost calleth clouds by Esay, David, Peter, and Judas. For from them falleth upon the people the sweet drops of his verity.

2. White they are as milk for their faith in the word, and for their christian conversation not blotted with hypocrisy of men's corrupted customs.

3. Upon this cloud was one sitting like unto the Son of man; which is verily Christ in his glorified manhood. For evermore is he among his true preachers, giving them such utterance and wisdom, as all their enemies are not able to withstand: always walketh he among the seven candlesticks, which are his congregations, as we had afore.

4. He had upon his head a golden crown, in token of his eternal and uncorrupt kingdom, and in his hand a sharp sickle, which is the sharp judgment or righteousness of his word, for therewith shall he reap his latter harvest; according to his word and promise shall he judge good and evil.

5. This sickle received he of his everlasting Father, such time as he gave over unto him his universal judgments. By the order of this vision should the preachers seem in the last age of the church much to admonish the people of the latter day, with the coming of Christ again to judge both the quick and the dead, as is in their creed or belief.

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The Text.

1 And another angel came out of the temple, 2 crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, 3 Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; 4 for the time is come to reap, 5 for the corn of the earth is ripe. 6 And he that sat on the cloud 7 thrust in his sickle on the earth, 8 and the earth was reaped.

The Paraphrase.

1. And another angel (saith St John) came out of the temple; which is the congregation of faith, consecrated as an holy temple unto God in the blood of the undefiled Lamb Jesus. This angel betokeneth those just men, that with Simeon and Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, in this latter age are desirous of the glory of God, and of the final redemption of man from bodily corruption.

2. These shall cry with a loud voice, with a fervent spirit shall they call unto Christ, which sitteth upon the cloud;

3. And this shall be their saying: Thrust in the sickle and reap. Send forth thy living word. And like as it hath created all things, so let it now try and judge all things.

4. For the time is at hand to reap: for we are those upon whom the ends of the world are come.

5. And doubtless the corn of the earth is ripe, the world is at the best that it will be. As it hath been ever, so is it still, altogether set on mischief. Let thy word, therefore, finish all, as it hath begun all. With the breath of thy mouth consume the great antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, and the adversary that hath exalted himself above God. Pour out thy indignation upon the kingdoms that will neither know thee, worship thee, nor alone call upon thy name. Thou hast called thy harvest the end of the world; let it now finish all indeed. Divide the chaff from the corn, the wicked sort from the righteous. Gather the wheat into thy garner, and burn the chaff in unquenchable fire.

6. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth, and anon the earth was reaped.

7. He hath sent his mighty word, so quick in operation as fire, which shall not only consume the wicked generation of the beast, but also reserve them to eternal damnation.

8. The earth shall be cleared of them, as of all other

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filthy corruptions, and hell replenished with them, to their perpetual care.

THE TEXT.

1 And another angel came out of the temple, 2 which is in heaven, 3 having also a sharp sickle.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And another angel (saith St John) came out of the temple which is in heaven, or from the great number of angels, having also a sharp sickle in his hand.

2. This angel betokeneth those heavenly Spirits that the Lord shall send forth to gather together his chosen from the four winds, when this token shall appear in heaven. These are the reapers of the Lord's harvest: these are they that shall go forth to gather all nations, and to separate the goats from the lambs, the ill from the good, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire, where as shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

3. And therefore is their sickle here named sharp. None other is their sickle, but this appointed office: none other is their harvest, but this gathering together. But these messengers shall not forth till they have commandment. And therefore St John consequently:

THE TEXT.

1 And another angel came out from the altar, 2 which had power over fire, 3 and cried with a loud cry unto him that had the sharp sickle, and said, 4 Thrust in thy sharp sickle, 5 and gather the clusters of the earth, 6 for her grapes are ripe. 7 And the angel thrust in his sickle on the earth, 8 and cut down the grapes of the vineyard of the earth, 9 and cast them into the great wine-vat of the wrath of God. 10 And the wine-vat was trodden without the city, 11 and blood came out of the vat, 12 even unto the horse bridles, 13 by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire. This is the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Malachi calleth the angel of the covenant that was longed for. He is the altar of the righteous, and by him are they a sweet sacrifice unto God: else could they be but very abomination. Till the judgment-day shall he be an altar of means-making

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to God the Father for us; but, that day once come, no longer shall he be an altar or an advocate, but go clean from it. He shall then become a judge over all the world, rewarding every one according to their works. Hitherto hath he meekly sitten upon the cloud, and not cut with his sickle. He hath had in his hand the judgment, and not judged.

2. But now hath he power over fire. By fire (which is under his obedience, as are all other creatures else) shall he at that day judge the universal world. And more sharp, vehement, quick, fierce, mighty, and terrible, shall his sentence be to the wicked, than is any fearful, flaming, or consuming wild fire.

3. For with a loud voice shall he cry unto him that hath the sharp sickle. An earnest charge and commandment shall he give at that day to ministers of his ire, for to cast them into exterior darkness, after this sort here uttered in mystery:

4. Thrust in my sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the earthly vineyard, for the grapes thereof are ripe.

5. Execute the vengeance committed unto you, and root out this rank riotous generation of the ravenous epicures.

6. For now are their mischiefs at the full. Now are they most curious in their fashions and feedings, most covetous in their compassings, most vain in their studies, and most cruel in their doings. For with them shall it be (saith Christ), as it was in the days of Noe and Lot: they shall build and banquet, ruffle and riot, buy and sell, and plant for their pleasures; and suddenly as a snare shall that terrible day light upon them unbewares, as did death on the covetous jurer[1].

7. And the angel (saith St John) thrust in his sickle on the earth; he cut down the grapes of the vineyard of the earth, and so did cast them into the great wine-vat of the wrath of God.

8. According to their commission they shall plague the earthly-minded; for here is the time past for the time coming used, for the certainty of it. With sudden death shall they pierce them in this world, that, contemning Christ's doctrine, have followed the course thereof in all concupiscence.

[1 The word signifies swearer, and the reference here is probably to Ananias.]

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9. And finally they shall throw them into the lake of misery, the pit without water, into the stinking dregs of hell, where as fire and brimstone shall be rewarded to drink. For the vineyard of the earth is the carnal synagogue of hypocrites, and the grapes thereof are the glorious gluttons and frank-fed[2] porklings of that greedy gulf, even the enemies of Christ's cross, whose God is their belly, whose glory is their confusion, and whose end is their damnation, for they are earthly-minded. This wine-vat of the wrath of God is none other than his great vengeance, to be poured upon the unfaithful; or else hell prepared for the devil and his angels: great, not only for the innumerable multitude that it hath and shall receive, but also in that it is insatiable.

10. And this wine-vat was trodden without the city. Nothing pertaineth it to that city (of whom famous things are spoken), which [is] the congregation of God, nor yet to the good creatures of God: no, not unto this world, which shall at that day be tried and purged by fire; but under the earth shall it be, and far without this world, secluded from the face of heaven in filthy and unspeakable darkness.

11. For blood will come out of this vat, even unto the horse-bridles. Wherein is expressed not only the terror of the place, but also of the pains therein contained: for blood-shedding and murder are things very horrible and fearful to behold, containing in them deprivation of life, which is most terrible of all. The abundance thereof betokeneth the greatness of the grief in the sufferance of them. The treading down also signifieth, that no raise towards any relief is to be looked for of them that be there. Unto them which at that day shall be in the city, will he that sitteth in the throne make all things new. All dolour, affliction, sorrow, pain, penury, wrath, condemnation, and death, shall be past with them. Only shall they be trodden down in this wine-vat of God's wrath, that lived here like beasts without reason, and that wandered here like horses and mules in their own filthy lusts.

12. All shall be punished there, that was here un-

[2 Frank: a small inclosure in which animals (generally boars) were fattened. Hence any animal that was shut up for the purpose of being fattened, was said to be franked, and the term was also applied to it when fattened. Halliwell.]

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bridled, unordered, and ungoverned after the word and pleasure of God; and therefore it is here said, unto the horse-bridles. Every man shall receive in body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil. They that have wrought the work of God in faith shall reap according unto it. The bridles also betoken the measure of God's judgment, not as concerning the time, which is everlasting, but concerning the pain rightly measured according to the iniquity. For the Lord hath set his judgments over the wicked in weight and measure, the stripes agreeing in quantity to the excess of sin, so much torment to have as their rejoice hath been in wickedness.

13. The space of these terrible torments or punishments of hell is a thousand and six hundred furlongs. A furlong of the Greeks is called the run of Hercules, and it is in length an hundred and twenty-five paces or steps. And commonly they used according to that length to measure their playing places, of whom Paul maketh mention to the Corinthians, being Greeks, by them that run in a course, and that prove masteries. In this thousand and six hundred furlongs here is comprehended the whole and universal course of the wicked for the four quarters of the world. The number of a hundred is evermore a whole, complete, and perfect number. And four hundred four times numbered is sixteen hundred, which maketh this number of a thousand and six hundred, the number of four respecting always the four climates of the world, which are the common habitations of sinners. In them course they in all wanton kinds of living: in them work they their masteries of all ungodly observations and false worshippings, walking in the large or open way which leadeth unto death. According to the number and measure of this course hath God here measured the place and punishment. Notwithstanding never is he without mercy. Marvellous he is in his works and judgments, which are unsearchable. Blessed is he that shall have his part in the city or congregation of the righteous, and that shall see the peace upon Israel, when the Lord shall lead forth them with the evil-doers that have yoked themselves with their laws. The Lord grant us once to taste the prosperity of Jerusalem! Amen.

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THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

Not only for the common sins of the world doth the Lord plague, but most of all for unthankfulness, of all blasphemies the greatest; for that spurneth against knowledge, and directly worketh against the Holy Ghost. A double destruction or decay both of soul and body by the righteousness of God must needs follow the wilful contempt of his verity manifestly shewed and openly taught. Yet is the Lord so merciful, that he willeth not the damnation of a sinner: such compassion hath he over our manifold weakness, that he premonisheth us of his most terrible plagues, to call us back by fear, if love will not do it; as here consequently in the first vision of this present revelation to John, which followeth after this sort in this fifteenth and sixteenth chapters.

The Text.

1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, 2 seven angels having the seven last plagues; 3 for in them is fulfilled the wrath of God. 4 And I saw as it were a glassy sea, 5 mingled with fire, 6 and them that had gotten victory of the beast, and of his image, 7 and of his mark, and of the number of his name, 8 stand on the glassy sea, 9 having the harps of God. 10 And they sung the song of Moses the servant of God, 11 and the song of the Lamb, saying, 12 Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; 13 just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. 14 Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? 15 For thou only art holy, 16 and all Gentiles shall come and worship before thee; 17 for thy judgments are made manifest.

The Paraphrase.

1. And I saw (saith St John), by the secret goodness of my Lord God, yet another token in heaven, great and marvellous, strange and wonderful. For in the church or congregation of God are evermore uttered his wonderful and deep judgments, unto them only whom his grace appointeth, as unto John. And this is the token in mystery.

2. Seven angels had in their hand the seven last plagues. Some expositors have taken these angels for the right ministers in the seven ages of the christian church; some have thought them to be the perverse preachers and ungodly ministers of all the said ages, suffered of God strongly to

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delude the unbelievers, that he which hurteth should hurt still, and that he which is in filthiness should still be filthy; unto every age corresponding an angel, to declare the nature of those deceitful hirelings and lying masters: and this maketh them so to understand the text. They are here expressly noted to be in heaven. Among the congregations of God are the false prophets and dissembling hypocrites evermore, as the chaff among the corn, the tares among the wheat, and the filthy dregs among the pure wine. For that kingdom is as a net thrown into the sea, and gathering all manner of fishes both good and bad. In all ages hath the wicked generation increased, to impugn the truth, and stiffly to stand up against God and his Christ; which is none other, after their minds, than to minister the seven last plagues here. For no poison is to the soul so pestilent, nor yet venom so noyful, as is false doctrine: no plague can be thought more deadly nor violent, than to deprive us of that faith, of that verity, and of that life which is in Christ Jesu, or to bring us out of that way which he hath appointed. And all this seemeth no small likelihood of the just understanding of the text here. Yet giveth Francis Lambert a far better judgment, calling them the set sentences or unvariable decrees of God, defining his judgments against the wicked in this latter age of the world, at their appointed times to be uttered. For all these things are jointly to be considered. These angels came not only from heaven, which is the congregation (as they have mentioned), but also out of the celestial temple of the tabernacle of testimony, which is the omnipotent God and his Christ, as the twenty-first chapter hereof declareth. They are also clothed with pure white linen, girded with golden girdles; they have golden vials delivered unto them by one of the four beasts, and one of them communeth with John, declaring unto him the judgment and fall of the great whore: which are no arguments that they are here to be taken for ill preachers, though they here minister the last seven plagues. Therefore shall we judge them here to be God's appointed purposes, or eternally decreed pleasures, against the wilful obstinates and indurate rebellious to the end of the world. These are called the last plagues, because they fall in the last age of the world, whom Esay, Jeremy, Oseas, and Micheas, call the last days, John

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the last hour, and Paul the ends of the world. Seven are they named here in a universal respect both of the times, persons, places, and perverse doctrines of the whole world; and also because of the seven seals and the seven trumpets, to whose judgments they jointly agree, as in the next chapter following will appear more largely.

3. For in them (saith the text) is fulfilled the wrath of God. The indignation of the Lord is in them wholly declared. For what hate can he shew more unto man, than to withdraw from him his grace, to leave him to himself, to suffer him in his own blind judgments, to give him over to his own filthy lusts, and to send him the operation of error to his double damnation? A very fulfilling of God's anger is it also to appoint us a false prophet or deceivable curate, a wanton prince or ungodly governor. These therefore with such like are those plagues, in whom is deeply accomplished the displeasure of God. And they are here named the last plagues; for after them shall none other be seen, the latter day finishing and clearing all.

4. And I beheld (saith St John), in the same said vision, as it were a glassy sea or a great flowing water in similitude of glass, all mingled with fire. None other is this sea, but the precious verity of the Lord, so clear as glass and so pure as crystal. This sea gushed out of the hard rock-stone, that was cloven asunder in the desert. When he sent forth his Spirit, these waters flowed forth in abundance.

5. Most effectual and quick is this sea. And therefore it is here noted as mingled with fire, which signifieth the Holy Ghost; for never is the verity without God's Spirit. A fierce fiery stream calleth Daniel this sea. "All fiery is thy word, Lord (saith David also), and therefore thy servant loveth it." This is the fountain of living water springing up into the life everlasting. Unto this water should all they resort that are thirsty, thereof to take refreshing.

6. Upon this glassy sea were they seen of St John, that had obtained victory of the beast, of his image, of his mark, and of the number of his name: by whom are meant those constant Christians, which hath for all ages firmly affirmed the truth, for none adversity declining from it. Strongly have these, since the apostles' time, resisted the adversaries of God by his only word, persisting therein unto the

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death, as did Stephen, James, and Antipas, with such other his faithful witnesses. Victory have they gotten by faith both of the beast and his image, both of the great antichrist and his supporters, of the pope and of Mahomet, with their maintainers, emperors, kings, and magistrates, and of all them that usurp their title, name, seat, authority, pomp or power.

7. They have blemished likewise by the said word not only the mark of the beast, which is a corrupted faith, but also the number of his name, which is the denial of God. Them have they to their rebuke uttered, and to their confusion declared. They have proved their orders damnable, their doctrine devilish, their religion hypocrisy, and their spirituality plain wickedness, condemning them by the scriptures, as ungodly dissemblers denying the Lord which bought them. These are they whom the Lord tenderly nourished, and graciously brought forth upon the refreshing waters, converting their souls to his godly fear and love.

8. These stand evermore on the glassy sea, they set sure footing upon the rock-stone. Unmoveably they persevere in the truth, never denying it afore men.

9. And they have in their hands the harps of God, which are devout minds given all unto godliness, and rejoicing in spiritual things.

10. Harmoniously they sing the tuneable song of Moses the faithful servant of God, and the melodious sweet song of the Lamb, Jesus Christ.

11. Of both testaments they make utterance, declaring the wonderful works and terrible judgments out of the old law, and out of the gospel of gladness the most sweet mercy of the Lord. Without ceasing open they the scriptures unto other, inwardly rejoicing in spiritual hymns and psalms, having this evermore for the standing tenor of their song:

12. Inestimably great is thy goodness, and wonderfully marvellous are thy works, O Lord God Almighty.

13. Just are thy promises, and most perfectly sure thy ways, thou glorious King of saints, and gracious guide of the godly believers.

14. Who shall not evermore fear thee, O mighty Lord? who shall not always in heart glorify thy blessed name?

15. Thou alone art holy, just, and perfect; for none is there good but thyself only. Thou art our only maker,

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redeemer, and comforter. None other have we for our God but thee.

16. No doubt of it but the time will be that all kinds of people, both Jews and Gentiles, faithful and heathen, shall seek unto thee, and shall faithfully in verity and spirit worship before thee, acknowledging thee for their only Lord God;

17. Because thy wonderful judgments, that sometime were secret, are now to the world made openly known and manifest. Though this song be little and small, yet is therein contained all verity, that both Moses and Christ confesseth at large. Moreover whatsoever the scriptures comprehend, either of the great omnipotency of God or of his most wonderful works, either of his loving mercy or of his benign pity towards man, of his glorious name or mighty power, or that he is to be magnified and feared, or how that the faithful pertaineth only to his kingdom, or how that all people shall finally be converted unto him; all is compendiously in this brief song here contained: what though it be not so word by word expressed? And as concerning that is here last spoken, that his judgments are made manifest, it is so understood of those faithful creatures whom he calleth, cleareth, and justifieth, and of none other. For unto them only are his heavenly verities known, to whom he withsaveth[1] to open them. Though the other outwardly see the judgments of God, yet do they not inwardly perceive them, though they boast it never so much; for it is not given them so to do. They must have eyes and not see, ears and not understand.

The Text.

1 And after that I looked, 2 and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of testimony 3 was open in heaven. 4 And the seven angels 5 came out of the temple, 6 which had the seven plagues, 7 clothed in pure and bright linen, 8 and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. 9 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels 10 seven golden vials 11 full of the wrath of God, which liveth for evermore. 12 And the temple was full of smoke, 13 for the glory of God, and for his power. 14 And no man was able to enter into the temple, 15 till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

The Paraphrase.

1. And anon after that (saith St John) I looked yet

[1 withsaveth: vouchsafeth.]

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more advisedly. And suddenly, as it were, the everlasting temple of the tabernacle of witness was open in heaven.

2. A mystery this is very earnestly to be marked, as a thing of great weight. The Lord Almighty is this eternal temple. He is the temple not made with hands, uncreated, glorious, and full of majesty, comprehending in him all things, and he within none again comprehended. He is the Lord of all. He measureth heaven with his span, he overreacheth all the world with his four fingers. In him we live, we move, and have our being. The tabernacle of witness is the Lamb Jesus Christ. He is that very tabernacle of God that was here among men, bearing that faithful witness which giveth wisdom to babes. He is the propitiatory, or mercy-seat, wherein we are heard and forgiven. Neither was this tabernacle of this manner building, but much more perfect and greater. This holy is within the aforesaid temple; for Christ dwelleth in the Father, and the Father in him.

3. Open is this temple in heaven, and the tabernacle seen, when God is known by true preaching, and Christ's doctrine believed. For he came into the world, and for that purpose was born, to bear witness unto the truth, whom the Father willed only to be heard concerning faith.

4. This temple and tabernacle open, or God and his word once known in this latter age, the seven angels come forth. The eternal decrees of God's secret judgments appear, and are fulfilled in their times. As angels or messengers of God, they have in his eternity their just plagues in their season appointed to be exhibited.

5. And therefore are they said to come out from the temple, which is God. Nothing hath he purposed to the world, but he hath decreed it afore the world's constitution. For his purpose, mind, and pleasure is, as he is, everlasting. And as it falleth to the world by his assignment, it becometh a messenger, going out of the temple. So many hath he sent of such messengers, as he hath fulfilled decreed purposes. And marvel not though they be here called angels, considering that it is the common manner of the holy scriptures evermore to call them angels which utter the will, pleasure, and commandment of God, as they do here. After this sort are the priests called angels; so is Aggeus the holy prophet, so is St John Baptist, so are Christ's disciples, and also the public preachers.

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6. What the plagues are that they shall shed out of their vials, will be shewed clearly in the next chapter, following one after another.

7. These angels are apparelled in pure white linen, bright shining as crystal, and girded about their breasts with girdles of fine gold; which betokeneth their sincere cleanness and their glorious perfectness. For what can be more pure and precious than the eternal decrees of the Lord? What can be more perfect and glorious than his predefined purposes? The laws of God are undefiled, the testimonies are true, the statutes are right, the ways are sure, the commandments are clear, the judgments are godly, the words are pure and precious. Yea, the gifts that come from the Father of light are evermore perfect and good.

8. The girding of their breasts is the strait spearing up of the secret meaning of God's judgments from our carnal understanding, till such time as he openeth them unto us by his Spirit. For it belongeth not unto us to discern such secrets as the Father reserveth to his own power.

9. And one of the four beasts or congregations (saith St John) delivered unto the aforesaid seven angels seven golden vials replenished with the wrathful displeasure of God which liveth for evermore. Though the congregations be in the first chapter seven, and in the fourth four, understood by the four beasts; yet are they here in this place brought all unto one, and called one of the four, or else of the four made one, forsomuch as the universal christian church is of one consent, one faith, one baptism, one God, and pertaineth to one Christ; forsomuch also, as it confesseth, believeth, and teacheth one doctrine of health. One is my dove (saith the Holy Ghost), one is my dearly beloved darling. A beast is it here noted, as living in the flesh, and not yet mortified by death.

10. The vials of God's wrath are the ungodly reprobates, fit only for destruction. Golden are they here named, because they appear glorious in the worldly judgments of men. Very painted tombs are the dissembling hypocrites, within full of stinking bones. A shining name of life have they, and yet are they inwardly dead: for all that they do is to be seen of men.

11. Full of wrath are they; whereby is meant a sinful understanding, with damnable doctrines. For very swift are

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they to all ungodliness. The six properties have they which the Lord hateth, and the seventh which he utterly abhorreth; a proud look, a dissembling tongue, bloody hands, a wicked heart, feet ready unto mischief, ways to practise lies, and sowings of dissension among brethren. These are given of the true christian congregation to the seven angels, or decreed purposes of God, to be judged as they have eternally defined. For none other is their continual prayer, but that his will be fulfilled, and that his predefined intents against the perverse multitude be finished at their convenient times. None other is it to put into the angels' hands the vials of God's displeasure, than thus to commit them by faithful prayer to his purposed decrees, or fore-set ordinances.

12. But because that commonly when God's judgments begin to wax known, all things are commoved and troubled, therefore is it said here, consequently, that the temple was full of smoke by reason of the majesty of God and of his glorious power. This smoke are certain mysteries, representing unto us the hidden majesty of God's eternal presence; whose brightness can no frail understanding abide, nor all the world could not sustain it, if all things were open and plain concerning it. In no wise could Moses presently see the face of God; only might he be suffered to see his back parts. For no man can see God and live. Only is he seen here in this life as in a glass or under a dark speaking. He appeareth unto us here in a mystical smoke, like as he did to the patriarch Jacob in sleep, to Moses in the flaming bush, to Elias in the whirlwind, to the apostles in fiery tongues, and unto Ananias in a secret vision.

13. Under the shadow of figurate location is his glory of the elect persons and faithful believers known. The unfaithful reprobates behold the smoke, but neither perceive they in it the glory of God, nor the majesty of his presence. They neither conceive his wonderful works, nor yet his godly judgments. Their foolish hearts are so darkened, that though they know God, yet glorify they him not. They see the smoke and perceive the world troubled (as it is always when the verity appeareth), but never the more faith nor godly knowledge have they. But that which is unto the faithful a raise, is unto them a ruin. That is unto the other the power of God unto the health, is unto them slander and foolishness; and that is unto

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the other a savour of life unto life, is unto them a savour of death unto death. They remember not that the Lord came down in fire unto Moses upon mount Sinai, when it smoked altogether like a burning furnace; and therefore bear they away no glorified faces, or consciences depured by a true perfect faith.

14. And no man was able, saith the text, to enter into the temple, till the seven deadly plagues of the seven angels were wholly fulfilled. For though the true believers perceive in the mysteries of the scriptures the present majesty and mighty power of God, yet enter they not into full knowledge of him, being as yet subject unto vanity. For here is their knowledge unperfect, and their prophesying also; and therefore, acknowledging their imbecility, and also waiting for the revelation of the children of God, they say with St Paul, "O the wonderful deepness of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways!"

15. And at this point shall they still be, till the last judgment-day finish all. For the full entering into the temple is none other than a whole, perfect, or consummate knowledge of God and his mysteries; which can not fully be had, till that which is unperfect be done away, the creature delivered from bondage of corruption, and till death be swallowed up, the vessel of corruption becoming incorruptible, and the mortal body becoming spiritual. The righteous shall then shine as doth the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and glister as doth the bright stars world without end. What the seven plagues are, and what is their fulfilling, will in this chapter following appear.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Text.

1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple, 2 saying to the seven angels, 3 Go your ways, pour out your vials of wrath upon the earth. 5 And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth, 6 and there fell a noisome and a sore botch upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them that worshipped his image.

The Paraphrase.

Another great voice heard John out of the temple. A

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perfect, strong, and earnest assurance had he of the Lord by a spiritual premonishment, that the unvariable decrees of his set judgments should be fulfilled at their times of him appointed: yea, ascertained he was infallibly, that they should in their due seasons come to pass. For unto his friends openeth he his secret counsels always, as he did in old time unto his well beloved Israel, unto Moses, Zachary, Ezekiel, and Daniel, with such other.

2. And the voice was unto the seven angels under the seven seals-opening and the seven trumpets-blowing after this sort: 'Go your ways forth, fulfilling the purpose ye be ordained unto. Pour out your vials of wrath upon the earth.

4. Declare them first of all to the world, to be the reprobate vessels of dishonour, which of wilfulness contemn my eternal verity. Consequently send them into most deep error, that they may wax worse and worse; and not only to err in themselves, but also to bring other into error, that they may receive the double reward thereof, abiding my most fearful judgment.'

5. And in such time as the Lord appointed, the first angel went forth under the first seal-opening, and poured out his vial upon the earth. For in the first age of the church, to try her as gold in the furnace, permitted the Lord by his eternal decree the malicious synagogue of the Jews to rage, and to do their ungodly feats: in the which their furious madness not only did they persecute the apostles and first preachers of Christ from city to city, but also perverted the earthly-minded multitude by many and divers ungodly kinds of false doctrine in hypocrisy. Of this sort was Hymeneus and Philetus, becoming of Sadducees false Christians, and denying the latter resurrection, whom Paul did excommunicate. So were also Phygellus and Hermogenes, bringing in again circumcision with certain ceremonial observations to blemish the gospel of Christ. These with such like subverted whole houses, saith Paul, "teaching things that they ought not to have taught for filthy lucre's sake."

6. And when they were thus by the decreed purpose of God shed upon the earth, or left unto their own earthly beastliness, all destitute of his grace, for contemning his word so graciously offered, there lighted a noisome and redious

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botch upon those men which had the mark of the beast, or an unchristian belief through their persuasions;

7. And upon them also that worshipped his image, or accepted them for godly that made laws repugnant to his laws. For the great-headed rabbins of the Jews did not only spot the consciences of the Israelites, their own native countrymen, but also of the Greeks and Latins, the Asians and Romans, compelling them for their own traditions to make God's commandments of none effect. These, having a pretence of godly living, denied the power thereof. Of this sort were they which entered into houses, and brought into bondage superstitious women laden with sin. For a more deep understanding hereof, confer this with the first seal-opening, and the first trumpet-blowing, and likewise the other six following.

The Text.

1 And the second angel shed out his vial 2 upon the sea, 3 and it turned as it were into the blood 4 of a dead man. 5 And every living thing died in the sea.

The Paraphrase.

1. After this went forth the second angel of the second seal-opening, effunding his vial upon the sea. According to the decree of God Almighty, for the second age of the christian church reigned among the Christians deceitful brethren and perverse teachers, betraying the true ministers and delivering them unto death for Jesus Christ's sake, that his life might be seen in their mortal flesh. For in this life he proveth his elects, with Abraham and Job, to save them, and to make them just followers of Christ, whom it behoved to suffer afore he entered into his glory.

2. Upon the sea, or wavering multitude, was this vial shed. Only are the false prophets received and taken of the foolish, fantastical, and slipper-witted sort, as a reed shaken of every wind: none regardeth them which hath set sure footing upon the hard rock, Christ. Such a vial or vessel of God's ire was Mair the Idomite, which made the Talmud of the Jews, a book more than ten bibles[1], after Nauclerus and other historians, full of blasphemies and lies, condemning the doctrine of Christ. So was Rabbi Moses, the Egyptian, Rabina, and Rabasses, with such other, confirming the same.

[1 more in quantity than ten bibles.]

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3. All bloody was this sea, the vial once shed thereupon. All fleshly were the people in their judgments, their hearts fulfilled with cruelty and murder against Christ's true witnesses, through their perverse preachings. Yea, in that furious rage they thought they did God great good service, when they put his servants unto death.

4. This blood was also in a manner as the blood of a dead man. For dead was the doctrine that they taught, even the slaying letter itself. Dead were also their ceremonies, their rites, and their idle observations: so that every living thing died in that bloody sea. All they which seemed through glittering hypocrisy to live, wanted the very life which is hid in Christ, and that riseth of faith in his living word. So did they also which depended all upon the vain pleasures of this life, exercising here tyranny both in words and doings. Neither were they out of the same danger, that fell from the verity once known, nor yet they which durst not receive it for fear of persecution; but both perished in this sea.

The Text.

1 And the third angel shed out his vial 2 upon the rivers and fountains of waters, 3 and they turned to blood. 4 And I heard an angel say, 5 Lord, which art and wast, 6 thou art righteous and holy, 7 because thou hast given such judgments. 8 For they shed the blood of saints and prophets, 9 and therefore hast thou given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. 10 And I heard another angel out of the altar 11 say, 12 Even so, Lord God Almighty, 13 true and righteous are thy judgments.

The Paraphrase.

1. Next in his course went out the third angel, under the third seal-opening, and he poured out his vial upon the watery floods and fountains, and all they became very blood. By his set decree for the third age of the church suffered the Lord false heretics to rage in all kinds of error, strongly to delude the unbelievers.

2. These lighted upon the sweet waters; by whom are meant the sacred scriptures refreshing the dry souls. "Whosoever drinketh (saith Christ) of the waters that I give, he shall never be more athirst."

3. Of these waters have they defiled both the rivers and well-springs with blood. Both the law and gospel, the figure

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and verity, the commandment and promise, the doctrine of prophets and apostles, have they corrupted with their false interpretations and glosses, with froward drifts and opinions, with vain traditions and worshippings, and with carnal wisdom and murderings. Of this sort were Eutyches and Arius, with such other like, as in the eighth chapter afore.

4. And I heard (saith St John) an angel; betokening those sincere witnesses, to whom God hath opened for that age his secret judgments. And this angel said:

5. Omnipotent Creator and Lord, which art not only of thyself at this present instant, but wast also essentially in thyself without beginning.

6. Thou, heavenly Lord, art faithful in thy words and holy in thy works.

7. For, as it appeareth before our eyes, the decrees and fore-judgments, that thou madest afore, are now fulfilled in effect.

8. For the religious murderers, that of cruelness caused the blood of thy holy saints and prophets, apostles and preachers, to shed, have now by thy just appointment very blood to drink, as they are most worthy.

9. For slaying of them whose message they contemned, they had their just plague. Not only became they vain in their thoughts, their foolish hearts darkened (not unlike to them that hath ears and hear not, eyes and see not;) but also there remained unto them after this life a perpetual vengeance without mercy for their cruel oppressions, as a due reward of their error.

10. Yea, another angel heard I (saith St John) even out of the altar, which is Christ. This angel signifieth those witnesses that sometime confessed the truth here, and now rest from their labours in the Lord. These, though they be departed, affirm that the other hath said afore; in token that now being departed they forget not that truth which they afore confessed, living still yet in the same. He that holdeth my word (saith Christ) shall never taste of death.

11. And this is their saying in mystery, or words comprehending their secret confession:

12. Even so, Lord God Almighty; as the living believers saith of thee by mouth, so say we now in the spirit;

13. That thy decreed judgments are evermore true,

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and thy marvellous workings righteous. The first is called in some translations the angel of waters, the other here reported to come from the altar, to signify both sorts.

The Text.

1 And the fourth angel poured out his vial 2 on the sun. 3 And power was given unto him to vex men with heat of fire. 4 And the men raged in great heat, and spake evil of the name of God, 5 which had power over those plagues; 6 and they repented not to give him glory.

The Paraphrase.

1. Consequently, by the appointment of God, the fourth angel in the fourth seal-opening poured out his vial of God's wrath on the sun, as the Lord had eternally prefixed, in the fourth age of the christian church. For the whole world's punishment was Christ sore blemished, which is the clear Sun of righteousness. Sore did the dissembling antichrists in those days darken the true glory of God with their manifold sects of hypocrisy. The pope had for his part an innumerable swarm of shorn smeared Sodomites, and Mahomet a foul flock of frantic fablers, which with their newly pointed religious and prodigious observations made first all the world to wonder, and then to worship Belial for Christ, taking darkness for light, and sin for righteousness.

2. These, being very adversaries unto Christ, took upon them his authority and seat, the one boasting himself for his general vicar in earth, the other for the great prophet of the Lord, and so were received of the execrate world. Needs would they seem to be the sun, being the very shadows of death.

3. Permitted was this hair-sacky sun to vex men with heat of fire. Sitting in the temple of God, which is within man, with such wicked laws as they made under the name of God and of Christ, they terribly vexed, tormented, and cruciated the weak consciences of men, leaving them commonly in most painful desperation:

4. So that the men raged in great heat, speaking evil of the name of God, which had power over those plagues. At their abominable persuasions was Christ of them not taken for a merciful Saviour and gentle Redeemer, but for a froward churl and untractable tyrant, unless he were mollified by the

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merits and callings upon of others, and that could not be had without money.

5. Power hath the Lord over plagues, to hold them or remove them. By his rightful judgment, at his only pleasure he hardeneth. As the potter may he break them, or make them vessels of dishonour.

6. In no wise did this perverted multitude repent their wicked blasphemies to give him glory, for all their confessions, mass-hearings, pilgrimages, and satisfactions without number: for they were not according to his prescription.

7. After none other sort [will] he be pleased and glorified, than he hath by his scriptures appointed. Nothing less are their fantasies than true repentance.

THE TEXT.

1 And the fifth angel poured out his vial 2 upon the seat of the beast, 3 and his kingdom waxed dark. 4 And they gnaw their tongues for sorrow, 5 and blasphemed the God of heaven for sorrow, and pain of their sores, 6 and repented not of their deeds.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. In order succeedeth, by the divine ordinance, the fifth angel under the fifth seal-opening, poured out his vial of God's indignation upon the seat of the beast. After none other sort than the Lord had afore predefined for man's unfaithfulness' sake, was the proud beastly kingdom of the papacy and the execrable reign of Mahomet replenished with all filthy abominations under the sun. For in the other age afore they did but creep into the hearts of men through the glitterings of hypocrisy and dissimulate sanctity.

2. But here have they obtained the power, seat, and authority of the beast, and so gotten unto them the mighty monarchies of the universal world. Here reigned they without check in all vain-glory, haughtiness, malice, pride, murder, hypocrisy, superstition, idolatry and blasphemy of God's name.

3. And therefore their kingdoms, as all one in devilishness, became all dark, without the light of God's verity, full of the stinking smoke of the bottomless pit. Then went the locusts abroad, and filled the world with ignorance and blindness.

4. Everywhere gnawed they their tongues for very

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sorrow in detracting the verity; much grief they suffered in their desperate hearts, their worms not dying, nor their fire quenched, the scorpions of the earth stinging them also.

5. Spitefully they blasphemed the omnipotent Lord of heaven for very anguish and dolour of their sores and wounds. For none other are the fruits of a desperate conscience than blasphemies of God, as in Cain, Judas, and such other like. None other are the utterances of an unpenitent heart, but heavy hateful murmurings.

6. And therefore it followeth, that they repented them not of their deeds. For in a cruciate or fearfully vexed conscience can never dwell true repentance. So unquietous always is the foolish desperate mind, as is the troubled raging sea. A wicked heart is laden with sorrows, heaping sin upon sin, the synagogue of proud hypocrites having no health. In the fifth seal-opening and trumpet-blowing is more of this mystery declared, which agreeth much with this vial of God, like as doth the other with the other in their numbers, though not in their figures.

The Text.

1 And the sixth angel poured out his vial 2 upon the great river of Euphrates; 3 and the water dried up, 4 that the way of the kings 5 of the east should be prepared. 6 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs 7 come out of the mouth of the dragon, 8 and out of the mouth of the beast, 9 and out of the mouth of the false prophet: 10 for they are the spirits of the devils, 11 working miracles to go out 12 unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, 13 to gather them to the battle 14 of the great day of God Almighty. 15 Behold, I come as a thief: 16 happy is he that watcheth, 17 and keepeth his garments, 18 lest he be found naked, 19 and men see his filthiness. 20 And he gathered them together into a place 21 called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon.

The Paraphrase.

1. In course now followeth the sixth angel of God's appointment, under the sixth seal-opening, shedding out his ireful vial upon the great river Euphrates, a flood of the Assyrians or of Babylon, betokening in mystery the pleasant possessions and wavering delights of the papistical clergy with such like.

2. Into all filthy desires of carnal and worldly lusts gave the Lord their hearts over in the sixth age of the christian church, for their unbelief's sake, to do those things which are

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uncomely and beastly; so that all their study, travail, and labour, sought to none other end but only to abound in them. Wholly were they given thereunto, and nothing to the glory of God in all their practised observation.

3. Yet were the waters thereof in process of time dried up. Their wealthy pomps, possessions, and pleasures (their false feats once known) are and shall be clearly taken away from them. For, after Jesus Sirach[1], the plant of sin shall be rooted out in the proud synagogue of the wicked.

4. And all this shall be to prepare the way of the kings from the spring of the sun. Never shall the governors walk in the ways of the Lord, nor rule according to Christ's doctrine, nor yet that doctrine be apparent and open, till the waters be dried up, not one drop remaining. So long as the priests dwell in wanton delights and vain pleasures, either are the princes childish or else tyrannous, according as their needs require.

5. Never are they kings from the spring of the sun, or according to Christ's rule, seeking God's honour with David and Josias. In England by the gospel-preaching have many of these waters been dried up in the suppression of monasteries, priories, convents, and friars' houses; yet are not all things brought unto Christ's clear institution. A sincere christian order cannot yet be seen there: and a great cause why; for all is not yet dried up there. The bishops reign still in as much vain-glorious pomp and with as many heathenish observations as ever they did. As cruelly hearted and as bloody minded are they yet as ever they were afore, no mischief unsought to hold in the waters. Mark how Winchester, Durham, York, London, and Lincoln work, with such other pleasantly disposed Euphratines. But be of good comfort and pray in the mean time: for the Holy Ghost promiseth here they shall wither away, with all that the heavenly Father hath not planted. All that generation will the Lord's breath consume. Now is the axe laid to the root of the tree, to hew down the unfruitful branches, the withered reserved to unquenchable fire. God grant the princes at that day more christianly to bestow the waters of Euphrates than they have yet been bestowed, no provision made for the poor, nor yet order set for the gospel preaching. For great part of it is now turned to the uphold-

[1 According to the saying of Jesus the son of Sirach.]

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ing of dice-playing, masking, and banqueting, yea (I would I could not by just occasions speak it), bribing, whoring, and swearing, the townspeople and households miserably decayed, which will not one day be unplagued unless they repent.

6. Furthermore I saw (saith St John) in the same self vision three unclean spirits, one coming out of the dragon's mouth, which signifieth Satan the devil, another out of the beast's mouth, betokening the universal antichrist, and the third out of the false prophet's mouth, compared afore to the two-horned beast. And all they seemed in manner as frogs, both in their colours and fashions.

7. Idolatry was that ill spirit, which first went out from the serpent, and hath continued ever since in the world under the colour of good works, as pilgrimage, devotion, and labour.

8. Error in abominable filthiness was the spirit which came from the beastly antichrist, defiling the whole Christianity with innumerable superstitions, under the colour of chaste living, in priesthood, sacrifices, and ceremonies.

9. Hypocrisy was the foul spirit which issued from the false preachers, poisoning the catholic faith with false doctrine under the colour of religion, pretending abstinence, prayer, and cleanness. These three wicked spirits are not all unlike to the wild-fire, smoke, and brimstone, which the terrible fierce horses evomited in the ninth chapter of this present prophecy. For cursed, false, and unpure they are. Their doctrine is wickedness, lies, and devilishness, and the execrable wisdom of the flesh. In manner of frogs are they here described for their diversity of colours in ceremonies, doctrines, and sects, for their filthy dwelling in the dirty traditions of men, and for croakling of their unknown psalmody and service, disquieting with their idle customs the consciences of the simple multitude.

10. These are the very spirits of devils, the imps of Satan, working such signs and miracles as would deceive the very chosen persons, and bring them into error, if it were so possible. But the Lord evermore defendeth his.

11. A strong power have they by the working of Satan to shew lying wonders and deceivable signs among them that shall perish for detesting the truth.

12. These shall by the permission of God be suffered to go at large: they shall strongly delude the kings of the earth,

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and blind the governors of the universal world, making them drunken with the cup of all abominations.

13. And all this shall they do to gather them together by their wicked counsels, and to bring them into one cruel consent of battling against Christ and his members, to receive the penalty thereof in the great day of the Lord Almighty.

14. Most busily they gather them to battle, when they move them to persecute the just believers with full ungodly acts, as now most of all in our age, which God hath promised in short space to revenge. Of this will more be spoken in the nineteenth chapter following. Lest any man knowing the truth should tangle his own conscience with their spiritual sorceries for fear of princes' laws, under the vain hope of repentance, in the end of their lives, it followeth in plain sentence:

15. Behold, saith the Lord Jesus Christ, or earnestly take heed unto it; for I come dangerously unlooked for, as commonly doth the thief, to thy hinderance, if thou watch not in faith, but live in superstition. Though this not without reasonable cause may be taken in a generalty for the last judgment-day, yet [it] is here spoken particularly of every man's departing. As a premonishment, he giveth this here of love, lest any man should perish without warning.

16. Blessed is he, saith that Lord, which watcheth in the true christian belief, and liveth not in the vain, but in the sure hope of life, sealed with the just promises of God; for all that he doth shall prosper, and turn him to great advantage in the conclusion.

17. Happy is he also that holdeth fast unto him his garments, or works of God's prescription (which are the fruits of the Spirit), or that hath done on the Lord Jesus Christ, girding him sure unto himself by faith;

18. Lest he be found a naked hypocrite without faith, verity, justice, charity, with such like; or lest the righteous number at the latter day see his filthiness uncovered, and rejoice at his condemnation.

19. He is blessed which at that day shall be covered with the white garment of the Lamb, not having his sins imputed unto him.

20. To shew the certainty of the aforesaid battle, St John saith that the devil gathered together those wicked

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rulers into a certain place, called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon. The unclean spirits that afore are named three, of their diverse working in the dragon, beast, and false prophet, are here brought into one, as all of one lying spirit, whom Christ calleth the father devil. This one lying spirit, which hath been a murderer from the beginning, comprehending in him all unclean spirits, like as doth the beast all antichrists, hath combined together into one execrable zeal of fatherly traditions all vain-glorious and ungodly-minded governors against God and his Christ. And this hath not been without the secret permission of God, willing to prove his elects by strong sufferings, that they might receive at his hand the reward of strong victory, or of his abundant riches.

21. This place, here called in the Hebrew Armageddon, betokeneth in mystery an hill of delectable fruits, interpreted of some for the hill of the gospel, and is commonly taken of the Hebrews for that is sweet or of value. And this without fail is the church, which oft-times in the scriptures is called the plenteous hill of God, the hill of God's house, the hill of myrrh, the hill of olives, the hill of Sion, Carmel, and Lebanon; with such other like. In this mount evermore are they bent to battle. There slay they the innocent lambs of Christ. All their power, malice, and tyranny, is there extremely uttered at the antichrists' labour and desire, which are exceedingly drunken in the blood of holy martyrs, which hath been shed upon earth from the righteous Abel unto this day. But when the Almighty setteth kings upon the earth, it shall be clear even in the darkness, that the hill of Basan is God's hill.

The Text.

1 And the seventh angel poured out his vial 2 into the air. 3 And there came a great voice out of heaven from the seat, saying, 4 It is done. 5 And there follow voices, thunderings, and lightnings; 6 and there was a great earthquake, 7 such as was not since men were upon earth, 8 so mighty an earthquake and so great. 9 And the great city was divided into three parts. 10 And the cities of the nations fell, 11 and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, 12 to give unto her the cup of wine of the fierceness of his wrath. 13 And every isle fled away, 14 and the mountains were not found. 15 And there fell a great hail, 16 as it had been talents, 17 out of heaven, 18 upon the men. 19 And the men blasphemed God, because of the plague of the hail; 20 for it was great, and the plague thereof was sore.

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The Paraphrase.

1. Finally the seventh angel went forth under the seventh seal-opening, as God had eternally determined, throwing out the content of his vial into the air. For the seventh age of the christian church, by the very set purpose of God, are many converted to the truth, and become with Paul the vessels of election, that afore were with Judas the vessels of wrath under the great adversary of God. Neither is it any blemish unto them to be called here that they were afore, vials of wrath, considering that Simon Leprosus, being once healed of his leprosy was ever after called a leper; in case like Paul after his conversion was not ashamed to report himself both a Pharisee, and also the son of a Pharisee.

2. These, by the mighty determination of God's strong judgment, are sent into the air. Most effectually are they lightened with the Spirit of God, and provoked stiffly to stand up against the aërial powers reigning in the fickle fantastical antichrists and hypocrites, condemning by God's word their universal doctrines and devilishness. These powers are no less than devils, whom Christ calleth fowls of the air, Peter and John man's adversaries, and St Paul the governors of these darknesses in spiritual wickedness.

3. Whiles these things are in doing, out of heaven, which is the universal congregation, yea, from the very throne of God, which is the elect faithful number (for they are only the seat of God), came a voice of rejoicing, saying after this sort,

4. It is done. All things are finished, Christ's glory once manifestly known, that the world is at an end. The wicked have done all their mischiefs, and the number of our brethren is fulfilled. Thus shall they preach a full deliverance of the captives and the peaceable year of the Lord. This is the silence of an half hour space mentioned afore in the eighth chapter, and the return of this world unto Christ in the twelfth chapter: not that there shall in those days be no enemies (for the remnant shall still remain), but that they shall not then openly dare rage, persecute, and kill, the world being at such a universal quiet.

5. Yet shall there happen in those days voices, thunderings, and lightnings: voices of sweet blessings and delectable

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promises to the faithful congregation; thunderings of terror to the unfaithful multitude, commanding things contrary to the flesh; and fearful lightnings of condemnation to the reprobate hypocrites and desperate obstinates.

6. And all from one word of the Lord, or one gospel-preaching in divers respects, no small earthquake following upon the same. What commotions, heavy complaints, fearful tremblings, sorrows, cries, griefs, fightings, wailings, grudgings, gruntings, groanings, weepings, and hands wringing, will be among the earthly-minded antichrists and hypocrites, bishops, priests, prelates, holy-watermongers, and parish clerks, lawyers, whores, carvers, painters, and ware-sellers, when their whorish church shall be turned over by the judgment of the said word, it is easy to conjecture.

7. Such a one will this earthquake be (saith the text), so mighty and so strong, as never was yet since men were upon the earth, or since that earthly generation first began. Then shall be clean taken away the carnal church of antichrist, or the smeared synagogue of shavelings. Neither shall the pope with his disguised rabble any more be seen here, nor yet Mahomet with his monstrous muster.

8. In such wise shall their laws, sects and ceremonies be destroyed in those days, that no man shall be found so bold as once to allow one of them openly. Then shall the glory of Christ's name shine the world over, he making of his enemies his footstool.

9. Moreover in this terrible earthquake the great spiritual city called Sodom and Egypt, or the holy whorish mother the church, shall be dissevered into three parts, of the which two shall still be wicked, the third converted unto godliness. Two parts shall be dispersed (saith Zachary), the third shall remain to the Lord. Of them which have and shall go out of minsters and monasteries, colleges and convents, churches and cloisters, parishes and nunneries, one sort shall inwardly be given to antichrist's superstitiousness and hypocrisy; another sort upon divers fleshly considerations shall feignedly fall to the gospel; the third sort only of love towards God and zeal of health in their neighbours shall unfeignedly cleave to the scriptures. Thus shall the ungodly sort be coupled still with the godly in every land and province, and be the much greater number. Yet shall they for that time

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attempt nothing against them, the truth so strongly reigning. Nevertheless yet it is not to be thought that they shall then have nothing to suffer, considering that it is a kingdom of sufferance. Christ, to be head of that congregation, suffered one incommodity or other always, so long as he was here living. It shall therefore behove them, which are his mystical members, always to suffer; for the servant is no better than his lord, nor the soldier than his head captain. And, to make this good, the Lord saith in Zachary: "The same third part will I lead through fire, and purge it as silver or gold in the furnace." Then shall every godly creature follow Christ in bearing his cross. They shall mortify their fleshly members, fleeing all fornication, filthiness, idolatry, covetousness, pride, anger, and malice. They shall help, suffer, and forbear one another, having pitiful compassion upon the weak, sick, and needy. No duty beseeming a Christian shall they leave undone.

10. Therefore, this great or general city thus divided, all other particular or national cities must also fall. The blasphemous Pantheon of Rome once perishing, all other churches of the unfaithful must needs follow soon after in their course; for, the foundation taken away, the building cannot endure: so that from thenceforth shall be no popish sects, no superstitious ceremonies, no heathenish observations, nor open idolatry in all the world. But when the remnant of the wicked shall attempt afresh to raise up again such abominations, the Lord shall suddenly without warning fall upon them with his most fearful and terrible last judgment.

11. Great Babylon, the aforesaid mother of all whoredom and filthiness, shall then come in remembrance before God. He shall then consider her abominable blasphemy, her pride, cruelty, murder, and sins without number, weighing them in right balance, according unto justice.

12. He shall also reward her to drink the fierce cup of his wrath, or wine of his great indignation, which is the perpetual death of soul. The very dregs of his ire shall she taste, yea, unspeakable sorrows and pains without end. For none other is it to come in remembrance before him at that day, but to be condemned, and receive punishment according to her deeds.

13. Then shall every isle (which is a place of refuge

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within the sea) flee away, and not tarry. The mountains that are wont to give succour unto them that be on the land shall not at that day be found. No comfort shall she then have nor sure help anywhere.

14. No remedy will be at that day to flee from the fearful face of the judge. Then will neither merits nor yet soul-masses help, neither blessings nor kneelings, sacrifices nor censings, wawlings nor ringings, bussings nor singings; but, will she nill she, needs must she abide his heavy and terrible sentence.

15. And there fell great hail (saith the text), as it had been weighty talents. Always must it be remembered, that commonly the time past is used in this prophecy for the time to come, for the certainty of the things here spoken. This hail is none other than the heavy tempest or plague of the said fearful and terrible judgments of the Lord, which shall on that woeful day fall suddenly as a thick hail upon the miserable multitude of them that boasted themselves to be the holy church, and upon their wicked followers, compared here unto Babylon.

16. This plague is here also for none other cause likened unto talents, but for that it is in weight and measure to be ministered unto them by the preordination of God. So much pain and sorrow is due unto that whorish generation, as she hath glorified herself in filthy delights, and so many punishments to be rewarded her: yea, double must she have according to her works.

17. Out of heaven shall this vehement hail fall, from the fearful sentence of the Lord Jesus Christ, which shall then sit as a Judge in the midst of his faithful congregation, they sitting with him as the body with the head in condemnation of the wicked.

18. And upon the men shall it light. For the great whore, or the city called here Babylon, is this place to be taken for that it comprehendeth, even for men, in whom also are included women by the common usage of the scriptures.

19. These men shall spitefully blaspheme God, because of the hail, plague, or terror of their torments. They shall cry out of him, wishing that he had no such power so to torment them.

20 For the tempest is great, and the sufferance thereof

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exceeding painful. As the Lord is mighty, so are his judgments when they fall: vehement, fierce, and strong is the Lord (saith Esay), as is the tempest of hail, breaking out on every side, and bearing down strong holds.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER.

OFT have occasions been given me in this book to speak of great Babylon, and of the execrable beast; but here is place offered to describe them more at large.

THE TEXT.

1 And there came one of the seven angels, which had the seven vials, 2 and talked with me, 3 saying unto me, 4 Come, I will shew the judgment 5 of the great whore, 6 that sitteth upon many waters; 7 with whom the kings of the earth have committed whoredom, 8 and the inhabiters of the earth are drunken with the wine of her fornication. 9 And he carried me away 10 into the wilderness in the Spirit.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. After this came (saith St John) one of the seven angels or unvariable decrees of the Lord's eternal judgments, which had the seven vials of his wrath as afore hath been declared.

2. And this angel, or set purpose of God, as an heavenly messenger talked with me in mystery.

3. Of favourable goodness in secret manner he ascertained me thereby of this wonderful judgment here following, to be fulfilled at the latter end of the world. And thus it said unto me:

4. Come hither, friend John, I will shew thee in secretness the terrible judgment of the great whore, or counterfeit church of hypocrites, as God hath appointed it. Needs must this whore be Rome, for that which is hereafter spoken, that she is the great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. Evident it is, both by the scriptures and chronicles, that in John's days Rome had her dominion all the whole world. And being infected with the abominations of all lands, rightly is she called Babylon, or city of confusion, not only in this revelation, but also in the first epistle of Peter. And like as in the scriptures oft-times under the name of Jerusalem is meant the whole kingdom of Juda; so under the name

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of Rome here may be understood the universal world with all their abominations and devilishnesses, their idolatries, witchcrafts, sects, superstitions, papacies, priesthoods, religions, shavings, anointings, blessings, censings, processions, and the devil, and all such beggaries. For all people, since Christ's ascension, hath this Rome infected with her pestilent poison gathered from all idolatrous nations, such time as she held over them the monarchial supremity. And like as Babylon had the Israelites captive under a bodily tribute, so hath this Rome had the Christians both in their bodies and souls. At the writing of this prophecy felt John of their cruelty, being exiled into Patmos, an isle of Lycia, for the faithful testimony of Jesu. And so did I, poor creature, with my poor wife and children, at the gathering of this present commentary, fleeing into Germany for the same[1].

5. No marvel though she be here called a great whore. For nowhere were ever yet seen so many idol-worshippings, so many vain observations, so many superstitious sects, so many errors in hypocrisy, so many false prophets, and so many prodigious kinds of filthiness, no, not in Sodom itself nor yet in miserable Egypt.

6. This Babylonish whore, or disguised synagogue of shorelings[2], sitteth upon many waters or peoples that are fantastical, fickle, or foolish. For none are in conscience subject unto her, that are constantly grounded in the sure doctrine of faith. Only alloweth her traditions the wavering-witted multitude, the slippery and unstedfast number, obeying them in their hearts of fear and not of love, so throwing themselves into a most confused chaos or vaut[3] of doubtful dotage.

7. With this stinking strumpet have the mighty potentates of the universal earth, the emperors, kings, princes, and other notable governors, committed most shameful whoredom in the spirit by many strange worshippings, agreeing among themselves to her wickedly decreed laws and customs. Too long should we stand here in this place, if we should describe them all severally in their colours at large as they be.

8. Through the crafty legerdemain of the priests on the one side, and the cruel constitutions of princes on the other side, the dwellers of the earth or worldly-minded mul-

[1 See the Memoir at the beginning of this volume.]
[2 shoreling: a shaveling, or priest.]
[3 vaut: vault.]

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titude are drunken with the wine of her fornication spiritual, or practised worshippings besides the prescript rules of God's word. Not only they which have been covetous, carnal, lewd, and wretched, have followed their abominations, but also an innumerable sort of the elect number have believed their lies and errors. Yea, they have been so dased with their dotages, and so tangled with their customs, that, as men losing their wits, without all godly remembrance, reason, wisdom, discretion, understanding, judgment, and grace, the laws of God laid apart, the commandments neglected, and the scriptures despised, they have not only kneeled, crossed, kissed, set up lights, and holden up their hands before rotten posts, but also called [them] their fathers in heaven. Yea (I ask God mercy a thousand times), I have been one of them myself. And this is to this day a principal religion of that whorish church, called devout pilgrimage or holy stations of prayer, many great pardons granted and many false promises made to allure the people thereunto.

9. But blessed be the Lord, whose word in this age both admonished many, as the angel did John, and brought them also clean from her abominations into a secret consideration of the Spirit, unknown to the world, there both to see her pride and also to understand her judgment. For it followeth in the text, that the angel conveyed John away into the wilderness in the Spirit.

10. In mystery here the Holy Ghost declared afore, what the Lord should work in men having his grace at the latter days of the world. Into the wilderness flee they with David, which, leaving the customed ways of men, after the course of the scriptures seek up their Lord God in faith, worshipping him only in Spirit and in verity.

The Text.

1 And I saw a woman sit upon 2 a rose-coloured beast, 3 full of names of blasphemy, 4 which had seven heads and ten horns. 5 And the woman was arrayed 6 in purple and rose colour, 7 and decked with gold, precious stone, and pearls, 8 and had a cup of gold in her hand, 9 full of abominations, 10 and filthiness of her whoredom. 11 And in her forehead was a name written, 12 A mystery, 13 great Babylon, the mother of whoredom and abominations of the earth. 14 And I saw the wife drunken with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesu. 15 And when I saw her, 16 I wondered with great marvel.

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THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And I saw (saith St John) in mystery a woman (for a whore at the first blush seemeth only a woman) sitting upon a rose-coloured beast. This beast is the great antichrist that was spoken of afore, or the beastly body of the devil, comprehending in him popes, patriarchs, cardinals, legates, bishops, doctors, abbots, priors, priests, and pardoners, monks, canons, friars, nuns, and so forth; temporal governors also, as emperors, kings, princes, dukes, earls, lords, justices, deputies, judges, lawyers, mayors, bailiffs, constables, and so forth, learning their own duty-offices as to minister rightly, to serve their abominations.

2. All rose-coloured is this beast, in token of tyrannous murder and blood-shedding over those that will not agree to their devilishness.

3. Full of blasphemous names is this beast also, as your holiness, your grace, your lordship, your fatherhood, your mastership, your reverence, honour, highness, worship, magnificence, goodness, God's vicar, spiritual sir, ghostly father, physician of souls, defender of faith, head of the holy church, and so forth; besides the names of their properties, feats, and pageants, as procession, bishoping, annealing, purgatory, pilgrimage, pardon, mass, matins, evensong, placebo, candlemass-day, palm-sunday, ash-wednesday, holy-rood day, St Thomas's day, and so forth.

4. This beast had seven heads and ten horns, signifying his universal crafts and suggestions to destroy the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost, and also his falsely borrowed primacies and tyrannous authorities to withstand the commandments of God.

5. Upon this beast sitteth a woman. For what else avanceth or beareth out this malignant muster in their copes, crosses, oils, mitres, robes, relics, ceremonies, vigils, holy days, blessings, censings, and foolings, but a wanton, foolish, and fantastical religion, a vain-glorious pomp, and a shining pretence of holiness in superstition, calling it their holy church? She is said here to sit upon this bloody beast, as to be staid, quieted and satled[1] by them. Mark what labours and pains that crafty and wily Winchester taketh, with Bonner, Tonstal, and other of his faction, as her own

[1 satled: settled.]

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sworn soldiers, to hold up this glorious whore in her old estate of Romish religion. Oh, he grunteth and groaneth, he sweateth and swelleth, he fretteth and belleth, he bloweth and panteth, he talketh and canteth, he stirreth and never ceaseth, to bring his matters to pass.

6. In token that this hypocritical church standeth in the murder of innocents, this woman is here gorgeously apparelled in purple, as guilty of their deaths which hath been slain, and also in fresh scarlet, as evermore fresh and ready to continue in the same blood-shedding. For if such terrible slaughter were not, the true christian faith should increase, to the great diminishment of her glory.

7. She is in like case flourishingly decked with gold, precious stone, and pearls, not only in her manifold kinds of ornaments, as is her copes, corporasses, chasubles, tunicles, stoles, fannoms and mitres, but also in mystery of counterfeit godliness. Many outward brags maketh this painted church of Christ, of his gospel, and of his apostles, signified by the gold, precious stone, and pearls; which is but a glittering colour: for nothing mindeth she less than to follow them in conversation of living.

8. Moreover in her hand, which is her exterior ministration, she hath a golden cup full of abominations and filthiness of her execrable whoredom. This cup is the false religion that she daily ministereth, besides the chalice whom her merchants most damnably abuse; and it containeth all doctrine of devils, all beastly errors and lies, all deceitful power, all glittering works of hypocrites, all crafty wisdom of the flesh, and subtle practices of man's wit, besides philosophy, logic, rhetoric, and sophistry; yea, all prodigious kinds of idolatry, fornication, sodomitry, and wickedness. Outwardly it seemeth gold, pretending the glory of God, the holy name of Christ, the sacred scriptures of the Bible, perpetual virginity of life; and all are but counterfeit colours and shadows of hypocrisy in the outward letter and name.

9. Full of abominations is the drink of the execrable faith of that Romish religion received of others, and full of filthiness also: for both retaineth the people thereof innumerable kinds of idol-worshippings under the title of God's service, and also their shavelings of prodigious beastliness in lecherous living under the colour of chastity. Here were

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much to be spoken of St Germain's evil, St Sithe's key, St Uncomber's oats, Master John Shorne's boot, St Gertrude's rats, St Job for the pox, St Fiacre for the ague, St Apolline for the tooth-ache, St Gratian for lost thrift, St Walstone for good harvest, St Cornelis for the foul evil, and all other saints else almost.

10. Of the lewd[1] boys also among prelates and priests, ghostly fathers and religious, might much be said here, were it not for infecting men's eyes, ears, and understandings. For all these noyful nocuments are the holy fruits of the whoredom of that holy whorish church.

11. In the forehead of this glittering whore, which is her outward shew, is written a name, expressly declaring what she is. By her ungodly fruits is she known to the elect servants of God, having the light of the scriptures. In their consciences appeareth she none other than a pestiferous whore, by the judgments of the same.

12. A very mystery is this shew to the infidels, an hidden secret, an unknown wonder; for they are so blinded with her fopperies and tangled with her toys, that they judge all that she doth holy, religious, and perfect. And all this suffereth God for their unbelief's sake, destroying nevertheless the wisdom of the wise and prudence of the prudent in his.

13. Her very name agreeing to her fruits is this: Great Babylon, in mischief far above the city of the Chaldæans, and much more full of confusion. For she is the original mother, the cause, the beginning, the root, the spring, and the fountain of all spiritual fornications, and in a manner of all fleshly abominations also done upon the earth. This is to the faithful sort, as a written name of her, evident, clear, open and manifest: but to the unfaithful it is only as a mystery, hidden, dark, obscure, and neglect. For so are the secrets that God openeth to babes, and hideth from wise.

14. And I (saith St John) perceived it evidently in my fore-understanding, that this woman, the very wife of the devil and of his beastly body (for the bishops are the husbands of their Romish churches), was all drunken in the bloody slaughter of saints, or earnest christian believers, and

[1] This word is a substitution.]

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in the exceeding tyrannous murder of the faithful witnesses of Jesu, or sincere preachers of his word: for neither of both she spareth. Besides all godly wisdom is she, and forgetful of herself, through this same bloody drunkenness; so great excess hath she taken.

15. And when I perceived and saw her with all her adder's-whelps so beastish, (saith St John,) with exceeding wonder I marvelled; not only that she was thus overset with blood-drinking or outrageous murdering of innocents, but also of her exceeding great abominations.

16. And most of all I wondered that the Almighty God could with so much patience suffer her in such mischief.

The Text.

1 And the angel said unto me, 2 Wherefore marvellest thou? 3 I will shew thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that beareth her, which hath seven heads and ten horns. 4 The beast that thou seest, was, 5 and is not, 6 and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, 7 and shall go into perdition. 8 And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, 9 (whose names are not written in the book of life from the beginning of the world,) 10 when they behold the beast that was, and is not.

The Paraphrase.

1. And as I was thus with myself marvelling, the angel or aforenamed decree of the Lord said unto me these words:

2. Wherefore dost thou thus marvel, thou mortal man?

3. For thy gentle and meek expectation I shall shew unto thee the mystery of this wretched woman, and of the cruel beast that beareth her, which hath seven heads and ten horns. By this shalt thou know the true church from the false, the just preachers from the hypocrites, the sincere doctrine from their subtle sophisms, and their lawful authority from their cruelly usurped presumptions. For that sheweth the Lord unto his elect, that he will not have known of all men.

4. The execrable beast or carnal kingdom of antichrist, which thou hast seen here in mystery, was as concerning his beginning in Cain first of all, and so continued forth in the fleshly children of men in the chaplains of Pharao, Jeroboam, Baal, and Bel, in the cruel bishops, priests, and law-

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yers, with such other like, till the death of Christ and so forth.

5. And now the said beast is not in power and authority as he hath been. For in John's time, sixteen years before the writing of this revelation, was the proud clergy of the Jews utterly destroyed by Titus and Vespasian in the terrible siege of Jerusalem. Notwithstanding yet shall this beast rise again in the Romish pope and Mahomet, and in their false prelates and doctors.

6. He shall ascend out of the bottomless pit from the stinking den of Satan, exalting himself in worship above all that is called God. But in the conclusion he shall have an end.

7. Into perdition shall he go without fail. The Lord shall first utter his wickedness (as now in this age), and then with the spirit of his mouth consume him and destroy him: so that his high climbing up shall at the last be the chief cause of his fall. Yet shall his wicked remnant once again set up their Christs, and persecute afresh, but that shall be no full raise unto him.

8. And the rabble of reprobates, which dwell on the earth, or for earthly commodities contemn God's truth, shall wonder once again not without much inward rejoice, that their church riseth again out of the old hypocrisies:

9. Whose names are not registered in Christ, which is the large book of life, and hath been both the life and the light of men since the first constitution of the moveable world. No, they are not numbered among those righteous that shall reign with him in glory.

10. These adversaries of God and his word shall have much gladness in their wicked hearts, when they behold the beast thus coming up again that was of such magnificence, and now is but a thing of nought; that was esteemed above God, and now is proved damnation. So long is[1] this beastly antichrist, as he worketh the mystery of iniquity in the reprobate vessels; and when he leaveth that working, then is he no longer. Mark in this process past the nature of God's eternal decree for this age of his church: first it sheweth, and then it condemneth, the cursed synagogue of the devil. In signification whereof the true preachers of our time have manifestly opened her wickedness unto all the world; where-

[1 Old ed. *as*.]

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upon her utter destruction must shortly follow. Watch, good christian reader, and pray earnestly.

The Text.

1 And here is a mind that hath wisdom. 2 The seven heads are seven mountains, 3 whereon the woman sitteth. 4 They are also seven kings. 5 Five are fallen, 6 and one is, 7 and the other is not come. 8 When he cometh, he must continue a space. 9 And the beast that was, and is not, is even the eighth, 10 and is one of the seven, 11 and shall go into destruction.

The Paraphrase.

1. Here is a meaning which comprehendeth wisdom. A sincere understanding shall herein be requisite. Necessary it is therefore to take heed, lest thou hold the harlot and beast for that they boast themselves to be, to thy damnation.

2. The seven heads of the beast aforementioned, by the plain definition of the Holy Ghost, are here to be taken for seven mountains, or the universal princely monarchies of the seven climates of the world.

3. Upon these the woman, that Babylonish harlot Rome, from whom hath issued all spiritual whoredom, in most proud manner sitteth, having over them a universal dominion. For in John's time to Rome was all the world subject; under whose cruel reign was Christ done to death: so have his faithful members been ever since by a new raised kingdom in the same.

4. These heads are also seven kings, or governors of the aforesaid monarchies, seduced by all kinds of crafty errors and devilish suggestions of that beast: so that if ye mark well this place, the head with the tail, and the cause with his effect, in these present significations shall no prejudice be found to that hath been said in the other, though they seem very diverse. For both the governors and also the lands, or the people subject unto them, have universally been blinded by their wily witchcrafts. And so have the worldly potentates with the spiritual antichrists agreed, that both they have usurped one malignant meddling over the souls of men to corrupt their faith, the princes applying their powers unto the same. And that causeth the Holy Ghost here to call them the beast's heads under the title of mountains and kings. For under their princely authorities have all their

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mischiefs been fulfilled to uphold this whore against Christ and his word.

5. Five of these heads are fallen from the universal monarchy of Rome. All the dominions of Africa and Asia have renounced the obedience of her empire. Only cleaveth Europe unto her, which is the least of the three, and yet not all thereof. When the papacy grew, the whole empire of the Greeks, called Constantinople, fell clean from the Latins, and became with other divers monarchies the possession of Mahomet's sect, or of the Agarenes and Turks. Of the other empires may a like conjecture be had. Thus have they declined from her, not so going forth nor yet rising up unto Christ; for only is it said here, that they were fallen.

6. And one head is (saith the text) at this present time remaining, the other head is not come as yet, but will come hereafter. This head remaining is the sixth, and it is that feeble empire that Rome now holdeth and hath holden since John's time. The power of this empire is ruinously diminished, and the notable fame thereof decayed betwixt the popish prelates and the Frenchmen, a great part of the lands becoming St Peter's patrimony. To make it a fit head of the beast to the upholding of this whorish church (the authority thereof maintaining her laws,) Gregory the fifth, pope, committed the emperor's choosing unto six princes of Germany, three of them being archbishops. He appointed also the king of Bohemia for the seventh, then being tributary unto him and his own feed man, as an odd person to weigh upon their sides, if need, place, and time should require it; provided always that he should take his oath and receive his crown imperial at Rome: so that now, though it still be the same in title that it was in John's days, yet is it so diverse from it through diminishment of power, and so unlike in outward magnificence, as it never had been the same.

7. The seventh head that is not yet come is the papistical kingdom of our Romish spiritualty. For thereof appeared nothing in John's time, nor yet more than five hundred years after it. The bishops of Rome (as they call them), from Peter to Sylvester, were very poor souls, simple creatures, and men not regarded, but despised of the world. They were no new law-makers for the more part, but rather they gave their

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whole diligence to see those laws observed whom the Holy Ghost had made to their hands. Neither were they any mass-sayers, soul-singers, or procession-goers, but, as was St Paul with the other apostles, simple preachers only, and for their sincere preaching they suffered the death of their bodies. But after the donation of Constantine, and other plenteous alms committed unto their hands for the succour of the poor, they became all confessors, and took them to their ease at home. Then was labour very tedious unto them, preaching very troublous and painful. Then studied they all to please the powers, peaceably to hold still their pleasant possessions, and by spiritual policies to increase them more and more, the poor in a manner forgotten. Then came in that holy ceremony, and that with Latin hours, serving of saints, and praying for the dead, to provoke men to offer to Corban. Thus crept they up in hypocrisy day by day, till such time as John of Constantinople contended with Gregory of Rome for the supremity; in the which contention though Gregory laid for himself St Peter's keys, with many other sore arguments and reasons, yet was he commanded by Mauritius the emperor after the general synod to obey the said John, as the universal head bishop of the whole world. Then were these holy fathers compelled to tarry a leisure, and under crafty colours to wait their prey. In process of time, when Phocas was emperor, Bonifacius the third, a man of a wily practice, perceiving him much given to vain-glory and covetousness, greatly also to disallow the acts of Mauritius his predecessor, through flattery and mede obtained of him that the church of Rome should be holden from thenceforth for the head church of the world, and he for the head bishop. When this was once gotten, then rose they up so high that the emperor became their foot-stool, and all other christian princes their waiting slaves, to tide and run, make and mar, strive and fight, slay and kill, at their commandment and pleasure. Thus became the Romish pope the seventh king that was in John's time yet to come. If thou mark in the chronicles, good reader, thou shalt find that Phocas, the first pope-maker, slew his master the emperor Mauritius, signifying in mystery the said pope-making to be an utter destruction to the empire. The pope's name was also at the time Bonifacius, which is as much to say as *bona facies*, a good face: which betokeneth that this new-raised

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kingdom should shew a fair face evermore, or a shining pretence of holiness, what mischief soever it wrought either against God or man in abominable superstition.

8. And when this seventh king cometh, saith the text, he must continue a space, or abide a little season. He must have a time by the permission of God strongly to delude the unbelievers, which will neither see nor hear, read nor yet thankfully receive his word of salvation so graciously offered them. So corrupt are the fleshly affects of men, that much more prone they are to lies and superstitions, than to the verity of the Lord; which is to be lamented. Christ came first in the name of his heavenly Father, but him will they not receive. The pope cometh in his own wicked name, and to him run they by heaps. Whose continuance here hath been but a time: for yet is it not a thousand years since the papacy first began under Phocas, which is but as a day before God; and that day will he shorten by his own promise for his elects' sake, which to remember is their great comfort: and a great cause why; for soon after that shall they be fully restored into the perfect number of the children of God.

9. And the execrable beast (saith the text), that of late days was in authority over all the world, yea, sitting above God in the consciences of men, and now is become of no reputation among men (God opening his mischiefs), is even the eighth in number; and yet nevertheless is one of the seven heads. For both is he the beastly body itself, comprehending in him the universal abominations of all the earthly kingdoms, and in that point diverse from the seven heads, and so the eighth in number.

10. And also he is one of the seven heads, and the seventh in number, in usurping this proud worldly kingdom thus after a void temporal sort. Over and besides all this may he also be called the eighth in the cursed remnant which, after the peaceable silence of christian liberty (Satan loosened), shall most cruelly persecute Christ's congregation afresh, as in the twentieth chapter here following will appear.

11. This beast with his carriage, the antichrist with his church, or Satan with his synagogue, shall not only go into destruction here by the mighty breath of God's mouth, or the true preaching of his gospel, but also into damnation everlasting in the end of the world with the devil and his angels.

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THE TEXT.

1 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, 2 which have not yet received the kingdom, 3 but shall receive power 4 as kings, 5 at one hour with the beast. 6 These have one mind, 7 and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 8 These shall fight with the Lamb, 9 and the Lamb shall overcome them; 10 for he is Lord of all lords, 11 and King of all kings. 12 And they that are on his side 13 are called, and chosen, and faithful.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And the ten horns (saith the angel unto John), which thou sawest here upon the heads of this rose-coloured beast, are in signification ten kings. Some have taken these ten kings for all those emperors of the Latins since Charlemagne, which have sworn themselves obedient to the bishop of Rome. Some have thought them to be those princes which here in Europe have aforetime been subject to the empire of Rome; as the kings of England, France, Spain, Portugal, Castile, Denmark, Scotland, Hungary, Bohemia, and Naples. But these consider not that they be yet more in number, as Aragon, Navarre, Sicily, Cyprus, Sardinia, Sweden, Poland, and such other, and are all included in the seven heads as members of the afore rehearsed empires. Neither mark they that they are above the heads as horns, and more in number than the heads, betokening a rigorous authority and fierce power, which they proudly usurp over them everywhere. Afore they were but suggestions, but here are they earnest doers. For in every region hath the beastly antichrist of Rome his metropolitans and primates: as in England are Canterbury and York; in France, Turonensis and Remensis; in Spain, Toletanus and Terragonensis; in Portugal, Hispalensis and Bracarensis; in Ireland, Armachanus and Dubliniensis; in Denmark, Lundensis and Upsalensis; in Germany, Coloniensis and Maguntinus; in Hungary, Strigoniensis and Colocensis; in Italy, Pisanus and Ravennas; in Sicily, Panormitanus and Messanensis; with an infinite number of bishops, prelates, priests and religious, besides the fighting orders of the Rhodes, the Prussians, the redeemers of captives, the Arragondes, the Georgians called De Alga, the Montestans, the Castilians, the Lusitanians, the Calatravans, and St James' warriors.

2. These had not yet at that time received the devilish kingdom of pestilent usurpation over the souls of men. For

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though in John's days arose certain antichrists, as Ebion, Cerinthus, Diotrephes, Carpocras, and such like, yet were they nothing to these.

3. But now indeed they have received the same self authority and power with the beast, that he took afore of the dragon, in manner of kings to rule in the hearts and consciences of men to his behoof.

4. Forsomuch as their authority is not of God like as is the authority of kings, it is said here "as kings," or as men counterfeiting them, in usurping a governance not freely given them of God, but of the devil.

5. All at one hour received they this authority with the beast. And that (I suppose) was in the general council of Lateran at Rome, gathered under the title to recover Jerusalem again; where as confession in the ear was cruelly extorted of christian people under pain of death and damnation by the whole consent both of the princes and bishops, at the former suggestion of Innocent the third, besides other wicked things; as to hear Latin service, to go procession on Sundays, to pray unto dead saints, to worship images, to buy masses for the dead, to fast the Fridays, with purgatory, pardons, merits, and friars' orders. In the said council became the metropolitans as kings, and by the authority thereof appointed they their stewards, bailiffs, and other officers, as bishops, curates, and parish priests to have cure and charge of soul, and in the said ear-confession to receive their accounts.

6. These counterfeit kings are all of one devilish mind, practice, and purpose against God and his verity.

7. And fully they are fixed to give their whole power, their study and their strength, unto the behoof of the beast. Not according to God's mind will they rule, but all after his will and pleasure, agreeing always unto him as members to their head, to serve wickedness after wickedness in Babylon. His popish decrees will they seek, his devilish decretals will they follow, his ceremonials will they observe, and nothing of the sacred scriptures. What learning soever they have, what gifts of nature, fortune, or grace, all must be to the maintenance of his fantastical fopperies. To him are they sworn to do him homage, to obey his laws, to kiss his feet, and for his glory's sake to persecute the gospel.

8. And in so doing they shall fight with the Lamb,

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which is Jesus Christ. They shall impugn his truth, when they think to do him service. For that mischief they do to one of his, they do to his own person.

9. But be they never so dogged, yet shall the Lamb overcome them in his faithful members, yea, by patient sufferance only. The victory (saith St John) which overcometh the world is a sure christian faith. Upon their side fighteth he which is most mighty and strong, yea, the Lord that is valiant in battle. And he shall first overcome them in this life with the mighty breath of his mouth, scattering them away as dust from the earth; and after this shall his terrible judgment for ever condemn them.

10. For he is by the authority given him of his Father the Lord of all lords, and by his own eternal Godhead the King of all kings, having all power in heaven and in earth. He is constitute judge of the quick and the dead, having alone the everlasting empire with his Father and the Holy Ghost, and of his kingdom shall never be an end.

11. By his permission do all kings reign; he hath their hearts in his hand, and judgeth their thoughts. Both may he give them his Spirit, and also take it from them, and of his enemies he shall make his footstool. He is the same stone, after Daniel, that without any hands was cut out of the mount, which breaketh the iron, the copper, the earth, the silver, and the gold in pieces: by whom are meant the universal kingdoms of this world.

12. Of this his victory are all they partners with him, which are upon his side by faith; most specially those true servants of his which, after they are called by grace and chosen by faith, persevere still constant, fervent, faithful and sure in his verity to the latter end of their lives.

13. Not only the Lamb therefore shall overcome the beast, but they also, after the doctrine of Paul, that are called and chosen in him, not falling from his truth for any temptation or grief, but standing fast by it unto the very death. For those that the Lord hath prefixed afore, he hath called, justified, and allowed. These advance not themselves with the proud, but meekly they submit their crowns, referring all victory to the Lamb, as men that could have done nothing in that behalf without him.

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THE TEXT.

1 And he said unto me, 2 The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, 3 are people, and folk, and nations, and tongues. 4 And the ten horns, which thou sawest upon the beast, 5 are they which shall hate the whore, 6 and shall make her desolate and naked, 7 and shall eat her flesh, 8 and burn her with fire. 9 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, 10 and to do with one consent, 11 for to give her kingdom unto the beast, 12 until the words of God be fulfilled. 13 And the woman which thou sawest is the great city, reigning over the kings of the earth.

THE PARAPHRASE.

1. And after this long communication (saith St John) the aforesaid angel said thus unto me to make up his tale with:

2. The wavering waters which thou sawest here now of late in mystery, where as the Babylonish whore sitteth upon the rose-coloured beast, are in signification all manner of peoples of the carnal nations, and the superstitious folk of many sundry tongues.

3. Not only in one place of the world ruleth this wanton religion of antichrist, but in every land, in every dominion, in every company, among all occupations and languages. The foolish multitude everywhere, being blinded by their subtile sorceries, and neither having faith nor yet the fear of God before their eyes, as a raging flood (the banks broken down), runneth headlings[1] into all blasphemy and devilishness.

4. Moreover the afore-named ten horns (saith the angel), which thou by the will of God beholdest here in spirit upon the said beast of destruction, are those very persons which also shall hate the whore. Her abominations once known by the gospel-preaching, they shall abhor her laws, despise her authority, and contemn her customs. They shall defeat her of those lands and possessions which now she unjustly holdeth.

5. They that afore were her friends shall then be her mortal enemies, denying her both tribute, obedience, and service, so leaving her without all comfort. Not only are these the temporal governors, as the king of England, the king of Denmark, the duke of Saxony, the landgrave of Hesse, and other princes of Germany, with such others as will hereafter follow the same principals, but also the metropolitans and bishops, the doctors and prelates; as are already Thomas Cranmer

[1 headlings: headlong persons.]

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the archbishop of Canterbury, Hermanus de Weda the archbishop of Cologne, Goderick the bishop of Ely, Barlow the bishop of St David's, Bird the bishop of Chester, Thurleby bishop of Westminster, Hugh Latimer and Nicolas Shaxton of late years bishops of Worcester and Salisbury, with such other like as will hereafter follow their trade. Though they were afore the horns of the beast for defence of the whore, yet are they now fallen from him, and more shall every day, to make her desolate of honour, and naked of rents and possessions.

6. So shall they chase that Babylonish harlot Rome with their preachers, that neither shall they leave her colour nor yet beauty. Consider what John Reuclin, Martin Luther, Erasmus, Œcolampadius, Zuinglius, Pomeran, Bucer, Capito, Melancthon, Grynæus, Calvinus, Brentius, Francis Lambert, Bullinger, and such other have done against her already: likewise here in England, Bylney, Tyndale, Frith, Barnes, Cromwell, Coverdale, Turner, George Joy, Rose, Ridley, Ward, Becon, and other else; leaving her neither relics nor roods, sects nor shrines, abbeys nor priories, many more coming after them of the same sort. These shall make her so desolate, that no man shall in process of time regard her. They shall leave her so naked, that all the world shall abhor her that shall look upon her. Yea, in the conclusion they shall eat her flesh.

7. Besides the taking away of her carnal profits and pleasures, they shall confound her fleshly understanding of the scriptures, and utterly consume the superfluous observations of her whorish ceremonies.

8. Finally with fire shall they burn her, in bringing unto nought all her abominable rules, customs, and kinds of idolatry. All these once plucked away by the evident word of God, no longer shall this harlot appear: for no longer continueth the whore, than the whoredom is in price. Take away the rites and ceremonies, the jewels and ornaments, the images and lights, their lordships and fatherhoods, the altars and masses, with the bishops and priests, and what is their holy whorish church any more? Not only is this flesh-eating and burning declared now-a-days in outward experiments, as in the rebellious monks and priests of England, and in them that arose there in the north, specially in friar Forest and Margaret Cheny, which were for their church consumed, like as were

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Baal's chaplains at the brook of Kison by Elias; but also mystically in that is spoken of hereafore.

9. For God hath (saith the angel), all blindness secluded, put it into the hearts of those and such other godly men by the infusion of his Spirit, to fulfil his decreed will and pleasure in this behalf, as utterly to destroy the popish religion or filthy abominations of antichrist.

10. He hath given it them moreover to do things to his glory, through the agreement of faith that they have in the unity of his godly truth, to the abolishment of all sects, false prophets, and conjurers of Egypt.

11. Finally, by his grace he hath moved them, through knowledge of his word, to render up her blasphemous kingdom (whom sometime of ignorance they usurped) unto the malignant beast again, as the horns of his pestilent heads. After this sort did good Latimer and Shaxton give over their bishopricks, and so have divers other godly men their promotions and livings, as many more yet hereafter will do.

12. For as they have begun, so shall they continue, in diminishing the abominations of this whorish church, till the words and promises of God by his apostles and prophets, which can never fail, be wholly fulfilled in effect, and till his last judgment do finish all. But thus do not all they which have done off the yoke of the pope's obedience or blotted out his name: for the greater number of them retain still the blasphemous observations and ceremonies of his Romish religion, some making new laws of death for the establishment of the same, as is in England the Act of the Six Articles, with divers other more. And for this remaineth here still the beast as receiving the rendered kingdom of the whore: in whom is also comprehended the wicked remnant that shall work the last mischief, whom the Lord shall end with his said judgment. This beast is not without his lively image still working the same feats that himself wrought afore, though his head be grievously wounded in divers quarters of the world. Neither is he without crafty physicians, to minister life to the same. Who ever forswore the pope more earnestly than did Stokesley and Sampson, Gardiner and Tunstall, Wilson and friar Watts, with such other holy prelates? Yet labour they tooth and nail to have Babylon still Babylon, Sodom Sodom, and Egypt Egypt. But marvel not of the

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ordinance of the Lord, which all at one time provided Moses to guide his people, and yet hardened Pharao against them; which sent his Son Jesus Christ to save them, and yet suffered the priests to murder him; considering he is that potter which maketh both the vessels of honour and dishonour.

13. Briefly to conclude the whole of this matter (saith the angel), the gorgeous apparelled woman, or glittering church of antichrist, which thou sawest here of late in mystery, is also in resemblance the great city Babylon, the mother of all the spiritual abominations and idolatries done upon the earth. For like as from Sion hath the law come forth, and the word of God from Jerusalem, so hath issued forth from this Babylonish Rome such a false religion into emperors, princes and people, as with filthy superstitions hath poisoned all the world.

14. For kingdom she had over the kings or noble governors of the earth, and false power, a usurped authority, and a seat of very pestilence. Alas for pity, that so worthy potentates should be in subjection to so stinking an whore, to so vile a harlot, being so the servants of sin and captive slaves to all wickedness; from the which the Lord once deliver them! Amen.

Thus endeth the second part.

THE CONTENTS OF THE SECOND PART.

The eleventh chapter beginneth, wherein John measureth the temple, the altar, and them that worship therein. The two witnesses do their appointed offices, the beast making war against them and slaying them. A great earthquake followeth, and the second woe is past.

The twelfth chapter beginneth, wherein the seventh angel bloweth his trumpet. In heaven appeareth a woman all clothed with sun, whom the dragon diversely vexeth. Michael fighteth with the dragon and overcometh him. The woman fleeth into the wilderness, and there is preserved.

The thirteenth chapter beginneth, wherein a beast riseth out of the sea with seven heads and ten horns, receiving authority of the dragon. One of his heads is wounded and healed again. Another beast cometh out of the earth with

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two horns, which deceiveth the earthly dwellers, and raiseth up an image like unto the beast. In the end is counted the number of the beast.

The fourteenth chapter beginneth, wherein the Lamb standeth upon the mount Sion, and the undefiled congregation with him. An angel sheweth the everlasting gospel: another declareth the fall of the great whore: another is commanded with his sickle to cut down the grapes of the vineyard.

The fifteenth chapter beginneth, wherein John seeth the seven angels, having the seven last plagues of the wrath of God. On the glassy sea standeth men having the harps of God, and they sing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. The tabernacle of testimony is seen in heaven.

The sixteenth chapter beginneth, wherein the seven angels pour out their vials of God's wrath: the first upon the earth; the second upon the sea; the third upon the rivers; the fourth on the sun; the fifth upon the seat of the beast; the sixth upon the great flood Euphrates; and the seventh into the air.

The seventeenth chapter beginneth, wherein an angel sheweth unto John the judgment of the great whore, which sitteth upon the beast. He describeth both her and the beast at large. Finally he sheweth the meaning both of his heads and horns, with other great mysteries more.

The poor persecuted church of Christ, or immaculate spouse of the Lamb[1].

Rev. xii. "The dragon was wroth with the woman which fled into the wilderness, and went and made war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandment of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The proud painted church of the pope, or sinful synagogue of Satan[1].

Rev. xvii. "I saw a woman sitting upon a rose-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, decked with gold, precious stone and pearls; with whom the kings of the earth committed whoredom, and the inhabiters of the earth are drunken with the wine of her fornication."

☞ Imprynted at London by Rycharde Jugge, dwellyng in Paules churcheyarde, in the signe of the Bible.

[1 In the old ed. there follows a vignette representation of each of these churches.]

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The thirde

parte of the Image of bothe churches, after the moost wonderfull and heauenly reuelacion of saint Johan the Euangelist, etc.

Compyled by Johan Bale.

☞ I Johan your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kyngedome of pacience whiche is in Christe Jesu, was in the yle of Pathmos for the woorde of God. Apoca. I.

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THE THIRD PART
OF THE
IMAGE OF BOTH CHURCHES.

A SMALL PREFACE
UNTO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

FORSOMUCH as this Image of both Churches, or exposition upon St John's Apocalypse, seemed unto me (as it came unto the printing) to be far too much for one volume, I thought to divide it by equal portions into three small books, as I have now done in deed: of whom the first containeth ten chapters, the second seven, and the third five only, which maketh out the whole number of the twenty-two. Some peradventure will marvel, that the smaller number of the chapters should comprehend so much of that commentary as the greater number. But if they mark in the text the abounding of mysteries evermore as the matter thereof aboundeth, they will soon leave their marvelling.

The nature of this revelation is, the farther it goeth, the more wonders it sheweth and openeth unto him that after prayer shall in faith read it and discern it. Never therein are the principles well perceived, till the conclusion thereupon following doth plainly, with the other scriptures conferred, declare them. In these five last chapters are the two churches (whereupon resteth the whole argument of this book) fully by all due circumstances described; the one turned over into a most fearful and terrible destruction, under title of the old whorish Babylon, the other obtaining a most glorious raise, under the name of the holy new Jerusalem.

In the eighteenth chapter is that execrable church of antichrist with the filthy wares and occupyings painted out here of the Holy Ghost, and with her most horrible fall in the end, her worldly favourers shewing great heaviness, and the servants of God an exceeding rejoice.

In the nineteenth chapter is that rejoice of the elect number over the terrible judgments of that whore much more highly described, the death of Christ's holy witnesses most plenteously revenged, and how the angel in no case will of John be worshipped.

In the twentieth chapter is the dragon tied up for a thou-

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sand years, the chosen sort reigning with Christ. Gog and Magog gather them to battle, and are overcome. The dead after that arise and receive judgment.

In the twenty-first chapter is the church of the chosen, or the new Jerusalem, prepared to her spouse. That city cometh down from heaven, and is of the Holy Ghost here, after most wonderful circumstances, in her right proportion described.

In the twenty-second chapter the river of living waters proceedeth from the throne of God. John sealeth up the sayings of this prophecy. Christ concludeth what his kingdom is, and who shall be thereunto received, admonishing that unto his word nothing be added of men in pain of damnation.

Some hateful and ungodly blasphemers there are and ever have been, which will in no wise this book to be of equal authority with the other scriptures of Christ's testament. But damnably wretched are they in the vain imaginations of their sinful hearts. The most high theology and secret wisdom of God the eternal Father, is the blessed doctrine thereof, given unto his only Son in our humanity, and after that of him so committed unto John by the Holy Ghost, to be distributed and taught by him to the universal christian congregation: which is a most sufficient argument of the authority thereof, whatsoever mad Momus shall quarrel to the contrary. James Faber Stapulensis, in his preface prefixed to the works of Dionyse the Areopagite, doubted never a deal to prefer this heavenly prophecy to all the other writings of the other apostles, confessing that in worthiness it far passed them all, the due circumstances thereof considered. The more nigher (saith he) the light be to the sun, the more strength it hath, and the more clearness it ministereth unto men.

But Momus hath not yet done away the mad mists of his mockery, nor yet the dark dregs of his sophistry, which both are a great blemishing unto his eye-sight. The wisdom of Plato, Homer, and Cicero, availeth nothing in this. Aristotle and Virgil, if they were alive, could herein do little or nothing. Inestimably more maketh the poor fishers' learning to the understanding of these mysteries, than the proud painted eloquence or far fet reasons of the philosophers. The Lord give us grace from the barn of his most plenteous scriptures to fetch the fat feeding of our feeble and hungry souls, that we may by them obtain his strength into the life everlasting.

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THE THIRD PART

OF THE

IMAGE OF BOTH CHURCHES,

AFTER THE MOST WONDERFUL AND HEAVENLY REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST.
COMPILED BY JOHN BALE.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER.

UNDER the title of Babylon is here in this chapter following described the fearful judgment of the malignant church, with the ruinous fall of antichrist and his kingdom, prefigured afore in Esay and Jeremy.

THE TEXT.

1 And after that I saw another angel 2 come down from heaven, 3 having great power, 4 and the earth was lightened with his brightness. 5 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, 6 She is fallen, she is fallen, 7 even great Babylon, 8 and is become the habitation of devils, 9 and the hold of all foul spirits, 10 and a cage of all unclean and hateful birds. 11 For all nations have drunk of the wine 12 of the wrath of her whoredom. 13 And the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her. 14 And her merchants are waxen rich 15 of the abundance of her pleasures.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. After these manifold visions (saith St John) I was yet ware of another angel or heavenly messenger of the Lord, coming down from heaven, which is the habitacle of God. For from above all goodness cometh. This angel betokeneth the faithful preachers of our age, and is all one with the angel that had the seal of the living God in the seventh chapter, with him that was clothed with a cloud in the tenth chapter, and with him that proclaimed the fall of Babylon in the thirteenth chapter.

2. In that he is said here to come down from heaven, is signified that they are sent of God, having great power, with constant ferventness of spirit, strongly to declare his will, to the utter destruction of the whore. For like as the Father hath life in himself, so hath his Son Jesus, and so hath in him his godly ministers.

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3. His power is an everlasting power, retaining both life and death.

4. With the brightness, not of this angel which was but a messenger, but of the power that was given unto him, was the universal earth abundantly lightened. Full is all the world of the glory of God, where as his word shineth, and his verity is once spread by the true godly preachers.

5. In this strong power cried he mightily, and in this clear light was his earnest voice heard, uttering this sentence to the world:

6. She is fallen clean down that was so proud, she is turned over that was so glorious an whore, yea, even the great Babylon herself, or blasphemous church of the hypocrites.

7. By the judgment of God is she brought to utter confusion. First had she a fall by the death of Christ, when the prince of this world was thrown forth. Mark the destruction of Jerusalem, where the church of the Jews did cease, the material temple of Solomon, and clearly overthrown, not one stone upon another remaining. Now shall she have another much worse by the plain manifestation of his word, to the comfort of all his elect. And both are of one certainty, though the one be past and the other yet to come. Confer with this place the overthrow of the monasteries in England, Denmark, the free cities of Germany, and certain other regions; and think that more sorrows are yet coming.

8. These are the causes of her fall, and occasions of her ruin before the Lord. She is become the filthy habitation of devils much more than before her first fall; for now they enter in by heaps, yea, seven for one afore.

9. Now is she the stinking hold of all unclean spirits. For there have all the kinds of idolatry their earnest maintenance by her spiritual occupiers, the bishops, priests and religious. There reigneth simony, sacrilege, usury, fraud, ambition, malice, gluttony, avarice, pride, filthiness, and all mischiefs beside.

10. Now is she the corrupt cage of all unclean fowls and hateful birds. For in her dwelleth the adulterous cardinals, the filthy[1] bishops, the prostibulous prelates and priests, the Gomorre[2] and monks, canons, friars, and nuns, an innumerable swarm of Sodomites. These doth Esay in

[1 A word changed.] [2 So in all copies.]

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similitude compare unto wild beasts, dragons, ostriches, dancing apes, owlets, mermaids, and other odible[1] monsters. For there is mocking and mowing, crying and yelling, crossing and gaping, congeeing and cloyning, with many other feats. Here could I shew wonderfully much, by the histories, of the stews of both kinds at Rome, of the profits received there of that occupying, of Winchester's rents in England, of St Lewis's mantle in the grey friars of Paris, of the hollow pillar of our Lord's length in Lyons, of the good ghostly father that constuprated two hundred nuns in his time, of the burying of infants in their jakes, and of many other strange mysteries else, were it not for losing of the time and hindering men's consciences.

11. "She is fallen, she is fallen," saith the angel; and therefore be glad of it. For all nations of the world, a small simple number except (whom God hath preserved of his goodness), have drunken of the wine of her whoredom. For not giving thanks unto God when causes have been offered, they have fallen into most deep error. They have sought her sorceries with devotion, believed her doctrines, and so followed them in effect.

12. And therefore they shall taste of the wrath of God, or penalties due to that advoutery of the spirit or vice of idolatry ministered by her. I shall have no pity (saith the Lord) upon her children; for they are the children of fornication.

13. The mighty kings and potentates of the earth, not having afore their eyes the love and fear of God, have committed with this whore most vile filthiness, abusing themselves by many strange or uncommanded worshippings, and binding themselves by other to observe her laws and customs. At the examples, doctrines, counsels, and persuasions of her holy whoremongers have they broken the covenants of peace, battled, oppressed, spoiled, ravished, tyrannously murdered innocents, yea, for vain foolish causes, and more vain title, neither godliness nor honesty regarded, as though there were neither heaven nor hell, God, nor accounts to be made.

14. And her mitred merchants, her shorn soldiers, her mass-mongers, her soul-sellers, and her mart-brokers, waxed very rich through the sale of her oils, cream, salt, water,

[1 odible: hateful.]

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bread, orders, hallowings, houselings, ashes, palms, wax, frankincense, beads, crosses, candlesticks, copes, bells, organs, images, relics, and other pedlary wares;

15. And are become very wealthy in the abundance of her pleasures. They have gotten in unto them places and princely houses, fat pastures and parks, meadows and warrens, rivers and ponds, villages and towns, cities and whole provinces, with the devil and all else, besides other men's wives, daughters, maid-servants, and children, whom they have abominably corrupted. What profits they have drawn unto them also by the sale of great bishopricks, prelacies, promotions, benefices, tot-quots[2], pardons, pilgrimages, confessions, and purgatory, besides the yearly rents of cathedral churches, abbeys, colleges, convents, for suits and such other, it were unreasonable to tell. No pleasures are in the farthest parts of the world, but they will have plenty of them. Yet can they for the time preach unto other men contempt of the world, and commend both poverty and fasting.

The Text.

1 And I heard another voice from heaven say, 2 Come away from her, my people, 3 that ye be not partakers in her sins, 4 lest ye receive of her plagues. 5 For her sins are gone up to heaven, 6 and the Lord hath remembered her wickedness. 7 Reward her even as she rewarded you, 8 and give her double according to her works. 9 And pour in double to her in the same cup, which she filled unto you. 10 And as much as she glorified herself, and lived wantonly, 11 so much pour ye in for her of punishment and sorrow.

The Commentary.

1. Besides all this (saith St John) yet heard I another voice from above; betokening another moving of the Spirit, whereby the godly ministers are taught of the Lord. And this was thereof the sweet warning:

2. Come away, my people, from that wicked Babylon with Esdras, and from that stinking Sodom with Lot. Have no more to do with that whorish church. Forsake her false religion and defiled sacraments. Refuse her wanton ceremonies, detest her superstition, leave her beggarly baggage. Meddle no more with those whoremongers, those Nicolaitans, those Balaamites. Abhor their abominable studies, manners,

[2 tot-quots: general dispensations.]

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and life, repenting in heart all foolishness past. "Resort unto me (saith the Lord), all you that labour and are loaden, and I shall ease you" of your heavy burdens.

3. Submit yourselves no longer to the yoke of the infidels, but set yourselves at large, lest ye be partakers of her abominable sins, and so receive of her plagues, which is the great vengeance of God. Let it suffice you that hath been done already at the pleasure of the heathen in the unlawful service of idols; and learn from henceforth to be more godly wise, lest ye be damned with the wicked. I remember that John Hildeshen in his book *In turpia pingentem* sheweth that Tailarandus Petragoriensis, a French cardinal, when question was moved at his table of apostates, commended the order of cardinals in that there was none among them: unto whom Peter Thomas, a carmelite friar, (which was notwithstanding within a while after the patriarch of Constantinople) made this true answer. What they be (saith he) that goeth from other orders, I cannot tell; but sure I am that they which go from your order are saints. As by example, St Jerome, Petrus Damianus, Petrus de Morone, and such other.

4. Besides the wholesome admonishments of the scripture have many godly men given warnings of these matters, both in the primitive church, and in every age since. Many notable doctors and fathers, since the pope's first rise, have in their famous writings called upon the church's reformation: as Bertramus, Herebaldus, Joannes Scotus Monachus, Berengarius Turonensis, Bruno Adegavensis, Petrus Damianus, Walerianus Medburgensis, Bernardus Clarevallensis, Robertus Tuitiensis, Joachim Abbas, Cyrillus Græcus, Joannes Salisburiensis, Gilbertus Leicestrius, Angelus Hierosolymitanus, Guilhelmus de sancto amore, Guido Bonatus, Nicolaus Gallus, Hubertinus de Casali, Petrus Joannes, Marsilius Patavinus, Joannes Paris, Arnoldus de villa nova, Michael Cesenus, Guilhelmus Ockam, Nicolaus de Luca, Marcus de Florencia, Joannes Wicleve, Joannes Huss, Michael de Bononia, Joannes Hildeshen, Dantes Aligerius, Franciscus Petrarcha, Nicolaus Cleinangis, Petrus de Alliaco, Joannes Gerson, Laurentius Valla, Lodovicus Arelatensis, Joannes Segobius, Thomas Redonensis Gallus, Mattheus Palmarius, David Bois, Dionysius Carthusianus, Joannes Milverton, Joannes Gocchius, Joannes de Wesalia Wormaciensis, Joannes Geyler, Joannes Crutzer, Wessalus

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Groningensis, Æneas Sylvius, Rodericus Samorensis, Julianus Brixiensis, and Hieronymus Savonarola; besides those that have written in our days, as John Reuclin, Baptista Mantuanus, Baptista Panecius, Joannes Crestonus, Erasmus, Luther, and such other, of whom they have condemned the more part for heretics. To recite their testimonies and writings, it would require much time, and therefore I pass it over here: only have I rehearsed their names (as I could do yet many more), to put ye in remembrance that God hath always had some in the world, which have not in all points consented to their blasphemies, though they have not had the light of this truth so open as we have it now. Many godly emperors and councils general have attempted this reformation in the church; but evermore have they found ungodly princes against them, to hold the antichrists still in their wickedness. Yet doubt I not but Pharao with his host shall perish in the sea, and the proud Jewish priests in the city, for their manifold blasphemies, at the time now appointed of the Lord.

5. For the sins of this whore, or abominations without number of that false religion, her stinking idolatry and slaughter of innocents, are gone up unto heaven against her, requiring the great vengeance of God. The filthiness of them hath moved him to wrath, and kindled his displeasure towards her, putting him in remembrance of his eternal decree concerning her destruction. The greatest of her mischiefs hath touched heaven, and hath asked with Sodom and Gomorre the fearful plagues threatened her.

6. And the merciful Lord, beholding the affliction of his people, and pitying their miserable thraldom in that spiritual Egypt, hath considered her ungodly behaviour, weighed her wilful wretchedness, and measured her unmerciful murder, commanding his appointed ministers to execute upon her his judgments without mercy.

7. Reward her now (saith he) in every condition as she hath rewarded you afore. Measure again unto her, like as she hath measured to you, now that ye have the judgment-seats. Cry out upon her as she hath cried out upon you. Snare her as she hath snared you. Destroy her as she hath destroyed you. As she hath taken vengeance of you, so take you vengeance again of her. Like as she hath afflicted you, judged you, and condemned you by the laws of men; so

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scourge you her again, judge her a harlot, and condemn her to hell by the mighty word of God.

8. See that you give her two-fold in punishment according to her wicked deservings. Whereas she hath taken from you no more but the life of the bodies, take you away from her again the life both of body and soul.

9. Into the same bitter cup of sorrows, that she hath filled unto you in her malice, pour you in double again to her. Whereas she hath given you a temporal death, give her the death everlasting, doubling unto her both the griefs and continuance of them.

10. Yea, consider how greatly she hath glorified herself against God in blasphemous errors, in pride, in pleasures, and in wanton living.

11. And so much let her[1] taste of most terrible punishments, sorrowful plagues, wailings, and gnashings of teeth. A holy priesthood hath she pretended, a regal dignity hath she usurped, and both those powers most shamefully hath she so abused; therefore let her have the penalties due unto such presumption. Take from her her pleasant Euphrates with the spoils and profits, wherein she hath inordinately delighted, and throw her into most deep wretchedness here, besides that shall follow in another world.

The Text.

1 For she saith in her heart, 2 I sit, being a queen, 3 and am no widow, 4 and shall see no sorrow. 5 Therefore shall her plagues come at one day, 6 death, and sorrow, and hunger. 7 And she shall be brent with fire; 8 for strong is the Lord God, 9 which shall judge her.

The Commentary.

1. For highly she standeth in her own conceit as yet, boasting herself to be the great goddess of the earth.

2. I sit here in wealth and pleasure (saith she), being a glorious queen, yea, the holy church herself, having authority in heaven, in earth, and in hell, with power to loose and bind, save and damn. With me is it not as with them that are not of this world, or have no dwelling-place here; for all is at my will and pleasure.

3. I am no desolate widow: the powers of this world

[1] Old ed. *there.*]

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stand by me. The mighty princes and potentates defend me with the death of innocent people. Never was Nero, Domitianus, Trajanus, nor Maxentius, with other cruel tyrants, more sure upon my side in defence of superstitions, than they are yet still to this hour.

4. Therefore I can take no scath, nor yet feel of any sorrow; I shall be lady for ever. Never shall my seat be removed: never shall I fall, nor any mishap light upon me. Such are the bold brags of the papists, that Peter's little ship may well be moved with the tempest of heretics, but never shall it be overthrown: thinking thereby, that whorish church shall evermore continue, and never come to nought.

5. They consider not how strong the Lamb is, against whom they daily fight. And therefore shall the terrible plagues, which God hath appointed her to suffer, heavily[2] light upon her, and all in one day.

6. And once shall he pour upon that wicked congregation death, sorrow, and hunger, like as he did fire and brimstone upon the sinful cities. Perpetually shall they be deprived of that life which is in Christ Jesu. Continual weeping and teeth-gnashing shall they have, their worm never dying. Still shall they inwardly famish, and never with felicity be satisfied.

7. With unquenchable fire shall this whore be brent with her whole generation of hypocrites, prepared for the devil and his angels.

8. Effectual and true is this sentence; for mighty is the Lord that shall judge her, and condemn her by his word.

9. Just is he in his promise, true in his sayings, glorious in his works, holy, terrible, and fearful in his judgments against the wicked. None shall be found able at that day to restrain the least part of his purposed vengeance, neither Mary throwing in her beads into St Michael's balance, John Baptist with his lamb, Peter with his key, nor yet Paul with his long sword. Though Moses and Samuel, the chosen prophets of the Lord, yea, with Noe, Daniel, and patient Job, should stand before him at that day, yet should they not be heard.

THE TEXT.

1 And the kings of the earth shall beweep her, 2 and wail over her, 3 which have committed fornication, 4 and lived wantonly with

[2 Old ed. *heavenly.*]

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her, 5 when they shall see the smoke of her burning, 6 and shall stand afar off, 7 for fear of her punishment, saying, 8 Alas, alas, that great city 9 Babylon, 10 that mighty city! 11 For at one hour cometh thy judgment.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. Moreover the carnally minded kings of the earth (saith the aforesaid angel), which have for her pleasure abused their authority and power, shall take her sudden destruction in this life very heavily.

2. Yea, they shall most sorrowfully bewail themselves over her, as men very ill contented with that ordinance of God. They shall be sorry in their hearts that his word is become so strong against her, that they can resist it with sword, fire, and halters no longer. They shall be pensive and heavy to see all go to wreck, they being no longer able by the slaughter of innocents to uphold her glittering estate.

3. Specially shall they be sore discontented with the matter, which have with her committed the whoredom of the spirit by many external worshippings of dry wafer cakes, oils, roods, relics, ladies, images, sculls, bones, chips, old rags, shoes, boots, spurs, hats, breeches, hoods, nightcaps, and such like;

4. And they that have lived wantonly with her in following her idle observations in matins, hours, and masses, in censings, hallowings, and font-hallowings, in going processions with canopy, cross, and pix, with banners, streamers, and torch-light, with such other gauds too foolish for children, no godly admonishment taken of the scriptures. For under the kings here are also to be understood those peoples, whom they have wickedly governed, and constrained by their laws to such abominable usages.

5. Dolorously shall these kings lament, when they shall behold the filthy smoke of her burning, or when they perceive that she, coming to the trial of the scriptures, appeareth nothing but a vile stinking smoke noyful to the eyes, choking to the throat, and evermore blemishing the comfortable light. The church of the wicked (saith David) is as the dust that is blown forth of the wind, the shadow that passeth away, the smoke that vanisheth, and the wax that melteth in the fire, yea, of all fantastical vanities the most.

6. Afar off shall they stand trembling at the majesty of God's word, fearing to be destroyed or to lose their worldly

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honours also by the same; as did the duke of Bavaria and Brunswick with other popish princes at the last council of Raynesburg. For the continual clamour of Eckius, Cochlæus, Tregarius, Scatzgerus, Pelargus, Herborn, Hofmeister, Badia, Winchester, and such other dirty doctors of theirs, is evermore, that the gospellers would have all things in common. And therefore do these persecute them, and would not have that church to go down, thinking that, if it once should fall, they should not long after continue.

7. Thus doth the children of Cain, which have murdered their poor innocent brethren, fear that every man looking upon them would destroy them. As men forsaken of God they despair in themselves, looking for none other but damnation, now that they can have no more masses, holy prayers, nor suffrages, and complaining after this sort:

8. Alas, alas! that great city, that beautiful Babylon, that blessed holy mother, the church, which sometime had so many popes' pardons, so many bishops' blessings, so many holy stations, so many clean remissions *a pœna et culpa*, so many good ghostly fathers, so many religious orders, so much holy water for spirits, and St John's gospels with the five wounds and the length of our Lord for drowning, is now decayed for ever!

9. We sorrow, we sigh, we sob, we are sore disquieted, for pain we pant, tremble, and quake, to see our dearly beloved Babylon turned upside down, whom we took for a most wonderful miracle.

10. Oh, that city, that city, that sometime was so mighty and strong, so fair and beautiful, so glorious and holy, is now become waste and desolate!

11. At once is the terrible judgment of God come upon thee unlooked for. Suddenly art thou destroyed with the spirit of his mouth unthought upon. Alas! who shall pray for us now? who shall sing diriges and trentals? who shall assoil us of our sins? who shall give us ashes and palms? who shall bless us with a spade, and sing us out of purgatory when we are dead? If we lack these things, we are like to want heaven. These are the desperate complaints of the wicked.

The Text.

1 And the merchants of the earth 2 shall weep and wail in them-

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selves, 3 because no man will buy their wares any more; 4 the wares 5 of gold, 6 and silver, 7 and of precious stones, 8 neither of pearl, 9 and silk, 10 and raines[1], 11 and purple, and scarlet, 12 and all thyne wood, 13 and all manner vessels of ivory, 14 and all manner vessels of most precious wood, 15 and of brass, 16 and of iron, 17 and of marble, 18 and cinnamon, 19 and odours, 20 and ointments, 21 and frankincense, 22 and wine, 23 and oil, 24 and fine flour, 25 and wheat, 26 and cattle, 27 and sheep, 28 and horses, 29 and chariots, 30 and bodies, 31 and souls of men.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. Now followeth in course the merchants of the earth, the sellers of wares in the temple, the marked muster of Mahomet and the pope.

2. They shall weep and mourn, wail and lament inwardly in themselves, both wringing their hands for sorrow, and scratching their heads for very anguish;

3. Because they see all men go from them, and none in a manner are disposed to buy their pedlary wares any more:

4. As these wares are specially, which follow here in course.

5. They will pay no more money for the housel-sippings, bottom-blessings, nor for seyst me and seyst me not above the head and under of their chalices, which in many places be of fine gold. Neither regard they to kneel any more down and to kiss their pontifical rings, which are of the same metal.

6. They will be no more at cost to have the air beaten and idols perfumed with their censers at principal feasts, to have their crucifixes laid upon horses, or to have them solemnly borne aloft in their gaddings abroad, with the religious occupyings of their paxes, cruets, and other jewels which be of silver.

7. Neither pass they greatly to behold precious stones any more in their two horned mitres, when they hallow their churches, give their whorish orders, and triumphantly muster in procession;

8. Nor in costuous pearls in their copes, perrours, and chasubles, when they be in their prelately pompous sacrifices.

9. Men knowing the word of God suppose that their

[1 Raines or Rennes: fine linen manufactured at Rennes.]

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ornaments of silk, wherewith they garnish their temples and adorn their idols, is very blasphemous and devilish.

10. They think also that their fair white rochets of raines or fine linen cloth, their costly grey amices of calaber and cats' tails,

11. Their fresh purple gowns when they walk for their pleasures, and their red scarlet frocks when they preach lies in the pulpit, are very superfluous and vain.

12. In their thyne wood (whom some men call algum trees, some brasil, some coral) may be understood all their curious buildings of temples, abbeys, chapels, and chambers, all shrines, images, churchstools, and pews that are well paid for, all banner-staves, Pater-noster scores, and pieces of the holy cross.

13. The vessels of ivory comprehend all their maundy-dishes, their offering-platters, their relic-chests, their god-boxes, their drinking horns, their sipping cups for the hiccough, their tables whereupon are charmed their chalices and vestments, their standishes, their combs, their musk-balls, their pomander pots, and their dust-boxes, with such other toys.

14. The vessels which after some interpreters are of precious stone, or, after some, of most precious wood, betoken their costuous cups or cruises of jaspar, jacinth, amel[2], and fine beryl, and their alabaster boxes wherewith they anoint kings, confirm children, and minister their holy whorish orders; their pardon-masers[3], or drinking dishes, as St Benet's bowl, St Edmond's bowl, St Giles' bowl, St Blyth's bowl, and Westminster bowl, with such other holy relics.

15. Of brass (which containeth latten, copper, alcumine[4], and other hard metals) are made all their great candlesticks, holy-water kettles, lamps, desks, pillars, buttresses, bosses, bells, and many other things more.

16. Of strong iron are the branches made that hold up the lights before their false gods, the tacks that sustain them from falling, the locks that save them from the robbery of thieves, their fire-pans, bars, and poles, with many other strange gins beside.

17. With marble most commonly pave they their temples,

[2 amel: enamel.]
[3 masers: bowl or goblet. Halliwell.]
[4 alcumine: a mixed metal. Halliwell.]

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and build strong pillars and arches in their great cathedral churches and monasteries: they make thereof also their superaltaries, their tombs, and their solemn grave-stones, besides their other buildings with freestone, flint, rag, and brick, comprehended in the same.

18. By the cinnamon is meant all manner of costly spices, wherewith they bury their bishops and founders, lest they should stink when they translate them again to make them saints for advantage.

19. By the smelling odours, the sweet herbs that they strew abroad at their dedications and burials, besides the damask waters, balms, musks, pomander, civet, and other curious confections, that they bestow upon their own precious bodies.

20. The ointments are such oils as they mingle with rose-water, aloes, and spike, with other merry conceits, wherewith they anoint their holy salvers and roods to make them to sweat and to smell sweet, when they are borne abroad in procession upon their high-feastful days, like as doctor Rede used his old rotten rood of Beccles in Suffolk upon the holy rood days.

21. Frankincense occupy they oft, as a necessary thing, in the censing of their idols, hallowing of their paschal, conjuring of their ploughs, besides the blessing of their palms, candles, ashes, and their dead men's graves, with *requiescant in pace.*

22. With wine sing they their masses for money, they housel[1] the people at Easter, they wash their altar-stones upon Maundy Thursday, they fast the holy embering days, besides other banquetings all the whole year to keep their flesh chaste.

23. With oil smear they young infants at baptism and bishoping[2], they grease their mass-mongers, and give them the mark of Midian, they anele their cattle that starve, and do many other feats else.

24. Fine flour is such a merchandise of theirs, as far exceedeth all other, and was first given them by pope Alexander the first, thinking Christ's institution not sufficient, nor comely in using the common bread in that ministry. For that

[1 housel: to administer the eucharist.]
[2 bishoping: confirmation.]

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ware hath brought them in their plentiful possessions, their lordships, fat benefices, and prebendaries, with innumerable pleasures else.

25. Wheat have they of their farms, whereof they make pardon-bread and cakes to draw people to devotion towards them.

26. Cattle receive they offered unto their idols by the idiots of the countries for recover of sundry diseases, besides that they have of their tithes.

27. Sheep have they sometime of their own pastures, sometime of begging, sometime of bequests for the dead, to cry them out of their fearful purgatory, when they be asleep at midnight.

28. Great horses have they for mortuaries, for offices, for favours, gifts, and rewards, to be good lords unto them that they may hold still their farms, and to have Saunder wasp their son and their heir a priest, or to admit him unto a mannerly benefice, that he may be called master parson, and such like.

29. Chariots have they also, or horse-litters of all manner of sorts, specially at Rome, with foot-men running on both sides of them, to make room for the holy fathers: of whom some carry their own precious bodies, some their treasure, some the blessed sacrament, some holy relics and ornaments, some their whores, and some their bastards.

30. The bodies of men must needs be judged to be at their pleasure, so long as christian provinces be tributers unto them, princes obedient, peoples subject, and their laws at their commandment to slay and to kill. And, to make this good, who hath not in England paid his Peter-penny sometime, to acknowledge himself a bondman of theirs at the receipt of his yearly housel? Farthermore yet, besides their marked muster of monks, friars, and priests, they have certain bondmen, of whom some they sell to the Venetians, some to the Genoese, some to the Portingales, and some to the Turks, to row in their gallies.

31. And last of all, to make up their market, lest any thing should escape their hands, these unmerciful bribers make merchandise of the souls of men, to deprive Christ of his whole right, sending many unto hell, but not one to heaven (unless they maliciously murder them for the truth's sake),

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and all for money. After many other sorts else abuse they these good creatures of God, whom the Holy Ghost here nameth by course, as things comprehending all other, besides that Mahomet's ministers in their sort in Barbary, Greece, and Egypt: for nothing under the heavens leave they undefiled. Much were it to shew here by the chronicles severally, of what pope they have received authority, power, and charge to utter these wares to advantage, and how they came first from the old idolaters, by the large testimonies of Sapience, [Book of Wisdom,] Esay, Daniel, Baruch, Oseas, and the other prophets. At one hour shall these merchants for their abominations be plagued, nothing that the vain lovers of this world have trusted in availing them nor yet helping them. For at all times in this last age of the world (whom John calleth the last hour) are the wicked reprobates condemned of God, and so reserved to the latter sentence of the judge. For it followeth in the text.

THE TEXT.

1 And the apples that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee. 2 And all things which were dainty, and had price, 3 are departed from thee, 4 and thou shalt find them no more. 5 The merchants of these things, 6 which were waxed rich by her, 7 shall stand afar off from her, for fear of the punishment of her, 8 weeping and wailing, and saying, 9 Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in raines, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearl! 10 for at one hour so great riches is come to nought.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. And the delicious apples (saith the threatening voice of the Holy Ghost unto this whore), that thy wretched heart hath so sore lusted after by so many unsatiable desires, are now departed from thee. Men of ripe learning and judgment, whom thou covetedst to have for defence of thy glorious whoredom, thy abominations perceived, will no longer dwell with thee, but utterly leave thee, detest thee, and abhor thee. Whereas they have afore avanced thee to the world, now will they by the scriptures reprove thee to the same.

2. In like manner all those things which were aforetime very precious and dainty unto thee, and whom thou hadst for their goodness in much estimation, are now for thy lewdness gone away clean from thee, bidding thee for ever adieu. Men

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of sober discretion and living, whom thou hast aforetime pretended much to favour, as things commodious unto thee, to the cloking of thy hypocrisy, thy conditions now known, doth daily more and more decline from thy dead observations and most damnable superstitions. And whereas they thought thee afore very holy and good, they suppose thee now both detestable and devilish.

3. So that from henceforth, the verity open, none shall remain with thee, nor defend thy known whoredom, but hypocrites, men-pleasers, flatterers, blasting sophisters, brawling canonists, epicures, and blasphemous antichrists. As for men that be godly wise, sober, virtuous, learned, well occupied, and minding the glory of God, [they] will utterly refuse thee, and forsake thy pestiferous ways.

4. Thou shalt find them no more upon thy side pleading. No more shalt thou have their favour, nor yet their sweet smelling. Neither shall their doctrine maintain thy vain ceremonies, nor yet their conversation observe thy crooked customs any more. Yea, be thou certain and sure of this, that, be they once gone from thee clean, never shall they again return unto thee. Only shall thy wicked remnant be beasts and babblers, filthy workers and drunkards; as is Eckius, which had three bastards the same year that he disputed at Lipsia against the marriage of priests, Natalis Beda, Clichtoveus, Liset, Godet, Sutor, Delphus, and de Quercu at Paris, bragging Winchester, the pope's paraclete in England, that is, master of the Stews at London, and such other dirty dunghills.

5. The busy merchants of these earthly things afore (saith the voice again unto John), which were become very fat, wealthy and rich through quick sale of the wares of this whorish church, shall at the day of her destruction stand afar off, bewailing her fall. Far diverse are these in their markets from the usage of other occupiers in the world. For whereas they sell their wares but once, and look no more for them again, these sell them every day, and yet retain them still. And whereas they sell the very wares in deed, these sell ne more but the sight, the sound, and the shadow; as the looking upon their images, the noise of their bells, the spreading out of their ornaments, the shew of their jewels, the use and

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occupying of their instruments, the kissing of their relics, the wind of their lips, the spittle of their tongues, their idle pratings, and unholy merits. But still they keep to themselves the gold, the silver, the precious stones, the pearls, and such like, though they never cost them money. Yea, so would they do also the learning and good living, if they had them, as they have not. For none would they have learned nor yet virtuous in the sight of the world, but their own smeared Sodomites.

6. How and wherein these merchants are rich, it is shewed afore, and besides that, all the world doth know it.

7. But now in the fall certainly of their whorish church will they stand afar off. They will be none of hers when they see her go down, lest they should go down with her, and be punished with penury; or lest they should be drawn, hanged, and quartered, as many have been in England.

8. Rather will they hold a fair face outwardly for advantage, inwardly in their hearts bewailing her ruin, or secretly among themselves deploring her decay, till such time as they may be bold to play the knaves again, saying after this weeping sort,

9. Alas, alas! that notable city, that Babylonish Rome that ruled all the world, that holy church that was so beautifully adorned with fine silk, purple, and scarlet, in her cups, vestures and ornaments, and was so preciously furnished with gold, precious stone, and pearls in her chalices, crosses, and mitres, and in all other prodigious and pompous jewels;

10. Alas for her, alas! for now at one hour in this latter age of the church, by the Gospel-preaching, is so exceeding great riches, glory, magnificence, and honour of our holy mother come even unto nought: yea, our manifold prelacies are not regarded among them, but utterly contemned and despised.

THE TEXT.

1 And every ship governor, 2 and all they that occupy ships, 3 and shipmen which work in the sea, 4 stood afar off, 5 and cried, 6 when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 7 What city is like unto this great city? 8 And they cast dust on their heads, 9 and cried weeping, and wailing, and said, 10 Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich 11 all that had ships in the sea 12 by the reason of her costliness! 13 For at one hour is she made desolate.

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THE COMMENTARY.

1. In like case every ship-master, which betokeneth diocesans, bishops, and ordinaries;

2. And all they that occupy boats, wherries, and scutes[1], or sail upon the sea, as they do which among the wavering multitude are taken for parsons, vicars, and curates;

3. Yea, and mariners also that work in the sea, by whom are signified foul priests, simple penitencers, and holy watermongers, daily perverting the ignorant people;

4. All these (saith the voice) will stand afar off, when they see her destruction. No longer will they stand by her, than they feel her profitable and pleasant unto them. Decay once the sweet profits, and they are gone away.

5. Yet will they turn towards her again, and cry out when they shall behold the filthy smoke that shall arise of her burning.

6. When her wisdom appeareth foolishness, her doctrine devilishness, and her sanctity wickedness, by the word of God, they shall sorrowfully lament for their own bellies' sake, saying thus in their desperate hearts,

7. What city in the world can be thought like unto this mighty city, either in magnificence, wealth, or power? No citizens are more preciously apparelled, more sumptuously fed, nor more deliciously dieted, than is the shorn nation, if ye mark well their favour and feeding, their fine disguising and lodging, their fat cheeks and great bellies, with such other likelihoods else. Much rather had they to have still the wanton commodities of this city, than the perpetual pleasures of heaven. So undiscreet, carnal, and beastly are they in their imaginations, cares, and studies.

8. So sorrowful will they be for this their general loss, that upon their witless heads they shall cast dust, in token of their inward heaviness. With despair shall they darken their wits, and with dotage dull their understanding. And as graciously will they repent as ever did Cain, Pharao, Esau, Antiochus, and Judas, their predecessors.

9. Dolorously shall they cry in their mutual murderings, mourning for their pouches, and sorrowing for their bellies; and this will be the tenour of their woeful tragedy:

[1 Scute: a light boat, from the Dutch *schuyte*.]

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10. Alas, alas, that worthy city, that royal Rome, that sweet Babylon, that holy mother of ours, in whom we were left so rich, so mighty, and so strong, that all the world feared us, and we felt of no sorrows!

11. Specially all we that had ships in the sea, or that had bishopricks, benefices, and other fat livings among the wavering wanderers of the light laity, inconstant, fickle, and foolish, where as God's word is not known.

12. We became wealthy in all manner of pleasures by reasons of her costly and profitable wares that those our ships contained, which are too many to be now rehearsed.

13. Full woe are we, and heavy at the heart, remembering that famous city; for at one hour is she made desolate. In this last age of his church will the Lord consume her with his breath, not leaving in her one stone upon another. Like the shadow that passeth shall she vanish away, and like the dry thistle flower, or dust that is scattered with the wind. Such words (saith the wise man Philo) shall they speak in hell that have sinned, besides their desperate complain in this life. Some expositors have taken all these kings, merchants, and ship governors for one manner of people or generation of antichrist. And it may well be, forsomuch as they are all of the earth. None of these are they justly by the authority of God, but very tyrants, thieves, and man-quellers.

The Text.

1 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, 2 and ye holy apostles 3 and prophets. 4 For God hath given your judgment on her. 5 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, 6 and cast it into the sea, saying, 7 With such violence shall that great city Babylon be cast, 8 and shall be found no more. 9 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, 10 and of pipers, and trumpeters, 11 shall be heard no more in thee. 12 And no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee. 13 And the sound of a mill shall be heard no more in thee. 14 And candle light shall be no more burning in thee. 15 And the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more in thee. 16 For thy merchants were the princes of the earth, 17 and with thine enchantments were deceived all nations. 18 And in her was found the blood 19 of the prophets, 20 and of the saints, 21 and of all that were slain upon the earth.

The Commentary.

1. With all mirth possible (saith the text) rejoice, thou

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heaven, or thou faithful congregation of God, to see this adulterous church of antichrist overthrown. Be glad in thy heart, not that thy quarrel is revenged, but in that the righteousness of God is fulfilled, his people being at liberty.

2. Have mirth convenient, ye holy apostles or messengers of the Lord, with them that the Gospel hath called.

3. Joy with your brethren, ye ancient prophets, or godly teachers of the old law.

4. For your merciful God hath heard your piteous cry from under the altar, and hath performed upon that blasphemous whore the same self judgment that you desired. According to your own request hath he revenged all your innocent blood, which hath been shed upon earth since Abel the righteous. The same damnation have they now justly that they ministered unto you unjustly; yea, double, forsomuch as they have it both in their bodies and souls, whereas you had it but alone in your bodies.

5. And immediately (saith St John) an angel of great power, betokening the true preachers of the latter age of the church, strongly endued from above, took up a stone of exceeding weight, very like in similitude unto a great millstone. They shall gather up out of Esay, Jeremy, Abacuk and other prophets, the mighty and terrible judgments of the Lord, which are the heavy stone that shall grind his enemies into powder.

6. This stone shall they cast into the sea. They shall publish, preach, and declare unto the people of this world (which are as the moveable flood) those heavy judgments which shall light upon that blasphemous church of theirs at the time appointed, and thus shall they say unto them:

7. So violent and heavy shall be the destruction of that miserable city, that mystical Babylon, that prostibulous church of antichrist, with her shorn citizens and smeared hypocrites, as is the weighty fall of an exceeding great millstone into the bottom of the sea, rising up no more again, yea, so terrible and fearful.

8. With shame and confusion shall that wicked generation come down, and never more be found hereafter, neither in the earth nor yet in heaven. Though in their painted stories they put popes, cardinals, and bishops, monks, canons, and

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shaven priests, friars, nuns, and hermits, in heaven among the saints, yet are there none such, nor never shall be. Their resting-place is the bottom of the sea by the judgments of God, unless they renounce those vain superstitions, and cleave to the sincere verities of the Lord. Much have they boasted in their writings that their holy mother of prodigious orders and disguised religions should evermore continue:

9. But be certain and sure, thou miserable church (saith the Holy Ghost), that thou shalt no longer enjoy the commodious pleasures of a free city, all quietous without troubles. The merry noise of them that play upon harps, lutes, and fiddles, the sweet voice of musicians that sing with virginals, viols, and chimes, the harmony of them that pipe in recorders, flutes, and drones, and the shrill shout of trumpets, waites, and shawms, shall no more be heard in thee to the delight of men.

10. Neither shall the sweet organs, containing the melodious noise of all manner of instruments and birds, be played upon, nor the great bells be rung after that, nor yet the fresh descant, pricksong, counterpoint, and faburden[1] be called for in thee, which art the very synagogue of Satan.

11. Thy lascivious harmony and delectable music, much provoking the weak hearts of men to meddle with thy abominable whoredom by the wantonness of idolatry in that kind, shall perish with thee for ever.

12. No cunning artificer, carver, painter, nor gilder, embroiderer, goldsmith, nor silk-worker, with such other like, of what occupation soever they be or have been to thy commodity, shall nevermore be found so again. Copes, cruets, candlesticks, mitres, crosses, censers, chrismatories, corporasses, and chalices, which for thy whorish holiness might not sometime be touched, will then for thy sake be abhorred of all men. Never more shall be builded for merchants of thy livery and mark palaces, temples, abbeys, colleges, convents, chantries, fair houses, and orchards of pleasure.

13. The clapping noise of neither windmill, horsemill, nor watermill, shall any more be heard, to the gluttonous feeding of thy puffed up porklings, for the maintenance of

[1 Faburden: a high sounding tone or noise that fills the ear. Halliwell.]

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thine idle observations and ceremonies. No more shall those idle belly-gods swill up the sweat there of the labouring man, nor devour the poor widow and fatherless for straining out a gnat.

14. The continual light of lamps before the high altars, the burning cressets at triumphs in the night, the torches at burials and solemn processions, tapers at high masses, and the candles at offerings, shall never more burn in thy sinful synagogues.

15. No more shall the bridegroom desire after thy foolish ordinance to be joined to his wife, nor the bride to her lawful husband. No more shall that free state of living be bound under yoke of thy damnable dreams, neither for vows unadvised, nor for popish orders, nor yet for any gossipry, but be at full liberty, as the Lord hath ordained it. No commodities, profits, nor pleasures shalt thou have any more of these, nor yet of such like, as aforetime thou hast had of them in abundance.

16. For thy mitred merchants were sometime princes of the earth, when they reigned in their royalty. Thy shorn shavelings were lords over the multitude, when they held their priestly authority over the souls and bodies of men.

17. Yea, and with thy privy legerdemain, with the juggling casts, with the crafts and enchantments of thy subtle charmers, were all nations of the world deceived. With lies in hypocrisy were the great governors most miserably blinded, and with errors in superstition the common people seduced. And all was to satisfy thy voluptuous affects. Only remaineth to thee now the due reward of thy wickedness, which is an everlasting damnation.

18. All this is said here (saith the Holy Ghost), for that in this adulterous church is found the great slaughter of innocents.

19. Guilty appeareth she afore God of all the blood of the holy prophets of the old law; as were Esay, Jeremy, Ezechiel and Amos;

20. And of the sincere witnesses of the new law, as were Stephen, James, Antipas, and Paul:

21. Yea, and of all those godly men that were slain upon earth from righteous Abel unto the end of the world for

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the faithful testimony of God: among whom may they also be numbered, which hath in battles, skirmishes, and uproars at the pope's appointment in all christian regions been unmercifully murdered, for the fulfilling of his insatiable purpose.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER.

Now followeth in course the convenient praise of thanksgiving unto God, for righteously condemning the blasphemous church of antichrist, and for graciously avenging the innocent blood of his true servants. Here are two manner of peoples to be considered, of whom the one is sorrowful, the other rejoiceth, and all about one matter. The fall of this malignant church is to the one sort a discomfort, to the other an heavenly comfort. The kings, the merchants, and the ship governors of the earth most dolorously lament the destruction of their mad vanities: the unregarded or forsaken number of those simple souls that faithfully believed in Christ, are highly glad of it for his glory's sake. About this one decay crieth the one sort, "Woe, woe, woe;" the other sort singing joyfully in their hearts unto God of so oft times, "Alleluia." So much differeth the one from the other, the children of darkness from the children of light, they that seek their own glory from them that seek the glory of God. Not unlike is John unto Aggeus, Zacharias, and other holy prophets, which both shewed afore of the people's return from the miserable captivity of the Babylonians, and also the re-edifying again of their new Jerusalem: for here hath he first shewed the destruction and fall of the damnable whore, the spiritual Babylon, which many years hath grievously vexed the people of God, and now in this chapter their peaceable time in the Lord. Now are the precious vessels of God like to be restored unto the temple, the great Balthasar of Rome once overthrown. Now shall the sweet peace grow, the plenteous quiet increase, the pastures of the Lord wax fat, and the mighty verity of his word flow like a sweet running flood.

THE TEXT.

1 And after that I heard the voice 2 of much people in heaven,

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3 saying, Alleluia. 4 Salvation, 5 and glory, 6 and honour, 7 and power, 8 be ascribed unto the Lord our God. 9 For true and righteous are his judgments, 10 because he hath judged the great whore, 11 which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, 12 and hath avenged the blood of his servants of her hand. 13 And again they said, Alleluia.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. After the destruction of that whorish Babylon, which signifieth the wicked church, I heard (saith St John), in mystery, the rejoicing voice of much people in heaven; which is that congregation of faith wherein the Lord resteth.

2. Very many were there among them which joyously gave thanks unto God,

3. Pronouncing this Hebrew sentence, Alleluia, which is so much to say as, Let us together praise the Lord's name.

4. Only is salvation, health, and deliverance of him. Unto none other is it to be ascribed, neither in heaven nor in earth, be there never so godly doers.

5. Inestimable glory, unspeakable honour, incomprehensible power, belongeth unto that Lord our God; so doth the due commendation thereof.

6. He it is that only ought of us to be praised, obeyed, and magnified.

7. For he alone hath overthrown the dragon, the beast, and the glittering whore, that deceived all the world, that proud church of stinking Sodomites.

8. And this hath he done for our salvation. Refer all the praise unto him, as to your conqueror most worthy.

9. For verily most true and perfect is he in his merciful promises, most righteous and just in his godly judgments, which hath been of late most evidently seen;

10. Specially in that he hath judged according to his former promise the abominable harlot, the superstitious church of antichrist, the filthy family of spiritual whoremongers, gluttons, and hypocrites, yea, the execrable synagogue of Satan indeed;

11. Which hath most miserably corrupted, not the true servants of God, but the very earth, or such men as were earthly-minded, with her filthy fornication of idolatry, superstition, and blasphemy.

12. That merciful Lord hath most righteously avenged the innocent blood of his faithful servants and constant wit-

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nesses of her wicked hand. From the terrible cruelty, spite, and violence of her unmerciful ministers hath he graciously delivered them.

13. Yet once again (saith St John) did this godly-minded multitude break forth into the praise of God, and cried with a most joyful shout, Alleluia, or commendation without end be unto our most heavenly Creator, Redeemer, and Comforter. His laud be evermore in our mouth for thus restoring his verity, the enemies thereof deposed.

The Text.

1 And smoke rose up for evermore. 2 And the twenty-four elders 3 and the four beasts 4 fell down, 5 and worshipped God that sat on the seat, 6 saying, Amen. 7 Alleluia. 8 And a voice came out of the seat, 9 saying, 10 Praise our Lord God, 11 all ye that are his servants, 12 and ye that fear him, both small and great.

The Commentary.

1. And the smoke (saith St John) of her abominations, very noyful unto the eyes of God, went up evermore into his sight, provoking him to eternal vengeance. A smoke ascended in his wrath (saith David), and upon that fire proceeded from his mouth, which kindled the coals of her damnation. This fire will be the terrible sentence given upon her at his latter judgment. For never ceaseth this blasphemous bloody church in requiring the vengeance of God.

2. And the twenty-four elders (saith he), by whom are signified the saints departed, as the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and other godly witnesses;

3. And the four beasts also, betokening the faithful multitude in the four quarters of the world, yet living in this frail nature, fell down before the face of the Lord.

4. In one godly spirit, faith, zeal, and fervent love, did both they in their times, and these in this our age, submit themselves unto God, referring always unto him all that they ever had, either in faith or works, as unto the special giver of them.

5. These worshipped in their ages, and yet do to this day, not things fantasied of men, but the only everlasting God that evermore hath sat upon the eternal seat of his omnipotency,

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6. Continually saying, Amen, or at his will be all things:

7. Saying also, Alleluia, or everlasting praise be given to his name of the universal christian multitude, for righteously judging the great whore to drink the blood that she hath shed of the holy witnesses of Jesu, or to sustain for ever the just vengeance thereof.

8. Consequently came there out an exceeding sweet voice from the eternal throne of God, which is Jesus Christ. This is the Gospel of glad tidings, which he taught when he was here living among us, being the bodily habitacle of his Godhead.

9. This voice evermore is moving us to the only faith, obedience, and fear of the eternal Father, comprehended in this clause following.

10. In all your sayings and doings (saith that voice) commend always that Lord which is both my Father [and your Father,] both my God and your God:

11. Specially all you that are his faithful servants by earnestly loving and following his word;

12. You also that unfeignedly fear to transgress his laws and commandments, whether ye be great or small, high or low, young or old, noble or unnoble, rich or poor, strong or weak, whole or sick, beautiful or deformed, wise or unwise, learned or unlearned, none to be excluded from his praise, so that he be faithful, charitable, patient and godly. For in no manner of nation is any of him forsaken, that faithfully feareth him, and liveth according unto righteousness.

The Text.

1 And I heard the voice of much people, 2 even as the voice of many waters, 3 and as the voice of strong thunderings, 4 saying, Alleluia; 5 for God omnipotent reigneth. 6 Let us be glad and rejoice, 7 and give honour to him. 8 For the marriage of the Lamb is come, 9 and his wife made herself ready. 10 And to her was granted, that she should be arrayed with pure and goodly silk. 11 As for the silk, it is the righteousness of saints.

The Commentary.

1. After this (saith St John) I heard in mystery the voice of very much people, or of an innumerable multitude of men.

2. And it sounded unto me even as it had been the flushing noise of many waters,

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3. And in a manner as the fearful sound of great thunderings. For though the praise of God be all one in the faithful nations, yet is the utterance thereof divers, like as the languages are also divers. Very strange and confused are the speeches one to another, where they are not known. Terrible also are they, partly for that they comprehend such a majesty, as is the glory of God, and partly because they are for the utter confusion of the wicked. None other was this voice than were the voices afore, nor to none other end.

4. For look, in what faith the patriarchs and the fathers, the prophets and apostles, the holy martyrs and preachers, lauded God for victory over their enemies, in the same doth now the faithful multitude of all regions commend him, saying, Alleluia, or praise be evermore in your mouths.

5. For our Lord God Almighty is become a victorious conqueror, and now reigneth over all. Not only hath he overcome the devil by the doughty death of his Son, but also his proud kingdom of hypocrisy by the power of his mighty word.

6. Let us be glad (saith this voice), and highly rejoice in our hearts for this heavenly alteration and profitable change.

7. Let us give thanks to his omnipotent name, that without our deservings we are brought to so joyful a day.

8. For the glorious spousage of the Lamb Jesus Christ is come. Now that this whore is overthrown, shall he be joined to his undefiled church, which was afore dispersed by divers afflictions and punishments.

9. His wife, which is his congregation, hath made herself now ready to her spouse; not with copes and crosses, mitres and relics, torches and holy waters; not with chapels and chantries, hallowings and censings, shavings and anointings, with such other beggary: no, neither with works of supererogation, merits of masses, nor other dirty deservings of our own righteousness; but with a pure christian faith, and with the true righteousness of God, which she hath of Christ.

10. For it followeth in the text, that to her it was granted by the singular goodness of God, that she should be apparelled beautifully with pure white silk, or with most fine raines.

11. None other are these fair, pleasant, and godly raines, after the clear definition of the Holy Ghost here, but

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the pure justifications of the holy saints, which have been since the beginning, whereof they have been called righteous. Of their faith in Jesus Christ is this pure garment of innocency, cleanness, and righteousness. Through faith was Abraham reputed for righteous; so was Abel, Enoch and Noe, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, Moses, Josue, and Gedeon, Samuel, David, and Elias, with the universal number of the saints, prophets, and fathers. So was Zacharias, Simeon, Joseph, and John Baptist, Peter, James, John, and Paul, Lazarus, Lucas, Agabus, and Stephen, with all the apostles, martyrs, and other true believers. Through faith (saith St Paul) have the "saints overcome kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained the promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire," with such like. Since the beginning of the world have the true and faithful prepared themselves unto this heavenly marriage, and in the resurrection of the righteous shall it be perfectly solemnized, celebrated, and magnified, such time as they shall appear in full glory with Christ. In this latter time will the true christian church, when all the world shall confess his name in peace, be of her full perfect age and apt unto this spousage. Now shall she in meekness of spirit appoint herself to meet her bridegroom in the air; for with a glad heart doth she now hear his voice. At that day shall she appear as the beautiful bride prepared to her spouse, accompanied with the wise maidens, the unwise, neither having oil nor light, for ever rejected.

The Text.

1 And he said unto me, 2 Write, 3 Happy are they which are called unto the Lamb's supper. 4 And he said unto me, 5 These are the true sayings of God. 6 And I fell at his feet 7 to worship him. 8 And he said unto me, 9 See thou do it not; 10 for I am thy fellowservant, 11 and one of thy brethren, 12 and of them that have the testimony of Jesus: 13 worship God. 14 For the testimony of Jesus 15 is the spirit of prophecy.

The Commentary.

1. And the angel (saith St John), which shewed unto me afore the fall of the great whore, said at this present time unto me,

2. Seriously register this sentence following, that it may remain to their comfort, which shall follow thee.

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3. After a most happy and fortunable sort are they blessed, which, having the wedding-garment, the pure fine raines aforenamed, are graciously predestinated, called, and accepted of the heavenly Father unto the everlasting supper of the undefiled Lamb Jesus Christ, there to participate with him the eternal refection both of soul and body. Satisfied shall I be (saith David) without end, when thy glory shall manifestly appear. Not of corruptible meats and drinks shall this supper be, but of uncorruptible delights, and of pleasures that shall never fail. Nothing shall be there profane, void, or uncomely; but all things pure, clean, true, stedfast, godly, and perfect. Then shall the meetings be heavenly, and the clippings[1] without deformity. The bride shall at that day rejoice with her everlasting Spouse, and the daughters of Sion shall behold the true Salomon in full glory, accompanied with his holy household of angels and saints.

4. And the aforesaid angel (saith St John) said thus unto me,

5. These words which I last told thee, friend John, are not mine, but they are the true sayings of God's own mouth. So much the rather they are to be believed as most certain and sure, that they are of him whose universal language is the verity unfeigned.

6. As I heard the angel speak thus unto me (saith St John), I fell down by and by at his feet flat upon the ground, minding to have worshipped him. So wonderful were the secrets of God whom he there declared unto me, and the mysteries so joyful unto my soul, that in a manner I clearly forgot myself.

7. Near hand was I at the point to have worshipped the messenger for the Lord, and the angel for the Lamb, otherwise than did Abraham, not of ignorance, but of a forgetful rejoicing.

8. But in no wise would the angel suffer me so to do, but gently he said thus unto me,

9. See thou do no such homage unto me a creature, as peculiarly belongeth unto God the Creator of all. So great art thyself, and such as thou art I am, and so excellent a creature of God. Truth it is that I am the angel of the Lord, and so are you also, so many as bear witness of the same verity.

[1 Clippings: embraces.]

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10. And as concerning mine own person, I am but thy fellow-servant. For he that is thy God is also my God, and he that is thy Lord and master is also mine. Indifferently are we both created for his servants, and admitted for his messengers.

11. Of thy brethren am I one by creation.

12. So am I also both a brother and fellow of all them that have the faithful testimony of Jesus. For like as they by his godly appointment are messengers thereof to the world, so am I now unto thee here for the same.

13. Worship not me therefore, which am but a creature, but worship thy Lord God, for sending by me this message of health unto thee. Though Lot, Jacob, Josue, Gedeon, Tobias, and other fathers of the old law, gave worship unto the angels whom God sent unto them in message; yet shalt thou not do so unto me now, considering that at this time God's Son hath taken the nature of man, hath raised it from death, hath set it upon the Father's right hand, and therein hath sent from thence the Spirit of reconciliation unto men. By this are ye become no longer inferiors unto us, but equal with us in favour and dignity. No longer are ye strangers and foreigners, but citizens of heaven and the very household children of God.

14. And as for the testimony of Jesus Christ, which both I unto you, and you to the world have to utter, it is the very spirit of prophecy, and one message of health committed unto us both. The true Spirit of God it is that beareth witness of Christ, both in the law and prophets (for none can say that Jesus is the Lord but in the Holy Ghost), and in that Spirit do we now make mention also of him. This is the Spirit of adoption, whereby ye acknowledge God for your dear Father. This Spirit ascertaineth your spirit, that ye are become his children believing in his name.

15. And in this Spirit do I admonish thee, John, by this present revelation, which is a prophecy, and in thee all them that have the same faith to acknowledge, worship, and confess the said Jesus Christ, as we do now, for the only Lord and Saviour of the world. Not only shalt thou be by the plain manifestation of this prophecy an angel, but also, by an excellent prerogative of singular grace above all thy fellows, a prophet. After the manner of this angel did Paul and Barnabas utterly refuse to have honour given them of the people at Lystra.

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Peter would in no case suffer Cornelius the noble centurion to worship him. Contrariwise the antichrist of Rome not only suffereth, but also commandeth straitly, such homage of honour evermore to be given to his holy fatherhood. Yea, he is not ashamed to constrain noble emperors to kiss his filthy feet, kings with cap and knee to hold his stirrups, and the greatest princes of the world to wait upon his mule. Great pardons hath he given to the worshipping of idols and of old rotten bones, threatening most terrible death unto them that would not at his commandment do the same. At Geneva was honourably worshipped an ass's tail, and at Tholosa a young boy's shoe, great indulgences granted unto them both. But let not him and his mitred Mahomets think easily to avoid the indignation of God, when he shall call them to account, with their crafty distinction of *Latria*, *Dulia*, and *Hyperdulia*, whom the scripture knoweth not. Notwithstanding in this is not utterly inhibited mutual reverence betwixt man and man, forsomuch as Paul willeth the faithful to prevent each other in honour-giving. Necessary it is that they first honour God, and then for his sake that they prosecute their neighbours with such christian benevolence, as the comeliness of humanity requireth. The gospel never forbiddeth such politic manners as nourish mutual friendship, yet doth it not give them unto idols.

The Text.

1 And I saw heaven open, 2 and behold, a white horse, 3 and he that sat upon him 4 was called faithful and true; 5 and in righteousness did he judge, 6 and make battle. 7 His eyes were as a flame of fire, 8 and on his head were many crowns. 9 And he had a name written, 10 that no man knew but himself. 11 And he was clothed with a vesture dipt in blood. 12 And his name is called the Word of God.

The Commentary.

1. After this (saith St John) I saw heaven open. Very evident were the mysteries of the Lord unto me. I perceived that through faith and meekness great knowledge men might have of the secrets of God. Open is heaven evermore, when God's word is freely taught; and closed up it is again, when that is laid apart.

2. And behold a pure white horse appeared in this mystery; which betokeneth the true ministers or perfect preachers of the apostles' doctrine, as is mentioned afore in the sixth

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chapter hereof. The godly nature of these is (as is specified in Paul) to carry the glorious verity of the Lord the world over, and to publish it before the governors and peoples of the nations.

3. He that sat upon this white horse, or assisted these preachers by his Spirit, was the eternal Son of God, which hath evermore been called in the scriptures faithful of his promise, and true of his word. Righteous is the Lord (saith David) in all his ways, sure of his sayings, and perfect in all his works.

4. None other thing could he teach but the verity, which was the Verity itself, nor yet they which had his godly Spirit.

5. According to true equity had he judged, in utterly condemning by his word the proud synagogue of Satan, and in exalting again his own meek-spirited church.

6. First in his own person, as a mighty warrior, did he battle with the devil, and by his death overcame him. Now by his faithful preachers doth he righteously overturn his kingdom by virtue of the same; graciously sending them forth in this latter age under the type of this white horse: for horses of lusty courage are his faithful servants, after Abacuk; yea, and whiter are they than either snow or milk by their true belief, after Jeremy. I (saith the Lord), which am the word of righteousness, do valiantly battle to save you. For none other purpose fighteth he, but to the intent to preserve his elect.

7. The eyes of the horseman were as the pure flame of fire, effectual, mighty, and clear. And these are not only his godly understanding and knowledge, whereby he perceiveth, discerneth, and judgeth clearly all things, but also the universal graces of the Holy Ghost. Upon one sure stone, saith Zachary (whom Paul called Christ), shall be seven eyes, "which are the seven Spirits of God." With these eyes lighteneth he the hearts of all godly men, and kindleth their minds to the true love of God. His word is a lantern to their feet, and a light to their paths. Pure is his commandment, giving clearness to the sight. Open thou mine eyes, Lord, (saith David,) and then shall I well perceive the wonderful mysteries of thy doctrine.

8. Upon his head (saith St John) were also many beautiful crowns, like as were before in figure upon the head of

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Jesus Josedech the high priest, in token that Christ is the high king over all worlds, regions, and ages. For he is the Lord of hosts, and the eternal King of glory; he was constitute a principal governor of Sion, the holy hill of the Lord. He gives prosperity to kings, and hath their victory in his hands. In him, as in their head, have all his elect members their crowns. Both with mercy shall he crown them, and also with long kindness. For Peter hath he laid up a crown of incorruptible glory, for John a crown of life, for Paul a crown of righteousness, and so forth. For the whole conflict, victory, and triumph of the saints, is of him alone.

9. He had a special name written, or eternally of God his Father appointed, whose excellent majesty no created understanding was able of his own industry to comprehend. Omnipotent was this name, marvellous, honourable, holy, and terrible, Adonai, Emmanuel, a name of salvation, and a name above all names: yea, the Lord was his name, or the Lord our Righteous-maker.

10. No man knoweth this name, save he himself only, and they to whom he hath shewed it. Neither flesh nor blood, Gentile nor Jew, hypocrite nor false Christian, hath rightly known it; no, though they have said, "Lord, Lord:" for none can say jointly that Jesus is the Lord, but in the Holy Ghost, which openeth all godly verity. In this name is also registered the elect number of God's adoptive children, whom the world doth not know for his, nor never will do.

11. And this Lord was beautifully adorned with a vesture fair and comely, but it was all dipt in blood. Some have taken this garment for his righteousness, wherein hath appeared all avengements over his enemies. Some have supposed it to be his church, all bloody in his martyrs and constant witnesses. But upon their side am I, which have taken it for his flesh; for that did he on as a vesture. So sore hath that vesture been striped, and so grievously wounded, that from the sole of the foot to the overmost part of the head was no whole place in it. This mighty captain is he which came from Edom and Bosra, his clothes besprinkled with red. His apparel is all spotted, much like unto his arrayment that treadeth in the winepress. For his mortal nature suffered most painful death. Alone trod he down the winepress in those days, and had no man to help him. Alone was he wounded for our

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offences, alone were our punishments laid upon him, with whose stripes we are now healed.

12. And his name (saith St John), besides that is spoken afore, is the eternal word of God. He is called that word which was in the beginning with God, which furnished the heavens above, which ordered all things beneath, and now last of all took flesh, restoring, lightening, quickening, healing and saving all them that truly believe in him.

The Text.

1 And the warriors which were in heaven 2 followed him 3 upon white horses, 4 clothed with white and pure silk; 5 and out of his mouth went a sharp sword, 6 that with it he should smite the heathen. 7 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; 8 and he trod the wine-vat of the fierceness 9 of the wrath of Almighty God; 10 and hath on his vesture, 11 and on his thigh, a name written, 12 King of all kings, 13 and Lord of all lords.

The Commentary.

1. The valiant warriors or constant ministers, which were in heaven or in the holy household of faith, did follow him in a comely order upon fair white horses.

2. According to his scriptures did they lead their conversation. After the rules of his godly discipline did they live. They fashioned themselves to the example that was shewed them in the mount.

3. None other are these horses, than their corruptible bodies, prepared to battle. They which are of Christ do mortify the vices and lusts of their flesh, they tame their carnal affections. Like perfect men they bridle their bodies to the obedience of the Spirit, so to become the true servants of righteousness, and no more to do service unto sin. White are these horses, for the pure word of the Lord which governeth them. No marvel though these mighty soldiers follow the Lord, considering he is so oft in the scriptures called the Lord of hosts. A like multitude did the servant of Helisæus the prophet behold in a vision through God's permission in Dotham.

4. This army of the Lord here were apparelled preciously with pure white silk or fine raines, betokening that pure innocency which they have in Christ their general captain. Not carnal is this armour, but evermore spiritual, after the doctrine of St Paul. "Though we walk in the flesh (saith he),

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yet do we not fight after a fleshly manner. For the weapons of our war are not carnal things, but things mighty in God." Beautiful and fair is my well beloved (saith the eternal Salomon), for his soul pleaseth his Lord, and is loved again of him. His favour and his mercy is upon his holy ones; he hath a loving respect unto his chosen number. A notable sign of victory in the faithful are also these white horses and vestures; for afore they are called the justifications of the saints.

5. And out of his godly mouth (saith the text) proceeded forth a sharp two-edged sword; which is the fierce judgment of his mighty word. By this effectual sword are the faithful believers wounded unto life, and the unbelievers to the death of damnation: for unto some it is the savour of life unto life, and unto some again the savour of death unto death. By this sword also shall the dead branches be cut from the vine, and the corrupted members from the whole body. The goats shall be divided from the lambs, and the evil from the righteous. Oh, how sharp, fierce, and terrible will this sentence of the Lord's indignation be at that day! "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." Yet shall it be unto the faithful a perpetual pure victory and triumph over their enemies.

6. Over and besides all this, goeth that sword from his eternal mouth to the intent he should therewith correct their heathen, or reform them of their heathenish life; so that if they will not at the wholesome admonishments of his word repent and amend their old conversation, that then they should be condemned by the same for their wilful contempt. If men will not turn (saith David), he shall whet his sword against them. He will sharpen it as the lightning, and acquit his enemies their wickedness.

7. This mighty Lord shall rule them with a strong rod of iron which is his invincible verity; that is the rod of right orders, the sceptre of the kingdom, and the wand of power, whom the Lord sent from Sion to have sway among our enemies. So strong is this sceptre, that it will not bow. No place will it give to the contrary part. If they will not therewith be ordered, he shall break them in pieces as the potter doth his pot, in such manner as they never shall recover again.

8. The wine-vat of the great fierceness and sore displeasure of Almighty God shall he tread down with power.

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More grievously shall they be oppressed at this latter coming by his set sentence, than they were afore at Jerusalem by Vespasian and Titus. The vineyard of the Lord of hosts was the house of Israel. This brought he out of Egypt by strong hand. Thereof looked he to have had grapes, and it brought him forth briars and thistles. Their vines were as the wild vines of Sodom. Bitter were their grapes as the poison of dragons, and as the cruel gall of adders. Therefore will he break the hedge, and throw down the wall, that it may be trodden under foot.

9. Great anguish shall be upon the earth in his fury, and wrath upon that people in his anger. They shall fall on the edge of the sword and be dispersed. Both here shall they have grief, and also in the world to come.

10. This victorious horseman hath upon his white vesture besprinkled with blood, which is his innocent manhood crucified;

11. And upon his tender thigh (whom some call his church, some his scriptures, as flesh of his flesh, or spirit of his Spirit), this name of magnificence written.

12. In both of them is it manifestly expressed that he is both King of kings, and also Lord of lords, the great guide of right governors, and the monarch of godly magistrates. By kings is his generation described of Matthew in the posterity of David, and of Luke by faithful fathers unto Adam, which had the first promise of health. Both doth the godly acts of his natural manhood, and also the Holy Spirit whom he left here to the comfort of all true believers, declare that he is the eternal attorney of God, his apostles and true servants affirming the same. And these are his garment and thigh. By his death is our nakedness covered, which are his mystical members: of his Spirit is our strength, which are the generation seeking the Lord of Jacob.

13. Both hath he given him of God the high seat of David his father, and also the universal power in heaven and in earth as he by whom all things were first created. For his power is an everlasting power, and his kingdom such as shall never perish. And all this is comprehended in that he is called the Son of the Highest, and in that he alone hath immortality, inhabiting the light that no man can attain; to whom be honour and everlasting empire. Amen. In this

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vesture and thigh are his titles written as to his only behoof, that no man should of presumption usurp them neither by supremity nor vicarage, his church and posterity acknowledging the same evermore.

The Text.

1 And I saw an angel 2 stand in the sun, 3 and he cried with a loud voice, 4 saying to all souls that fly by the midst under the heaven, 5 Come and gather yourselves together 6 unto the supper of the great God, 7 that ye may eat the flesh of kings, 8 and of high captains, 9 and the flesh of mighty men, 10 and the flesh of horses, 11 and of them that sit on them, 12 and the flesh of all free men and bond men, 13 both of small and great.

The Commentary.

1. After this revelation I saw (saith St John) a beautiful angel; betokening not only the apostles, but all other faithful ministers in the word else, having the apostles' spirit.

2. In the sun stedfastly stood this angel, which signifieth Christ the clear Sun of righteousness, the bright morning-star in the midst of the clouds, the express image of God and substance of his glory. In the strong faith of his name and word stand these worthy witnesses against the whole swarm of antichrists, not once removing their foot from the rock, which is Christ also, for no persecution nor death.

3. These have cried, and shall yet cry still to the world's end, with a mighty loud voice or a sure constant spirit. Earnestly shall they protest and publish unto the feathered fowls of the air, that fly by the midst of heaven; by whom are understood the meek-spirited multitude, made spiritual by faith and by knowledge of heavenly mysteries.

4. These as flying birds are taken up from unpure delights, leaving at their tails all corruptible things. They lift up themselves above themselves, and have their conversation in heaven unfeignedly. Yea, these are those gentle souls whom the heavenly Father abundantly feedeth without their deservings. Such a fowl was faithful Abraham in Mesopotamia, Moses in Sinai, Elias in Carmel, Daniel among the lions, the children of Israel in the wilderness, Paul in Damascus, John in Patmos, and many other more which afterward became angels also in the sun, or teachers in Christ. And this not only hath been, but shall be also still to the world's end, the tenor of their cry:

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5. Come, you that have received the verity, from the heavy and careful cures of this world, and gather yourselves together into the unity of one faith and spirit. Knit yourselves together in christian love, which is the chain of perfection, and let the peace of God which passeth all wit keep your hearts and understandings in Christ Jesu, that ye may be counted worthy your christian vocation.

6. And so prepare yourselves as his loving friends unto the bounteous supper of the Almighty God (which is the eternal refection of soul), that ye may be fed with his most precious delicates. Learn of the word of God what is his heavenly will, and follow it in your works: flee thereby from all worldly lusts, live soberly, justly, and godly here, abiding his glorious appearance.

7. So order yourselves in living and doctrine, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, or take from the worldly governors by your godly preaching all that is filthy and carnal.

8. Consume the fierce flesh of the captains, in plucking them from cruelty and malice.

9. Devour the froward flesh of men that be mighty in power and possessions, cause them to leave their superfluous vanities.

10. Spare neither horses nor yet those that sit upon them, but bite both their fleshes hard. Rebuke both the beastly antichrist and the prince that ruled by him.

11. Pluck from those belly-gods, bishops and priests, their pomps, and lecherous pleasures, and from those that follow them in superstitions the cruel persecuting of innocents.

12. See that no flesh be left untouched, neither of freemen nor bondmen, rulers nor subjects, masters nor servants; neither of small nor great, poor nor rich, low nor high; but be doing with them all. Play, as doth the eagles and other ravening fowls: where as ye see a dead carcass, or body without faith and spirit, thither resort ye apace.

13. Tell every man his right office. Exhort the king to be learned, and to live in the fear of the Lord; the prince to be wise, and the judge to be godly. Bid the grand captains be faithful to their commons, and the great rich men more merciful to the poor. Command the carnal hypocrites no longer to dissemble, and their undiscreet clients no longer follow them in darkness. Require them no longer

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to neigh after their neighbours' wives, like rank-stoned horses, and the other no longer to pamper them up to all beastly vices. Charge the governors to rule faithfully, and the common people to obey lovingly. See that the women obey their husbands, the children their fathers, the servants their masters; and again, that the men be loving to their wives, gentle to their children, and favourable to their servants. Open the four-cornered sheet, as did Peter: slay all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, vermin, worms, and fowls of the air, and eat them. Rebuke them with patience, whatsoever they be, tyrants, persecutors, murderers, gluttons, antichrists, extortioners, ribalds, idolaters, thieves, and pluck from them their filthy and carnal customs. Ye shall eat the flesh (saith Ezechiel) of the worthies, and drink the blood of the princes of the land, of the wethers, of the lambs, of the goats, and of the oxen that be all slain at Bashan.

The Text.

1 And I saw the beast, 2 and the kings of the earth, and their warriors, 3 gathered together 4 to make battle 5 against him that sat upon the horse, 6 and against his soldiers. 7 And the beast was taken, 8 and with him that false prophet 9 that wrought miracles before him, 10 with which he deceived them that received the beast's mark, 11 and them that worshipped his image. 12 These both were cast quick into a pond 13 of fire burning with brimstone. 14 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, 15 which sword proceedeth out of his mouth; 16 and all the fowls were stuffed with their flesh.

The Commentary.

1. Anon after this I beheld (saith St John) the great horrible beast that rose out of the sea, that battled with the saints, and that bare the great whore of Babylon, which is the general antichrist.

2. I saw also following him the cruel kings of the earth and their host of bloody warriors, the mitred bishops of his beastly kingdom with their great-bellied monks and priests, the malicious tyrants of the world with their mad moody magistrates and slaves.

3. These gather themselves together in one mind of mischief, and have done since Christ's ascension. They muster in array as did Pharao's host. They buskle[1] to-

[1 buskle: bustle about.]

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gether as did Caiphas' hired knights in the dark with firebrands and weapons;

4. To make fierce war or very sharp battle against the most valiant captain Jesus Christ, which sat upon the aforesaid white horse, and against the mighty-stomached soldiers of his faithful army of true Christians. Never was the holy gospel yet sincerely taught, the glory of God proponed, and the inordinate livings of men reprehended, but such uproar of hypocrites and such tumult of tyrants have followed.

5. The word of the Lord is always of one nature, to be the mark of contradiction and rock of reproach. Horsemen for the more part are these malicious warriors against Christ and his word, stirred, provoked, and set forward by the beastly bishops. None other caused Herod and Pilate to put Christ unto death, but Annas and Caiphas. None other moved Felix the president of Jewry to imprison Paul, but the puffed up prelate Ananias. Trajan the emperor would never so extremely have persecuted the christian church, nor yet other cruel tyrants ever since, had they not been propped forwardly by such pampered palfreys of the devil.

6. Not only against Christ do they move this bold battle, but also against those that faithfully believe his word, which are the dear members of his mystical body. No blasphemies, false miracles, lies, nor opprobrious slanders and rebukes spare they, to blemish their opinion to the world, besides the most cruel kinds of death. The captain of this wicked army is that terrible beast, whom Daniel also beheld in a vision, with iron teeth devouring, and with nails of brass destroying, and stamping the residue under his feet.

7. This horrible beast (saith St John), this filthy body of antichrist, comprehending all the great adversaries of the Lord, was taken suddenly:

8. And with him the false prophet, or beast rising out of the earth, betokening his false preachers,

9. Which wrought vain miracles before him, as did Jannes and Jambres the sorcerers of Egypt before Pharao, in counterfeiting Moses and Aaron. Yea, by their transubstantiations they can take from bread the substance, the accidents still remaining. They can hold the shadow when the body is gone, besides that they can do in purgatory and hell by their sacrifices of satisfaction.

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10. With such deceitful miracles and lying signs shall those be deceived by them, that hath by a false belief received into their consciences the unwholesome mark of the beast, or such a corrupt faith as shall cause their damnation.

11. And they in like case shall be seduced by them, that hath worshipped the beastly image of that great antichrist, or inclined to any worldly potentate in the upholding of his false religion. So sealed Caiphas the hearts of the wavering multitude of the Jews with that marking-iron of Satan, that they could be but his ministers. In no case could they save Jesus, but Barabbas the murderer. Though they received him joyfully not long afore into the city with *Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini*, yet could they at that time but cry, *Crucifige, Crucifige eum.* No, they had power to do none other but to crucify him in deed, which is to worship the beast's image, or to follow the wicked intent of that beastly generation, as their faithful clients do yet still to this day.

12. Both these twain (saith the text), the head and the body, the beast with his false prophet, were cast quick by the mighty judgment of God into a deep lake of most terrible fire, boiling with stinking brimstone. For unbewares shall destruction light upon that cursed generation, according to the faithful request of David, and suddenly shall they fall into their own mischief.

13. Without warning shall the great dart of the Lord's indignation light upon them, and bring them to nought for ever. Hastily shall death attach them for their wickedness' sake, and quick shall they drop into hell with Chore, Dathan, and Abiron. As a weighty stone or lead shall they sink to the bottom, and the pit shall swallow them up for their exceeding rebellion. For, like as they stood up against Moses and Aaron, so hath this beastly generation against God and his Christ. Therefore are they here specified after a most strange and terrible sort to be thrown forth. For three causes may it be that they are called here quick. One is, in that their stinking remnant shall at that dreadful day be alive, after the doctrine of Paul: another, in that they have wilfully, upon a set malice, resisted the known verity, detorting it to their own proper lust. "If I had not (saith Christ) done among them such works as never man did, they should be faultless. But

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they have certainly known them, yet have they hated both me and my Father." The Pagans not believing are judged already, and go to hell dead; whereas their knowing the will of their Lord, and not doing it, shall after another sort be plagued: fire shall they have with heat, and brimstone with stink. The third is, in that they shall have palpable darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth, their worm neither dying nor yet their fire going out. And like as the devil was thrown forth at the death of Christ, and soon after that the prelates and Pharisees of the Jews, as the head with the body; so shall at that time antichrist with his church, the pope with his clergy, and Mahomet with his sects, as the head with the body also.

14. The residue (saith St John), as kings, captains, strong, weak, high, low, great, and small, were slain with the sharp two-edged sword of him that yet to this hour sitteth upon the horse; which is Jesus Christ in the glorified nature of his manhood.

15. This mighty sword proceeded out of his reverend mouth. For it is the strong word of him that liveth for ever, and hath in it both spirit and life. Necessary it is for them that have been either seduced by their crafts, or coacted by their threatenings, to be touched with this sword. For he that is not thereby slain from sin and the world, shall not rise up to the life which is in Christ. He that is not with him dead from the ordinances of men, but still is led with traditions, cannot be clear from the curse, nor yet be the heir of promise. Therefore must they be slain dead with this sword, either to repentance and amendment of life, or else by the hard judgments of the same to eternal damnation.

16. Which way soever it be, all the aforesaid fowls, or peoples whom God hath raised from this world's affections, shall be fulfilled with their flesh. Whether they be saved or damned, they will most highly rejoice, considering it the pleasure of God. Both ways shall they be satisfied. If they be saved, then must they be glad, for that their number is so much the more increased, and for that their selves have escaped like danger. If they be damned, then must they rejoice also to see the right justice of God: for "the righteous shall make mirth beholding the vengeance, and shall wash

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their hands in the blood of the wicked," all flesh abhorring to look upon them.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER.

THE last enterprise of Satan, the common adversary of man, doth this chapter following declare, fetching an original from the beginning of Christ's spiritual kingdom, to conclude with the whole for our necessary instruction. As a brief rehearsal of all that is in a manner spoken afore, was this unto John, lest he should of obliviousness forget (as man's nature is forgetful) these wonderful mysteries and singular premonishments of the Lord, most expedient to be known of his church, that she might by them see aforehand the wily crafts of the devil and his members, and to beware of them; besides that to take courage, patiently to suffer their cruel persecutions. For a thing oft rehearsed departeth not so soon the memory as that is but once told. Which caused this evangelist not only here in this place, but also in his gospel and first epistle, oft to repeat the sayings, lest he should seem faintly to pass them over, and because the reader should the more earnestly mark them.

THE TEXT.

1 And I saw an angel 2 come down from heaven, 3 having the key of the bottomless pit, 4 and a great chain in his hand: 5 and took the dragon, the old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan. 6 And he bound him a thousand years, 7 and cast him into the bottomless pit. 8 And he bound him, 9 and set a seal on him, 10 that he should deceive the people no more, 11 till the thousand years were fulfilled. 12 And after that must he be loosed 13 for a little season.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. In the end of these revelations afore rehearsed (saith St John) saw I in a secret vision an angel of most singular beauty, betokening Jesus Christ the angel of God's eternal covenant.

2. From the high heaven above came this angel down unto the earth, sent of the everlasting Father. For neither spared that loving Father to send his most dear and only Son at the time appointed, nor yet the obedient Son to submit himself to the shape of a servant, and so become man. Vic-

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toriously did he overcome both death and the devil, as appeareth by his great miracles, resurrection, and ascension. And like as he came down first of all with a possible[1] meekness, so came he down after that with an impossible[1] and invisible majesty. Sudden was this latter coming down, and most marvellous to the world, such time as he by his heavenly Spirit replenished his apostles with all necessary knowledge. And the voice thereof was heard the world over, such time as they did preach it abroad. Sensibly was this coming down expressed in Saul, and also the mighty power thereof, when he threw him to the ground, and said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

3. This angel had the key of the bottomless pit, or power over hell, and a great chain in his hand, or full liberty to restrain the spiritual adversary. For unto him was given all power in heaven and in earth.

4. Authority had he to destroy him that had rule over death, which was then the devil. Though I was dead (saith Christ), yet "am I now alive for ever and ever, having the keys both of death and hell."

5. And according to his authority (saith St John), he took the fierce dragon in hand that was wont so maliciously to noy, that old wily serpent that of so long time hath with infinite crafts deceived; which is the very devil himself or malicious accuser of man, and is called Satan, or the cruel adversary, as he is most worthy: for both is he a spiteful adversary to God, evermore withstanding his will, and also unto man in plucking him back from following the same.

6. Like a most valiant captain fell he upon that strong-armed house-watcher, and overcame him, depriving him both of weapon and spoil. He laid a snare for the outrageous Behemoth, and caught him. He ringed the nose of the great Leviathan, and so brought him under. Yea, he bound that malicious Satan, and made him sure for a thousand years' space, to make of the vessels of wrath the vessels of mercy. This did he by his strong word of covenant, whom he made for a thousand generations. And a full performance it is of God's first promise for man's behoof, that Christ should tread down the head of the serpent. For a thousand years was this restraint. Mark, besides the mystery, the time from the

[1 Qu. *passible, impassible?*]

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ascension of Christ unto the days of Sylvester, the second bishop of Rome of that name; and ye shall find that it was from Christ's nativity a complete thousand, after all the historiographers. By such necromancy as he learned of a Saracen in Spain obtained he the papacy; and, as witnesseth John Wicliffe in his book, *De solutione Sathanæ*, in Christ's vicarship he loosened that devil whom Christ had afore shut up, and set him again at large to deceive afresh. Consider for the time that he was thus bound the constant faith of the Christians, and the invincible hearts of their martyrs; and ye shall find them far different from them which have been since. He was then so weak, so infatuate and babyish, that not only wise men, learned men, and strong men, did set him light, but also young maids, children, and tender infants in a manner did laugh him to scorn, and set all his subtle sleights at nought. Evident will this be to all them that shall read the lives of the holy martyrs and saints of the primitive church. Like a bird was that crooked Leviathan in those days so tamed, that no man set by him at all.

7. For not only was he then bound, but also thrown down with violence into the bottomless pit. For that time might they go safe upon the adder and scorpion, they might tread under their feet both the lion and the dragon. Both the devil and his angels might they then set at nought.

8. Yea, he was shut up, and so was double bound. So was his power taken from him, that upon neither side could he harm: neither was he able to pluck them from Christ's faith by flattering prosperity, nor yet by urgent adversity: neither could tyrannies nor heresies for that time prevail against the gospel.

9. Finally, he set a sure seal upon him; which was his word, will, and commandment, that he should no more of his own presumption deceive the people with errors and idol-worshippings, that believed in him, or that were predestinated to be saved, till such time as the aforesaid thousand years were fully accomplished, or as he should permit him thereunto for their unbelief's sake.

10. By this doth the Holy Ghost here ascertain us, that Christ hath so suspended the subtilties, and suppressed the venomous crafts of Satan for his elect, that he cannot hurt them in one hair of their head. For only is all this

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spoken for the chosen number; no part hath therein the reprobate vessels: never was the devil from them yet speared, but hath been in all ages with them familiar. Only are the consciences of the righteous by this freedom quieted, all other still left in captivity. This revelation respecteth in this point the inward kingdom of Christ, or the hidden congregation of the faithful, whom the world beholdeth with froward eyes; and not the blazing synagogue of antichrist, whom it laugheth upon so freshly.

11. None otherwise were they for all those thousand years vexed of Satan and his cursed members, but as was patient Job, in their outward substance and bodies. No power had he upon their souls all that long season.

12. And whereas it is here said, that after these thousand years Satan must be let loose again for a certain time, consider it to be the promise of God, which must in effect be fulfilled: not that he shall again loose him, which hath once bound him for ever, but that he shall permit other to do it according to his threatening promise, the unthankfulness and malice of wicked doers requiring none other. In the end of these thousand years reigned in the papacy at Rome the aforenamed necromancer Sylvester, which was both a black monk and also a Frenchman born. This beastly antichrist, boasting himself not only to be Christ's vicar in earth, but also to be equal with him in majesty and power, set first the devil at large by his necromancy, which took from the hearts of men the living word of the Lord, lest they should be saved. From thenceforth were not the holy scriptures regarded, but old wives' tales and Jewish fables most highly reputed. Then came in canons, decrees, sentences, synodals, decretals, Clementines, extravagantes, with other popish laws, the gospel clean set apart. About this time also (as Master John Carion[1] writeth in his chronicle) flourished the lordly order of cardinals, and grew into a wonderful estimation in the world. The universities were then furnished with learned men, mightily to prove the pope Christ's vicar in earth, and the only husband and overseer of his church. General councils were oft gathered to dispute

[1 Circa hæc tempora cardinalium nomen in usu esse cœpit; unde æstimari potest hanc ipsam dignitatem in ecclesia vetustiorem non fuisse.—J. Carion. Chronic. Libell. Paris, 1543, fol. 102.]

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with all Christendom, that none might dispense in matters of conscience, but he and they whom he should appoint, and that he could in no wise err; no, though when the candle were out, he went to bed with another man's wife, besides that I will not speak at this time. By this means got he an imperial seat, and might make both emperors and kings at his pleasure, and likewise depose them when he lusted. He might distribute the kingdoms and give the great possessions of this world to whom he lusted, yea, to his own bastards and chamberlains, as he did many times: for of the devil he hath received them, whereas Christ did utterly forsake them. And forsomuch as he was the high priest after the order of Satan, he might keep a general mart all his lifetime, and sell all the bishopricks, benefices, degrees, and offices of his church. He might subject the gospel to his own interpretation, make new constitutions, release sin for money, make every day new Gods, and do many other things else. No end was then of their gaudish ceremonies, brawlings in the temple, singings, bells, organs, images, ornaments, lamps, candles, holy days, shavings, surplices, paternosters, commanded fasts, and such like, that a man would have thought them angels, when they were very devils in deed. For the time that Satan was thus set at large by Christ's only vicar, was there not one martyr allowed, unless he were for deposing of princes, and defending the liberties of holy church against them, lest their murderers and thieves, being within sacred orders, should be hanged with the seculars. Mark the condition of the time. Afore that Satan was thus at liberty, he remained secret in the hearts of evil men. Now is he abroad in their outward ceremonies and rites, ready to be seen of all the world, if pride, pomp, haughtiness, and vain-glory may shew him, or if hypocrisy, error, superstition, and all other devilishness can tell where he is. When Christ shut him up, he took idolatry from the people; the pope hath restored it unto them again in thus setting him at large. In this is he not denied to have been afore this time abroad among the wicked. For, little less than four hundred years afore the end of this thousand, began the two monarchs of antichrist's kingdom, the pope in the west under Phocas the emperor, and great Mahomet in the east under Heraclius: mark it in the chronicles whoso

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list. For afore that time was not the pope taken for the universal head of the church, nor yet for Christ's vicar. And this could not have been, unless he had after some sort been at liberty. Evermore hath he reigned without restraint among the ungodly; but never so manifestly as then, his abominations accounted for holiness in the church. At this loosing of Satan or very defection, as Paul calleth it, openly appeared the man of sin, the son of perdition, and the adversary which exalteth himself above all that beareth the name of God. Faith waxed so faint and charity so cold, that scarce appeared one spark of the truth. The church became a perverse generation, and her children were very unfaithful. Afore reigned he evermore in the world, but never in Christ's congregation till that time. Never was the universal church of Christ defiled with so many abominable kinds of idolatry before.

13. But so it continued not long: for the text saith, he was loosed but for a little season. Immediately after perceived Berengarius, the archdeacon of Anjou in France, that all was not well, and with Bruno the bishop impugned their reality, identity, and naturality in the sacrament, to bring in again to Christ's clear institution. After him followed Waleranus the bishop of Medenburg, and did the same in Germany, with many other prelates and doctors. Consequently ensued the Waldeans and Albigeans pretending the apostles' life and doctrine, men doubtless of a godly zeal and spirit; and of them the antichrists slew more than a hundred thousand, besides an hundred and fourscore whom they brent because they would never abjure. What Guido, Bonatus, Joannes Semeca, Guilhelmus de Sancto Amore, Marsilius Paduanus, Arnoldus de Villa Nova, Franciscus Petrarcha, and other learned men needed against them after that, it were very long to write. John Wicliffe in England, and John Huss in Bohemia, men of excellent life and learning, with divers other more, replied earnestly against their transubstantiations and other sorceries. Laurentius Valla denied the donation of Constantine. John Wessalus of Groning in Freisland, called the light of the world, condemned utterly their purgatory and pardons. Now last of all cometh Martin Luther, Joannes Œcolampadius, Ulricus Zuinglius, Pomeranus, Brentius, Melancthon, Bucer, Bullinger, with other sincere

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and godly divines, and they turn over their universal kingdom. So merciful is the Lord to his people in this latter end of the world, that by these and such other the antichrist is clearly uttered, and all his hypocrisy disclosed. I doubt not but within few days the mighty breath of his mouth, which is his living gospel, shall utterly destroy him with his whole generation of shavelings by their faithful administration in the word.

The Text.

1 And I saw seats, 2 and they sat upon them; 3 and the judgment was given unto them. 4 And I saw the souls of them 5 that were beheaded for the witness of Jesu, 6 and for the word of God; 7 which had not worshipped the beast, 8 neither his image, 9 neither had taken his mark upon their foreheads, 10 or on their hands. 11 And they lived, 12 and reigned with Christ 13 a thousand years. 14 But the other of the dead men lived not again, 15 till the thousand years were finished.

The Commentary.

1. Whilst the dragon was thus tied up and thrown into the bottomless pit for a thousand years' space, a certain continuance of quiet-being the elect number had; whose peaceable estate and condition for that time the text here following declareth, by manner of recapitulation. After the afore rehearsed vision of the serpent, I beheld (saith St John) seats prepared without number. I saw the hearts of faithful believers (which are the seats of wisdom after Solomon) beautifully garnished with virtues by the preaching of the apostles and of other godly teachers. Very peaceable and quietous were these seats. For though they had in the world on every side tribulation, yet had they their consciences quieted in Christ. They considered themselves partakers of the heavenly calling, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God's children.

2. Upon these seats sat they which are afore called that people whom Satan should no more deceive. They settled themselves in the wisdom that God loveth. They grounded their dwelling with discretion in his understanding and knowledge. Fast did they cleave to his loving word; and for none adversity would they move their foot from the hard rock, which is Christ. Thus sat his people in the beautiful seats of peace, after Esay, in the tabernacles of trust, and in a most plenteous rest, the deceivers and mockers put apart.

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3. And as they were thus quieted, the judgment or true understanding of the Lord's verity was given unto them. Their senses were opened, and great knowledge had they in the scriptures. The figures and prophecies that were hid to others were manifest and open unto them. The dark veil was removed from Moses' face, and the light of the laws appeared. They could then discern good from evil, light from darkness, and sweet from sour. The yoke was then taken from them, and no longer were they subject to strangers. Dead men perceived the secrets of the book. The eyes of blind might see without mist of darkness. They which aforetime were of an erroneous spirit, had then the right understanding, and were learned in the law. In their inward parts was the knowledge thereof planted of the Lord, and the truth written in their hearts, he becoming their God and they his people. Because we should not separate the dead from the quick, or the departed from the living, and so judge them diverse, considering they both are of one God, and live by one Spirit, being of one hope and calling; the Holy Ghost doth here couple them together, as sheep of one pasture, feeding all of one spiritual meat, and drinking of one spiritual rock accompanying them, and as members of one mystical body of Christ in this present revelation.

4. I also (saith St John) beheld in this secret mystery of the Spirit the innocent souls of godly men and women, that were beheaded of cruel tyrants for the faithful testimony of Jesu, and the constant assertion of the true word of their Lord God. I perceived by the scriptures, that his true-hearted witnesses remained not in death with the wicked, but passed through with the righteous from death unto life, and had the life everlasting. They are not forgotten with the ungodly, but they now follow the Lamb, and dwell where as he dwelleth. Else would Paul never so earnestly have desired to be dissolved from this flesh, and so to be with Christ.

5. Not only is this here spoken of them that were beheaded, and of none other else, though it seemeth so in the letter, but of all them that have died for the verity. For then should Esay, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Amos, Micheas, Zachary, Stephen, and James the less, with all those that have been burned, strangled, quartered, drowned, stoned, crucified, spitted, racked, flayed, boiled, sticked, shot through with

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arrows, and that have suffered all other terrible torments, be reckoned to be none of that number. Beheading is here taken for deprivation of life, like as the head is in scripture taken sometime for the soul, sometime for the whole man.

6. For standing by Christ's verity, confessing him God and man, did they lose their lives, which was in the end no loss unto them, but a profitable winning. For unto such remaineth the crown of life, the delights of Paradise, and a seat with God.

7. These worshipped not the beastly antichrist, the very body of Satan. They bowed not down, nor yet gave themselves to such wicked traditions as that carnal generation made for their beastly bellies' sake.

8. Neither reverenced they his prodigious image, or such ungodly princes and magistrates as (their true office set apart) did counterfeit him in cruelty and devilishness. But they rightly considered with the faithful Maccabees and Apostles, that in such case it was much better to obey God than man.

9. Neither had they in their lifetime taken the print of his filthy seal upon their foreheads, professing in their inward consciences those diabolical rules;

10. Nor yet on their hands, agreeing to use them in the outward conversation of their bodies. No yoke would they draw with the infidels, thinking that Christ could have no agreement with Belial. For through faith they perceived (as he that is of the Spirit discerneth all things), that though they seemed glorious in the face of the world, yet were they before God abominable sacrilege. Diligently they searched the scriptures, and believed not all spirits, but first proved them whether they were of God or nay. By that knew they that the homage of soul ought to be given to none other than to one living God alone, and that none other precepts of living were to be followed of them than Christ their Saviour had taught. All other traditions of men took they for strange doctrine, and for crafty colours of devilish deceitfulness.

11. Therefore, when they were thought of the wicked to be dead, they lived in all sweetness of the Spirit, in desire of his latter coming, which shall be to their double glory.

12. And they reigned with Christ, the pastor and high bishop of their souls, not only here, where as they suffered with him, for a thousand years' space, but also above, where as

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he sitteth on the right hand of God's majesty-seat a thousand without end. Then reigneth the godly number most of all, when they seem to the wicked least of all to reign, as when they suffer persecution and death for Christ. For after none other sort reigneth his church here than he reigned afore them, whose triumph was greatest upon the cross.

13. The thousand years of the reign of the godly stretcheth here no farther than the thousand years of the fall of the ungodly, Christ's years also deducted, which is the head of his congregation. For as the one kingdom decreased, the other always increased, very few christian martyrs or constant witnesses perceived from thenceforth. For, as it appeareth by the history, many were abjured and recanted (which was not seen in the former age), and all in a manner, a small number of the poor except, utterly renounced the verity for the cruel behaviour of the antichrists. In these two sorts afore rehearsed, of them that sat upon the seats, and of them that were beheaded for the testimony of Jesu, is it to be marked, that all were not martyrs whom God allowed for his in the primitive church, but that there were of both sorts. So well was he accepted, that mortified the desires of the flesh, and offered himself a living sacrifice unto God, as he that gave his life for the verity.

14. But the residue (saith St John), or the other sort, called the dead men for that they were not numbered with the righteous, neither among them that sat upon the seats, nor yet among them that were slain for the witness of Jesu, lived not again after they were once dead, till the thousand years of their death was throughly fulfilled. The time was when they, which were dead through sin, did hear the voice of the Son of God. They faithfully believed the word thereof, and so revived in him unto the life everlasting, which was both the life and light of men: whereas the froward contemners of that living word, having their consciences sealed with the beast's mark, remained still in their infidelity, which is the very death of the soul, and so were by their right judgment of God lost for ever. For the sin against the Holy Ghost, which is a resistance against the manifest truth, shall neither be forgiven in this world, nor yet in the world to come.

15. A time without end doth this word "till" cause this thousand here to be, after the common usage of the scripture.

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Noe sent forth a raven out of the ark, which returned not again till the waters were dried up; that is to say, he never returned again. Joseph knew not Mary till she had brought forth her first-born son; that is to say, he never bodily knew her. Thou shalt not out of prison till thou hast paid the uttermost mite, that [is,] thou shalt never out: with an hundred of such places in the Bible.

The Text.

1 This is that first resurrection. 2 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: 3 for on such shall the second death have no power, 4 but they shall be the priests of God and of Christ, 5 and shall reign with him a thousand years.

The Commentary.

1. This is the first resurrection unto life, to rise from sin to repentance, from ignorance to godly knowledge, and from darkness to faith. Through the offence of one man entered sin into the world, and through sin death. Necessary it is therefore to die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness, and so to rise together with Christ, seeking the things which are above, and not upon earth. For never shall they come to the second resurrection, which is unto the life everlasting, that will not rise by repentance unto a new life in him which is both resurrection and life.

2. Blessed is that man of the Lord, yea, holy, just, and perfect may he be reported also of all men, which hath portion convenient in that first resurrection with David, Magdalene, Zacheus, and Peter. Happy are they which, hearing the word of God, retain it in their living: for they, being renewed with the glad tiding of life, are depured by the Spirit of Christ, sanctified, and so made the habitacles of the Holy Ghost.

3. Upon such godly disposed persons hath the second death of the soul (which is eternal damnation) no manner of power nor effectual jurisdiction. For no damnation can be unto them which are in Christ Jesu, not walking after the flesh. Though they have been great sinners, yet shall not their sins be to them imputed: but in the resurrection of the righteous shall they rise to immortality, and be as the very angels in heaven. He that hath taken from them the power of death, shall make them sure of the eternal inheritance with God.

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4. They shall surely be the chosen priests of God, the everlasting Father, and of his eternal Son, Jesus Christ, which are of the first resurrection. Though they be here in the flesh, yet fight they not after the flesh; but they shall follow the governance of the Spirit, and give over their bodies for a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God.

5. And thus shall they reign with Christ, their merciful Saviour and Redeemer, for the space of the thousand years aforenamed. None other took they all that long season for their spiritual Messias, their eternal King, their high bishop for all, their master, their lord, their guide, their light, and the shepherd of their souls. None other would they acknowledge but him for their mediator and atonement-maker, neither Moses nor Samuel, Noe, Daniel, nor Job, John Baptist, Mary, nor Peter. He only was unto them all wisdom, righteousness, holiness, and redemption. In none other name could they find health and salvation but alone in his. Nothing pertaineth this unto the pope's mass-sayers; for they call upon many names with *Ora pro nobis*, and are of a far other priesthood, as we have declared afore. In Christ's kingdom is none outward priesthood, nor sacrifice to be made for sin: for he hath with one oblation for all, fully satisfied for the sins of his elect number for ever. The office of a christian man now is only to offer up himself by the denial of himself and by the mortification of his flesh. In the holy supper of the Lord (which is a mutual participation of his body and blood) is no new sacrifice to be made, but only a faithful remembrance to be taught of that full and perfect sacrifice that he made once for all, unless we will betray him and crucify him again. The duty of a minister in Christ's congregation is with all study and diligence to labour in the holy word of God, be he bishop, priest, chaplain, pastor, or preacher. His ministration is great labour and no dignity; pain, and not pride or arrogancy; and having his food and raiment, he ought to require no more.

THE TEXT.

1 And when the thousand years are expired, 2 Satan shall be loosed out of prison, 3 and shall go out 4 to deceive the people 5 which are in the four quarters of the earth, 6 Gog and Magog, 7 to gather them together to battle, 8 whose number is as the sand of the sea. 9 And they went upon the plain of the earth, 10 and compassed the tents of

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the saints about, 11 and the beloved city. 12 And fire came down from God out of heaven, 13 and devoured them. 14 And the devil that deceived them 15 was cast into a lake of fire and brimstone, 16 where the beast and the false prophet were, 17 and shall be tormented day and night for evermore.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. After the plenteous description of the true church of Christ, which is unknown to the world (for the glorious daughter of the eternal King is from within, saith David), now followeth in course the pernicious kingdom of antichrist, when it was in the highest pride. So soon as the afore rehearsed thousand years (saith St John) are fully accomplished, or brought to an end,

2. Satan, the common adversary of man, shall be loosed out of his dark prison, and so shall be set at large by the sufferance of God, man's wickedness deserving none other. A full liberty shall he have to do all mischief upon earth, and strongly to delude the unbelievers for their unbelief's sake.

3. He shall go forth with all deceitful power, whereof he is full, transforming himself into a resemblance of the angel of light, to deceive the universal people of the world.

4. Through the operation of error he shall cause them to give credence unto lies and false miracles, that they might be damned for refusing the truth, and consenting to such wickedness. Very craftily shall he compass them with gins of hypocrisy to blind their unfaithful minds, lest the light of the gospel should be open unto them. The abomination of desolation shall be set up in the holy place, to the utter destruction of their faith.

5. Yea, he shall seek out this people from the four quarters of the universal earth, to corrupt their consciences with all manner of superstitions.

6. Which people of him thus perverted is called here in mystery Gog and Magog, which is as much to say as 'covered, and of covered.' For both the grand captains and multitudes of them depending doth these two words comprehend, the one covering the devil with many false religions, and the other in his sort following the same wicked consent. St Augustine, in his twentieth book *De civitate Dei*, willeth by Gog to be signified the glorious hypocrites of the world, and

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by Magog the open enemies of righteousness pretending the contrary[1]. As testifieth Berosus the Chaldean, in the first book of his histories, and fifth chapter: Gog was a mighty governor in the land of Sabea and Arabia the rich under Nimrod, the great king of Babylon, and there ruled with Sabus his father in the eighteenth year of his reign. In the thirty-eighth chapter of Ezechiel's prophecy is he called the chief prince of Mosoch and Tubal, whom some expositors take for Cappadocia and Spain. But after the opinion of St Jerome and Isidorus, which was a Spaniard, the Hebrews do take this Tubal for Italy, which is much more agreeable to this purpose. Magog was the second son of Japhet, which was the third son unto Noe. This Magog (as witnesseth Josephus in the first book of his Antiquities, the eleventh chapter) was the first beginner of the Magogites, whom the Greeks called the Scythians, and we now the Tartarians[2]. And all the chief writers specify the Turks of them to have taken their first original. Now mark this wonderful mystery, and consider therein both the time and story. So shall ye well perceive the Holy Ghost to mean none other here by this Gog and Magog, but the Romish pope and Mahomet, with their blasphemous and wicked generations. Search the chronicles, and ye shall find that their beginnings were base, and their estate simple, before the thousand years were finished. But after that they grew up so high by their feigned simplicity and simulated holiness, that they became the two chief monarchs of the earth, and so in process ruled the universal world.

These are the two horns or beastly kingdoms of the great antichrist, or whole body of the devil, rising up by the earthly studies and devilish devices of wicked men. By the doctrine of Aristotle, Plato, Porphyry, Avicenna, Averroes, Avenzoar, and such other, became the Romish pope Christ's vicar, and head of the universal church. Petrus Lombardus created him a new divinity; so did Gratianus Monachus a new canon

[1 The words here cited are not to be found. St Augustine says, Quorum interpretationem nominum comperimus esse, Gog, *tectum*, Magog, *de tecto*; tanquam domus, et ipse qui procedet de domo, &c.—S. Aug. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1679—1700, de Civ. Dei, Lib. XX. cap. 11, Tom. VII. col. 588, 9.]

[2 Μαγώγης δὲ τοὺς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ Μαγώγας ὀνομασθέντας ᾤκισε, Σκύθας δὲ ὑπ' αὐτῶν προσαγορευομένους.—Flav. Joseph. Ant. Lib. I. cap. 6, Lips. 1782—5, Tom. I. p. 40.]

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law of decrees to establish the same, besides that was done then by Petrus Comestor, the third brother. For all they three were the children of one adulterous mother, as witnesseth Antoninus, Hermannus, Schedel, Joannes Textor, and divers other chronographers. By the crafty conveyance of Sergius, a false monk of Constantinople, and of one Matthew the archdeacon of Antioch, was Mahomet taken for the Apostle of both Testaments, for the great prophet of God, and for Messias among the Tartarians and Arabians, with other peoples of the East. To establish this by a pretended religion, and to bring it to a mighty monarchy, by the advisement of Phineas, Abdias, Cabalchabar, Balteira, Merban, and Elgug, with other Jews, Jacobines, Nestorians, and Arians, they made the blasphemous law of their Alcoran, as testifieth John Cuspinian in his book *De Turcarum origine*, and other authors else. Thus for the wickedness and sins of the people suffered the Lord abominable hypocrites to have the dominion over them. The two horns are like the lamb's horns at a blush. For both they pretend holiness in fastings, in prayers, in alms-deeds, in washings, and in other holy rites and ceremonies; that a man seeing them, not having knowledge of that truth of God which trieth all, would think nothing to be more pure, honest, godly, innocent, clean, holy, and angelic, than are their traditions. Both they confess one God. Both they commend Christ. Both they allow the scriptures of both laws. Mahomet calleth Christ the word of God, the Spirit of God, and the soul of God, the most excellent prophet, and the worthiest among creatures. But in no case will he have him taken for the Son of God, no more than the pope will have him taken for a full Saviour without his masses and suffrages. And like as the pope hath risen up by the wily practices of philosophers, sophisters, sententioners, and canonists; so hath Mahomet come up by the Sabellians, Manichees, Eunomians, Macedonians, Nestorians, and Arians, with other heretics: out of whose opinions was contrived his Alcoran, as a mean law betwixt Moses and Christ, because the one (say they) was too full of hardness, the other too full of liberty. And to call unto him both Jews and Christians, he admitteth after a sort both circumcision and baptism, granting them liberty to have many wives, with other voluptuous pleasures.

7. Thus under simulate religion, or pretence of God's law and service, these two tyrants, Gog and Magog, the

Romish pope and Mahomet, with their whole generations of like spirit with them, have gathered themselves together into one wicked consent against God and his Christ. For under Gog and Magog are all they comprehended, whom Satan deceived after that he was set at large. Though these two have not accorded in other things, yet have they both agreed in this one point by the devil's enticement, to battle against the Lamb. To withstand the verity, and impugn the truth of the gospel, they have been ready everywhere, in every land, in every city, and in every town.

Of one cruel purpose and study to do mischief have these two enemies been in all places of the world, to persecute Christ's poor congregation. This thing doth the daily practices of them both so manifestly declare, that all the world see it well enough. These doth Esay call that strong multitude, whose spoil Christ shall divide, the smith that bloweth the coals in the hot fire, and the waster that destroyeth. Ezechiel doth compare them to a raging tempest, Daniel to the king of the north, and Zachary to the princes of the earth.

8. Whose exceeding number (saith St John) is as the dry sand that hath been cast up with the sea, which can in no wise be numbered. In this full well may it be considered, what a small thing Christ's flock was in comparison of these soldiers of Gog and Magog, after Satan's going forth, and for the time of their battle. Innumerable were the sects of the pope with those that they brought to that false faith and obedience: and so were the prophets of Mahomet with that perverted multitude. Their power was great for the time, and their malice vengeable; yet were they as sand, dry and unfruitful.

9. They rose up in pride, riches, and royalty, and always went over, where as they see the earth made plain and smooth, and that in every land they compass. Their general journey was all the world over towards them that were poor in spirit, or whose lusts were mortified from the world. Consider them for an example, whom they have cruelly burned and slain. Where as they perceived their crooked customs thrown down, and the strait rule of God's word faithfully received, there persecuted they most fiercely, there waxed they furious and mad, sparing neither sword, fire, gibbet, nor other torment.

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10. Yea, they compassed everywhere about with tyranny and malice possible the holds, the dwelling houses, and the places of resort pertaining to the faithful brethren. They vexed their bodies on every side with rebukes, scorns, blasphemies, lies, scourgings, imprisonments, open shames of the world, and all manner of kinds of death. Seldom escaped any from the terrible hands of the prelates and priests in that wretched time, that sincerely favoured the truth. Everywhere had they their spies, their Judases, their false accusers, their summoners, their bailiffs, and their pick-thanks with other officers, to bring them in. In all places were they diligently watched, fiercely examined when they were taken, and cruelly enforced to accuse so many as they knew of that belief. Everywhere had they bishops' prisons and spiritual dungeons, with plenty of ropes, stocks, and irons, and as little charity else as the devil hath in hell. Everywhere had they fagots, fire, and stakes in abundance, to consume such heretics as would not believe as holy church commanded. This hath been their order for the time of Satan's liberty; and this have they taken for an high point of christian religion. For this is that hour that Christ prophesied of, wherein men should think to do unto God great service when they put one of his unto death.

11. Thus have they with all prodigious tyranny compassed the dearly beloved city of God, or the holy congregation for whom Christ died, utterly to overthrow it. By all manner of crafts and devilish circumventions have they gone about at that time (as they would do yet still) to destroy that small remnant or church of the Lord, builded without material stone and mortar, that sweet spouse of his without spot or wrinkle. Not only sought they in that enterprise to bring to nought the particular congregations, but, for as much as lay in them, the universal church of God then living. Blessed be our Lord God, though it hath been since the loosing of Satan but a poor wretched neglected thing, and of no reputation before the world, yet hath it been always before him a beloved city, and hath defended it so mightily, that nothing hath perished of it, no, not one hair of their heads. What the Turk with Mahomet's host hath done for his part in Egypt, Greece, Palestine, Jerusalem, Bulgaria, in the borders of Italy and Spain, at the Rhodes, in the kingdom of

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Hungary, Ludovicus the king there ruefully slain, and now last of all against the city of Vienna, I think it is known unto all men. We may see by that is here written of these two enemies, Gog and Magog, the daily experiments confirming the same, that they are far above us in number and power, being as the sands in the sea. Most vainly are we occupied, if we ascertain ourselves to have the victory over them by any other way than the Lord hath appointed. Let us pray therefore unto the Lord for grace, and then amend our lives, and the plague shall cease. Only hath he promised to destroy them all with the breath of his mouth, and with no bodily armour nor strength of men, as hereafter followeth. Let us in the mean time give ourselves unto fervent prayer, to compassion of our brethren, to deeds of charity and pity, to abstinence from sin, and to the forsaking of our own desires. For sure we are that he shall shorten their days of mischief, for his elect's sake.

12. In the process following must we take for the time past the time to come, for the clear declaration of the mystery, considering evermore the usage of the scriptures for times. When these enemies, Gog and Magog, shall be at the highest in their vengeable enterprises against the elect city, or peaceable congregation of Christ, a consuming fire (saith St John), which is the eternal word of the Lord, shall come down fiercely out of heaven from the mouth of the great omnipotent God.

13. As a fearful lightning shall it fall upon them, and as a terrible fire shall it devour them; like as the material fire did eat up Sodom and Gomorre, the rebellious in the desert, and the enemies that sought Elias. The fire that is kindled in the wrath of God shall burn unto the bottom of hell, and consume up those terrible termagants.

14. That word of the Lord's indignation shall with great violence throw the devil, that wily serpent which deceived Gog and Magog with their innumerable soldiers, into a foul stinking lake, or boiling pit of wild fire and brimstone.

15. "Upon the wicked (saith David) shall the Lord rain snares; wild fire, brimstone, with terrible storm and tempest, shall they have to reward," for their eternal punishment. Herein are to be marked and considered both the intolerable grievousness of the pains, and also the everlasting continuance of them.

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16. In the same place of intolerable torment were the beastly generations of antichrist, and all their schoolmasters of hypocrites' doctrine. For eternally of God were they thereunto appointed, as the ungodly commonalty with their captain, and as the body and members with their wicked head (for already is it done by his word, but then shall it follow in effect); where as they shall be, as the Lord hath appointed, most sharply afflicted with unspeakable torments, both day and night, without pause or ceasing, for ever and ever without end.

17. Never shall their fire be quenched (saith Esay), nor yet their gnawing worm be taken from them. For all manner of griefs wherewith God vexeth the wicked, may this fire here be taken after the scriptures. For, as witnesseth St Augustine in his twentieth book and twelfth chapter, *De civitate Dei*, not only is this punishment to be referred to the latter judgment, but also to the extermination of antichrist's host by the word of God the world over[1]. Be the gospel once purely taught among men, it will condemn all that they have done upon their own presumption, without the ground of God's verity, be it ceremony or sacrament, priesthood or sacrifice, reserving the deceivers to his most fearful judgment.

The Text.

1 And I saw a great white seat, 2 and him that sat on it, 3 from whose face fled away both the earth and heaven, 4 and their place was no more found. 5 And I saw the dead, both great and small, 6 stand before God. 7 And the books were opened: 8 and another book was opened, 9 which is the book of life. 10 And the dead were judged of those things 11 which were written in the books, according to their deeds. 12 And the sea gave up her dead, 13 which were in her. 14 And death 15 and hell delivered up the dead 16 which were in them: 17 and they were judged every man according to his deeds. 18 And death 19 and hell were cast 20 into the lake of fire. 21 This is the second death: 22 and whosoever was not found written in the book of life, 23 was cast into the lake of fire.

The Commentary.

1. And after this I beheld (saith St John) in secret mystery an imperial throne, or seat of estate, fair, splendent, and beautiful. None other is this than the judgment-seat of the Lord.

[1 Bale expresses in a few words the sense of the whole chapter. S. Aug. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1679—1700. De Civ. Dei, Lib. xx. cap. xii. Tom. VII. col. 590.]

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2. Great it is, for the majesty and power of him that shall sit thereupon is of inestimable magnificence and greatness: fair and white, both for the celestial clearness that shall at that hour appear with him, and also for the pureness, equity, and right of his universal judgments:

3. From the aspect of whose fearful countenance shall both the earth beneath and the other elements above flee away. All the creatures of his creation shall with reverence tremble and quake at his mighty appearance. The sun shall then be darkened, the moon shall not give her light. The stars shall fall down from above, the powers of heaven shall be moved; the elements shall melt with heat, and the whole earth shall tear in pieces like a rag.

4. A terrible fire shall go before the Judge, to burn up his enemies on every side. The places of them that lived here superstitiously and voluptuously shall no more after that be found. Never shall they resort again hither to their old wanton pleasures. Of their beautiful cities shall not one stone be left upon another. Their proud painted synagogues, as dust in the wind, shall be scattered away from the earth. Neither shall the sky, nor yet the ground beneath, be as it was, but both they shall be renewed and changed. These shall be delivered from corruption, and so appear both a new heaven and a new earth, according to the expectation of the creatures.

5. Immediately after that (saith St John), the Judge thus sitting upon the seat of his eternal majesty, I saw still in mystery after the blast of the trumpet, that all they which were dead arose out of the earth; and that both high and low, great and small, good and bad, king and beggar, prelate and ploughman, tyrant and persecuted innocent; yea, the sucking babe that died in the cradle, so well as the aged man.

6. All they seemed unto me to stand before their general Judge, Jesus Christ, to whom the everlasting Father had given over his whole judgments, which there appeared as he was indeed, a very omnipotent God. "All we shall appear (saith Paul) before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one of us may receive according to that he hath done, be it good or ill."

7. And the books of reckonings (which are the several consciences of men) were open before the Judge. That afore

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was hid will then be manifest, and that was secret will then come to light and be disclosed. Evident it will be unto him, who hath fulfilled the commanded works of mercy, and who hath left them undone, their own consciences bearing witness to the same. For what can be hid from him which seeth both the inward reins and the secret thoughts of thy heart? In this general reckoning yet shall praise with the eternal reward redound unto them from that merciful Lord, whose walking here hath been according unto faith. There shall they be reported to have been pitiful to the poor, hungry, thirsty, needy, naked, sick, and in prison.

8. After this was another book opened of a far diverse nature from the other books; for it was the sweet book of life, wherein were registered all that were predestinate to be saved, from the world's beginning. And this book is the eternal predestination of God.

9. "Before the world's foundation (saith St Paul) the Lord predestinated us into the adoption of his children through Jesus Christ." Of this book made Moses mention, when he said, Either "pardon this people, or else rase me out of thy book, which thou hast written." And Christ also to his seventy disciples, "Be glad (saith he) that your names are written in heaven." Moreover Josue called this the book of the righteous, and John here the book with seven clasps. This sheweth the Holy Ghost here unto us, much after the custom daily used among us: for of the most notable men and women our manner is both long to remember the names, and also to speak of them, as occasion giveth. So equal is this eternal Judge, that no personage respecteth he in judgment, neither of emperor nor pope, king nor bishop, lord nor priest; but as he is righteous of himself, so judgeth he righteously.

10. For they that were dead (saith St John), or that had led their lives here without faith and the Spirit of Christ, were judged of him there, according to the things which were registered in the books of their consciences:

11. That is to say, according to the filthy works whereof their desperate consciences accused them. Only are the wicked to be taken here for the dead: for the righteous shall then have nothing whereof their conscience may accuse them; neither shall the evil-doers, as witnesseth David, be of counsel with them at that day. They having the life everlasting

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shall not then be judged, though they then appear; but shall sit with Christ in judgment, and rejoice in the condemnation of the ungodly blasphemers. The reward of their unfaithfulness shall then be poured upon them, to their perpetual care. At that day shall none be absent, but all shall be seen, either to honour or else to reproof.

12. Neither shall the depth of the sea, nor the darkness of death, nor yet hell that is bottomless, be able to hide any from the face of this Judge. For the sea (saith St John), that is mighty and great, shall at that day deliver up clean her dead, or those whom the Lord suffered her to swallow in for their outrageous sins.

13. Like as were the giants in the flood of Noe, the great host of Pharao in the Red Sea, and such other more;

14. So shall greedy death do also, which after many strange sorts hath consumed the enemies of God: as for an example, Cain by a chance onslaught, Nadab and Abiu by fire, Achan by stoning, Holofernes and Saul by the sword, Nabal by excess of wine, Jezebel by treading of horses, Daniel's accusers by the lions, Menelaus by breaking his neck, Judas by hanging himself, Herod by worms, the children of Israel by sword, fire, serpents, and sudden death, and such other like.

15. Hell, which is insatiable, shall in like case render up the innumerable swarm of the dead whom he with open mouth hath swallowed in quick for their abominations.

16. Of whose number were Chore, Dathan, and Abiron, with their affinity, the cities of Sodom and Gomorre, the uncircumcised giants, the rich jurer and the rich glutton in Luke, Simon Magus, with divers other. Hell hath gaped marvellously wide (saith Esay), and hath ravenously devoured the high-minded, sturdy, and disobedient nation. The uncircumcised giants (saith Ezechiel), with their weapons, are gone down to hell, whose swords are laid under their heads, their wickedness upon their bones. Of the wicked only is all this spoken here, if ye mark well the text, and in no wise of the godly; what though many of them have been drowned in the sea, burned, beheaded, and hanged upon the land, and buried quick in the earth?

17. For it followeth also, that they were judged of the Judge, and received every one according to their deservings.

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According to the fleshly fruits of their own inventions shall they be rewarded, their unfaithfulness justly measured unto them. Their bodies shall then take part with their wretched souls in the everlasting curse of damnation, the elect number rewarded with perpetual felicity.

18. And as concerning death itself, which is the universal enemy of man, it shall be destroyed for ever.

19. Hell also (which is here taken for sin) shall never more be seen among the creatures of God.

20. For both shall be thrown into the great lake of boiling fire and brimstone. The victory of death shall be swallowed up, and his sting done clean away, which is sin. That is now corruptible shall put on incorruption, and that is now mortal, immortality. Thus shall the Lord at that hour make of all his enemies his footstool, according to his promise by Oseas the prophet, "O death, I will be thy death; O hell, I will be thy destruction."

21. This terrible appointment of the Judge (saith St John) is the second death, or perpetual deprivation of the sight of God, yea, the utter fall from his favour, grace, and mercy. This death is the whole vengeance of all innocent blood which hath been shed upon earth from just Abel to the last faithful witness. Yea, this sentence is that stone that shall grind the enemies to powder, the very eternal damnation both of body and soul.

22. Now for a conclusion of the whole matter, whatsoever he be, king or emperor, priest or prelate, lay or religious, that shall not be found written in the book of life, which is the eternal predestination of God, for that he hath worshipped the beast and his image, he shall be cast by the irrevocable sentence of the Judge into the stinking lake of fire, perpetually there to burn with the devil and his angels: so that he which hath had no part in the first resurrection, shall be sure to taste of this second death, which is damnation.

23. He that believeth not the gospel, when it is faithfully taught him, repenting his former life, but refuseth the grace thereof freely offered, shall for ever be damned. Never shall his sin be remitted, neither in this world, nor in the world to come, that resisteth the Holy Ghost, withstanding the open verity. Only remaineth a fearful expectation of judgment unto them that here tread Christ under foot, not regarding

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his blood-shedding, but doing injury to the Spirit of grace for their own invention.

THE TWENTY FIRST CHAPTER.

In this last vision of John is both described the prosperous estate of the true church or kingdom of Christ here, and also the perpetual sabbath of the children of God. All the other visions were mixt with labours, afflictions and pains: this is full of peace, tranquillity, and joy, incorruption, glory, and felicity.

The Text.

1 And I saw a new heaven, 2 and a new earth: 3 for the first heaven 4 and the first earth were vanished away, 5 and there was no more sea. 6 And I John saw that 7 holy city, 8 new 9 Jerusalem, 10 come down from God out of heaven, 11 prepared as a bride, 12 garnished for her husband. 13 And I heard a great voice from the seat, saying, 14 Behold, the tabernacle of God 15 is with men, 16 and he will dwell with them: 17 and they shall be his people, 18 and God himself shall be with them, 19 and shall be their God. 20 And God shall wipe away 21 all tears from their eyes. 22 And there shall be no more death, 23 neither sorrow, 24 neither shall there be any more pain; 25 for the old things are gone.

The Commentary.

1. Besides the afore rehearsed revelations, I beheld now last of all (saith St John), that heaven was clean altered from that it was afore, and became all new; and so was the earth also, and became the same. Not only became they now spiritual by a true belief in the gospel, that afore were carnal, but also in the end of the world shall the whole bodies of heaven and of earth, as gold in the furnace, be purged from filthiness by fire going before the Judge, which both are now defiled with wickedness of the creature.

2. After both sorts shall they be delivered from the corruption, here of sin, and there of death and damnation, and so be restored unto the glorious liberty of God's children.

3. The first heaven defiled through the pride of angel, and the first earth also corrupted by the sinful usage of man, shall vanish clean away, and no more be seen. Not that the substance of them shall utterly perish, but that their nature,

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shape, and figure shall change into a much more pure and perfect similitude. A custom it was among the prophets, when they advertised the afflicted Israelites of prosperity, peace, or renovation of the glory of God coming towards them, to promise all things new.

4. "Behold (saith the Lord in Esay), I make you new heavens and a new earth, and as for the old, shall never more be thought upon." New is the true church of Christ, so are the people pertaining to the same. In no point are they like to the pope's holy orders, nor yet unto Mahomet's religion. Clear are their hearts, which have received the verity, from all superstitions, and their outward lives from idle observations. Perfect are their consciences, and their conversations godly. And this in the regeneration shall be fully accomplished. Not only shall that which is now mortal become immortal, and that is now corruptible then incorrupted, and as the very angels of the Lord; but also the universal heaven shall be then renewed, so shall the whole face of the earth appear more beautiful than now.

5. And from that time forth shall there be no more sea; which signifieth people unstedfast, vain, and fickle. Where as the peace of Christ is surely grounded, no more is there any troubled conscience; no more is there any diffidence, wan hope[1], or despair. All bitterness, sorrow, and anguish, is turned into sweetness and joy in the Holy Ghost. "We know (saith St Paul) that all things are taken to the best in them that love God." From the apostles, whom Christ first also called from the sea, vanished this wavering sea away, when they went from the malicious council of the bishops, rejoicing that they were found worthy to suffer rebuke for his name's sake. In like case all impediments and needs, all dangers and doubts, all fearful movings and outragings, that we now have of the sea, shall cease in the day of the Lord, when we shall behold him face to face. No longer shall it be subdued unto vanity, no more than the other creatures, but clearly depured from filthy corruption. No more shall it be the same to see, being from thenceforth so clear as crystal, though it still be the same in substance.

6. Heaven, earth, and sea with all other creatures in mystery thus renewed, I John, the son of Zebedee, and the same disciple whom Christ loved, being here in exile for his

[1 wan hope: faint hope.]

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word and testimony, perceived in the same mystery by the singular gift of the Spirit, that the selfsame holy city or congregation of the Lord, which is worthily called the new Jerusalem of peace, descended down out of heaven from her omnipotent Creator and God eternal.

7. Holy is this city. For both is she here the undefiled spouse of the Lamb, and shall be hereafter more perfectly in the regeneration. Here admitteth she nothing in faith, that is profane and carnal, but cleaveth to his only word: there shall she follow his steps in a much more pure estate, clearly delivered from all that is ill.

8. Here is she new, in that she hath here by his godly Spirit done off the old man with his filthy works. And there shall she also be new through his gift, by throwing away the body of sin with death and corruption.

9. Jerusalem is she called both here and there, or peaceable city of the Lord, in that all her citizens are of one faith, and there shall be of one glorious unity and concord. Here are her dwellers citizens with the saints, and the household servants of God; [there] shall they be both his children and heirs together with Christ.

10. From God came she down, and out of heaven first of all. Neither out of flesh nor blood hath sprung her christian belief, but from the gracious opening of the Father, which is in heaven. "That Jerusalem (saith Paul), which is free and our mother, is from above." She is that city, whose builder and maker is God. With none other laws is she governed, but with his eternal testament and gospel of peace. With the constitutions of men hath she nothing to do, be they never so holy and precious: for alone she dependeth on God and his Spirit.

11. Of him is she prepared through the gift of faith. She is cleansed with the fountain of water in the word of life, to seem a glorious congregation without blemish or wrinkle. From her sins is she purely washed in his blood;

12. And so garnished as a beautiful bride to her husband with love, joy, peace, patience, meekness, long-suffering, and other glorious fruits of the Spirit. "Upon thy right hand, Lord (saith David), standeth a queen in a garment of most fine gold, compassed with diversity." But every man shall not see this her apparel; for it will be rather a raiment of the heart

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than of the outward body. Figured was this decking of her at large in the wonderful adorning of the temple and tabernacle of God in the days of Moses and Salomon, whose mystical meeting also he describeth in his canticles. How marvellous this new Jerusalem will be in the regeneration, when she meeteth her spouse in the air, and how glorious her continuance with him, it lieth not in us to declare in all points, considering that neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, neither can the heart conjecture, what God hath there prepared for them that love him. But of this are we sure, that with the glory of him she shall be replenished. Here is her estate unperfect, and there perfect; here mortal, there immortal; here sour, there sweet; here hard, there pleasant; here painful, there delectable; here godly, there inestimably glorious.

13. And as John had seen these wonderful things, and mused much upon them, a great voice came unto him from the seat of God, declaring the mystery thereof. I heard (saith he) in the midst of this last revelation, as I was in doubt what it meant, a mighty voice from the throne of my everlasting Lord, saying thus unto me:

14. Behold, John, behold, and mark it both for thine own erudition, and also for the instruction of others. The holy tabernacle of resting-place of the everlasting God of heaven is with man in the world beneath; not only in that the eternal Son of the Lord took upon him the shape of a man, calling it the temple of his body, but also in that the soul of every faithful man is become the habitacle of the Holy Ghost. "He that loveth me (saith Christ) observeth my word. In him will both I and my Father provide us a resting-place." "He that is in love abideth in God, and God dwelleth in him."

15. This voice might John well hear from the mouth of God in Ezechiel. "I will make (saith he there) a perpetual covenant with man to dwell with him evermore. My tabernacle shall be among them: so that I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

16. For why, it followeth here in this voice, that he hath determined of favourable love and mercy to dwell with them, assisting them here in this life by his Spirit, and in the life to come shall he satisfy them by his eternal presence. For here do we see him in a similitude far off; there shall we

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behold him like as he is indeed, and shall eternally rejoice therein.

17. Here are they his people through faith; for Israel is his heritage: there shall they be his familiar household through love, and he their Lord for ever. Here shall they be his children, and he their eternal Father: there shall they be his heirs, Christ being the right heir for them all.

18. Thus God his own self of his ineffable goodness being presently in them, shall here by his grace, and there by inestimable benefits, shew himself in all points to be their most merciful and loving God. Here doth he strongly assist them against all temptations of enemies: there shall he endue them with full perfection and clearness.

19. So shall he be their God, that neither here nor yet there shall they knowledge any other but him alone. He shall so comfort them here by his Spirit, and there by his glorious presence, that neither shall they here forsake him, nor there be divided from him.

20. And this everlasting God shall so wipe away all tears from their eyes here, that no vexation shall make them sorrowful, nor yet adversity pensive. But all manner of slanders and persecutions shall they take for most sovereign consolation for his name's sake; for if he be with them, who can prevail against them?

21. And after that day can no weepings be, where as shall be full joy with immortality both of soul and body. "Behold (saith the Lord in Esay's prophecy), I shall make a joyful Jerusalem, yea, and myself will rejoice there with them. From thenceforth shall neither wailing nor weeping be heard in her any more."

22. In her moreover shall be no more death, for it shall be destroyed for ever. No more shall men's consciences despair here, but have joy in the Holy Ghost. No more shall they die through sin, but live unto God by faith. And there shall no more the rose-coloured whore be drunk in the blood of martyrs. Her tyrants shall be closed up in the stinking lake of fire from the slaughter of them, they then becoming immortal and impassible. Moreover than this, he that believeth in Christ shall never die, nor yet come into judgment, but pass clean from death unto life.

23. Neither shall there be any sorrow, nor crying any

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more. For all manner of displeasures of the body, as poverty, sickness, losses, enmity, vexations, and ill reports, are here patiently borne of the faithful; and there shall be found nothing to minister any such occasions. Here is neither age doubted, nor yet persecution feared, in them that reckon death advantage, having in desire with Paul to be hence and with Christ; nor yet shall be there, where all is in joy and peace, durable for ever.

24. Neither shall there be felt any more pain. Such hath been the constancy of the martyrs here, that little have the tormentors grieved them. Eleasar patiently suffered all punishment. Stephen rejoiced to see heaven open. Andrew would in no case be delivered from death. Laurentius offered his brent flesh to be eaten. The burning coals were so sweet unto Tiburcius as the fragrant roses. So desirous[1] were the terrible torments unto Vincent as a most pleasant banquet. Angelus desired the people in Sicilia to esteem the tyrant his friend. What the exceeding constancy was of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, divers chronicles mention. And in our time, George Bainham in the fire did never complain; John Frith never shewed himself once grieved in countenance; Barnes never moved, as his enemies do report; Peter Frank in Colchester sung joyfully to the Lord; the three young men in Suffolk rejoiced at the death; with such other many. And how far they shall be from pains after this, the great day of the Lord shall declare.

25. For the old things are past, saith the text. All that was afore was tedious, heavy, and fearful to the flesh, is now become easy, light, and pleasant, through that they have learned of Christ. His word refresheth them in spirit, and is a sweet rest unto their souls. And in the regeneration shall hunger, thirst, weariness, labour, heat, cold, rain, wind, thunder, earthquakes, with all other discommodities, be taken clean from them: neither shall they have their need of meat nor drink, food nor raiment, beds nor buildings, fields nor meadows, well-springs nor rivers, gardens nor vineyards.

THE TEXT.

1 And he that sat upon the seat said, 2 Behold, I make all things new. 3 And he said unto me, 4 Write, 5 for these words are faithful and true. 6 And he said unto me, 7 It is done: 8 I am Alpha and

[1 Desirous: desirable, pleasant.]

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Omega, 9 the beginning and the end. 10 I will give to him that is athirst 11 of the well of the water of life, free. 12 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; 13 I will be his God, and he shall be my son. 14 But the fearful, 15 and unbelieving, 16 and the abominable, 17 and murderers, 18 and whoremongers, 19 and sorcerers, 20 and idolaters, 21 and all liars, 22 shall have their part in the lake 23 that burneth with fire and brimstone, 24 which is the second death.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. And the omnipotent Lord, which sat upon the eternal throne, concluded thus with me. His Holy Spirit of promise ascertained my spirit by his heavenly word, that all these things should be true.

2. Behold (saith he), I will make all things fresh and new: heaven, earth, the sea, and the universal city of peace, I will deliver from all corruption. I make all pure, clean, holy, immortal, uncorrupt, impassible, clear, heavenly, spiritual, and glorious. Never more shall they be as they were afore when they were yet old. Never shall be more eating nor drinking, wiving nor banqueting, travelling nor sleeping, nor other such doings, pertaining to the corruptible life. The righteous shall then shine as the red fire sparks. So bright as the sun shall they be in the kingdom of their Father.

3. Thus hath the Lord here most marvellously described unto John, and by him unto us, the mystical sabbath of his people here, and the eternal sabbath after this life, commanding him to register it, as followeth. Much to and fro hath been among the school-doctors, and is yet to this day, whether the saved multitude shall reign here upon earth with Christ, or above in heaven after the judgment-day: which is easy to be perceived, if the scriptures be truly conferred: therefore search diligently the scriptures; for they bear witness of all truth. Christ hath in Matthew, that they shall be then as the angels are now in heaven, whose office is both to be here and there; and so much the rather that they shall be as then all one: so well shall the earth be new as the heavens. And needs it must be to some purpose. Never would Esay and Peter have said, that righteousness should dwell in them, if they should not occupy them both. It is said here also that the new Jerusalem shall come down from heaven: but not so that it shall not up again. For Christ's elects shall be where as he is. When they shall be upon the earth, no let nor im-

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pediment shall they have to be also in heaven, both they being one. Such agility and perfection shall be then in their bodies as is now in the glorified body of Christ, or in the spiritual nature of the angels, which are now here, now there. And whether they be here or there, always they see God, and are never more absent from him. Many scriptures might be brought in to declare this matter more at large; but it would ask much time. What mutual fellowship, heavenly amity, and glorious pastime will be betwixt them and the angels at that day, it far passeth all capacities to define. I counsel no[1] man to be curious in the search of so high mysteries as this here is one, without the fear of God; lest he, overcome of their exceeding brightness, be thrown into most deep error and blindness of the spirit. Rather submit your weak judgments with Paul, confessing God's secret counsels to be unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. Seek here only to be renewed, and then shall ye be sure there to find them: for there shall his servants be satisfied with the plenteousness of his house, and with the abundance of his eternal pleasures; for he hath enough in his towers for all men. He that hath a desire to know the one church from the other, and the true from the false, may here do it well by conferring of them together. Let him consider by that is said here afore, that this is holy, the other blasphemous. This is new, the other is old, for Cain was the elder brother. This is called Jerusalem, the other confused Babylon. This came down first from heaven, the other rose out of the bottomless pit. This was soberly prepared to her spouse, the other apparelled herself rashly like an whore; for none other rule follow they but their own traditions. This hath but one husband, she hath done whoredom with many kings by many false worshippings. This for her meekness is commended of God, the other proudly boasteth herself through holy traditions, merits, and deservings to be a rich queen: with many such other.

4. And the Lord (saith St John), which worketh all things by his only word and commandment, said thus unto me: Imprint first in thy heart that I have here shewed thee, and then leave it in writing to the instruction of those that shall follow thee.

5. And if thou wilt know a reason why thou shalt thus

[1 Old ed. *to*.]

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do, take this strong sentence with thee. I assure thee so truly as I am God, that the words which I have shewed in this present revelation are effectually most faithful and just. In no manner of point can I break promise, nor go from the word that I have once spoken. Both heaven and earth shall pass over, but not one jot of my words shall pass unfulfilled at their times appointed. The word that goeth out of my mouth shall not return home again void, but shall both accomplish my will, and prosper the thing I sent it for. Needful is it therefore that men believe that I shall fulfil the covenants here promised.

6. Moreover than this, the said heavenly Lord said thus unto me, to put me clearly out of doubt:

7. It is finished and done already. Be thou ascertained that my word is my deed. In the beginning I spake but the word, and all things were created, heaven, earth, the light, the firmament, the sun, the moon, the fowls, the fishes, the beasts, and last of all, man. Whatsoever I say therefore ought to be believed as now done in deed, be it to the righteous or damned. For all things are present afore me. In token whereof, the prophets and fathers uttered their prophecies of things to come in the time past for the more part, for the sure certainty of them.

8. And take these my words so much to be the more certain, that I, which have made those promises, have all things in my power. I am the first and the last, figurately comprehended under Alpha and Omega, the first and the last Greek letters, as a known trope to the Greeks, unto whom this revelation was first written. For no God was there before me, nor yet shall be after me. I am God from everlasting and world without end.

9. I am he that hath begun all things; I am he again that shall finish them. I am alone, and there is none other God but I. I slay, I quicken, I smite, I heal, I set up, I put down. Through me doth kings reign, and every man's end is in my hand. Wherefore it is reason that they have recourse unto me.

10. I am that fresh fountain that Esay speaketh of, most highly necessary to them that will live. Very liberal shall he find me, that seeketh me in faith.

11. To him that is athirst or desirous of righteousness will I give to drink of the plenteous well-spring of the wholesome waters of life. And that will I do freely, without price

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or payment either of masses or merits, dead suffrages or deservings. Lay out your money no more for the thing that feedeth not, spend no more travail about the thing that helpeth not. "Come unto me, all you that labour and are loaden, and I shall refresh you." So desirously seek unto me your God as the hart seeketh to the brooks of water. For with me is the well of life everlasting; with my pleasant rivers shall I content your good appetites. The water of this fountain is the verity and sweetness of Christ's Spirit, refreshing the soul here with hope, and there with the life everlasting. In this life is felt but a taste of it, in the world to come shall the thirst be satisfied. Here is it but in heart springing up toward life; there shall it be in full course, and never fail. Here are obtained but small drops of it; there shall it be had in full plenteousness. The philosophers for their wisdom, and the physicians for their cunning, look for great rewards. The buyers and sellers in the temple set their wares at a great price, yet are they but stinking waters, and not able to restrain the thirst; but this is free without payment through Christ, and containeth health in abundance. Not our good works (saith St Augustine), but his own free gifts doth God crown in us[1]. This must be sought for: for only shall he obtain it that thirsteth after it; only shall he have that asketh, and he find that seeketh.

12. He that hath done on a christian warrior's armour to fight against the devil of these darknesses, and so manfully doth his part that by faith he overcometh him, and hath the full victory over him in Christ; he shall be sure to possess all these things, heaven, earth, the new Jerusalem, the living waters, and to have his full desire in the joys to come. Wonderful is this promise. No king nor emperor, priest nor prelate, Turk nor Soldan, can grant such wages. But who shall obtain them? None other than fighteth lawfully, working according to the rules and examples of faith: neither he that masseth, nor censeth, processioneth nor holy-watereth, nor yet he that buildeth churches; for those works the scripture commandeth not.

13. Besides this promised reward (saith the Lord here),

[1 ... et cum Deus coronat merita nostra, nihil aliud coronat quam munera sua.—Aug. Op. Ed. Ben. Par. 1679—1700. Ad Sext. Epist. cxciv. cap. 5, Tom. II. col. 720.]

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I will be his God in deed, according to my former covenant, and he shall be unto me as my natural son. So loving will I be to him, as the mother is to the babe born of her body, whom she can never forget; so merciful as the natural father, that pitieth his own children at the very heart. Example by the unworthy lost child, whom I both lovingly received and sweetly embraced in mine arms; yea, I both clothed him and fed him with the best, as a son full dear unto me. And of this let him be sure, which hath me for his Father, that I shall give him Christ to be his brother, and with him all things necessary, constituting him my perpetual heir. This fatherly covenant was plain unto my servant David, for whom I set up mercy for ever.

14. But far otherwise will I do by the other sort, which neither will seek the living waters, or have desire to the scriptures, nor yet keep the hold I have put them to, which is their christian profession, but cowardly leave it unto the enemies, the serpent, the beast, and the false prophet: as are these which followeth here in their course. First of all the fearful cowards or false-hearted Christians, whom the Holy Ghost calleth here afore neither hot nor cold. At a time they believe, but when any trouble cometh they go clean from it. These doubt the loss of their goods, the hinderance of their names, and the harm of their bodies, and so are they not worthy of Christ. Such were Ananias and Saphira, with many other more since their time. These trust not in the Lord as doth Sion, which never removeth.

15. Next are the unfaithful hypocrites, which neither believe the promises nor yet fear the threatenings of the Lord. These make God's commandments of no value for their own traditions. With beggarly ceremonies clog they the people, and, as the blind, they lead the blind into the ditch. Neither will these enter into the kingdom of God, nor yet suffer other to enter. Such were the Pharisees and Sadducees with our monks, canons, and friars succeeding in their wicked examples.

16. After them followed the cursed obstinates or abominable blasphemers, which, knowing the verity, do not only abhor it, but also with most spiteful cruelness persecute it. These are the swine that tread pearls in the mire, and the dogs that turn again to devour. Unpossible is it for these again to be renewed to repentance, thus casting at their

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tails the graces of the Spirit so freely offered them. Such were Annas and Caiphas, with our execrated bishops, suffragans, canons, parsons, vicars, with all the priests of the same wicked zeal.

17. The unpitiful murderers are also the same blood-thirsty prelates, those Cains and these boisterous Nimrods, that never will be satisfied with the slaughter of innocents. No cruel antichrist after John Wicliffe's time did so spitefully persecute the verity of Christ in England, as did Philip Repingdon, made then of a false brother or perjured Christian bishop of Lincoln. The grand captain of this mad muster is the proud bishop of Rome, the preposterous vicar of the Lamb, and the unworthy successor of Peter, in that he hath not yet put up his sword. Of the same sort also are all those cruel princes and unmerciful magistrates, that apply their authorities, powers, and offices unto the same mischief. Such deceitful, ravenous, and abominable blood-shedders the merciful Lord abhorreth evermore. Of this number was Pharao and Herod, with innumerable tyrants since, which to rehearse in order were too long.

18. The filthy whoremongers are those holy spiritual Ammonites, which have consecrate themselves unto Moloch in the fire of fleshly concupiscence. For ever have they forsworn godly marriage, to make daily sacrifice to the devil in carnal beastliness[1]. The most highly esteemed virtue of that generation is to have no wives. Never commanded I such filthy vows (saith the Lord), neither came it ever in my thought, to make Juda sin with such abomination. For the oft breaking of their oath, profession, and vow, it is no matter, so long as they make the reckoning among themselves. Innumerable is the swarm of these lecherous locusts of Egypt: everywhere are their fruits seen all the world over.

19. Some expositors take the sorcerers here mentioned, for them that with charms and subtle witchcrafts deceive the people; and some suppose them to be such as have practised poisons to destroy men with: and both may be well. For never were Pharao's conjurors nor Jezebel's apothecaries more expert, than they are in their daily feats, to destroy both bodies and souls. Wonderful are their practices both ways, all the chronicles over. Mark the legerdemain of

[1 Three words omitted.]

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Anastasius the Second, Sylvester the Second, Bonifacius the Eighth, Benedictus the Ninth, with Hildebrand and such other, besides Bar-jesu and Simon Magus in the scripture. Mark also how John the Twenty-third caused Marsilius a physician of Parma to poison his predecessor, called Alexander the Fifth, with a great sort more of that practice, as mentioneth Baptista Panecius.

20. The idolaters are they that worship after any other sort than the Lord hath taught and commanded in the scriptures, or that believe in any other than in God, which will have his glory given to none other. Not that shall thou do (saith he), that seemeth good in thy sight, but that I command thee, that do only, neither making it more nor yet less. Of this sort are they that observe days and months, times and years in bondage. So are all they which prayeth to the saints departed, offereth to images, kiss the relics, hear mass without understanding, worship their sacrament (as they call it) in their massings and processions, with such other abominable superstitions.

21. And finally, the unshamefaced liars are they, which minister errors in hypocrisy, forbidding both marriage and meats, and telling that Christ is here and there, so blemishing the christian religion. They are also those blasphemers which call the scriptures heresy, and slanderously report the poor favourers thereof. These are the natural children of the devil. Such a one was Tertullus the orator, that accused Paul of sedition; and so were the bishops and priests that waged the soldiers after Christ's resurrection, to say that his disciples had stolen him away by night.

22. All these with such other execrable sects (saith the Lord unto John) shall have their just portion in the foul stinking lake that horribly foameth upward with filthy fire and brimstone. With the devil and his angels shall they dwell for ever.

23. Thus the wicked (saith David), for neglecting their Lord God, he turned into hell with perpetual confusion. The fiery flood that shall go before the Judge will swallow them up clean.

24. And this is without fail the second death, or damnation both of soul and body; the perpetual shame and reproof, as Daniel calleth it, that shall never be recovered.

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Not only the abominable homicides, idolaters, and whoremongers shall have this stinking reward; but also the faint-hearted hypocrites, the unfaithful sorcerers, and the execrable liars, with all their affinity.

THE TEXT.

1 And there came unto me 2 one of the seven angels, 3 which have the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, 4 and talked with me, saying, 5 Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. 6 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, 7 and he shewed me the great city, 8 holy Jerusalem, 9 descending out of heaven from God, 10 having the brightness of God. 11 And her shining was like unto a stone most precious, 12 even a jasper, clear as crystal, 13 and had walls great and high, 14 and had twelve gates, 15 and at the gates twelve angels, 16 and names written, 17 which are the twelve tribes of Israel: 18 on the east part three gates; on the north side three gates; 19 and towards the south three gates; and on the west side three gates. 20 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, 21 and in them the names of the Lamb's twelve apostles.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. And as I was yet still joyously marvelling (saith St John) at this most friendly communication and wonderful mystery of the Lord,

2. There resorted unto me very lovingly one of the seven angels mentioned here afore; which angels have committed unto them at the Lord's pleasure the seven vials of his wrath, containing the seven last plagues of the world.

3. None other are these angels, but the decreed purposes of God, uttering his judgments against cursed Babylon at their times appointed, as we have sufficiently declared in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters afore. One of them sent the Lord unto John, to describe unto him at large the glory of the new Jerusalem, like as he did afore, the confusion of Babylon. For only was this in spirit, as hereafter followeth.

4. This angel (saith he) familiarly communed with me. This inspired purpose of God moved my heart, my mind, my wit, reason, understanding, and remembrance, with the other powers of soul, to make me privy of this secret mystery, necessary to be known of the faithful.

5. Come hither (saith it spiritually unto me), leaving at this time behind thee all such considerations as thou hast of nature. Certainly will I manifest unto thee, to the singular

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comfort of many others, what the beautiful bride is, which is the undefiled spouse of the Lamb, Jesus Christ. Thou shalt well perceive her by the gift of faith, to be far different from the rose-coloured whore that thou seest afore. Thou shalt know her, her estate, beauty, behaviour and apparel. For that maketh God open to his lovers, which he hideth unto other in parables.

6. Then took he me up in the Spirit (saith John), and so carried me clean away into a mighty great and exceeding high mountain. The contemplation of this heavenly mystery so occupied my mind that clearly was I taken from the remembrance of all worldly fantasies, and thought myself rapt up with Paul unto the third heaven. Sitting solitary alone (as did Jeremy) I was lift up above myself. With Enoch and Elias, I thought myself taken from the world; so great was the mystery.

7. Anon this spiritual messenger shewed me a great godly city. I was in remembrance of the true congregation of God, compact together in the unity of one perfect christian faith. And this was not the old Jerusalem, builded long ago of Melchisedech, as testifieth Josephus: for that was full of sin, ignorance and blindness. She slew the prophets, and stoned them unto death that were sent unto her. She disdained also to receive her own Lord, when he came to her of good love.

8. But this is all of another sort, perfect, godly, and faithful. Yea, this is above all estimation holy; not for the outward sacrifices, which were but shadows of things to come, but for the eternal redemption that came through him which offered himself unto God the Father without spot.

9. Not made by man's hand was this holy Jerusalem, nor yet after this manner building. For it issued out of heaven, and so came down from God the Father of light, of whom only is all that is good and perfect. Great is this city, not only in that it is the possession of the great King of all, but also in that it is highest in dignity before him, and spread the world over.

10. Glorious is it also, blessed, spiritual, and heavenly, having the inestimable brightness or wisdom of the omnipotent God: her light is the Lamb, Jesus Christ, and his word the lantern to her very foot-steps. Endued is she here with the

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graces of spirit, and *after this shall* possess these *benefits* of immortality. Like *shall she be* to her spouse in his latter appearance, and *shall see God* as he is indeed, when she is like fashioned *to his glorious* similitude.

11. And this her shining light or wisdom in the spirit (saith the angel) was like unto a stone most orient and precious. For more precious is the verity than gold in his most pureness.

12. And of all things in the world most rightly might it seem to be compared to a fine jasper, resembling a pure crystal in clearness. For not only is it here in faith clear as the crystal, high, incomparable, and inestimable; but also in the regeneration it will be to the eyes of the glorified saints, as the green jasper, most amiable, fresh, and desirous. The doctrine of the Lord is here all pure, expelling the darkness of errors and lies. "He that followeth me (saith Christ) wandereth not in the dark, but shall have the light of life." And there shall neither their eyes be sore, nor yet their sight bleared by any impediment; but they shall be made able to behold him face to face, being of most estimable brightness.

13. The walls of this city, betokening the manifold strength of God, were inestimably great and high, marvellous and glorious. Great is the Lord (saith David) and mighty is his power. He compasseth his people round about from this time forth and for ever. A wall of fire is he unto Jerusalem, and a defence of steel unto Juda. Their keeper, protector, saviour, and defender is he, most stedfast, perfect, constant, and sure. Strong is the city of Sion; for the Saviour is both her wall and bulwark.

14. Twelve gates hath this city to open and to spear. Yet is there but one opening unto them, which is Christ. Divers are they called, for the diversity of nations, peoples, languages and kindreds; from all quarters of the world round about cometh people to Christ's congregation, yet enter they not but through him. "No man (saith he) cometh unto the Father but by me. I am the door into the sheep-fold. He that entereth in by me shall be saved."

15. Twelve angels are set at the gates of this city; which are both the angels indeed, and the godly preachers signified by them. "The angels of the Lord (saith David) pitched their tents round about those that feared him, to pre-

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serve them." Watchmen hath he set (saith Esay) upon the walls of Jerusalem, to preach his glorious name: so that it is now become inexpugnable. The devil with his whole army cannot prevail against it. None is he able to pluck out of his hand.

16. Names were gloriously written over the gates of this city; and none other were they but the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: as are Juda, Reuben, Gad, Asser, Nephtalim, Manasse, Simeon, Levi, Isachar, Zabulon, Joseph, and Benjamin. For this consideration were their names there in sight, and none other.

17. Only was the heritage promised unto Abraham's seed. Only cometh salvation from among the Jews. Christ was the only seed of Abraham, and we are now become the children of promise in him. In the scripture are their names registered: and not the names of them alone, but of so many else as have brought unto us the true worship of God; as were Moses, Samuel, David, and Elias, Esay, Jeremy, Ezechiel, and Daniel, with the twelve inferior prophets; John Baptist, Joseph, Simeon, and such other. For the number of twelve is a universal number comprehending all.

18. Upon the east part of this beautiful city were three gates. So were three gates also upon the north side.

19. Towards the south were three gates; and on the west side three gates, to perform up the number of twelve. Such a city is the true church of Christ, as is spread the world over. Whatsoever they be that will approach[1] unto this city, which way soever they come, necessary is it for them to enter into it through an only faith in the Father, in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost. Behoving is it (saith Paul) for him that will resort unto God, faithfully to believe. Through faith have we entrance into his favour. Baptize them that believe (saith Christ) in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Exceeding great is the multitude of those just believers which hath come from these four quarters of the world, and hath entered into this city through this faith. Very many shall come (saith the Lord) from the east and the west (which includeth the other two parts), and shall rest with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. From the east come the Jews, inhabiting the mid part of the world. From the three out quarters

[1 Old ed. *reproach*.]

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else, as are Asia, Africa, and Europa, came the Gentiles, and after this sort, through one faith in the Trinity, became one city of the Lord having twelve fair gates. Prefigured was this in the passage of the children of Israel out of Egypt. In the wilderness of Sinai, as the Lord's commandment, were the tribes of Juda, Isachar, Zabulon with their hosts of a hundred eighty and six thousand and four hundred upon the east side; Reuben, Simeon, and Gad, with their armies of a hundred fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty, upon the south side; Ephraim, Manasse, and Benjamin, upon the west part, with their hundred and eight thousand and one hundred; Dan, Asser, and Nephtalim, upon the north with their hundred and fifty-seven thousand and six hundred also: whereas the tribe of Levi was only appointed to minister in the tabernacle of witness in the midst of the hosts, and therefore was not at the time numbered among the children of Israel.

20. Finally (saith the angel), the wall of this beautiful city, which is the power of God unto salvation for them that believe, hath twelve strong foundations surely couched upon the unmovable and hard rock Christ: for upon him was the christian church first grounded. Adam, Noe, Abraham, Moses, David, Elias, and John Baptist, with all the other fathers and prophets, builded upon him, though they were long before him. For all they trusted surely in the promises that God had made them in him. All they being under the cloud did eat of one spiritual meat, and drink of one spiritual rock following them in the flesh, which was Jesus Christ. No man can lay any other foundation than is laid already, which is Christ Jesus.

21. Upon this one foundation, perpetually strong and durable, were laid these twelve foundations agreeing to the same; and in them were the names of the Lamb's twelve apostles or faithful messengers: as Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the less, Simon, Thaddæus, and Matthias. These are figured in the twelve stones that Josue raised up in Galgala for a remembrance of the dry passage of the children of Israel through Jordan. So are they signified also by the twelve other stones wherewith Elias in the mount of Carmel made an altar in the Lord's name. The sure ground of these foundations was, that Christ is the Son of the living God.

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Upon this builded all they both in their preachings and writings. All one with this was the faith of the prophets, which believed that he was the Lamb that should take away the sins of the world. For they inquired the way of salvation, they searched for the saving-health. Wherein they prove themselves the living stones of this spiritual building. Thus unto one sure ground of faith extended the beliefs both of the apostles and prophets. "Now are ye citizens with the saints (saith St Paul to the Ephesians), builded upon the sure foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the fast corner-stone." For this cause are the apostles put here before the prophets, that we, reading their prophecies, should understand them after the apostles' doctrine, and so deduce them both unto Christ. And for this consideration are they here called the Lamb's apostles, that they have in all their instructions and writings uttered nothing but that they have received of his wonderful, rich, and plenteous abundance. Besides all this, not only are these twelve here named to be taken for the twelve foundations, and none other: for then should Paul be excluded, which laboured more than all the rest; so should Barnabas, Silas, Luke, Agabus, Judas the righteous, John that was called Mark, with many other. But so many godly ministers are of that sort besides them, as have been of the same faith, spirit, and doctrine. For ye must consider that twelve is here a universal number as in other places, and betokeneth all the whole fellowship, they holden for the principals, for that they were present with Christ.

The Text.

1 And he that talked with me 2 had a golden reed 3 to measure the city withal, 4 and the gates thereof, 5 and the wall thereof. 6 And the city was built four square, 7 and the length was as large as the breadth of it: 8 and he measured the city with the reed twelve thousand furlongs. 9 And the length and the breadth 10 and the height of it were equal. 11 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty-four cubits 12 after the measure of man, which the angel had.

The Commentary.

1. And the angel (saith St John), or set purpose of the Lord, which communed thus with me in secret mystery, had

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a measure all of gold in his hand, in similitude of a reed, not all unlike unto them that talked with Ezechiel and Zachary, in mystery also.

2. And with this golden reed, which is the pure word of God, did he take measure both of the city itself, and of the twelve gates thereof, and also of the great mighty wall of the same.

3. The determinate purpose of the everlasting builder measureth all things concerning his church, according to his undefiled scriptures, which are the right rule of faith and the rod of right order in his kingdom. "Whatsoever they be (saith both Paul and David) that live according to this rule, mercy and peace be unto them, as upon the Israel of God." Not only is this measuring reed precious in itself, but also as gold in the furnace it is daily tried afresh, through many troublous adversities of them that hath unfeignedly set hands upon it. Diversely measureth this reed of the Spirit in the city, in the gates, and in the wall. For diverse are the gifts of the Holy Ghost in one congregation of the Lord. Unto every one is given a grace according to the measure of faith: some hath he constituted apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to the necessary edification of Christ's mystical body. For here by the city is meant the whole congregation of God's elects, perfectly joined together in one true belief.

4. By the gates, the godly preachers and counsellors, by whom Christ openeth unto his kingdom:

5. By the wall, the mighty power which he hath committed to the angels or spirits of heaven to keep them, to the godly princes and magistrates here to defend them, and to other true ministers to hold them still in righteousness. All these must be measured. They must be brought to the touch-stone. The scriptures must try of what spirit they are: if they agree not to this measure, they pertain not to the city of God; but they are that salt unsavoury that is no better worth than to be thrown forth of men, and those unprofitable servants whom the Lord shall cast into exterior darkness.

6. And as concerning the fashions of this city, builded all four square, all four sides thereof being of like length and breadth:

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7. No longer nor broader was it upon the east side than upon the north side, nor upon the south part than towards the west; but equal it was every way, towards all quarters of the world. And as it was in length and breadth, so was it in height. Which signifieth not only the perpetual stability or sureness of the true christian faith, the Lord evermore preserving it, but also that the faithful believers of one quarter of the world are so highly accepted unto him, as of another. So largely doth he reward them of the east that truly believeth in Christ, as of any other quarter else, and so highly doth he esteem them. So dear unto him are those good Christians that dwell among the Saracens, Turks, and Jews, as are they which dwell in the midst of Christendom; so precious, that lie sick in the spital-house, as they which pray in the temple. Noe found grace in the sight of God, when all the world else was wicked. Lot was judged righteous in the midst of the filthy Sodomites. And so are many yet to this day among the idolaters and superstitious papists. Still are there lambs among wolves, clean wheat among tares, and good fishes among evil. Job was a companion with the dragons and ostriches: Esay dwelt among ill-tongued people, Ezechiel in the midst of a froward household. St Paul commended the Philippians, in that they shone among the perverse generation as lights in the firmament. Never is God any partial accepter of persons, but among all peoples he that in his fear worketh righteousness, is accepted unto him, whatsoever he be. Thus are they in length, breadth, and height, spiritual, godly, and heavenly through his word.

8. Moreover this angel measured the city with the golden reed, and it was in compass twelve thousand furlongs: which signifieth Christ's kingdom to be so large every way, that it teacheth the whole earth over by his word and promise. The sound of the apostles' preaching hath gone out into all lands, and their doctrine into the ends of the world. For twelve evermore in the scriptures is an whole perfect number, and a thousand a universal sum, as we have here noted afore. No man ought in this heavenly work superstitiously to observe the number, but rather to seek diligently to understand the godly mysteries that they comprehend.

9. The greatness of a city is to be considered to the

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multitude of the dwellers therein. Then who can think Christ's congregation small, measuring it by the scriptures from the first beginning of the world to the latter ending? A furlong is the eighth part of a mile, and containeth a hundred and twenty-five paces, which is in length six hundred and twenty-five feet: and here it betokeneth the continual course of labour and painful sufferance in the kingdom of Christ, after St Paul. They that run for the wager in this course laboureth not for a thing uncertain; but for an incorruptible crown they hold their bodies in subjection to the Spirit. Such are the inhabiters of this city, whose number is great, whole, and perfect, universally taken. O Israel (saith Baruch), how great is the house of God, and how large is the compass of his possession! Exceeding great is it, and hath no end, high out of measure and cannot be overreached.

10. The height of this city from the foundation was all one in measure with the length and breadth: for every way was it equal and square in compass. Round about was it strong, mighty, and sure, the gates of hell in no wise able to prevail against it. Upon every part faithful, perfect, and godly, seeking those things only which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God: yea, all spiritual, high, and heavenly are they, having their daily conversation not here but in heaven, from whence they wait for their Saviour, Jesus Christ. So high also is the Spirit, that governeth this congregation, in rewarding as it is either large in giving, or long in continual working. Never had John seen the height, breadth, and length of this wonderful city for our universal comfort, had he not been raised up by the secret purpose of God into the mountain of this Spirit, inestimable, high, and great.

11. After this measured the angel the wall of this city, and it came fully to an hundred and forty-four cubits, which is twelve times twelve in number, as we had afore here in the seventh and fourteenth chapters. And it comprehendeth the whole number of the elect multitude, only for the universal perfectness thereof. A cubit after the common sort is in length but a foot and a half; but after the course of geometry it is six times so much, which cometh to nine foot justly. Now an hundred and forty-four cubits wanteth, after the first reckoning, two

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hundred and nine feet of a furlong; and after the rules of geometry it passeth not forty-six foot more than two furlongs, which stretcheth nothing towards twelve thousand furlongs. Therefore we may not here reckon the cubits with the furlongs after a worldly sort, but we must spiritually measure them according to the scriptures; so that they may agree together after the meaning of the mystery, the course with the gifts, and the working with the power. The cubit of a man is the fore part of his arm with the hand, and it betokeneth here in mystery Jesus Christ, which is the strong arm of the Father. "To whom is the arm of the Lord known (saith Esay and John), or who perceiveth the power of his word?" Such might (saith Mary) sheweth he in his arm, as will scatter abroad his obstinate enemies. That hand is he, wherewith God created all things in the beginning. In this arm hath he redeemed his people, the posterity of Jacob and Joseph. With this hand preserveth he them in the life that cannot fail, whom the enemies have marked out unto cruel death. Through the mighty power of this arm shall most terrible fear and dread light upon the wicked at the latter day. After this cubit must they be measured, which are of this spiritual building, specially they that are the wall thereof, as the godly preachers, princes, magistrates, and other lawful ministers[1]. Agreeable to his doctrine ought their conversation to be in all points. As his true ministers should they shew themselves in meekness, knowledge, long-sufferance, in love unfeigned, in the word of truth, in the power of God, by the armour of righteousness, and so forth. Necessary is it for them to do on Jesus Christ, and to walk worthily in their vocation, observing the unity of the Spirit in the yoke of peace; as the chosen, holy, and well-beloved of God, to take upon them a tender pity, kindness, lowliness, softness, swift forgiving, with other fruits of the Spirit, acknowledging always Christ for their only wisdom, righteousness, and redemption, for their keeper, saviour, and strong bulwark of defence. Thus in this spiritual reckoning is it to be considered, that by the furlongs is the city measured, and by the cubits the wall; the furlongs comprehending them that have run in the true course of a christian life, and the cubits them that have justly ministered the power of

[1 Old ed. *lawfully*.]

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Christ's word and doctrine. Some writers have taken the one sort here for martyrs, for valiantly performing their most sharp course, and the other for them that have peaceably rested in Christ. But I am contented here with my conjecture, considering there have been martyrs in both the aforenamed degrees. And as for the unequalness of length in the furlongs and cubits, it only respecteth the persons or peoples, among whom the people taught hath exceeded the teachers in number, the commonalty the governors, and the flock the shepherds, or else the gentiles the Jews. Yet are they both twelves, both great, whole, perfect, and universal numbers, one Jerusalem, or one perfect kingdom of Christ. Thus doth also the twelve twelves correspond to the twelve thousands, as the Jews to the gentiles in one faith (though their limits were much larger, extending to the ends of the world), and are made one sheepfold or flock, Christ being one Shepherd of salvation to them both.

12. Consequently, the golden measure which the angel had was much after the measure that man customably useth. And this signifieth that the word of God, which measureth all things pertaining to his church, is given unto us under such worldly similitudes and likelihoods, as we are best acquainted with, for our weakness' sake. Not only in this revelation, but also in all other books of the scriptures, doth the Holy Ghost at his appointment allure us to his kingdom by the examples and parables of such things as we have in daily custom; as of mountains, gardens, well-springs, vineyards, fig-trees, tabernacles, temples, buildings, marriages, stewards, virgins, merchandise, tilling, harvest, talents, pearls, nets, suppers, sheep, lambs, light, wheat, salt, goats, doves, serpents, men, keys, lanterns, swords, rods, travailing women, mustard seed, beasts, and here of furlongs and cubits, with such other like, and all to make us to perceive them. Now see we only by such dark similitudes; but in the regeneration, when all things are clear, shall we have need of no such night-shadows. Without vail or covering shall we then see and behold our Lord God as he is indeed. Then shall we perfectly know, like as we are now known of him. Then shall our measure be in all points as is the angel's measure. Equal shall we be unto them in full perfection, understanding, and knowledge. For

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as the angels of heaven shall we then be, impassible, immortal, and glorious, and of equal number with them.

The Text.

1 And the building of the wall of it was jasper, 2 and the city was of pure gold, 3 like unto clear glass. 4 And the foundations of the walls and of the city 5 were garnished with all manner of precious stones. 6 The first foundation was a jasper, 7 the second a sapphire, 8 the third a chalcedony, 9 the fourth a smaragde, 10 the fifth a sardonyx, 11 the sixth a sardius, 12 the seventh a chrysolite, 13 the eighth a beryl, 14 the ninth a topaz, 15 the tenth a chrysoprasus, 16 the eleventh a jacinth, 17 the twelfth an amethyst.

The Commentary.

1. The whole building of the wall of this city was of jasper stone: which betokeneth that in Christ it shall be most precious, pleasant, delectable, and sure. For ever shall they be new and green, fresh and lively, durable and beautiful, that perfectly believe in him, and shall become sure stays or pillars in his holy temple. He that truly observeth my word (saith Christ) shall never taste of death. Upon a living foundation shall they be couched, and so grow up into an holy temple in the Lord, and so together into the habitacle of God in the Holy Ghost.

2. And this fair city itself was of most pure gold, so fine, beautiful, and clear, as most pure glass possible. Without spot or deformity is the true church of God, having neither blemish nor yet wrinkle, and tried it is throughly as gold in the furnace. The clear light of this city is Christ, which never did sin in word nor in deed. More precious hath his death and blood-shedding made it, than is the most pure fine gold that ever was yet seen.

3. A glorious congregation hath he provided it to be, and that will appear in the day of his visitation. So far shall this excel the Jerusalem that Salomon builded, as heaven excelleth the earth. For that was but gold within, this is all gold throughly, both within and without. That was builded by the hands of men, this is of a much higher workmanship. An undefiled heritage is this, and shall be changed from clearness to clearness into the glory of the Lord.

4. The strong foundations of the wall of this worthy city

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(which is the firm faith of the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles and other true teachers surely grounded upon Christ) were beautifully adorned with all manner of precious stones, or gifts of the Holy Ghost.

5. Divers were the graces which they had received, and the fruits out springing from them were also divers and glorious; as love, joy, peace, patience, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, temperance, and such other. Nothing fair appeared these stones unto this world, when they were hewn, squared, and made fit foundation, by the manifold persecutions of tyrants; no more than was the great costly stone in the bottom of Sion, upon whom they were builded, which seemed so deformed as a leper. Nevertheless yet was their death precious in the Lord's sight. "These are they (shall their adversaries say at that day) whom we sometime thought fools, and had in much derision: but now they are counted among the children of God, and have their portion among the saints." Here might much be spoken of faith, which diversely wrought in Abel, Seth, and Enoch, for the first age; in Noe, Abraham, Moses, David, Elias, and other in their ages; in Peter, John, and James, with all the other apostles and sincere preachers since Christ's time. But let that suffice in this behalf, that St Paul hath written in the eleventh chapter to the Hebrews, which is also hereafter comprehended under the mystery of the twelve precious stones whereof the foundations are.

6. In that the first foundation is said here to be of a jasper or diamond (whose colour is green), is signified that the faith of the first fathers is not yet withered away. Still unto this present day is the example of Enoch orient, fresh, and lively, which first called upon the name of God, and of many such other more. Still persevere they green in the lively scriptures, and fade not. "I have earnestly prayed for thee, Peter (saith Christ), that thy faith should not fail."

7. The second foundation was of a sapphire, whose colour is as the air clear, but not very precious in sight. This betokeneth those simple souls, which, though they were as Job and Joseph the carpenter, not precious to the world, yet had they their daily conversations in heaven.

8. The third was of a chalcedony, which is yet more

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coarse to look upon than the sapphire, but in nature precious, mighty and strong. Of this nature were Elias and John Baptist, whose conversation was in the wilderness, rough, hard, and unpleasant. Yet appeared they precious at their times appointed, mightily rebuking sin, drawing unto them the chaff (as the property is of the chalcedony), which are the common people, but utterly throwing forth again, or condemning the idolaters and hypocrites. The word of Elias brent like a cresset, and John was a shining lantern before the Lord.

9. The fourth was of a smaragde or an emerald, which is not only green of his own nature, but he maketh all the air about him to seem green also. Of this condition was Jeremy and Paul, which, having the doctrine of life, spared not to minister it unto others for their eternal refreshing. These with such other thrown into the foundation of the church were very comfortable unto others. "With the holy (saith David) thou shalt be holy, and with the pure innocent thou shalt be both innocent and pure."

10. The fifth was of a sardonyx, which is compound of a sardis and an onyx, and is beneath black, in the midst white, and above red. Such were those meek-spirited, that confess themselves sinners with David and Magdalene, being through faith both pure and orient afore God. "Though I be black (saith the true congregation), yet am I fair and well-favoured." "We faint not (saith Paul); for though our outward man be corrupt, yet is he that is inward daily renewed."

11. The sixth is a sardius, which in similitude is very like unto red earth. And such are they, as notwithstanding the great benefits of God think themselves the unworthy children of Adam, whose interpretation, after Philo, is red earth indeed. Mary, Christ's mother, was of this sort, confessing herself after most high benefits to be but an handmaid, and her spirit only to rejoice in God her Saviour. So was Abraham, calling himself but dust and ashes before the Lord.

12. The seventh foundation is of a chrysolite, or turcas, which shineth as gold, and seemeth as it should send forth sparks. Under this are they comprehended, which, having the wisdom of the Spirit, inflame others with it, provoking them thereby to the love of God and their neighbour. Thus

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did Moses and Esay, Barnabas and Paul, in whom the glory of the Lord appeared plenteously.

13. The eighth was of a beryl, which is of a pale green colour, betokening those faithful persons which of christian compassion have dolorously lamented the fall of their brethren. Of this godly nature was Stephen, which prayed for them that stoned him to death. So was afore his time Samuel, which mourned for Saul, when he saw him cast out of the Lord's favour.

14. The ninth was of a topaz, which hath in him the colours of all other stones. And this signifieth them which are with all virtues adorned; like as was Daniel the man of desires, and John the Evangelist, which wrote this present prophecy, whom Christ much loved. The clear works of these and such other would he to shine unto men, that by them the Father might be glorified.

15. The tenth was of a chrysoprasus, whose condition is to shine like gold, and yet he is green in sight. Such are they which, having godly wisdom, uttereth it according to the talent given them of the Lord, thereby reviving the dull spirits of others unto heavenly things. Among this sort may Ezechiel be numbered, who saw many wonderful visions; and so may Simeon and Anna in the gospel.

16. The eleventh was of a jacinth, which is in colour like unto water, spread over with bright sun-beams. And this betokeneth those that are barren from the science and learning of this world, and yet have knowledge from above. Very idiots appear they in the sight of men, and yet are they taught of God, to disclose most wonderful secrets. Of this sort were Oseas, Joel, and Amos, which was but a poor shepherd, with the other inferior prophets: and so were Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, with the other apostles and disciples.

17. The twelfth was an amethyst, purple, violet, and rose-coloured. And this betokeneth them that are fervent, meek, and constant in the Lord's truth, and that have been always ready to shed their blood for it. Such were the seven brethren in the Maccabees, with their most faithful mother. So was also James the more, and Antipas, the faithful witness, with other disciples and martyrs. None can shew a more token of love than he which giveth up his life

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for his friends. This sort did Christ proclaim altogether blessed, and said that the kingdom of heaven was their own. Thus signifieth these twelve foundations, that the godly ministers of Christ's congregation have builded upon him according to the divers graces which God hath given them, some gold, some silver, some precious stones. But they that have brought unto this building timber, hay, or stubble, which are customs, traditions, and dumb ceremonies, or else worldly honours, riches, and voluptuous pleasures, are not in this heavenly number admitted. Figured are these foundations in the precious stones which were in the breast-flap of Aaron the high priest, and in the precious decking of the king of Tyrus. Necessary shall it be for him that will more largely know the natural properties of them, to resort unto Plinius in the thirty-seventh book of his Natural History, or unto Bartholomew, *De Proprietatibus Rerum;* and for the understanding of the mysteries, unto St Jerome upon the fifty-fourth chapter of Esay, or unto Beda, Haymo, Costasy, Baconthorpe, Eline, Tilney, and such other as have written great works upon the Apocalypse. Enough is it for us to shew you, after the mind of St Augustine, these stones to signify the divers graces of the Holy Ghost: for all these things doth one Spirit of the Lord work, dividing several gifts unto every man at his pleasure, which are not without their preciousness, beauty, and excellent glory, as will appear in the glorious day of the children of God.

The Text.

1 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, 2 and every gate was of one pearl, 3 and the street of the city was pure gold, 4 as a thorough shining glass. 5 And I saw no temple therein: 6 for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb is the temple of it. 7 And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon to lighten it: 8 for the brightness of God doth lighten it, 9 and the Lamb is the light of it. 10 And the people which are saved shall walk in the light of it, 11 and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory unto it. 12 And the gates of it shall not be shut by day; 13 for there shall be no night there. 14 And there shall enter into it none unclean thing, 15 neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh lies, [16] but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

The Commentary.

1. Consequently (saith the angel unto John), the twelve gates or openings into this city were twelve fair pearls. For

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delectable and precious is the doctrine of the gospel, whereby men do enter into the kingdom of God on every side, or in every quarter and age of the world.

2. And every gate by himself was of one pearl, like as were the foundations of one precious stone evermore in their kinds; in token that the verity of Christ is whole, perfect, and unbroken in itself, like as is his coat without seam. A special commodity is it in cities, to have their gates strong and beautiful. And so is it in the kingdom of God, that they which open unto righteousness be more fervent in the truth and of a more sincere life than the residue; for they should be both the salt of the earth and light of the world. Though these gates be many, yet have they but one entrance; for each one of them is but of one pearl. But one mediator is there between God and man, which is Jesus Christ. None may come unto the Father but by him only. Alone is he the door, the way, the verity, light and life.

3. And as concerning the city within, the great street thereof was as of pure gold, so fine, fair, and clear as the bright shining glass, that may be seen through without any manner of impediment or dimness. This street is the large commonalty of[1] the saints, whom the Father of heaven by his power made of froward stones the perfect children of Abraham, when he couched them here together in the verity of one christian faith, and shall hereafter join in such perfection of love as possibly cannot be dissolved.

4. Precious are they here through faith in Christ's blood, and there shall they be pure both in love and life incorruptible. Our rejoice (saith St Paul) is not in carnal wisdom, but in the great grace of God, in the singleness of heart, and in a sincere faith. Your glory are we, even as you are ours also in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

5. In this glorious city saw I no temple builded (saith John); for the Lord God Almighty, which is the eternal Father, and the Lamb Jesus Christ, which is his eternal Son, is the holy, full, and perfect temple thereof. None outward priesthood, ceremony, nor sacrifice for sin, commandeth Christ's doctrine to his congregation. The golden measure of his word, which defineth and judgeth all things necessary thereunto, appointeth no such matter. For in no temples made with

[1] Old ed. *or*.]

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stone dwelleth God, which will be all in all. Only is required of them a sacrifice from the soul, which is the very temple of God. In his only name should the faithful sort there offer up themselves. And therefore Christ appointed Vespasian and Titus to turn over the great temple of Jerusalem, and utterly to destroy that priesthood, because we should put no trust in such things, nor yet be addict or bound to places. A damnable invention is it of antichrist, that the suffragans hallow the synagogues, to bring them into all kinds of superstition. They constitute also a feastful day to the honour and worship thereof, called the dedication, which is most abominable wickedness. Truth it is that after the apostles' time there were places appointed, where as the congregation met together once in the week for the hearing of God's word and for the holy communion, and that was called the oratory or house of prayer. But that house was not exorcised nor conjured, crossed nor smeared, blessed nor besprinkled with water; neither was there at that time any altar set up in it, and anointed with oil and cream, to offer any new sacrifice upon. Consider also that the appointment of this bare house without altar or images was left to man's ordinance without any express commandment of Christ, that it should be thought of no reputation: for in spirit and verity will God only be worshipped. And for this cause, after that Christ had driven the buyers and sellers out of the temple, he commanded none other temple unto us but his body, which he raised up in the day of his resurrection, to our behoof.

6. God therefore is our temple and his Christ. In them ought we to do sacrifice, and in none other. In their faith should our works, labours, and studies be grounded only, if we covet them to profit us. John for his time could see none other temple but this. The Lord of his tender mercy grant us to be Johns in this behalf! John beheld also at the angel's demonstration, that this city had need of neither sun nor moon to minister light unto it, as the old Jerusalem had. Neither hath Christ's congregation need of man's natural reason, nor yet of his worldly wisdom, conjectures nor practices, subtilties nor wiles, policies nor wits, inventions nor traditions: no, neither of their philosophy nor sophistry, the decrees nor sentences of the great lawyers and schoolmen, which all is but darkness and blindness.

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8. For the brightness of God sheweth them light sufficient. His shining verity, his pure gospel, and his undefiled laws, cleareth their understandings. A lantern to their feet is his heavenly word. Only doth that clearness suffice them, which faith offereth unto them.

9. Only are they contented with the light they have of the Lamb, which is the bright Sun of rightousness. He is the lamp, the candle and the flaming cresset of this city. None other admonisher have they need of, none other counsellor nor teacher. Accursed hold they him that bringeth any other doctrine than his, though he were an angel from heaven. For he is the only light of the world, the brightness everlasting, the undefiled mirror of the majesty of God, and the image of his infinite goodness. Whosoever followeth him can in no wise walk in the darkness. "The days will come (saith the Lord in Jeremy), that a man shall not need to teach his neighbour or brother, for they shall know me from the highest to the lowest. I shall plant my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts."

10. And the people of all manner of regions, which are predestined of God to be saved, shall walk in the clearness of the light. None other wisdom, health, righteousness, and redemption shall they seek, than they find in him. Neither shall they care for Mary nor John, roods nor relics, beads nor holy water, masses nor merits. For so shall he shine upon them, and his glory appear in them, that the clouds of antichrist and his false prophets shall take no place. So lively shall the righteous wax in that faith of salvation, that they shall become not only the children of clearness, but also very lights in the Lord.

11. Moreover unto this heavenly light shall the mighty kings of the earth bring their glory, magnificence, and honour, as did the wise men of the east, which offered rewards unto Christ. They shall be converted from their errors to a sincere belief in the Lord, as were in the apostles' time Abagarus, Egyppus, and Gundoforus; and since their days the mighty emperors, great Constantine, Jovinian, Theodosius, and divers others: yea, some were so fervent in that faith, that gladly they suffered death for it; of whose number were here in England St Edmond, Oswald, Ethelbert, Edwin, and Fremond, with a great sort more in other christian

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regions. "All kings (saith David) shall worship him, and all pagans shall do him service." Among these are not they to be reckoned, which, leaving their kingdoms, have made themselves monks and friars, or have founded masses and monasteries to be prayed for: for they never brought their glory to this light. No more have they done which have enriched the clergy, glutting them with possessions, and setting them up in a glittering point; but rather have they sought darkness than light, blindness than to be taught of God. Some have thought themselves in our age clearly converted to this light: but rightly hath their iniquity lied unto them; for nothing have they done less than brought unto Christ their glory. Truth it is that they have discharged themselves of the pope, and of some of his sects. They have plucked down shrines and images that received offerings and daily worshippings, with a few superstitions besides; but still bring they up whelps of the same false generation, both bishops and priests. Still have they to this day the same wicked rites and ceremonies that they had afore. And when they should bring any thing to a right christian order, according to Christ's first institution, they cannot away with it. Great is the vengeance, terrible, heavy, and fearful the judgment that abideth them.

12. And as concerning the great gates of this city, which are the true understandings of the Lord's verities, they shall not be shut up by day. Hidden shall they not be to them that walk in this light. All that Christ hath received of his heavenly Father leaveth he manifest and plain unto his faithful lovers. Not only openeth he their feeble understandings, but also sendeth them his Spirit to deduce them into all godly knowledge.

13. For in that city shall be no night. No doctrine of darkness, nor filthy mist of men's imaginations, can have place where Christ is ever resident, and his verity manifest. The night of infidelity is clean gone from them which have obtained the everlasting day. The clouds of filthy errors abide not, where the true sun hath always dominion. The strong powers of hell shall not be able to prevail, where as faith is perfect and sure. So goeth the Lord before his true Israelites in this pillar of fire, that the night is unto them all one with the day. That is unto other darkness in parables,

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is unto them the clear light and the evidently known mysteries of God's kingdom. In the common translation, that is daily read in the temple, it followeth, that they shall bring the glory and honour of the heathen into the same city, which is not found in the Greek: and by this is it signified that the apostles and other godly preachers since their time, converting the Gentiles, have not only brought into the christian church by their preachings many of their philosophers, whose glory hath been their wisdom and learning, but also their princely potentates, whose honour consisted in power, possessions, and magnificence. Of this sort was the chamberlain of queen Candace, to whom Philip declared the prophecy. So was Cornelius the noble centurion, which was instructed and baptized of Peter. So were also Dionysius the Areopagite, Apollo of Alexandria, and Aquila the Italian, with divers other whom Paul converted in his progress. And after their days were of this company Justin the martyr, Quadratus, Aristides, Tertullian, Origen, Cyril, Basil, John Chrysostom, Augustine, Jerome, with an infinite number else. So was Lucius, the first christian king of this region, Philip the emperor, with many other great governors, which both builded alms-houses for the poor, and made other godly provisions else. This is the precious spoil they brought out of Egypt, and the fruit they have planted in the Lord's vineyard. As Esay prophesied, they enjoyed the strength of the pagans and triumphed in their glory, but not in their superfluous toys and vanities, as do the papists.

14. For into this city (saith the text) or congregation, which is from within and unknown to the world, shall nothing enter that is unclean, or that after any sort defileth; no righteousness of men, which is afore God but as the cloth stained with menstrue: no traditions, merits, nor masses, appear they never so holy. For all that is done beside the prescripts of his word, is plain abomination and filthiness. None that is gelded or coacted to chastity by papistical vows, none that is born of a concubine, or that maketh a new superstitious profession, no misbegotten Moabites and Ammonites, betokening all sects of perdition, are allowed of the Lord unto this congregation: only are they accepted for citizens thereof, which are renewed in faith by the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

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15. Whatsoever it be that worketh abomination in uncommanded worshippings, or maketh lies in hypocrisy, is clearly sequestered from this undefiled city. The constrained virginity of priests, which hath made so many Sodomites; confession under a stole, that hath bred so many false traitors and thieves; the two-horned order of bishops, that hath hatched so many proud gluttons and murderers; the anointed priesthood, that hath increased so many idolaters; the unholy profession of monks, that hath brought forth so many stinking hypocrites, with such other seeds of the devil, hath here no place at all. For neither whoremongers, nor idol-worshippers, nor abusers of themselves with mankind[1], nor Gomorreans, nor extortioners, nor covetous bribers, nor drunkards, nor blasphemers of the Lord's word, nor cruel destroyers of innocents, can in any wise inherit the kingdom of God.

16. But they only shall possess that, which are written in the Lamb's book of life, or that were predestinate thereunto in Christ before the world's constitution, to be holy and unspotted in his sight. These are they whom he hath in a perpetual remembrance, whom he hath ordained of goodness, chosen of mercy, called by the gospel, justified through faith, and glorified in the performance of his commandments, that they should be like-fashioned to the shape of his Son. Thongh these of frailness offend many times (as the flesh can do none other), yet deny they not the verity, they abhor not the scriptures: but after they have fallen, they repent from the heart, they seek the remedies, they hate their own deeds, they call unto Christ, they lament their chance, they hunger and thirst continually for the righteousness of God, and such other like. Now as concerning this city in the regeneration or sabbath to come, all will be gold, precious stones and pearls. Their glory will be perfect, their knowledge whole, and their judgment in the Spirit full. All will be there square, even, and right; nothing shall be crooked, rough, and froward. All will be new and precious, no manner of deformity appearing in the creatures. The beauty of the city will be wonderful, the light inestimable, the dwelling most quietous and pleasant. There shall we clearly behold how mighty, marvellous, high, beautiful, glorious, perfect, strong, victorious, delectable, and sweet our Redeemer Jesus

[1 A scriptural expression substituted.]

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Christ is with his Father and Holy Ghost. Here have we but a small taste thereof, but there shall we be fully replenished therewith.

THE TWENTY-SECOND CHAPTER.

STILL doth this chapter following, which is the last of this Revelation, prosecute the spiritual and heavenly commodities of this city, concluding with most excellent admonitions and godly warnings.

THE TEXT.

1 And he shewed me a pure river 2 of water of life, 3 clear as crystal, 4 proceeding out of the seat of God, and of the Lamb. 5 In the midst of the street of it, 6 and of either side of the river 7 was there wood of life, 8 which bare twelve manner of fruits, 9 and gave fruit every month; 10 and the leaves of the wood served 11 to heal people withal.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. And the angel (saith St John), or gracious purpose of the Lord, which commoned with me all this time to bring me yet into a farther knowledge of his mysteries, shewed unto me a most pure and commodious river, which was the wholesome water of life. None other can I suppose this river to be by the search of the scriptures, but the flowing verity, the word of salvation, or the effectual doctrine of Christ's holy Spirit. That is the sweet flood of Eden, which pleasantly floweth through paradise, and visiteth the four quarters of the world. This is that wholesome and delectable water, which daily comforteth and preserveth the spiritual Jerusalem from all contagious maladies. This running flood with his rivers on every side rejoiceth the city of God, which is the habitation of the highest.

2. All full of quickness is it, springing into the life everlasting. Here is it the spiritual comfort of God's children, there shall it be the inestimable glory of the saints. "To whom shall we go, Lord" (saith Peter), "but unto thee? For only hast thou the words of eternal life."

3. So clear is this water as the pure crystal that is without spot. Much farther from corruption is the sincere

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word of God, than is the fine silver that is seven times tried in the fire. "The laws of the Lord are perfect, and quicken the soul; his testimonies are true, giving wisdom to babes. His statutes are right, rejoicing the heart: his precepts are pure, giving sight to the eyes; and his judgments are altogether righteous."

4. The nature of this water is none other but evermore to cleanse, evermore to revive, and evermore to make whole and perfect. For only doth it issue from the majesty of God, it proceedeth out from the sempiternal throne of the Father, and so floweth forth in the plenteous abundance of the Lamb Jesus Christ and of his godly Spirit. With him is the well of everlasting life. They that walk in his light shall be free from darkness for ever. They shall throughly enjoy the abundance of those things that his house is full of, and he shall give them drink out of the full flowing river of his eternal pleasures. "I will pour clear water upon you (saith the Lord in Ezechiel), and ye shall be clean from all filthiness. A new heart will I give you; a new spirit will I plant in you, and so cleanse you from all your idols." "Rejoice with Jerusalem, all you that love her, for ye shall suck comfort out of her breasts, and be satisfied." They that have sown in heaviness shall reap in perpetual gladness. From the Father and the Son proceeded the Holy Ghost, as a clear crystal river, neither created nor begotten, to refresh this chosen city: so that much more understanding, light, and knowledge it hath, than had the old synagogue of the Jews, which was thereof but a shadow; yet is it incomparably far from that shall be in the durable life to come, being as yet thereto but a figure. For, as witnesseth Paul, "our knowledge is now unperfect, and our prophesying unperfect; but when that cometh which is perfect, then that which is unperfect shall be done away." Here is it also to be considered that the Lamb is equal with God, they both having but one seat.

5. Moreover in the midst of the golden street of this beautiful city, which comprehendeth the spiritual children of Abraham couched together in the unity of one tried faith,

6. And upon either sides of the sweet river, which are the two testaments of the Lord, was standing the most delectable tree of life, Jesus Christ, that mediator and father

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which giveth life to the world. Out of the stock of Abraham and David sprang this tree after the flesh, conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of Mary the Virgin, which was also a golden stone of this street. "Blessed art thou (saith Elizabeth) for thy belief's sake; for in thee is performed the full promise of the Lord." This is that tree which was planted by the water side, and gave forth fruit at his time appointed. As the tree of life was set in the midst of paradise at the beginning, so is he now spiritually grounded in the midst of his church, which is his garden of pleasure. "Behold (saith Christ), I am with you every day unto the world's end."

7. Marvel not that the tree is here called wood; for it is the custom and manner of the Hebrews to put the one for the other. Both is this tree in the midst of the street, and also upon either side of the river. For both is Christ known of his faithful multitude, and comprehended in the scriptures. David acknowledged himself to be a pure stone of this golden street, when he said, "My humble soul hath cleaved or fastened to the pavement, thou quickening me, Lord, according to thy word." So did king Hezekiah, when he was revived again. And so did Elias, when he under the juniper-tree desired to die; with many other more. Between both testaments arose Christ, performing the old, and beginning the new. He bordereth also to this present day upon them both, for both they bear large and plenteous witness of him: both the law and the gospel, the prophets and apostles, the Psalms and all other scriptures, witness throughly that he is the promised Seed, the Son of the living God, and the Saviour of the world.

[Psal. cxix. 25.]

8. If that soil be fortunate, which bringeth forth fruits twice in the year, most happy and blessed is the ground of this city. For the living tree thereof is never barren, bare, nor idle.

9. Not only doth it bear twelve manner fruits of inestimable wholesomeness, betokening the universal graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost; but also it giveth them forth every month in the year, or evermore without ceasing. Every month hath there both his summer and his winter. Every lifetime of them, which be of this congregation, hath here both his sweet consolation in the Spirit, and also his hard

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persecution in the flesh. Else is it not of Christ's kingdom, which is the destroyer of death, and ministereth life at his pleasure. In this tree is the original ground of life. He is the very life of all them that live unto God. In him only they consist, they move, and they have their continual being. His branches are the holy prophets and apostles, and the evangelists and martyrs, with all other godly preachers and teachers, evermore green and pleasant in their conversation and doctrine. "I am the true vine (saith he), and you are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, bringeth forth much fruit." Them sent Christ out as branches, and spread with them the world over, to bring forth fruit that should not perish; and that every month, from age to age, and from time to time, continually. For still are the true believers fed with the apostles' fruitful doctrine, and shall be to the end of the world. Therewith are their souls refreshed in their great manifold sorrows and labours. A singular comfort it is unto them to consider God's sweet promises, and to remember what a loving Father they have of him through Jesus Christ their only Mediator and Saviour. Most abundantly feel they themselves satisfied, when they are ascertained throughly by the scriptures, that they are predestinate, called, saved, sanctified, and shall be hereafter glorified by him: whereas contrariwise, the desperate infidels are much discomforted, considering themselves blinded, condemned, judged, and reproved. Twelve are these fruits here called, which is a perfect and full complete number, comprehending the universal graces of the Spirit, contained in all the whole scriptures: as are the fear of God, the poverty of soul, the cleanness of heart, compassion upon the needy, desire of righteousness, mercy, gentleness, quietness, sufferance, wisdom, understanding, counsel, perseverance, knowledge, prudence, force, justice, temperance, with those that Paul numbereth to the Galatians, and innumerable virtues besides. Some expositors willeth this twelve to signify that none can be saved unless he be of the twelve children of Israel in spirit, and so walk according to the doctrine of Christ's twelve apostles: but I am contented with that is said afore, being more agreeable to the text.

10. Such leaves had this wholesome tree as were for the health of the people, good, necessary, and medicinable.

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Such profitable words and promises hath Christ, as are spirit and life, power of salvation, and everlasting health. These leaves of his can in no wise wither away; and whatsoever he doth by them, it shall wonderfully prosper. He sent forth his wholesome word (saith David), and so healed them. He delivered them from all evils wherewith they were oppressed. As these words are sincerely taught, the benefits of our redemption are brought into remembrance. So is the conscience quieted, and the heart made glad. So rejoiceth the soul, and giveth perpetual thanks unto God the Father. So are the Gentiles throughly made whole, acknowledging Christ for their only Saviour and Redeemer.

11. Thus, after Ezechiel, are these fruits good to eat, and their leaves profitable for medicines. As the leaves are the beauty of a tree, and preserveth the fruit, so is the true preaching of the Lord's verity the comeliness of his church, and preservation of the same; and not the oilings, shavings, and disguisings, nor yet the lordships, mitres, and masses. A light thing is the word of God, written or spoken, as is the leaf also of a tree; but if his Spirit worketh in it, then is it a thing most precious, effectual, and strong, compared of Christ to a mustard-seed, which groweth into a great tree. Above all things (saith Zorobabel) the verity is most strong. For that is the Lord's eternal will, which never shall be altered.

THE TEXT.

1 And there shall be no more curse, 2 but the seat of God and the Lamb 3 shall be in it, and his servants shall serve him. 4 And they shall see his face, 5 and his name shall be in their foreheads. 6 And there shall be no night there, 7 and they need no candle, 8 neither light of the sun; 9 for the Lord God giveth them light, 10 and they shall reign for evermore.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. And as concerning the aforenamed city, or worthy congregation of the Lord, the curse that the earth had in the work of Adam shall clearly be taken from it. Never more from henceforth shall therein be any thing that God is not pleased with. For Christ hath redeemed her from the curse of the law, sustaining thereof the penalty to make her innocent: so that now there is no damnation to them which are in Christ Jesu, following the doctrine of the Spirit,

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If painful adversity, loss of goods, detriment of fame, sickness, persecution of body, or any other troublous cross happeneth, it is evermore for the best to them that are faithful. Perfectly shall these be taken away, with all the corrupt fruits of Adam, in the regeneration, when to their glory both heaven and earth shall be blessed, all that is cursed thrown into the lake of everlasting fire.

2. And for a more sure token that this will be true, the high seat of God the eternal Father, and of the Lamb Jesus Christ with the Holy Ghost, one Lord Almighty in three personages, shall be continually therein. In the house of Jacob shall he reign evermore, and of his kingdom shall be none end. Among them will he fix his dwelling-place here, which loveth him and observeth his commandments; and there will he not be separated from them, but be still their eternal God.

3. Moreover, as his true servants, here shall they worship him in spirit and in verity, and so serve him in a sincere faith, performing such godly works as he hath prescribed unto them, and not such as men's fantasies have dreamed. They shall so mortify their old man, destroying the body of sin, that no longer shall he obey the concupiscence, nor become a captive servant unto wickedness here: but now, delivered from sin, they shall do on a new man, which is rightly fashioned of God, and so become his servants in righteousness; and in the world to come they shall serve him according to the knowledge that they shall have then, which now is incomprehensible and unspeakable.

4. Having the Spirit of Christ, they shall here see his face of salvation in the mirror of faith, which is to have knowledge of his Godhead. And after this life they shall behold him in glory, like as he is indeed, much more perfectly than did Jacob, which saw him face to face. Moreover so shall these his servants respect his visage, that whatsoever they do here in word or in deed, they shall do it with all godly fear, lowliness, and reverence, always thinking him to behold their deeds.

5. They shall also perceive his glorious name to be written in their foreheads, or registered in their faith, feeling the sweetness thereof to their salvation. Besides that, not only shall they confess God with their mouth, but also in their

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outward conversation shall they daily appear as his faithful servants and children. And as concerning the glorious day, by that name then shall one know another to be a free citizen of heaven. "Consider (saith St John), how lovingly the Father doth use us." Not only here do we bear the name of his children, but also there shall we be sure to be his sons indeed.

6. No manner of night or darkness of human doctrine shall appear any more in that city. But having Christ and his verity, all unprofitable doubts, fantasies, errors, lies, and false miracles, shall these citizens detest here; and after this life are no such matters to be looked for, all things then being clear and perfect. Though they sometime were darkness, yet are they now light in the Lord, and will walk still therein as the children thereof, till they come to the God of gods in the everlasting Sion.

7. There shall they have need of no candle, or of wisdom borrowed of men;

8. Nor yet of the material sun, which ministered light to the day; by whom is meant the high science of philosophers conceived of the creatures above without faith. Those foreign lights may his ministers well use, but truly his church needeth them not, having much better than they are of Christ and of his apostles. Very dark lights are they, where his bright beams once appeareth, which is the clear Sun of righteousness. Abominable lies and errors did he prove the high learning of the bishops and lawyers, as he doth yet their decrees and laws, their school-divinity and sentences, their ordinary questions and quodlibets.

9. All these stinking mists set apart, the merciful Lord above, which is the omnipotent God, giveth them a light sufficient. His eternal Son is unto them such a clear shining cresset, as no great blast can extinguish, nor cloud with dark shadow blemish. Of most tender mercy sent he that day-spring from above, to direct their feet here in the way of his peace.

10. And, after this laborious pilgrimage, in the sabbath of perpetual quiet shall he lighten them throughly with his most glorious presence, and with him shall they reign for ever and ever in full felicity and glory continuing. In this life beginneth the kingdom through faith, but there shall it be performed in the perfect sight of the Godhead. The proud

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reign of tyrants is here but for a time, the less it is to be feared. The meek reign of the righteous continueth for ever, the more it is to be sought for and desired. The fruits that are here very hard and sour unto them, shall there be inestimably sweet, gentle, beautiful, perfect, and pleasant, having their full ripeness. No need shall it be then to run by sea and land for the wisdom, power, and glory of Christ; for in that day shall they be with every one present. Here have they but little pretty beams of the light, very small drops of the water, and a smell of the fruits afar off; likelihoods, figures, and mysteries have they only now of the beatitude to come: but there shall they be sure to have them in full sight, taste and savour, and plenteously to be satisfied with them. Scarce is it here in comparison to that it shall be there, as one drop of water to the whole sea, or as an handful of sand is to the whole earth.

The Text.

1 And he said unto me, 2 These sayings are faithful and true; 3 and the Lord God 4 of the holy prophets 5 sent his angel to shew unto his servants 6 the things which shortly must be fulfilled. 7 Behold, I come shortly. 8 Happy is he that keepeth the saying 9 of the prophecy of this book.

The Commentary.

1. In the conclusion of these most wonderful revelations (saith St John), the angel that communed with me all this time (which was the very Spirit of Christ) said thus unto me, his poor exiled servant:

2. It shall become no man to despise these words, nor to reject these sayings, whom thou hast here seen and heard since the first beginning of this revelation. For they are most faithful and true, sure and perfect, and shall without fail at their appointed times in every jot be fulfilled, for the true church's commodity and profit. This is here spoken for the conservation of the high mysteries of this book, lest any false antichrist hereafter (as many such have been indeed) should condemn them, deprave them, and as of none authority report them. As the most dear treasures of God, therefore, doth the Holy Ghost here wrap them up together, to preserve them under his power, and setteth unto them the seal of his own witness, that they should evermore be taken for his. After

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this sort did the prophets use their prophecies, concluding always, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts." So did the Lord himself when he said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, we speak that we know. My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. Of myself I speak not the words that I utter. The Father dwelling in me performed the works. I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true;" with such other like. Paul doth also name himself the apostle of Jesus Christ. "Not I" command this faith (saith he), "but the Lord. The gospel that I preach have I learned of no man, but by the shewing of Jesus Christ. The Lord that is blessed for ever knoweth that I lie not;" and such like. So is the end of this book, as was the beginning, sealed with many wonderful and strong sentences of the Lord, as his whole mind, perfect will, and purposed decree, concerning his church here in earth.

3. And the same Lord God eternal (saith Christ unto John), which hath diversely aforetime spoken in the holy prophets and fathers, hath now last of all sent the angel of his everlasting covenant, by him to utter the secrets of his mind by whom he created the world. Him hath he hither directed, in these latter days of the world, to shew clearly unto his true servants (of whom thou art in these days principal) those wonderful things in mystery, which must within short space effectually come to pass and be fulfilled in deed: as the manifold persecutions of his church, and the prosperous reign of the beast and his shorelings, with the glorious raise of the one, and damnable fall of the other; that when troublous crosses do come, they may be the more joyfully taken, considering the time of them short, and the reward of their sufferance everlasting.

4. For none other cause is God here called the Lord God of the prophets, but that they have through his Spirit truly believed in him, and by the same Spirit declared his mind and pleasure.

5. In the beginning of this revelation was this angel sent unto John alone; here is he sent also unto his other servants, in token that the Lord in John respecteth his congregation.

6. The things that must shortly follow are his judgments in rewarding the righteous and condemning the reprobates. For a thousand years are but a day before him, and as the time that is in a manner past. Let every man take heed

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(saith the Lord), lest I come upon him unlooked for. Let them watch in faith, and pray in spirit and verity, having their wedding-garments, with the oil of christian love in their lamps.

7. For behold, when I shall come either to the particular end of any man, or to the latter judgment, I will come suddenly, neither the day nor yet the hour of my coming known afore; lest men (as they are ill of nature) should drive off till that day to live according to faith. Of this admonition may the faithful sort be glad, being here in adversity, considering their deliverance is at hand, and their crown of immortality not far off.

8. Happy is that man, whatsoever he be, high or low, rich or poor, learned or unlearned, that observeth in his conversation and life the godly sayings contained in the prophecy in this present book.

9. Yea, blessed is he that so receiveth the premonishments thereof, that neither false prophet can deceive him, nor yet any cruel antichrist with terrors drive him from the right understanding and following of Christ's pure doctrine. For neither to dogs nor swine are they here left, to be neglected or disdained; but unto his faithful servants, to be reverently followed and had in remembrances.

The Text.

1 I am John 2 which saw these things, 3 and heard them. 4 And when I had heard and seen them, 5 I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel 6 which shewed me these things. 7 And he said unto me, 8 See thou do it not; 9 for I am thy fellow-servant, 10 and the fellow-servant of thy brethren the prophets, 11 and of them which keep the sayings of this book: 12 worship God.

The Commentary.

1. Consequently, because ye shall not suppose this matter light (saith St John), as many think that which hath not the testimony of men, besides the authority of God; I, John Boanerges, an earnest thunderer out of the gospel, and a stirrer up [of] men's hearts to the study of heavenly things; yea, a man known not only to you Asians, but also to the whole Christianity, for that apostle whom Christ peculiarly loved;

2. Even I am the same self John, which have both heard these wonderful things with mine ears, and also have seen

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them through the great goodness of my Lord God with mine eyes, for your singular commodity and profit.

3. None other matter do I here write unto you, at the commandment of Jesus Christ, for your health and salvation, but such as I have both heard and seen for the same; believe them if ye will. In my other writings, as are my gospel and my first epistle, whereunto I never subscribed, ye have throughly believed me. Give no less credence now then unto this, whereunto I subscribe my name: for so have I done here, that ye should the rather believe it, and receive it, as most wholesome doctrine of salvation. After this sort did Paul add his name to his sayings, that they should be the more earnestly received.

4. And as concerning my part, truly when I had thus heard them and seen them, the wonderful mysteries of them so ravished my spirits, that I in a manner clearly forgat myself.

5. Yea, I was so far from my right remembrance for the vehemency of them, that I fell down flat to the ground, prostrate before the feet of the angel, minding to give unto him the whole homage of my soul, which is only due unto God that created my soul.

6. And what, though this angel which had thus opened unto me all these wonderful mysteries afore, were Jesus Christ himself (as I thought him no less indeed); yet thought I not to have worshipped him in that similitude, considering also that God will have no part of his honour given to any other than unto himself only.

7. Wherefore he charitably admonished me of it, and said thus unto me:

8. In any wise beware thou do no such homage unto me, which appear here to thee but a creature, lest thereby thou offend the Lord God. For danger may be in such case, though the intent be godly, if any part thereof should remain to the creature, as thou knowest well enough. Nothing mayest thou worship that thy outward sight offereth unto thee; for in them hath faith no place, which is a substance of things unseen. And God hath taught thee to worship him in no creatures, neither in bread nor wine, man nor angel, but in spirit and verity only; much less then to worship the self creatures, or idols in their stead, which is much worse.

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9. Though I be the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, yet am I in this office but a creature and thy fellow-servant; a sent messenger from God as thou art, an opener of his godly mind and pleasure as thou art, to signify that unto thee, which he would have thee again to signify unto his people.

10. And in this point am I not only thy companion, or in this message joined fellow with thee (for so well is it my revelation as thine), but also I am a like companion to thy former brethren Ezechiel, Daniel, Zachary, and such other, which had the gift of prophecy and were prophets indeed, as thou art now, doing like office with them, thus uttering God's mind in mysteries.

11. Yea, furthermore, I am a fellow-servant likewise and a companion together of all them that with reverence observe the faithful testimonies of this present book or prophecy: in token whereof I took the shape of a servant, I fulfilled the law, and was conversant among men.

12. See thou worship not me therefore, but worship thy only Lord God. For alone shouldest thou seek him and love him, honour him and serve him, praise him and glorify him. None other gods shalt thou have in my sight, saith the eternal and omnipotent Lord. Observe the same rule in worshipping, that I taught thee to observe in prayer. Remember I taught thee not to pray unto me whom thou seest, nor yet unto any dead saint whom thou seest not; but unto thy Lord God whom thou hast only in belief, saying, "Our Father which art in heaven." I told thee also that God was a Spirit, and that he would only be sought in Spirit, and in nothing that thou seest with thine eyes. Therefore worship God, and not me. Consider here, good reader, the ungodly violence of the papists, enforcing the simple multitude to worship a dry wafer-cake, to kneel unto it, to hold up their hands, to make their prayers to it, and to call it their God, making them to believe that it is God's commandment they should so do. O abominable anti-christs! O filthy Balaamites! seeking your own bellies and glory to your confusion. Weigh this place throughly with the other scriptures, and be once ashamed of your beastly and blasphemous madness. Ye will paraventure say, it is Christ's body. But truly that is all false. For thereof is no mutual participation, where one eateth up all. No shewing is there

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of the Lord's death till he come, where all is done in a foreign language, and nothing understood. Christ breathed not upon the bread with *hoo, hee, have at all,* as you do. He only took it in his holy hands, and gave thanks unto God. The words of thanksgiving he left not behind him for you to conjure with; for he knew ye afore for subtile workers. He kept not the bread to himself, nor yet closed it up in a box, as you do; but he brake it, and distributed it unto other. In like case the disciples did neither worship it nor him at that season: for if they had, he would have forbidden it them, and have taught the same self doctrine that he sheweth here unto John. Only did they take it and eat it in his remembrance, and that was his institution: and where as it is this [thus] used, there is both his body and blood received; but otherwise not. The bread that was left of this consecration or breaking, which was so holy as the other, was neither housed nor churched, boxed nor pixed, but remained there still to the householders, to be eaten of whomsoever lusted. Neither doth the divinity of your sententioners, as of Thomas of Aquine, Duns, Dorbel, Guido, Baconthorpe, and such other, appoint thereunto that kind of honour that ye suffer the people to give unto it, but a far meaner honour called *Hyperdulia.* But you can wink at such matters, and suffer both them and yourselves to go to the devil for worldly lucre. Nothing holdeth long with you, neither Christ's doctrine nor your own: but that ye make now, ye mar to-morrow; and that at one time is a law, at another time shall be none at all. Such are your wavering wonders.

The Text.

1 And he said unto me, 2 Seal not thy sayings of the prophecy of this book, 3 for the time is at hand. 4 He that doth evil, let him do evil still; 5 and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; 6 and he that is righteous, let him be more righteous; 7 and he that is holy, let him be more holy. 8 And behold, I come shortly, 9 and my reward with me, 10 to give every man according as his deeds shall be. 11 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, 12 the first and the last.

The Commentary.

1. Consequently the angel (saith St John), which was Jesus Christ, said these same sayings unto me that here followeth:

2. Seal not (saith he) the godly words contained in the

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prophecy of this book. Close them not up from the sight of other. Hide them not from those which are desirous of knowledge: for profitable they are to the congregation of God, and most highly necessary to them that shall be saved. For both shew they throughly the damnation of the wicked with the remedies to avoid it, and also the salvation of the righteous with means to obtain it.

3. And this is the cause why thou shalt not close them up. The time is at hand. The fulfilling of them will shortly appear, and evidently declare what they are in deed. In the mean season shall many of their mysteries be open unto them that are taught of God, though the unfaithful sort know nothing what they mean. They that have Christ's Spirit can in no necessary point be ignorant. The cause why many writers have erred in expounding this revelation hath been the ignorance of other scriptures, the pleasing of prelates for dignity and lucre, and most of all the horrible blindness of soul, which long hath continued in the world among the fleshly hypocrites.

4. And as concerning those beastly belly-gods, let them wallow in their mischiefs. He that is evil among them, or froward and obstinate against the verity of God, let him work evil upon evil, abomination upon abomination, and murder upon murder, till he bring upon himself the vengeance of all innocent blood, which hath been shed upon earth, to his more damnation without remedy.

5. Moreover, he that is filthy in his conversation, be it in the spirit or otherwise, I will take my grace from him, for the utter contempt of my word; and he shall be still from thenceforth more execrable and filthy. He shall do wickedness upon wickedness, idolatry upon idolatry, and whoredom upon whoredom: yea, whereas he was before but an idolater in himself, he shall become after that an idolater also in others, by provoking them to the same, to his double damnation. And whereas he should paraventure in the world have been but a single whoremonger, he shall be there an holy, spiritual, anointed, shaven, shorn, priestly and mitred whoremonger, abusing every man's wife, daughter, and servant; and, to make up all to the devil, become a consecrated sodomite, offering himself up in dead sacrifices unto Belphegor[1], for fear of

[1 Baal-peor.]

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breaking his unvirginal vow. Farther than all this, he shall enter into such blindness of the spirit, that he will think verily to do God an high pleasure when he murdereth up without mercy his innocent people, which will not obey their execrable laws, blessings, absolutions, and other sorceries, for conscience' sake. Consider in this the terrible and fearful hand of the Lord towards them that withhold his truth in unrighteousness, specially when he hath given them over, and left them to themselves: for they work their own damnation, when they think nothing less.

6. Contrariwise consider his exceeding great mercy towards them that are godly, whom he diverely afflicteth in this[1] life, lest they should perish with the wicked. My pleasure is it (saith he here), that the man which is faithful, righteous, and good, shall increase evermore therein, and so continually be righteous. I shall so temper their hearts, that hath love to my truth, that they shall love it more and more: yea, I shall so therein strengthen them, that for no persecution of tyrants shall they forsake it.

7. So will I order the matter among my elect, that he which is holy, pure, and perfect, leading a life according to my word, he shall persevere in it still, and be perfect unto the end, that he may enjoy the crown thereof; neither shall seducing hypocrite, nor yet perverting antichrist, with all their subtle charms and gins, be able to bring them out of that way which leadeth unto life. By this we may see that, the verity preached, Christ is unto some a falling, unto some again a rising up. Unto some is his godly doctrine a sweet savour unto life, and unto some an ill savour unto death. The gospel is foolishness to them that shall perish, but unto them that believe it is such a power of God as bringeth salvation with it. The faithful by hearing it wax more godly: the undiscreet hypocrites contemn the grace thereof; so that the one sort is thereby made better and increased in virtue, the other is made worse and followeth all mischiefs. In him that hath faith shall all other graces of the Spirit abound; and in him that hath it not shall no gift of virtue arise to his soul's profit.

8. Let men take heed if they will, and give diligent watch and attendance; for truly (saith the Lord) I will come

[1 Old ed. *his*.]

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suddenly and unbewares upon the unfaithful, none other warning given but this, and such other in the scriptures; take them if they list.

9. Necessary it is that every man walk according to his vocation, both prince and preacher, lord and commoner, merchant and artificer. For when I shall resort, be certain and sure of it, my just reward shall come with me, which is both life and death.

10. Let no man reckon otherwise to find me than a most righteous Judge, rendering unto every one at that day according as his works shall appear, and as his deeds shall require of righteousness. Neither shall suffrages nor church-building, pilgrimages nor mass-singing, holy orders nor yet assoiling, stand in any stead at that day. Only shall they find mercy which have been merciful, all other perishing without mercy. No man shall there be rewarded for works of men's prescription, be they never so holy, but for that which hath risen of faith in God's word only: neither shall they have that of deservings, as work-preachers have taught, but only of grace and favour, for Christ's blood sake. For unprofitable servants are we of ourselves, when we have done all that hath been commanded us. No better is our whole righteousness, when it is at the highest, than is the cloth that is stained with menstrue, nor more pleasant unto God, were it not for him. Let no man think to be saved through deserving, no more than he is justified of deserving. Only is it the merciful favour and free goodness of him without our many merits, that shall save us. Not our good works (saith St Augustine), but his own mere gifts, doth the Lord crown in us.

11. This hath the Lord put here in the end as a brief conclusion, comprehending his whole mind in this Revelation, concerning the righteous and unrighteous. Believe this necessary doctrine, saith the Lord Jesus Christ; for I which have told it here unto you, am under the mystery of Alpha and Omega, the first and the last Greek letters, the original beginning of all things, and perfect end of the same. I am that mighty Word of God, though I appear now in this nature, in whom he created all, and by whom he shall perform and finish all to that end they were created for.

12. I am the first, in that I am in one Godhead equal with the Father, and with the Holy Ghost. I am also the

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last, in that I shall so continue world without end. I am he before whom there was never any God, neither shall there be any after me. I am only the Lord, for I am from everlasting. In token whereof I have told you both things that are past, and things yet to come. Under this strange trope, or similitude of Alpha and Omega (which is a common allegory used of the Greeks), is always to be understood the eternal divinity in Christ's manhood: which is here (as are many other things else) oft-times repeated, of none other purpose but as a most necessary cause to be had in remembrance.

The Text.

1 Blessed are they that do 2 his commandments, 3 that their power may be in the tree of life, 4 and may enter in through the gates into the city. 5 For without are dogs, 6 and enchanters, 7 and whoremongers, 8 and murderers, 9 and idolaters, 10 and whosoever loveth or maketh leasings.

The Commentary.

1. From henceforth doth the Lord change the manner of his speaking, representing again the personage of an angel or messenger. Blessed are they (saith he), or happy afore God, that of a sincere faith and godly mind do diligently observe his just commandments, which is a very washing of their defiled garments in the blood of the Lamb. For perfectly pure, innocent, and clean are they that walk faithfully according to the precepts of his heavenly doctrine: yea, doing on the armour of light, they are very clearness in the Lord, and the shining beauty of the world.

2. And as concerning his commandments, grievous are they not, but sweet and pleasant, he setting hand to the fulfilling of them, which hath commanded them; he, ministering his godly Spirit, may make of him that was afore unwilling a very willing person, like as he did of Saul, when he changed him into a Paul. He, laying before their eyes the inestimable profit of the good things to come, will cause them to forget these corruptible pleasures, and always to labour for them.

3. Happy are they aforehand, that shall mind to do these things, that their power through a true belief may be in the tree of life, whereby they may work them, and so have fruit of their labours. For without that tree (by whom is

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meant the Saviour of the world) they can do nothing thereunto. Without his strength, grace, and Spirit, doubtless they are all weak, wretched, and unprofitable, have they never so many holy deservings; which, faithfully desired, is never denied them, as all the scriptures record.

4. This world he sought therefore, that they may thereby enter in peaceably, without impediment, through the clear gates of pearl afore mentioned, into the pleasant city, or the newly prepared Jerusalem. By the which gates is none other signified here, but he alone, diversly opened by the apostles' doctrine. He is the only portal of righteousness and the straight way unto life, by whom they enter in from all quarters of the world. None other would David acknowledge in all his godly praises, nor yet the apostle Paul in his manifold exhortations. Whatsoever they be that enter in by him, be without peril evermore, and shall have the life everlasting. Thus is a true belief in him and his word with a just following of the same a full doing of his commandments without any other traditions, ordinances, or ceremonies.

5. And whiles this chosen flock are thus entering into this city, the cruel dogs which bark against the verity, and tear the true servants of God, are still remaining without, appear they never so spiritual and holy.

6. So are the subtle sorcerers, which with their holy charms and enchantments, with their prophecies, revelations, and false miracles, both blind the unlearned governors, and deceive the profane idiotish multitude, leading them both to the devil.

7. So are the consecrate whoremongers, the defilers of all honesty, and breakers of all godly ordinances, as are in these days, in the braggers out of Romish chastity, the bishops, priests, and religious, under the title of vows maintaining Sodom and Gomorre.

8. Likewise in the spiteful murderers, that of malice and mischief slay the godly preachers and other poor innocent people for rebuking their corrupt customs, are sequestered from thence for ever.

9. The superstitious idolaters, of all generations the most execrable, as mass-mongers, bead-babblers, saint-seekers, image-lighters, gadders to Compostella, Rome, Triers, and

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Tholouse, with all their strange worshippings not commanded of God, shall have no place there.

10. Briefly to conclude the whole, what people soever they are that delight in fables, lies, and errors, not regarding the right meaning of the scriptures; or what holy hypocrites soever they be that with feigned sanctity, deceivable wonders, and false interpretations, blemish the verity of the Lord, for the upholding of their pride, lechery, and lucre, shall enjoy no freedom within this city. Be ye sure of this (saith St Paul in divers places), that no fornicator, nor unclean person, no covetous cloyner, deceitful hypocrite, liar for advantage, filthy idolater, malicious murderer, or such other like, can have any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. No portion can they have in the land of the living, that have been partakers with adulterers and thieves.

THE TEXT.

1 I Jesus have sent mine angel 2 to testify unto you these things in the congregation. 3 I am the root and generation of David, 4 and the bright morning star. 5 And the Spirit and the bride say, 6 Come. 7 And let him that heareth say, 8 Come. 9 And let him that is athirst come. 10 And let whosoever will, take 11 freely of the water of life.

THE COMMENTARY.

1. Consequently if ye covet (saith the Lord) to know surely, from whence this doctrine doth come, and who is the chief author thereof, be you throughly ascertained that I Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, have directed forth mine angel (which is the Spirit of truth), or the Holy Ghost whom I promised, to witness here manifestly unto you by my dear disciple John these wonderful things, hereafter to chance in the christian congregations.

2. Think not that the contents of this book are either of John, or yet of any other man that ever was here living: for neither hath he learned them of prophet nor holy father; but by my only revelation or shewing, which am the eternal spouse of the church, hath he received them to their singular health and comfort.

3. And as concerning me, without fail I am the original root, or ground of salvation in David after the word, and after the flesh I am of his stock or generation. For in me are

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fulfilled all promises of health that ever God made for that faithful household. By me had David his beginning, for I made him; and by me shall he and all other true Israelites in him have for ever a glorious countenance, for I saved them in that flesh.

4. To all them which walk after David's faith am I the bright morning-star of grace, removing the filthy clouds of error; the shining clearness of godly understanding, finishing the dark night of ignorance. I bring with me the day of mercy, health, and righteousness, and the sabbath of full reconciliation to God. I give light unto them that sat in darkness, directing their feet in the path-way of peace.

5. For my word is spirit and verity, resurrection and life; and where as it shineth in the hearts of mortal men, it maketh them the children of light. To seek unto this necessary light, the eternal Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, daily moveth and provoketh by many inward callings upon, saying always,

6. Come with a sincere faith. Draw nigh unto him, and be lightened, and your frail consciences shall never be confounded. Resort unto him all you that are loaden, and he shall refresh you. The bride or congregation of the Lord, thus taught, stirred, and pricked forward of his Spirit, saith also in her heart evermore, with a fervent desire, 'O come, my most delectable spouse, and Lord Jesus Christ, my health, joy, and sweetness. Apply that the immortal glory of the chosen children of God may be seen of all creatures, iniquity condemned for ever. Accomplish the marriage appointed from the world's beginning. Permit that prepared spouse with her appointed number to enter into thy eternal tabernacle of rest.'

7. Moreover (saith the Lord), whatsoever they be that shall hear and believe this prophecy, let them desire the consummation thereof, and so conform themselves unto Christ and his church, saying also,

8. Come, most merciful Saviour and Redeemer, and fulfil the godly promises of this book, to the eternal comfort of man. Make haste to the judgment-seat, for a full deliverance of the whole chosen number, that thy servants may be where as thou art in perfect glory and joy.

9. Finally, let him (saith the Lord), that in faith is

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athirst, or that hath in him a desire to be saved, haste himself forward, and come also. Let him only believe: for the plenteous fountains of the living waters mentioned afore are withholden from no servant of God; nothing is denied unto him that asketh in faith. In prayer are all spiritual commodities granted.

10. Whosoever therefore hath a will conformable unto God's will, let him take freely without price or payment, without satisfaction or merit, the pleasant water of the life for ever, refreshing his soul in the plenteousness thereof.

11. Of grace and favour is salvation in Christ laid for thee. Only is here required but a will to seek for it. Not that it shall so be deserved; for neither is it of him that willeth, nor yet of him that runneth: but that gracious Lord, which calleth men to these waters, putteth into them a stomach, thirst and desire to covet them; yea, he ministereth strength to the seeking of them, lest some of the glory thereof should remain unto their deservings, and not all to his mercy alone. Thus standeth the doctrine of our work-braggers void, which neither feedeth nor satisfieth, considering that not for our righteous doings, but alone for his own mercy's sake, hath he saved us.

The Text.

1 But I testify unto every man that heareth the words of prophecy of this book, 2 if any man shall add unto these things, 3 God shall add unto him the plagues 4 that are written in this book. 5 And if any man shall minish of the words of the book of this prophecy, 6 God shall take away his part out of the book of life, 7 and out of the holy city, 8 and from the things which are written in this book. 9 He which testifieth these things saith, 10 Yea, 11 I come quickly. 12 Amen. 13 Even so, 14 Lord Jesus. 15 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ 16 be with you all. 17 Amen.

The Commentary.

1. As my duty is (saith St John) to premonish aforehand, I faithfully protest by this my present testimony unto all those men that shall hereafter receive the words of this wonderful prophecy here written in this book, either by reading or hearing,

2. That if any of them shall presumptuously take upon him to add any thing thereunto, in purpose to pervert the truth, or contrary to the Holy Ghost's meaning, as Carpocras,

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Ebion, Cerinthus, and other antichrists have done with the other scriptures;

3. Be certain and sure of it, that the eternal God, from whom nothing can be hid, shall add unto him for so doing the most terrible and woeful plagues registered afore in this work:

4. That is to say, he shall suffer him to run into most deep errors, and give him over for ever into the sin against the Holy Ghost, whereupon all other plagues of damnation dependeth. Ye shall put nothing, saith the Lord, unto the word that I have given you, neither shall ye take any thing from it. Put thou nothing unto his sayings, saith Solomon, of thine own imagination, lest he reprove thee for a damnable liar. Nothing is this against them which by the other scriptures and histories doth expound this revelation, to make it to their understanding more plain: for then should St Augustine, St Jerome, Isidorus, Beda, Rabanus, and divers other great pillars of the church, be under the plagues for doing that charitable office. So should also the doctrine of this book be against itself in the thirteenth chapter, where as liberty is given unto him that hath wit to count the number of the beast, and in other places else. But this is here spoken for them that corrupt the text to maintain their blasphemous lies for advantage, or that seek to blemish the right sense thereof, lest men should behold them in their right colours, as the wicked papists have done ever since their beginning, so drowning the authority and majesty thereof.

5. Moreover (saith St John), if any mortal man shall presume to diminish the words contained in the volume of this heavenly prophecy, unreverently so controlling the wisdom of God;

6. The said omnipotent God and revenger of all ungodliness shall clearly wipe away his portion out of the book of life, so that he shall be none of their number which are predestinated to the glory of his children.

7. Neither shall such be allowed for citizens with saints in the holy congregation of his new Jerusalem, nor yet be accepted for his household servants, enjoying sweet commodities mentioned in this book as pertaining to his peculiar people:

8. Like as are the beautiful tree of life with his manifold fruits and leaves of wholesomeness, the sweet running

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river of the living waters, and the holy city sufficiently described afore, with such other else. "None that contendeth for a mastery (saith Paul) shall be crowned, unless he contend lawfully." Arius took away from the tenth of John this sentence, "I and the Father are one." Photinus addeth this clause to the gospel as a voice from the Father, I give unto Jesus his original of Mary. And their intents were to destroy our faith concerning Christ's Godhead, like as the papists doth also our justification in his blood, unless we have their lousy masses and merits. A like adjuration to this hath Irenæus in the end of his octonary, requiring all them that shall copy out that book to do it truly, as they will answer it before God their righteous Judge[1]. In like case doth St Jerome before the abbreviations of Eusebius' chronicle command, that in any wise the verity thereof be diligently reserved. So doth also Cyril the Greek in the preface of his prophecy unto Joachim Abbas, desiring the writings thereof in no case to be corrupted of ill writers, with divers others.

9. In confirmation of that I have said afore (saith St John), the eternal Son of God, which hath ratified these former things with his mighty word, saith here also as one subscribing to it,

10. Yea, it is so. Or else thus: Like as thou hast said, John, shall these blasphemers hereafter find it, that presume either to add or to diminish from these scriptures for any carnal purpose.

11. And to perform that promise of thine, I will not long tarry. I come by and by to reward the wicked with swift damnation, for not believing the truth. For now are the last days, the ends of the world, yea, the very last hour. "Ready is the Lord (saith St Peter) to judge the quick and dead; and the end of all things is at hand."

12. St John, hearing this of his merciful Lord and Saviour, lift up his head and hands towards heaven, and as

[1 Ὁρκίζω σε τὸν μεταγραψόμενον τὸ βίβλιον τοῦτο, κατὰ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ κατὰ τῆς ἐνδόξου παρουσίας αὐτοῦ, ἧς ἔρχεται κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς, ἵνα ἀντιβάλῃς ὃ μετεγράψω, καὶ κατορθώσῃς αὐτὸ πρὸς ἀντίγραφον τοῦτο, ὅθεν μετεγράψω ἐπιμελῶς, καὶ τὸν ὅρκον τοῦτον ὁμοίως μεταγράψῃς, καὶ θήσεις ἐν τῷ ἀντιγράφῳ.—S. Iren. Op. Oxon. 1702.—Lib. de Ogdoc. d. ex Euseb. Lib. v. Hist. Eccles. cap. xx. p. 463.]

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one desirous of the performance of God's appointed will, and of the full deliverance of the faithful, he said, Amen; or, Be it fulfilled in effect. For that is the thing which my soul daily desireth and inwardly coveteth, to the full manifestation of thy glorious kingdom.

13. Consequently in the voice of the whole congregation crieth John, as did Simeon the just: Yea, even so might it be, as thou hast here promised, that thou mightest come out of hand.

14. O come, most merciful Redeemer and gracious Lord Jesus Christ, to judge the universal world. Come, come, or hie thee hither apace, to separate the wheat from the chaff, and the lambs from the goats, so bringing them into thy eternal tabernacle. Woe is me that my banishment endureth so long, I dwelling in the tabernacles of the sorrowful! My soul hath a thirsty desire for God the fountain of life. Oh, when shall I come and behold his face? Like are we to those faithful servants which wait for the return of their Lord from the wedding, very ready to open at his knocking.

15. The grace of our merciful Lord Jesus Christ (saith St John), whereby cometh salvation to them that truly believed, be with you all, so many as are of that godly expectation and desire.

16. Or, The favour, mercy, and acceptation of God the Father, through his blessed death, evermore preserve you in the unity of his godly Spirit, that ye may hereafter in this holy city be partakers of his glorious heritage in the world to come.

17. Let all them say, Amen, unto this, which mind the glory of the Lord unfeignedly. So be it.

A CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE WORK.

Here hast thou, good christian reader, to thy soul's consolation, from the eternal Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, three distinct persons in one everlasting Godhead, the universal estate of the church from Christ's ascension to the end of the world, in wonderful mysteries described, and directed unto them of him by the most holy apostle and evangelist St John: wherein it is fully by all due circum-

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stances manifested of the said Holy Ghost, what the innocent christian church is, with all her justifications and blessings, to the singular comfort of the Lord's true elect; and what the proud synagogue of antichrist is, with her filthy superstitions and plagues, to their fore-warning also. This is specially done here of the said Holy Ghost, that no true believer should profess himself a citizen of this wretched world with Cain, Nimrod, and other reprobate vessels, at the execrable doctrine of men; but at the pure voice of God with Abel and Abraham to seek for that heavenly heritage, which is purchased for them in Christ's blood. Mark here the condition of John being in most painful exile; for he in mystery through all this book representeth every godly believer. ' By this shall ye well know in this revelation the one church from the other; for the one is maintained by the only preaching of God's pure word, the other by all kinds of Jewish ceremonies and heathenish superstitions. And by this they also differ, that Christ would have all of love, antichrist of tyrannous constraint, as evidently appeareth in Mahomet and the pope. For that only cause are many necessary things here written in mystery, that they should be hid from the worldly-wise hypocrites, and that the just or God's meek-spirited servants should ask them of their Lord in faith and prayer. In the which daily prayer is that most worthy minister of God, king Edward the sixth, afore all other to be remembered, which hath so sore wounded the beast, that he may throw all his superstition into the bottomless lake again (from whence they have come) to the comfort of his people. The grace and peace directed from God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ with the Holy Ghost in the beginning of this revelation be unto all them which unfeignedly love his verity.

Amen.

¶ Imprynted at London by Richarde Jugge dwelling in Paules churchegarde at the sygne of the Bible.

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