

THE
ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BY
JOHN FOXE.

(1517-1587)

First published in

1563

Original woodcuts are excluded

FAMILY EDITION

Books V – VI

EDITED BY

REV. M. HOBART SEYMOUR, M.A.

1855

Source text:

http://www.archive.org/stream/actsmonumentsofcoofoxe/actsmonumentsofcoofoxe_djvu.txt

Formatted, corrected, modernized w/Am. spelling, and annotated (in blue)
by **William H. Gross** www.onthewing.org April 23, 2012

Last updated 5/7/2025

Contents

BOOK V.....	502
<i>The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan 1360-1422.....</i>	<i>502</i>
<i>Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh – 1348.....</i>	<i>510</i>
<i>The Law of Praemunire.</i>	<i>518</i>
<i>John Wycliffe – 1370-1384.....</i>	<i>529</i>
<i>King Richard II - 1377.....</i>	<i>533</i>
<i>Articles against Wycliffe – 1382.....</i>	<i>536</i>
<i>Schismatical Wars of the Popes – 1383.....</i>	<i>546</i>
<i>The Death of Wycliffe – 1384.....</i>	<i>548</i>
<i>The History of William Swinderby – 1389.....</i>	<i>553</i>
<i>The History of Walter Brute – 1391.....</i>	<i>560</i>
<i>Letter of Richard II to Boniface IX, on the Schism – 1398.</i>	<i>599</i>
<i>King Henry IV – 1399.</i>	<i>606</i>
<i>The History and Examination of William Thorpe – 1409.....</i>	<i>621</i>
<i>Articles Taught By John Purvey.....</i>	<i>637</i>
<i>King Henry V – 1413.</i>	<i>648</i>
<i>John Huss and the Bohemians.</i>	<i>664</i>
<i>The Council of Constance – 1414.</i>	<i>671</i>
<i>John Huss Summoned to the Council.....</i>	<i>676</i>
<i>Articles Alleged Against John Huss.....</i>	<i>691</i>
<i>The Execution of John Huss – 1415.</i>	<i>704</i>
<i>Jerome of Prague Taken and Brought to Constance – 1415.....</i>	<i>714</i>
<i>The History of John Claydon, Currier; and Richard Turming, Baker.</i>	<i>728</i>
<i>Ziska of Bohemia – Hussite Wars – 1419-1434.....</i>	<i>738</i>
<i>Bull of Pope Martin Against the Followers of Wycliffe – 1418.....</i>	<i>745</i>
<i>War Between the Pope and the Bohemians.</i>	<i>760</i>
BOOK VI.	765
<i>The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan 1422-1516.....</i>	<i>765</i>
<i>Preface To The Reader</i>	<i>765</i>
<i>The Order and Manner of the Council of Basel – 1431-1449.</i>	<i>783</i>
<i>Amadeus VIII Duke of Savoy, Elected Pope Felix V – 1440.....</i>	<i>791</i>
<i>The Invention of Printing – 1450.....</i>	<i>800</i>

<i>King Edward IV – 1461.....</i>	<i>809</i>
<i>Frederick III, Emperor – 1440.</i>	<i>815</i>
<i>Richard, Protector of King Edward V – 1483.....</i>	<i>825</i>
<i>King Richard III, Usurper – 1483.</i>	<i>827</i>
<i>King Henry VII – 1485-1509.</i>	<i>829</i>
<i>Maximilian the Emperor – r. 1508-1519.</i>	<i>830</i>
<i>History of the Turks— Mahomet – the Koran.....</i>	<i>834</i>
<i>The Suffering of Christians under the Turks.....</i>	<i>867</i>
<i>Prophecies from Scripture Concerning the Turks.</i>	<i>873</i>
<i>Martyrs under King Henry VII.</i>	<i>883</i>
<i>The Proud Primacy of Popes Described.....</i>	<i>891</i>

ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BOOK V. CONTAINING

The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan 1360-1422.

Thus having discoursed in these former books the order and course of years, from the first tying up of Satan to A.D. 1360, I have a little overpassed the limit of time in the Scripture, appointed for loosing him out again. For so it is written by St. John (Rev 20.3), that after a thousand years, Satan, the old dragon, shall be let loose again for a season, etc.

For the better explanation of this mystery, let us first consider the context of the Scripture; afterwards let us examine by history and course of times, the meaning of that. And first, to recite the words of Scripture, the text of the prophesy is this (Rev 20.1).

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them; and I saw the souls of those who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus,” etc.

By these words of the Revelation, recited here, three special times are to be noted.

First, Satan’s being abroad to deceive the world.

Secondly, The binding of him.

Thirdly, The loosing of him again, after a thousand years, for a season.

Concerning the interpretation of these times, I see the common opinion of many to be deceived by ignorance of history, and the state of things done in the church. They suppose that the chaining up of Satan for a thousand years, spoken of in the Revelation, was meant from the birth of Christ our Lord. In this I grant that *spiritually*, the strength and dominion of Satan, in accusing and condemning us for sin, was cast down at the passion (crucifixion), and *by* the passion of Christ our Savior, and locked up, not only for a thousand years, but forever. Although, as to the malicious hatred and fury of that serpent against the outward bodies of Christ’s poor saints (which is the heel of Christ), to afflict and torment the church outwardly, I think the Revelation of St. John means it is not to be restrained till the ceasing of those terrible persecutions of the primitive churches. Then it pleased God to pity the sorrowful affliction of his poor flock, for they were so long under persecution, for 300 years; and so, it was to assuage their griefs and torments. This is what is meant by the binding up of Satan, the worker of all those mischiefs. We understand by this, that the devil, the prince of this world, has now by the death of Christ the Son of God, lost all his power and interest against the soul of man. And that he would turn his furious rage and malice, which he had toward Christ, against the people of Christ (which is meant by the *heel of the seed*, Gen 3.15) in tormenting their outward bodies. Yet this would not be forever, but for a determinate time, as it would please the Lord to bridle the malice, and snaffle (rein in) the power of the old serpent, and give rest to his church for the term of a thousand years. This time now being expired, the serpent will be set loose again for a certain or short time.

And I am led by three reasons to thus expound this prophetical passage of Scripture:

The *first* is that the binding up of Satan, and the angel closing him in the bottomless pit, imports that he was at liberty before then, raging and doing mischief. And certainly those terrible and horrible persecutions of the primitive time, universally throughout the world during the first three hundred years of the church, declare no less. In this it is to be thought and supposed that Satan, all that time, was not fastened and closed up.

The *second* reason, moving me to think that the closing up of Satan was *after* the ten persecutions of the primitive church, is taken out of the twelfth chapter of Revelation. There we read that after the woman (meaning the church) had travailed with her man-child, the old dragon, the devil, was at the same time cast down from heaven, drawing a third of the stars with him. He stood before the woman with great anger, and persecuted her (that is, the church of God) with a whole flood of water (that is, with an abundance of all kinds of torments). And from there, moreover, he went to fight against the residue of her seed, and stood upon the sands of the sea. By this it appears that he was not as yet locked up.

The *third* reason I derive from the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. There it is written of the beast, signifying the imperial monarchy of Rome, that he had power to make war for 42 months. By these months is meant, no doubt, the time that the dragon and the persecuting emperors would have in afflicting the saints of the primitive church.

[213] A.D. 1360.

The computation of these 42 months (counting every month as a sabbath of years — that is, 7 years, according to the order of Scripture, and counting from the passion of the Lord Christ) amounts to 300 years less 6 (or 294 years), when Maxentius, the last persecutor in Rome, fighting against Constantine, was drowned with his soldiers, just as Pharaoh persecuting the children of Israel, was drowned in the Red Sea. To these 42 months, or sabbaths of years, if we add the other 6 years in which Licinius persecuted in the East, we have just 300 years, as specified before in the First Book. ¹

After these 42 months expired, it is manifest that the fury of Satan, that is, his violent malice and power over the saints of Christ, was diminished and universally restrained throughout the world.

Thus then, the matter stands evident that after 300 years, counting from the passion of Christ, Satan began to be chained up. This is when the persecution of the primitive church began to cease. Now let us see how long this binding up of Satan should continue. It was promised in the book of the Revelation to be a thousand years. This thousand years, if you add it to the 42 months of years, that is, to 294 years, they total 1,294 years after the passion of the Lord. To these, moreover, add 30 years for the age of Christ, and it comes to A.D. 1324, which was the year Satan was let out, according to the prophecy.

These things thus premising the loosing of Satan according to the prophecy in John's Revelation, let us now enter (Christ willing) to the declaration of these later times which followed after Satan was let out into the world. The wondrous troubles and cruel tyranny stirred up by him against Christ's church, and the valiant resistance of the church of Christ against him and antichrist, may appear in our books which follow.

The argument of these books consists in two parts: *First*, to treat the raging fury of Satan now loosed, and thus of antichrist, against the saints of Christ fighting and laboring for the maintenance of truth, and the reformation of the church. *Secondly*: To declare the decay

¹ See note page 69. [Ed.]

and ruin of antichrist, through the power of the word of God, being at length either overthrown in a great part of the world, or at least detected universally in the whole world.

Thus then, to begin with the year 1360, where I have transgressed a little past the limits of the first loosing of Satan, we come now to the time in which the Lord, after long darkness, begins some reformation of his church, by the diligent industry of his faithful and learned servants, several of whom we have already touched on in the previous book, as having withstood the corrupt errors and intolerable enormities of the Bishop of Rome.

Now we will add to these (the Lord willing) those other holy martyrs and confessors who followed after in the course of years. With like zeal and strength of God's word, and also with like danger to their lives, they resisted the enemy of Christ's religion, and suffered like persecutions at his hands.

The Ploughman's Complaint of the Abuses of the World.

First, we begin with the godly man (whoever he was) that authored the book entitled, *The Prayer and Complaint of the Ploughman*, written about this present time. It is as follows:

*An old ancient Writing entitled.
The Prayer and Complaint of the Ploughman. ²*

“Ah Lord, you sometimes forgave Peter his sins, and also Mary Magdalen, and many other sinful men, without shriving to priests,³ and taking penance from priests, for their sins. And Lord, you are as mighty now as you were at that time, if any man has but known of your might. And we laymen believe that there is no man of such great power, and that if any man makes himself to be of such great power, he heightens himself above God. St. Paul speaks of one who sits in the temple of God, and heightens himself above God; and if any is such, he is a false Christ. (2The 2.3-4)

“But to this, priests say that when Christ made leprous men clean, he bid them go and show themselves to priests. And therefore they say that it is a commandment of Christ, that a man should show his sin to priests. For as they say, lepers in the old law represent sin in this new law. Ah, Lord God, did your apostles not know your meaning as well as men do now? And if they had only known that you had commanded men to shrive to priests, and they had not taught that commandment to the people, I think they would have been to blame. But I believe they knew well that it was none of your commandments, nor needful to heal a man's soul. And as I think, the law of the leper is not for the purpose of shriving. For priests in the old law had certain points and tokens to know whether a man was leprous or not. And if they were leprous, they had power to put them away from other clean men, for they were not clean. And then they had power to receive him among his brethren, and offer a sacrifice for him to God.

“This is nothing to the purpose of shriving. For there is but one priest, who is Christ, who may know for certain the leprosy of the soul. Indeed, no priest may cleanse the soul of its sin except Christ, who is a priest of Melchizedek's order. Indeed, no priest here below may know for certain whether a man is clean of his sin, or clean acquitted, unless God tells it to him by revelation. No, God did not ordain that his priests should set men a penance for their sin, according to the quantity of the sin. Rather, this is man's ordinance, and it may well be that good comes of it. But I know well that God is much unworshipped by this. For men trust more in man's absolutions, and in his years of grace, than in Christ's absolutions, and thereby the

² The old language and spelling of this treatise called “The Ploughman's Lament,” renders it in a great degree unintelligible to the general reader. It is of considerable length, and we have retained only a portion of it, so that the reader may be enabled to judge its nature. [Ed.] *It has therefore been modernized to better convey its content.*

³ *Shriving*: auricular confession – confessing your sins to a priest, that upon hearing them, he may forgive them.

people are much impaired. For now the sorrow that a man should have for his sin, is put away by this shrift,⁴ and a man is bolder to sin from his trust of this shrift, and of this bodily penance.

“Another mischief is that the people are only brought into this belief, so that one priest has a great power to absolve a man of his sin, and greater than another priest has.

“Another mischief is this, that some priest may absolve them both of sin and pain. And in this they take to themselves a power that Christ granted no man on earth, and only Christ himself used it on earth.⁵

“Another mischief is that these priests sell forgiveness of men’s sins and absolutions for money; this is a cursed heresy that is called *simony*. And all those priests who ask a price for granting spiritual grace, are by holy laws deprived of their priesthood, and also those who assent to this heresy. And let them be aware; for Elijah the prophet took no money from Naaman when he was cleansed of his leprosy; but Gehazi his servant did; and therefore the leprosy of Naaman abided with Gehazi and with his heirs evermore after. (2Kng 5)

“But, Lord God, he that sits in your stead has undone your law of mercy and love. Lord, you bid us to love our enemies as ourself, as you show in the gospel; just as the Samaritan had mercy on the Jew. And you bid us to pray for those who curse us, and who defame us, and pursue us to death. And so Lord you did, and your apostles also. But the one who calls himself your vicar on earth, and head of your church, has undone your law of love and mercy. For if we speak of loving our enemies, he teaches us to fight with our enemies, which Christ has forbidden. He curses and desires vengeance on those who do so to him. If any man pursues him, he curses him, so that it is a sorrow for a Christian man to hear the cursings that they make, and blasphemies in such cursing. Of this thing that I know, I may bear true witness.

[214]

“But if we speak of loving of our brethren, this is undone by the one who says he is God’s vicar on earth. For Christ in the gospel bids us to call no one father on earth: but call God our father, to make us love perfectly together. And this man calls himself Father of fathers, and makes many religions, and to each one a father. But are love and charity increased by these fathers and by their religions, or only made less? For a friar does not love a monk, nor a secular man either, nor yet does one friar love another who is not of his order, and it is contrarywise.

“But, Lord, in the old law the tithings of the lay people were not due to priests, but to that other child of Levi who served you in the temple. And the priest had their part of sacrifices, and the first begotten beasts and other things, as the law says. And Lord, St. Paul your servant says that the order of the priesthood of Aaron ceased at Christ’s coming, and the law of that priesthood. For Christ was the end of sacrifices only offered upon the cross to the Father of heaven, to bring man out of sin; and he became himself a priest of Melchisedek’s order. For he was both king and priest, without beginning and end; and both the priesthood of Aaron, and also the law of that priesthood, were changed at the coming of Christ. And St. Paul says the law is reprov’d, for it brought no man to perfection. For the blood of goats, nor of other beasts might do away with sin; for to that purpose Christ shed his own blood. (Heb 7.17-19; 9.11-14)

“Ah Lord Jesus, did you ordain an order of priests to offer on the altar your flesh and your blood to bring men out of sin, and also out of pain? And did you give them alone a power to eat your flesh and your blood, and may no other man eat your flesh and your blood without the

⁴ *Shrift*: the act of confessing and receiving absolution.

⁵ "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the *sins* of any, they are retained." (Joh 20:23) This regards sins against *ourselves*, not sins committed by someone against others; only God can do that. They are “retained” by those who are impenitent, or unregenerate, not by a priest’s withholding forgiveness from them.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

leave of priests? Lord, we believe that your flesh is true food, and your blood true drink; and whoever eats your flesh, and drinks your blood, dwells in you, and you in him; and whoever eats this bread shall live without end. (Joh 6.54-56) Lord, your disciples said this is a hard saying. But you answered them and said, when you see [the Son of] Man soon ascend up where he was before, the Spirit is what makes you live; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life (Joh 6.63). Lord, blessed may you be, for in this word you teach us that whoever keeps your words and does them, eats your flesh and drinks your blood, and has everlasting life in You. And that we might mind this living, you gave us the sacrament of your flesh and blood, in the form of bread and wine at your supper, before you would suffer your death. And you took bread in your hand, and said: 'Take this, and eat it, for it is my body:' and you took wine, and blessed it, and said; 'This is the blood of a new and everlasting Testament, that shall be shed for many men in forgiveness of sins. As often as you do this, you do it in mind of me.'

"Ah Lord, you did not bid your disciples to make this a sacrifice to bring men out of pains if a priest offered your body on the altar. But you bid them to go and baptize all the folk in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in forgiveness of their sins; and to teach them to 'keep what I have commanded you.' And Lord, your disciples were not ordained priests principally to make your body a sacrament, but to teach the people. And good stewards who well govern their households, both wives and children, and their money, they ordained to be priests to teach other men the law of Christ, both in word and deed, and they lived as true Christian men. Every day they ate Christ's body, and drank his blood, to the sustenance of the life of their souls; other times they partook of the sacrament of his body in the form of bread and wine, in mind of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"But all this is turned upside down. For now, whoever would live as you taught, he will be seen a fool. And if he speaks your teaching, he will be held a heretic, and accursed. Lord, no longer wonder about this, for so they treated you when you were here sometime. And therefore we must patiently take their words of blasphemy as you did yourself, or else we would be to blame. And truly Lord, I believe that if you were now in the world, and taught as you did sometimes, you would be done to death. For your teaching is damned as heresy by wise men of the world; and then, those who teach your love must be heretics, and all those also who strive to live accordingly.

"Lord in the gospel you say that true hearers of God do not hear him in that hill beside Samaria, nor in Jerusalem either; but true hearers of God hear him in spirit and in truth. And Lord God, what hearing is it to build you a church of dead stones, and rob your living churches of their bodily livelihood? Lord God, what hearing is it, to clothe idols of wood and of stones in silver and in gold, and in other good colors? And Lord I see your image (believers) going about in cold and in heat, in shredded clothes, without shoes and socks, hungered and thirsting. Lord what hearing is it to tend to tapers and torches before blind puppets that do not move or speak? And you who are our light and our lantern towards heaven are hidden, and put under a bushel, so that for darkness we may not even seen our way toward bliss? Lord what hearing is it to kneel before puppets that do not move or hear, and worship them with prayers, and make your living images kneel before them, and ask absolutions and blessings from them, and worship them as gods, and yet put your living images in bondage and in travail evermore like beasts, in cold and in heat, and in feeble fare, to find them in danger of the world? Lord what hearing is it to fetch dead men's bones out of the ground, where they should rather rot, and enshrine them in gold and silver; and suffer the quick bones of your images to rot in prison for lack of clothing? And suffer also your living images to perish for lack of sustenance, and rot in the whorehouse in abominable lechery? Some become thieves and robbers, and murderers, that might have been helped with the gold and silver that hangs about dead men's bones, and other blind puppets of wood and stones.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“Lord, here are great abominations that you showed to Ezekiel your prophet, that priests are doing in your temple, and yet they call that ‘hearing’ you. But truly Lord, I think that they love you little who thus befoul your living images, and worship blind puppets.

“And Lord, there is now another great mischief in the world, a hunger that your prophet Amos speaks of, that there shall come a hunger in the earth, not of bread, nor thirst for drink, but of the hearing of God’s words. And your sheep would be refreshed, but their shepherds take from your sheep their livelihood, as tithings, etc. And enrich themselves thereby wherever they like.

“O Lord deliver the sheep out of the ward of these shepherds, and these hired men, who stand more to keep their riches than they rob from your sheep, than they stand to keep your sheep.

“O Lord, when you came to Jerusalem one time, you drove out of the temple sellers of beasts and of other wares, and said, My house should be called a house of prayers, but they made a den of thieves of it. O Lord you are the temple in whom we should pray your Father of heaven. And Solomon’s temple, that was built at Jerusalem, was a figure of this temple. But Lord, he who calls himself your vicar upon earth, and says that he occupies your place here on earth, has become a chapman (peddler) in your temple, and has his chapmen walking in diverse countries to sell his wares, and to make him rich. And he says, You gave him so great a power above all other men, that whatever he binds or unbind on earth, you bind or unbind the same in heaven. And of so great a power, he sells other men forgiveness of their sin. And for much money he will absolve a man so clean of his sin, that he promises men the bliss of heaven without any pain, even after they are dead, if they give him much money.

[215] A.D. 1360.

Bishoprics and churches, and such other goods, he also sells for money, and makes himself rich. And thus he beguiles the people.

“O Lord Jesus here is much untruth, and mischief, and matter for sorrow. Lord you said sometime, that you would be with your servants to the end of the world. And you also said, where two or three are gathered together in your name, that you are in the middle of them. Ah Lord, then there was no need for you to make a lieutenant, since you would be evermore among your servants.

“Lord, you asked of your disciples, who they believed you were. And Peter answered and said, ‘That you are Christ God’s Son.’ And you said to Peter, ‘You are blessed Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood did not show this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.’ And I say to you, ‘That you are Peter, and upon this stone you would build my church, and the gates of hell shall not avail against it.

“And to you I will give the keys of heaven, and whatever you bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you unbind on earth, shall be unbound in heaven.’ This power was granted to the other disciples also, as well as to Peter, as the gospel openly tells. In this place men say that you granted to Peter’s successor, the sole power that you gave to Peter. And therefore the bishop of Rome, who says he is Peter’s successor, takes this power to himself to bind and unbind on earth whatever he likes. But Lord, I have much wonder how he may for shame call himself Peter’s successor; for Peter acknowledged that you were Christ and God, and kept the behests of your law. But these have forsaken the behests of your law, and have made a law contrary to the behests of your law. And so he makes himself a false Christ, and a false god on earth. And I believe you gave him no power to undo your law. And so in taking this power upon himself, he makes himself a false Christ and antichrist.

“For who may be more against Christ, than the one who in his words makes himself Christ’s vicar in earth; and in his works undoes the ordinance of Christ, and makes men believe that it is needful to the health of men’s souls, to believe that he is Christ’s vicar in earth? And that

whatever he binds on earth, is bound in heaven? And under this color he undoes Christ's law, and makes men always to keep his own law and behests.

“And thus man may see that he is against Christ, and therefore he is antichrist who makes men worship him as a god on earth, as the proud King Nebuchadnezzar did at one time, who was king of Babylon. And therefore we laymen who do not know God but you Jesus Christ, believe in you who are our God, and our King, and our Christ, and in your laws. And we forsake antichrist, and Nebuchadnezzar who is a false god, and a false Christ, and his laws that are contrary to your preaching.

“And Lord, strengthen us against our enemies. For they are about to make us forsake you and your law, or else to put us to death.

“O Lord, only in you is our trust to help us in this mischief, for your great goodness that is without end.

“Lord you did not teach your disciples to absolve men of their sin, and set them a penance for their sin in fasting, nor in praying, nor other charitable deeds. Neither you yourself, nor your disciples, used any such power here on earth. For Lord, you forgive men their sins, and bid them sin no more. And your disciples cleansed men in your name, in forgiveness of their sins. Nor did they take any such power upon themselves, as our priests now dare. And Lord, you alone absolved a man both of his sin and of his pain that was due for his sin, and you did not grant any man such power here on earth. ⁶

“And Lord, I think that if there was a purgatory, and any earthly man had power to deliver sinful men from the pains of purgatory, he should, and he would in charity, save every man who was in the way of salvation from these pains, since they make them greater than any bodily pains of this world. Also, if the bishop of Rome had such a power, he himself should never come into purgatory, nor into hell. And since we well see that he has no power to keep himself, nor other men out of these bodily pains of the world, and he may go to hell for his sin just as another man may. Neither do I believe, that he has so great a power to absolve men of their sin as he takes upon himself above all other men. And I believe that in this, he heightens himself above God.

“As touching the selling of bishoprics, and parsonages, I believe it is a point of falsehood. For against God's ordinance, he robs poor men of a portion of their sustenance, and sells it or gives it, to fund proud men in idleness, who do the lay people little profit, but much harm, as we said before. Thus your commandments of truth, of meekness, and of poorness are undone by him, who calls himself your vicar here upon earth.”

I doubt not, gentle reader, but in reading this godly treatise prefixed above, the matter is manifest and plain of itself without any further explication, what is to be thought and judged of this vicar of Christ, and successor of Peter, whom we call the bishop of Rome. His life here is seen not only to be disordered in all points, swerving from the steps and example of Christ, the prince and bishop of our souls, but also whose laws and doctrines are so repugnant and contrary to the precepts and rule of the gospel, that there is scarcely any similarity between them: as may be understood in perusing this complaining prayer.

A Parable Prophecy the Destruction of the Pope.

Therefore, having no need to stand any further in expressing this matter, but leaving it to the consideration and discretion of the reader, I will (Christ willing) proceed toward the time of John Wycliffe and his fellows. In the order of years as I go along, I will take such

⁶ Originally, “thou ne assoiledst no man both of his sin and of his pain, that was due for his sin, ne thou grantedst no man such power here on earth.” Modernized taking Mat 9.2 and Luk 7.48 into account. Also see note, p. 214.

things by the way, that happened before the time of Wycliffe, and that may also better prepare the mind of the reader for entering that history. First, I think it not inconvenient to insert a prophetic parable, written about this time or not much before, which its author morally applies to the bishop of Rome. To what author this moral is to be ascribed, I cannot affirm with certainty. In the meantime, as I have found it expressed in Latin, and because it paints the pope so rightly in his feathers and colors, I thought it was not to be omitted. And therefore I took this present place as most fitting to insert it here, though perhaps it is a little outside the order of years. The context of this parable is as follows:

In the time of Pope Innocent VI (r. 1352-1362), when friar John de Rupescissa was kept at Avignon in prison, Froysard heard in the pope's court this parable recited by this friar, to cardinal Hostiensis, and cardinal Auxercensis.

“Once, when a certain bird was brought into the world all bare and without feathers, the other birds hearing of it, came to visit her. And as they saw she was a marvellous fair and beautiful bird, they counselled together how they might best do her good, because without feathers she might neither fly, nor live conveniently. They all wished her to live for her excellent form and beauty's sake, insomuch that among them all there was not one which would not grant some part of their own feathers to deck this bird with. Yes, and the more trim they saw her to be, the more feathers they still gave to her, so that by these means she was passing well penned and feathered, and began to fly. The other birds that had thus adorned her with goodly feathers, beholding her flying abroad, were marvellously delighted with this. In the end, this bird seeing herself so gorgeously feathered, and to be honored above all the rest, began to wax proud and haughty. Insomuch that she had no regard at all for those, by whom she was advanced. Indeed, she struck them with her beak, plucked them by the skin and feathers, and hurt them in all places. Whereupon the birds sitting in council again, called the matter in question, demanding of one another what was best to be done regarding this unkind bird, whom they had lovingly decked and adorned with their own feathers. Affirming that they did not give their feathers with the intent that, thereby puffed up with pride, she should contemptuously despise them all. The peacock therefore answers first, ‘Truly,’ he says, ‘as she is impressively adorned with my painted feathers, I will take them back from her.’ Then the falcon says, ‘And I will also have mine back.’

[216]

“At length, this was said by them all, so that every one plucked from the bird those feathers which they had given before, each taking their own back again. Now this proud bird, seeing herself thus dealt with, quickly began to abate her haughty spirit, and to humbly submit herself openly, confessing and acknowledging that of herself she had nothing; but that her feathers, her honor and other ornaments were their gift. She came into the world all naked and bare, and they clad her with beautiful feathers. And therefore of right they may take them back again. Therefore she most humbly desires pardon, promising to amend all that is past. Nor would she at any time hereafter commit anything by which, through pride, she might lose her feathers again. The gentle birds, which had given their feathers before, seeing her so humble and lowly, and being moved with pity, restored again the feathers which they had recently taken away, adding this admonition: ‘We will gladly,’ they say, ‘behold you flying among us, so long as you will use your office with humbleness of mind, which is the greatest beauty of all the rest. But know this for a certainty, that if at any time hereafter you extol yourself in pride, we will straightway deprive you of your feathers, and reduce you to your former state in which we found you.’

“Even so, oh you cardinals,” said this friar, “it shall happen to you. For the emperors of the Romans and Germans, and other Christian kings, potentates, and princes of the earth, have

bestowed upon you goods, lands, and riches that should serve God, but you have poured it out, and consumed it upon pride, and all kinds of wickedness, riot, and wantonness.”

Richard FitzRalph, Archbishop of Armagh – 1348.

In the catalogue of these learned and zealous defenders of Christ against antichrist, recited above — those whom the Lord began to raise up about this time for the reanimation of his church — I cannot omit writing something about the reverend prelate, and famous cleric, Richard **Armachanus**, archbishop of Ireland. His life and learning were so memorable that almost none was his better. His name was Richard FitzRalph (r. 1348-1360). Such was the capacity and dexterity of this man, that being commended to King Edward III, he was promoted by him, first to be archdeacon of Lichfield; then to be the commissary of the university of Oxford; and at length to be archbishop of Armagh in Ireland. He had cause to come to London at a time when there was contention between the friars and clergy about preaching and hearing confessions, etc. Whereupon, Armachanus, being requested to preach, gave seven or eight sermons in which he propounded nine conclusions against the friars. He was cited for these by the friars, and was to appear before this Pope Innocent VI; and so he went. And before the face of the pope he valiantly defended, both in preaching and in writing, the same conclusions, and stood constantly to the death in this, as John Wycliffe well testifies. William Botonerus, testifying of him in like manner, says this:

“Armachanus first reprov'd begging-friars for hearing the confessions of professed nuns, without license from their superiors, and also of married women without knowledge of their husbands. What dangers and troubles he sustained by his persecutors; and how miraculously the Lord delivered him from their hands; and in what peril he was by thieves and searchers; and yet the Lord delivered him; indeed, what danger he was in from the king's officers, who coming with the king's letters, laid all the havens for him. And how the Lord Jesus delivered him, and gave him to triumph over all his enemies; how the Lord also taught him and brought him to the study of the Scriptures of God. All this, with much more, he himself expresses in a certain prayer or confession made to Christ Jesus our Lord, in which he describes almost the whole history of his own life.”

Thus you have partly heard the troubles of this good man, and how he was cited by the friars to the pope. Now his reasons and arguments with which he defended his cause in the pope's presence, are to be declared.

In the time of Innocent III and the Lateran Council (A.D. 1215), lived Dominic, the author and founder of the preaching friars. He labored at Pope Innocent for the confirmation of his order, but he did not obtain it in the lifetime of that pope.

The year after this council, Pope Innocent died (A.D. 1216). After him came Honorius III, who confirmed the order of the friar Dominic. He gave to him and his friars authority to preach, and to hear confessions, with other privileges. Dominic lived five years after the confirmation of his order, and died A.D. 1221. About that year the order of the Franciscan friars also began to breed and spread in the world.

After Honorius, followed Pope Gregory IX, about A.D. 1228; He also promoted the order of Dominic. Gregory died about A.D. 1241. After him came Celestine IV, who sat as pope but eighteen days. Then came Innocent IV, who sat for eleven years and six months. Although he favored the friars at first, afterward he debarred them from their liberties and privileges, and he issued precepts and excommunications against the friars. Not long after, he was dispatched and made away with.

Innocent being removed out of the way, about A.D. 1254, Pope Alexander IV succeeded, who was a great maintainer of the friars; he sat for seven years. He revoked and repealed the acts and writings of his predecessor, Pope Innocent, against the friars. But the divines and students of Paris being discontented with this, stirred up four principal doctors. These four compiled a book against the begging order of friars, both Dominicans and Franciscans. It was entitled *De Periculis Eccliae*, containing fourteen chapters. In the fourteenth, it has thirty-nine articles against the friars. Besides these thirty-nine articles, are seven other articles, under the name of the students of Paris against the friars.

Besides these articles, certain conclusions were also propounded in the schools of Paris at that time, to be solemnly disputed and defended by the friars. They were these:

First, That the begging friars were not in a state of salvation.

Secondly, That those who could were bound to labor with their hands, and not to beg.

Thirdly, That they should not exercise the office of preaching, nor hear the confessions of those who will come to them.

All these articles and conclusions, with the book set forth by these Parisians, were condemned by Pope Alexander IV, to be abolished and burned. He wrote his precepts in favor of the friars to the French king, and also to the university of Paris. He commanded that the friars be restored to all their privileges and liberties.

Not long after Pope Alexander IV, followed Clement IV (A.D. 1265), who sat as pope for three years. He likewise gave privileges to the friars.

Some time after Clement, came Pope Martin IV (A.D. 1281), who renewed again the canon in behalf of the curates against the friars.

Pope Boniface VIII was seated in A.D. 1294, and sat for eight years and nine months. Siding with the friars, he gave them another privilege. In this privilege he *licensed* the friars, so that without the license of vicars of churches, they would first present themselves to the prelates to be admitted. If they were refused a second time, then upon special authority from this pope, they would be privileged, without either bishop or curate, to preach, to bury, and to hear confessions.

By Pope Boniface, a certain Dominican friar was made cardinal, named Nicolas Bocasin, of Tervisa. After the death of Boniface, he was made pope (A.D. 1303), surnamed Pope Benedict XI, who made another constitution, revoking that of Boniface.

Again, after Benedict XI, followed Pope Clement V (A.D. 1305), who sat nine years. In his general council held at Vienna, he revoked the constitution of Benedict his predecessor, and renewed the former decree of Boniface. This constitution, moreover, was afterward confirmed by Pope John XXII (A.D. 1316).

Upon this varying diversity of the popes (one dissenting from and repugning another) a great matter of contention arose among the divines and schoolmen in universities — in the university of Paris as well as the university of Oxford — about the begging friars. Some held one way, some another.

[217] A.D. 1360.

The matter of contention about the friars stood in four points: *First*, preaching without the license of curates. *Secondly*, in hearing confession. *Thirdly*, in burying. *Fourthly*, in begging and taking from the people.

Popes who maintained the Friars.

Honorius III.	Clement IV.
Gregory IX.	Boniface VIII.
Alexander IV.	Clement V.

Popes who maintained Curates.

Innocent III.	Martin IV.
Innocent IV.	Benedict XI.

These considerations being premised for opening this present cause of Armachanus against the idle beggarly sects of friars, it now remains that we collect and open his reasons and arguments uttered in the consistory, and in the audience of the pope himself. With these he maintains the true doctrine and cause of the church against the pestiferous canker creeping in by these friars in their subtle ways of hypocrisy, to corrupt the sincere simplicity of Christ's holy faith and perfect testament., I thought it good and expedient for the utility of the church, to more amply and largely o discourse and prosecute his reasons and arguments, for I note in the sects, institutions, and doctrine of these friars, a subtle poison lurks, more pernicious and hurtful to the religion of Christ and the soul of Christians, than all men perhaps consider.

Thus Armachanus, joining with the clergy of England, disputed and contended with the friars of England (A.D. 1358) about a double matter. One of which concerned confession and other escheats ⁷ which the friars used to encroach in parish churches against the curates, and public pastors of churches. The other concerned willful beggary and poverty which the friars then took upon themselves, not upon any necessity (being otherwise strong enough to work for their living), but only upon a willful and affected profession. For this cause the friars appealed Armachanus to the court of Rome. The occasion of it arose as follows.

It happened that Armachanus, coming up to London on certain business, found certain doctors disputing and contending there about the begging of Christ our Savior. Whereupon he, being greatly urged and requested, gave seven or eight sermons in which he drew nine conclusions. The first and principal conclusion touched upon the matter of the friars' privileges in hearing confessions. His nine conclusions were these:

First, That if a doubt or question is raised in hearing confessions, which of two places is rather to be chosen; the parish church is to be preferred before the church of the friars.

Secondly, that if it is demanded who should rather hear the confession of parishioners, the parson or curate, or else the friar, it is said to be rather the parson or curate.

Thirdly, that our Lord Jesus Christ in his human conversation was always poor, but that he did not love poverty, nor did he covet to be poor.

Fourthly, that our Lord Jesus Christ never begged, willfully professing to be poor.

Fifthly, that our Lord Jesus Christ never taught to willfully beg, or to profess willful beggary.

⁷ Normally *escheat* is a reversion of property to the state when a person dies intestate; here it is to the church. This issue was mentioned earlier in letters on pages 174 (Henry III), 187 (Grossthead), and 198 (Cassiodorus).

Sixthly, that Christ our Lord held the contrary, that men should not willfully or purposely beg, without necessity.

Seventhly, that it is neither wisdom nor holiness, for any man to take upon himself willful beggary, to be observed perpetually.

Eighthly, that it does not agree with the rule of the observants, or of the friars' minorites, to observe willful poverty.

The last conclusion regarded the bull of pope Alexander IV, which condemned the libel of the masters of Paris. And thus,

Ninthly, that this same bull touched none of the seven previous conclusions.

Upon these nine conclusions just premised, and Armachanus being cited and brought up to the presence of the pope, he began to prove them, beginning with the first.

1. That the parish church was a place more fitting and convenient for the confessions or burials of the parishioners, than any other exempt church or place of the friars. He proved this by three causes. *First*, for greater sureness or certainty to the conscience of the parishioners who are confessed. *Secondly*, for their greater utility and profit. *Thirdly*, less inconvenience ensues by confessions taken in parish churches than in friars' churches.

Regarding the first, for greater assuredness and certainty, he argued that as the sacraments of the church are to be frequented and used in no other place, but only in that which is assigned and commanded by God himself. And seeing that the elect place in the law, *i.e.* the temple, represents the parish churches; and that the friars' church is not the place prescribed by God, but only permitted by bishops of Rome; he therefore concluded that parish churches were surer for confessions and burials than the places of the friars.

He also confirmed this by another reason. For the parish church stands free from the pope's interdict, and the churches of the friars do not, but are under suspicion and doubt by the pope's interdict. And further, he proved that there were fewer inconveniences for every man to resort to his parish church rather than to the friars.

2. Now to the second conclusion, touching the person of the friar, and of the ordinary curate. If the question is, which of these two is to be preferred in the office of ecclesiastical administration, the opinion of Armachanus was that the ordinary curate was better than the extraordinary friar.

He argued that it is safer and surer for the parishioners to resort to their ordinary or parish priest, because the person of the lawful ordinary or priest is expressly commanded by God, where the person of the friar is not, and therefore is forbidden. Also, because the parishioner may better trust to his ordinary curate as one who is more bound and obliged to be careful for him, than any other extraordinary person. And because in the person of the ordinary curate, there is commonly no doubt of any interdict to bind him; whereas in the friars there is good matter to doubt whether he stands bound under the pope's censure of excommunication or not, and that is for diverse causes. As where it is decreed that all such religious men are excommunicated *de facto*, who ever absolved anyone against whom the sentence of excommunication has been denounced by the statute provincial or synodal — as it is commonly said that the friars are accustomed to do, in loosing those whom the censure of prelates or of their officials have bound. Armachanus brings an example of this in his own diocese:

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“For in my own diocese of Armagh, I have as good as 2,000 under me, who by the censure of excommunication every year denounced against willful murderers, common thieves, burners of men’s houses, and similar malefactors, stand accursed. Notwithstanding, of this number there are scarcely 14 who come to me, or to anyone around me, for their absolution. And yet all of them receive the sacraments as others do; and all because they are absolved, or because they feign themselves to be absolved, by none other than by friars. In so doing, they are proved to be under the danger of excommunication — both the friars, and also the parishioners — if knowing of this, they consent to their error.”

Moreover, that it is the surer way for the parishioners to resort to their appointed curates than to the friars. He argues thus: that the parish priest or curate, being better acquainted with his own parishioner than a stranger is, he can better judge the nature and disposition of his disease, and minister to him the medicine of penance for it; and he will also be more careful in curing him.

[218]

About this matter Armachanus learnedly and worthily discourses, proving how pernicious these orders of friars are to the whole state of the church. And also what mischief comes by certain popes who have privileged themselves to intermeddle in the office and function of ecclesiastical ministers — to preach and to take alms and tithes from the people, and take impropriations from the church. To prosecute his reasons and arguments in order, as he has left them in writing, would make a large book. Yet because it will not be unfruitful both for the present time and for posterity, to know the manifold detriments and inconveniences received through these friars, and to know what great benefit God has done for us in unburdening the church of this monstrous generation, I have therefore briefly contracted certain of his reasons, which seemed most worthy of noting:

First, alleging the authority of Innocent IV, he presents four inconveniences arising by the friars, which are these: (1) Contempt of the people against their ordinaries; (2) decreasing devotion; (3) removing shame from the people by confessing to the friars; (4) detaining the oblations (charitable contributions), that the people customarily give at their confessions and burials, and which by right belong to the parish churches.

Also, by the privileges of the popes, granted to the friars, many other great enormities arise. Such as, first, thereby the true shepherds do not know the faces of their flock.

And, by the occasion of these privileges given to the friars, great contention, and sometimes blows arise between the friars and secular curates, about impropriations,⁸ titles, and other avails (means of serving).

Also, by the occasion of these privileges, many young men in universities as well as in their fathers’ houses, are craftily allured by the friars, as their confessors, to enter their orders, from which they cannot afterward get out, even if they would. This is to the great grief of their parents, and no less repentance to the young men themselves. Armachanus gives the case of a certain Englishman with him in Rome, who having a son at the university of Oxford, enticed by the friars to enter into their order, could by no means release him afterward. When his father and his mother would come to him, they were not allowed to speak with him, except under the friars’ custody. Whereas the Scripture commands plainly, that whoever steals any man and sells him (being convicted of it) shall be put to death, Exo 21.16. The father was compelled to come to Rome to seek remedy for his son.

⁸ *Impropriation*: putting an ecclesiastical benefice or tithe in the hands of a layman (i.e., a friar).

And no less inconvenience and danger arises for the clergy by the friars. For laymen seeing their children thus stolen from them by the friars in the universities, refuse to send them to their studies. They are willing to keep them at home in their own occupation, or to follow the plough, rather than be circumvented and robbed of their sons at the university, as manifestly appears by daily experience. For whereas in my time (says Armachanus) there were 30,000 students in the university of Oxford, now there are not 6,000 to be found. The occasion of such great decay is to be ascribed to no other cause than to this circumvention of the friars, mentioned above.

Over and besides this, there is another inconvenience, just as great or greater, that Armachanus inferred proceeds from the friars through the decay of doctrine, and knowledge in all manner of faculties, and liberal sciences, which he thus declared. For these begging friars, through their privileges obtained from the popes — to preach, to hear confessions, and to bury; and through their charters of impropriations — thereby grew to such great riches and possessions by their begging, craving, catching, and intermeddling with church matters, that there was no book concerning any science, either of divinity, law, or medicine, that they were not both able and ready to buy it up. So that every convent having a great library fully stuffed and furnished with all sorts of books, and there being so many convents within the realm, and in every convent there are so many friars increasing daily more and more, it came to pass that very few books if any remained for other students. He testifies of this by his own experience, saying that he himself sent to the university four of his own priests or chaplains, who sent word back to him, that they could neither find the bible, nor any other good profitable book of divinity fit for their study. Therefore they were minded to return home to their country; and one of them, he was sure, had returned by this time.

Furthermore, as he has proved up to here that the friars are hurtful both to the laity and to the clergy, so proceeding further, he proves them to be hurtful to themselves also; and that is in three points — as incurring the vice of *disobedience* against God and against their own rule, the vice of *avarice*, and the vice of *pride*. He proves all of these points in a long discourse.

Concerning the vice of avarice, it may be proved against them (says Armachanus) in seeing so many charges belong to the office of a secular parish priest, such as ministering the sacrament at Easter, visiting the sick with extreme unction, baptizing children, performing weddings, and other such things, requiring great devotion. How then does it happen that these friars, not laboring in these things, only procure from parish churches privileges to preach, to hear confessions, and to bury, if not because there is lucre and gain in these, and none in the other.

It may also appear by this, for if it were for mere devotion only, that they procure from parish churches a license to bury, and to preach, why then have they procured a license to take offerings, oblations, and legacies for their funerals? As for their preaching, why have they also annexed a license to require and take from the people necessities for their labor, unless avarice is the only cause of it?

Likewise for hearing confessions, when all good men have enough to know their own faults, and not wishing to hear the faults of others, it may be supposed that they would never have been so desirous to procure that privilege, were it not that these friars felt some sweetness and gain to hang upon it.

Also, where the rule of Friar Francis forbids them to keep company with any woman, if they enter into monasteries to be godfathers and gossips to men and women, how does it happen that, contrary to their rule, they enter into the secret chambers of queens, and other women, and come to know the most secret counsels of their doings, if not that avarice and advantage have so blinded their eyes, and stirred their hearts?

3. His third conclusion was that the Lord Christ in his human conduct was always poor, not because he loved or desired poverty for itself, etc. In this it is to be noted that Armachanus did not differ from the friars in this — that Christ was poor, and that he loved poverty — but he differed in the *manner* of loving, that is, whether he loved poverty for itself, or not.

4. The fourth conclusion was that Christ our Lord and Savior never begged willfully. He proves this with sundry reasons.

(1.) First, that in doing so, Christ would break the law which says, “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house, his wife, his servant, his maid, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is his,” Exo 20.17. Whoever begs voluntarily must incur the danger of this commandment.

(2.) If Christ had begged voluntarily, he would have sinned against another commandment, which says, “There shall be no beggar, nor needy person among you,” Deu 15.7-8.

(3.) Christ in so doing would have transgressed the emperor’s law, for the emperor’s law said no able-bodied beggar shall be permitted in the city.

(4.) If Christ had been a willful beggar, he would have broken the law of loving his neighbor, whom he would vex by having no need. For whoever, without need, asks or craves alms from his neighbor, vexes him in such a way that he would not be vexed himself. Christ would never do this.

[219] A.D. 1360.

(5.) If Christ had begged willfully, he would thereby have slandered his own gospel, which he confirmed with miracles. For those who saw his miracle in feeding 5,000 in the wilderness, would have thought much to themselves about how that miracle had been worked, if he who fed others, either could not or would not feed himself.

(6.) If Christ had begged willfully, then he would have done that which he himself condemns by Paul. For so we read in 1Tim 6.5, that Paul condemns those who esteem piety to be gain and lucre — which all those do, who under the color of piety, hunt or seek gain, when otherwise they need not.

(7.) If Christ had begged willfully, he would have offended by declaring an untruth in so doing. For whoever knows in his mind that he does not indeed need that thing which he asks from another, declares in himself an untruth, as someone who in word pretends to be otherwise than he is in very deed — which Christ, without doubt, never did nor ever would do.

(8.) If Christ had begged willfully, that is, having no true need for it, then he would have appeared either to be a hypocrite, seeming to be what he was not and to lack when he did not; or else to be a true beggar indeed, unable to suffice his necessity. For he is a true beggar indeed, who being constrained by mere necessity, is forced to ask from others, what he is unable to give to himself. But neither of these two agrees with Christ.

(9.) If Christ had begged willfully, then why did Peter rebuke the mother of Clement, his disciple, finding her standing among the beggars, whom he thought was strong enough to labor with her hands for her living, if in so doing she had followed the example of Christ?

(10.) If Christ had begged willfully: and if the friars rightly define perfection of the gospel by willful poverty, then Clement, St. Peter’s successor, was to blame, who labored so much to

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

remove beggary and poverty from among all those who were converted to the faith of Christ, and is specially commended for it by the church.

(11.) Again, why did Clement, writing to James, bishop of Jerusalem, command so much to obey the doctrine and examples of the apostles, who as he shows in that epistle, had no beggar or needy person among them, if Christian perfection (by the friars' philosophy) stands in willful beggary?

(12.) If Christ the high priest had begged willfully, then the holy church erred knowingly, which ordained that none without sufficient title of living and clothing, should be admitted to holy orders; and moreover, when it is said in the canonical decrees, that the bishop or clerk who begs, brings shame upon the whole order of the clergy.

(13.) If Christ had willfully begged, then the examples of willful poverty would have pertained to the perfection of Christian life. This is contrary to the old law, which commands that the priests were to have possessions and tithes to keep them from beggary. Num. 18:25-28

(14.) If Christ willfully begged, then beggary was a point of Christian perfection. And so the church of God would err in admitting such patrimonies and donations given to the church, and so in taking this perfection from the prelates.

(15.) Again, what will these friars who put their perfection in begging, say to Melchizedek, who without begging or willful poverty, was the high priest of God, and king of Salem, and prefigured the order and priesthood of Christ? Gen 14.18

(16.) And if beggary is such a perfection of the gospel (as the friars say) how does it happen that the Holy Spirit, given to the apostles to lead them into all truth, Joh 16.13 did not tell them a word about this beggarly perfection, nor is there any word of it mentioned throughout the whole testament of God?

(17.) Moreover, where the prophet says, "I never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread," Psa 27.25 how would this stand with the righteousness of Christ, who was most perfectly righteous, if he were to be forsaken, or his seed go begging for their bread? And then how does this agree with the abominable doctrines of Franciscan friars, who put their perfection in willful begging?

(18.) Finally, do we not read that Christ sent his disciples to preach without scrip or wallet, and bid them greet no man by the way? Luk 10.4 Meaning that they should beg nothing from any man. Did not the same Christ also labor with his hands under his father Joseph? St. Paul likewise, did he not labor with his hands, rather than burden the Corinthians? 1Cor 4.12 And where now is the doctrine of the friars, which puts the state of perfection in willful begging?"

5. The fifth conclusion of Armachanus against the friars was this, that Christ never taught any man to willfully beg, which he proved thus. It is written, Act 1.1, "Christ began to do and to teach." If Christ therefore, who never willfully begged himself, had taught men to do otherwise, then his doing and teaching would not have agreed together.

And if Christ, who never willfully begged himself, had taught men this doctrine of willful begging, contrary to his own doing, he would have made his doctrine suspect.

Moreover, in so teaching, he would have taught contrary to the emperor's just law, which expressly forbids it.

6. The sixth conclusion of Armachanus against the friars was that our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that we should not beg willfully. He proves it by Luk 14.13; 2The 3.8-10; Pro 6.9, Pro 31.13. etc.

7. The seventh conclusion of Armachanus is that no wise nor true holy man can take upon himself willful poverty, to be observed always; which he proves by Pro 30.8, and by its being a temptation; and so it is against the Lord's prayer. ^{Mat 6.13}

8. The eighth conclusion of this matter, that it is not agreeable to the rule of the Friars Observant,⁹ to observe willful beggary. For friar Francis, both in his rule and in his testament left to his Franciscans, plainly prefers labor before begging.

9. The ninth and last conclusion is that the bull of Pope Alexander IV, which condemns the book of the masters of Paris, impugns none of these conclusions.

Notes to be observed in this oration of Armachanus.

By this oration of Armachanus the learned prelate, made before Pope Innocent and his cardinals, there are many things worthy to be observed for the utility of the church.

First, what troubles and vexations came to the church of Christ by these friars.

Secondly, what persecution follows by means of them against so many learned men and true servants of Christ.

Thirdly, what opposition and contrariety there were among the popes, and how they could not agree among themselves about the friars.

Fourthly, what a pestiferous doctrine it was, that well near subverted the testament of Jesus Christ.

Fifthly, what a decay of ministers in Christ's church.

Sixthly, what robbing and circumventing of men's children.

Seventhly, what a decay of universities, as appeared by Oxford.

Eighthly, what damage to learning, and lack of books for students, came by these friars.

Ninthly, to what pride they grew under color of feigned humility; to what riches they grew under dissembled poverty. Insomuch that at length, through their subtle and most dangerous hypocrisy, they crept up to be lords, archbishops, cardinals, and at last also chancellors of realms, yes, and of the most secret counsel with kings and queens.

But enough of this oration of Armachanus. What success it had with the pope is not certain. By his own life it appears that the Lord so wrought that his enemies did not triumph. Yet he was seven or eight years in banishment for the same matter.

I credibly hear of certain old Irish Bibles translated long since into the Irish tongue, which if it is true, it is not unlikely the doing of this Armachanus. And thus much of this learned prelate and archbishop of Ireland, a man worthy for his Christian zeal of immortal commendation.

[220]

The Law of Praemunire. ¹⁰

After the death of Innocent VI, next "poped" in the see of Rome was Pope Urban V, who on his father's side, was an Englishman.

⁹ The Observant Friars, also called the Friars Minor of the Observance (Minorites), are a branch of the Franciscan Order that emphasized poverty and austerity; they are one of the *mendicant* or *begging* orders.

¹⁰ *Praemunire*: the offense of asserting or maintaining papal jurisdiction in England.

This pope maintained and kindled great wars in Italy, sending Egidius his cardinal and legate, and after him Arduinus a Burgundian, his legate and abbot, with great force and much money against several cities in Italy. By their means the towns and cities which had before broken from the bishop of Rome were oppressed; also Barnabas and Galeaceus, princes of Milan, were vanquished. By their example others were made afraid, and submitted themselves to the church of Rome. Thus that wicked church gained her great possessions, which her patrons claimed came from father Constantine the godly emperor.¹¹

In the time of this Pope Urban V, in the second year of his reign, about the beginning of A.D. 1364, I find a certain sermon of one Nicholas Orem, made before the pope and his cardinals on Christmas Eve. In this sermon, the learned man worthily rebukes the prelates and priests of his time, declaring their destruction was not far off, by certain signs taken from their wicked and corrupt life. All the sayings of the prophets spoken against the wicked priests of the Jews, he aptly applies against the clergy of his time. He compared the church then to the spiritual strumpet spoken of in the sixteenth chapter of the prophet Ezekiel. And he proves, in conclusion, that the clergy of the church then was so much worse than the old synagogue of the Jews, by how much worse it is to sell the church and sacraments, than to allow doves to be sold in the church. With no less judgment, and also learning, he responds to the old and false objections of the papists who, although ever so wicked, still think they are the church which the Lord cannot forsake.

In the fifth year of Pope Urban, the order of the **Jesuits** began. And up to this time, which was about A.D. 1367, the offices here in England, such as the lord chancellor, lord treasurer, and office of the privy seal, were usually in the hands of the clergy. But about this year, through the motion of the lords in the parliament, and partly for hatred of the clergy, all the offices were removed from the clergy to the lords temporal.

After the death of Pope Urban, succeeded Pope Gregory XI, who again brought the papacy out of France to Rome, after having been absent for seventy years. He was influenced (as Sabellicus records) by the answer of a bishop, whom the pope had asked why he was so long absent from his charge and church. The pope said, "it was not the part of a good pastor, to keep himself from his flock for so long." The bishop responded saying, "And you yourself, being the chief bishop, who may and ought to be an example to us all, why are you so long from the place where your church is?" The pope sought all means after that to remove his court out of France again to Rome, and he did so.

The king of England, holding a parliament in the third year of this pope, sent his ambassadors to him, desiring that from then on the pope would abstain from his reservations of benefices used in the court of England; and that spiritual men, promoted within this realm to bishoprics, might freely conduct their elections within the realm, and be confirmed by their metropolitans, according to the ancient custom of the realm. Therefore, upon these and other such matters, where the king and the realm thought themselves aggrieved, he desired the pope to provide some remedy, etc. The pope replied to the king, requesting to be certified of the king's mind concerning this. But what his answer was, is not recorded in history, except that the following year, 1374, there was a negotiation at Burges upon certain of the articles between the king and the pope, which hung in suspense for two years. At length it was agreed that the pope would no longer use his reservations of benefices in England, and the king would no longer confer and give benefices upon the writ,

¹¹ That is, the alleged Donation of Constantine. See pp. 72, 210, and 398.

Quare impedit, etc.¹² But as to the freedom of elections to be confirmed by the metropolitan, nothing was touched.

The king, in the twenty-fifth year of his reign, by the consent of the lords and commons, enacted a statute in accordance with a statute made in the thirtieth year of his grandfather Edward I, in which an act was passed against the ravenous pillage by the pope, through provisions, reservations, and collations, etc. But it was not put into execution. By its provisions, the state of the realm decreased more and more, the king's royalty and prerogative was greatly obscured and diminished, innumerable treasure of the realm was transported, aliens and strangers were placed in the best and fattest bishoprics, abbeys, and benefices within the realm; and those who could not be resident here in England, either for their offices in Rome, such as cardinalships, etc., or if resident, were yet better away for infinite causes. The king not only revived the statute made by Edward I, but he also enlarged it. He added very strait and sharp penalties against the offenders, such as exemption from the king's protection, loss of all their lands, goods, and other possessions, and their bodies were to be imprisoned at the king's pleasure. And further, whoever was lawfully convicted, or for lack of appearance by process, was within the lapse of this *Statute of Praemunire* (for that was the name of it), would suffer all and every such molestation and injury, as men exempted from the protection of the king. So that whoever killed such men, would have been in no more danger of law, than for killing any outlaw, or someone not worthy to live in a commonweal. They were then esteemed unprofitable members, in that time of ignorance in England, who would offer themselves to the willful slavery and servile obedience of the pope. Although in *these* days, yes and that is among no small fools, it is counted more than evangelical holiness. Whoever wishes to peruse the statute, and would see every branch and article of it discussed and handled at large, with the penalties, let him read the *Statute of Provision and Praemunire*, made in the twenty-fifth year of this king's days. And let him read in the statutes made in the parliaments that were held in the 27th and 38th years of his reign. And under the same title of *Provision and Praemunire*, he will find the pope's primacy and jurisdiction within this realm more nearly touched, and much of his papal power restrained. It went so far, that whoever would either appeal or consent to any appeal to be made outside the realm to the pope or See of Rome — for any cause or controversy in law, either spiritual or temporal, which was determinable in any of the king's courts (as all matters were), whether personal or real citations, or other — would incur the penalty and danger of *praemunire*. Diverse other matters are expressed in the titles and statutes, and set forth at large, in which the pope is restrained from his usurped power, authority, and jurisdiction within the realm of England. Whoever wishes may peruse it; but for brevity's sake I omit it, hastening on to other matters.

Holy Bridget.

About this time (being A.D. 1370), lived holy Bridget, whom the church of Rome has canonized not only as a saint, but also as a prophetess. Notwithstanding, in her book of revelations, which has often been printed, she was a great rebuker of the pope, and of the filth of his clergy, calling him a murderer of souls, a spiller and a pilferer of the flock of Christ, more abominable than the Jews, more cruel than Judas, more unjust than Pilate, worse than Lucifer himself. She prophesies that the see of the pope will be thrown down into the deep like a millstone; and that his assistants shall burn with brimstone; affirming that

¹² In English law, *quare impedit* was a writ commencing a common law action to decide a disputed right of presentation to a benefice, known as an advowson. It was typically brought by a patron against a bishop who refuses to appoint the patron's nominee as a priest.

the prelates, bishops, and priests are the cause why the doctrine of Christ is neglected, and almost extinguished. And that the clergy have turned the ten commandments of God into two words, to wit, "Give money." It would be long and tedious to declare all that she writes against them, so let this suffice for all. Bridget affirms in her revelations, that when the Holy Virgin said to her Son that "Rome was a fruitful and fertile field," he said, "Yes, but only of weeds and cockle," etc.

[221] A.D. 1362-1371.

To this Bridget I will also join **Catherine of Sienne**, a holy nun, who lived much about the same time (A.D. 1379). This Catherine was accustomed to complain much about the corrupt state of the church — namely, of the prelates of the court of Rome, and of the pope — warning them of the great schism, which then followed in the church of Rome, and endured till the Council of Constance (A.D. 1414).

Besides these, the Lord, who never ceases to work in his church, stirred up against the malignant church of Rome, the spirits of diverse good and godly teachers, such as **Matthew Paris**, a Bohemian born, who about A.D. 1370, wrote a large book about antichrist, and he proves that he has already come; he notes that the pope is the antichrist. In this book he greatly inveighs against the wickedness and filthiness of the clergy, and against the neglect of their duty in governing the church. The locusts mentioned in the Apocalypse, he says, are the hypocrites reigning in the church. The works of antichrist, he says, are these: the fables and inventions of men reigning in the church; the images and feigned relics that are worshipped everywhere; and that every man worships his own saint and savior beside Christ, so that almost every man and city has its peculiar Christ. He taught and affirmed moreover, that godliness and true worship of God are not bound to place, persons, or times — to be heard more in this place than in another, or at this time more than at another, etc. He also argues against the cloisterers, who leaving the only true Savior, set up for themselves their Francises, their Dominics, and such others, and have them for their saviors, glorifying and triumphing in them, and feigning many forged lies about them. Paris was greatly and much offended with monks and friars, for neglecting, or rather *burying* the word of Christ. And instead of him, celebrating and setting up their own rules and canons, affirming him to be hurtful to true godliness; that priests, monks, and nuns, should account themselves spiritual, and all others to be lay and secular; attributing only to themselves the opinion of holiness, and despising other men. Paris further writes that antichrist had seduced all universities and colleges of learned men, so that they teach no sincere doctrine, nor give any light to the Christians with their teaching. Finally, he forewarns that it will come to pass, that God once again will raise up godly teachers who, being fervent in the spirit and zeal of Elijah, shall disclose and refute the errors of antichrist, and antichrist himself, openly to the whole world.

About the same time, or shortly after (A.D. 1384), we also read of **John of Mountziger**, rector of the university of Ulme, who openly in the schools, in his oration, propounded that the body of Christ (bread) was not God, and therefore not to be worshipped as God with that kind of worship called *Latreia*, as the sophisters term it, meaning thereby that the sacrament was not to be adored. Afterward he defended this in writing, also affirming that Christ in his resurrection took to himself again all his blood which he had shed in his passion. He thereby meant to infer that the blood of Christ (wine), which is worshipped in many places, neither can be called the blood of Christ, nor ought to be worshipped.

Nilus, archbishop of Thessalonica, lived much about this time. He wrote a long work against the Latins, that is, against those who took part and held with the church of Rome.

His first book, written in Greek, was afterward translated into Latin, and recently into English in our time. In the first chapter of this book, he lays all the blame and fault of the dissension and schism between the eastern and the western churches, upon the pope. He affirmed that the pope would only command what he pleased, however contrary to all the ancient canons; that he would hear and follow no man's advice; that he would not permit any free councils to be assembled, etc. And that therefore it was not possible that the controversies between the Greek church and Latin church might be decided.

In the second chapter of this book he makes a very learned disputation. First, he declares that if the pope has any more dignity than other bishops, it is not at all by God's commandment, but only by human law. The councils, the fathers, the emperors, have granted this dignity, to him. Nor did they grant it for any consideration other than the city then had the empire of the whole world, and not at all because Peter was ever there or not.

Secondly, he declares that the primacy is not so great as he and his sycophants usurp to themselves. Also, he refutes the main propositions of the papists one after another. He declares that the pope has no more dominion than other patriarchs, and that the pope may err as well as other mortal men; and that he is subject both to laws and councils, as well as other bishops. That it did not belong to him, but to the emperor, to call general councils; and that in ecclesiastical causes he could establish and ordain no more than all other bishops might. And lastly, that he gets no more by Peter's succession than that of being a bishop, as all other bishops after the apostles are, etc.

I cannot leave out the memory of **James Misuensis**, who also wrote of the coming of antichrist. He mentions a certain learned man, whose name was **Militzius**, who was a famous and worthy preacher in Prague. He lived about A.D. 1366, long before Huss, and before Wycliffe also. In his writings he declares how the same good man Militzius was incited by the Holy Spirit of God, and moved to search out of the holy Scriptures the manner and coming of antichrist. He found that then, in his own time, he had already come. And James says that Militzius was constrained to go up to Rome, and to publicly preach there; and that afterwards, he affirmed this before the inquisitor — that the same mighty and great antichrist, which the Scriptures mentioned, had already come.

He also affirmed that the church, by the negligence of the pastors, would become desolate, and that iniquity would abound. Also, he said that in the church of Christ there were idols, which would destroy Jerusalem, and make the temple desolate, but they were cloaked by hypocrisy. Further, that there are many who deny Christ, for they keep silence against their conscience; nor do they *hear* Christ, whom all the world should know, and *confess* his truth before men.

There is also a bull of Pope Gregory XI to the archbishop of Prague, in which he is commanded to excommunicate and persecute Militzius and his hearers. The same bull declares that he was once a canon of Prague, but that afterwards he renounced his canonship, and began to preach. But because he preached that antichrist had already come, he was put in prison by John, archbishop of Prague. He had his company or congregation to whom he preached, and among them were certain converted women who had forsaken their evil life, and lived godly and well. He was accustomed in his sermons to prefer these before all the blessed nuns who never offended. He also taught openly that there was no truth in the pope, cardinals, bishops, prelates, priests, and other religious men, and that they did not teach the way of truth, but that only he, and those who held with him, taught the true way of salvation.

About the year 1371, lived **Henry de Jota**, whom Gerson much commends, and also his companion **Henry de Hassia**, a learned and famous man. In an epistle of this Henry de Hassia, which he wrote to the Bishop of Normacia, the author greatly accuses the spiritual men of every order — yes, and the most holy of all others, the pope himself — of many and great vices. He said that the ecclesiastical governors in the primitive church were compared to the sun shining in the daytime; and the political governors to the moon shining in the night. But the spiritual men now in it, he said, neither shine in the day-time, nor yet in the night-time, but rather with their darkness they obscure both the day and the night — that is, with their filthy living, ignorance, and impiety. He also cites these words out of the prophecy of Hildegardis (see p. 160):

“Therefore the devil in himself speaks of you priests; I find among these men dainty banquets and feasts in which there is all voluptuousness,; insomuch that my eyes, my ears, my body, and my veins are filled with the froth of them! ... Lastly, every day more and more, as Lucifer did, they seek to climb higher and higher, till every day with him, more and more, they fall deeper and deeper.”

[222]

Martyrs Before Wycliffe.

About the year 1390, thirty-six citizens of Mentz were burned at Bringa, for the doctrine of the Waldenses, as Brussius affirms. This opinion was not contrary to what they held before, in which they affirmed that the pope was that great antichrist which would come; unless perhaps the pope seemed then to be more evidently convicted of anti-Christianity, than at any other time.

For the same cause many others beside these are to be found in histories, who sustained similar persecutions by the pope, if leisure would serve to peruse all that might be searched. Such as where Masseus records some 140 in the province of Narbonne, who chose to suffer every grievous punishment by fire, rather than receive the decretals of the Romish church, contrary to the truth of the Scripture.

What should I say here about the 24 who suffered at Paris (A.D. 1210)? Also in the same author it is testified that (A.D. 1211) 400 were named heretics and burned; 80 were beheaded. Prince Americus was hanged, and the lady of the castle was stoned to death.

Moreover, in the chronicles of Hoveden and of other writers, a great number are recited who were burned as heretics in France.

Notes out of Acts of Parliament Against the Pope.

We will now, Christ willing, proceed upon no light reports of feeble credit, nor upon any fabulous legends without authority, but upon the true and substantial copies of the public records of the realm, still remaining to be seen under the king's most sure and faithful custody. Out of these records such matter appears against the popish church of Rome, and against his usurped authority, such open standing and crying out against that see. And it was not done secretly, but even in open parliament in the days of King Edward III. So that the Romish people of our age will neither easily think it is true when they see it, nor yet be able to deny it.

King Edward III, in the sixth year of his reign (1333), hearing that Edward Baliol had proclaimed himself King of Scotland, required counsel from the whole state. And for this he summoned a parliament of all estates to meet at York about the beginning of December, where the king had already come, waiting for the coming of those who were summoned. But

none of all the clergy came, except the archbishop of York, the bishop of Lincoln, and of Carlisle, and the abbots of York and Selby. So that the archbishop of Canterbury did not come, nor any other from his province, and all because there was a dispute as to whether Canterbury or York should carry the cross.

It also follows in the records, that the commons find great fault at provisions coming from Rome, by which foreigners were enabled to enjoy ecclesiastical dignities within this realm. And they show the inconveniences ensuing thereby; namely, the decay of daily alms; the transporting of the treasure to nourish the king's enemies; the discovering of the secrets of the realm; and the disabling and impoverishing of the clergy within this realm.

They also show how the pope had most covertly granted to two new cardinals within this realm, over 10,000 marks of yearly taxes. The commons therefore requested the king and nobles to find some remedy, for they never could, nor would they any longer, bear those strange oppressions. Or else they would have the king and nobles help them to expel the pope's power out of this realm by force.

Hereupon, the king, lords, and commons, sent for the act made at Carlisle, in the thirty-fifth year of King Edward I (1307), upon the same complaint, thereby forbidding that anything should be attempted or brought into the realm, which would tend to the blemishing of the King's prerogative, or to the prejudice of his lords or commons. And so at this time the statute called the Act of Provision was made common by consent, which generally forbids bringing in any bulls, or such trinkets from the court of Rome, or the using, enjoying, or allowing of any such bill, process, instrument, or ware.

Also, it was propounded in the parliament, in the eighteenth year of Edward III (1345), that if any bishop-elect refuses to take any such bishoprics other than by the pope's bull, then he shall not enter nor enjoy his temporalities without special license from the king.

Also, that the king shall dispose of all such benefices and dignities of such foreigners, his enemies, that remain in the country of his enemies, and employ the profits fore the defense of the realm.

Moreover it was propounded that commissioners be sent to all the king's ports, to apprehend all such persons who bring in any such instrument from Rome, and to bring them immediately before the council to answer for it.

It was propounded, furthermore, that the deanery of York, which is to be recovered by judgment in the king's court, may be bestowed upon some able man within the realm, who will maintain it against him (meaning against the cardinal who holds the same by provision from Rome, being an enemy to the king and to the realm), and that the profits may be employed for the defense of the realm.

To all of these petitions, the king's answer was made in the following form:

“It is agreed by the king, earls, barons, justices, and other men of the realm, that the petitions aforesaid be made in sufficient form of law, according to the petitions aforesaid.”

To pass further, in the twentieth year of the king's reign (1347), in the parliament held the same year, it was propounded that all foreign monks should leave the realm by St. Michael's day,¹³ and that their livings should be disposed to young English scholars. The livings of these, the king took in his hands.

¹³ [St. Michael's day, or Michaelmas, falls on September 29th.](#)

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

Also, that the king may take the profits of all other foreigners' livings, such as cardinals and others, during their lifetimes. The profits of which were also to be in the king's hands.

That such foreigners enemies, as are advanced to livings here in England (being in their own countries, shoemakers, tailors, or chamberlains to cardinals), should depart before Michaelmas, and their livings be disposed to poor English scholars. The livings also of these remained in the king's hands.

The commons refused to pay any payment to any cardinals, lying in France, to deal with war or peace; this was granted on the king's part as reasonable.

Also propounded and fully agreed: that the yearly advance of 2,000 marks (granted by the pope to two cardinals, out of the provinces of Canterbury and York) should be restrained.

Likewise enacted: that no Englishman should take anything in farming from any foreign monk, or buy any of their goods, or take their counsel, on pain of perpetual imprisonment.

Enacted further: that no person should bring into the realm, to any bishop or other, any bull, or any other letters from Rome, or from any alien, unless he shows it to the chancellor or warden of the cinque ports,¹⁴ upon loss of all his goods.

Finally, at the end of the parliament, the bishops were commanded to certify to the chancery, before the next convocation, the names of all such foreigners, of their benefices, and the values of them.

The parliament of the twenty-fifth year (1352) was begun the 6th day of February, in which, besides other matters, it was propounded that remedy might be had against the pope's reservation, by which the pope received the first fruits of all ecclesiastical dignities: a greater consumption (financial loss) to the realm than all the king's wars.

Also that the same remedy might be had against those in the court of Rome who presume to undo any judgment given in the king's court, as if they had power to undo the laws of the realm. To which it was answered, that there was sufficient remedy provided by law.

[223] A.D. 1370.

In the parliament held at Westminster, the thirty-eighth year of Edward III (1364), it was required by the king's own mouth, and declared to the whole estates, how citations and false suggestions were made to the pope daily, for matters that were determinable in the king's courts within the realm; and for procuring provisions for ecclesiastical dignities. This was to the great defacing of the ancient laws — to the spoiling of his crown — to the daily conveying away of the realm's treasure — to the wasting of ecclesiastical livings — to the withdrawing of divine service, alms, hospitality, and other acceptable works — and to the daily increase of all mischiefs. Therefore, the king required, in person and by his own mouth, the whole estate to provide due remedy.

In the fortieth year of the reign of King Edward III (A.D. 1366), another parliament was called at Westminster, the bishop of Ely being lord chancellor and speaker. On the second day of the assembly, in the presence of the king, lords, and commons, he declared how the day before, they generally understood the cause of their assembly, but now they should more particularly understand it. Especially, how the king understood that the pope — for the homage which King John made to the See of Rome for the realms of England and Ireland, and for the tribute granted by him — meant by process to cite the king to Rome to answer

¹⁴ *Cinque Ports*: originally a confederation of five ports in southeast England, but later comprising forty ports.

for it. The king required their advice in this, what would be best for him to do if any such thing were attempted. The bishops by themselves required a respite till the next day to answer. So did the lords and commons, every one of them by themselves.

The next day the whole estates re-assembled together, and by common consent enacted in effect following; for neither King John, nor any other king, could bring his realm and people under such thralldom and subjection, except by the common assent of parliament. This had not been done previously, and therefore king John acted against his oath at his coronation. If, therefore, the pope should attempt anything against the king, by process or otherwise, then the king, with all his subjects, should resist it with all their force and power.

Here, moreover, it is not to be omitted, how in this same parliament, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge on the one side, and the friars of the four mendicant orders in the universities on the other side, made long complaints, one against the other, to the king in parliament. But in the end they submitted themselves to the king's order.

After which the king, upon fully digesting the whole matter (and by assent of parliament), ordered that the chancellor and scholars, as well as the friars of those orders in the universities, should in all graces and other school exercises, use each other in friendly ways, without any rumor as before. That none of those orders should receive any scholars into their orders under the age of eighteen years. That the friars should take no advantage, or procure bulls or other process from Rome, against the universities, or proceed in them. And that the king should have power to redress all controversies between them from then on, and the offenders were to be punished at the pleasure of the king, and of the Council.

In process of these acts and rolls of parliament, it follows that in the fiftieth year of the reign of King Edward III (A.D. 1376), another great parliament was assembled at Westminster, where a long bill was put up against the usurpations of the pope.

1. That he was the cause of all the plagues, murrains, famine, and poverty of the realm, such that not one-third was left of the number of persons or other commodity within the realm, that there recently was.
2. That the taxes paid to the pope of Rome for ecclesiastical dignities, amount to five-fold as much as the tax of all profits which belong to the king, by the year, out of his whole realm; and that for some one bishopric or other dignity, the pope, by means of translations¹⁵ and deaths, has three, four, or five separate taxes.
3. That the brokers of that sinful city promote, for money, many caitiffs¹⁶ (being altogether unlearned and unworthy), up to 1,000 marks living a year, where the learned and worthy can hardly obtain 20 marks; whereby learning decays.
4. That foreigners (enemies to this land) who never saw nor care to see their parishioners, have those livings, whereby they despise God's service, and convey away the treasure, and are worse than Jews or Saracens.
5. Also it was put in the bill to be considered, that the laws of the church would have such livings bestowed for charity only, without praying or paying.
6. That reason would have livings given of devotion, should be bestowed in hospitality.

¹⁵ *Translation*: the act of moving a bishop from one see to another, which is a power held by the Pope.

¹⁶ *Caitiff*: a base or despicable person.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

7. That God had committed his sheep to the pope, to be pastured, and not to be shorn or shaven.
8. That lay patrons, perceiving the covetousness and simony of the pope, thereby learn to sell their benefices to beasts, just as Christ was sold to the Jews.
9. That there is no prince in Christendom so rich, that he has even a fourth of the treasure which the pope has most sinfully taken out of this realm for churches.
10. Over and besides in the bill — repeating again the tender zeal for the honor of the church — were declared and particularly named all the plagues which have justly fallen upon this realm for allowing the church to be so defaced, with a declaration that they will daily increase without redress.
11. Whereupon with much persuasion this was desired, to help to re-edify the church; and this was rather because this was the year of jubilee, the fiftieth year of the king's reign, the year of joy and gladness, and there could be no greater than this.
12. The means how to begin this, was to write two letters to the pope, the one in Latin under the king's seal, the other in French under the seals of the nobles, importing their particularities that required redress. The effect of this letter of the lords may be seen in a similar letter mentioned earlier.
13. And to further accomplish this, to enact that no money was to be carried out of the realm by a letter from Lombardy or otherwise, on pain of forfeiture and imprisonment, and to enact the articles hereafter ensuing.
14. The king had previously provided sufficient remedy by statute, and otherwise pursued it with the holy father the pope, and so minded to do from time to time, until he had obtained the matters before, as well as for the articles ensuing, being in a way all one.
15. That the pope's collector and other strangers, the king's enemies, who were only lieger spies of English dignities and for disclosing the secrets of the realm, may be touched.
16. That the same collector, also being a receiver of the pope's pence, keeps a house in London, with clerks and officers, as if it were one of the king's solemn courts, transporting yearly to the pope 20,000 marks, and most commonly more.
17. That cardinals and other foreigners remaining at Rome, of which one cardinal is dean of York, another of Salisbury, another of Lincoln, another archdeacon of Canterbury, another archdeacon of Durham, another archdeacon of Suffolk, another archdeacon of York, another prebendary of Thame and Nassington, another prebendary of Bucks in the church of York, have some of the best dignities of England, and have sent over to them yearly 20,000 marks, over and above that which English brokers lying here have.
18. That the pope (to ransom the Frenchmen, the king's enemies, who defend Lombardy from the king), always at his pleasure, levies a subsidy from the whole clergy of England.
19. That the pope for greater gain makes several translations of all the bishoprics and other dignities within the realm.
20. That the pope's collector has this year taken for his use the first fruits of all benefices, by collation or provision.
21. To renew all the statutes against provisors from Rome, since the pope reserves all the benefices of the world for his own proper gifts, and has this year created twelve new cardinals, so that now there are thirty, where usually there were but twelve, and all those cardinals, except two or three, are the king's enemies.

[224]

22. That the pope in time will give the temporal manors of those dignities to the king's enemies, since daily he so usurps upon the realm and the king's regalities.
23. That all houses and corporations of religion, who up to the time of the king's reign had free election of their heads, the pope has encroached upon them for himself.
24. That in all legacies from the pope, the English clergy bear the charge of the legates, and all for the goodness of our money.
25. And so it appears, that if the money of the realm were as plentiful as it ever was, the collectors, with the proctors of cardinals, would soon convey it away.
26. For the remedy of this, it may be provided that no such collector or proctor remain in England, on pain of life and member. And that no Englishman, on like pain, may become any such collector or proctor, or remain at Rome.
27. For better information about this, and namely touching the pope's collector — because the whole clergy being obedient to him, dare not displease him — it would be good that Sir John Strensale, parson of St. Botolph's in Holborn, may be sent to come before the lords and commons of this parliament, who being strictly charged, can declare much more, because he served the collector five years.

And thus much of this bill touching the pope's matters, by which it may appear that it was not for nothing that the Italians and other foreigners used to call Englishmen good asses, for they bore all the burdens that were laid upon them.

In these rolls and records of parliament in this King's time, several other things are noted as worthy of being marked, and not suppressed in silence. By these the reader may learn and understand that the state of the king's jurisdiction here within this realm, was not restricted in those days (although the pope then seemed to be in his best ruff¹⁷) as seen afterwards in other kings' days. This appears in the parliament of the fifteenth year of Edward III (1342), in the twenty-fourth article of the parliament. There it is to be read, that the king's officers and temporal justices then punished usurers, and impeached the officers of the church for bribery, and for taking money for temporal pain, probate of wills, solemnity of marriage, etc. notwithstanding all the pretended liberties of the popish church to the contrary.

This is moreover to be added to the commendation of this king, how in the volumes of the acts and rolls of the king it appears that King Edward III sent John Wycliffe, then reader of divinity lectures in Oxford, with other lords and ambassadors, over to Italy, to deal with the pope's legates concerning affairs between the king and the pope, with full commission. The tenor of it follows here:

“The king to all and singular to whom these presents shall come, greeting. Know that we repose assured confidence in the fidelity and wisdom of the reverend father John bishop of Bangor, and our other loving and faithful subjects — Master John Wycliffe, reader of the divinity lecture. Master John Gunter, dean of Segobyen, and Master Simon Moulton, doctor of law, Sir William Burton Knight, Master John Belknap, and Master John Honnington. We have directed them as our ambassadors and special commissioners to the parts beyond the seas — giving to our ambassadors and commissioners, to five or six of them (of whom I desire that the bishop shall be one), full power and authority, with special commandment to deal with and consult mildly and charitably with the legates and ambassadors of the lord pope, regarding certain affairs. Whereupon of late, we sent the bishop, and William Ughtred, monk of

¹⁷ *Ruff*: A circular frill or ruffle on a garment, espec. a starched, fluted frill worn at the neck as a sign of status.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

Durham, and Master John Shepy to the see apostolical; and hereof to make full relation of all things done and passed in the said assembly, so that all such things which may tend to the honor of holy church, and the advancement of our crown and this our realm, may by the assistance of God, and wisdom of the see apostolical, be brought to good effect, and accomplished accordingly. Witness ourselves, etc. at London, dated the 26th day of July, in the 48th year of our reign.”

It may be seen by this letter what good will the king then bore toward Wycliffe, and what little regard he had for the sinful see of Rome. We will now proceed to the history of this valiant soldier of Christ.

John Wycliffe – 1370-1384.

After all those recited before, by whom it pleased the Lord to work against the bishop of Rome, and to weaken the pernicious superstition of the friars, it now remains to enter into the history of John Wycliffe, our countryman. And also others of his time and country, whom the Lord by the power of his Spirit raised up here in England, to detect more fully and amply the poison of the pope’s doctrine, and the false religion set up by the friars. In Wycliffe’s opinions some blemishes may perhaps be observed, yet they are such blemishes that show him to be a man who might err, rather than one who could directly fight against Christ our Savior, as the popes and friars did. And from the primitive ages of the church, what learned man has been so perfect, so absolutely sure, that no opinion of his has ever been erroneous? And yet these articles of Wycliffe would be seen to be neither so many in number, nor yet so gross in themselves, as his enemies make them out to be, if his books, which they destroyed, remained to compare with those articles which they have twisted to the worst.

This much is certain, and cannot be denied, that being the public reader of divinity to the university of Oxford, he was for the rude time in which he lived, famously reputed as a great clergyman, a deep scholar, and no less expert in all kind of philosophy. This not only appears by his famous and learned writings, but also by the confession of Walden, his most cruel and bitter enemy, who in a letter written to Pope Martin V, says, “That he was wonderfully astonished at his strongest arguments with the places of authority which he had gathered, with the vehemency and force of his reasons,” etc. It appears that Wycliffe flourished about A.D. 1371, in the reign of Edward III. For thus we find in the chronicles of Caxton:

“In the year of our Lord 1371, Edward III, king of England, in his parliament was against the pope’s clergy. He willingly hearkened and gave ear to the voices and tales of heretics with some of his council; conceiving and following sinister opinions against the clergy, for which he tasted and afterward suffered much adversity and trouble. And not long after, in the year of our Lord 1372, he wrote to the bishop of Rome, that the pope should not by any means intermeddle any more within his kingdom, as to the reservation or distribution of benefices; and that all those bishops who were under his dominion, should enjoy their former and ancient liberty, and be confirmed by their metropolitans, as accustomed in times past,” etc.

Without all doubt, when the world was in a most desperate and vile state, and lamentable darkness and ignorance of God’s truth overshadowed the whole earth, this man Wycliffe stepped out like a valiant champion.

Thus Almighty God continually succors and helps us, when all other things are in despair, being always, according to the Psalm, “a help in time of need.” This was never more apparent than in these later days and extreme age of the church, when the whole state, not

only of worldly things, but also of religion, was depraved and corrupted. The state of religion among the divines was in a deep lethargy, and past all the help and remedy of man. Only the name of Christ remained among the Christians. His true and lively doctrine was as far unknown to most men, as his name was common to all men. As to faith; consolation; the end and use of the law; the office of Christ; our impotency and weakness; the Holy Spirit; the greatness and strength of sin; true works; grace, and free justification by faith; the liberty of a Christian man — of all these things in which the sum of our profession consists, there was no mention, and scarcely a word spoken.

[225] A.D. 1370-1376.

Scripture, learning, and divinity, were known but to a few, and that was in the schools only; and there too it was almost all turned into sophistry. Instead of the epistles of Peter and Paul, men occupied their time in studying Aquinas and Scotus, and Lombard, the Master of Sentences. The world leaving and forsaking God's spiritual word and doctrine, was altogether led and blinded with outward ceremonies and human traditions. In these all the hope of obtaining salvation was fully fixed, so that scarcely anything else was taught in the churches.

The people were taught to worship nothing but what they saw, and saw almost nothing which they did not worship.

The whole world was filled and overwhelmed with error and darkness. And no great wonder, for the simple and unlearned people, being far from all knowledge of the holy Scripture, thought it sufficient for them to know only these things which were delivered to them by their pastors and shepherds. And they, on the other hand, taught nothing but those things which came forth from the court of Rome, of which the greater part tended to the profit of their order, more than to the glory of Christ.

The Christian faith was nothing then, but that every man should know that Christ once suffered — that is to say, that all men should know and understand what the devils themselves also knew. Hypocrisy was counted as wonderful holiness. Men were so given to outward forms, that even those who professed the knowledge of the Scriptures, scarcely understood or knew anything but these forms. And this appeared not only in the common sort of doctors and teachers, but also in the very heads and captains of the church, whose whole religion and holiness consisted in observing days, foods, garments, and circumstances such as place, time, person, etc. From this there sprang so many fashions of vestures and garments, so many differences of colors and foods, so many pilgrimages to several places, as if St. James at Compostella could do what Christ could not do at Canterbury. Or else, that God was not of the same power and strength in every place, or could not be found unless by running here and there in pilgrimages. etc. Thus the holiness of the whole year was transported and put off to the lent season. No country or land was counted holy except Palestine. Such was the blindness of that time, that men strived and fought for the cross at Jerusalem, as if it had been for the chief and only strength of our faith. It is a wonder to read the monuments of the former times, to see and understand what great troubles and calamities this cross had caused in almost every Christian commonwealth. For the Romish champions never ceased, by writing, admonishing, and counselling, yes, and by quarrelling, to move and stir up princes to mind war and battle, even as though the faith and belief of the gospel were of no power, or of little effect without that wooden cross.

In these troublous times, and horrible darkness of ignorance, when there seemed to be no spark of pure doctrine remaining, this Wycliffe sprang up by God's providence, through

whom the Lord purposed to awaken the world, which was overwhelmed in the deep streams of human traditions.

Wycliffe, after he had a long time professed divinity in the university of Oxford, and perceiving the true doctrine of Christ's gospel to be defiled with the inventions of bishops, orders of monks, and dark errors, and after long deliberating with himself, with many secret sighs, and bewailing the general ignorance of the world, could no longer bear it, he at last determined to remedy such things as he saw to be out of the way. But as he saw that this could not be attempted without great trouble, and that these things, which had been rooted and grafted in men's minds so long a time, could not be plucked up suddenly, he thought that it should be done little by little. Therefore he first assailed his adversaries in logical and metaphysical questions, disputing with them about the first form and fashion of things, of the increase of time, and of the intelligible substance of a creature, with other such things of no great importance. Yet it helped him not a little in preparing to dispute about greater matters.

From these beginnings the way was opened to greater matters, so that at the length he came to address the matters of the sacraments, and other abuses of the church. This holy man took great pains regarding these things, protesting openly in the schools, that it was his chief and principal purpose to call back the church from her idolatry to some better amendment, especially in the matter of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. But this sore point could not be touched without the great grief and pain of the whole world. For first of all, the whole body of monks and begging friars were set into a rage and madness; and even as hornets with their sharp stings, they assailed this good man on every side. After them the priests, and then after them the archbishop took the matter in hand, depriving him of his benefice which he had in Oxford. But being somewhat befriended and supported by the king, he continued and bore up against the malice of the friars, and of the archbishop, till about A.D. 1377. I must now digress a little to make some mention of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, who was his special supporter and friend.

When King Edward III had reigned about fifty-one years, and was of great age, and in such feebleness that he was unable to govern the affairs of the realm, a parliament was called the year before his death. It was resolved by the knights and burgesses, that twelve sage and discreet lords and peers should be placed as guardians around the king, to do and dispose under him matters pertaining to the government.

These twelve governors being appointed by parliament to have the tuition of the king, and to attend to the public affairs of the realm, remained for a certain time about him, till afterwards, being again removed, all the government of the realm, next under the king, was committed to the duke of Lancaster, the king's fourth son. For as yet Richard, the son of Prince Edward (who was recently deceased), nephew of the duke and grandson of Edward III, was very young and under age.

Wycliffe Sent For By John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

This duke of Lancaster had conceived in his heart for a long time, a displeasure against the popish clergy, whether for corrupt and impure doctrine joined with abominable excess of life, or for what other cause, is not precisely known.

The duke sent for John Wycliffe, who was then the divinity reader in Oxford. He had commenced several disputations contrary to the form and teaching of the pope's church in many things, and been deprived of his benefice. The opinions which Wycliffe began to put forth in his lectures and sermons at Oxford, were these: That the pope had no more power

than others to excommunicate any man; that even if the pope excommunicates a person, yet it is as much in the power of another priest to absolve that person, as it is in the pope. He affirmed that neither the king nor any temporal lord could give any perpetuity to the church, nor to any ecclesiastical person. For when such ecclesiastical persons sin, and continue in their sin, the temporal powers ought to take away from them what had been bestowed upon them before. Wycliffe proved this to have been practiced here in England by William Rufus (son of William the Conqueror). Wycliffe said that if Rufus did this lawfully, then why may this not also be practiced now? If he did it unlawfully, then the church errs unlawfully in praying for him.

Besides these opinions and assertions of his, with others which will be mentioned later in order, he began also to touch the matter of the SACRAMENT. He proved that in the sacrament, the bread remained in its substance. He proved this both by the holy Scriptures, and also by the authority of the doctors, but especially by those who were most ancient. As for the later writers, he utterly rejected them, saying that the simple and plain truth appears in the Scriptures, to which all human traditions whatsoever must be referred, and especially those which are set forth and published in recent years. This was the reason why he refused the later writers about decretals,¹⁸ leaning only on the Scriptures and ancient doctors. He affirmed out of them, that in the sacrament of the body which is celebrated with bread, the incidentals are not present without the substance; that is to say, that the body of Christ is not present without the bread, as the common sort of priests in those days dreamed.

[226]

Wycliffe Cited to Appear Before the Bishops.

Although through the favor and support of the duke of Lancaster, and Lord Henry Percy, he persisted in this, and was protected against the violence and cruelty of his enemies. At last, about A.D. 1376, the bishops still urged and incited their archbishop Simon Sudbury, who had already deprived Wycliffe, and afterwards prohibited him, had obtained by process and order of citation, to have him brought before them. Both space and time for him to appear was assigned to him in their usual form.

The duke receiving intelligence that Wycliffe was to appear before the bishops, and fearing that he was too weak against such a multitude, called out of the orders of friars, four bachelors of divinity, one out of every order, to join with Wycliffe for greater security. When the day came assigned to Wycliffe to appear (which was Thursday the 19th of February), John Wycliffe went accompanied with the four friars, and the duke of Lancaster, and also Lord Henry Percy, lord marshal of England. Lord Percy went before them to make room and way where Wycliffe would come.

As Wycliffe, thus sufficiently guarded, was coming to the place where the bishops sat, they animated and exhorted him not to fear or shrink before the bishops, who were all unlearned as compared with him. With these words, and with the assistance of the nobles, Wycliffe approached to the church of St. Paul in London, where a great concourse of people was gathered to hear what would be said and done. Such was the throng of the multitude, that the lords (notwithstanding all the authority of the high marshal) had great difficulty getting through. The bishop of London seeing the stir that the lord marshal kept in the church among the people, speaking to Lord Percy, said, "If he had known before what authority he would have assumed in the church, he would have stopped him from coming there." At

¹⁸ *Decretal*: an authoritative order or decree from the pope determining a point of ecclesiastical law.

which the duke, not a little angered, answered, “That he would keep such authority there, whether the bishop liked it or not.”

At last they pierced through and came to our Lady’s chapel, where the dukes and barons were sitting with the archbishops and other bishops. John Wycliffe, according to the custom, stood before them, to learn what would be laid to his charge. Lord Percy kindly bid him to sit down. But the bishop of London in anger said, “he should not sit there. Nor was it fitting,” he said, “that the one who was cited before his ordinary, should sit during the time of his answer.” At these words a fire began to kindle between them, so that they began to berate and revile one another.

Then the duke, taking Lord Percy’s part, answered the bishop with hasty words. The bishop far excelled him in this railing art of scolding; so the duke fell to threatening the bishop, that he would bring down the pride not only of him, but also of all the prelacy of England; and softly whispering in the ear of the person next him, said that he would rather pluck the bishop by the hair of his head out of the church, than he would take this affront at his hand. This was not spoken so secretly that the Londoners could not overhear him. Upon which they cried out in a rage, that they would not let their bishop be abused so contemptuously, but would lose their lives rather than allow him to be drawn out by the hair. Thus that council, being broken up with scolding and brawling for that day, was dissolved before nine o’clock.

On the 21st of June (A.D. 1377), the worthy and victorious prince King Edward III died, after he had reigned fifty one years. A prince not more aged in years than renowned for his many heroic virtues, but chiefly remarkable and applauded for his singular meekness and clemency towards his subjects and inferiors. He ruled them by gentleness and mercy, without rigor or severity. Among other noble and royal ornaments of his nature, he is described as a “father to the orphan, compassionate to the afflicted — mourning with the miserable — relieving the oppressed — and a friend to all who lacked a helper in time of need,” etc. But in my mind, above all other things in this prince, deserving to be commemorated, is that above all other kings of this realm, till the time of King Henry VIII, he was the greatest bridler of the pope’s usurped power and outrageous oppressions. During all the time of this king, the pope could never entirely succeed in this realm, and so John Wycliffe was maintained with favor and sufficient support.

King Richard II - 1377.

After King Edward succeeded his grandson, Richard II, at the age of eleven years. He was crowned at Westminster A.D. 1377. Following his grandfather’s steps, he was no great opponent to the doctrine of Wycliffe. Although at the beginning, partly through the iniquity of the times, and partly through the pope’s letters, he could not do all that he wished in Wycliffe’s behalf. The bishops now seeing the aged king taken away — during whose old age all the government depended upon the Duke of Lancaster — and now seeing the duke, with Lord Percy, remain in their private houses without intermeddling, they thought it was time to gain some advantage against Wycliffe; who had some degree of rest and quietness under the protection of the duke and lord Marshal. It is already stated how when he was brought before the bishops, by means of the duke and lord Henry Percy, the council was interrupted, and broken up, by which Wycliffe escaped without any further trouble. The following articles were at that time collected out of Wycliffe’s sermons (to be used against him).

- That the Holy Eucharist, after the consecration, is not the very body of Christ, but only figuratively.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

- That the church of Rome is not the head of all churches: and that Peter did not have any more power given by Christ, than any other Apostle had.
- That the pope of Rome has no more in the keys of the church, than any other person in the order of priesthood has.
- That the lords temporal may lawfully and deservedly take away their temporalities from the churchmen who persevere in offending.
- That if any temporal lord knows the church to be so offending, he is bound, under pain of damnation, to take the temporalities from it.
- That the Gospel is a rule sufficient of itself to rule the life of every Christian man here, without any other rule.
- That all other rules, under whose observances various monastic persons are governed, add no more perfection to the Gospel, than white adds color to the wall.
- That neither the pope, nor any other prelate of the church, ought to have prisons in which to punish transgressors.

Besides these articles, various other conclusions were afterward gathered out of his writings and preachings, which the bishops sent to pope Gregory XI at Rome.¹⁹ Being perused there, they were condemned as heretical and erroneous by twenty-three cardinals.

Bull of Gregory XI Against Wycliffe.

The next year (A.D. 1378), being the first year of King Richard II, Pope Gregory sent the following bull by means of master Edmund Stafford, directed to the university of Oxford, rebuking them sharply, imperiously, and like a pope, for so long allowing the doctrine of John Wycliffe to take root, and not plucking it up with the crooked sickle of their catholic doctrine.

*Gregory the Bishop, the servant of God's servants, to his well-beloved Sons,
the Chancellor and University of Oxford, in the Diocese of Lincoln,
Greeting and Apostolical Benediction.*

“We are compelled not only to marvel, but also to lament, that considering the apostolical see has given to your University of Oxford so great favor and privilege, and also that you flow as in a large sea in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures, and ought to be champions and defenders of the ancient and catholic faith (without which there is no salvation) by your great negligence and sloth, you will suffer wild cockle, not only to grow up among the pure wheat of the flourishing field of your university, but also to wax strong and choke the corn.

[227] A.D. 1376-1382.

“Neither do you have any care (as we are informed) to extirpate and pluck up the same by the roots, to the great blemishing of your renowned name — the peril of your souls — the contempt of the church of Rome — and to the great decay of the ancient faith. And further (which grieves us) the increase of that filthy weed was more sharply rebuked and judged in Rome, than in England where it sprang up.

“Therefore let there be means sought by the help of the faithful, to root out the same. Grievously, it is come to our ears, that one John Wycliffe, parson of Lutterworth in Lincoln diocese, a professor of Divinity (would God he were not rather a master of errors) has run into a kind of detestable wickedness, not only openly publishing, but also vomiting out of the filthy dungeons of his breast, diverse professions, false and erroneous conclusions, and most wicked and damnable heresies. Whereby he might defile the faithful sort, and bring them from the

¹⁹ Pope Gregory XI returned the papacy to Rome from Avignon on January 17, 1377.

right path headlong into the way of perdition, overthrow the state of the church, and utterly subvert the secular policy. Of his mischievous heresies, some seem to agree (only certain names, and terms changed) with the perverse opinions, and unlearned doctrine of Marsilius of Padua, and of John Gandune, of unworthy memory, whose books were utterly abolished in the realm of England, by our predecessor of happy memory, John XXII. That kingdom not only flourishes in power, and abundance of faculties, but it is much more glorious and shining in pureness of faith; accustomed always to bring forth men who are excellently learned in the true knowledge of the holy Scriptures, ripe in gravity of manners, men notable in devotion, and defenders of the catholic faith.

“Therefore we will and command you by your writing apostolical, in the name of your obedience, and upon pain of privation of our favor, indulgences, and privileges granted to you and your university from the said apostolic see, that hereafter you do not suffer those pestilent heresies, and those subtle and false conclusions and propositions, misconstruing the right sense of faith and good works (however they term it, or whatever curious implication of words they use) to be any longer disputed, or brought in question; lest if it is not withstood at the first, and plucked up by the roots, it might perhaps be too late hereafter to prepare medicines, when a greater number are infected with the contagion.

“And further, that you apprehend immediately, or cause to be apprehended, the said John Wycliffe, and deliver him to be detained in the safe custody of our well-beloved brethren, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of London, or either of them. And if you find any opponents, corrupted with the said doctrine (which God forbid) in your university within your jurisdiction, who will obstinately stand in the said errors, that you then apprehend them in like manner, and commit them to safe custody, and otherwise do in this case as it pertains to you: so as by your careful proceedings in this, your past negligence concerning the premises may now be fully supplied and recompensed with present diligence. Whereby you shall not only purchase the favor and benevolence of the apostolic see, but also great reward and merit from Almighty God.

“Given at Rome at St. Mary’s the Greater, 11th Kalend of June, and in the 7th year of our consecration.”

The pope also sent letters of similar purport to the University of Oxford and to the bishops, and even to King Richard.

The bishops being again assembled, and Wycliffe being brought before them, they proceeded to examine him, when a certain personage of the prince’s court, and yet not of very noble birth, named Lewes Clifford, entered among the bishops. He commanded that they should not proceed with any final sentence against John Wycliffe. At these words they all were so amazed, that they became speechless. And thus by the unforeseen providence of God, John Wycliffe escaped the second time out of the bishops’ hands.

At the time of his examination, John Wycliffe exhibited to the bishops in writing, the following protestation, with a declaration of his mind, upon the articles charged.

The Protestation of John Wycliffe.

“First I protest (as I have often done before) that I do mind and intend with my whole heart (by The grace of God) to be a true Christian, and as long as breath remains in me, to profess and defend the law of Christ. And if it happens that through ignorance or otherwise, I fail in this, I desire of my Lord God pardon and forgiveness. And now again, as before, I revoke and retract, most humbly submitting myself under the correction of our holy mother the church. And because the statement of my faith, which I have held in the schools and elsewhere, is reported even by children, and moreover is carried by children to Rome, lest my dear beloved

brethren take any offense by me, I will therefore set forth in writing the sentence and articles for which I am now accused and impeached. I will also defend this even to the death, as I believe all Christians ought to do, and specially the bishop of Rome and all other priests and ministers of the church. For I understand the conclusions after the sense and manner of the speaking of the Scriptures and holy doctors, which I am ready to expound. And if they are found contrary to the faith, I am ready to revoke, and to speedily call them back again.”

This protest was accompanied by an exposition of the articles exhibited against him.

The next year, which was 1382, by the command of William archbishop of Canterbury, there was a convocation held at London, at which John Wycliffe was also commanded to be present. But whether he appeared personally or not, I cannot find certainly affirmed.

Articles against Wycliffe – 1382.

Of the articles attributed to John Wycliffe, there were ten which were condemned by the friars as heretical, the rest as erroneous, and they are as follows. It may be supposed that some of them were made worse by their sinister collecting, than he meant them in his own works and writings.

The Articles of John Wycliffe, condemned as Heretical.

1. The substance of material bread and wine remains in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration.
2. The accidents do not remain without the subject in the same sacrament, after the consecration.²⁰
3. That Christ is not in the sacrament of the altar truly and really, in his proper and corporal person.
4. That if a bishop or a priest is in deadly sin, he cannot ordain, consecrate, or baptize.
5. That if a man is duly and truly contrite and penitent, all exterior and outward confession is but superfluous and unprofitable.
6. That it is not found or established by the gospel, that Christ made or ordained mass.
7. If the pope is a reprobate and evil man, and consequently a member of the devil, he has no power given to him over faithful Christians, unless it is given to him by the emperor.
8. That since the time of Urban VI,²¹ there is none to be accepted for the pope, but every man is to live in the manner of the Greeks, under his own law.
9. That it is against the Scripture, that ecclesiastical ministers should have any temporal possessions.

The other Articles of John Wycliffe, condemned as *erroneous*:

²⁰ *Accidents*: incidentals, referring to the attributes of physical bread (round, savory, and white). In his writings, Wycliffe asked sardonically (to show the absurdity of transubstantiation), “Does the bread become the body of Christ? Because, if so, then bread will be the matter of Christ’s body; also after transubstantiation, do the accidents remain? If so, they must be in another subject — for instance, in the air. But if it is there, then some part of the air must be round, and savoury, and white; and as the form is carried through diverse places, so the accidents must change their subject. Again, these accidents abide in the same part of the air, and so solidity will be in the air; because they are solid, and consequently, the air will be solid. Hence it appears that these accidents are not in the air, nor are they in the body of Christ; nor can any other body be assigned in its place, in which they shall appear to be; and therefore the accidents do not seem to remain.”

²¹ Pope Urban VI (r. 1378-1389). He was known as a harsh reformer. His election sparked the Western Schism.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

10. That no prelate ought to excommunicate any man unless he knew him first to be excommunicated by God.
11. That whoever so excommunicates any man, is thereby himself either a heretic, or excommunicated.
12. That a prelate or bishop excommunicating any of the clergy, who has appealed to the king or the council, is thereby himself a traitor to the king and realm.
13. That all those who abandon preaching or hearing the word of God, or the preaching of the gospel, for fear of excommunication, are already excommunicated, and in the day of judgment shall be counted as traitors to God.

[228]

14. That it is lawful for any man, either deacon or priest, to preach the word of God without the authority or license of the apostolic see or any other of his catholics.
15. That so long as a man is in deadly sin, he is neither bishop nor prelate in the church of God.
16. Also that the temporal lords may, according to their own will and discretion, take away the temporal goods of the churchmen whenever they offend.
17. That tithes are pure alms, and that the parishioners may, for offenses by their curates, detain and keep them back, and bestow them upon others, at their own will and pleasures.
18. Also, that all special prayers applied to any private or particular person, by any prelate or religious man, no more profit that person, than general or universal prayers profit others under similar circumstances.
19. Moreover, if any man enters into any private religion, whatever it is, he is thereby made more unapt and unable to observe and keep the commandments of God.
20. That holy men who have instituted private religions, whatever they are (those who have possessions, as well as the order of begging friars who have no possessions) in so doing, have grievously offended.
21. That religious men (*i.e.* monks), being in their private religions, are not of the Christian religion.
22. That friars are bound to get their living by the labor of their hands, and not by begging.
23. That whoever gives any alms to friars, or to any of the mendicant orders, is accursed, or in danger of being cursed.

The archbishop and suffragans, with other doctors of divinity and lawyers, and with a great company of babbling friars and monastics gathered together on St. Dunstan's day, at the Gray Friars in London, to consult as to John Wycliffe's books. Just after dinner, about two o'clock, the very hour that they were to go forward with their business, a shocking and terrible earthquake fell throughout England. Several of the suffragan bishops being frightened, thought it good to abandon their purpose. But the archbishop confirmed and strengthened their hearts and minds, which were daunted with fear, to proceed in their attempted enterprise. Then discoursing upon Wycliffe's articles, not according to the sacred cations of the holy Scripture, but according to their own traditions, they pronounced and gave sentence — that some of them were simply and plainly heretical, others half erroneous, others irreligious, and some were seditious and not consonant with the church of Rome.

Whereupon the lord archbishop of Canterbury, wishing to check such heresies and errors, delivered to the chancellor, his letters patent to be executed as follows:

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“William by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolical see, To our well-beloved son in Christ, the chancellor of the university of Oxford, within the diocese of Lincoln, greeting, grace, and benediction.

“The prelates of the church, about the Lord’s flock committed to their charge, ought to be so much more vigilant as they see the wolf, clothed in sheep’s attire, fraudulently go about to worry (tear apart) and scatter the sheep. Doubtless, the common fame and report has come to our ears, etc. We therefore will and command, straitly enjoining you, that in the church of our blessed lady in Oxford, upon those days in the which customarily the sermon is given, and also in the schools of the university upon those days when the lectures are read, you publish and cause by others to be published to the clergy and people, in their common tongue, as well as in the Latin tongue, manifestly and plainly without any curious implication, that the same heretical and erroneous conclusions — so repugnant to the determination of holy church, as aforesaid — have been and are condemned. These conclusions we also declare by these our letters, to be utterly condemned.

“That furthermore, you forbid and canonically admonish and cause to be admonished, just as we by the tenor of these presents do forbid and admonish you, once, twice, thrice, and that is peremptorily, so that none hereafter shall hold, teach, and preach, or defend the heresies and errors above said; nor shall any of them, either in school or out of school by any sophistical cavilling or otherwise; nor shall any be admitted to preach, hear or hearken to John Wycliffe, Nicholas Uerford, Philip Reppington (canon regular), or John Ashton, or Lawrence Redman, who are vehemently and notoriously suspected of heresy; nor to any other whatever who is so suspected or defamed; or who privately or publicly either aids or favors them or any of them — but that they immediately shun and avoid these like a serpent, which puts out its most pestiferous poison.

“And furthermore we suspend the said suspected persons from all scholastical actions, till such time as they purge themselves before us in that behalf: and that you denounce them publicly to have been and are suspended by us; and that you diligently and faithfully inquire about all their favorers, and cause to be inquired throughout all the halls of the university. And we pronounce that when you have intelligence about their names and persons, that you compel all and every one of them to abjure their outrages by ecclesiastical censures and other canonical pains, under pain of the greater curse, which is against all and singularly the rebellious in this behalf, and for disobeying our admonitions. So that their fault, deceit, and offense in this behalf deserve the same (the said admonition of ours first being sent) which in this behalf we esteem and allow as canonical, doing that then and again according to the effect of these our letters, etc. The absolution of all and singular such persons, who shall incur the sentence of this instrument sent forth by us (which God forbid) we specially reserve to ourselves. We exhort you, the chancellor, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, that to the utmost of your power, you hereafter do your endeavor, so that the clergy and people being subject to you, if there are any who have strayed from the catholic faith by such errors, may be brought home again to the praise and honor of His name that was crucified, and to the preservation of the true faith.

“And further, our will is that whatever you do in the premises, in the manner and form of our process in this behalf, it be had and done. And that for your part, when you are required to do so, you plainly and distinctly certify it to us by your letters patent, having the tenor of it.”

The conclusions and articles mentioned in this letter, were listed above it. Again, some were condemned as heretical, and some as erroneous.

After this, the archbishop directed his letters of admonition to Robert Rigge, commissary of Oxford, to repress this doctrine. Notwithstanding, both then, and still to this day (God be praised), this doctrine remains.

Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, and John Ashton.

Some days after, on June 18th 1382, in the chamber of the preaching-friars mentioned above (Gray Friars), Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, and John Ashton, bachelors of divinity, appeared before the archbishop in the presence of diverse doctors and bachelors of divinity; and also many lawyers, both canon and civil, whose names are written below. After an oath was taken to give judgment upon the aforesaid conclusions, they were examined severally, each by himself, before the archbishop. He there required a day and place to deliberate on the conclusions, and to give their answer to these men in writing.

Two days afterward, when the answers were returned, the lord archbishop of Canterbury demanded from all the doctors what their judgment was touching the answers that were made upon these conclusions. All of the doctors severally said that,

“All the answers given to the first, second, third, and sixth conclusions, were insufficient, heretical, and subtle; and that all the answers made, especially to the ninth, tenth, and last conclusions, were insufficient, erroneous, and perverse.”

Whereupon the lord archbishop of Canterbury, considering the answers to be heretical, subtle, erroneous, and perverse, accordingly as the doctors had weighed and considered, admonished Nicholas and Philip.

[229] A.D. 1382.

He assigned them eight days' time, that is to say, until the 27th of the month, that then they should appear before the lord archbishop of Canterbury, to hear his decree that would be made in that behalf. This done, the archbishop of Canterbury admonished and cited John Ashton, in the tenor of the following words:

“In the name of God, we, William, by God's permission, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, legate of the apostolic see, and throughout our province of Canterbury, chief inquisitor of all heretical pravity, admonish and cite you, John Ashton, master of arts, and student in divinity, appearing before us, judicially to say and speak the plain truth touching these conclusions, to which we refer you, and to which we have caused you to swear, laying your hand upon a book,” etc.

After this citation, John Ashton was examined before the bishops, and his answers not proving satisfactory to them, they determined against him. And then the archbishop proceeded thus:

“And you John Ashton, admonished and commanded by us, as aforesaid, after your oath taken, without any reasonable cause, or any other license, neither would you, nor yet will you, but you refused, and contemptuously, to answer to such conclusions before us. Judicially, according to our admonition and commandment aforesaid, we hold all such conclusions to be confessed by you, and you to be convicted, the aforesaid John, with all your aforesaid conclusions. And, therefore, we do pronounce, and declare by giving sentence that you John Ashton, concerning those conclusions — which by us, with good deliberation of diverse prelates, our suffragans, and also diverse and sundry professors of divinity, and other wise men and learned in the law, according to the canonical sanctions — are condemned and declared as a heretic, and have been heretical, and still are a heretic, and your conclusions are heretical. And as touching your other conclusions, previously counted erroneous by us, and

condemned as erroneous, we do pronounce and declare sententially by these our writings, that you have both erred, and do err.”

On the appointed day, the archbishop with the doctors, being assembled in the chief house of his church at Canterbury, before the hour of nine, expected Nicholas, Philip, and also Thomas Hilman, calling them and looking for them. Nevertheless they did not appear before two o'clock the same day. At that hour the archbishop of Canterbury examined Thomas Hilman, who then and there judicially appeared, as to what his opinion was regarding the aforesaid conclusions. Somewhat stammering at them and their meaning, at last to all the conclusions then read and expounded to him, he thus answered:

“I suppose and judge all and singularly those conclusions recently condemned by my lord of Canterbury, to be heretical and erroneous, even as my lord of Canterbury, and other doctors of divinity, of the canon and civil law, by common consent and counsel have supposed and thought. And the same (being condemned as heresies and errors, as said before) I do, as much as it is in me, condemn, protesting that I will hold and affirm the *contrary* of those conclusions, and in the same faith live and die.”

Then the archbishop of Canterbury, sitting as tribunal or judge, pronouncing Nicholas and Philip guilty of contumacy²² and disobedience, for not appearing in court, excommunicated them for their contumacy, as follows: —

*The denouncing of the excommunication against
Nicholas Herford and Philip Reppington.*

“William, by God’s permission, archbishop of Canterbury, etc. To our beloved Son in Christ, whoever he is, that this instant Sunday shall preach at St. Paul’s cross in London, salutation, grace, and blessing. Forasmuch as we appointed a certain day and place to Master Nicholas Herford, and Master Philip Reppington, canon regular of the monastery of our lady of Leicester, being doctors of divinity, and suspected of heretical depravity (after certain answers were not fully made, but were impertinent and nothing to the purpose, and also heretical and erroneous), commonly, generally and publicly taught and preached in diverse places of our province, and that therefore they should judicially appear before us, to do and receive peremptorily in that behalf, whatever the quality of that business should move us to. And that we have for their contumacy in not appearing before us at that day and place, adjudged as right required in this. We, by these presents, command and commit to you, firmly enjoining you, when all the multitude of people shall be gathered together to hear your sermon, that in the day and place appointed you publicly and solemnly denounce the aforesaid Nicholas and Philip, holding up a cross, and lighting a candle, and then throwing them down upon the ground, to have been so and in such manner excommunicated, and still continuing so.

“Fare you well. In our manor house at Lambeth, the thirteenth day of July, the year of our Lord 1382, and first year of our translation.”

The archbishop also sent another letter to Master Rigge, commissary of Oxford, straitly enjoining and charging him, not only to pronounce the sentence of excommunication, and to issue a public citation against them, but also to make a diligent search and inquisition throughout Oxford for them, to have them apprehended and sent up to him, to appear personally before the bishop at a certain day prescribed for it. By this it may appear how busy this bishop was in disquieting and persecuting these poor men, whom he should have nourished and cherished as his brethren.

²² *Contumacy*: obstinate rebelliousness and insubordination; resistance to authority.

The archbishop not contented with this, solicited the king to join the power of his temporal sword, for he well perceived that as yet the popish clergy did not have sufficient authority, by any public law or statute of this land, to proceed unto death against any person in question of religion, but only by the usurped tyranny and example of the court of Rome. Where note, gentle reader, for your better understanding, the practice of the Romish prelates in seeking the king's help to further their bloody purpose against the good saints of God. The king being but young, and not yet arrived at years of ripe judgment, was seduced by the archbishop to give his private assent to an ordinance, which was indeed the very first law to be found against religion and the professors of it, bearing the name of an act made in the parliament held at Westminster, in the fifth year of Richard II. There, among other statutes then published, and still remaining in the printed books of statutes, this supposed statute is to be found (cap. 5. & ultimo).

“Forasmuch as it is openly known that there are diverse evil persons within the realm, going from county to county, and from town to town, in certain habits under dissimulation of great holiness, and without the license of the ordinaries of the places, or other sufficient authority, preaching daily not only in churches and churchyards, but also in markets, fairs, and other open places where there is a great congregation of people, diverse sermons containing heresies and notorious errors, to the great blemishing of the Christian faith, and destruction of the laws, and of the estate of holy church, to the great peril of the souls of the people, and of all the realm of England, as is more plainly found, and sufficiently proved before the reverend father in God, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops and other prelates, masters of divinity, and doctors of canon and of civil law, and a great part of the clergy of the said realm, specially assembled for this great cause. These persons also preach diverse matters of slander, to engender discord and dissension between diverse estates of the said realm, spiritual as well as temporal, in exciting the people to the great peril of the whole realm. These preachers being cited or summoned before the ordinaries of the places, there to answer to that for which they are impeached, they will not obey the summons and commands, and do not care for the admonitions nor censures of the holy church, but expressly despise them; and moreover, by their subtle and ingenious words, they draw the people to hear their sermons, and maintain them in their errors by a strong hand, and by great routs (mobs).

[230]

“It is ordained and assented in this present parliament, that the king's commissions be made and directed to the sheriffs, and other ministers of our sovereign lord the king, or other persons sufficiently learned, and according to the certificates of the prelates to be made in chancery from time to time, to arrest all such preachers, and also their favorers, maintainers and abettors, and to hold them in arrest and strong prison, till they justify themselves according to the law and reason of holy church. And the king wills and commands, that the chancellor make such commissions at all times, that by the prelates, or any of them, he shall be certified and required of this, as aforesaid.”

The Validity of the King's Statute Against Wycliffe Examined.

As this supposed statute was the principal ground upon which proceeded all the persecution of that time; it is therefore not impertinent to examine it more particularly, by which it will appear that, as it was fraudulently and unduly devised by the prelates alone, so it was in like manner most injuriously and disorderly executed by them. For immediately upon the publishing of this law, without further warrant either from the king or his council, commissions under the great seal of England were made in this form:

“Richard by the Grace of God,” etc. “Witness myself at Westminster the 26th day of June, in the sixth year of our reign.”

Without further words of warrant underwritten, such as in like cases are both usual and requisite, viz: “*per ipsum regem*” (the king himself) “*per regem et concilium*” (the king and the council) “*per breve de privato sigillo*” (by writ of privy seal). All or any of these words being utterly lacking in this place, as may be seen in the king’s records of that time, it must therefore have been done either by warrant of this statute, or else without any warrant at all. Whereupon it is to be noted that, whereas the statute appointed the commissions to be directed to the sheriff, or other ministers of the king, or to other persons sufficiently learned, for the arrest of such persons, these commissions are directed to the archbishop and his suffragans, being (as it appears) parties in the case, authorizing them further, without either the words or reasonable meaning of the statute, to imprison them in their own houses, or wherever else they pleased.

Besides this, what manner of law this was, by whom it was devised, and by what authority it was first made and established, judge by what follows.

In the *utas* of St. Michael next following, at a parliament summoned and held at Westminster in the sixth year of the king, among various petitions made to the king by his commons, to which he assented, there is one in this form:

“**Article 52.** That whereas a statute was made during the last parliament in these words —

‘It is ordained in this present parliament that commissions from the king be directed to the sheriffs, and other ministers of the king, or to other persons sufficiently skillful, and according to the certificates of its prelates, to be made to the chancery from time to time, to arrest all such preachers, and their favorers, maintainers, and abettors; and to detain them in strong prison, until they justify themselves according to reason, and law of holy church. And the king wills and commands that the chancellor make such commissions at all times as he shall be, by the prelates or any of them, certified and thereof required, as is aforesaid’

— which was never agreed to nor granted by the commons; but whatever was moved in this, was without their assent. That the said statute therefore be disannulled. For it is not in any way their meaning, that either themselves or those who succeed them, shall be further justified or bound by the prelates, than were their ancestors in former times,” to which it is answered, “II plaist al, Roy. I.” (the king is pleased).

Hereby, notwithstanding that the former unjust law was repealed, and the fraud of the framers of it was sufficiently revealed: yet such means were taken by the prelates, that this act of repeal was never published, nor ever since printed with the rest of the statutes of that parliament. So that the repeal being concealed, similar commissions and other processes were made from time to time, by virtue of the statute, during the whole reign of this king, as well as ever since against the professors of religion.

The young king was further induced by the importunity of the archbishop, to send special letters to the vice chancellor and proctors of the university of Oxford, in which he straitly and sharply enjoins them to make a general inquisition through the whole university, for John Wycliffe, Nicholas Herford, Philip Reppington, John Ashton, and such others; and also for all whom they know or judge to be suspected of that doctrine, or to be maintainers, receivers, and defenders of the parties, or their opinions; with the intent that being so apprehended, they may be expelled the university within seven days of their admonition, and cited before the archbishop of Canterbury. Moreover the vice-chancellor and proctors with their assistants, were commanded that if any person or persons in any house, hall, or college, or in any other place is found to have any of the books or treatises compiled by John Wycliffe, Nicholas Herford, etc. they will have that person or persons arrested and attached,

and their books seized and presented within one month, without correction, corruption, or alteration, to the archbishop, upon their faith and allegiance, if they would avoid the forfeiture of all privileges of the university, etc.

The vice-chancellor at this time in Oxford was Master Robert Rigge. The two proctors were John Huntman and Walter Dish. As far as they dared, they favored the cause of John Wycliffe. So that when some public sermons at the feast of the Ascension, and of Corpus Christ, were to be preached before the people in the cloister of Saint Frideswide (now called Christ's church), by the vice-chancellor and the proctors: they committed it to Philip Reppington and Nicholas Herford. Herford would preach on the Ascension-day, and Reppington on Corpus Christi day.²³ Herford was observed to defend John Wycliffe openly as a faithful, good, and innocent man — at which there were great outcries among the friars. Herford, after he had long favored and maintained Wycliffe's part, grew in suspicion among the enemies of truth. For as soon as he began somewhat liberally and freely to utter anything which tended to the defense of Wycliffe, by and by the Carmelites, and all the orders of religion, were on his watch. And they laid not a few heresies to his charge, which they had strained here and there out of his sermons. After this, the feast of Corpus Christi drew near. On this day it was expected that Reppington would preach. This man was a canon of Leicester, who protested openly that in all moral matters he would defend Wycliffe. But as to the sacrament he would hold his peace until such time as the Lord otherwise illuminated the hearts and minds of the clergy.

Now, the day of Corpus Christi was approaching when, as the friars understood, this man would preach,. They arranged with the archbishop of Canterbury, that on the same day, a little before Philip was to preach, Wycliffe's conclusions — which were privately condemned — would be openly defamed in the presence of the whole university.

These things being done, Philip Reppington at the hour appointed, proceeded to his sermon. Among many other things in it, he was reported to have uttered these statements, to this effect:

“That the popes or bishops should not be exalted above temporal lords.

“That in moral matters, he would defend Master Wycliffe as a true catholic doctor.

“That the duke of Lancaster was very earnestly affected and minded in this matter, and wished that all such should be received under his protection,” besides many more things which touched the praise and defense of Wycliffe.

And in concluding his sermon, he dismissed the people with this sentence: “I will, in the speculative doctrine pertaining to the sacrament of the altar, keep silence and hold my peace until such time as God otherwise instructs and illuminates the hearts of the clergy.”

[231] A.D. 1382.

When the sermon was done, Reppington entered into St. Frideswide's church, accompanied with many of his friends who, as their enemies surmised, were privately armed under their garments against danger. Friar Stokes, the Carmelite, who was the chief champion against Wycliffe, suspecting all this to be against him, kept within the sanctuary of the church. The vice-chancellor and Reppington, friendly greeting one another in the church porch, sent away the people, and so every man departed home to his own house. There was not a little joy through the whole university for that sermon. But in the meantime, the unquiet and

²³ *Corpus Christi*: a Christian feast celebrating the presence of the body of Christ in the Eucharist.

busy Carmelite did not let go of it. For by his letters he declared the whole matter to the archbishop, exaggerating the danger that he was in. Desiring his help and aid, he omitted nothing to move and stir up the archbishop's mind, who of his own nature was ready enough to prosecute the matter. The vice-chancellor was later accused of contempt of the archbishop's letters. When he perceived that no excuse would prevail to avoid that danger, he humbled himself upon his knees, desiring pardon. Once he had obtained it by the help of the bishop of Winchester, he was sent away again with certain commands, and suspensions of heretics. Then the hatred on both sides began to appear and develop itself. All men were offended at these friars and monks, to whom they imputed whatever trouble or mischief was raised up, as the authors and causers of it.

Nicholas Herford, and Philip Reppington, being secretly warned by the vice-chancellor, conveyed themselves out of sight, and fled to the duke of Lancaster. But the duke, whether for fear or some other cause I cannot say, in the end forsook his poor and miserable clients. Being repulsed by the duke, and destitute of his support, they went to the archbishop. Whether they were sent or did it of their own accord is uncertain; but Reppington was reconciled again to the archbishop, and admitted to the university. So was John Ashton. I find no specific mention of Nicholas Herford all this while.

In the meantime, about the 23rd of September (A.D. 1382), the king sent his mandate to the archbishop for collecting a subsidy, and to have a convocation of the clergy summoned against the next parliament, which would begin the 18th of November. All of this being done, the parliament was assembled at Oxford, where the convocation was kept in the monastery of Frideswide. The archbishop with other bishops, sitting there in their pontifical robes, declared two causes of their present assembly. One was to repress heresies, which began afresh in the realm; the other was to aid and support the king with some necessary subsidy of money.

The convocation being continued the next day, the archbishop, with the other prelates, assembled themselves as before. The archbishop, after the usual solemnity, desired the proctors of the clergy, appointed for every diocese, to consult among themselves in some convenient place, what they thought regarding the redress of matters, and to be notified and declared to him and to his brethren, etc. Further, (he says) it was rumored throughout the realm, that there were certain ones in the university of Oxford who held and maintained heretical and erroneous conclusions, condemned by him and by other lawyers and doctors of divinity. He therefore assigned the bishops of Sarum, Hereford, and Rochester, with William Ruge, then vice-chancellor of the university of Oxford (for Robert Rigge was probably displaced), and also William Berton, and John Middleton, doctors, giving them his full authority, including cursing and banning, to compel them to search, and to inquire with all diligence and in all possible ways, over all and every individual whatsoever — whether doctors, bachelors, or scholars of the university — who held, taught, maintained, or defended, in schools or out of schools, the conclusions mentioned before.

On that day, in the presence of the prelates and the clergy in the chapter-house of St. Frideswide, in came Philip Reppington, who there disavowed those conclusions and assertions, in this form:

“In the name of God, Amen. I, Philip Reppington, canon of the house of Leicester, acknowledging one catholic and apostolic faith, do curse and also disavow all heresy, namely, these heresies and errors underwritten, condemned and reproved by the canonical decrees, and by you, most reverend father, touching which I have been defamed till now; condemning, moreover, and reproving both them and the authors of them, and I do confess the same to be

catholically condemned. And I swear also by these holy evangelists, which here I hold in my hand, and do promise, never by any persuasions of men, nor by any way hereafter, to defend or hold as true, any of the said conclusions underwritten; but do and will stand and adhere in all things, to the determination of the holy catholic church, and to yours, in this behalf. Over and besides, all those who stand contrary to this faith, I do pronounce them, with their doctrine and followers, worthy of everlasting curse. And if I myself shall presume at any time to hold or preach anything contrary to the premises, I shall be content to abide the severity of the canons. Subscribed with my own hand, and of my own accord, Philip Reppington.”

And thus he was discharged, and afterward made bishop of Lincoln, and became at length the most bitter and extreme persecutor of this side, of all the other bishops within the realm.

After the abjuration of this Reppington, John Ashton was immediately brought in. Appearing before the archbishop and the prelates, he did in like form of words abjure as Reppington had before done.

We read of John Ashton, that afterward he was cited and condemned by Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury; but whether he died in prison, or was burned, we have no certainty.

As for Nicholas Herford, he did not appear during the time of this convocation, and therefore he was excommunicated; against which he appealed from the archbishop to the king and council. The archbishop would not admit it, but caused him to be apprehended and put in prison. He escaped out of prison, returning again to his former exercise and preaching as he did before, though in as covert and secret a manner as he could. Upon which the archbishop, thundering out his bolts of excommunication against him, sent to all pastors and ministers, commanding them in all churches, and on all festival days, to proclaim the excommunication against him to all men.

Not content with this, he addressed his letter to the king, requiring the aid of his temporal sword. See and note, reader, the seraphical charity of these priestly prelates towards the poor redeemed flock of Christ.

The letter of the Archbishop to the King.

“To the most excellent prince in Christ, etc. William, etc., greeting, in him by whom kings do reign, and princes bear rule. Unto your kingly highness by the tenor of these presents we intimate that one Master Nicholas Herford, doctor of divinity, for his manifest contumacy and offense in not appearing before us, being called at the day and place assigned, is therefore included in the sentence of the greater curse, publicly by our ordinary authority; and in the same sentence he has continued now forty days, and yet still continues with obdurate heart, wickedly contemning the keys of the church, both to the great peril of his soul, and to the pernicious example of others. Forsomuch, therefore, as the holy mother, the church, cannot proceed any further in this matter, we humbly desire your kingly majesty to direct out your letters for apprehending the said excommunicate, according to the custom of this realm of England, wholesomely observed and kept up to now; to the intent that those whom the fear of God does not restrain from evil, the discipline of the secular arm may bridle and pluck back from offending. Your princely highness, the Lord continue. From Lambeth, the 15th of January.”

[232]

And thus far concerning Nicholas Herford, and the others. But all this while, what became of John Wycliffe is not certainly known. It appears that he was banished and driven to exile.

In the meantime it is not to be doubted that he was alive all this while, as may appear by the letter which he wrote to Pope Urban VI about this time.

The Epistle of Wycliffe to Pope Urban VI, A.D. 1382.

“Truly I do rejoice to open and declare to every man the faith which I hold, and specially to the bishop of Rome, which faith as I suppose it to be sound and true, he will most willingly confirm, or if it is erroneous, amend.

“First, I suppose that the gospel of Christ is the whole body of God’s law; and that Christ, who gave that same law himself, I believe to be truly man, and in that point, to exceed the law of the gospel, and all other parts of the Scripture. Again, I do give and hold the bishop of Rome, in that he is the vicar of Christ here in earth, to be bound most of all other men, to that law of the gospel. For the greatness among Christ’s disciples did not consist in worldly dignity or honors, but in the near and exact following of Christ in his life and manners. Whereupon I gather out of the heart of the law of the Lord, that Christ for the time of his pilgrimage here, was a most poor man, abjecting and casting off all worldly rule and honor, as appears by the gospel of St. Matthew, the eighth chapter, and second of the Corinthians, eighth chapter.

“Hereby I fully gather, that no faithful man ought to follow either the pope himself, or any of the holy men, except in such points as he has followed the Lord Jesus Christ. For Peter and the sons of Zebedee offended by desiring worldly honor, contrary to the following of Christ’s steps, and therefore in those errors they are not to be followed.

“From this I gather, as a counsel, that the pope ought to leave to the secular power, all temporal dominion and rule, and to effectually move and exhort his whole clergy to this end; for so Christ did, and especially by his apostles. Therefore, if I have erred in any of these points, I will most humbly submit myself to correction, even by death, if necessity so requires. And if I could labor according to my will or desire in my own person, I would surely present myself before the bishop of Rome. But the Lord has otherwise visited me to the contrary, and has taught me to obey God rather than men. In so far, then, that God has given our pope just and true evangelical instinctions, we ought to pray that those motions are not extinguished by any subtle or crafty device. And that the pope and cardinals are not moved to do anything contrary to the law of the Lord. Therefore, let us pray to our God, that he will so stir up our Pope Urban the sixth, as he began, so that he, with his clergy, may follow the Lord Jesus Christ in life and manners; and that they may teach the people effectually, and that they likewise may faithfully follow them in the same. And let us especially pray, that our pope may be preserved from all malign and evil counsel, which we know that evil and envious men of his household would give him. And seeing that the Lord will not permit us to be tempted above our power, much less then will he require of any creature to do that thing which they are not able; for that is the plain condition and manner of antichrist.”

Thus much wrote John Wycliffe to Pope Urban. But this pope was so hot in his wars against Clement VII, the French pope, his rival, that he had no leisure, and even less will to attend to Wycliffe. By this schism God provided some rest and quietness for poor Wycliffe.

Schismatical Wars of the Popes – 1383.

Concerning the schismatical wars of these popes, it will not be irrelevant to digress a little, so as to say something about the tragic doings of these two holy popes, striving for the triple crown, so that the Christian reader may see what difference there is between the popes, and Christ with his apostles. For though in the gospel it is written that certain of the disciples strived for which would be the greater; yet we do not read that one of them ever took weapons against the other; and it appears, too, that for so striving as they did, they were sharply rebuked by our Savior Christ.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

About the beginning of the year 1383, Pope Urban, studying how to conquer his rival pope, took to himself the sword of Romulus, instead of the keys of Peter, and set upon him with open war. Devising with himself whom he might best choose for his chief champion, he thought none more fitted for such affairs than Henry Spencer, then bishop of Norwich. He was a young and stout prelate, more fitting for the charge of a camp, than for the peaceable church of Christ. To this bishop of Norwich the pope had sent his bulls about this time, to confer the cross on whoever would go with him into France, to destroy the antipope. In these bulls, the following privileges were granted.

1. That the bishop of Norwich may use his sword against the antipope, and all his adherents, favorers, and counsellors, and with violence put them to death.
2. That he has full power to inquire after all schismatics, and to put them in prison, and to confiscate all their goods, moveable and immoveable.
3. That he has power and authority to deprive all laymen who are schismatics, of all manner of secular offices whatever, and to give their offices to other fit and convenient persons.
4. That he may deprive all such clergy, and declare them to be schismatics, and to give and bestow their benefices either with cure or without cure, their dignities, parsonages or offices, to other persons more fit for the same.
5. He has power and authority over lay persons who are exempt, and clergy both secular and regular, yes, even if they are friars mendicants, or masters and professors of other houses, or hospitals of St. John's of Jerusalem, or St. Mary's of Flanders, or professors of whatever order.
6. He has power to dispense, with any secular clergy whatsoever, being beneficed either with cure or without cure, and also with those who have dignities, parsonages, or offices, being regulars, either exempt or not exempt, so that every one of them may be absented by him from their dignities and benefices, etc., under the standard of the cross, without license of any of their prelates being required, and yet to receive and take the entire income of their benefices, as though they had been personally resident upon the same.
7. There is granted to all who pass over the seas in this quarrel, either at their own expenses, or at the expenses of any other, full remission of their sins; and as large privileges are granted to all those who go over the sea with him, and to any who pay their money, or go to fight for the Holy Land.
8. Also all those who with their proper goods and substance shall give sufficient stipend to able soldiers, mustered at the discretion of the foresaid lord bishop, or by his deputy, even if they themselves are not personally in this business, yet they shall have like remission and indulgence, as those who have been personally with him in this expedition.
9. All those are partakers of this remission, who give any part of their goods to the said bishop to fight against the said schismatics.
10. If any chances to die in the journey, who are soldiers under the standard of the cross, or else are killed by some means before the quarrel, they shall fully and wholly receive the said grace, and shall be partakers of the remission and indulgence.
11. He has power to excommunicate, suspend, and interdict whatsoever persons are rebellious or disturbers of him in the execution of his power and authority committed to him, of whatsoever dignity, state, degree, pre-eminence, order, place, or condition they shall be; whether they are either of regal, queenly, or imperial dignity, or of whatsoever dignity, either ecclesiastical or civil.

[233] A.D. 1382-1384.

12. He has power and authority to compel and enforce any religious person whosoever, and to appoint them, and send them over seas, if it seems good to him, yes, even if they are professors of the friars mendicants, for the execution of these premises.

The Pope's Absolution pronounced by the Bishop.

“By the authority apostolical to me in this behalf committed, we absolve you A___ B___ from all your sins confessed with your mouth, and being contrite with your heart, and of which you would be confessed if they came into your memory; and we grant to you plenary remission of all manner of sins, and we promise to you your part of the reward of all just men, and of everlasting salvation. And as many privileges as are granted to those who go to fight for the Holy Land, we grant to you; and of all the prayers and benefits of the church; the universal synod, and also of the holy catholic church, we make you partaker.”

This courageous, or rather outrageous bishop, armed thus with the pope's authority, and prompt with his privileges, came to the parliament. There was great consultation and contention, and almost no less schism, about the voyage of this popish bishop in the parliament, than there was between the popes themselves. In this parliament, there were many who thought it was not safe to commit the king's people and subjects to an unskillful priest. So great was the diversity of judgments in that behalf, that the voyage of the bishop was protracted to the Saturday before Passion Sunday. After that Sunday, the parties agreed that the bishop should set forward in his voyage, having given to him the fifteenth which was granted to the king in the parliament before. These things thus concluded in the parliament, this warlike bishop prepared all things in readiness, and set forward on his journey. He immediately entered the seas, and went to Calais where, waiting a few days for the rest of his army, he then took his journey to the town of Gravelines. He besieged it so desperately, without any preparation of engines of war, or counsel, that he seemed to fly upon them, rather than to invade them. At length, through the superstition of our men, trusting to the pope's absolution, they entered the town with their bishop. There, at his command, they destroyed both man, woman, and child, and left not one alive!

From Gravelines this warlike bishop set forward to Dunkirk, where not long after, the French meeting with him, he joined them in battle; in which battle (if the story is true) 12,000 of the French were slain in the chase, and of our men only 7 were missing. It would require a long treatise here to relate all the things done in these popish wars. Also it would be no less ridiculous to view and behold the glorious temerity of this new upstart captain. As when the bishop coming from Dunkirk to the siege of Ypres, a great number of Englishmen were lost there, and much money was consumed; yet nothing was done, to the great shame and ignominy of the bishop. Again, after the siege of Ypres, the bishop proceeded with a small force to fight with the French king's camp, contrary to the counsel of his captains. He was glad to break company with them, whereby part of the army went to Burburgh, and the bishop with his portion returned to Gravelines, both of which towns were besieged by the French army shortly after. In brief, when the bishop could keep Gravelines no longer, he crossed the seas, and came home again as wise as he went.

The Death of Wycliffe – 1384.

And thus making an end of this pontifical war, we will return from where we digressed, to the history of John Wycliffe. Returning again in a short time, either from his banishment, or from some other place where he was secretly kept, he repaired to his parish of Lutterworth, where he was parson. And there, quietly departing this mortal life, he slept in peace in the Lord, in the beginning of the year 1384, upon Silvester's day.

Here may be seen the great providence of the Lord in this man, as in several others whom the Lord so long preserved amidst the fury of so many enemies, from all their hands, even to his old age. For it appears by Thomas Walden, that he was a very aged man before he departed. Such a Lord is our God, that whomever He will keep, nothing can hurt.

Wycliffe had written several works, which in the year A.D. 1410 were burnt at Oxford. And not only in England, but likewise in Bohemia, the books of Wycliffe were destroyed by the archbishop of Prague, who made diligent inquisition for them, and then burned them. The number of volumes which he is said to have burned, were about 200 — most excellently written and richly adorned with bosses of gold, and rich coverings (as Eneas Silvius writes).

We will now add the testimonial of the University of Oxford concerning Wycliffe. Here is the public testimony given out by the University of Oxford, regarding the commendation of the great learning and good life of John Wycliffe.

“Unto all and singularly the children of our holy mother the church, to whom this present letter shall come, the vice-chancellor of the university of Oxford, with the whole congregation of the masters, with perpetual health in the Lord. Forsomuch as it is not commonly seen that the acts and monuments of valiant men, nor the praise and merits of good men should be passed over and hidden in perpetual silence, but that true report and fame should continually spread abroad in strange and far distant places, both for the witness of the same, and the example of others. Forsomuch as the provident discretion of man’s nature, being recompensed with cruelty, has devised and ordained this buckler and defense against those who blaspheme and slander other men’s doings: that whenever witness by word of mouth cannot be present, the pen, by writing, may supply the same.

“Hereupon it follows that the special goodwill and care which we bear to John Wycliffe, sometime child of our university, and professor of divinity, moving and stirring our minds (as his manners and conditions required no less) with one mind, voice and testimony, we witness that all his conditions and doings throughout his whole life were most sincere and commendable. His honest manners and conditions, profoundness of learning, and most redolent renown and fame, we desire more earnestly to be noted and known to all the faithful, for we understand the maturity and ripeness of his conversation, his diligent labors and troubles to tend to the praise of God, the help and safeguard of others, and the profit of the church.

“Therefore we signify to you by these presents, that his conversation (even from his youth upward, to the time of his death) was so praise-worthy and honest, that never at any time was there any note or spot of suspicion rumored of him. But in his answering, reading, preaching and determining, he behaved himself laudably. And as a stout and valiant champion of the faith, vanquishing by the force of the Scriptures, all those who by their willful beggary blasphemed and slandered Christ’s religion. Nor was this doctor convicted of any heresy, neither was he burned by our prelates after his burial.²⁴ God forbid, that our prelates should have condemned a man of such honesty, as a heretic. Among all the rest of the university, he had written in logic, philosophy, divinity, morality, and the speculative arts, without an equal. The knowledge of which all and singular things, we desire to testify and deliver, with the intent that the fame and renown of this doctor may be more evident and held in reputation among those into whose hands these present letters testimonial shall come.

²⁴ This was written in 1406. His bones were burned in 1428. See *Council of Constance*, next page, 234.

“In witness of which, we have caused these our letters testimonial to be sealed with our common seal. Dated at Oxford in our congregation-house, the 1st day of October, in the year of our Lord 1406.”

[234]

The Council of Constance Condemns the Doctrines of Wycliffe.

Now, as we have declared the testimony of the university of Oxford concerning the praise of John Wycliffe, it follows likewise that we set forth the censures and judgments of his enemies. They were blinded with malicious hatred and corrupt affections against him, especially of the pope’s council gathered at Constance. They proceeded first in condemning his books, then his articles, and afterward burning his bones. The copy of the sentence given against him by that council follows here:

*The sentence given by the Council of Constance, in condemning
the Doctrine, and forty-five Articles of John Wycliffe.*

“The most holy and sacred Council of Constance, making and representing the catholic church, for the extirpation of this present schism, ²⁵ and of all other errors and heresies, springing and growing under the shadow and pretense of the same, and for the reformation and amendment of the church, being lawfully congregated and gathered together in the Holy Spirit, for the perpetual memory of the time to come.

“We are taught by the acts and histories of the holy fathers, that the catholic faith, without which, as the holy apostle St. Paul says, it is impossible to please God, has been always defended by the faithful and spiritual soldiers of the church, by the shield of faith, against the false worshippers of that faith, or rather its perverse impugnors; who through their proud curiosity would seem to know more, and to be wiser than they ought to be, and for the desire of the glory of the world, they have gone about oftentimes to overthrow it. These kinds of wars and battles have been prefigured for us before, in those carnal wars of the Israelites against the idolatrous people. For in those spiritual wars the holy catholic church, through the virtue and power of faith, being illustrated with the beams of the heavenly light, by the Providence of God, and being helped by the help and defense of the saints and holy men, has always continued immaculate (and the darkness and errors, as her most cruel enemies being put to flight), she has most gloriously triumphed over all.

“But in our days the old and unclean enemy has raised up new contentions and strifes, that the elect of this world might be known, whose prince and captain in times past was one John Wycliffe, a false Christian who, during his lifetime, taught and sowed very obstinately many articles contrary to and against the Christian religion and the catholic faith. And the same John Wycliffe wrote certain books which he called a *Dialogue*, and a *Triologue*, besides many other treatises and works which he both wrote and taught, in which he wrote the aforesaid, and many other damnable and execrable articles. These books, for the publication and advancement of his perverse doctrine, he set forth openly for every man to read. By doing so, besides many offenses, great hurt and damage of soul has ensued in diverse regions and countries, but especially in the kingdom of England and Bohemia. Against him, the masters and doctors of the universities of Oxford and Prague, rising up in the truth and verity of God according to the order of schools, within a while after reprovved and condemned the said articles.

²⁵ The schism here alluded to was of the popedom. There being at that time no less than *three* rival popes — Benedict XIII, Gregory XII, John XXIII. The Council of Constance was convened A.D. 1414, to suppress this schism. The first was deposed; the two latter resigned; and the cardinals elected Otto de Colonna, under the title of Martin V. [ED.]

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“Moreover, the most reverend fathers the archbishops and bishops for that time, those of Canterbury, York, and Prague, legates of the apostolic see, in the kingdoms of England and Bohemia, condemned the books of Wycliffe to be burnt. And the said archbishop of Prague, commissary of the apostolic see, likewise determined and judged in this behalf. Moreover, he forbid that any of those books which remained unburned, should be read any longer. And again, those things being brought to the knowledge and understanding of the apostolic see and the general council, the bishop of Rome in his last council condemned the said books, treatises, and volumes, commanding them to be openly burned. He most straitly forbid that any men who bore the name of Christ should be so hardy either to keep, read, or expound any of the said books or treatises, volumes or works, or by any means to use or occupy them, nor to quote them openly or secretly, except to their reproof and infamy. And with the intent that this most dangerous and filthy doctrine should be utterly wiped away from the church, he commanded throughout all places, that the ordinaries should diligently inquire for and seek out by apostolic authority and ecclesiastical censure, all such books, treatises, volumes, and works. And the same being found, to burn and consume them with fire, providing this: that if any are found who will not obey this, process should be made against them, as against the favorers and maintainers of heresies.

“And this most holy synod has caused the said forty-five articles to be examined and oftentimes perused by many most reverend fathers of the church of Rome — cardinals, bishops, abbots, masters of divinity, and doctors of both laws, besides a great number of other learned men. These articles being so examined, it was found (as in truth it was no less) that many, indeed a great number of them, are notoriously reprovèd and condemned by the holy fathers as heretical; others are not catholic, but erroneous; some are full of offense and blasphemy; certain of them are offensive to godly ears; and many of them are rash and seditious. It is also found that his books contain many articles of similar effect and quality, and that they induce and bring into the church unsound and unwholesome doctrine contrary to the faith and ordinance of the church.

“Therefore in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, this sacred synod — ratifying and approving the sentences and judgments of the archbishops and Council of Rome — do by their decree and ordinance perpetually forevermore condemn and reprove the said articles, and every one of them — his books which he entitlèd his *Dialogue* and *Triologue*, and all other books of the same author, volumes, treatises and works, by whatever name they are entitlèd or called, which we intend here, are sufficiently expressed and named. Also, we forbid to all faithful Christians, the reading, learning, exposition, or alleging of any of the said books, except so far as tends to reprove them; forbidding all and singular catholic persons, under the pain of curse, that from henceforth they not be so hardy as to openly preach, teach, or hold, or by any means quote the said articles, or any of them, unless, as aforesaid, it tends to reprove them; also commanding all those books, treatises, works, and volumes aforesaid, to be openly burned, as it was decreed in the synod at Rome, as expressed before. For the execution of this to be duly observed and done, the said sacred synod straitly charges and commands the ordinaries of the place, to diligently attend and look to the matter, as it pertains to every man’s duty by the canonical laws and ordinances.”

*The Decree of the Council of Constance, regarding taking up
the Body and Bones of John Wycliffe, to be burned forty-one years
after he was buried in his own Parish at Lutterworth.*

“Forsomuch as by the authority of the sentence and decree of the Council of Rome, and by the commandment of the church, and the apostolical see, after due delays being given, they proceeded to the condemnation of the said John Wycliffe, and his memory, having first made proclamation, and given commandment to call forth whoever would defend the said Wycliffe,

or his memory, if there were any such (but none appeared who would either defend him or his memory). And moreover, witnesses being examined by commissioners appointed by Pope John ²⁶ and his council, upon the impenitency and final obstinacy and stubbornness of the said John Wycliffe (reserving that which is to be reserved, as in such business the order of the law requires) and his impenitency and obstinacy even to his end, being sufficiently proved by evident signs and tokens, and also by lawful witnesses, and credit lawfully given to them.

[235] A.D. 1388-1389.

“Therefore at the instance of the steward of the treasury, proclamation being made to hear and understand the sentence against this day, the sacred synod declares, determines, and gives sentence, that the said John Wycliffe was a notorious obstinate heretic, and that he died in his heresy, and they curse and condemn both him and his memory.

“This synod also decrees and ordains that the body and bones of the said John Wycliffe, if it might be discerned and known from the bodies of other faithful people, should be taken out of the ground, and thrown away far from the burial of any church, according to the canon laws and decrees. This determination and sentence definitive being read and pronounced, the lord president, and the aforesaid presidents of the four nations, being demanded and asked whether it pleased them or not? They all answered (first Hostiensis the president, and after him the other presidents of the nations) that it pleased them very well, and so they allowed and confirmed all the premises, etc.”

What Heraclitus would not laugh, or what Democritus would not weep,²⁷ to see these sage and reverend Catoes ²⁸ occupy their heads about taking up a poor man’s body, who had been dead and buried for the past forty-one years? And yet perhaps they were not able to find his right bones, but took up some other body, and so made a heretic of a catholic! Yet in this Wycliffe had some cause to give them thanks, that they at least spared him so long till he was dead, and gave him so long respite after his death, to rest in his sepulcher before they ungraved him, and turned him from earth to ashes. These ashes they also took and threw into the river Swift. And so he was resolved into three elements, earth, fire, and water, thinking thereby to utterly extinguish and abolish both the name and doctrine of Wycliffe forever. This is not unlike the example of the old Pharisees, who when they had brought the Lord to the grave, thought to make him sure to never rise again. But these and all others must know that, just as there is no counsel against the Lord, so there is no keeping down the truth; but it will spring up and come out of dust and ashes, as appeared right well in this man. For though they dug up his body, burnt his bones, and drowned his ashes; yet the word of God, and the truth of His doctrine, with the fruit and success of it, they could not burn. To this day, most of his articles remain, notwithstanding that the transitory body and bones of the man were thus consumed and dispersed.

These things are thus finished and accomplished which pertain to the history and time of Wycliffe. Let us now, by the support of the Lord, proceed to write about the rest who either in his time or after his time, springing out of the same university, and raised up (as one might say) out of his ashes, were partakers of the same persecution. Thomas Walden speaks of them where he says that after Wycliffe, many suffered most cruel deaths, and many more forsook the realm.

²⁶ Antipope John XXIII (r. 1410-1415). This Council of Constance was held from 1414-1418.

²⁷ Heraclitus was known as *the weeping philosopher*, Democritus as *the laughing philosopher*.

²⁸ Alluding ironically to Cato, known as Cato the Wise — for these men were not at all wise.

Among their number were William Swinderby, Walter Brute, John Purvey, Richard White, William Thorpe, Raynold Peacock bishop of St. Asaph, and afterward of Chichester.

This catalogue also includes Laurence Redman master of arts, David Sautre, divine, John Aschwarby vicar (as they call him) of St. Mary's church at Oxford, William James (an excellent young man, well learned), Thomas Brightwell, and William Hawlam a civilian, Rafe Grenhurst, John Scut, and Philip Norice — who being excommunicated by Pope Eugenius IV in the year 1446, appealed to a general council. Peter Paine also, who fleeing from Oxford to Bohemia, stoutly contended against the sophisters, as administering both kinds in the sacrament of the last supper. Also the Lord Cobham, etc., with others, whose names are named in the king's writ, sent to the sheriff of Northampton. This writ of the king follows in this tenor:

“In that John Attyate of Chepingwarden, John Warryner, Robert Brewood, etc., are receivers and favorers of heretics, and especially of John Woodward, priest, who was publicly defamed and condemned of heresy, will not be justified by the censures (judgments) of the church, as the reverend father John bishop of Lincoln has certified to us — therefore, desiring to withstand all defenders and favorers of such heresies, we will and command the forenamed, as well as namely the aforesaid John Woodward, are to be apprehended, straitly charging that they are to be imprisoned by their bodies, or otherwise punished as seems good to the justices, until they and every of them submit themselves to the obedience of the aforesaid bishop in that behalf accordingly. You shall not fail of this under pain of a hundred pounds. Witness ourselves: given at our manor of Langley the 8th day of March, the twelfth year of our reign.”

To these named above, and other favorers of Wycliffe within our country of England, we may also add the Bohemians. For the propagation of the doctrine of Wycliffe in that country took root, coming from England to Bohemia on the following occasion.

At that time, a certain student of the country of Bohemia happened to be at Oxford. He was from a wealthy house, and also of noble stock. Returning home from the university of Oxford to the university of Prague, he carried with him certain books of Wycliffe. It happened at the same time, that a certain nobleman in the city of Prague had founded and built a great church of Matthias and Mattheus (this church was called *Bethlehem*), giving great lands to it. Every day, two preachers could be found in it, to preach to the people on both holy days and working-days. One of these two preachers was John Huss (or Jan Hus), a man of great knowledge, a pregnant wit, and most highly esteemed among them for his worthy life. Being familiar with this young man, and reading and perusing these books of Wycliffe, Huss derived such pleasure and profit from reading them, that he not only began to defend the author openly in the schools, but also in his sermons. He commended him as a good man, a holy man, and a heavenly man, wishing for himself that when he died, he might be placed there, where the soul of Wycliffe would be.

And thus much briefly concerning the favorers and adherents of John Wycliffe in general. Now particularly and in order let us (by Christ's grace) narrate the histories and persecutions of the parties aforesaid, beginning with the valiant champions William Swinderby and Walter Brute.

The History of William Swinderby – 1389.

In the year 1389, William Swinderby, priest within the diocese of Lincoln, being accused and seized for certain opinions, was presented before John, bishop of Lincoln, in the form and order of the pope's law, and according to their usual rite. His accusers were friar Frisby, an Observant; friar Hincely, an Augustinian; and Thomas Blaxton, a Dominican.

The articles or conclusions were exhibited against him by the friars in the bishop of Lincoln's court. These articles although he never preached, taught, or at any time defended them, as appears in the process, the friars with their witnesses standing against him, declared him to be convicted. They brought dry wood with them to the town to burn him, and would not leave him before they made him promise and swore for fear of death, never to hold them, teach them, nor preach them secretly or openly; and that he would go to certain churches to revoke the conclusions, which he never affirmed. He obediently accomplished this with the following form of revocation, which they bound him to.

The Revocation of William Swinderby.

"I, William Swinderby, priest, although unworthy of the diocese of Lincoln, acknowledging one true catholic and apostolic faith of the holy church of Rome, disavow all heresy and error opposed to the determination of the holy mother church, of which I have been up to now defamed; namely, the conclusions and articles above prefixed, and every one of them judicially objected to me by the commissary of the reverend father in Christ, Lord John, by the grace of God bishop of Lincoln.

[236]

"And I do revoke the same, and every one of them, some as heretical, some as erroneous and false, and do affirm and believe them to be so, and hereafter will never teach, preach, or affirm them publicly or privately. Nor will I make any sermon within the diocese of Lincoln, without first asking and obtaining the license of the aforesaid reverend father and lord, the bishop of Lincoln. Contrary to which, if I presume hereafter to say or do, to hold or preach, I shall be content to abide the severity of the canon, as I have judicially by the necessity of the law, sworn, and do swear," etc.

Thus you see the conclusions and articles of this good man, falsely objected against him by the malicious and lying friars; and also the retraction to which they compelled him. By this it may be conjectured what credit is to be given to the articles and conclusions which these cavilling friars, twisting all things to the worst, have objected and imputed to Wycliffe and all others like him, whom they so falsely defame, so slanderously belie, and so maliciously persecute. After these things in the diocese of Lincoln, Swinderby moved to the diocese of Hereford. There he was as much or more molested by the friars again, and by John Tresnant bishop of Hereford, as it may appear by the process set out at large in their own registers.

Here follow the informations ²⁹ laid before John Tresnant, bishop of Hereford, against William Swinderby in the cause of "heretical depravity," as the popish heretics call it.

"Reverend father and high lord, Lord John, by God's sufferance bishop of Hereford. It is lamentably declared to your reverend fatherhood on behalf of Christ's faithful people, your devout children of your diocese of Hereford, that notwithstanding the unbelief of very many Lollards,³⁰ who have too long sprung up in your diocese, there has newly come a certain child of wickedness named William Swinderby. By his horrible persuasions and mischievous endeavors, and also by his public preaching and private teaching, he perverts the whole ecclesiastical state and stirs up, with all his power, schism between the clergy and the people. And that your reverend fatherhood may be the more fully informed, who and what manner of man William Swinderby is; there are proposed and exhibited here to your fatherhood, on

²⁹ *Informations*: a collection of facts or charges, from which conclusions may be drawn.

³⁰ *Lollard*: mumbler; a derogatory nickname given to those who were largely uneducated, and followed the teachings of John Wycliffe. They wanted the bible translated into their native language instead of Latin, so they could understand it themselves, teach it to their children, and refute the falsehoods of the Romish clergy.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

behalf of the faithful people of Christ, against the same William Swinderby, cases and articles. Which if he denies them, then these cases and articles shall be most evidently proved against him by witnesses worthy of belief, and by other lawful proof and evidences, to the end that your fatherhood may do and ordain such things as belong to your pastoral office.

“1. William Swinderby, pretending to be a priest, was openly and publicly convicted of certain articles and conclusions being erroneous, schismatical, and heretical, preached by him at several places and times, before a multitude of faithful Christian people. And the same articles and conclusions by force of law he revoked and abjured, some as heretical, and some as erroneous and false, avouching and believing them to be those of the same conclusions which from then on he would never preach, teach, or affirm openly or secretly. And if he were to presume to do the contrary by preaching or avouching them, he would then be subject to the severity of the canons, according to the corporal oath he took judicially upon the holy gospels.

2. Also the conclusions, which were first openly taught and preached by him, and afterward abjured and revoked, are contained in the process of the bishop of Lincoln, written word for word. As for the cases and articles, they were exhibited by the faithful Christian people against the said William Swinderby, together with the conclusions, and are hereafter recorded. The tenor of these cases and articles follows here:

3. The said William, contrary to the revocation and abjuration, not converted to repentance, but perverted from bad to worse, and given up to a reprobate mind, came into your diocese where running about in sundry places, he has presumed to preach, or rather to pervert and to teach of his own rashness, many heretical, erroneous, blasphemous, and other slanderous things, contrary and repugnant to the sacred canons, and the determination of the holy catholic church. What those things were, at what place and what time, will hereafter be more particularly declared.

4. The same William, notwithstanding your commandments and admonitions sealed with your seal, and directed to all the curates of your diocese, ordaining among other things that no person of whatever state, degree, or condition, should presume to preach or to teach, or expound the holy Scripture to the people, either in hallowed or profane places within your diocese, without sufficient authority, under any manner of pretense, as is more largely contained in your letters of admonition and of inhibition. The same William received these letters into his hands, and read word for word in the town of Monmouth of your diocese, in the year 1390; so that letters of yours came to the true and undoubted knowledge of the same William. Yet notwithstanding, he has presumed in various places and times to preach within your diocese, after and against your commandment aforesaid.

5. The same William in his preaching to the people, on Monday the first of August, 1390, in the parish of Whitney in your diocese, held and affirmed that no prelate of the world, of whatever estate, pre-eminence or degree he was, having cure and charge of souls, being in deadly sin, and hearing the confession of anyone could do anything in giving him absolution; as being one who neither looses him from his sin, nor in correcting or excommunicating him from his demerits, binds him by his sentence, unless the prelate is himself free from deadly sin, as St. Peter was, to whom our Lord gave power to bind and loose.

6. The same William in many places said and affirmed, in the presence of many faithful Christian people, that after the sacramental words uttered by the priest when he intends to consecrate, the very body of Christ is not made in the sacrament of the altar.

7. That accidents cannot be in the sacrament of the altar without a subject; and that material bread remains there to those who are communicants of the body of Christ, in the same sacrament.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

8. That a priest, being in deadly sin, cannot by the strength of the sacramental words make the body of Christ, or bring to perfection any other sacrament of the church, nor minister it to the members of the church.

9. That all priests are of equal power in all things, even though some of them in this world are of higher and greater honor, degree, or pre-eminence.

10. That only contrition puts away sin, and is such if a man is duly contrite; and that all auricular and outward confession is superfluous, and not requisite of necessity to salvation.

11. Inferior curates do nor have their power of binding and loosing immediately from the pope or bishop, but immediately from Christ: and therefore neither pope nor bishop can revoke to themselves this kind of power, at their will and pleasure.

12. That the pope cannot grant annual and yearly pardons, because there may not be so many years till the day of judgment, as are contained in the pope's bulls or pardons. From this it follows that these pardons are not of such value as they pretend.

13. It is not in the pope's power to grant to any penitent person remission of the punishment of the fault.

14. That person who gives alms to anyone who in his judgment is not in want, commits sin in so giving it. ³¹

15. That it is not in the power of any prelate, of whatever order he may be, to privately give letters for the benefit of his order, nor does such benefit profit to the salvation of the soul, of those to whom they are granted.

[237] A.D. 1389-1391.

16. That the same William, unmindful of his own salvation, has many and oftentimes come into a certain desert wood, called Dervallwood, of your diocese, and there in a certain chapel which is not consecrated, or rather, in a profane cottage, has in contempt of the keys, presumed of his own rashness to celebrate [the sacrament], indeed rather to profane it.

17. The same William has also presumed to do such things in a certain profane chapel, situated in the park of Newton near the town of Leintwarden, of your diocese."

The Citation.

"John, by God's permission, bishop of Hereford, to his dear sons our dean of Leamster, to the parsons of Croft, Almady, and Whitney, and also to the vicars of Kingston, Ladersley, Wiggemore, and Monmouth Clifford, and of St. John's altar in our cathedral church of Hereford, and to the rest of the deans, parsons, vicars, chaplains, parish priests, and to others whosoever in any place are appointed through our city and diocese of Hereford, sends greeting, grace and benediction.

"We bid and command, charging you straitly, in the virtue of holy obedience, that you cite or cause to be cited peremptorily (and under the pain of excommunication) William Swinderby, pretending himself to be a priest, that he appear before us, or our commissaries on the twentieth day of this present month of July, at North Lodebury, within our diocese, with the continuance of the days following in other places also to be assigned to him if it is expedient, till such things as have been, and shall be laid against him, are fully discussed, to answer more at large to certain positions and articles touching the catholic faith, and the holy mother church's determination that have been exhibited and ministered to the said William. And to also see and hear many things that have openly in judgment before us, and a great number of

³¹ Referring to giving alms to mendicant (begging) friars.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

faithful Christians, even been confessed by him in writing, to be condemned as heretical, false, schismatical, and erroneous. And to see and hear positions and articles denied by the said William, to be proved by faithful witnesses, and other lawful trials against the said William. And to receive for his false, heretical, erroneous, and schismatical doctrine, that which justice shall appoint, or else to show causes why the premises should not be done.

“And if the said William conceals himself, or cannot be cited in his proper person, we will that in your churches, when most people then come together to divine service, you openly with a loud voice that may be understood, cause the said William peremptorily to be cited to the premises, certifying that the said William, whether he appears at the day and place appointed or not, notwithstanding we will proceed to the premises against the said William, according to the canonical decrees, by form of law, in the absence or contumacy of the said William notwithstanding. We will, moreover, if the said William appears before us at the said day and place, as aforesaid, friendly hear him, and honestly and favorably deal with him, as far as we may with God’s leave; granting free license to come and go for his natural liberty without any hurt either in body or goods. And see that you fully certify to us about the things that you or any of you do about the execution of this our commandment, and that by your letters patent, signed with your authentic seal, also faithfully giving to the said William, or to his lawful proctor, if he requires it, a copy of this present commandment.

“Given at our house of Whitburne, under our seal, the fifth day of the month of July, in the year of our Lord 1391.”

William Swinderby either explained or defended the various conclusions objected against him, and gave his conclusions in the following words, which we insert in the ancient style in which they were written:

“The fifth article tells of forgiveness of sins, and it is this: that true contrition, without charity and grace, does away with all sins done before by that man who is truly contrite; and all true confession made by mouth outwardly to a wise and a good priest, profits much to a man, and it is needful and helpful, so that men show their life to such priests, trusting fully to God’s mercy, that He forgives the sin.

“And to this I say, that there are two remissions of sin. One that belongs only to God, and *that* remission is the cleansing of the soul from sin. The other remission, is a certifying that one man certifies to another, that sins have been forgiven by God, if he is sorry with all his heart for them, and is in full will to leave them forever; and *this* manner of forgiveness belongs to priests. David says of the first manner of forgiveness, ‘And I said, I will confess my unrighteousness to the Lord, and you forgave me my misdeed.’ ^{Psa 32.5} And Zacharias says, ‘And you, O child, shall be called the prophet of the highest, etc. To give knowledge of salvation to his people for the remission of their sins, by the tender mercies of God.’ ^{Luk 1.76-78} And John the Baptist, ‘Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.’ ^{Joh 1.29} And St. John the Evangelist says in his epistle, ‘If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all our iniquity.’ ^{1Joh 1.9} And it follows, ‘If any man sins, we have an advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ, and he is the propitiation for our sins.’ ^{1Joh 2.1-2} And of the other remission of sins, Christ says in the gospel, ‘If you forgive the sins of any, they shall be forgiven.’ ^{Joh 20.23} And man’s forgiveness avails little, if God forgives our sins through his grace.

“The sixth conclusion touches indulgences and pardons that the pope grants in his bulls, and men call it an absolution *a poena et culpa* (from punishment and guilt).

“This manner of speech I cannot find in the gospel, nor in any place of holy writ, nor have I read that Christ used this manner of remission, nor any of his apostles. But as I conceive it, if the pope had such a power, since the pains after a man’s death would have been much greater

than any bodily pains of the world, I think he should of charity keep men out of such pains, and then men need not find so many vicious (sinful) priests, after their life, to bring their souls out of purgatory. Another thing I think, is that since the pope's power may not keep us from bodily pains in this world, such as from cold, from hunger, from dread, from sorrow and other such pains, how might his power help us from spiritual pains, when we are dead? But because no man after his death comes to tell us the truth of what pain they have, men must tell of it what they wish. St. John says in his Apocalypse, that he saw under the altar the souls of those who were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they had. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long. Lord holy and true, do you not revenge our blood against those who dwell on the earth?' And white robes were given to every of them to rest awhile, till the number of their fellow servants and brethren should be fulfilled, who remained to be slain as they were, etc. ^{Rev 6.9-11} Here it seems, that these souls were not absolved *a poena*, that is, from *pain*; for their desire is not fulfilled. And they were told to abide awhile, and that is a pain. And if martyrs were not absolved from pain, then it is hard for any man to say that he absolves other men *a poena*. Also, good men's souls have only spiritual bliss, and they want bodily bliss until their resurrection on the Day of Doom (judgment). And after, they desired to have that bliss, and abide in it, and that is pain to them. I cannot see that the pope has power to bring him from this pain. But if any man can show me that he has such a power granted in the pledge of holy writ, I will gladly leave it.

"The seventh point speaks of the pope, and it is this: since it is only due to God, as I said before, to give and to grant plenary remission from pain and from blame, whoever he is, pope or other, that presumptuously takes upon himself the power that is only due to God, in doing so, as much as it is in him, he makes himself even with Christ, and blasphemes God, just as Lucifer did when he said, *Ascendam, et ero similia altissimo*, that is, I will ascend, and be like the highest, etc. ^{Isa 14.12-14}

[238]

"For I say, if the pope holds men of arms to maintaining his temporal lordship, to avenge himself upon those who fault and offend him, and he gives remission to fight and to slay those who oppose him, as men said he did by the bishop of Norwich not putting his sword in his sheath (as God commanded Peter), then he is antichrist. For he does the contrary of the commandment of Jesus Christ, who had Peter forgive his brother seventy times seven. ^{Mat 18.22} Well, I find in the gospel, that when Christ sent his disciples to Samaria, the Samaritans would not receive them. And some of them bid Christ to make fire come down from heaven to destroy the city. He blamed them and said, 'You do not know of what spirit you are; the Son of Man has not come down to destroy, but to save the lives and souls of men,' etc. ^{Luk 9.54-56} If Christ then came to save men, and not to slay them, then whoever does the reverse of that is against Christ, and he is *antichrist*. Christ bid Peter to put his sword into his sheath, and said, 'All those who take up the sword, shall perish with the sword.' ^{Mat 26.52} And I cannot find that Peter drew out his sword after that, but suffered as Christ said he would: 'When you grow old, another will gird you, and lead you whether you will or not.' ^{Joh 21.18} And therefore Peter said, 'Christ suffered for us, leaving us example that we should follow his steps.' ^{1Pet 2.21} And Paul says, 'Not defending yourselves, but give place to anger; for Vengeance is mine, and I shall reward them,' etc. ^{Rom 12.19} And therefore it seems to me, that it is much against Christ's love, that his vicar should be a fighter; since he must be a shepherd who should go before his sheep, and let them come after him, and not drive them away from him with swords. For as Christ says, 'A good shepherd puts his life for his sheep.' ^{Joh 10.11}

"And all that Christ had was two swords ^{Luk 22.38} when he was taken by the Jews. He said himself it was that the Scriptures might be fulfilled, ^{Mat 26.56} 'He was reputed among the wicked;' ^{Mar 15.28} and not to prefigure the two swords that men say the pope has to govern the

church with. And when I see such doings of the pope, and many other things that do not accord with Christ's love, nor his living; and when I read diverse Scriptures of holy writ, I am full astonished whether they should be understood of him, or of any other. And I pray you, for God's love, tell me the truth. Christ says, 'Many will come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and will seduce many,' etc. ^{Mat 24.5} Christ (I know well) is saying, as the anointed one, that there were two anointings in the law: one of kings, another of priests. And Christ was both king and priest, and so the pope says that he is. Yet if all who have been emperors of Rome, and other heathen kings, have been antichrists, then they do not come in Christ's name. But whoever comes in Christ's name, and pretends to be Christ's friend, but is secretly his enemy, may lightly beguile many. St. Paul says that, before the Day of Christ, a defection comes first; and the son of perdition will be revealed, who is the adversary. He is extolled above all that is named God, or which is worshipped; so that he will sit in the temple of God, showing himself as God. And it follows in the same place — and you know what holds till he is revealed in his time — for he already works the mystery of iniquity. Only, the one who holds, let him hold till he comes abroad, and then that wicked one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the spirit of his mouth, etc. ^{2The 2.3-8} And St. John says in the Apocalypse, 'I saw another beast ascending out of the earth, and he had two horns like the Lamb. He spoke like the dragon, and had the power of the first beast.' ^{Rev 13.11-12} Many such authorities have often astonished me since; and therefore I pray, for the love of God, *you* tell me what they mean."

After two sittings in July, and two in August, the last of which was on the sixteenth of August 1391, they proceeded to the sentence, on October the third.

"The name of Christ being invoked, we, John, by the permission of God, bishop of Hereford, sitting in tribunal seat, having God before our eyes, weighing and considering the articles by the aforesaid faithful Christians put up against the said Swinderby, pretending himself to be priest, with his answers upon the same, *Actis et Actitatis* before us in the cause of heretical perversity, with mature deliberation had before in his behalf, with masters and doctors of divinity, and also of other faculties, with their counsel and consent, do pronounce, decree, and declare the said William to have been, and to be, a heretic schismatic, and a false informer of the people, and one who is to be avoided by faithful Christians. Therefore we admonish, under the pain of the law, all and singular Christians, of whatever sex, state, condition, or pre-eminence, that neither they nor any of them within our diocese, or any other, believe, receive, defend, or favor the said William, till he deserves to be fully reconciled again to the bosom of holy church."

You have heard of the process, answers, and condemnation of this worthy priest, and true servant of Christ, William Swinderby. What became of him afterwards I have not been able to ascertain. Whether he died in prison, or whether he escaped their hands, or whether he was burned, there is no certain relation made. But this remains beyond doubt, that during the life of King Richard II, no great harm was done to him, which was until the year 1401, when King Richard being wrongfully deposed, and Henry IV seized the kingdom of England. About the beginning of his reign, we read of a certain parliament held at London, in which it was decreed that whoever showed themselves to be favorers of Wycliffe (who at that time were called *Lollards*), should be apprehended. And if they obstinately persevered in that doctrine, they should be delivered to the bishop of the diocese, and from him committed to the secular magistrate. This law (says the history) brought a certain priest to punishment the same year, who was burned in Smithfield in the presence of a great number. But it does not appear what the priest's name was. Notwithstanding, by diverse conjectures it appears to me that his name was Swinderby, who was forced to recant before the bishop of Lincoln. This is plain for all men to judge, that if he was burned, then the bishops, friars, and priests,

who were the causes of it, have a great thing to answer to the Lord, when he comes to judge the quick and the dead.

The History of Walter Brute – 1391.

After the history of William Swinderby, I thought it good and convenient to add the acts and doings of Walter Brute, his joint fellow and companion, being a layman, and learned. He was brought up, it seems, in the university of Oxford, and was also a graduate. In treating his history, as it is long, many things will appear that are worthy to be read and considered.

First, the mighty operation of God's Spirit in him, his ripe knowledge, modest simplicity, his valiant constancy, his learned treatises, and the many conflicts he sustained against God's enemies. On the contrary part, in his adversaries there may appear might against right, and man's authority against plain truth. Having nothing to directly allege against him, they proceeded in condemnation against someone whom they were not able to confute. The chief occasion that seemed to stir up the heart and zeal of this Walter against the pope, was the impudent pardons and indulgences of Pope Urban VI, granted to Henry Spencer bishop of Norwich, to fight against Pope Clement, mentioned earlier. Secondly, the wrongful condemnation of the articles and conclusions of William Swinderby. The whole order of it may appear more plainly in the process that follows here.

Articles Exhibited Against Walter Brute

*The process of John, bishop of Hereford, against Walter Brute
a learned layman of the diocese of Hereford, touching the cause of Heresy.*

“In the name of God, amen. To all manner of faithful Christian people, who will see and hear this present process of ours, John by the sufferance of God, bishop of Hereford sends greeting and continual charity, in the Lord.

[239] A.D. 1391.

“We would that you all should know, that of late we were lamentably informed by many faithful Christian people, and especially zealous followers of the catholic faith, by way of complaint, that a certain son of ours, named Walter Brute, a learned lay person of our diocese, has under a cloaked show of holiness, damnably seduced the people. And setting behind him the fear of God, he seduces them as much as he can from day to day, informing and teaching openly and secretly the nobles as well as the commons, in certain conclusions that are heretical, schismatical, and erroneous, and previously condemned. And they have also exhibited against the same Walter, the articles underwritten, in manner and form as follows.

Articles exhibited and denounced to the bishop, against Walter Brute.

“Reverend father and lord, we the faithful people of Christ, and zealous lovers of the catholic faith, and also your humble and devout children, do minister and exhibit to your reverend fatherhood the articles underwritten, touching the catholic faith, contrary and against malicious persons and detractors of the same faith, and the determinations of holy mother church, and namely, against the child of Belial, one Walter Brute, a false teacher and seducer among the people: humbly beseeching, that you would grant to regard the correction of the enormities underwritten, according to the canonical constitutions, even as it belongs to your pastoral office.

1. We do give and exhibit and intend to prove that the same Walter Brute, being unmindful of his salvation, has been frequently accused by many and diverse faithful Christian people, of the cursedness of heresy, as has been testified by the swift report, slander, and rumor of the people, proceeding before the most reverend father and lord, lord William, archbishop of

Canterbury, and also before the reverend father and lord, lord John, late bishop of Hereford, your predecessor, and now bishop of St. Asaph. And he has also been, many and diverse times, cited to answer to the articles avouched and openly and publicly taught by him against the catholic faith. But in this matter of heretical cursedness (so grievously and shamefully spoken of) he has never purged his innocency; but lurkingly, and running into corners, he has for many years labored to advance things that are erroneous, and schismatical, and also heretical, and to imprint them in the hearts of faithful people.

2. The aforesaid Walter Brute has openly, publicly, and notoriously avouched, and commonly said and taught, and stubbornly affirmed, that every Christian man (yes, and woman) being without sin, may make the body of Christ (consecrate the bread) as well as the priest.

3. The same Walter has notoriously, openly, and publicly avouched and taught that in the sacrament of the altar, there is not the very body, but only a sign and a memorial.

4. The aforesaid Walter has said commonly, and avouched, and also has labored to inform men and companies, that no man is bound to give tithes nor oblations; and if any man will give, he may give his tithes and oblations to whomever he will, thereby excluding their curates.

5. That those who preach and prefer crosses and pardons (granted by the high bishop to those who helped the purpose of the reverend father lord Henry, by the grace of God bishop of Norwich, when he took his journey to fight for the holy father, the pope) are schismatics and heretics, and that the pope cannot grant this manner of pardons.

6. The said Walter has often said, and commonly avouched, that the pope is antichrist, and a seducer of the people, and utterly against the law and life of Christ.

7. Whereas of late your reverence proceeded in form of law against William Swinderby; and that the said William Swinderby had given his answers in writing, which contained errors, schisms and heresies, even as you — with the mature counsel of masters and doctors in divinity, and other faculties have determined and given sentence — have pronounced the same William Swinderby to be a heretic and a schismatic, and an erroneous teacher of the people. Nevertheless, the aforementioned Walter has openly, publicly, and notoriously said, avouched, and stubbornly affirmed, that the said William's answers are good, righteous, and not able to be convicted, in that they contain no error, and that your sentence, given against the said William, is evil, false, and unjust; and that your assistants have wickedly, naughtily, perversely, and unjustly condemned the answers aforesaid.

“Now thereupon immediately those same faithful Christian people have instantly required that we would grant that other articles given by the same faithful Christians against William Swinderby, together with the writings and answers of the same William, should be admitted against Walter Brute. These things being done, the same faithful Christian people, and especially Sir Walter Pride, the penitentiary³² of our cathedral church of Hereford, personally appearing before us, sitting in our judgment seat in the parish church of Whiteborne of our diocese, brought forth and exhibited two public instruments against the same Walter Brute, in the case of cursed heresy aforesaid.

The Answer of Walter Brute.

“At last, Walter Brute presented to us diverse scrolls of paper, written with his own proper hand, for his answers to the same articles and conclusions above written. These scrolls were as follows: —

³² *Penitentiary*: An officer in some dioceses (since 1215), vested with power from the bishop to absolve in cases reserved to him. He prescribes the rules and measures of penance, and administers the sacrament of penance.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen. I, Walter Brute, sinner, layman, husbandman, and a Christian of the Britons (having my offspring of the Britons, both by my father’s and mother’s side), have been accused to the bishop of Hereford, that I erred in many matters concerning the catholic Christian faith; by whom I am required that I should write an answer in Latin to all those matters. I will satisfy his desire to my power, protesting first of all, before God and before all the world, that as it is not my mind, through God’s grace, to refuse the known truth, for any reward, greater or smaller, indeed, however big it may be, nor yet out of the fear of any temporal punishment — even so, it is not my mind to maintain any erroneous doctrine for any personal advantage. And if any man, of whatever state, sect, or condition he is, will show me that I err in my writings or sayings, by the authority of the sacred Scripture, or by probable reason grounded on the sacred Scripture, I will humbly and gladly receive his information. But as for the bare words of any teacher (Christ only excepted) I will not simply believe, unless he is able to establish them by the truth of experience, or from the Scripture. Because, even in the holy apostles elected by Christ, error has been found by the testimony of the holy Scripture, as Paul himself confesses that he rebuked Peter, for he was worthy to be rebuked, Gal 2.14. There have been errors found in the holy doctors who have lived before us, as they themselves confess about themselves. And oftentimes it happens that there is error found in the teachers in our own age. They have contrary opinions among themselves, and some of them sometimes determine one thing for truth, and others condemn the self-same thing as heresy and error. This protestation being premised, I will here place two suppositions or cases as a ground and a foundation of all the things that I will say, and out of which I would gather two probable conclusions established upon them, and upon the sacred Scripture. By these conclusions, when they are declared in my manner and fashion, it will plainly appear what my opinion and judgment are concerning all matters that I am accused of. But because I am ignorant and unlearned, I will get myself under the mighty defenses of the Lord: *O Lord, I will remember your righteousness alone.*

“God the Father Almighty uncreated, the maker of heaven and earth, has sent his Son (who was everlastingly begotten) into this world, that he should be incarnate for the salvation and redemption of mankind, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, everlastingly proceeding from the Father and the Son, and was born of Mary the virgin, to the end that we might be born anew.

[240]

“He suffered passion under Pontius Pilate for our sins, laying down his life for us, that we should lay down our life for our brethren. He was crucified, that we should be crucified to the world, and the world to us. He was dead, that he might redeem us from death, by purchasing for us forgiveness of sins. He was buried, that we being buried together with him into death by baptism, and being dead to sins, should live to righteousness. He descended into hell, thereby delivering man from thralldom, and from the bondage of the devil, and restoring him to his inheritance which he lost by sin. The third day he rose from the dead, through the glory of the Father, that we also should walk in newness of life. He ascended up to the heavens, to which nobody has ascended, saving he that descended from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven. He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, until his enemies are made his footstool. He being in very deed so much better than the angels, as he has obtained by inheritance a more excellent name than they. From there he shall come to judge the quick and the dead, according to their works, because the Father has given all judgment to the Son. In His terrible judgment we shall rise again, and all of us shall stand before this judgment seat, and receive joy bodily as well as spiritually, forever to endure, if we are of the sheep placed at the right hand; or else punishment of both body and soul, if we are found among goats, and placed on the left hand, etc.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“Jesus Christ the Son of God, very God and very man, a king forever, by establishing an everlasting kingdom (breaking to powder all the kingdoms of the world), Dan 2.44. A priest forever after the order of Melchizedek, whereby also he is able evermore to save those who come to God by him, and always lives to make intercession for us, Heb 7.25. Offering one sacrifice for our sins, he has made perfect forever by one oblation those who are sanctified, Heb 10.14. Being the wisdom that cannot be deceived, and the truth that cannot be uttered, he has taught in this world the will of God his Father. This will he has by his work fulfilled, to the intent that he might faithfully instruct us, and has given us the law of charity to be observed by his faithful people, which he has written in the hearts and minds of the faithful with the finger of God, which is the Spirit of God, searching the inward secrets of the Godhead. Therefore, his doctrine must be observed above all other doctrines, whether they are of angels or of men, because he could not, and would not err in his teaching. But in men’s doctrine there are often chances for error. And therefore we must forsake their doctrines, if they are covertly or expressly repugnant to the doctrine of Christ. Men’s doctrines being made for the people’s profit, they must be allowed and observed, so far as they are grounded upon Christ’s doctrine, or at least are not repugnant to his words.

“ If the high bishop of Rome calling himself the servant of the servants of God, and the chief vicar of Christ in this world, makes and maintains any laws contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, then is he of those who have come in Christ’s name, saying, I am Christ, and have deceived many, by the testimony of our Savior, as in Mat 24.23. And the idol of desolation sitting in the temple of God and taking away from him the continual sacrifice for a time, times, and half a time, which idol must be revealed to the Christian people by the testimony of Daniel. ^{Dan 7.25} Christ speaks of this in the gospel, ‘when you see the abomination of desolation that was told of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, let him who reads understand, ^{Mat 24.15} he is the pestiferous mountain infecting the whole earth, Jer 51.25, and not the head of Christ’s body. For the person ancient in years and honorable in reverence, he is the head; and the prophet teaching lies, he is the tail, Isa 9.15. He is that wicked and sinful captain of Israel, whose foreappointed day of iniquity has come in the time of iniquity, who shall ‘take away the diadem and take away the crown,’ Eze 21.26. To whom it was said;

‘Because your heart was exalted, and said, I am a god, and sit in the seat of God, in the heart of the sea, seeing you are a man and not God, and have given your heart, as if it were the heart of God; therefore behold I will bring upon you the strongest and most mighty strangers of the nations, and they shall draw their swords upon the beauty of your wisdom, and shall defile the commandments, and kill you, and pull you out, and you shall die in the destruction of the slain. And it follows, in the multitude of your iniquities, and of the iniquities of your merchandise, you have defiled your sanctification. I will therefore bring forth a fire from the midst of the whole earth, and will make you like ashes upon the earth. You have become nothing, and you shall never be any more, Eze 28.2-19.

Furthermore, he is the idol shepherd forsaking his flock, having a sword against his arm, and another sword against his right eye, Zec 11.17. And sitting in the temple of God, he advances himself above all so-called gods, or whatever is worshipped, 2The 2.4. And in this defection or falling away, the man of sin shall be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth. ^{Isa 11.4} For every kingdom divided in itself shall be brought to desolation. He is also, besides, the beast ascending up out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb, but he speaks like a dragon, and like the cruel beast ascending up out of the sea, whose power shall continue forty-two months. He works the things that he has given to the image of the beast. And he compelled small and great, rich and poor, free men and bond-slaves, to worship the beast, and to receive his mark on their forehead or their hands, Rev 13.16. And thus, by the testimony of all these places, he is the chief antichrist upon the earth, and must be slain with the sword of

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

God's word, and cast with the dragon, the cruel beast. and the false prophet who has seduced the earth, into the lake of fire and brimstone. to be tormented world without end.

“If the city of Rome allows its traditions, and disallows Christ's holy commandments and Christ's doctrine, so that it may confirm its traditions, then she is ‘Babylon the great,’ or the ‘daughter of Babylon,’ and the ‘great whore sitting upon many waters,’ with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have become drunk with the wine of her fornication. The whole world is infected and seduced with her spiritual whoredom, enchantments, witchcrafts, and Simon Magus' merchandise — saying in her heart, ‘I sit as queen, and am not a widow, nor shall I see sorrow and mourning.’ ^{Rev 18.7} Yet she is ignorant that within a little while the day of her destruction and ruin shall come by the testimony of God, Rev 17.15-16 Because from the time of the continual sacrifice being taken away, and the abomination of desolation being placed, there have passed 1,290 days by the testimony of Daniel, and the chronicles added agree with the same. And the holy city also has been trodden underfoot by the heathen, for forty-two months, and the woman was nourished in the wilderness (to which she fled for fear of the face of the serpent) during 1260 days, or for a time, times, and half a time, which is all the same. All these things are manifest by the testimony of the book of Revelation, and the chronicles agreeing to it. As concerning the fall of Babylon aforesaid, it is manifest in the Revelation, where it is said, ‘In one day her plagues shall come, death, lamentation, and famine, and she shall be burned with fire. ^{Rev 18.8-9} For, strong is the Lord, who shall judge her. And again, ‘Babylon that great city is fallen, which has made all nations drink of the wine of her fornication.’ ^{Rev 14.8} And, thirdly, ‘One mighty angel took up a millstone, that was a very great one, and cast it into the sea, saying. With violence that great city Babylon shall be overthrown, and shall be found no more. For her merchants were the princes of the earth, and all nations have gone astray with her witchcraft, and in her is there found the blood of the saints and prophets.’ ^{Rev 18.21-24}

[241] A.D. 1391.

“And Isaiah speaks of her destruction in the thirteenth chapter, ‘And Babylon, that glorious city, being so noble among kingdoms in the pride of the Chaldeans, it will be like when the Lord overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, upside down. It will never more be inhabited, nor have its foundation laid in any age, from generation to generation.’ ^{Isa 13.19-20} Jeremiah says, ‘Your mother who bore you is brought to very great confusion, and leveled to the ground.’ ^{Jer 50.12} And again, ‘The Lord has devised and done as he has spoken against the inhabitants of Babylon; you who dwell richly in your treasures upon many waters, your end is come.’ ^{Isa 51.12-13} And thirdly, ‘Drought will fall upon her waters, and they will begin to dry. For it is a land of graven images, and boasts in her prodigious wonders. It will never more be inhabited, nor be built up in any age nor generation — even as God subverted Sodom and Gomorrah with her calves.’ ^{Jer 50.38-40}

“Pardon me (I beseech you) though I am not plentiful in pleasant words. For if I were to run in the course of this wicked world, to please men, I would not be Christ's servant. And because I am a poor man, and neither have nor can have notaries hired to testify of my writings; I call upon Christ to be my witness, who knows the inward secrets of my heart, that I am ready to declare the things that I have written to the profit of all Christian people, and to the hurt of no man living. And I am ready to be reformed if any man will show me where I have erred. I am ready also (miserable sinner though I am) to suffer for the confession of the name of Christ, and of his doctrine, as much as it may please him by his grace and love to assist me, a miserable sinner. In witness of all these things I have set the seal of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to this writing, which I beseech him to imprint on my forehead, and to take from me all manner of the mark of antichrist. Amen.”

The Second and More Ample Treatise of Walter Brute.

These two suppositions (as they are termed in the schools) written by Walter Brute, and exhibited to the bishop, although they contained matter sufficient either to satisfy the bishop if he had been disposed to learn, or else to have provoked him to reply back if his knowledge in these things had been better than Brute's. Yet neither of them could work any effect in him. But receiving and perusing them, when he could neither confute what was said, nor reply or answer to what was truth by his own learning, he said Brute's "writing, was too short and obscure, and therefore he was required to write upon the same thing again, more plainly and more at large." Whereupon Master Walter, satisfying the bishop's request for a more ample treatise (and ready to give an account of his faith to everyone), he revised the matter declared before. We give the following extracts from this treatise:

"Reverend father, because it seems to you that my motion in my two suppositions or cases, and in my two conclusions, is too short and somewhat dark, I will gladly now satisfy your desire, according to my small learning, by declaring the same conclusions. In opening this, it will plainly appear to your reverence what I judge in all matters that I am accused of. I desire first of all that your discretion would not believe that I undertake any presumption to handle the secrets of the scriptures, which the holy, and just, and wise doctors have left unexpounded. It is not unknown to many, that I am in all points far inferior to them, whose holiness of life and profoundness in knowledge is always allowed. But as for my ignorance, and multitude of sins, they are sufficiently known to myself and others. Therefore I do not judge myself worthy to unloose or to carry their shoes after them. Therefore, do not otherwise deem of me, than I do of my self. But if you find any goodness in my writings, ascribe it to God alone. For according to the multitude of his mercy, he sometimes reveals those things to idiots and sinners, which are hidden from the holy and wise, according to this saying, 'I thank you, O Father, for you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes: even so, O Father, for so it seems good in your sight.' ^{Mat 11.25-26} And in another place, 'For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see, might perceive; and that those who see, might be made blind.' ^{Joh 9.39} And Paul says that, 'God has chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the mighty;' ^{1Cor 1.27} that no man shall glory in himself, but that all men should give the glory to God.

"He that has the key of David, who opens and no man shuts, shuts and no man opens,' ^{Rev 3.7} does (when and however long it pleases him) hide the mysteries, and the secrets of the Scriptures from the wise, prudent, and righteous; and at his pleasure reveals them to sinners, and lay persons, and simple souls, so that he may have the honor and glory in all things. Therefore, as I have before said, if you find any good things in my writings, ascribe them to God alone. If you find otherwise, think it has been written in ignorance, and not in malice. And if any suspicion of error is shown to me in all my writings, I will humbly accept your information and fatherly correction.

"In the first conclusion of my answer, I have conditionally put it, Who is that antichrist lying concealed in the hid Scriptures of the prophets? I will pass on the declaration of that conclusion, bringing to light those things which lay hidden in darkness, because nothing is hidden which shall not be disclosed, and nothing is covered which shall not be known. And therefore the thing which was said in the darkness, let us say in the light; and the thing which we have heard in the ear, let us preach upon the house-tops. I therefore say that if the high bishop of Rome, calling himself the servant of God, and the chief vicar of Christ in this world, makes and justifies many laws that are contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, then he is the chief of many who, coming in the name of Christ, have said, *I am Christ*, and who have deceived many. This is the first part of the first conclusion, and it is manifest. For *Christ* is called by the Hebrews the very same thing we call *anointed*. And among them there was a

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

double sort of anointing by the law: the one of kings, and the other of priests. And thus the kings, as well as the priests, were called *Christs* in the law. The kings, as in the psalm, The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes took counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Christ, or anointed. ^{Psa 2.2} And in the books of the Kings, the kings are very often called Christs. ^{2Sam 19.21} And our Savior was Christ, or anointed king, because he was a king forevermore upon the throne of David, ^{Luk 1.29} as the Scripture very often witnesses. ^{1Tim 1.17} The priests also were called anointed, such as where it is written, ‘Do not touch my Christs;’ that is, my anointed ones, ‘and do my prophets no harm.’ ^{1Chr 16.22} And so was our Savior Christ, ‘a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek.’ ^{Heb 5.6}

“Seeing, then, that the bishops of Rome say that they are the high priests, they also say in this that they are kings, because they say that they have the spiritual sword pertaining to their priesthood, and the temporal sword which agrees to a king’s state. So it is plain, that really, and in very deed, they say that they are Christs, though they are not expressly called Christs. Now, it is manifest that they come in the name of Christ, because they say that they are his vicars in this world, ordained by Christ for the government of the Christian church. Therefore, seeing that they say, that they are really and in very deed Christs, and the chief friends of Christ, then if they make and justify many laws that are contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is plain that they themselves on earth are *antichrists*, because there is no worse plague and pestilence than a familiar enemy. And if in secret they are against Christ, and yet in open appearance they say that they are his friends, they are so much more fit to seduce and deceive the Christian people. This is because a manifest enemy will have much trouble deceiving a man, because men do not trust him; but a hidden enemy, pretending outward friendship, may easily seduce.”

[242]

Peter Was Not Over the Other Apostles.

“Paul to the Romans declares in a godly discourse, and to the Galatians likewise, ‘That none will be justified by the works of the law, but by grace in the faith of Jesus Christ.’ ^{Gal 2.16} As for the morals and ceremonies of the law — such as circumcision, sacrifices for offenses and for sins, first-fruits, tenths, vows, diverse sorts of washings, the sprinkling of blood, the sprinkling of ashes, abstaining from unclean meats, all of which are ordained for sanctifying and cleansing the people from sin, nor yet the prayers of the priests, neither the preachings of the prophets — none of these could cleanse a man from his sin. For death reigned even from Adam to Moses, and sin from Moses to Christ, as Paul declares to the Romans in the fifth chapter. But Christ, willing to have mercy and not sacrifice, being a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek, and a high priest of good things to come, neither by the blood of goats nor calves, but by his own blood, entered in once into the holy place, when an everlasting redemption is found. ^{Heb 9.12} Nor did Jesus enter into the holy places that were made with hands, which are the examples of true things, but into the very heaven, so that now he may appear before the face of God for us. ^{Heb 9.24} Nor yet did he do so, that he might offer himself often, as the high bishop entered into the holy place every year with strange blood (for otherwise he must have suffered oftentimes since the beginning of the world). But now, in the latter end of the world, has he once appeared by his own sacrifice, for the destruction of sin. And as it is decreed for men once to die, and after that Comes judgment; even so was Christ once offered up to consume away the sins of many. The second time he shall appear without sin to the salvation of such as look for him. ^{Heb 9.25-28}

“For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image or substance itself of the things, can never by those sacrifices which they offer (the same, continually year by year) make them perfect who come to her. Otherwise, men would abandon offering, because those worshippers being once cleansed, would afterwards have their conscience

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

pricked no more for their sin. But in them there is a remembrance made of sins every year. For it is impossible that sins should be taken away by the blood of goats and bulls. Wherefore he entering into the world does say. As for sacrifice and offering you wouldst not have, but a body have you framed unto me. And sacrifices for sin have not pleased you: then I said, behold I come. In the head, or principal part of the book it is written of me, that I should do your will O God. Therefore he said before, that sacrifices, oblations, and burnt offerings for sin you would not have: neither were those things pleasant to You which are offered according to the law. Then I said, Behold I come, that I may do your will, O God. He takes away the first that he may establish that which followed. ^{Heb 10.1-9}

In this will we are sanctified and made holy by the offering up of the body of Jesus Christ once. And truly, every priest is ready every day ministering, and oftentimes offering the self-same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man, offering one sacrifice for sins, forever and ever sits at God's right hand, looking for the rest to come, till his enemies are made his footstool. For with one offering he has forever made perfect those who are sanctified. ^{Heb 10.11-14} By these things it plainly appears that Christ, by once offering, has cleansed from their sins, those who could not be cleansed from them by all the ceremonies of the law; and so he fulfilled what the priesthood of the law could not. Therefore he fulfilled the moral and judicial law by the law of charity and by grace; and he fulfilled the ceremonial law by one offering up of his body on the altar of the cross. And so it is plain that Christ fulfilled the whole law.

“They say that the bishop of Rome (who is the chief priest and judge among them) has full power and authority to remit sins. Whereupon they say that he is able, fully and wholly, to absolve a man *a pena et culpa* (from punishment, pain and guilt) so that if a man at the time of his death, had this remission, he might straightway fly to heaven without any pain of purgatory. The other bishops (as they say) do not have so great an authority. The priests constituted under every bishop, have power, they say, to absolve the sins of those who are confessed, but not all kinds of sins, because there are some grievous sins reserved to the absolution of the bishops. And some again, are reserved to the absolution only of the chief and high bishop. They also say that it behooves the offenders, for the necessity of their soul's health, to call to their remembrance their offenses, and to declare them to the priest in auricular confession, with all the circumstances, thus taking the place of God, in the manner of a judge; and then afterward, they are to humbly fulfill the penance enjoined by the priest, unless the penance so enjoined, or any part of it, is released by the superior power. All these things (they say) are manifestly determined. Although these things do not expressly have their foundation in the plain and manifest doctrine of Christ, nor in any of the apostles, yet the authors of the decrees and decretals concerning this matter, have grounded it upon diverse places of the Scriptures. Such as, in the words of Christ in the gospel of St. Matthew, the sixteenth chapter, upon which they ground the pope's judicial power to surmount the powers of other priests, as where Christ said to his disciples,

‘Who do men say that I am? And they answered, Some say that you are John Baptist, some Elijah, and some Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He said, But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said. You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said to him. Blessed are you Simon Bar-Jona; for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you; but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to you, that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth, will also be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth, will be loosed in heaven.’ ^{Mat 16.13-19}

“Out of this text of Christ, diverse expositors have drawn diverse errors. Such as, first, when Christ said, ‘And I say to you, that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;’ some say that Christ meant he would build his church upon Peter. This exposition is ascribed

to Pope Leo; and the error of it is manifestly known. For the church of Christ is not built upon Peter, but upon the rock of Peter's confession, for he said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And again when Christ said particularly to Peter, 'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind,' etc. By this, they say that Christ gave to Peter specially, as chief of the rest of the apostles, a larger power to bind and to loose, than he gave to the rest of the apostles and disciples. But Peter answered for himself and all the apostles, not only confessing the faith which he had chiefly above the rest, but also the faith which the rest of the apostles had, even as himself, by the revelation of the heavenly Father. It appears that, just as the faith of all the apostles was declared by the answer of one, so by what Christ said, 'Whatever you bind,' etc., the same power and equality to bind and to loose is given to the rest of the apostles, as to Peter. Christ himself declares this in the gospel of St. Matthew, the eighteenth chapter, in these words, 'Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth, will be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth, will be loosed in heaven.' And he further adds, 'And again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth, touching anything you ask, it will be given to you by my Father who is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them.' ^{Mat 18.18-20} And in John, the twentieth chapter, he says to them generally, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. Whoever's sins you remit, they are remitted to them; and whoever's sins you retain, they are retained.' ^{Joh 20.23}

Popish Absolution Not Warranted By Scripture.

"By this it appears, that the power to bind and to loose is not specially granted to Peter, as chief and head of the rest, and that the rest had their power to bind and to loose by him; for the head of the body of the church is one, who is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. ^{1Cor 11.3}

[243] A.D. 1391.

"Peter and the rest of the apostles are the good members of the body of Christ; receiving power and virtue from Christ, by which they confirm and glue together the other members (the strong and noble, as well as the weak and unable) to a perfect composition and seemliness of the body of Christ — that all honor from all parts and members may be given to Christ as head and chief, by whom, as the head, all the members are governed. And therefore Paul says, 'For while one says, I am of Paul; and another I am of Apollos; are you not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom you believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then, neither is he that plants anything, nor he that waters; but God who gives the increase,' ^{1Cor 3.4}. And to the Galatians he says,

'But of those who seemed to be something, whatever they were, it makes no matter to me. God accepts no man's person. For those who seemed to be something in conference added nothing to me. But contrariwise, when they saw that the Gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to me, as the Gospel of the circumcision was to Peter (for He who worked effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, was mighty in me toward the Gentiles); and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go to the heathen, and they to the circumcision. Only they would have us remember the poor; the very thing I also was eager to do,' ^{Gal 2.6-10}.

"Hereby it appears that Paul did not have his authority from Peter to convert the Gentiles, to baptize them, and to remit their sins, but from Him who said to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.' ^{Act 26.14} Here Paul is of the Head of the church, and not of Peter. By this head, they say, all the members are sustained and made lively.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“The third error which the authors of the canons conceive in the text, ‘To you I will give the keys,’ etc., is this: they say that in this sentence which was said to Peter about the authority to bind and to loose, it was meant that just as Christ gave to Peter above all the rest of the apostles a special, and as it were an excellent power above all the apostles — even so, they say, he gave to the bishops of Rome (whom they call Peter’s chief successors) the same special power and authority, which exceeds the power of all other bishops of the world.

“The first part of this parallel and comparison, manifestly appears erroneous by the premises, in which it is plainly shown that the other apostles had equal power with Peter to bind and loose. Therefore, it consequently follows that the second part of the parallel, grounded upon the same text, is also erroneous. But if the first part of the parallel were true, as it is not, yet the second part must be an error, in which it is said that the bishops of Rome are Peter’s chief successors. For though there is but one catholic Christian church, of all the faithful who are converted, yet the first part of the church, and the first converted, was of the Jews, the second of the Greeks, and the third part was of the Romans or Latins. Of these three, the first part was most perfectly converted to the faith, for they faithfully observed the perfection of charity by the multitude of the believers, as it appears in the Acts of the Apostles. ‘They were of one heart, and one soul. Nor did they call anything that they possessed their own, but all was common among them.’ ^{Act 4.32}

“Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, says the gospel is ‘salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.’ ^{Rom 1.16} The Greeks were next to be converted after the Jews, and after them the Romans, taking their message to the Greeks, as it appears by the chronicles (epistles), although indeed some Romans were converted to the faith by Peter and Paul. And as Christ said three times to Peter, feed my sheep, so Peter ruled these three churches, as the chronicles witness. But first he reformed the church of the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea, as it appears by the testimony of the Acts of the Apostles. For it is manifest how Peter, standing up among his brethren, spoke to them concerning the election of an apostle in the place of Judas the traitor, alleging places to them out of the Scripture, that another should take upon him Judas’ apostleship. And so by lot Matthias was constituted in the place of Judas. ^{Act 1.26} After the Holy Spirit had come upon the apostles, and they spoke with the tongues of all men, the hearers were astonished at the miracle. And some mocked them, saying that these men are full of new wine; but Peter stood up and spoke to them, saying, that it was fulfilled in them what was prophesied by Joel the prophet. ^{Act 2.1-16} And he preached Christ to the people, whom in their ignorance they had put to death, and to whom a Savior was promised by the testimony of the prophets. And when they heard the words of Peter, they were pricked to the heart, saying to him and the rest of the apostles, what then shall we do? And Peter said to them. Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you will receive the Holy Spirit. And there were joined to them the same day about three thousand souls. ^{Act 2.41}

“And from Act 3.4-5, it appears that Peter, more than the rest, did those things which belonged to the ministry of the apostleship, in preaching as well as in answering. Whereupon some chronicles say, that Peter governed the church of the Jews at Jerusalem four years before he governed Antioch. And by the testimony of Paul to the Galatians, the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed to Paul, even as the circumcision was to Peter. And He worked with Peter in the apostleship of circumcision, worked with Paul among the Gentiles. By this it appears that the church of the Jews was committed to the government of Peter. And in the process of the acts of the apostles it appears that Peter believed that the faith of Christ was not to be preached to those Gentiles, who always lived in the uncleanness of idolatry. But when Peter was at Joppa, Cornelius, a Gentile sent to him to come and show him the way of life. But Peter (a little before the messengers of Cornelius arrived) being in his chamber, after he had prayed, fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending even like a

great sheet, let down by four corners from heaven to earth. In it were all manner of four-footed beasts, serpents of the earth, and fowls of the air. And a voice spoke to him, saying, Arise Peter, kill and eat; and Peter said, Not so. Lord, because I have never eaten any common or unclean thing. This was done three times. And Peter descended (not knowing what the vision signified) and found the messengers of Cornelius.

Of Auricular Confession and Absolution.

“As concerning the judicial authority of the clergy, many things are written in the canons of decrees, greatly to be marvelled at, and far from the truth of the Scripture. The authors of the canons say, that Christ gave unto the priests judicial power over sinners that confessed their sins unto them. And this they ground upon the text of Christ: ‘I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you loose,’ etc. And these keys of the kingdom of heaven, they call the knowledge to discern, and the power to judge, which they say only belongs to the priests, except in case of necessity; then they say a lay-man may absolve a man from sin. And as touching absolution, they say there are three things to be required on the sinner’s part: first, hearty contrition, whereby the sinners ought to bewail their offending of God through sins; the second is, auricular confession, whereby the sinner ought to show unto the priest his sins, and the circumstances of them; the third is satisfaction through penance enjoined to him by the priest for his sins committed. And on the part of the one who gives absolution, there are two things required (they say): that is, the knowledge to discern one sin from another, by which he ought to distinguish between sins and appoint an appropriate penance, according to the quantity of the sins. The second is, the authority to judge, by which he ought to enjoin penance to the offender. And further, they say, the one who is confessed should with all humility submit himself to this authority, and wholly and voluntarily do those penances which are commanded him by the priest, unless the penance is released by a superior power. For all priests (they say) do not have equal authority to absolve sins.

[244]

“The chief priest whom they call Peter’s successor, has power fully and wholly to absolve. But some inferior priests have more power, some less. The nearer they are to him in dignity (their church office), the less far they are from the degree of his dignity. All this is declared by process in the decrees, but not by the express doctrine of Christ, or any of his apostles. For although Christ absolved men from their sins, I do not find that he did it in the manner of a judge, but of a Savior. For Christ says, ‘God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved,’ Joh 3.17. Whereupon he spoke to the one whom he healed of the palsy (paralysis), ‘Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.’ ^{Mat 9.2} And to the woman taken in adultery, Christ said, ‘Woman, where are your accusers? Has no man condemned you?’ She said, ‘No man. Lord.’ Jesus then said to her, ‘Neither will I condemn you; go and sin no more.’ ^{Joh 8.3-11}

“By these words and deeds of Christ, and many other places in the Scripture, it appears that he was not a judge at his first coming, to punish sinners according to their offenses. But that day would come hereafter, in which he will judge all men according to their works, as where he says, ‘When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all his angels with him; then he will sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats,’ etc., Mat 25.31-32. Nor will he judge alone, but also his saints with him. For he says, ‘You who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits in the throne of his glory, will sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.’ ^{Mat 19.28} If Christ did not come as a judge, why then do the priests say that they take the place of Christ on earth, to judge sinners according to the quantity of their offenses? And not only this, but it is more to be wondered at, how the bishop of Rome dares to take it upon himself to be a judge before the Day of Judgment, and to

prevent the time, judging some to be saints in heaven and honored by men, and some again to be tormented in hell eternally with the devils! Would to God that these men would weigh the saying of St. Paul, in 1Cor 4.5, 'Judge nothing before the time the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts, and then every one will have praise from God.' Let the bishop of Rome take heed, lest that saying in Ezekiel is spoken of him: 'Because your heart is lifted up, and you have said I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, and in the midst of the seas, yet you are a man, and not God.' ^{Eze 28.2} It is manifest that the remission of sins principally belongs to God, who through grace washes away our sins. For it is said, 'The Lamb of God takes away the sins of the world.' And it belongs to Christians as the ministers of God. For in Joh 20.23, Christ says, 'Receive the Holy Spirit: whose sins you remit, they are remitted to them; and whose sins you retain, they are retained.' Seeing, therefore, that all Christians who are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, receive the Holy Spirit, it appears that they have power given to them by Christ, to remit sins ministerially. Has not every Christian authority to baptize? And in the baptism, all the sins of the baptized are remitted. Ergo, those who baptize remit sins. ³³

"Who is he therefore, who so rashly takes it upon himself to judge the infants begotten of faithful parents, dying without baptism, to be tormented with eternal fire? Now let us consider the three things which the canons of decrees affirm to be requisite for the remission of the sins of those who sin *after* baptism; that is to say, contrition of heart, auricular confession, and satisfaction of the deed through penance enjoined by the priest for the sins committed. I cannot find in any place in the gospel, where Christ commanded that this kind of confession should be made to the priest. Nor can I find that Christ assigned any penance to sinners for their sins, only that he desired them to sin no more. If a sinner confesses that he has offended God through sin, and sorrows heartily for his offenses, minding thereafter to sin no more, then he is truly repentant for his sin, and is converted to the Lord. If he then humbly, and with good hope, craves mercy from God, and remission of his sins, who is the one that can prevent God from absolving that sinner from his sin? And just as God absolves a sinner from his sins, so Christ has absolved many, even though they did not confess their sins to the priests, and even though they did not receive due penance for their sins. And if Christ could once absolve sinners in that way, then how has he now become unable to absolve them? Unless some man says that he is above Christ, and that his power is diminished by the ordinances of his own laws. How were sinners absolved by God in the time of the apostles, and before these canons were made?

"I do not say these things as though confession to priests is wicked, but that it is not, of necessity, requisite to salvation. I believe truly that the confession of sins to good priests, and likewise to other faithful Christians, is good, as St. James the apostle witnesses: 'Confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed; for the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.' ^{Jas 5.16} This kind of confession is good, profitable, and expedient; for if God perhaps does not hear a man's own prayer, he is helped with the intercession of others. Yet nevertheless, the prayers of the priests seem to be extolled too much in the decrees, where they treat penitence saying — as it is ascribed to Pope Leo X (*multiplex misericordia Dei*, etc. — God's manifold mercy), that it is ordained by the Providence of God's divine will, that the mercy of God cannot be obtained except by the prayer of the priests, etc. The prayer of a good priest avails a sinner much, after confessing his faults to him. The counsel of a discreet priest is very profitable for a sinner, to give the sinner counsel to beware of sin hereafter, and to instruct him.

"In this manner I esteem confession to priests as very expedient and profitable to a sinner. But to confess sins to the priest as to a *judge*, and to receive from him corporal penance for a

³³ In truth, those who are baptized have had their sins remitted by God, through faith in Christ, not by the baptizer.

satisfaction to God for his sins committed — I do not see how this can be founded upon the truth of Scripture. For before the coming of Christ, no man was sufficient or able to make satisfaction to God for his sins, even if he suffered ever so much penance for his sins. And therefore it was needful that one who was without sin, should be punished for sins, as Isa 53.4 witnesses, where the prophet says, ‘He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.’ And again, ‘He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.’ And again, ‘The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all.’ And again, ‘For the transgression of my people he was stricken.’ Isa 53.4-8 If therefore Christ, through his passion, has made satisfaction for our sins, because we ourselves were unable to do it, then through Him have we grace and remission of sins. How can we say now that we are sufficient to make satisfaction to God by any penance enjoined to us by man’s authority, seeing that our sins are more grievous *after* baptism, than they were *before* the coming of Christ? Therefore, just as in baptism the pain of Christ in his passion was a full satisfaction for our sins, it is so even after baptism also, if we confess that we have offended, and are heartily sorry for our sins, and mind not to sin again afterwards.

“Hereupon John writes in his first epistle, 1Joh 1.9-2.2,

‘If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, these things I write to you that you do not sin; but if any man sins, we have an advocate with the Father. Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.’

Therefore we ought to confess ourselves chiefly to God even from the heart, for that he chiefly remits sins, without whose absolution little avails the absolution of man.

[245] A.D. 1391.

“This kind of confession is profitable and good. The authors of the canons say that although auricular confession made to the priest is not expressly taught by Christ, they say it is taught in that statement which Christ made to the diseased of leprosy, whom he commanded, ‘Go your ways and show yourselves to the priests.’ Luk 17.14 — because (they say) the law of cleansing lepers, which was given by Moses, signified the confessions of sins to the priest. And because Christ commanded the lepers to show themselves to the priests, they say that Christ meant that those who were unclean with the leprosy of sin, should show their sins to the priests by auricular confession. I greatly marvel at the authors of the canons; for even from the beginning of their decrees to the end, they ground their sayings upon the old law, which was the law of sin and death, and not (as Paul witnesses) upon the words of Christ, which are spirit and life. Christ says, ‘The words which I speak to you are the spirit, and they are life.’ Joh 6.63 They ground their sayings in the shadow of the law, and not in the light of Christ, ‘for every evil doer hates the light, and does not come to it, lest his deeds be reproved; but whoever does the truth comes into the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God, Joh 3.20-21.

“Now let us pass to the words that Christ spoke to the leper. The leper said, ‘Lord, if you will, you can make me clean. And Jesus stretching out his hand touched him, saying, I will, be clean; and straightway he was cleansed of his leprosy. And Jesus said to him, See that you tell no man, but go and show yourself to the priests, and offer the gifts that Moses commanded for a testimony to them.’ Mat 8.2-4 This gospel witnesses plainly, that the leper was cleansed only by Christ, and not by the priests; nor did Christ command the leper to show himself to the priests for any help of cleansing that he might receive from the priests; but to fulfill the law of Moses, in offering a sacrifice for his cleansing, and for a testimony to the priests, who always out of envy accused Christ as a transgressor of the law. For if Christ, after he had cleansed the

leprosy, had licensed him to communicate with others who were clean, before he had shown himself cleansed to the priests, then the priests might have accused Christ as a transgressor of the law, because it was a precept of the law, that the leper after he was cleansed, should show himself to the priests. And they had signs in the book of the law, by which they might judge whether he was truly cleansed or not. And if he was cleansed, then the priests would offer a gift for his cleansing; and if he were not cleansed, then they would separate him from the company of others who were clean. Seeing every figure ought to be assimilated into the thing that is figured, I ask you then, what agreement is there between the cleansing of lepers by the law, and the confession of sins? By the law, the priest knew whether the man was leprous better than the one who had the leprosy. In confession, the priest does not know not the sins of the one who confessed, except by his own confession. In the law, the priest did not cleanse the leprous. How therefore would the priests cleanse sinners from their sin, such that without them they cannot be cleansed? In the law the priest had certain signs by the which he could certainly know whether a man was cleansed from his leprosy or not. In confession, the priest is not certain of the cleansing of sins, because he is ignorant of the sinner's contrition. Also, he does not know whether he will not sin any more; without such contrition and resolving to sin no more, God has not absolved any sinner. And if God has not absolved a man, without doubt then, he is not made clean. And how then is confession figured under the law? Doubtless, so it seems to me (under the correction of those who can judge better in the matter) that this law instead bears a figure of excommunication and reconciliation of someone who has been obstinate in his sin, and is reconciled again. For so it appears by the process of the gospel, that when the sinner does not amend for the private correction of his brother — not for the correction of two or three, nor yet for the public correction of the whole church — then he is to be counted as a heathen and a publican, just as a certain leper is to be voided out of the company of all men. This sinner, notwithstanding, if he yet repents, is then to be reconciled, because he is then cleansed from his obstinacy.

“But he who pretends to be the chief vicar of Christ, and the high priest, says that he has power to absolve *a poena et culpa*. I do not find how it is founded in the Scripture, but by his own authority he enjoins sinners to penance for their sins. And granting that he may absolve them from their sins, yet from the pain (which they call *a poena*) he simply does not absolve, as he promises in his indulgences. But if he were charitable, and had such power as he pretends, he would suffer none to lie in purgatory for sin, forso much as that pain far exceeds all other pain which we suffer here. What man is there, that if he sees his brother tormented in this world, will not help him and deliver him? Much more then, should the pope deliver out of the pains of purgatory, rich as well as poor alike. And if he sells his indulgences to the rich, doublewise, indeed triplewise he seduces them. *First*, in promising to deliver them out of the pain from which he does not and cannot deliver them; and so he makes them falsely believe what they should not believe. *Secondly*, he deceives them of their money, which he takes for his indulgences. *Thirdly*, he seduces them in this, that promising to deliver them from pain, he induces them into grievous punishment indeed, for the heresy of simony, which both of them commit. And therefore they are both worthy of great pain to fall upon them; for so we read that Jesus cast out buyers and sellers from his temple. Also Peter said to Simon, the first author of this heresy, ‘Your money,’ he said, ‘perish with you, because you thought the gift of God could be purchased for money.’ Moreover, whereas Christ says, ‘Freely you have received, freely give.’ And whereas on the contrary, the pope sells that thing which he has taken, what doubt is there, but that he grievously deserves to be punished — both he who sells, and he who buys — for the crime of simony which they commit? Over and besides these, by many reasons and authorities of the Scripture it may be proved that he does not absolve a man who is contrite for his sins, even if he absolves him from the guilt of it.

“But this surprises me, that in his indulgences he promises to absolve men from all manner of deadly sins; and yet he cannot absolve a man from debt. For as the debt which we owe to God is of much greater importance than the debt of our brother, if he is able to remit the debt due to God, then it would seem that he is much more able to forgive the debt of our brother.

“There is another thing that I wonder at: the pope shows himself stricter in absolving a priest for not saying, or negligently saying his matins, than for transgressing the commandment of God; considering that the transgression of the commandment of God is much more grievous than the breach of man’s commandment.

“For these and many other errors concurring in this matter of the pope’s absolutions, blessed be God, and honor be to him for the remission of our sins. And let us firmly believe and know, that he does and will absolve us from our sins, if we are sorry from the bottom of our hearts that we have offended him, having a good purpose and will to offend him no more. And let us be bold to resort to good and discreet priests who, with wholesome discretion and sound counsel, can instruct us how to avoid the corruption of sin hereafter; and who may pray to God for us, because they are better than we. By this we may sooner obtain the remission of our past sins, and we may also learn better how to avoid the danger of sin to come.” (Ex Registro Latino Episc. Hereford.)

And thus much concerning the judgment and doctrine of this Walter Brute for Christian patience, charity, and mercy, which as they are true and infallible notes and marks of true Christianity, so this man, making a comparison in this between Christ and the pope, goes about purposely to declare and manifest, so that all men may see what contrariety there is between the rule of Christ’s teaching, and the proceedings of the pope, between the example and life of the one, and the example of the other.

[246]

Of these two, just as one is altogether given to peace, so the other on the contrary side is as much disposed to war, murder, and bloodshed, as is easily seen. Whoever does not look upon the outward shows and pretended words of these Romish popes, but advises and considers their inward practices and secret works, will easily perceive under the mask of peace what discord and debate they work. Bearing outwardly the meek horns of the lamb mentioned in the Revelation, they bear within them the bowels of a wolf, full of cruelty, murder, and bloodshed. If any think this is spoken by me disrespectfully, I would to God that man could prove as well the same to be spoken of me not truly. But truth it is, I speak it sincerely, without affection of blind partiality, according to the truth of histories both old and new. Thus under the phrase ‘In the name of God, Amen,’ how unmercifully the pope condemns his brother! And while he pretended it was not lawful for him to kill any man, what thousands of men has he killed? And likewise in this sentence, ‘in the bowels of Jesus Christ,’ pretending as though he would be a mediator to the magistrate for the party, yet indeed he will be sure to excommunicate the magistrate if he does not execute the sentence given, who are the true heretics whom the Lord will judge when he comes. But grant that those are heretics whom he condemns as heretics, yet what bowels of mercy are here, where there is nothing but burning, fagotting, drowning, imprisoning, chaining, famishing, racking, hanging, tormenting, threatening, reviling, cursing, and oppressing — and no instructing, nor yet an impartial heiring of them — what can they say?

The same cruelty may also appear in their wars, if we consider how Pope Urban V, besides the racking and murdering of seven or eight cardinals, set up Henry Spencer, bishop of

Norwich,³⁴ to fight against the French pope. Innocent IV was in war himself against the Apulians. Likewise Alexander IV, his successor, stirred up the son of King Henry III to fight against the son of the emperor, Frederick II, for Apulia. Boniface VIII moved Albert (who stood to be emperor) to drive Philip the French king out of his realm. Gregory IX excited Louis the French king three separate times to mortal war against the Earl Reymond and the city of Toulouse, and Avignon³⁵ where Louis the French king died. Honorius III, by strength of war, in many ways resisted Frederick II and set out thirty-five galleys against the coasts of the emperor's dominions. The same pope also besieged Ferrara, not to mention the war at Ticinum, with many other battles and conflicts of popes against the Romans, Venetians, and diverse other nations. Innocent III set up Philip the French king to war against King John. It is not unknown what a stir Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) kept up against Emperor Henry IV. And who is able to recite all the wars, battles, and fields that were fought by the stirring-up of the pope? These considered with many other similar examples, caused Walter Brute to write in this matter, yet making no universal proposition, except that Christian magistrates in case of necessity might resist the pope in defense of public right. Now he proceeds further to the matter of the sacrament,

Walter Brute's Belief Concerning the Lord's Supper.

“Touching the matter of the sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, diverse men have diverse opinions, as the learned know. Concerning my judgment upon the same, I firmly believe whatever the Lord Jesus taught implicitly or expressly to his disciples, which is to be believed by faithful people. For he is, as I believe and know, the true bread of God which descended from heaven, and gives life to the world. Whoever eats of this bread shall live forever, as declared in the sixth chapter of John. ^{Joh 6.51} Before the coming of Christ in the flesh, although men lived in body, yet they did not live in spirit, because all men were then under sin. Their souls were thereby dead. And from this death no man was justified by the law, nor with the law: ‘For by the works of the law no flesh will be justified,’ Gal 2.16. And again in the same epistle, Gal 3.11, ‘But it is evident that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God: for the just shall live by faith. The law is not of faith; but the man who does them shall live by them.’ And again in the same chapter, Gal 3.21-24, ‘If the law had been given which might have justified, then our righteousness would have come by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, so that the promise might be sure by faith in Jesus Christ to all believers. Moreover, before faith came, they were all kept and confined under the law, until the coming of that faith which was to be revealed. For the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, so that we should be justified by faith.’ Also, Paul says in Rom 5.20-21, ‘The law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace much more abounded; so that just as sin reigned unto death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.’ By this it is manifest that by the faith which we have in Christ, that is, by believing he is the true Son of God who came down from heaven to redeem us from sin, we are justified from sin. And so we live by Him who is the true bread and food of the soul. And the bread which Christ gave is his flesh, given for the life of the world. For being God, he came down from heaven, and being truly carnal man, he suffered in the flesh for our sins, which in his divinity he could not suffer. Therefore, just as we believe by our faith that he is true God, so we must also believe that he is a true man; and then we eat the bread of heaven, and the flesh of Christ. And if we believe that he voluntarily shed his blood for our redemption, then we drink his blood.

³⁴ Henry le Despenser (c. 1341-1406) was an English nobleman and Bishop of Norwich whose reputation as the 'Fighting Bishop' was gained for his part in suppressing the Peasants' Revolt in 1381.

³⁵ Actually, Louis VIII died at Auvergne, though he besieged Avignon in 1226.

“And thus, unless we eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, we do not have eternal life in us, because the flesh of Christ is food indeed, and his blood is drink indeed; and whoever eats the flesh of Christ, and drinks his blood, abides in Christ, and Christ in him, Joh 6.53-56. And as in this world the souls of the faithful live, and are refreshed spiritually with this heavenly bread, and with the flesh and blood of Christ; so in the world to come, they will live eternally in heaven, refreshed with the deity of Jesus Christ. And in the memory of this refreshment, present in this world, and in the world to come, Christ has given to us (for eternal blessedness) the sacrament of his body and blood, in the substance of bread and wine, as it appears in Mat 26.26-28, ‘As they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said. Take, eat, this is my body: And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying. Drink you all of this, this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’ And in his gospel, Luke thus writes of this matter: ‘And he took bread, and gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying. This is my body which is given for you, do this in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying. This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.’ Luk 22.19-20 That Christ said *this is my body*, showing the bread to them, I firmly believe, and know that it is true. For Christ (because he is God) is the very truth itself, and by consequence, all that he says is true. And I believe that the very same bread was his body, in such a way as he willed it to be his body; for being Almighty, he has done whatever pleased him. And as in Cana of Galilee, he changed the water into wine really, so that after the transubstantiation it was wine and not water, so too when he said, *this is my body*, if he would have had the bread really transubstantiated into his very body, so that after changing, it would have been his natural body and not bread as it was before, I know that it must have been so. But, I do not find in the Scripture that it was his will to have any such real transubstantiation or mutation.

“And because the Lord God Omnipotent, being the Son of God in his essential perfection, exceeds the purest creature, yet when it pleased him, he took upon himself our nature, remaining really God as he was before, and he was made really man. So that, after assuming our substance, he really was very God, and very man.

[247] A.D. 1391.

“Even so, if he would, when he said, *this is my body*, he could make this to be his body really, while the bread really remained as it was before. Therefore, the one who could make one man to be very God, and very man, could (if he would) make one thing to be really very bread, and also his very body. But I do not find it expressed in the Scripture, that he wished any such identity or conjunction to be made. And as Christ said, ‘I am the true bread,’ not changing his essence or being in the essence or substance of bread, but he was the same Christ which he was before really; and yet he was bread by a similitude or figurative speech. So if he would, it might be that when he said, *this is my body*, this would really have been the bread as it was before, and yet sacramentally or memorially, it was his body. And this seems to me most nearly to agree to the meaning of Christ, for as he said, ‘Do this in remembrance of me.’ Then in the supper it is manifest that Christ gave his disciples the bread of his body which he broke, to eat with their mouths. In this bread he also gave *himself* to them, as one in whom they should believe (so as to be the food of the soul), and that by faith they should believe him to be their Savior. In doing this, he also wished it to be manifest that he would redeem them from death. So the bread was eaten with the disciples’ mouths, so that He, being the true bread of the soul, might be received in spirit and eaten spiritually by their faith, who believed in him.

“The bread which was chewed in the disciples’ mouths, passed from the mouth to the stomach. For, as Christ says, ‘Whatever comes to the mouth, goes into the belly, and is cast out into the sewer.’ Mat 15.17 But that true and very bread of the soul was eaten by the spirit of the disciples,

and by faith it entered their minds, and abode in their hearts through love. And so the bread broken seems to me to be really the food of the body, and the same bread which it was before. But sacramentally, it is the body of Christ, as Paul says in 1Cor 10.16. “The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” So the bread which we break is the communion of the Lord’s body. And it is manifest that the *heavenly* bread is not broken, nor is it subject to such breaking. Therefore Paul calls the *material* bread which is broken, the body of Christ which the faithful are partakers of. The bread, therefore, does not change its essence, but is bread really, and it is the body of Christ sacramentally. Even as Christ is the true vine, abiding really and figuratively as the vine, so the temple of Jerusalem was really the material temple, but figuratively it was the body of Christ. This is because he said, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it again. And this he spoke of the temple of his body.’ ^{Joh 2.19,21} Whereas others understood it to be the material temple, as it appeared by their answer. For they said, ‘It took forty-seven (or 46) years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’ ^{Joh 2.20}

“The writers of our time and age affirm that if by the negligence of the priest, the sacrament is so negligently left, that a mouse, or any other beast or vermin eats it, then the sacrament returns again into the nature and substance of bread. ³⁶ By this they must confess that a miracle is as wrought by the negligence of the priest, as by the consecration of the priest in making the sacrament. For by the mouse eating the body of Christ, transubstantiating the bread back into the nature of bread, which is a supernatural transubstantiation; or else by this bread being produced or created out of nothing — either of these operations is therefore miraculous. Now, considering the varying opinions of the doctors, and the absurdities which follow, I believe with Paul, that the bread which we break, is the communion of the body of Christ. And as Christ says, the bread is his body as a memorial and remembrance of him. And so, in the same way that Christ willed the bread to be his body, I believe it to be his body.

Walter Brute’s Declaration Concerning the Priesthood, etc.

“But it remains for me next to speak about whether we can *make* the body of Christ, and minister it to the people: or whether priests are divided from lay people by their knowledge, pre-eminence, and sanctity of life, or else by external signs only. Also, whether the signs of tonsure ³⁷ and other external signs of holiness in priests, are signs of antichrist, or else are taught by our Lord Jesus Christ.

“And first about the three kinds of priests. I remember I have read that the *first* of them is Aaronical, legal, and temporal; the *second* is eternal and regal according to the order of Melchizedek; and the *third* is Christian. The first of these ceased at the coming of Christ. For St. Paul says to the Hebrews,³⁸ that the priesthood of Aaron was transferred to the priesthood of the order of Melchizedek. The legal sort of priests, of Aaron, were separated from the rest of the people by kindred, office, and inheritance. By kindred, for only the children of Aaron were priests. By office, for it pertained to them alone to offer sacrifice for the sins of the people, and to instruct the people in the precepts and ceremonies of the law. By inheritance, because the Lord was their portion of inheritance; nor did they have any other inheritance among their

³⁶ The following is still part and parcel of the Rubric or Canon of the Missal (1855): “If the host when consecrated shall disappear, either by some *accident*, such as by the wind, or by a *miracle*, or taken away by a *mouse* or any *animal*, and *cannot be found*, then let another be consecrated!” Such is the rule of the Missal, or Mass Book. And thus, after teaching that the host is Jesus Christ, it supposes the gross absurdity of his disappearing by an *accident* — by *wind* — eaten up by a *mouse* or other *animal*? There is nothing in Egyptian idolatry more absurd than this, for it supposes that God is not able to take care of himself. They have lately become so ashamed of this, that in the later editions of the Missal they have surreptitiously omitted all mention of the mouse, though they retain the rest of the rule. [ED.]

³⁷ *Tonsure*: the shaved crown of a monk’s or priest’s head.

³⁸ Today we say, “the writer of Hebrews.” But prior to the 20th century, Paul was assumed to be that writer.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

brethren, except for those things which were offered to the Lord, such as the first-fruits, parts of the sacrifices, and vows; and also places for houses for them and theirs, as it appears by Moses' law. The priesthood of Christ greatly differed from this priesthood, as Paul witnesses to the Hebrews.

“First, it differs in kindred, because our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ came of the stock and tribe of Judah. None of this tribe had anything to do with the altar, and in this tribe nothing at all was spoken of the priests of Moses. ^{Heb 7.14}

“Secondly, others were made priests without taking their oath: but Christ was made a priest by an oath, which said, ‘The Lord swore and will not repent, you are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.’ ^{Heb 5.4}

“Thirdly, in duration, for many of them were made priests only during the term of their lives. But He, because he remains forever, has an eternal priesthood. Therefore he is able to save us forever, having access to God by himself, who ever lives to make intercession for us. ^{Heb 7.25}

“The law also made men priests who had infirmities; but ‘Sermo’ (that is the word, which according to the law is the eternal Son and perfect) by an oath.

“The priesthood of Christ also differed from the priesthood of Aaron and the law, in the matter of the sacrifice, and in the place of sacrificing. In the matter of their sacrifices, because they used strange bodies in their sacrifices, and shed strange blood for the expiation of sins. But in offering himself to God his Father for us, Christ shed his own blood for the remission of our sins. As for the place of sacrificing, they offered their sacrifice in the tabernacle, or temple. But Christ suffered death outside the gates of the city, offering himself upon the altar of the cross to God his Father; and there he shed his precious blood. Also In his dining chamber he blessed the bread, and consecrated it as his body, and he also consecrated the wine which was in the cup, as his blood. He delivered this to his apostles to be done as a commemoration and remembrance of his incarnation and passion.

[248]

“Nor did Jesus enter into the sanctuary made with man’s hands, which are examples and figures of true things; but he entered into heaven itself, so that he might appear before the majesty of God for us. Nor does he offer himself often, as the chief priest in the sanctuary did with strange blood (for then he would have suffered often from the beginning). But now once for all, he has appeared in the latter end of the world, to destroy sin by his peace-offering. And even as it is decreed that man shall die once, and then comes the judgment, so Christ has been once offered, to take away the sins of many. The second time he will appear without sin, to those who look to him for their salvation. For the law having been a shadow of good things to come, it can never by the image of these things (which they offer every year without ceasing by such sacrifices) make those perfect who come to it. For otherwise that offering would have ceased — because such worshipers, once being cleansed from their sins, they would have no more conscience of sin. But in these sacrifices, commemoration is made every year for sin. For it is impossible that sins should be purged and taken away by the blood of goats and calves. ^{Heb 10.4} Therefore Christ coming into the world said,

‘Sacrifice and offering you would not have, but you have given me a body; peace-offerings for sins have not pleased you. Then I said, behold I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, that I should do your will, O God: saying as above; because you would not have sacrifices or burnt offerings for sin. Neither do you take pleasure in those things that are offered according to the law. Then I said, Behold I come, that I may do your will, O God. He takes away the first to establish what follows. In His will we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest is ready daily ministering, and

oftentimes offering like sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Jesus, offering one sacrifice for sin, sits for evermore on the right hand of God, expecting the time till his enemies be made his footstool. For by his one offering, he has perfected for evermore those that are sanctified.’ ^{Heb 10.5-14}

“All these places I recited, which Paul wrote, are for the better understanding and declaration of those things which I mean to say. By all of them, it manifestly appears how the priesthood of Christ differs from the legal priesthood of Aaron. And by these places it also appears how these differ from all other Christian priesthood that imitates Christ. For the properties of the priesthood of Christ, recited above, are found in no other priest, but in Christ alone.

Of the *third* priesthood, that is, the Christian priesthood, Christ by his express words, says but little to differentiate between the priest and the rest of the people; nor does he use the name ‘sacerdos’ or ‘presbyter,’ in the gospel. But some he calls disciples, some apostles, whom he sent to baptize and to preach, and to do miracles in his name. He calls them *the salt of the earth*, by which wisdom is meant; and he calls them *the light of the world*, by which good living is signified. For he says, ‘Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.’ ^{Mat 5.16} And Paul, speaking of the priests to Timothy and Titus, does not seem to me to differentiate between the priests and the other people, but he would have them surpass others in knowledge and perfection of life.

“But a *fourth* priesthood is the *Roman* priesthood, brought in by the church of Rome. This church distinguishes between the clergy and the lay-people. And after that, the clergy is divided into sundry degrees, as it appears in the decretals. This distinction of the clergy from the laity, with the tonsure of clerics, began in the time of Anacletus, as it appears in the histories.³⁹ The decrees of the clergy were afterward invented and distinguished by their officers, and there was no ascension to the degree of the priesthood except by inferior orders and degrees. But in the primitive church it was not so. For immediately after the conversion of some of them to faith, and receiving baptism, they were made priests and bishops. This appears by Anianus, who was a tailor or shoemaker, whom St. Mark made a bishop. And it was likewise done with many others, according to the traditions of the church of Rome. Priests are ordained to offer sacrifices, to make supplication and prayers, and to bless and sanctify. The oblation of the priesthood only to priests (as they say) is congruent. Their duties are upon the altar, to offer for the sins of the people the Lord’s body, which is consecrated by bread. I greatly marvel at this saying, considering St. Paul’s words to the Hebrews recited earlier. If Christ, offering one oblation for our sins forevermore, sits at the right hand of God, and with that one oblation has perfected forevermore those who are sanctified; and if Christ evermore sits at the right hand of God, to make intercession for us; then why does He need to leave here any sacrifice for our sins, to be daily offered by the priests? I do not find in the Scriptures of God, nor of the apostles, that the body of Christ ought to be made a sacrifice for sin; but only as a sacrament and commemoration of the past sacrifice which Christ offered upon the altar of the cross for our sins.

“For it is an absurdity to say that Christ is now really offered every day as a sacrifice upon the altar by the priests; for then the priests would really crucify him upon the altar, which is a thing to be believed by no Christian. But even as in his supper, he delivered his body and his blood to his disciples, in memorial of his body that would be crucified on the morrow for our sins. So after his ascension, his apostles used them (when they broke bread in every house) for a *sacrament*, and not for a *sacrifice*, of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And by this means they were put in remembrance of the great love of Christ, who so entirely loved us, that he willingly suffered death for us, and for the remission of our sins. And thus they offered

³⁹ Anacletus, see p. 132.

themselves to God by love, being ready to suffer death for the confession of His name, and for the saving health of his brethren, fulfilling the new commandment of Christ, who said to them, 'A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, as I have loved you.' But when love began to grow cold, or rather to be frozen cold, through the anguish and anxiety of persecution for the name of Christ, then priests used the flesh and blood of Christ, instead of a sacrifice. And because many of them feared death, some of them fled into solitary places, not daring to give themselves to God as a sacrifice by death, through the confession of Christ's name, and the saving health of their brethren. Some others worshipped idols, fearing death, as did also the chief bishop of Rome, and many others in different parts of the world. And thus it came to pass that what was ordained and constituted as a memorial of the one and only sacrifice, was altered (for lack of love) into the reality of the sacrifice itself."

After these things thus discussed, Brute entered upon another brief treatise concerning women and laymen. It concerned whether in the absence of the clergy, they may exercise the action of prayer, and the administration of sacraments belonging to priests. There he declares the custom received in the pope's church for women to baptize, which, he says, cannot be without remission of sins. Therefore seeing that women have power by the pope to remit sin, and to baptize, why may they not as well be admitted to minister the Lord's supper, in like cases of necessity? In this he also relates about Pope Joan VIII, a woman pope, proposing certain questions concerning her. For brevity, I omit all of this, proceeding to the ministration of prayer, and the blessing of sanctification, appropriate to the office of priests, as follows.

Walter Brute's Declaration Concerning Exorcisms. etc.

"Furthermore, concerning the function and office of praying and blessing, to which priests seem to be ordained (to omit here the question of whether women may pray in churches, in the absence of other suitable persons) it now remains to discuss Christ, being desired by his disciples to teach them to pray. He gave common prayer to both men and women, to which in my estimation, no other prayer is to be compared. ⁴⁰ For first, the whole honor due to the Deity is comprehended.

[249] A.D. 1391.

"Secondly, whatever is necessary for us, both for the time present, or past, or for the time to come, is there desired and prayed for. He informs us to pray secretly, and also briefly: secretly to enter into our private chamber, and there in secret he wills us to pray to his Father. And he says moreover, 'When you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do, for they think they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them.' By this doctrine he calls us away from the errors of the heathen gentiles from whom proceed these superstitious manner of arts (or rather of ignorances) such as necromancy, the art of divination, and other species of conjuration, not unknown to those who are learned. For these necromancers believe that one place is of greater virtue than another; and they are sooner to be heard there than in another. This is like Balaam, who was hired to curse the people of God by his art of soothsaying or charming. When he could not accomplish his purpose in one place, he moved to another. But in the end he was deceived by his desire. For intending to curse them, he was not able to curse those whom the Lord blessed; so his curse could not hurt any of that people. In the same way, the necromancers turn their face to the East, as a place more apt for their prayers. Also the necromancers believe that the virtue of the words of the prayer, and the ornateness of them, causes them to bring into effect that which they seek after. This is also another point of infidelity, used much by charmers, sorcerers, enchanters, soothsayers, and others like them.

⁴⁰ That is, the Lord's Prayer, as found in Mat 6.5-13; and also Luk 11.1-4.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

Out of the same art (I fear) proceeds the practice of exorcising, whereby devils and spirits are conjured to do what they are enforced to do by the exorcist. Also, other creatures are likewise exorcised or conjured, so that by virtue of their exorcism they may have their power and strength exceed all natural operation.

“In the church of Rome many such exorcisms and conjurations are practiced, which they call benedictions, or hallowings. But here I ask of these exercisers, whether they believe the things and creatures so exorcised and hallowed, have that operation and efficacy given to them which they pretend? If they so believe, every child may see that they are deceived. For holy water being exorcised or conjured by them, has no such power in it, nor can it, which they command in their exorcism. For there they enjoin and command that wherever that water is sprinkled, all vexation or infestation of the unclean spirit should be voided, and that no pestilent spirit should abide there, etc. But it is most plain that no water, however “holy,” can have any such power to do as it is commanded, to wit, to be a universal remedy to expel all diseases.

“I would ask of these exorcists, whether in their commanding, they conjure or adjure the things conjured to be of a higher virtue and operation than their own nature gives; or else, whether in their prayers they desire God to infuse into them that virtue which they request? If in their commanding they so believe, then they believe that they have that power to which the inferior power of the thing exorcised must obey, in receiving what is commanded. And in so doing, they are much more deceived, for in seeing themselves as those authorized to the office of exorcising, they say to the devil being conjured, ‘Go,’ but he does *not* go; and to another, ‘Come,’ but he does *not* come. And they command the inferior spirit (their subject) to do many other things, but he does not do it. So in the same way, when they pray to God to make the water of such a virtue that it may afford them health of mind and body, and that it may be able to expel every unclean spirit, and to chase away all manner of distemper and pestilence in the air (which is an unreasonable petition, and displeasing to God), it is to be feared that their benediction, their hallowing and blessing, is changed into cursing, according to this saying:

‘And now, O you priests, this commandment is for you; If you will not hear, and if you will not lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, says the Lord of Hosts, I will send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings.’ Mal 2.1-2.

“How many things are blessed, or hallowed in the church, that in the hallowing of them, we displease God, and are accursed? Therefore according to the saying of St. James, ‘they ask and do not receive, because they ask amiss, that they may consume it on their lusts.’ Let a man behold the blessing or hallowing of their fire, water, incense, wax, bread, wine, the church, the altar, the churchyard, ashes, bells, copes, palms, oil, candles, salt, the hallowing of the ring, the bed, the staff, and of many similar things — and I believe he will discover many errors of the heathen magicians, witches, soothsayers and charmers. Notwithstanding, the ancient magicians in their books command those who are conjurers, to live devoutly (for otherwise, as they say, the spirits will not obey their commandments, and conjurations). Yet the Roman conjurers impute it to the virtue of the holy *words*, because it is *those* that work, and not the holiness of the conjurers. How then can they say, the things consecrated by a cursed and vicious priest, have as great a virtue (they say) in pronouncing the holy and mystical words, as if they were pronounced by a priest who is ever so holy? I marvel that they say so, reading in the Acts of the Apostles, that the charmers would have healed those who were possessed with devils by pronouncing the name of Jesus (which is above all names). They said; ‘We command you by Jesus, whom Paul preaches.’ And the one possessed with devils answered, ‘Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?’ And he beat the exorcists. Act 19.13-16

Walter Brute’s Declaration on Selling Prayers and Dirges.

“And now considering this and many similar things, I marvel as to why the vicious priests sell their prayers and blessings (and also their masses and trentals of masses) as dearer than those of devout laymen, and holy women, who with all their heart desire to flee from vice, and take hold of virtue. For God promises in diverse places of the Scripture, that he will not hear sinners and wicked persons. Neither would He seem to be just, if he sooner heard the prayers of his enemies, than of his faithful friends. How, I pray you, will a sinful priest deliver another man from sin by his prayers, or from the punishment of sin, when he is not able to deliver himself from sin by his prayer? What then, does God so much accept the mass of a vicious priest, that for his mass, prayer, or oblation, He might deliver any man either from sin, or from the pain due for sin? No, but only because Christ once offered himself for our sins, and now sits at the right hand of God the Father, always showing Him what things and how great they were, that he suffered for us. And every priest always mentions this oblation in his mass. Nor do we do it so that we might bring that oblation into the remembrance of God, because he always sees it in his presence. But we do it so that we might remember this great love of God, that he would give his own Son to die for our sins, that he might cleanse and purify us from all our sins. What, does it please God, that the remembrance of so great love is made by a priest, who loves sin more than God? Or how can any prayer of such a priest please God, in whatever holy place he is in, or whatever holy vestments he puts on, or whatever holy prayers he makes? And whereas Christ and his apostles command the preaching of the word of God, the priests are now more bound to celebrate the mass, and more straitly bound to say the canonical hours. I cannot help but greatly marvel at this. For why do it? To obey the precepts of men more than the commandments of God, is in effect to honor man as God, and to bestow the sacrifice upon man which is due to God; this is spiritual fornication. How therefore are priests bound at the commandment of man, to leave the preaching of the word of God, at whose commandment they are *not* bound to leave the celebration of the mass, or singing of matins? Therefore, priests should not at the commandment of any man, leave the preaching of the word of God, to which they are bound both by divine and apostolical precepts.

“Do priests therefore sin or not, who bargain for money to pray for the soul of a dead man? It is well known that Jesus whipped and drove out of the temple, those who were buyers and sellers, saying; ‘My house shall be called the house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves.’^{Luk 19.46}

[250]

“Truly he tossed such merchants out of the church because of their sins. Whereupon Jerome says on this text, Let the priest be diligent and take good heed in this church, that they do not turn the house of God into a den of thieves. He doubtless is a thief who seeks gain by religion, and who by a show of holiness studies to find an occasion for merchandising. Peter said to Simon Magus, ‘Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gifts of God may be bought for money.’ Therefore the spiritual gifts of God should not be sold.

“Truly, prayer is the spiritual gift of God, as is the preaching of the word of God, or the laying on of hands, or the administration of other sacraments. Christ, sending out his disciples to preach, said to them; ‘Heal the sick, cast out devils, raise the dead; freely you have received, freely give.’^{Mat 10.8} If the priest has power to deliver souls in purgatory from grievous pains, then without doubt he has received that power freely from God. How therefore can he sell his act unless he resists the commandments of God, from whom he has received that authority? This truly cannot be done without sin, because it is against the commandment of God. How plainly Christ spoke to the Pharisees and priests, saying; ‘Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater damnation.’^{Mat 23.14} In what, I pray you, do our Pharisees and priests differ from them? Do not our priests devour widows’ houses and possessions, so that

by their long prayers they might deliver the souls of their husbands from the grievous pains of purgatory?

“How many lordships, I pray you, have been bestowed upon monastic men and women, to pray for the dead, so that they might deliver (they say) those dead men from the pain they suffer in purgatory, grievously tormented and vexed? If their prayers and speaking holy words are not able to deliver *themselves* from pain, unless they have good works, then how will other men be delivered from pain by their prayers, who while they lived, gave themselves over to sin? Indeed, perhaps those lordships or lands which they gave to the priests to pray for them, they have gotten by force from other faithful men, unjustly and violently. And the canons say that sin is not forgiven till the thing wrongfully taken away is restored. How then will they be able (those who unjustly possess such lordships or lands) to deliver them by their prayers from pain, who have given to them these lordships or lands, seeing that God from the beginning has hated all extortion in His burnt sacrifices? ‘Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of Heaven: but he who does the will of my Father in Heaven.’ ^{Mat 7.21} And again, ‘not the hearers of the law, but the doers of the law shall be justified.’ ^{Rom 2.13}

“If therefore the words of him who prays, do not deliver himself from sin, nor from the pain of sin, then how do they deliver other men from sin or from the pain of sin, when no man prays more earnestly for another man, than he does for himself? Therefore many are deceived in the buying or selling of prayers, just as in the buying of pardons, that they might be delivered from pain, when commonly they pay dearer for the prayers of the proud and vicious prelates, than they do for the prayers of devout women and devout men of the lay people. But beyond doubt, God does not regard the person of the one who prays, nor the place in which he prays, nor his apparel, nor the ornateness of his prayer, but the humility and godly affection of the one who prays. Did not the Pharisee and the publican go up into the temple to pray? The publican’s prayer for his humility and godly affection is heard. But the Pharisee’s prayer for his pride and arrogancy is despised. ^{Luk 18.10f} Consider that neither the person, nor the place, nor the state, nor the ornateness of his prayer helps the Pharisee. Because the publican not thinking himself worthy to lift up his eyes to Heaven, for the multitude of his sins (saying, O God, be merciful to me a sinner) is justified in his humility, and his prayer is heard. But the Pharisee boasting in his righteousness is despised, because God casts down the proud, and exalts the humble and those who are meek. Also, the rich glutton who was clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, prayed to Abraham, and was not heard, but was buried in pains and torments of hell-fire. But Lazarus, who lay begging at his gate (being full of sores), is placed in the bosom of Abraham. ^{Luk 16.19f} Behold that neither the richness of his apparel, nor the deliciousness of his banquets, nor the gorgeousness of his estate, nor the abundance of his riches, helped at all to prefer the prayers or petitions of the rich glutton, nor yet diminish his torments, because mighty men in their mightiness will suffer torments mightily.

“How dare any man by composition, demand or receive anything from another man for his prayers? If he believes that by his prayer he can deliver his brother from grievous pain, then he is bound by charity to relieve his brother with his prayers even if he is not hired. But if he will not pray unless he is hired, then he has no love at all. What then helps the prayer of him who does not abide in charity? Let him first take compassion on himself by prayer, that he may come into charity, and then he will be better able to help others. If he does not believe, or if he stands in doubt whether he will be able to deliver his brother by his prayer, why does he make an assured bargain with him, and take his money, not knowing whether he will relieve him a whit more from his pain? I fear lest the words of the prophet are fulfilled, saying, ‘From the least to the most, all men apply themselves to covetousness; and from the prophet to the priest, all work deceitfully.’ ^{Jer 8.10} For the poor priests excuse themselves concerning this selling of their prayers, saying that the young cock learns to crow from the old cock. For he says that the pope himself, in the installing of bishops and abbots, takes the first-fruits; and in

placing or bestowing benefices he always takes something, especially if the benefices are great. And he sells pardons or bulls, or to speak more plainly, he takes money for them. Bishops in giving orders, in hallowing churches and churchyards, take money. In ecclesiastical correction, they take money for the mitigation of penance; in the grievous offenses of convicted persons, money is required and caused to be paid. Abbots, monks, and other religious men who have possession, will receive no man into their fraternity, or make them partakers of their spiritual suffrages, unless he bestows something upon them, or promises them something. Curates and vicars have sufficient livings by the tithes of their parishioners; and yet they require and get money for dirges and years' minds,⁴¹ in hearing confessions, in weddings and burials. Also the friars of the four orders of beggars, who think themselves the most perfect men of the church, take money for their prayers, confessions, and burying the dead; and when they preach, they believe they should have either money or something else worth money.

“Why then are the poor priests blamed? Should they be held excused, even if they take money for their composition of prayers? Truly (I think) this excuse by other men's sins does not excuse them; for heaping one mischief upon another's head, is not a sufficient discharge. I would to God that all the buyers and sellers of spiritual suffrages would with the eyes of their heart behold the ruin of the great city, and the fall of Babylon, and what they will say after that fall. Does the prophet not say, ‘And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn for her, for no man buys their merchandise any more, the merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stone, and of pearl, and fine linen, and purple and silk.’ Rev 18.11-12. And again, he says; ‘The merchants of these things who were made rich by her, will stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, alas! alas! that great city, that was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls. For in one hour, such great riches have come to nothing,’ Rev 18. 15-17. And again; ‘And they cast dust on their heads, and cried out, weeping and wailing, and saying; alas! alas! that great city in which all who had ships in the sea were made rich because of her wealth! For in one hour she is made desolate.’ Rev. 18.19.

[251] A.D. 1391.

Walter Brute's Declaration — Rome Is Babylon, etc.

“This Babylon, this great city, is the city of Rome. Because the angel which showed to St. John the destruction of the mighty harlot sitting upon many waters, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and all those who dwell upon the earth, are made drunk with the wine of her fornication, said to him, ‘And the woman which you saw, is the great city that reigns over the kings,’ etc. ^{Rev 17.1f} And indeed in the days of St. John the whole world was subject to the temporal empire of the city of Rome, and afterwards it was subject to the spiritual empire or dominion of that city. But touching the temporal government of the city of Rome, it has fallen already. And so also the other shall fall, for the multitude of her spiritual fornication. The emperors of the city gave themselves to idolatry, and would have men honor them as gods, and put all those to death who refused such idolatry, and by the cruelty of their torments all infidels got the upper hand.

“Hereupon by the image of Nebuchadnezzar, the empire of the Romans is likened to iron, which beats together, and has the mastery of all metals. And in the vision of Daniel (chap. 7), in which he saw the four winds of heaven fight in the main sea; and four very great beasts coming out of the sea; the kingdom of the Romans is likened to the fourth terrible and marvellous beast, which had great iron teeth; eating and destroying, and treading the rest under its feet. And this beast had ten horns, and as Daniel says, he will speak words against the most high, and tear with his teeth the saints of the most high. And he will think that he

⁴¹ *Year's mind*: a memorial service held one year after a person's death.

may be able to change times and laws, and they will be delivered into his power, until a time, times, and half a time. In the Revelation (chap. 13), St. John saw a beast coming out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and power was given to him to continue forty-two months. So long a time the empire of the Romans endured — that is to say, from the beginning of Julius Caesar, who was the first emperor of the Romans, to the end of Fredericus, who was the last emperor of the Romans. Under this empire Christ suffered, and other martyrs also suffered for his name's sake. And here is fallen Rome, like Babylon (which is all one), according to the manner of speaking in the Revelation, as regards the temporal power of governing. And thus she will fall also, regarding the spiritual power of governing, for the multitude of iniquities, and spiritual fornication, and merchandising that are committed by her in the church.

“The feet of the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw, betokens the empire of Rome; part of them were of made iron, and part of clay and earth. The part that was made of iron fell, and its power vanished away because the power of it was at an end after a certain number of months. That part of clay and earth still endures, but it will vanish away by the testimony of the prophets. Whereupon St. John says later in the Revelation, that he saw the part made of iron rising out of the *sea*, to which each people, tribe, and tongue submitted themselves. And he saw another beast coming out of the *earth*, which had two horns, like the horns of a lamb, and he spoke like a dragon, and he vanquished the first beast in his sight.

“This beast, it seems to me, betokens the clay and earthen part of the feet and image, because he came out of the earth. For by earthly help he is made the high and chief priest of the Romans in the church of Christ. And so, from below he ascended on high. But Christ descended from heaven, because he who was God, and the author of every creature, became man; and he that was Lord of Lords, was made in the form of a servant. ^{Phi 2.7} And although in the heavens the company of angels minister to him, he himself ministered or served on earth, so that he might teach us humility, by which a man ascends into heaven, even as by pride a man goes down into the bottomless pit. This beast has two horns most like a lamb, because he claims for himself both the priestly and kingly power above all others here on earth. The Lamb (that is, Christ) is king forever upon the kingly seat of David, and he is a priest forever in the order of Melchizedek; but his kingdom is not of this world. But the kingdom of this beast is of this world, because those who are under him, fight for him.

“And as Jesus is Christ in two ways, because ‘Christ’ is the same as saying ‘anointed,’ he truly was anointed king and anointed priest. So this beast says that he is chief king and priest. Why does he call himself Christ? Because Christ, knowing beforehand, said, ‘Many will come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and will deceive many.’ ^{Mat 24.5} And thus, because he is both king and priest, he claims for himself the double sword, that is, the temporal sword and spiritual sword. The temporal sword is in his right hand, and his spiritual sword is in his right eye, by the testimony of Zechariah. ^{Zec 11.17} But he speaks subtly like a dragon, because, by the testimony of Christ, he will deceive many, as the book of Revelation witnesses. He did great wonders that he might make more fire come from heaven to the earth in the sight of men, that he might deceive those who dwell upon the earth, because of the wonders that he is permitted to do in the sight of the beast, and he overcame the first beast which ascended out of the sea. For that beast claimed for himself the authority to govern the whole world. He has put to death and tormented those who resisted his commandments, and he would be honored as a god on the earth. The bishop of Rome says that the whole world ought to be in subjection to him; those who are disobedient to his commandments he puts in prison, and to death if he can. If he cannot, he excommunicates them, and commands them to be cast into the devil's dungeon. But he has no power over the body, much less does he have power over the soul. And truly his excommunication, or the excommunication of any priest under him, will at that time little hurt

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

the one who is excommunicated — if the person who is excommunicated is not first excommunicated by God through sin.

“This one thing is certain, that none in the church might sell spiritual merchandise (which we spoke of before) unless he has the mark of the beast. My counsel is, let the buyer beware of those marks; because after the fall of Babylon (Rev 14.9-11),

‘If any man worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation. He shall be tormented in fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and in the sight of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torments ascends forever and ever: and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.’

“The beast doubtless recompenses his friends with his small reward; that is, with great temporal gifts and benefices; with a mean reward, that is, with great spiritual gifts, in the authority of blessing, loosing, binding, praying, and exercising other spiritual works; and with his greatest reward, which after they are dead, makes them honored on earth among the saints. The number of his name, according to the opinion of some men, is *Dux Cleri*, the ‘captain of the clergy,’ because he is named by that name, and makes his name known, and that name is 666, Rev 13.18.

“This is my opinion about the beast ascending out of the earth, and it will be until such time as I am better instructed about the beast. Although this beast signifies the Roman *bishops*, yet the other cruel beast ascending out of the sea, signifies the Roman *emperors*. And although the dragon being a cruel beast, and the false prophet giving the mark, must be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone to be tormented forever, I would have no man judge, but I leave such things altogether to the final judgment of Christ to be determined. But Martin, the Pope’s confessor, who makes the chronicle of the emperors and the popes, recites many errors of the popes, more horrible and abominable than of the emperors. For he speaks of the idolatrous, heretical, simoniacal popes, and popes who were murderers, who used necromancy and witchcraft, who were evil livers, and defiled with all kinds of vice. But I have partly declared how the pope’s law is contrary to Christ’s law, and how he says that, ‘He is the chief vicar of Christ in earth;’ and in his deeds he is contrary to Christ, and forsakes both his doctrine and life. I cannot see who else may be so well antichrist, and a seducer of the people. For there is not a greater pestilence than a familiar enemy.

“Concerning idols and the worship of them, I think of them as Moses, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest of the prophets did, who spoke against making images, and also worshipping images. And faithful David, full of the Spirit of God, says, ‘Let all those be confounded who worship images, and who rejoice in idols.’ *Psa 97.7* And again he says, ‘Let them be made like those who make them, and all those as put their trust in them.’ *Psa 115.8* Therefore I pray to God that this evil does not come upon me, which is the curse of God pronounced by David the prophet. Nor will I be, by God’s grace, either a maker, or a worshipper of images.”

After all the aforesaid things were exhibited and given by Walter Brute, to the bishop of Hereford, who further appointed to Walter, the 3rd day of October, at Hereford, to hear his opinion. That third day now at hand, being Friday (A.D. 1393), Walter Brute appeared before him, sitting in commission in the cathedral church of Hereford, about six o’clock. The bishop had for his assistants in the same place, diverse prelates and abbots, and twenty bachelors of divinity, of which twelve were monks, and two were doctors of the law. Among these was Nicholas Hereford, accompanied with many other prelates and worshipful men, and wise graduates in sundry faculties. They charged Walter about his writings, and their contents. They were earnest in picking out of those writings his heresies, and in showing his

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

schisms, sundry errors, and other things. Now, after that they continued all that day, and the two days following in their informations and examinations. Walter Brute submitted himself to the church, as appears in a scroll written in the English tongue, as follows:

“I, Walter Brute, submit myself principally to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to the determination of holy Kirk, and to the general councils of holy Kirk. And to the sentence and determination of the four doctors of holy writ; that is, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, and Gregory. And I meekly submit myself to your correction, as a subject ought to his bishop.”

This scroll Walter Brute was read with a loud and intelligible voice, at the cross in the churchyard on Monday, the sixth of October, before the sermon, in the presence of the bishop of Hereford and others — also barons, knights, and noblemen, and clergy, and a great multitude of people. After which Thomas Crawlay made a sermon, and took for his text the words of the apostle to the Romans, 11.20.

Out of these declarations and writings of Walter Brute, the bishops, with the monks and doctors listed above, gathered certain articles, totaling thirty-seven, which they sent to the university of Cambridge to be confuted by two learned men, Master Colwill and Master Newton, bachelors of divinity. Masters Colwill and Newton both labored in the matter, to the utmost of their cunning, in replying to these thirty-seven articles.

Besides them also William Woodford, a friar (who likewise wrote against the articles of Wycliffe) laboring in the same cause, made a solemn and a long treatise, compiling the articles of Brute, totaling twenty-nine.

I do not find what became of this Walter Brute afterwards, but it is probable that he escaped at that time. I here add certain writings and documents connected with his history.

The bull of Pope Boniface IX, against the Lollards.

“Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to the reverend brother, John, bishop of Hereford, sends greeting, and apostolical benediction. We mean to write to our well-beloved son in Christ, Richard, the renowned king of England, in form enclosed within these presents. Therefore we will and command your brotherhood, that as much as you may, you study and endeavor to exhort and induce the same king to do those things which we have written to him, as said before. And notwithstanding that now, for many a day, you should have done it of yourself, and not looking to persuade you to that effect written by us, you may proceed by our authority, as well as by your own, as it was given to you before. So that hereafter we may know effectually by your diligence, what zeal your devotion bears to the catholic faith, and to conserving the ecclesiastical honor, and also to the execution of your pastoral office.

“Given in Rome at St. Peter’s, the 15th kalends of October, the sixth year of our bishop-like dignity.”

The bull to the renowned prince, Richard, by the grace of God, king of England and of France, which was enclosed in the above, and mentioned there.

“To our well-beloved son in Christ, Richard, the noble king of England, we send greeting, etc. It grieves us from the bottom of our hearts, and our holy mother the church in all places throughout Christendom laments. We understand that there are certain heresies sprung up, and without any deserved restraint, range about at their own liberty, to the seducing of the faithful people; and every day with overmuch liberty, they enlarge their indiscreet bounds. But how much more carefully we labor for the preservation both of you and your famous kingdom, and also the purity of the faith, and with much more ardent desire we long that the prosperous state of it should be preserved and enlarged. The sting of greater sorrow so much more penetrates and molests us, as we see (alas the while!) in our time, and under the regal

presidence of your most Christian government, a certain crafty and hare-brained sect of false Christians grow and increase in your kingdom, who call themselves *the poor men of the treasury of Christ and his disciples*, and whom the common people by a sounder name call them Lollards (as a man might say, 'withered darnel'), as their sins accordingly require. And we perceive that they may grow strong, and as it were, prevail against the diocesans of some places, and other governors, as they meet together, not courageously addressing themselves against them as they ought to do (for which chiefly and not undeservedly I give them admonition) for thereby they take the bolder presumption and courage among the unlearned people. And because those whom we cannot call men, but the damnable shadows or ghosts of men, rise up against the sound faith, and holy universal church of Rome. And very many of them being indifferently learned, which little learning (to the confusion and eternal damnation of some of them) they got sitting on their mother's lap, the said church of Rome, rise up or inveigh against the determination of the holy fathers, with too much presumptuous boldness, to the subversion of the whole ecclesiastical order and estate. And they have not been afraid, nor are they yet afraid, to publicly preach very many erroneous, detestable, and heretical articles, because they are not put to silence, reprov'd, driven out, rooted out, or otherwise punished by anyone who has authority and the fear and love of God. And also they are not afraid to openly write the same articles, and so being written, to deliver them to your kingly parliament, and to obstinately affirm the same. The venomous and disdainful recital of these articles, on good advice, we pass over at this present time, lest the sufferance of such sensuality might chance to renew the wound that reason may heal. Yet notwithstanding, lest so great and contagious an evil should escape unpunished, and without deserved vexation; and also that it might not get more heart, and grow stronger, we therefore (according to our office and duty, where there is such negligence and sluggishness of our prelates who are present where this thing is found) do commit and give in commandment to our reverend brethren the archbishops of Canterbury and York by our letters, that they stand up in the power of God, against this pestilent and contagious sect, and that they promptly persecute it in form of law — that they root out and destroy those who advisedly and obstinately refuse to withdraw their foot from this stumbling-block, any restraint to the contrary notwithstanding.

[253] A.D. 1392.

“But because the assistance, counsel, favor, and aid of your kingly estate and highness are requisite to the execution of these premises, we request, exhort, and beseech the same of your princely highness by the bowels of the mercy of Jesus Christ, by his holy faith, by your own salvation, by the benefit that is common to all men, and by the prosperity assured to every man and woman, that not only your kingly severity may readily show, and cause to be shown to our archbishops and their commissaries, convenient aid and favor, and otherwise also cause them to be assisted — but also that you will more straitly enjoin your magistrates and justices of assize and peace. So that, of their own good wills, they execute the authority committed to them, with all severity against such damned men, as they are accordingly bound by the office which they are entrusted with — against those, I mean, who have determined obstinately to defile themselves in their malice and sins, to expel, banish, and imprison, and there to keep them, till deserved sentence pronounces them worthy to suffer punishment. For your kingly wisdom sees that men such as these not only deceive poor simple souls (or at least they do what they can to deceive them) but also bring their bodies to destruction, and further prepare confusion and ruinous fall to their temporal lords. Go too, therefore, my sweet son, and endeavor to work so in this matter, as undoubtedly we trust you will. So that just as this firebrand (burning and flaming overmuch) began under your presidence or government, so under your severe judgment and virtuous diligence, might, favor, and aid, there may not remain one spark hidden under the ashes, but that it be utterly extinguished, and speedily put out.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“Given at our palace of St. Peter’s at Rome, the 15th of the kalends of October, in the sixth year of our pontificality.”

The King’s Commission.

“Richard, by the grace of God, king of England, and of France, and lord of Ireland, to all those to whom these present letters shall come, greeting. Know that whereas lately at the instance of the reverend father, William, archbishop of Canterbury, metropolitan of all England, and legate of the apostolical see, for the redress and amendment of all those who would obstinately preach or maintain, publicly or secretly, any confusions of the holy Scripture, repugnant to the determination of our holy mother the church, and notoriously redounding to the subversion of the catholic faith, or containing any heresy or error, within the province or bishopric of Canterbury, we have by our special letters patent, in the zeal of the faith, given authority and license to the foresaid archbishop, and to all and singular his suffragans, to arrest all and every one of them who preaches or maintains any such conclusions, wherever they may be found, and to commit them either to their own prisons, or any other at their own pleasure, and to keep them there, until they repent them of the errors and depravities of those heresies, or till by his or by our council, it should otherwise be determined, that is to say, to every one of them and their ministers throughout their cities and diocese. And now the referend father in God, John, bishop of Hereford, has for a certainty informed us, that although the same bishop has according to justice convinced a certain fellow named William Swinderby, pretending to be a chaplain, and one Stephen Bell, a learned man, and has pronounced them heretics, and excommunicate, and false informers among the common people, and has declared the same, by the definitive sentence of the aforesaid bishop, they have presumed to affirm and preach openly, in diverse places within the diocese of Hereford, many conclusions or naughty opinions notoriously redounding to the subversion of the catholic sound faith, and tranquility of our kingdom. The same bishop, notwithstanding, neither by the ecclesiastical censures, nor by the force and strength of our commission, was able to revoke the foresaid William and Stephen, nor yet to bridle the malice and indurate contumacy of them; for after they were convicted of such heretical depravity by the same bishop (with the intent that they might delude his judgment and justice) they conveyed themselves into the borders of Wales, with those who were their favorers and accomplices, keeping themselves hidden, to whom the force of our letters does in no way extend.

“Whereupon the said bishop has made supplication to us, that we will grant to provide a sufficient remedy in that behalf. We therefore, who always by the help of Almighty God, are defenders of the faith, willing to withstand such presumptuous and perverse enterprises by the safest way and means, give and commit full power and authority to the aforesaid bishop, and to his ministers, by the tenor of these presents, to arrest or take, or cause to be arrested or taken, the aforesaid William and Stephen, in any place within the city and diocese of Hereford, and our dominion of Wales, with all possible speed. And then to commit them either to our prison, or else to the prison of the same bishop, or any other prison at their pleasure, if such need be, and there to keep them safe. And afterwards, unless they will obey the commandments of the church, to diligently bring them before us and our council, or else cause them to be brought, so that we may determine their further punishment, as we think it requisite and convenient to be done by the advice of our council, for the defense and preservation of the catholic faith. And that the aforesaid William and Stephen, being succored by the aid of their favorers, should not be able to flee or escape to their accustomed starting holes, and that the sharpness of their pains so aggravated, may give them sufficient cause to return to the lap again of their holy mother, the church — we straitly charge and command all and singular of our sheriffs, bailiffs, barons, and all other officers of ours in the city and diocese of Hereford, and in any other places within our dominion of Wales, by the tenor of these presents, that from time to time (where they think it most fitting) they cause it to be

openly proclaimed in our name, that none of whatever state, degree, pre-eminence, kind, or other condition he may be, who cherish openly or secretly the aforesaid William and Stephen, until the time that they repent of their heresies and errors, and are reconciled to the holy church of God; nor that any person or persons, be they believers, favorers, or receivers, defenders, or in any case wittingly instructors of the said William or Stephen, or any other of the residue of the heretics who are to be convinced, upon the forfeiture of all that they ever have. And also that giving their attendance. they are obedient and answerable to the aforesaid bishop and his deputies in this behalf, for the execution of the premises; and that they certify to us and our council distinctly and plainly, from time to time, of the names of all and singular persons, who are found culpable in this behalf, under their seals. In witness of which, we have caused these our letters patent to be made.

“Witness ourself at Westminster, the ninth day of March, in the fifteenth year of our reign. Farrington.”

Another letter of the King against Walter Brute.

“Richard, by the grace of God king of England, and of France, and Lord of Ireland, sends salutations to his beloved and faithful John Chaundos, knight; John Eynfore, knight; Renold de la Bere, knight; Walter Deveros, knight; Thomas de la Bare, knight; William Lucy, knight; Leonard Hakeluke, knight; and to the mayor of the city of Hereford, to Thomas Oldcastle, Richard Nash, Roger Wygniore, Thomas Waylwayne, John Skydmore, John Up-Harry, Henry Morton, and to the sheriff of Hereford,.

“In that it is made known to us, that one Walter Brute, and other such children of iniquity, have damnably held, affirmed, and preached, certain articles and conclusions, being notoriously repugnant against the holy Scripture (of which some of these as heresies, and the rest as errors, are finally condemned by the church), and that in diverse places within the diocese of Hereford, and parts adjoining nearby, both privately, openly, and obstinately, which we perceive not only to redound to the subversion, in a manner, of the catholic faith, which we as well as other catholic princes should of duty maintain, but also to forewarn us of the subversion of our faithful diocesans.

[254]

“And that the said bishop, upon the good deliberation and advice of a great number of doctors in divinity, and other learned and skillful men in the Scriptures, and of special devotion, according to his bound duty, purposed to begin and make diverse and sundry processes by law to be sent to the aforesaid Walter and his accomplices to appear personally before him and the other doctors aforesaid, in the cathedral church of Hereford, the morrow after the translation of Sf. Thomas of Hereford next ensuing; and to proceed in the same place against the same Walter, in the aforesaid articles and conclusions, for the amendment of his soul. And that they now afresh (because the said Walter and others of their retinue, clinging to and confederating with him, might not suffer deserved pains according to their demerits) endeavor to make void and frustrate the said godly purpose of the same bishop, in such correction and execution as should have been done, and do resist with force, and prevent the same with all the power they may, to the great contempt of us and of our crown, and to the breaking and hurting of our peace, and pernicious example of others.

“We appoint you, and every one of you, as soon as this commission of ours is delivered to you, in our behalf and name, to immediately make open proclamation in the diocese and the parts aforesaid, where you think it most fitting and convenient: that no man be so hardy henceforth, of whatever state or condition he may be, within the diocese and parts aforesaid, upon pain of forfeiture of all that he ever has, to make or levy any conventicles, assemblies, or confederacies, by any color; or that they presume to attempt or procure any other thing by

which our peace may be hurt or broken; or that the same bishops and doctors aforesaid may by any means be molested or hindered in the execution of such correction as is to be done, according to the canonical sanctions; and to arrest all those whom you find or take, offending in this behalf, or who keep themselves in any such conventicles; and that being committed to prison, they be kept there till you have other commandment from us and from our council for their deliverance; and that you distinctly and plainly certify to us, and our said council, of all your doing in this behalf under your seals, or else the seals of some of you. And therefore we straitly charge and command you, and every one of you, that you diligently attend upon the premises, and that in your deeds you execute the same with all diligence and careful endeavor in the form and manner aforesaid. And further we give strait charge and commandment to all and singular sheriffs, mayors, bailiffs, constables, and other our faithful subjects, by the tenor of these presents, that they attend upon you, counsel and aid you and every one of you, as is fitting and convenient in the doing and execution of the premises. In witness of which, we have caused these letters patents to be made.

“Witness myself at Westminster, the twenty-second day of September, in the seventeenth year of our reign. By the same king and council.”

Certain Godly Persons in Leicester Persecuted for the Truth.

Thus King Richard — by setting William Courtenay, archbishop of Canterbury, and his fellows upon this, taking sides with the pope and Romish prelates — became strict and hard against the poor Christians on the other side who followed Wycliffe. Yet during the life of this king, I find none expressly by name who suffered burning. There were some, however, who had been condemned, and some also abjured, by the archbishop and other bishops, and they did penance in other places, as well as chiefly about the town of Leicester, as declared in the archbishop’s register and records as follows:

“At the time the said archbishop William Courtenay was in his visitation at the town of Leicester, certain persons were detected and accused to him, by the monks and other priests in the said town. The names of these persons were Roger Dexter, Nicholas Taylor, Richard Wagstaff, Michael Scrivener, William Smith, John Henry, William Parchmentar, and Roger Goldsmith, inhabitants of the town of Leicester. These, with others, were denounced to the archbishop for holding the opinion of the sacrament of the altar, of auricular confession, and other sacraments, contrary to what the church of Rome preaches and observes. All of these parties above named, and many others whose names are not known, held these heresies and errors here underwritten, and are condemned by the church of Rome.

- “1. That in the sacrament of the altar, in the words of consecration, the body of Christ remains with the material bread.
- “2. That images should not be worshipped in any case, and that no man should set any candle before them.
- “3. That no cross should be worshipped.
- “4. The masses and matins should not be said in the church with a high and loud voice.
- “5. That no curate or priest, taken in any crime, can consecrate, hear confessions, or minister any of the sacraments of the church.
- “6. That the pope and all prelates of the church cannot bind any man with the sentence of excommunication, unless they know him to be first excommunicated by God.
- “7. That no prelate of the church can grant any pardons.
- “8. That every layman may preach and teach the gospel in every place.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“9. That it is sin to give any alms or charity to the friars, preachers, Minorites, Augustinians, or Carmelites.

“10. That no offering should be used at the funerals of the dead.

“11. That it is not necessary to confess our sins to the priest.

“12. That every good man, even if he is unlearned, is a priest.”

“They taught, preached, and affirmed these articles manifestly in the town of Leicester, and other adjoining places. Whereupon the said archbishop admonished Roger and Nicholas, with the rest, to answer him on the next day in the said monastery to the aforesaid articles. But the aforesaid Roger and Nicholas, with the rest, hid themselves out of the way, and did not appear. Whereupon the archbishop upon All-hallow day, being the first day of November, celebrating the high mass at the high altar, in the said monastery, being attired in his pontifical robes, denounced as excommunicate and accursed, the said parties with all their adherents, favorers, and counsellors, who either held, taught, or maintained the aforesaid heretical and erroneous conclusions, and did that in solemn way, by ringing the bells, lighting the candles, and putting them out again, and throwing them down to the ground, with other circumstances belonging to it. On the morrow after, being All-Souls day, he sent for all the curates and some laymen of the town of Leicester, to inquire more diligently about the truth of such matters as they knew, and were able to say against any persons whatever concerning the aforesaid articles, as also against the parties before named and specified upon their oaths, denouncing every one of them severally by their names, to be excommunicated and accursed; and he also caused them to be excommunicated in diverse parish churches in Leicester. And further, the said archbishop interdicted the whole town of Leicester, and all the churches in the town, so long as any of the aforesaid excommunicate persons remained, or were within the town, and till all the Lollards of the town returned and amended from such heresies and errors, obtaining at the said archbishop’s hands, the benefit of absolution.

At length it was declared and shown to the archbishop, that there was a certain anchoress⁴² named Matilda, living within the churchyard of St. Peter’s church of the town of Leicester, infected with the pestiferous contagion of the aforesaid heretics and Lollards. Whereupon, after the said archbishop had examined her regarding the aforesaid conclusions, heresies, and errors, and he found that she did not answer plainly and directly to them, but sophistically and subtly; he peremptorily gave and assigned to her a day on which to personally appear before him in the monastery of St. James at Northampton, to more fully answer to the said articles, heresies, and errors, which was the sixth of November.

[255] A.D. 1393.

They commanded the abbot of the monastery of Pratis, that the door of the recuse in which Matilda stayed, should be opened, and that till his return he should cause her to be put in safe custody. That done, he sent forth his mandate against the Lollards, in this form:

“William, by the permission of God, etc. To his well-beloved sons, the mayor and bailiffs of the town of Leicester diocese, greeting. We have lately received the king’s letters, graciously granted us for the defense of the catholic faith, in these words following: Richard, by the grace of God, king of England and of France, etc. We, on the behalf of our holy mother, the church, by the king’s authority aforesaid, require of you, that you cause the same Richard, William, Roger, and the rest, to be arrested, and sent to us, so that they, with their pernicious doctrine, do not infect the people of God, etc. Given under our seal,” etc.

⁴² *Anchoress*: a woman who lives in seclusion for religious reasons, often in a small cell or hermitage.

Another instrument in the same register mentions one Margaret Gaily, a nun, who had forsaken her order. She was constrained by the archbishop, against her will, to enter the order again, as appears by the following instrument.

“William, by the grace of God, etc. To our reverend brother of God, John, by the grace of God, bishop of Ely, greeting, etc. In the visitation of our diocese of Lincoln according to our office among other enormities worthy of reformation, we found one sheep strayed out of our fold, and entangled among the briars; to wit, Margaret Gaily, a professed nun, in the monastery of St. Radegond, within your diocese. Casting off the habit of her religion, she was found in secular attire, being an apostate for many years, and leading a dissolute life. And lest her blood be required at our hands, we have caused her to be taken and brought to you, being her pastor. And we straitly enjoin you, by these presents we command, that you admit the same Margaret again into her aforesaid monastery (although returned against her will), or else into some other place which you think most convenient for her soul’s health; and that from henceforth she be safely kept, and in the strait examination of her, you will yield an account. Given under our seal,” etc.

By sundry other instruments in the same register, I find that Matilda — the anchoress, upon the strait examination and handling of the archbishop, before whom she was peremptorily enjoined to appear, and was taken out of the recluse till that day of appearance, and committed to safe custody, as you heard — retracted and recanted her aforesaid articles and opinions. For this she was enjoined forty days’ penance, and was again admitted into her recluse in Leicester.

Also, by another letter of the archbishop to the dean of the cathedral church of our lady of Leicester, I find that of those eight persons listed earlier, whom the archbishop himself, at high mass in his pontifical robes, so solemnly cursed with bell, book, and candle, after the process against them, or else being apprehended and taken in the meantime, two of them recanted their opinions; to wit, William Smith and Roger Dexter. But in the meantime Alice, the wife of Roger Dexter, had abjured (disavowed) the same. However, whether they presented themselves willingly, or were brought against their wills (as most likely it was) hard penance was enjoined them before they were absolved. The words of the penitential instrument are as follows: —

“Seeing that our holy mother the church does not deny her lap to any penitent child returning to her unity, but rather proffers to them the same: we therefore receive again William, Roger, and Alice, to grace. And further, we have caused them to abjure all and singular the foresaid articles and opinions, before they received from us the benefit of absolution, and were loosed from the sentence of excommunication in which they were snarled, enjoining them to penance, according to the quantity of the crime, in the following form, that is to say, that the Sunday next after their returning to their proper goods, the said William, Roger, and Alice, holding every of them an image of the crucifix in their hands, and every one in their left hands holding a taper of wax weighing half a pound weight, in their shirts (having no other apparel upon them) go before the cross three times, during the procession of the cathedral church of our lady of Leicester; that is to say, in the beginning of the procession, in the middle of the procession, and at the latter end of the procession; to the honor of Him that was crucified, in the memorial of his passion, and to the honor of the virgin his mother; who also devoutly bowing their knees and kneeling, shall kiss the same crucifix so held in their hands. And so with the same procession entering again into the church, they shall stand during the entire time of the holy mass, before the image of the cross, with their tapers and crosses in their hands. And when the mass is ended, the said William, Roger, and Alice, shall offer to him who celebrated the mass that day. Then upon the next ensuing Saturday, the said William, Roger, and Alice, shall in the full and public market, within the town of Leicester, stand in like

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

manner in their shirts, without any more clothes on their bodies, holding the foresaid crosses in their right hands. They shall devoutly kiss these crosses three times (during the market), reverently kneeling upon their knees; that is, in the beginning of the market, in the middle of the market, and at the end of the market. And the said William (because he somewhat understands the Latin tongue) shall say this anthem, with the collect, "*Holy Catherine,*" etc.; and the foresaid Roger and Alice, being unlearned, shall say devoutly a *Pater Noster* (Lord's Prayer), and an *Ave Maria*. And, thirdly, the Sunday next immediately after, the said William, Roger, and Alice, in their parish church of the said town of Leicester shall stand and do, upon the Sunday before, just as they stood and did in the cathedral church of our lady aforesaid in all things. Which done, the foresaid William, Roger, and Alice, after mass, shall offer to the priest or chaplain who celebrated the mass, with all humility and reverence the wax tapers, which they shall carry in their hands. And because of the current cold weather, lest the foresaid penitents might perhaps take some bodily hurt standing naked for so long (being mindful to partly moderate our rigor) we give leave, that after their entrance into the churches above mentioned, while they are in the hearing of the foresaid masses, they may put on necessary garments to keep them from cold, so that their heads and feet, notwithstanding, are bare and uncovered. We therefore will and command you, together and apart, that you pronounce the said William, Roger, and Alice to be absolved and restored again to the unity of our holy mother the church, and that you call them forth to do their penance in the aforesaid manner and form. Given at Dorchester the 17th day of November, in the year 1389, and the ninth year of our translation."

To the above narration we will adjoin the history of Peter Pateshul, an Augustinian friar. Obtaining by the pope's privilege (through means of Walter Dis, confessor to the duke of Lancaster) the liberty to change his coat and religious order, and hearing the doctrine of John Wycliffe and others of the same kind, he began at length to preach openly, and to expose the vices of his order, in such a way that all men wondered to hear the horrible recital. This being brought to the ears of his order, twelve of them (coming out of their houses to the place where he was preaching) thought to have stood against him by force. One among them, especially for the zeal of his religion, stood up openly during Peter's preaching, and contradicted what he said, as he was preaching in the church of St. Christopher in London. When the faithful Londoners saw this, taking grief at it, they were very angry against the friar, throwing him and his other brethren out of the church, whom they had not only beaten and sorely wounded, but they also followed them home to their house, intending to also destroy their mansion with fire.

[256]

And they would have so done, had not one of the sheriffs of London, with two of the friars of the house, well-known and reputed among the Londoners, mitigated their rage and violence with gentle words. After this, Peter Pateshul thus disturbed, was desired by the Londoners (since he could not well preach among them) to put in writing what he had said, and other things besides these that he knew about the friars. At their request, in writing he accused the friars of murder committed against several of their brethren. And to make the matter more apparent and credible, he declared the names of those who were murdered, with the names also of their tormentors: and moreover, he named time and place, where and when they were murdered, and where they were buried. He affirmed further that they were guilty of other horrible sins, and were traitors both to the king and the realm, with many other crimes, which my author, for their tediousness, leaves off reciting. And for the further confutation of the friars, the Londoners caused the accounts to be openly set up at St. Paul's church-door in London. There they were read and copied by many. This was done in A.D. 1387, in the tenth year of King Richard II.

Thus it may appear how the gospel of Christ, preached by John Wycliffe and others, began to spread and fructify abroad in London, and other places of the realm. And no doubt more would have been done, had not William Courtenay the archbishop, and other prelates, along with the king, set themselves so forcibly with might and main to withstand the course of it. However, as is said before, I find none who were put to death during the reign of this King Richard II. Whereby it appears about this king, that although he cannot utterly be excused for molesting the godly and innocent preachers of that time, (such as may appear by his briefs and letters mentioned earlier), he was not so cruel against them, as others who came after him. And what he did, seemed to proceed by the instigation of the pope and other bishops, rather than by the consent of his parliament, or the advice of his council about him, or else by his own nature. But whether the doings of this king are to be excused or not, it is undoubted that Queen Anne his wife, most rightly deserves singular commendation. At the same time, living with the king, she had the gospels of Christ translated into English, along with the writings of four doctors upon the gospel. Anne was Bohemian born, and sister to Wenceslaus, king of Bohemia. She was married to King Richard about the fifth (some say the sixth) year of his reign, and continued with him for eleven years. By the occasion of this it may seem not improbable that the Bohemians coming in with her, or resorting into this realm after her, perused and received here the books of John Wycliffe, which afterward they conveyed into Bohemia.

The said virtuous Queen Anne, after she had lived with King Richard about eleven years, in the seventeenth year of his reign, left this mortal life, and was buried at Westminster. At her funeral Thomas Arundel, then archbishop of York, and Lord Chancellor, gave the sermon. In this sermon (as it remains in the library of Worcester), in his commendation of her, he said these words: That there was more joy from her than from any woman he ever knew; for notwithstanding that she was born an alien, she had all four gospels in English, with four doctors' comments on them. He affirmed and testified, moreover, that she had sent them to him to examine; and he said that they were good and true. And further, with many words of praise, he greatly commended her in that, being so great a lady, and also a foreigner, she would humbly study such virtuous books. Also in that sermon he sharply blamed the negligence of the prelates and other men, going so far that some said he would, on the morrow, give up the office of chancellor, and forsake the world, and fulfill his pastoral office, for what he had seen and read in those books. And then they said it had been the best sermon they ever heard. In this sermon of Thomas Arundel, three points are to be considered: *First*, the laudable custom of those old times, to have the scripture and doctors translated into our English tongue. *Secondly*, the virtuous exercise and example of this godly lady, who had these books hanging at her girdle not just for a show; but she also seemed by this sermon to be a studious reader of them. The *third* thing to be noted is what fruit the archbishop declared that he received by hearing and reading these books in the English tongue. However, after he gave this sermon and made that promise, this same Thomas Arundel became the cruelest enemy there might be against English books and their authors, as follows afterward in his history.

The Book of Conclusions Presented to Parliament.

For shortly after the death of Queen Anne, in the same year (the king then being in Ireland) this Thomas Arundel, archbishop of York, and Robert Braybrocke the bishop of London (whether sent by the archbishop of Canterbury and the clergy, or whether going of their own accord) crossed the seas to Ireland, to desire the king to return with all speed, and help the faith and church of Christ against those who held to Wycliffe's doctrine, and who went about (they said) to subvert all their proceedings, and to destroy the canonical sanctions of their

holy mother church. At this complaint, the king hearing only the one party speak, and not the other, was so incensed that leaving all his affairs incomplete, he immediately hastened back to England. In the beginning of the following year (A.D. 1395), a parliament was called at Westminster, in which twelve articles or conclusions were put up by those on the gospel's side. These conclusions were fastened on the church-door of St. Paul's in London, and also at Westminster.

A copy of the words and contents of these conclusions, follow here:

The Book of Conclusions or Reformations, presented to the Parliament at London, and set upon the door of St. Paul's, and other places, in the eighteenth year of the reign of King Richard II, and in the year 1395.

"The first conclusion: When the church of England first began to dote in temporalities after her stepmother, the great church of Rome, and the churches were authorized by appropriations, then faith, hope, and charity in diverse places began to vanish and fly away from our church; for pride, with her most lamentable and dolorous genealogy of mortal and deadly sins, challenged that place by title of heritage. This conclusion is general, and it is proved by experience, custom, and manner, as you will later hear.

"The second conclusion: That our usual priesthood, which took its origin at Rome, and is feigned to be a power higher than angels, is not that priesthood which Christ ordained to his disciples. This conclusion is thus proved, in so far as the Romish priesthood is exercised with signs and pontifical rites and ceremonies, and benedictions, which are of no force and effect, nor do they have any ground in Scripture, as the bishop's ordinal (book of ordination) and the New Testament do not at all agree; nor do we see that the Holy Spirit gives any good gift through any such signs or ceremonies; because the Spirit, together with all noble and good gifts, cannot co-exist in any person with deadly sin. It is a lamentable and sorrowful mockery to wise men, to see the bishops mock and play with the Holy Spirit in giving their orders.

"The third conclusion: [omitted here].⁴³

"The fourth conclusion: this most harms the innocent people, that the feigned miracle of the sacrament of bread induces all men, except for a very few, to idolatry. For they think that the body which will never be out of heaven, is by virtue of the priest's words, essentially included in the bit of bread which they show to the people. But would to God that they would believe what the evangelical doctor (Wycliffe) teaches us in his *Trialogue*, 'That the bread of the altar is the body of Christ only incidentally (figuratively).'

[257] A.D. 1394—1395.

"forsomuch as we suppose that by that means every faithful man and woman in the law of God may make the sacrament of that bread without any such miracle. The corollary of this conclusion is that, just as the body of Christ is endowed with eternal joy, the service of *Corpus Christi*, made by friar Thomas, is not true, but painted full of false miracles.

"The fifth conclusion: That the exorcisms and hallowings, consecrations, and blessings over the wine, bread, wax, water, oil, salt, incense, the altar-stone, and about the church walls, over the vestment, chalice, miter, cross, and pilgrim-staffs, are the very practices of necromancy, rather than of sacred divinity. This conclusion is thus proved: because by such exorcisms the creatures are honored as being of more force and power than their own proper nature. For we

⁴³ This conclusion, which reflects on the vices of the Romish priests, is omitted, being of too gross a nature for insertion in this edition. [ED].

do not see any alteration or change in any creature so exorcised, unless is be by false faith, which is the principal point of the devilish art. The corollary of this is that if the book of exorcism or the conjuring of holy water which is sprinkled in the church, were altogether faithful and true, then we think certainly that holy water used in the church, would be the best medicine for all kinds of sickness and sores; but daily experience teaches us the contrary.

“The sixth conclusion: That having both a king and bishop in one person, a prelate and justice in temporal causes, and a curate and officer in worldly office, puts both kingdoms out of good order. This conclusion is manifest because the temporality and the spirituality are two parts of the holy universal church. And therefore whoever addicts himself to the one part, let him not intermeddle with the other, for *no man can serve two masters*. The corollary of this conclusion is that we, the proctors of God in this case, sue to the parliament, so that it may be enacted that all the clergy (of the highest degree as well as the lowest) should be fully excused from any temporal office, and occupy themselves with their own charge, and not with others.

“The seventh conclusion: What we mightily affirm is that spiritual prayers made in the church for the souls of the dead (preferring anyone by name more than another) is a false foundation of alms, whereupon all the houses of alms in England are falsely founded. This conclusion is proved by two reasons. The one is that a meritorious prayer (of any force or effect) ought to be a work proceeding from mere charity; and perfect charity excepts no person, because *you shall love your neighbor as yourself*. Whereby it appears that the benefit of any temporal gift, bestowed and given to priests and houses of alms, is the principal cause of any special prayers, which is not far different from simony. The other reason is that every special prayer, made for men condemned to eternal punishment, is very displeasing to God. Although it is doubtful, it is very probable to faithful Christians that the founders of every such house of alms, for their wicked endowments, are for the most part passed by “the broad-way.” The corollary is that every prayer of force and effect, proceeding from perfect charity, would comprehend generally all those whom God would have saved. The merchandise of special prayers now used for the dead, creates mendicant possessioners and other hireling priests, who are otherwise strong enough to work and serve the whole realm. And it maintains them in idleness, to the great charge of the realm, because it was proved in a certain book which the king has, that a hundred houses of alms are sufficient for the whole realm. And thereby perhaps greater increase and profit might come to the temporality.

“The eighth conclusion: it is needful to tell the beguiled people, that pilgrimages, prayers, and oblations made to blind crosses or roods, ⁴⁴ or to deaf images made either of wood or stone, are very near akin to idolatry, and far different from alms. Although these things which are forbidden, are the book of errors to the common people, the usual and common image of the Trinity is most especially abominable. God himself openly manifests this conclusion, commanding alms to be given to the poor and needy, for he is the image of God, in a more perfect similitude and likeness than any block or stone. For God did not say, let us make a block or stone in our likeness and image, but let us make man; the supreme and highest honor, which the clergy call ‘Latria,’ pertains only to the godhead, and the inferior honor which the clergy call ‘Dulia,’ pertains to men and angels, and to no other inferior creature. The corollary is that the service of the cross, celebrated twice every year in our church, is full of idolatry. For if rood, tree, nails, and spear should be so profoundly honored and worshipped, then Judas’ lips (if any man could get them) were a marvellous goodly relic. But, you pilgrim, we pray you tell us when you make an offering to the bones of the saints and of holy men, which are laid up in any place, whether you relieve the holy man who is already in joy, or the alms house which is so well endowed. Whereas the saints are canonized (the Lord knows

⁴⁴ [Rood: Representation of the cross on which Jesus died.](#)

how), and to speak more plainly, every faithful Christian may well suppose that the strokes of that same man whom they call St. Thomas, were no cause for martyrdom.⁴⁵

“The ninth conclusion: what keeps the people down, is auricular confession, which is said to be so necessary for salvation; and the feigned power of absolution exalts and sets up the pride of priests, and gives them an opportunity for other secret talks, which we will not speak of at this time. For as both lords and ladies witness, it is for fear of their confessors that they dare not speak the truth. And the time of confession is a good opportunity to minister wooing, or to play the villain, or to make other secret arrangements for deadly sin. They affirm and say that they are emissaries sent by God to judge and discern of all manner of sin, to pardon and cleanse whatever pleases them. They also say that they have the keys of heaven and hell, and that they can excommunicate, curse, and bless, bind and loose at their own will and pleasure. So that for a small reward, or for twelve pence, they will sell the blessing of heaven by charter and clause of warranty, sealed by their common seal. This conclusion is so common in use, that it needs no proof. The corollary is that the pope of Rome who feigned himself to be the profound treasurer of the whole church, having that same worthy jewel — the treasure of the passion of Christ in his own keeping and custody, together with the merits of all the saints in heaven, by which he gives feigned indulgences and pardons — is a treasurer out of charity, who pretends he may deliver all captives in purgatory at his pleasure. But here, every faithful Christian may easily perceive that there is much falsehood hidden in our church.

“The tenth conclusion: that manslaughter (either by war or by any pretended law of justice for any temporal cause or spiritual revelation) is expressly contrary to the New Testament, which is the law of grace, full of mercy. This conclusion is evidently proved by the examples of the preaching of Christ here on earth, who chiefly teaches every man to love his enemies, and to have compassion on them, and not to kill and murder them.. The reason is this, that for the most part when men fight, after the first stroke, charity is broken; and whoever dies without charity goes the right way to hell. And we know that none of the clergy can deliver anyone from the punishment of death for one deadly sin, and not for another. But the law of mercy, which is the New Testament, forbids all manner of murder. For in the gospel it is spoken to our forefathers, “You shall not kill.” The corollary is that it is a robbing of the people, when lords purchase indulgences and pardon for those who help their armies to kill and murder the Christian people in foreign countries, for temporal gain. We see certain soldiers who run among the heathen people, to get themselves fame and renown by the murder and slaughter of men. They much more deserve evil thanks at the hands of the king of peace, in that our faith is multiplied and increased by humility and peace. But Christ hates and menaces murderers and manslaughterers. “He that kills with the sword shall perish with the sword.”

“The eleventh conclusion. ⁴⁶

[258]

“The twelfth conclusion: that the multitude of unnecessary arts (used in our church) causes much sin and offense in waste, curiosity, and dressing in curious apparel. Experience and reason partly show this, for nature, with a few arts, is sufficient for man’s use and necessity.

This is the whole tenor of our ambassadorship that Christ commanded us to prosecute at this time, which is most fit and convenient for many causes. Although these matters are only briefly noted and touched upon here, they are declared more at large in another book, with many others besides, in our own proper tongue. We wish they would be common to all

⁴⁵ Thomas Aquinas wrote about self-flagellation as a means of penance, hence the mention of “strokes.”

⁴⁶ This conclusion reflects on the morals of nunneries, and though most true, it is also omitted for same reason as the third (too gross for this edition). [Ed.]

Christian people. This is why we earnestly desire and beseech God for his great goodness' sake, that he will wholly reform our church (now altogether out of frame) to the perfection of her first beginning and origin. (*Ex Archivis Regiis.*)

After these conclusions were thus proposed in the parliament, the king not long after returned home from Dublin into England, toward the latter end of the parliament. At his return he called certain of his nobles to him — Richard Stury, Lewis Clifford, Thomas Latimer, John Mountacute, etc. — whom he sharply rebuked, and terribly threatened, for he heard they were favorers of that side, straitly charging them never to hold, maintain, or favor those opinions and conclusions any more. And he took an oath from Richard Stury, that he would never from that day, favor or defend any such opinions. This oath being taken, the king then answered, 'And I swear again to you, if you ever break your oath, you will die a shameful death for it,' etc.

Death of Archbishop Courtenay. ,

All this while William Courtenay archbishop of Canterbury was still alive, who was a great stirrer in these matters. Yet Pope Urban VI the great master of the catholic sect, was dead and buried six years before (1389). After him succeeded in the schismatical See of Rome, Pope Boniface IX, who was not at all inferior to his predecessor in all kind of cruelties. He left no diligence untried to set forward what Urban had begun, in suppressing those who were setting forth the light of the gospel. He had written several times to King Richard II, for repealing the acts of parliament against his provisions, *Quare impedit* and *Praemunire faces* (p. 220); and also that he should assist the prelates of England in the cause of God (as he pretended) against those whom he falsely suggested to be Lollards and traitors to the church, the king, the realm, etc. Thus the "courteous" pope, with the cruel slander of his malicious tongue, sought to work his poison against those whom he could not reach with his sword. He wrote this letter to the king, in A.D. 1396, the year before the death of William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury. After him in that see, succeeded Thomas Arundel, brother to the earl of Arundel. He was first bishop of Ely, afterwards archbishop of York and lord chancellor of England, and at last made archbishop of Canterbury, about A.D. 1397.

Letter of Richard II to Boniface IX, on the Schism – 1398.

The next year, which was A.D. 1398, in the ninth year of the pope, I find in certain records of the bishop of Durham, a letter of King Richard II, written to Pope Boniface, rebuking the schism in the popedom. I judged it worthy of being seen here, and therefore I annex it as follows: —

To the most holy father in Christ, and Lord, Lord Boniface IX, by the grace of God, high pope of the most holy Romish and universal church, his humble and devout son Richard, by the grace of God, king of England, and France, lord of Ireland, greeting and desiring to help the miseries of the afflicted church, and kissing his blessed feet.

"Who will give my head water, and my eyes streaming tears, that I may bewail the decay and manifold troubles of our mother, which have chanced to her by her own children in the distress of this present schism and division? For the sheep have forgotten the proper voice of their shepherds, and hirelings have thrust themselves in to feed the Lord's flock, who are clothed with the apparel of the true shepherd, challenging the name of honor and dignity, so resembling the true shepherd, that the poor sheep can scarcely know whom they ought to follow, or what pastor they ought to flee to as a stranger, and whom they should shun as a hireling. Therefore we are afraid lest the holy standard of the Lord be forsaken of his host, and

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

so that city, being full of riches, becomes solitary and desolate, and lest the land or people which was accustomed to say (flourishing in her prosperities) I sat as a queen and not a widow, am destitute of the presence of her husband, and as it were so bewitched that she will not be able to discern his face, and so wrapped in amazement, that she will not know where to turn, that she might more easily find him, and that she will with weeping speak that saying of the spouse, 'I sought him whom my soul loves, I sought him and did not find him.' ^{Sol 3:1} For now we are so compelled to wander, that if any man says, behold here is Christ, or there, we may not believe him. And so, many shepherds have destroyed the Lord's vineyard, and made his pleasant portion a vast wilderness.

"This multitude of shepherds has become very burdensome to the Lord's flock. For when two strive to be chief, the state of both their dignities stands in doubt; and in so doing, they give occasion to all the faithful of Christ, for a schism and division of the church. And although both parties go about to subdue to their power the whole church militant, yet contrary to both their purpose, by working this way, a division in the body now begins to arise in the church, as when the division of the living innocent body was asked, when the two women strived before Solomon; ^{1Kng 3:25} like the ten tribes of Israel followed Jeroboam the intruder, and were withdrawn from the kingdom for Solomon's sin; ^{1Kng 12:20} even so of old time the desire for ruling has drawn the great power of the world from the unity of the church. Let yourselves remember, we beseech you, how all of Greece fell from the obedience to the Romish church in the time of the faction of the primarch of Constantinople; and how Mahomet ⁴⁷ with his fellows, on the occasion of seeking supremacy in ecclesiastical dignity, deceived a great part of Christians, and withdrew them from the empire and ruling of Christ. And how in these days, that same supremacy has withdrawn itself from obedience to Christ, to such an extent that now the candle that burns before the Lord remains in very few realms, and that is for his servant David's sake. Although few countries now remain that profess obedience to Christ's true vicar, perhaps if every man were left to his own liberty, he would doubt the preferring of your dignity, or what is worse, he would utterly refuse it by such doubtful evidence alleged on both sides. And this is the subtle craft of the crooked serpent, that is to say, to procure schisms under the pretense of unity, just as the spider of a wholesome flower gathers poison, and Judas learned to make war out of peace.

"Therefore it is believed by wise men, that unless this pestilent schism is withstood by and by, the keys of the church will be despised, and they will bind the conscience of but a few. And when either none dares to be bold to correct this fault, or else to reform things contrary to God's law, by this means temporal lords will at length take away the liberties of the church; and perhaps the Romans will come and take away their place, people, and lands. They will spoil their possessions, and bring the men of the church into bondage, and they will be disdained, reviled, and despised, because the obedience of the people, and devotions towards them will almost be taken away — when the greater part of the church, left to their own liberty, will grow prouder than they usually are, leaving a wicked example to those who see it. For when they see the prelates pursue covetousness more than usual, to hoard up money, to oppress the subjects, to seek gain in their punishings, to confound laws, to stir up strife, to suppress truth, to vex poor subjects with wrong corrections, being intemperate in food and drink, past shame in feastings — what marvel is it if the people despise them as the foulest forsakers of God's law? But all these things follow if the church were to be left for long in this doubtfulness of a schism. And then that old saying would be verified; 'In those days there was no king in Israel, but everyone did what was right in his own eyes.' ^{Jdg 17:6}

[259] A.D. 1396-1398.

⁴⁷ Mohammed (570-632); also Sultan Murad I (r. 1362-1389), and his son Bayezid I, or Bajazet (r. 1389-1402).

“Micah saw the people of the Lord scattered in the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd: for when the shepherd is struck, the sheep of the flock will be scattered, the great striking of the shepherd is the diminishing of his jurisdiction, by which the subjects are drawn away from his obedience. When Jason had the office of the highest priest, he changed the ordinance of God, and brought in the customs of the heathen. The priests left the service of the holy altar, and applied themselves to wrestling and other exercises of the Grecians. And despising those things that belonged to the priests, they labored with all their might to learn such things from the Grecians. By that means the place, people, and holy anointing of priests, which in times past were held in great reverence by kings, were trodden underfoot by all men, robbed by the king’s power, and profaned by being thrust aside for money. Therefore, let the highest vicar of Christ look to this with a diligent eye, and let him be the follower of Him by whom he has received authority above others.

“If you mark well, most holy father, you will find that Christ sharply rebuked two brethren who coveted the seat of honor. He taught them not to play the lords over the people; but the more grace they were filled with, they were to be so much more humble than others, and more lowly to serve their brethren. To one who asks for his coat, give him the cloak; to one who strikes him on the one cheek, turn the other to him. For the sake of the sheep that are given to his keeping, he must forsake all earthly things, and shed his own blood; yes, and if need requires it, to die. These things, I say, are those that adorn the highest bishop, if they are found in him — not his white horse, not his imperial crown — because among all men, he is most bound to all the sheep of Christ. For the fear of God, therefore, and for the love of the flock which you guide, consider these things diligently, and do them wisely, and no longer allow us to waver between two. Even if not for your own cause, to whom perhaps the fulness of your own power is known; yet in pitying our weakness, if you are the one, then tell us openly, and show yourself to the world, that we all may follow the one. Do not be a bloody bishop to us, lest by your occasion, man’s blood is shed; lest hell swallow a number of souls; and lest the name of Christ be spoken of wickedly by infidels, through such a worthy personage.

“But perhaps you will say, our right is manifest enough, and we will not put it to other men for a decision. If this answer should be admitted, then the schism will continue still: seeing that neither part is willing to agree with the other. And where the world is, as it were, equally divided between them, neither part can be compelled to give way to the other without much bloodshed. The incarnation of Christ, and his resurrection, was known well enough to himself and to his disciples. And yet he asked his Father to be made known to the world. ^{Joh 17.23} He also made the gospel to be written, and the doctrine of the apostles; and he sent his apostles into all the world, to do the office of preaching, so that the same might be known to all men. The aforesaid reason is the subtlety of Mahomet, who knowing himself guilty of his sect, utterly forbade disputations. If you have such full trust of your right, put it to the examination of worthy persons in a general council, to which it belongs by right to define such doubts. Or else commit it to able persons, and give them full power to determine all things concerning that matter; or at least, by both parties forsaking the office, leave the church of God free to speedily provide a new shepherd.

“We find kings have forsaken their temporal kingdoms only for devotion, and have taken the apparel of a monk’s profession. Therefore, let Christ’s vicar (being a professor of most high holiness) be ashamed to continue in his seat of honor to the offense of all people, and to the prejudice and hurt of the Romish church, and to its devotion, and to cutting kingdoms away from it.

“But if you say, it is not requisite that the cause of God’s church be called into controversy, and therefore we cannot so easily get away from it, seeing that our conscience forbids us. Then to this we answer, if it is the cause of God and the church, let the general council judge it. But if it

is a personal cause (as almost all the world probably thinks) if you were the followers of Christ, you would rather choose a temporal death, than to suffer such a schism and division. I do not say this to the hurt of so many, but I speak to the endless destruction of souls, to the offense of the whole world, and to an everlasting shame of the apostolical dignity. Did not Clement, named (or that I may speak more truly) *ordained* by St. Peter to the apostolic dignity, and to be bishop, resign his right, so that his deed might be taken as an example by his successors? Also Pope Siricius (r. 384-399) gave up his popedom to be a comfort to the eleven thousand virgins.⁴⁸ Therefore much more should you (if need requires it) give up your popedom, that you might gather together the children of God who are scattered abroad. For just as it is thought to be a glorious thing to defend the common right, even unto bloodshed, so it is sometimes necessary for a man to wink at his own cause, and to forsake it for a greater profit, and by that means to better procure peace. Should he not be thought a devil, and Christ's enemy, who would agree to an election of himself for the apostolical dignity and popedom, if it were to the destruction of Christians, the division of the church, and the offense and loss of all faithful people? If such mischief were made known to all the world by God's revelation, to come to pass by such a person receiving the popedom and apostolical dignity, then by like reasoning, why should a man not be judged an apostate by all men, and a forsaker of his faith, who chooses dignity or worldly honor, rather than the unity of the church? Christ died that he might gather together the children of God, who are scattered abroad. But such is an *enemy* of God and the church, who wishes his subjects to die in battle bodily, and the greater part of the world to perish in soul, rather than forsake his popedom.

"If the fear of God, the desire for the heavenly kingdom, and the earnest love of the unity of the church moves your heart, then show indeed that your works may bear witness to the truth. Clement and Siricius, most holy popes, not only are not reprov'd, but rather are revered by all men, because they gave up their right for profitable causes; and for the same cause, all the church of holy men show forth their praise. Likewise, your name should live for ever and ever, if you would do the same for a necessary cause, that is to say, for the unity of God's church. Give no heed to the unmeasurable cry of those who say that the right choosing of popes is lost, unless you defend your part manfully. But be afraid, lest those who stir up such mischief, look for their own advantage or honor; that is to say, that under your wing, they might be promoted to riches and honor. In this way Ahithophel was joined with Absalom in persecuting his own father, and falsely usurping his kingdom. ^{2Sam 15:31f}

"Furthermore, there should be no jeopardy for that election, because both parties stick stiffly to the old fashion of election, and both of them covet the preeminence of the Romish church, counselling all Christians to obey them. And although, through their resignation the fashion of choosing the pope might be changed for a time, that could be borne, rather than to suffer any longer this division in God's church. For that method in choosing is not so necessarily required for the state of a pope, that the successor of the apostle might not come in at the door by another method of election, and that be canonical enough. And we are manifestly taught this by the examples of the fathers; for Peter the apostle appointed Clement after him, and that was not by falsely usurping the power. It was thought that that method of appointing popes was lawful up to the time of Pope Hilary [r. 461-468], who first decreed that no pope should appoint his successor.

[260]

"Afterwards the election of the pope went by the clergy and people of Rome, and the consent of the emperor's council, as appears in the election of the blessed Gregory. But Pope Martin IV

⁴⁸ According to legend, Ursula, a Romano-British virgin and martyr, headed for Rome with her virgin followers and persuaded Pope Siricius, along with Sulpicius, bishop of Ravenna, to join them. After setting out for Cologne, which was being besieged by Huns, all the virgins were beheaded in a massacre.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

[r. 1281-1285], with the consent of the holy synod, granted king Charles I [r. 1266-1285] the power to choose the pope. But of late, pope Nicholas II [r. 1059-1061] was the first whom Martin mentions in his councils, as chosen by the cardinals. But most of the bishops of Lombardy withstood this election, and chose Cadulus to be pope, saying that the pope should not be chosen except within the precinct of Italy. Therefore we think it is not a safe way to so earnestly stick to the traditions of men in the method of choosing the pope, and to so often change it, lest we be thought to break God's traditions concerning the unity of the church. Rather, it would be better yet to ordain a new method of his election, and fitter for him as it has been before. But all things concerning the same election might be kept safe, if God's honor were looked to before your own, and the peace of the church were uprightly sought. For such a dishonoring would be most honoring to you; and giving way would be getting a greater dignity. The willing deposing of your honor would obtain for you the entry of everlasting honor; it would procure the love of the whole world toward you; and you would deserve to be exalted continually, just as David was in humbling himself. O how monstrous a sight, and how foul a monster a man's body is, that is disfigured with two heads! So too (if it were possible), the spouse of Christ would be made so monstrous if she were ruled with two such heads. But that is not possible — she is ever altogether fair, in whom no spot is found. ^{Eph 5:27} Therefore we must cast away that rotten member who thrusts in a second head. We cannot suffer any longer so great a wickedness in God's house, as to suffer God's coat, which is without seam, ^{Joh 19:23} to be torn by any means, by the hands of two who violently tear it asunder. For if these two were to be suffered to reign together, they would, between them, so tear in pieces that coat of the Lord, that scarcely one piece would hang with another. They surpass the wickedness of the soldiers who crucified Christ. For willing to keep the coat whole, they said, 'Let us not tear it, but let us cast lots for it, whose it will be.' ^{Joh 19:24} But these two popes not allowing their right and title to be tested by lot or other way (if not in words, yet in deeds), they pronounce this sentence: 'It shall neither be yours nor mine, but let it be divided.' For it appears they choose to be lords (though it is but in a little part, and that is to the confusion of the unity of the church) rather than, in leaving that lording, to seek the peace of the church. We do not affirm this, but only show the judgment of almost the whole world.

"We looked for amendment of this intolerable confusion during the time that these two inventors of this mischief lived. But we looked for peace, and behold trouble. For neither in their lifetimes nor in their deaths, have they procured any comfort, but rather dying, as it were, in a doubt between two ways, they left to their successors a matter of continual contention. But now for seven years, we desired and looked to have them bear good grapes, and they bring forth wild grapes. In this matter we fall into a deep despair. But inasmuch as we hear the comfort of the Lord, who promised that he would destroy those wicked men miserably, and let out his vineyard to other husbandmen who will bring him fruit at their appointed times. And he has promised faithfully that he will help his spouse in her need to the end of the world. We, leaning on the sure hope of this promise, and in hope believing against hope, by God's grace will put our helping hands to ease this misery, when a convenient time serves, as much as our kingly power is able. And although our wit does not perceive how these things may be amended, being encouraged to this by the hope of God's promise, we will do our endeavor. Just as Abraham believed that even if his son were slain by sacrifice, ^{Heb 11:17-19} that the multitude of his seed would increase to the number of the stars, according to God's promise.

"Now, therefore, the times draw near to make an end of this schism, lest a third election of a schismatic against the apostle's successor, makes a custom of the thing, and so the pope of Avignon will be beside the Romish pope, and he will say with his partakers, as the patriarch of Constantinople said to Christ's vicar when he forsook him, 'The Lord be with you, for the Lord is with us.' (see p. 168) And this is much to be feared by all Christian men: for that Pharisee

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

now begins to be called the *pope of Avignon* among the people. But perhaps it would be thought by some men, that it does not belong to secular princes to bridle the outrages of the pope. To them we answer that the members naturally put themselves in jeopardy to save the head, and the parts labor to save the whole. Christ so dressed his spouse, that her sides would cling together, and uphold themselves; and by course of time, and occasion of things, they would correct one another, and cling together in harmony. Did not Moses put down Aaron, because he was unfaithful? ^{Num 12.1f} Solomon put down Abiathar, who came by lineal descent from Anathoth, and removed his priesthood from his kindred to the stock of Eleazar, in the person of Zadok, who had his beginning from Eli the priest? ^{1Kng 2.27.35} Emperor Otto deposed Pope John XII because he was immoral. The Emperor Henry put down Gratian, because he used simony in buying and selling spiritual livings. And Otto deposed Pope Benedict I, because he thrust himself in.⁴⁹ Therefore, by like reasoning, why may not kings and princes bridle the Romish pope in default of the church, if the quality of his fault requires it, or the necessity of the church compels them to help the church oppressed by tyranny? In olden times, schisms (which arose about making the pope) were determined by the power of secular princes, just as the schism between Symmachus and Laurence was ended in a council before Theodric, king of Italy. The Emperor Henry III, when two men strove to be pope, deposed them both, and received the third who was chosen at Rome to be pope — that is to say, Clement II, who crowned Henry with the imperial crown. And the Romans promised Henry that from then on they would promote no one to be pope without his consent. Alexander also overcame four popes — schismatics — ‘all of whom the Emperor Frederick corrected.’

“Thus look at the register of popes and their deeds, and you will find that schisms have most commonly been decided by the power of secular princes, the schismatics being cast out. Sometimes new popes are made, and sometimes the old ones are cast out of their dignities, and restored to their old dignities again. If it were not lawful for secular princes to bridle the outrages of such a pope who is lawfully made, but afterwards becomes a tyrant, then in such a case he might oppress the church. He might change Christendom into heathens, and make the labor of Christ crucified, to be in vain: or else truly, God would not have provided for his spouse in earth to withstand these dangers by all means, and as much as possible by the service of men. Therefore we counsel you, with such a loving affection as becomes children, that you well consider this in your heart, lest in working by this means, through your desire, you prepare a way for antichrist to bear rule. And so by this means, as we fear, one of these two things will happen: either you will cause all the princes of the world to rise against you to bring in a true follower of Christ to have the state of apostolical dignity; or what is worse, by the whole world despising the rule of one shepherd, it will leave the Romish church desolate.

“But God keep this from the world, that the desire for honor by two men would bring such a desolation into the church of God. For then, that falling away, which the apostle prophesied, would come before the coming of antichrist was at hand. ^{2The 2.3} That would be the last disposition of the world: to receive antichrist with honor. Consider, therefore, the state of your most excellent holiness, how you received the power from God to build the church, and not to destroy it; that Christ has given you wine and oil to heal the wounded; and He has appointed you his vicar in those things which pertain to gentleness, and has given us these things which serve to rigor. For we do not bear the sword without cause; it is to punish evil-doers, which power we have received, as ordained by God, ourselves being witness. We beseech you to receive our counsel effectually, that in doing so, the waters may return to the places from where they came, and so the waters may begin to be made sweet with salt — lest the axe swim on the water, and the wood sink, and lest the fruitful olive degenerate into a wild olive; and

⁴⁹ The ravages of the Lombards rendered it difficult to communicate with the emperor at Constantinople, who claimed the privilege of confirming the election of popes. Hence there was a vacancy of nearly eleven months between the death of Pope John III and the arrival of the imperial confirmation of Benedict's election on 2 June 575.

the leprosy of Naaman clung continually to the house of Gehazi; and lest the pope and the Pharisees crucify Christ again. Christ, the spouse of the church, which customarily brings the chief bishop into the holiest place, increase, or rather restore your holiness, it being lost.”

[261] A.D. 1397-1400.

This epistle of King Richard II, written to Pope Boniface IX in the time of the schism (A.D. 1397), just as it contained much good matter of wholesome counsel to be followed, so how little it worked with the pope the sequel that will afterwards be declared. For the schism continued long after, in which neither of the popes would give up their hold.

Deposition and Death of Richard II.

We come now to the 22d year of King Richard's reign, which is A.D. 1399. In this year was the strange and lamentable deposing of King Richard from his kingly scepter, the cause of which was briefly as follows.

Several acts on the part of the king led to the estrangement of the people, and certain of the nobles appeared in arms against him. As this was going on in England, the report reached the king's ears, who was then in Ireland. He therefore left the business he had in Ireland, and returning, he landed at Milford Haven, not daring, it seems, to come to London.

Henry duke of Hereford having returned from France, and taken up arms against the king, had now landed in the north, and was joined by the earl of Northumberland, lord Henry Percy, and Henry his son, the earl of Westmoreland, lord Radulph Nevil, and other lords, with a great number of men, so that the multitude grew to 60,000 able soldiers. First making toward the castle of Bristol, where the members of the council who sided with the king had shut themselves in. Having gained the castle, they took the chief of them prisoners, namely; John Bushy, Henry Grene, William Scrope and William Bagot. Three of these were immediately beheaded, but Bagot escaped and fled away to Ireland.

The king lying about Wales, destitute and desolate, without comfort or counsel, neither dared come to London, nor would any man come to him. Perceiving that the commons had a great force against him, and would rather die than cease what they had begun, and being compassed on every side with miseries, Richard moved from place to place, the duke still following him. At length, at the castle of Conway, the king desired to talk with Thomas Arundel archbishop, and the earl of Northumberland. He declared to them that he would resign his crown, on condition that an honorable living might be provided for him, and that life be promised to eight persons, whom he would name. This being granted and ratified, but not performed, he came to the castle of Flint. From there he was brought the same night by the duke of Lancaster and his army to Chester, and from there conveyed secretly to the Tower, there to be kept till the next parliament. As he came near to London, several evilly disposed men of the city gathered themselves, thinking to slay him, for the great cruelty he had used toward the city. But the madness of the people was checked by the mayor and rulers of the city. The duke followed not long after, and the parliament assembled. In this parliament, the earl of Northumberland, with many other earls and lords, was sent to the king in the Tower, to receive his full resignation, according to his promise. This done, certain accusations and articles were laid against the king. And the next year, after he was removed to Pomfret castle, he starved to death there.

King Henry IV – 1399.

And thus King Richard being deposed from his rightful crown, the duke of Lancaster ⁵⁰ was led to the royal seat by Thomas Arundel the archbishop. Standing there, and crossing himself on the forehead and the breast, Henry spoke as follows:

“In the name of God, Amen. I, Henry of Lancaster, claim the realm of England and the Crown, with all the appurtenances, as descended by right line of the blood, coming from that good Lord King Henry III. And through the right that God of his grace has sent to me, with the help of my kin and of my friends to recover the same, which was in danger of ruin by default of good government, and due justice,” etc.

After these words, the archbishop, asking the assent of the people, took the duke by the hand, and placed him on the throne. Shortly after, he was crowned king of England by the archbishop.

The History of Sir William Sautre.

The next year, a parliament was held at Westminster; in which one Sir William Sautre, a good man and a faithful priest, inflamed with zeal for true religion, requested that he might be heard for the advantage of the whole realm. But the matter being suspected by the bishops, they succeeded in having the matter referred to the convocation. There William Sautre, being brought before the bishops and notaries, the convocation was deferred to the Saturday next ensuing.

When Saturday had come, that is to say, the 12th of February A.D. 1400, Thomas Arundel archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of his provincial council being assembled in the chapter-house, made objections against Sir William Sautre, personally then and there appearing by the command of the archbishop. It was said that Sir William had once renounced and abjured before the bishop of Norwich, diverse and sundry conclusions that were heretical and erroneous; and that after such abjuration, he publicly and privately held, taught, and preached the same conclusions, or similar ones, contrary to the catholic faith, and to the great peril and pernicious example of others. After this, the archbishop caused such conclusions, held and preached by Sir William, to be read to him then and there, in a certain scroll written in the tenor of the words that follow:

“Sir William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, parish priest of the church St. Seithe the Virgin in London, publicly and privately holds these conclusions under written.

1. That he will not worship the cross on which Christ suffered, but only Christ who suffered on the cross.
2. That he would sooner worship a temporal king than the wooden cross.
3. That he would rather worship the bodies of the saints, than the very cross of Christ on which he hung, if it were before him.
4. That he would rather worship a man truly contrite than the cross of Christ.
5. That he is bound to worship a man who is predestinate rather than an angel of God.
6. That if any man would visit the monuments of Peter and Paul, or go on a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas à Becket, or anywhere else, for obtaining of any temporal benefit, he is not

⁵⁰ This is Henry IV, also known as Henry Bolingbroke. He was the first king from the House of Lancaster, born at Bolingbroke Castle in Lincolnshire, c. 1367. Henry was the son of John of Gaunt (p. 225).

bound to keep his vow, but he may distribute the expenses of his vow upon the alms of the poor.

7. That every priest and deacon is more bound to preach the word of God than to say the canonical hours. ⁵¹

8. That after pronouncing the sacramental words of the body of Christ, the bread remains of the same nature that it was before, nor does it cease to be bread.”

The archbishop of Canterbury required Sir William to answer to these conclusions, or articles. Sir William then asked for a copy, and requested a competent time to answer. The archbishop appointed the following Thursday. When the day had come, the convocation was adjourned until the morrow. And when the morrow came. Sir William Sautre, in the chapter-house, before the bishop and his provincial council, exhibited a certain scroll, containing the answers to the articles or conclusions given to him, and said that he delivered it to the archbishop as his answer in that behalf. That answer was as follows: —

[262]

“I, William Sautre, unworthy priest, say and answer that I will not, and intend not to worship the cross on which Christ was crucified, but only Christ who suffered upon the cross. So understand me, that I will not worship the material cross, or the gross corporeal matter: yet notwithstanding I will worship it as a sign, token, and memorial of the passion of Christ. And that I will rather worship a temporal king, than the wooden cross, and the material substance. And that I will rather worship the bodies of saints than the very cross of Christ on which he hung, with this addition: even if the very same cross were before me, regarding the material substance of it. And also that I will rather worship a man truly confessed and penitent, than the cross on which Christ hung, as touching the material substance.

“And that also I am bound, and will rather worship him whom I know to be predestinate, truly confessed and contrite, than an angel of God; for the one is a man of the same nature as the humanity of Christ, and so he is not a blessed angel. Notwithstanding, I will worship both of them, according to the will of God, as I should.

“Also, that if any man has made a vow to visit the shrines of the apostles Peter and Paul, or to go on pilgrimage to St. Thomas’s tomb, or anywhere else, to obtain any temporal benefit or advantage, he is not bound simply to keep his vow upon the necessity of salvation; but he may give the expenses of his vow in alms among the poor, by the prudent counsel of his superior, as I suppose.

“And also I say, that every deacon and priest is more bound to preach the word of God, than to say the canonical hours, according to the primitive order of the church.

“Also, regarding the sacrament of the altar, I say that after the pronouncing of the sacramental words of the body of Christ, the bread does not cease to be very bread simply, but it remains bread, holy, true, and the bread of life; and I believe the said sacrament to be the very body of Christ, after the pronouncing of the sacramental words.”

When all these answers were publicly read, the archbishop inquired of Sir William whether he had abjured the heresies and errors objected against him, or else had revoked and renounced the conclusions or articles, or not? To which he answered and affirmed that he had not. And then the archbishop examined Sir William Sautre, especially upon the sacrament of the altar.

⁵¹ *Canonical hours*: appointed times for prayer throughout the day, set by Benedict’s Rule (c. 480-c. 547).

First, whether in the sacrament of the altar, after the pronouncing of the sacramental words, there remains very material bread or not? To this interrogatory Sir William somewhat waveringly answered, that he did not know. He said, however, that there was very bread, because it was the bread of life which came down from heaven.

After that, the archbishop demanded of him whether in the sacrament after the sacramental words rightly pronounced by the priests, the same bread remains which did before the words were pronounced, or not.' And to this question William answered as before, saying, that there was bread, holy, true, and the bread of life.

After that, the archbishop asked him whether the same material bread before consecration, by the sacramental words of the priest rightly pronounced, is transubstantiated from the nature of bread into the very body of Christ? Sir William said, that he did not know what that meant.

And then the archbishop assigned Sir William till the next day to deliberate, and to more fully make his answer. And he then and there adjourned the convocation till the morrow, which was the 19th of February. It having come, the archbishop of Canterbury, before his provincial council then and there assembled, specially examined Sir William Sautre on the sacrament of the altar, as before; and Sir William again answered as before.

Then the archbishop demanded, whether he would stand to the determination of the holy church or not, which affirms that in the sacrament of the altar, after the words of consecration being rightly pronounced of the priest, the same bread, which in nature was bread before, ceases any more to be bread? To this interrogation Sir William said that he would stand to the determination of the church, where such determination was not contrary to the will of God.

The archbishop then demanded of him again, what his judgment was concerning the sacrament of the altar? He said and affirmed that after the words of consecration were duly pronounced by the priest, it remained very bread, and the same bread which it was before the words were spoken. Therefore the archbishop of Canterbury, by the counsel and assent of the whole convocation then and there present, sentenced Sir William Sautre — being personally present, and refusing to revoke his heresies, that is to say, his true doctrine, but rather constantly defending it — in the tenor of the following words:

“In the name of God, Amen. We, Thomas, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, primate of England, and legate of the apostolic see, by the authority of God Almighty, and blessed St. Peter and Paul, and of holy church, and by our own authority, sitting for tribunal as chief judge, having God alone before our eyes, by the counsel and consent of the whole clergy, our fellow brethren and suffragans, assistants to us in this present provincial council, by this definitive sentence of ours, do pronounce, decree, and declare by these presents, that you, William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, parish priest pretended, personally appearing before us, in and upon the crime of heresy, are judicially and lawfully convicted as a heretic, and as a heretic to be punished.”

The bishop of Norwich, according to the commandment of the said archbishop of Canterbury, presented to William Sautre a certain process, enclosed and sealed with his seal, giving the names of credible witnesses sealed with their seals, the tenor of which is as follows:

“That upon the last day of April, A.D. 1399, Sir William Sautre, parish priest of the church of St. Margaret in the town of Lynn, appeared before the bishop of Norwich, and there publicly affirmed and held the conclusions before specified.

“And afterwards, to wit, the 19th day of May, Sir William revoked and renounced all his conclusions, abjuring and correcting all such heresies and errors, taking his oath upon a book before the bishop of Norwich, that from that time forward he would never preach, affirm, nor hold, privily nor openly, these conclusions; and that he would pronounce, according to the appointment of the bishop, the aforesaid conclusions to be erroneous and heresies, in the parish churches of Lynn and Tilney, and in other places at the assignment of the said bishop.”

This being done, the archbishop of Canterbury, in the convocation of his prelates and clergy, and such like men, caused the process of the bishop of Norwich to be read openly and publicly to Sir William Sautre. And after that, he demanded and objected against Sir William, that after he had revoked and abjured diverse errors and heresies before the said bishop of Norwich, he affirmed that in the same sacrament of the altar, after the consecration made by the priest, as he taught, there remained material bread. This heresy, among other errors, he also abjured before the foresaid bishop of Norwich. To which William answered smiling, or in a mocking way. He said and denied that he knew of these premises. Then, finally, it was demanded of Sir William, why he should not be pronounced as a man fallen into heresy, and why they should not further proceed to this degradation according to the canonical sanctions. Sir William answered nothing to this, nor would he allege any cause to the contrary.

Whereupon the archbishop of Canterbury, by the counsel and assent of the whole council, and especially by the counsel and assent of the reverend fathers and bishops, and also priors, deans, archdeacons and other worshipful doctors and clerics who were then and there present in the council, fully determined to proceed to the degradation and actual deposing of William Sautre, as relapsed into heresy, and as incorrigible, according to the sentence in writing, as follows.

[263] A.D. 1400.

“In the name of God, Amen. We Thomas, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, legate of the see; apostolical, and metropolitan of all England, do find and I declare, that you William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, priest, by us with the counsel and assent as all and singular our fellow brethren and whole clergy, by this our definitive sentence declared in writing, have been convicted and condemned for heresy, and are (having again fallen into heresy) to be deposed and degraded by these presents.”

On the 26th of February, the archbishop of Canterbury sat in the bishop’s seat of the foresaid church of St. Paul in London, and solemnly apparelled in his pontifical attire, with six other bishops, commanded and caused Sir William Sautre, apparelled in priestly vestments, to be brought before him. That done, he declared and expounded in English to all the clergy and people assembled there in great multitude; that all process was finished against Sir William Sautre. This being finished, he recited and read the above-mentioned sentence of relapse against Sir William. And as he saw that William was not all abashed, he proceeded to his degradation and actual deposition in the following form.

“In the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. We Thomas by God’s permission archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, denounce you William Sautre, otherwise called Chatris, a pretended chaplain, in the habit and apparel of a priest, as a heretic, and re-fallen into heresy, by this our sentence, by counsel, assent, and authority to be condemned: and by conclusion of all our fellow brethren, fellow bishops, prelates, council provincial, and of the whole clergy, do degrade and deprive you of your priestly order. And in sign of degradation and actual deposition from your priestly dignity, for your incorrigibility and lack of amendment, we take from you the paten and

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

chalice,⁵² and deprive you of all power and authority to celebrate the mass, and we also pull from your back the casule (cassock or robe), and take from you the vestment, and deprive you of all manner of priestly honor.

“Also, we Thomas archbishop by authority, counsel, and assent, which upon the foresaid William we have, being a pretended deacon, in the habit and apparel of a deacon, having the New Testament in your hands, being a heretic, and twice fallen, condemned by sentence as is aforesaid, do degrade and put you from the order of a deacon. And in token of your degradation and actual deposition, we take from you the book of the New Testament, and the stole, and do deprive you of all authority in reading of the gospel, and of all and all manner of dignity of a deacon.

“Also, we Thomas archbishop, by authority, counsel, and assent, which over you the foresaid William we have, being a pretended sub-deacon, in the habit and vestment of a sub-deacon, a heretic, and twice fallen condemned by sentence, as is aforesaid, do degrade and put you from the order of a sub-deacon; and in token of this, your degradation and actual deposition, we take from you the surplice and maniple,⁵³ and do deprive you of all manner of sub-deaconical dignity.

“Also we Thomas archbishop aforesaid, by counsel assent, and authority which we have over you, the foresaid William, a pretended acolyte, wearing the habit of an acolyte, and heretic, twice fallen, by our sentence condemned, do degrade and put from you all order of an acolyte; and in sign and token of this your degradation, and actual deposition, we take from you the candlestick and taper, and also urceolum (pitcher), and do deprive you of all and all manner of dignity of an acolyte.

“Also we Thomas archbishop, by assent, counsel, and authority, which upon you the aforesaid William we have, a pretended exorcist, in the habit of an exorcist or holy water clerk, being a heretic, twice fallen, and by our sentence as is aforesaid, condemned, do degrade and depose you from the order of an exorcist; and in token of this your degradation and actual deposition, we take from you the Book of Conjurations, and do deprive you of all and singular dignity of an exorcist.

“Also, we Thomas archbishop, by assent, counsel, and authority, as is abovesaid, do degrade and depose you the aforesaid William, a pretended reader, clothed in the habit of a reader, a heretic, twice fallen, and by our sentence as is aforesaid, condemned from the order of a reader; and in token of this your degradation and actual deposition, we take from you the book of the divine lections (portions of sacred text read aloud during mass) and do deprive you of all and singular manner of dignity of such a reader.

“Also, we Thomas archbishop of Canterbury aforesaid, by authority, counsel and assent, the which we have, as is aforesaid, do degrade and put you the foresaid William Sautre, a pretended sexton,⁵⁴ in the habit of a sexton, and wearing a surplice, being a heretic twice fallen, by our sentence definitive condemned, as aforesaid from the order of a sexton; and in token of this your degradation and actual deposition, for the causes aforesaid, we take from you the keys of the church-door, and your surplice, and do deprive you of all and singular manner of commodities of a door-keeper.

“And also, by the authority of omnipotent God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, and by the authority, counsel, and assent, of our whole council provincial above written, we do degrade

⁵² *Paten and chalice*: the small plate used to hold the bread during the Eucharist, and the cup that holds the wine.

⁵³ *Surplice*: A loose-fitting white ecclesiastical vestment with wide sleeves; the *maniple* is a liturgical vestment worn on the left arm.

⁵⁴ *Sexton*: An officer of the church who is in charge of sacred objects, church buildings and properties.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

you, and depose you, being here personally present before us, from orders, benefices, privileges and habit in the church; and for your incorrigible pertinency we do degrade you before the secular court of the high constable and marshal of England, being personally present; and do depose you from all and singular clerky honors and dignities whatever, by these writings. Also, in token of your degradation and deposition, here actually we have caused your crown and ecclesiastical tonsure in our presence to be erased away, and utterly to be abolished, like the form of a secular layman; and here we put upon your head the aforesaid William, the cap of a lay secular person; beseeching the court aforesaid, that they will receive favorably the said William to them, thus recommitted.”

Thus William Sautre the servant of Christ being utterly thrust out of the pope’s kingdom, and metamorphosed from a clerk to a secular layman, was committed to the secular power. Which so done, the bishops, not yet content, did not cease to call upon the king to cause him to be brought to speedy execution. Whereupon the king, too ready to gratify the clergy, and to retain their favors, directed a terrible decree against William Sautre, and sent it to the major and sheriffs of London to be put into execution; as follows:

The Decree of the King against William Sautre.

“The decree of our sovereign lord the king and his council in the parliament, against a certain newly sprung up heretic. To the major and sheriffs of London, etc. Whereas the reverend father Thomas archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolic see, by the assent, consent, and counsel of other bishops, and his brethren suffragans, and also of the whole clergy within his province or diocese, gathered together in his provincial council, the due order of the law being observed in all points in this behalf, has pronounced and declared, by his definitive sentence, William Sautre sometime chaplain fallen again into his most damnable heresy, which beforehand the said William had abjured, thereupon to be a most manifest heretic, and therefore has decreed that he should be degraded, and has for the same cause really degraded him from all prerogative and privilege of the clergy, decreeing to leave him to the secular power; and has really so left him, according to the laws and canonical sanctions set forth in this behalf, and also that our holy mother the church has nothing further to do in the premises.

[264]

“We therefore being zealous in religion, and reverend lovers of the catholic faith, willing and minding to maintain and defend the holy church, and the laws and the liberties of the same, to root out all such errors and heresies out of our kingdom of England, and with deserved punishment to correct and punish all heretics or such as be convicted; provided always that both according to the law of God and man, and the canonical institutions in this behalf accustomed, such heretics convicted and condemned in form aforesaid ought to be burned with fire: we command you, as straitly as we may, or can, firmly enjoining you that you cause the said William, being in your custody, in some public or open place within the liberties of your city aforesaid (the cause aforesaid being published to the people) to be put into the fire, and there in the same fire really to be burned, to the great horror of his offense, and the manifest example of other Christians. Fail not in the execution of this, upon the peril that will fail thereupon.”

Thus it may appear how kings and princes have been blinded and abused by the false prelates of the church, insomuch that they have been their slaves and butchers, to slay Christ’s poor innocent members. See therefore what danger it is for princes not to have knowledge and understanding themselves, but to be led by other men’s eyes, and specially trusting to such guides who deceive them through hypocrisy, and devour the people through cruelty.

As King Henry IV, who was the deposer of King Richard, was the first of all English kings who began the unmerciful burning of Christ's saints for standing against the pope, so this William Sautre, the true and faithful martyr of Christ, was the first of all of those in Wycliffe's time, who I find to be burned in the reign of this king, which was A.D. 1400.

After the martyrdom of this godly man, the rest of the same company began to conceal themselves for fear of the king, who was altogether bent to side with the pope's prelacy. Such was the reign of this prince, that he was ever terrible to the godly, immeasurable in his actions, and really beloved by very few men; but princes never lack flatterers about them. Nor was the time of his reign quiet, but full of trouble, blood, and misery. Such was their desire for King Richard again, in the reign of this king, that many years after Richard was rumored to be alive (by those who desired to be true, that which they knew to be false) for which several were executed. For six or seven years, scarcely a year passed without some conspiracy against the king. Many of the nobles joined in these rebellions, and many of them were beheaded or otherwise slain; but still the rebellions continued.

Articles against King Henry – 1401.

This civil rebellion of so many nobles and others, against the king, declared what hostile feelings the people then bore towards King Henry. Among them I cannot omit here the archbishop of York named Richard Scrope, who with the Lord Mowbray, marshal of England, gathered a great company in the north country against the king. To them was also joined the forces of Lord Bardolf, and Henry Percy earl of Northumberland. And to stir up the people more willingly to take their parts, they collected ten articles against the king, and fastened them on the doors of the churches and monasteries, to be read by all men in English. These articles, as they contain a great part of the doings between King Henry and King Richard, I thought to insert them here to better open the matter, in such a form as I found them.

Articles set upon the Church Doors against King Henry IV.

“In the name of God, Amen, Before the Lord Jesus Christ, judge of the quick and dead, etc. We A___ B___ C___ D___ etc., not long since became bound by oath upon the sacred evangelical book, to our sovereign lord Richard, late king of England and France, in the presence of many prelates, potentates, and nobility of the realm; that we, so long as we lived, should bear true allegiance and fidelity toward him and his heirs succeeding him in the kingdom by just title, right, and line, according to the statutes and custom of this realm of England. By virtue of which we are bound to see that no vices or heinous offenses arising in the commonwealth take effect, and we ought to give ourselves and our goods to withstand the same, without fear of the sword or death, upon pain of perjury, which pain is everlasting damnation. Therefore, seeing and perceiving diverse horrible crimes, and great enormities daily without ceasing, committed by the children of the Devil and Satan's soldiers against the supremacy of the church of Rome, the liberty of the church of England, and the laws of the realm, against the person of King Richard and his heirs, against the prelates, noblemen, religion, and commonalty, and finally against the whole public weal of the realm of England, to the great offense of the majesty of Almighty God, and to the provocation of his just wrath and vengeance toward the realm and people — fearing also the destruction both of the church of Rome and England, and the ruin of our country to be at hand, having before our eyes the justice and the kingdom of God, calling always on the name of Jesus, having an assured confidence in his clemency, mercy and power — we have here taken certain articles, subscribed in the following form to be propounded, tried, and heard before the just judge, Jesus Christ, and the whole world, to his honor, the delivery of the church, the clergy, and commonalty, and to the utility and profit of the public weal. But if (which God forbid) by force,

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

fear, or violence of wicked persons, we are cast in prison, or prevented by violent death, so that in this world we will not be able to prove the articles as we would wish, then we appeal to the high celestial judge, that he may judge and discern the same, in the day of His supreme judgment.

“I. We depose, say, except, and intend to prove against the Lord Henry Darby, son of the Lord John of Gaunt, late duke of Lancaster, and commonly called king of England (himself pretending the same, although without all right and title to it) and against his adherents, favors, and accomplices; that they ever have been, are, and will be traitors, invaders, and destroyers of God’s church in Rome, England, Wales, and Ireland, and of our sovereign lord Richard late king of England, his heirs, his kingdom and commonwealth, as will hereafter manifestly appear.

“II. We depose, etc. against the said Lord Henry, for he had conceived, devised, and conspired certain heinous crimes and traitorous offenses against his sovereign lord Richard’s state and dignity, as manifestly appeared in the contention between the said Lord Henry, and the Lord Thomas duke of Norfolk begun at Coventry, but not finished thoroughly. Afterwards he was sent into exile by sentence of King Richard, by the agreement of his father the Lord John duke of Lancaster, by the voice of many of the lords temporal, and nobility of the realm, and also by his own consent — there to remain for a certain time appointed to him by the said lords, and with this he was bound by oath not to return into England before he had obtained favor and grace from the king. Not long after, when the king had departed into Ireland for reformation of that country pertaining to the crown of England, but then rebelling against it, the said Lord Henry in the meantime, contrary to his oath and fidelity, and long before the time limited to him was expired, with all his favorers and invaders secretly entered into the realm, swearing and protesting before the face of the people, that his coming into the realm in the absence of the king was for no other cause than that he might, in humble sort with the love and favor of the king, and all the lords spiritual and temporal, have and enjoy his lawful inheritance descending to him by right after the death of his father. This thing, as it pleased all men, so they cried, ‘Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.’ But how this blessing afterwards turned into cursing, will appear in that which followed. And also you will understand his horrible and wicked conspiracy against his sovereign lord King Richard, and diverse other lords, spiritual as well as temporal, besides which his manifest perjury will be well known, and that he remains not only foresworn and perjured, but also excommunicate, for he conspired against his sovereign lord our king. Therefore we pronounce him by these presents perjured as well as excommunicate.

[265] A.D. 1401.

“III. We depose, etc. against the Lord Henry, that he immediately after his entry into England, by crafty and subtle policy caused to be proclaimed openly throughout the realm, that no tenths of the clergy, fifteenths of the people, sealing up of cloth, diminution of wool, impost of wine, nor other extortions or exactions whatever, should hereafter be required or exacted — hoping by this means to purchase for himself the voice and favor of the prelates spiritual, the lords temporal, the merchants, and commonalty of the whole realm. After this, he took by force the king’s castles and fortresses, spoiled and devoured his goods wherever he found them, crying, Havoc! Havoc! The king’s majesty’s subjects, spiritual as well as temporal, he spoiled and robbed; some he took captive and ‘imprisoned, and some he slew and put to miserable death, of which many were bishops, prelates, priests, and religious men. Whereby it is manifest that the said Lord Henry is not only perjured, in promising and swearing that hereafter there would be no more exactions, payments, or extortions within the realm, but also excommunicate for the violence and injury done to prelates and priests. Therefore by these presents we pronounce him, as before, perjured as well as excommunicate.

“IV. We depose, etc. against the said Lord Henry, That hearing of the king’s return from Ireland into Wales; he rose up against his sovereign lord the king with many thousands of armed men, marching forward with all his power towards the castle of Flint in Wales, where he took the king and held him prisoner, and so led him captive as a traitor to Leicester. From there he took this journey towards London, misusing the king by the way, both he and his, with many injuries and opprobrious insults and scoffs. And in the end, he committed him to the Tower of London, and held a parliament, the king being absent and in prison. There, for fear of death, he compelled the king to yield and resign to him all his right and title of the kingdom and crown of England. After this resignation was made, the said Lord Henry standing up in the parliament house, stoutly and proudly before them all, said and affirmed, that the kingdom of England and crown of the same, with all belonging to it, pertained to him at that present time, as of very right, and to no other; for the said King Richard by his own deed was deprived forever of all the right, title, and interest that he ever had, has, or may have in the same. And thus at length, by right and wrong, he exalted himself to the throne of the kingdom. Since that time, our commonwealth never flourished nor prospered, but has been altogether void of virtue. For the spirituality is oppressed, exercise and war-like practices have not been maintained, charity has grown cold, and covetousness and misery have taken place; and finally, mercy is taken away and vengeance takes its place. Whereby it appears (as said before), that lord Henry is not only perjured and false by usurping the kingdom and dominion belonging to another, but also excommunicate for apprehending, unjustly imprisoning, and depriving his sovereign lord the king of his royal crown and dignity. Therefore, as in the articles before, we pronounce the said Lord Henry to be excommunicate.

“V. We depose, etc. against the said Lord Henry, that he, with the rest of his favorers and accomplices, heaping mischief upon mischief, have committed and brought to pass a most wicked and mischievous fact, yes, such as has not been heard of at any time before. For after they had taken and imprisoned the king, and deposed him by open injury, against all human nature; yet, not content with this, they brought him to Pomfret castle, and there imprisoned him, where fifteen days and nights they vexed him with continual hunger, thirst, and cold, and finally bereft him of life with a kind of death that has never before that time been known in England, but by God’s Providence, it has come to light. Who ever heard of such a deed, or who ever saw the like of him? Therefore, O England! arise, stand up, avenge the cause, the death and injury of your king and prince — which if you do not, then take this for certain, that the righteous God will destroy you by strange invasions and foreign power, and avenge Himself on you for so horrible an act. Whereby not only his perjury appears, but also his most execrable excommunication; so that, as before, we pronounce the said Henry not only perjured, but also excommunicate.

“VI. We depose, etc. against the said Lord Henry, that after he had attained to the crown and scepter of the kingdom, he caused immediately to be apprehended diverse lords spiritual, bishops, abbots, priors, and religious men of all orders, whom he arrested, imprisoned, and bound, and against all order he brought them before the secular judges to be examined; nor sparing the bishops whose bodies were anointed with sacred oil, nor priests nor religious men, but he commanded them to be condemned, hanged, and beheaded by the temporal law and judgment, notwithstanding the privilege of the church and holy orders, which he ought to have revered and worshipped if he had been a true and lawful king. For the first and chief oath in the coronation of a lawful king is to defend and keep inviolate the liberties and rights of the church, and not to deliver any priest or religious man into the hands of the secular power, except for heresy, and that is after his degradation, according to the order of the church. He has done contrary to all this; so that it is manifest by this article as before in the rest, that he is both perjured and excommunicate.

“VII. We depose, etc. against the said Lord Henry, that he not only caused to be put to death the lords spiritual and other religious men, but also diverse of the lords temporal and nobility of the realm, and chiefly those who studied for the preservation of the commonwealth, not ceasing as yet to continue his mischievous enterprise, if by God’s Providence it is not prevented, and that be done with speed: among all other of the nobility, he put these to death first: the earl of Salisbury, the earl of Huntington, the earl of Gloucester, the Lord Roger Clarendon the king’s brother, with several other knights and esquires, and afterwards, the Lord Thomas Percy earl of Worcester, and the Lord Henry Percy son and heir to the earl of Northumberland. This Lord Henry he not only slew, but to the utmost of his power again and again he endeavored to have him slain. For after he was once put to death, and delivered to the lord of Furnile to be buried (who committed his body to holy sepulture, with as much honor as might be, commending his soul to Almighty God with the suffrages of blessed mass and other prayers) the said Lord Henry, most like a cruel beast still thirsting for his blood, caused his body to be exhumed and brought out again, and placed between two millstones in the town of Shrewsbury, there to be kept with armed men; and afterwards to be beheaded and quartered, commanding that his head and quarters be carried into diverse cities of the kingdom. Therefore, for so detestable an act never heard of in any age before, we pronounce him, as in the former articles, excommunicate.

“VIII. We depose, etc. against the said Lord Henry, that after his attaining to the crown he willingly ratified, allowed, and approved a most wicked statute set forth and renewed in the parliament held at Winchester. That statute is directly against the church of Rome, and the power, and principality of it given by our Lord Jesus Christ to blessed St. Peter and his successors, bishops of Rome. To them it belongs by full authority, the free disposing of all spiritual promotions superior as well as inferior. This wicked statute is the cause of many mischiefs, viz. of simony, perjury, adultery, disorder, and disobedience; for many bishops, abbots, priors, and prelates (we will not say by virtue, but rather by error of this statute) have bestowed the benefices vacant upon young men, rude and unworthy persons, who have bargained with them for those benefices, so that scarcely one prelate is found who has not covenanted with the party promoted for the half yearly, or at the least, the third part of the said benefice so bestowed. And by this means the said statute is the destruction of the right of St. Peter, the church of Rome and England, the clergy and universities, the whole commonwealth, and maintenance of wars, etc.

[266]

“IX. We say and depose, etc. against the said Lord Henry, that after he had tyrannously taken upon himself the government of the realm, England never flourished since, nor prospered, by reason of his continual exactions of money and yearly oppressions of the clergy and commonalty. Nor is it known how this money so extorted is bestowed, when neither his soldiers, nor his gentlemen are paid as yet their wages and fees for their charges, and wonderful toil and labor, nor yet are the poor country people satisfied for the victuals taken from them. And nevertheless, the miserable clergy and more miserable commonalty, are still forced to pay by menaces and sharp threatenings. Notwithstanding that he swore, when he first usurped the crown, that hereafter there would be no such exactions or vexations, neither of the clergy nor of the laity. Therefore, as before, we pronounce him perjured, etc.

“X. In the tenth and last article we depose, say, and openly protest by these presents, for ourselves, and all our assistants in the cause of the church of Rome and England, and in the cause of King Richard, his heirs, the clergy and commonalty of the whole realm — that our intencion neither is, was, nor shall be, in word or deed to offend any state either of the prelates spiritual, lords temporal, or commons of the realm; but rather, foreseeing the perdition and destruction of this realm approaching, we have here brought before you certain articles

concerning the destruction of the same, to be circumspectly considered by the whole assembly, of the lords spiritual as well as temporal, and the faithful commons of England. We beseech you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ the righteous judge, and for the merits of our blessed lady the mother of God, and of St. George our defender, under whose displayed banner we wish to live and die, and under pain of damnation, that you will be favorable to us, and to our causes which are three in number. Of which the *first* is that we exalt to the kingdom, the true and lawful heir, and crown him in the kingly throne with the diadem of England. And *secondly*, that we recall the Welshmen, the Irishmen, and all other enemies of ours to perpetual peace and amity. *Thirdly*, and finally, that we deliver and make free our native country from all exactions, extortions, and unjust payment; beseeching our Lord Jesus Christ to grant his blessing, the remission of their sins, and life everlasting to all who assist us to their power in this godly and meritorious work. And to all those who are against us, we threaten the curse of Almighty God, by the authority committed to us by Christ and his holy church, and by these presents we pronounce them excommunicate.”

Archbishop of York Executed.

These articles being seen and read, a great concourse of people daily resorted more and more to the archbishop. The earl of Westmoreland, hearing of this, mustered his soldiers with all the force he was able to make, and went against the archbishop. But seeing his party too weak to encounter with him, he used policy, and under color of friendship, he labored to seek out the causes of that great stir. The archbishop showed him the articles which, when the earl had read them, he seemed to highly commend the purpose and doings of the bishop; promising that he would help in that quarrel to the utmost of his power. The archbishop, easily persuaded, was content — although much against the counsel of the earl marshal, and came to hold further conference. The articles being opened, published, and read, the earl of Westmoreland pretended to like them, and exhorted the archbishop that he would discharge the needless multitude of his soldiers, and dismiss them home to their works and business, and they would together drink and join hands in the sight of the whole company. Thus shaking hands together, the archbishop sent away his soldiers in peace, not knowing he was to be circumvented, until he was arrested by the hands of the earl of Westmoreland. Shortly after, the king coming with his army to York, he was there beheaded; and with him also Lord Thomas Mowbray, marshal, with diverse others. After their slaughter, the king proceeded further to pursue the earl of Northumberland, and Lord Thomas Bardolph. At length, within two years after, fighting against the king, they were slain in the field (A.D. 1408).

The king, after the shedding of so much blood, seeing himself so disliked by his subjects, thought to keep with the clergy, and with the bishop of Rome. And therefore he was compelled in all things to serve their humor, as it appeared in condemning William Sautre, as well as others whom we will now consider.

Among these is John Badby, who by the cruelty of Thomas Arundel, archbishop, and other prelates, was brought to his condemnation in this king's reign (A.D. 1409), as appears by their own registers.

The Martyrdom of John Badby, Artificer.

In A.D. 1409, March 1st, the following examination of John Badby, a layman, was made upon the crime of heresy, before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, and the archbishop of York, bishops of London, of Winchester, of Oxford, of Norwich, of Salisbury, of Bath, of Bangor, and a great number of other lords, both spiritual and temporal. Master Morgan read the articles of his opinions to the hearers, as follows:

“In the name of God, Amen. Be it manifest to all men by this present public instrument, that in the year after the incarnation of our Lord, according to the course and computation of the church of England, in the year 1409, John Badby, a layman, of the diocese of Worcester, appearing personally before the reverend father in Christ and Lord, Lord Thomas, by the grace of God bishop of Worcester, was detected of heresy, having heretically taught, and openly maintained, that the sacrament of the body of Christ, consecrated by the priest upon the altar, is not the true body of Christ by virtue of the words of the sacrament. But that after the sacramental words spoken by the priests to make the body of Christ, the material bread remains upon the altar as in the beginning, nor is it turned into the very body of Christ after the sacramental words spoken by the priests. This John Badby being examined, and diligently demanded by the reverend father, answered that it was impossible that any priest should make the body of Christ, and that he believed firmly that no priest could make the body of Christ by such words sacramentally spoken in such a way. And he also said expressly that he would never while he lived believe that any priest could make the body of Christ sacramentally, unless first he manifestly saw the like body of Christ to be handled in the hands of the priest upon the altar, in his corporal form. And furthermore, he said that John Raker of Bristol had as much power and authority to make the like body of Christ, as any priest had. Moreover, he said that when Christ sat at supper with his disciples, he did not have his body in his hand, with the intent to distribute it to his disciples; and he said expressly that he did not do this. He also spoke many other words teaching and defending the heresy, both grievous, and also out of order, and horrible to the ears of the hearers, sounding against the catholic faith.

“Upon this occasion the reverend father admonished and requested John Badby, often and very instantly to charity; that he should willingly have forsaken such heresy and opinion held, taught, and maintained by him against the sacrament, to renounce, and utterly abjure them, and to believe other things which the holy mother church believes. And he informed the said John in that behalf, both gently, and yet laudably. And yet the said John Badby, even though he was admonished and requested often and instantly by the said reverend father, said and answered expressly, that he would never believe otherwise than he had said, taught, and answered before. Whereupon, the aforesaid reverend father, bishop of Worcester, seeing, understanding, and perceiving John Badby to maintain and fortify the heresy, being stubborn, and proceeding in the same stubbornness, pronounced him to be up to this time convicted of such a heresy, and that he has been and is a heretic, and in the end declared it in these words:

[267] A.D. 1409.

“In the name of God, Amen. We, Thomas, bishop of Worcester, do accuse you, John Badby, being a layman, of our diocese, of and upon the crime of heresy, being oftentimes confessed and convicted before us sitting for chief judge, that you have taught, and openly affirmed, as up to now you do teach, boldly affirm, and defend that the sacrament of the body of Christ, consecrated upon the altar by the priest, is not the true body ‘of Christ; but in the sacramental words, to make the body of Christ, by virtue of pronouncing the said sacramental words, to have been in the crime of heresy: and we do pronounce you both to have been and to be a heretic, and do declare it finally by these writings.”

When these things were thus finished, and all the conclusions were read in the vulgar tongue, the archbishop demanded of him, whether he would renounce and forsake his opinions and such conclusions or not, and adhere to the doctrine of Christ and the catholic faith? He answered that according to what he had said before, he would adhere and stand to those words which he had answered before. Then the archbishop repeatedly required him by the bowels of Jesus Christ, to forsake those opinions and conclusions, and that from then on he would cling to the Christian faith which, in the audience of all the lords and others

who were present, he expressly denied and refused. After all this, when the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London had consulted as to what safe keeping John Badby might be committed, it was concluded that he should be put into a certain chamber or safe house within the mansion of the friars preachers. And then the archbishop of Canterbury said that he himself would keep the key to it in the meantime. When the day had expired, being the fifteenth of March, and the archbishop of Canterbury, with his fellow brethren and suffragans, were assembled in the church of St. Paul in London, the archbishop of Canterbury, taking the episcopal seat, called to him the archbishop of York, and the following bishops: Richard of London; Henry of Winchester; Robert of Chichester; Alexander of Norwich; and the noble Prince Edmund; the duke of York; Ralph, earl of Westmoreland; Thomas Beaufort, knight; lord chancellor of England; and the Lord Beaufort, with other noble men, spiritual as well as temporal, who stood and sat by, whom it would take a long to name.

Before them, John Badby was called personally to answer to the articles. The articles were read by the official of the court of Canterbury, and expounded publicly and expressly by the archbishop (in the vulgar tongue); and as John had spoken and deposed before, he still held and defended his opinions, and said that while he lived, he would never retract the same. And furthermore, he said especially to be noted, that the lord duke of York, personally there present, and every other man for the time being, is of more estimation and reputation than the sacrament of the altar, consecrated by the priest in due form. And while they were thus in his examination, the archbishop considering and weighing that he would in no way be altered, and seeing moreover his stout countenance, and confirmed heart, he began to persuade others as it appeared. These things considered, the arch-prelate, when he saw that it was not in his power either by exhortations, reasons, or arguments, to bring John Badby from his constant truth to the catholic faith (executing and doing the office of his great master) proceeded to confirm and ratify the former sentence given by the bishop of Worcester against John Badby, pronouncing him as an open and public heretic. And thus they delivered him to the secular power; and desired the temporal lords then and there present, that they would not put John Badby to death for his offense, nor deliver him to be punished or put to death *in the presence of all the lords*. These things thus done and concluded by the bishops in the forenoon, in the afternoon the king's writ was not far behind. John Badby, still persevering in his constancy unto death, was brought to Smithfield, and there being put in an empty barrel, was bound with iron chains fastened to a stake having dry wood put about him.

And as he was thus standing in the barrel, it happened that the prince, the king's eldest son, was present. Showing some part of the good Samaritan, he endeavored to save the life of him whom the hypocritical Levites and Pharisees sought to put to death. He admonished and counselled John Badby that he should speedily withdraw himself from these dangerous labyrinths of opinions, often adding threats, which might have daunted any man's courage.

In the meantime, the prior of St. Bartholomew's in Smithfield, brought with all solemnity the sacrament of God's body, with twelve torches borne before them, and so showed the sacrament to the poor man at the stake. And then they demanded of him how he believed in it. He answered that he knew well it was hallowed bread, and not God's body. And then the barrel was put over him, and fire put to him. And when he felt the fire, he cried, mercy, calling upon the Lord, and so the prince immediately commanded to take away the barrel, and quench the fire. The prince's commandment being obeyed, he asked John Badby if he would forsake heresy and take to the faith of holy church? If he would do this, he would have goods enough, promising also a yearly stipend out of the king's treasury.

But this valiant champion of Christ, neglecting the prince's fair words, refused the offer of worldly promises, being no doubt more vehemently inflamed with the Spirit of God, than with any earthly desire. Therefore, when he continued immovable in his former mind, the prince commanded him to be put straight back into the barrel, and that he should not afterward look for any grace or favor. Just as he could not be allured by any rewards, even so he was not at all abashed at their torments, but as a valiant champion of Christ, he persevered invincible to the end. Not without a great and most cruel battle, but with much greater triumph of victory — the Spirit of Christ always having the upper hand in his members, notwithstanding the fury, rage, and power of the whole world.

This godly martyr, John Badby, having thus perfected his testimony and martyrdom in fire, the persecuting bishops were not yet content. Thinking that as yet they either were not strong enough, or else not sharp enough against the poor innocent flock of Christ, as to make all things sure and substantial on their side — so that this doctrine of the gospel now springing should be suppressed forever — they laid their conspiring heads together. And now having a king for their own purpose, ready to serve their turn, the bishops and clergy of the realm exhibited a bill to the king's majesty. It subtly declared what quietness had been maintained within this realm by his most noble progenitors, who always defended the ancient rites and customs of the church, and enriched the same with large gifts, to the honor of God and the realm. And contrariwise, what trouble and disquietness had now risen by wicked and perverse men, teaching and preaching openly and secretly a certain new, wicked, and heretical kind of doctrine, contrary to the catholic faith and determination of holy church. The king, always oppressed with blind ignorance by the crafty means and subtle pretenses of the clergy, granted in the parliament (by consent of the nobility assembled) a statute to be observed, called *ex-officio*, as follows:

The Statute Ex-Officio.

“That is to say. That no man within this realm, or other of the king's dominions, presume to take upon himself to preach secretly or openly, without special license first obtained from the ordinary of the same place (curates in their own parish churches, and persons previously privileged, and only others admitted by the canon law excepted). Nor that any hereafter do preach, maintain, teach, inform openly or in secret, or make or write any book contrary to the catholic faith, and determination of the holy church. Nor that anyone hereafter makes any conventicles or assemblies, or keeps and exercises any manner of schools regarding this sect's wicked doctrine and opinion.

[268]

“And further. That no man hereafter shall by any means favor any such preacher, any such maker of unlawful assemblies, or any such bookmaker or writer; and finally, any such teacher, informer, or stirrer up of the people. And that all and singular persons having any of the said books, writings, or schedules, containing the said wicked doctrines and opinions, shall within forty days after this present proclamation and statute, really and effectually deliver, or cause to be delivered, all and singular said books and writings to the ordinary of the same place. And if it happens that any person or persons, of whatever kind, state or condition he or they may be, does or attempts any manner of thing contrary to this present proclamation and statute, or does not deliver these books in form aforesaid, then the ordinary of the same place in his own diocese, by authority of the said proclamation and statute, shall cause to be arrested and detained under safe custody the said person or persons in this case defamed and evidently suspected, or any of them, until he or they so offending have by order of law purged him or themselves as regarding the articles laid to his or their charge in this behalf; or until he or they have denied and recanted (according to the laws ecclesiastical) the said wicked sect,

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

preachings, teachings, and heretical and erroneous opinions. And that the said ordinary by himself or his commissaries, proceed openly and judicially to all the effect of law against the said persons so arrested and remaining under safe custody, and that he end and determine the matter within three months after the said arrest (all delays and excuses set apart) according to the order and custom of the canon law. And if any person, in any cause mentioned above, shall be lawfully convicted before the ordinary of the diocese or his commissaries, then the said ordinary may lawfully cause the said person so convicted (according to the manner and quality of his offense) to be laid in any of his own prisons, and there to be kept so long as in his discretion it shall be thought expedient.

“And further. The said ordinary (except in cases by the which according to the canon law the party offending ought to be delivered to the secular power) shall charge the said person with such a fine of money to be paid to the king’s majesty, as he thinks competent for the manner and quality of his offense. And the said diocesan shall be bound to give notice of the said fine, into the king’s exchequer, by his letters patent under his seal, to the intent that the said fine may be levied to the king’s use of the goods of the person so convicted.

“And further. If any person within this realm and other of the king’s dominions, shall be convicted before the ordinary of the place, or his commissaries, of the said wicked preachings, doctrines, opinions, schools, and heretical and erroneous informations, or any of them, and refuses to abjure and recant the said wicked sect, preachings, teachings, opinions, schools, and informations; or if, after his abjuration is once made, the relapse be pronounced against him by the diocesan of the place, or his commissaries (for so by the canon law he ought to be left to the secular power, upon credit given to the ordinary or his commissaries) that then the sheriff of the same county, the mayor, sheriffs, or sheriff, or the mayor, or bailiffs of the same city, village, or borough of the same county, and nearest inhabiting to the said ordinary, or his said commissaries, shall personally be present, as often as they are required, to confer with the said ordinary or his commissaries in giving sentence against the said persons offending, or any of them. And after the said sentence is so pronounced, shall take to them the said persons so offending, and any of them, and cause them openly to be burned in the sight of all the people; to the intent that this kind of punishment may be a terror to others, that the like wicked doctrines and heretical opinions, or authors and favorers of it are no more maintained within this realm and dominions, to the great hurt (which God forbid) of Christian religion, and decrees of holy church. In all of which and singular the premises, concerning the statute aforesaid, let the sheriff, mayors, and bailiffs of the said counties, cities, villages, and boroughs be attendant, aiding and favoring the said ordinaries and their commissaries.”

By this bloody statute, so severely and sharply enacted against these simple men, the reader may well consider the nature and condition of this present world, how it has been ever set and bent from the beginning, by all might, counsel, and ways possible, to strive against the ways of God, and to overthrow that which He will have set up. And although the world may see by infinite histories and examples, that it is but in vain to strive against Him, yet such is the nature of this world (all set in malignity) that it will not cease to be like itself.

After this, the terrible constitution of the archbishop of Canterbury was issued against the followers of God’s truth, full of cruelty and persecution unto blood, but which is too long for insertion here.

Who would have thought by these laws and constitutions, that the name and memory of this persecuted sort would not have been utterly rooted up, and never could have stood? And yet such are the works of the Lord, surpassing all men’s admiration, that notwithstanding all this, so far from being vanquished was the number and courage of these good men, that rather they multiplied daily and increased. For so I find it recorded in registers, that these

foresaid persons, whom the king and the catholic fathers so greatly detested as heretics, were increased in diverse counties of this realm — especially at London, in Lincolnshire, in Norfolk, in Herefordshire, in Shrewsbury, in Calais, and other quarters. However, there were some who did shrink, and many revolted and renounced, for fear of the law. Among them was John Purvey, who recanted at Paul's Cross, about whom more will follow (the Lord willing) in what is said of the year 1421. Also John Edward, priest of the diocese of Lincoln, who revoked in the Greenyard at Norwich; Richard Herbert and Emmot Willy of London; also John Becket, who recanted at London; John Seynons, of Lincolnshire, who was caused to revoke at Canterbury.

The History and Examination of William Thorpe – 1409.

Thus much being signified briefly, touching those who have been forced in the time of this king, to open abjuration. Next comes the history of Master William Thorpe, a valiant warrior, under the triumphant banner of Christ, with the process of his examinations before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury. It was written by Thorpe, and recorded by his own pen, at the request of his friends. In his examination (A.D. 1407) you will have, good reader, much to both learn and marvel at. To learn, in that you will hear truth discoursed and discussed, with the contrary reasons of the adversary dissolved. To marvel, for you will 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. ^{Mat 10.19} Master Thorpe, in his preface to the account of his examination, says that he was moved to write it, not only by the desire of his friends, but also so that other Christian People might profit by seeing truth opposed to error, and that they might be prepared to forsake all the things of this life, not knowing how soon they may be called to a similar trial.

The Examination of William Thorpe, penned with his own hand.

“Be it known to all men who read or hear this writing, that on the Sunday next after the feast of St. Peter, what we call *Lammis* (A.D. 1407), I, William Thorpe, being in prison in the castle of Saltwood, was brought before Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, then chancellor of England.

[269] A.D. 1409.

“And when I came to him, he stood in a great chamber, with many people about him; and when he saw me, he went into a private room, bidding all secular men who followed him to leave him soon, so that no man was left in that room but the archbishop himself, and a physician who was called Masveren, parson of St. Dunstan's in London, and two other persons unknown to me, who were ministers of the law. By and by the archbishop said to me, ‘William, I know well that you have this twenty winters or more travelled in the north country, and in diverse other countries of England, sowing false doctrine, laboring with untrue teaching to infect and poison all this land. But through the grace of God you are now withstood and brought into my ward, so that I will now sequester you from your evil purpose, and prevent you from poisoning the sheep of my province. Nevertheless, St. Paul says, *If it may be, as much as it lies in us, we ought to live peaceably with all men.* ^{Rom 12.18} Therefore, William, if you will now meekly and of good heart without any feigning, kneel down and lay your hand upon a book and kiss it, promising faithfully as I will here charge you, that you will submit yourself to my correction, and stand to my ordinance, and fulfill it duly by all your skill and power, you will yet find me gracious to you.’ Then I said to the archbishop, ‘Sir, since you deem me a heretic, and outside the faith, will you give me audience here to tell you my belief?’ And he said, ‘Yes, tell on.’

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“And I said, ‘I believe that there is but one God Almighty, and in this Godhead, and of this Godhead are three Persons, that is, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And I believe that all these three Persons are equal in power and in knowledge, and in might, full of grace of all goodness. For whatever the Father does, or can, or will do, that thing the Son also does, and can, and will do; and in all their power, knowledge, and will, the Holy Spirit is equal to the Father, and to the Son.

“Besides this, I believe that through the counsel of this most blessed Trinity, in the time before appointed for the salvation of mankind, the second person of this Trinity was ordained to take the form of man, that is, the nature of man. And I believe, that this second person, our Lord Jesus Christ, was miraculously conceived through the Holy Spirit in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary. And I believe that in due time Christ was born of this most blessed virgin.

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

“And I believe that Christ, as he was about thirty years old, was baptized in the Jordan by John the baptist; and the Holy Spirit descended like a dove upon him, and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, ‘You are my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’

“And I believe that Christ was moved then by the Holy Spirit to go into the desert, and there he fasted forty days and forty nights without bodily food and drink. And I believe that by and by after this fasting, when the manhood of God hungered, the devil came to him, and tempted him in gluttony, in vain glory, and in coveting; but in all those temptations Christ confuted the devil, and withstood him. And then without tarrying, Jesus began to preach, and to say to the people, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’

“I believe that Christ lived here most holily, and taught the will of his Father most truly. And I believe that he suffered most wrongfully the greatest reproofs and despisings.

“And after this, when Christ would make an end of this temporal life here, I believe that on the day before he was to suffer passion, he ordained the sacrament of his flesh and his blood in the form of bread and of wine; that is, his own precious body, and gave it to his apostles to eat; commanding them, and by them all those who came after, that they should do it in this form that he showed to them, use it themselves, and teach and minister to other men and women this most worshipful and holiest sacrament in remembrance of his holiest living, and of his most true preaching, and of his willing and patient suffering of the most painful passion.

“And I believe that Christ our Savior, after he had ordained this most worthy sacrament of his own precious body, went forth willingly 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 to defile him with their spittings. Besides this, I believe that Christ most meekly and patiently suffered his enemies to extract with sharp scourges the blood that was between his skin and his flesh; yes, without resisting, Christ suffered the cruel Jews to crown him with sharp thorns, and to strike him with a reed. And after, Christ suffered wicked Jews to draw him out upon the cross, and to nail him upon it.⁵⁵ And so Christ willingly shed the blood that was in his veins, for man’s blood. And then Christ willingly gave his spirit into the hands or power of his Father. And so, as he would, and when he would, Christ died willingly for man’s sake upon the cross. And notwithstanding that Christ was willfully, painfully, and most shamefully put to death for the world, there was blood and water left in his heart, as ordained before, that he would shed this blood and this water for

⁵⁵ The Jews had the Romans do it, since Jews were forbidden by law (Joh 18.31). And the death penalty under Jewish law is carried out by stoning, then hanging on a tree (Due 13.10; 21.22-23) — not by crucifixion, which is Roman.

man's salvation. And therefore he allowed the Jews to have a blind knight thrust him in the heart with a spear; and this blood and water that was in his heart, Christ would shed 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 fortieth day after, I believe that Christ ascended into heaven, and that he sits there at the right hand of the Father Almighty. And the fiftieth day after his ascension, he sent to his apostles the Holy Spirit that he had promised them before. ^{Joh 15.26} And I believe that Christ will 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 Spirit, that also with them, he is the same God Almighty. ⁵⁶

“And I believe in a holy church, that is, all those who have been, now are, and always will be to the end of the world, a people who will endeavor to know and keep the commandments of God, dreading above all things to offend God, and loving and seeking to please him. And I believe that all those who have had, and still have, and all those who will yet have the aforesaid virtues — surely standing in their belief of God, hoping steadfastly in his merciful doings, continuing to their end in perfect charity, willingly, patiently, and gladly suffering persecutions, chiefly following the example of Christ and his apostles — all these have their names written in the Book of Life. ^{Luk 10.20}

“Therefore I believe that the gathering together of this people, now living here in this life, is the holy church of God, fighting here on earth against the devil, the prosperity of the world, and their own lusts. This is why, seeing that the gathering together of this church, and every part of it, neither covets, nor wills, nor loves, nor seeks anything but to eschew the offense of God, and to do His pleasing will — meekly, gladly, and willingly, with all my heart, I submit myself to this holy church of Christ, to be ever ready and obedient to its ordinances, and of every member of it, according to my knowledge and power by the help of God. Therefore I acknowledge now, and evermore shall, if God wills, that with all my heart, and with all my might, I will submit myself solely to the rule and governance of those whom, according to my knowledge, I may perceive to be members of the holy church. Therefore these articles of belief and all others (both of the old law, and of the new, which after the commandment of God any man ought to believe) I believe truly in my soul, as a sinful deadly wretch, of my knowledge and power, ought to believe — praying the Lord God for his holy name to increase my belief, and to help my unbelief. ^{Mar 9.24}

[270]

“And 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 four who are now present here, desiring that all men and women who are now *absent* know the same. That is, whatever I have said or done before this time, or whatever I will do or say at any time hereafter, I believe that all the old laws, and new laws, given and ordained by the council of the three persons of the Trinity, were given and written for 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 ordained and commanded by these three persons of the most blessed Trinity, are to be believed.

“And therefore, as to the rule and the ordinance of these laws of God, I submit myself with all my heart, meekly, gladly, and willingly, that whoever can or will by authority of God's law, or by open reason, tell me that I have erred or now err, or in any time hereafter will err in any article of belief (God keep me from this misfortune by his goodness) I submit to be reconciled,

⁵⁶ Various citing the Apostles Creed.

and to be ready and obedient to those 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 to these laws. Indeed, sir, and besides this, I believe and receive all the sentences, authorities, and reasons of the saints and doctors according to the holy Scripture, who declare it truly.

“I submit myself willingly and meekly to be ever obedient, according to my knowledge 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) for any earthly power, dignity or state, through the help of God. But sir, I pray you tell me, if after your bidding I lay my hand on the book, is it with the intent to swear thereby?” And the archbishop said to me, “Yes, why else?”

“And I said to him: ‘Sir, a book is nothing but a thing coupled together by diverse creatures; and to swear by any creature, both God’s law and man’s law is against it. But sir, this thing I say here to you before these clerics of yours, with my protestation that how, where, when, and to whom men are bound to swear or to obey in any way after God’s law, and saints, and true doctors, according to God’s law, I will through God’s grace be ever ready to do this, with all my skill and power. But I pray you sir, for the charity of God, that before I swear, you will tell me how or to whom I will submit myself; and show me that of which you will correct me, and what is the ordinance that you will thus oblige me to fulfil.’

“And the archbishop said to me: ‘I require that you swear to me, that you will forsake all the opinions which the sect of Lollards hold; so that neither secretly nor openly, will you hold any opinion which I recite to you. And that you will not favor any man or woman, young or old, who holds these opinions; but according to your knowledge and power you will exert yourself to withstand all such disturbers of holy church in every diocese that you come into; and those who will not leave their false and damnable opinions, you will reveal them, reporting them and their names, and make them known to the bishop of the diocese, or to the bishop’s ministers. And besides this, I will that you preach no more until I know by good witness and true, that your conversation is such that your heart and mouth accord truly as one, contradicting all the secular learning that you have taught here before.’

“And hearing these words, I thought in my heart that this was an unlawful demand; and I deemed myself accused by God if I consented to it. And because I stood still and did not speak, the archbishop said to me: ‘Answer one way or the other;’ and I said, ‘Sir, if I consented to swear to you as you require, I would become an appealer, or every bishop’s spy in all of England. For if I were to thus reveal and publish the names of men and women, I would deceive many persons in this. Indeed, sir, by the doom of my conscience, I would be the cause of the death of both men and women, yes, both bodily and spiritually. But I find in no place in holy Scripture, that this office of common informer and spy, with which you would now engage me, accords with any priest of Christ’s sect, nor to any other Christian man. If I were to do as you require, many men and women would (as they might truly) say that I had falsely and cowardly forsaken the truth and shamefully slandered the word of God. For if I consented to your will from any fear of man, or of worldly consideration, then I deem in my conscience that I would be worthy of being cursed by God and also by all his saints. Almighty God keep me and all Christian people from this misfortune, now and forever, for His holy name.’

“And then the archbishop said to me: ‘Oh, your heart is full-hardened, as was the heart of Pharaoh, and the devil has overcome you, and perverted you, and he has so blinded you that you have no grace to know the truth nor the measure of mercy that I have offered to you. Therefore, as I perceive now by your foolish answer, you have no will to leave your old errors. But I say to you, either quickly consent to my ordinance, and submit to my decrees, or by St. Thomas you shall be degraded, and follow your companion to Smithfield.’

“And at this saying I stood still and did not speak. But I thought in my heart, that God did me great grace if he would of his great mercy bring me to such an end. And in my heart I was not at all afraid from this menacing of the archbishop. And I considered two things in him. One, that he was not yet sorrowful that he had caused William Sautre to be wrongfully burnt; and as I considered that the archbishop still thirsted after more shedding of innocent blood, I was moved in my mind to hold him as being neither prelate nor priest of God. And because my inward man had thus altogether departed from the archbishop, I thought that I should not have any dread of him. But I was right heavy and sorrowful, because there were no secular men present to hear. But in my heart I prayed the Lord God to comfort me and strengthen me. I prayed God for his goodness to give me then and always grace to speak with a meek and a quiet spirit. And whatever I might speak, that I might have true authorities from the scriptures or a credible reason for it. As I stood thus still and spoke nothing, one of the archbishop’s clerics said to me, ‘What are you musing about? Do as my lord has commanded you.’

“And yet I stood still and did not answer him. And then soon after, the archbishop said to me, ‘Are you not yet determined whether you will do as I have said to you?’ And I then said to him, ‘Sir, my father and my mother spent much money for my learning, to have made me a priest to God. But when I came to the years of discretion, I had no will to be a priest; and therefore my friends were very harsh towards me. Then I thought their grudging against me was so painful, that I purposed to have left their company. They often spoke to me very grievous words, and menaced me in diverse manners. And thus they were busy with me a long time, before I consented to be a priest. At last, I asked them to give me license to go to wise priests, of virtuous conversation, to have their counsel, and to know from them what was the office and charge of priesthood. My father and my mother consented gladly, and gave me their blessing and leave, and also money to spend on this journey. And so I went to those priests whom I heard to be of the best name, most holy living, best learned, and most wise of heavenly wisdom. And so I communed with them till the time that I perceived by their virtuous and continual occupations, that their honest and charitable works surpassed their fame which I had heard of them before.’

“And the archbishop said, — ‘I say to you, who are these holy and wise men, from whom you have taken your information?’

““And I said, sir, Master John Wycliffe was held by many men the greatest cleric that they knew then living, and he was reputed to be an able, good, and innocent man in his living; and therefore great men communed often with him; and they so loved his learning, that they wrote it down, and endeavored to rule themselves after it. ‘Therefore, sir, this learning of Master John Wycliffe is still held by many men and women, to be the learning most in accordance with the living and teaching of Christ and his apostles, and most openly showing and declaring how the church of Christ has been, and still should be ruled and governed.

[271] A.D. 1409.

“This is why so many men and women desire his learning, and purpose through God’s grace to conform their lives to this learning of Wycliffe. Master John Ashton taught and wrote accordingly, and full zealously, where, and when, and to whom he might. And he used it himself right perfectly to his life’s end. And also Philip of Rampington, while he was a canon of Leicester, Nicholas Herford, Davey Gotray of Pakring, monk of Byland, and a master of divinity. John Purvey and many others who were held to be right wise men, and prudent, taught and wrote busily of this learning, and I conformed to it. And I was very familiar with all these men, and communed with them a long time and often. And above all other men, I chose willingly to be informed of them and by them, and especially of Wycliffe himself, as of the most virtuous and godly wise man that I ever beard of or knew. And therefore from him

especially, and from these I men, I took the learning that I have taught and purpose to live by hereafter (if God wills) to my life's end.'

"And the archbishop said, 'The learning that you call truth and truthfastness, is open slander to holy church, as is proved by holy church. For although Wycliffe was a great cleric, and though many held him to be a perfect liver; yet his doctrine is not approved by holy church; rather, many sentences of his learning are damned as they well deserve. But as to Philip of Ramplington, he neither holds now, nor will he hold what he then taught when he was a canon of Leicester. For no bishop in this land now pursues more sharply, those who hold those doctrines, than he does.'

"And I said, 'Sir, many men and women wonder at him, and speak of him much to his shame, and hold him to be a cursed enemy of the truth.'

"And the archbishop said to me, 'Why do you delay me with such fables? Will you submit yourself to me or not?'

"And I said; 'Sir, I tell you at one word; I dare not for fear of God submit myself to you, according to the sentence you have read to me.'

"And thus, as if he had been angry, he said to one of his clerics; 'Fetch here quickly the certificate that came to me from Shrewsbury under the bailiff's seal witnessing the errors and heresies which this fellow has venomously sown there.'

"Then the cleric hastily took out, and laid forth on a table, some rolls and writings, among which there was a little one, which the clerk delivered to the archbishop. By and by the archbishop read this roll containing this sentence:

"The third Sunday after Easter, the year of our Lord 1407, William Thorpe came to the town of Shrewsbury, and through leave granted to 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 way be worshipped. And that men should not go on pilgrimages. And that priests have no title to tithes. And that it is not lawful to swear in any way.'

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

"And I said, 'Sir, I am both ashamed on their behalf, and sorrowful for those who certified these things to you thus untruly; for I never preached nor taught thus, secretly or openly.'

"And the archbishop said to me, 'I will give credence to these worshipful men who have written to me, and witnessed under their seals among them. Though now you deny this, do you think that I will give credence to you? You have troubled the worshipful commonalty of Shrewsbury, so that the bailiff's and commonalty of that town have written to me, asking me, who am archbishop of Canterbury, primate and chancellor of England, that I will grant them that if you will be made (as you are worthy) to suffer for your heresies, that you may suffer openly there among them. So that all those whom you and such others have perverted there, may through fear of your deed be reconciled again to the unity of holy church. And also those who stand in true faith of holy church, may be more established in it.'

"But certainly neither the prayer of the men of Shrewsbury, nor the menacing of the archbishop made me afraid, but my heart greatly rejoiced. I thank God for the grace that I then thought, and still think will come to the whole church of God in this matter, by the special mercy of the Lord. And having no dread of the malice of tyrants, by trusting steadfastly in the help of the Lord, I said to the archbishop, — 'Sir, if the truth of God's word might now be accepted as it should be, I do not doubt to prove by likely evidence, that those who are glad to

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

be outside 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 show to man's judgment (faithfully dreading and loving God) their desire, their will, their love, and their business, are most set to dread to offend God, and to love and please him in true and faithful keeping of his commandments. And again, those who 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, and other foul words and works, neither know, nor have the will to know, truly and effectually the right faith of holy church. ^{Mat 7.16}

“And where, sir, you say that I have troubled the commonalty of Shrewsbury, and many other men and women with my teaching, if it is thus, it is not to be wondered at, since all the commonalty of the city of Jerusalem was troubled by Christ's own person, that was very God and man, and the most prudent preacher who ever was or shall be. And also the whole synagogue of Nazareth was moved against Christ, and so filled 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 to cast him down headlong. ^{Luk 4.29}

“And the archbishop said to me, ‘It follows from these words of yours, that you and such others think that you do right well to preach and teach as you do, without authority from any bishop. For you presume that the Lord has chosen only you to preach, as faithful disciples and special followers of Christ.’

“And I said, ‘Sir, by authority of God's law, and also by saints and doctors, I have learned to deem it every priest's office and duty to preach busily, freely, and truly the word of God.’

“And the archbishop said to me, ‘Fellow, why do you give such vain reasons to me? Does St. Paul not ask how priests will preach unless they are sent? ^{Rom 10.15} But I never sent you to preach. For your venomous doctrine is known throughout England, so that no bishop will allow you to preach. Why then will you presume to preach, since you are not sent or licensed by your superior to preach? St. Paul says that subjects ought to obey their sovereigns, and not only good and virtuous, but also tyrants that are vicious.’

“And I said, ‘Samuel the prophet said to Saul, the wicked king, that God was more pleased with the obedience of his commandments, than with any sacrifice of beasts. ^{1Sam 15.22} But David says, and St. Paul, and St. Gregory say together, that not only those who do evil are worthy of death and damnation, but also those who consent to evil doers. ^{Rom 1.32} And sir, the law of the holy church teaches in the decree, that no servant to his lord, nor child to its father or mother, nor wife to her husband, nor monk to his abbot, ought to obey them except in lawful things.’

“And the archbishop said to the three clerics who stood before him, ‘Sirs, this is the business of this fellow, and such others, to pick out such sharp sentences of holy Scripture and doctors, to maintain their sect against the ordinance of holy church. And therefore it is that you wish to have again the psalter that I had taken from you at Canterbury, to recite sharp verses against us. But you will never have that psalter, nor any other book, till I know that your heart and your mouth agree fully to be governed by holy church.’

[272]

“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 you ask me this question again, I call Christ and his saints, holy church.’

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“And the archbishop said to me, ‘I know well that Christ and his saints are holy church in heaven, but what is holy church on earth?’

“And I said, ‘Sir, holy church has two parts. The first and principal part has overcome perfectly all the wretchedness of this life, and reigns joyfully in heaven with Christ. And the other part is still here in earth, busily and continually fighting day and night against the temptations of the devil; forsaking and hating the prosperity of this world, despising and withstanding their fleshly lusts, who alone are the pilgrims of Christ, wandering towards heaven by steadfast faith, and grounded hope, and by perfect charity. For these heavenly pilgrims may not, and will not be hindered from their good purpose by reason of any doctors disagreeing from holy Scripture, nor by the floods of any temporal tribulation, nor by the wind of any pride, of boast, or of menacing of any creature. For they are all fast grounded upon the sure rock, Christ, hearing his word and loving it, exercising it faithfully and continually with all their wits to do accordingly.’

“And the archbishop said to his clerics, ‘Do you see how his heart is hardened, and how he has travelled with the devil, bringing in such sentences to maintain his errors and heresies? Certainly, he will occupy us here all day, if we allow him.’

“One of the clerics answered, ‘Sir, he said just now, that this certificate that came to you from Shrewsbury, is untruly forged against him. Therefore, sir, question him now on the points which are certified against him, and we will hear his answers from his own mouth, and witness them.’

“And the archbishop took the certificate in his hand, and looked at it a while, and then he said to me:

“Look, here it is certified by worthy and faithful men of Shrewsbury, that you preached there openly, that the sacrament of the altar was material bread *after* the consecration. What do you say? Was this truly preached?’

“And I said, ‘Sir, I tell you truly that I touched nothing there about the sacrament of the altar; but with God’s grace, I will tell you here in this way. As I stood there in the pulpit, busying myself to teach the commandment of God, a sacred bell began ringing, and therefore many people turned away hastily, and ran towards it noisily. Seeing this, I said to them thus: ‘Good men, you would do better to stand still here, and to hear God’s word. For the virtue of the most holy sacrament of the altar stands much more in the faith that you ought to have in your soul, than in the outward sight of it. And therefore you would do better to stand still quietly to hear God’s word, because through the hearing of it, men come to true belief. And I am certain I did not speak more than this about the worthy sacrament of the altar.’

“And the archbishop said to me, ‘I do not believe you, whatever you say, since such worshipful men have witnessed thus against you. But since you deny what you said this, what do you say now? After the consecration, does material bread remain in the host, or not?’

“And I said, ‘Sir, I know of no place in holy Scripture, where this term *material bread* is written. And therefore sir, when I speak of this matter, I do not speak of material bread.’

“Then the archbishop said to me, ‘How do you teach men to believe in this sacrament?’

“And I said, ‘Sir, as I believe myself, so I teach other men.’

“He said, ‘Tell us plainly your belief about it.’

“And I said with my protestation, ‘Sir, I believe that the night before Christ Jesus suffered for mankind, he took bread in his holy hands, lifting up his eyes, and giving thanks to God his Father, blessed this bread, and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying to them, take and eat of this all you, this is my body. And that this is, and ought to be, all men’s belief, Matthew,

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

Mark, Luke, and Paul witness. Other belief, sir, I have none, nor will I have, nor teach it For I believe that this is sufficient in this matter. For in this belief, with God's grace, I purpose to live and die, acknowledging as I believe and teach other men to believe, that the holy sacrament of the altar is the sacrament of Christ's flesh and blood in the form of bread and wine.' "And I said, 'Sir, by clear evidence, a thousand years after the incarnation of Christ, the determination which I have recited here before you, was accepted by holy church as sufficient to the salvation of all those who would believe it faithfully.'

"And the archbishop said to me, 'Well, well, you will say otherwise before I leave you. But what do you say to this second point that is recorded against you by worthy men of Shrewsbury, saying that you preached there, that images should not be worshipped in any way?'

"And I said, 'Sir, I never preached thus, nor through God's grace will I at any time consent to think, or to say thus. For look, the Lord witnesses by Moses, that the things which he had made were very good. And so they were, and are and shall be good and worshipful in their kind. And therefore, to the end for which God made them, they are all praiseworthy and worshipful. And especially man, who was made in the image and likeness of God, is worshipful in his kind. And I also say that wood, tin, gold, silver, or any other matter that images are made of, are worshipful in their kind, and to the end that God made them for. But the carving, casting, and painting of an image should not be worshipped in form, nor in the likeness of man's craft.'

"Then the archbishop said to me, 'I grant that nobody should worship any images for themselves. But a crucifix ought to be worshipped for the passion of Christ that is painted on it, and thus too the images of the blessed Trinity, and of the Virgin Mary, Christ's Mother, and other images of saints ought to be worshipped. For as earthly kings and lords who send their letters sealed with their arms, or with their private signet to those that are with them, are worshipped by these men. For when these men receive their lord's letters, in which they see and know the wills of the lords, they doff their caps to these letters. Why not then, since in images made with man's hands, we may read and know many things about God, and his saints, should we not worship their images?'

"And I said 'These worldly usages of temporal laws that you speak of now, may be done without sin. But this bears no similarity to worshipping images made by man's hand, since Moses, David, Solomon, Baruch, and other saints in the bible so plainly forbid the worshipping of such images.'

"Then the archbishop said to me, 'In the old law before Christ took human nature, there was no likeness of any person of the Trinity. But now since Christ became man, it is lawful to have images to show his manhood, yes, even if many men 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 a great impetus of devotion to men, to have and behold the Trinity and other images of saints carved, cast, and painted. For beyond the sea are the best painters that ever I saw. And sirs, I tell you, this is their manner, and it is a good manner: when an image-maker carves, casts a mold, or paints any images, he goes to a priest, and confesses himself as clean, as if he were then to die. He takes penance, and makes some certain vow of fasting or of praying, or of pilgrimages, asking the priest specially to pray for him, so that he may have grace to make a fair and devout image.'

"And I said, 'Sir, I do not doubt that if these painters that you speak of, or any other painters, truly understood the texts of Moses, of David, of the Wise Man, of Baruch, and of other saints and doctors, these painters would be moved to confess to God with inward sorrow of heart, taking upon themselves penance for the sinful and vain craft of painting, carving, or casting; promising God faithfully never to do so again.'

[272] A.D. 1409.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“Then the archbishop said to me, ‘I hold you a vicious priest and accursed, and all your sect. For all priests of holy church, and all images that move men to devotion, you and such others go about to destroy. Would it be a right thing to come into the church, and see no image in it?’”

“And I said, ‘Sir, those who come to the church to pray devoutly to the Lord God, may in their inward parts be more fervent, so that all their outward senses are closed from all outward seeing and hearing, and from all disturbance and lettings. And since Christ blessed those who did not see bodily, but have believed faithfully in him, ^{Joh 20.29} it is sufficient for all men to believe in God, even if they never see images made with man’s hand after any person of the Trinity, or of any other saint.’”

“And the archbishop said to me with a fervent spirit, ‘I say to you, that it is right well done to make and to have an image of the Trinity; yes, whatever you say.’ Is it not a stirring thing to behold such an image?”

“And I said, ‘Sir, you said just now that in the old law, before Christ took mankind, no likeness of any person of the Trinity was shown to men. Therefore, sir, you said it was not then lawful to have images, but now you say, since Christ has become man, it is lawful to have an image of the Trinity, and also of other saints. But sir, would I learn this from you: since the Father of heaven, yes and every person of Trinity, was God Almighty without beginning; and many holy prophets were martyred violently in the old law, and also many men and women then died confessors; why was it not just as lawful and necessary then as now, to have an image of the Father of heaven, and to have other images of martyrs, prophets, and holy confessors, to move men to devotion, as you say that images now do?’”

“And the archbishop said, ‘The synagogue of the Jews had no authority to do those things which the church of Christ now has.’”

“And I said, ‘Sir, St. Gregory was a great man, and of great dignity, and he commended greatly a bishop, and he forbade utterly the images made with man’s hand to be worshipped.’”

“And the archbishop said, ‘Ungracious fellow, you savor no more truth than a hound. Since at the rood (crucifix) at the north door at London, at our lady at Walsingham, and many other places in England, many great and admirable miracles are done — should not the images of such holy saints and places, to the reverence of God, and of our lady and other saints, be more worshipped than other places and images, where no miracles are done?’”

“And I said, ‘Sir, there is no such virtue in any imagery, that any image should be worshipped. Therefore I am certain that there is no miracle done by God in any place on earth, in order for any images made with man’s hand to be worshipped. And therefore, sir, as I preached openly at Shrewsbury and other places, I say now before you here, that nobody should trust that there is any virtue in images made with man’s hand. And therefore nobody should vow to them, nor seek them, nor kneel to them, nor bow to them, nor pray to them, nor offer anything to them, nor kiss them, nor offer incense to them. For even the most worthy of such images, the bronze serpent (made by Moses at God’s bidding) the good King Hezekiah destroyed worthily and thankfully, and all because it was worshipped. ^{2Kng 18.4} Therefore sir, if men take good heed to the writing and the learning of St. Augustine, of St. Gregory, and of St. John Chrysostom, and of other saints and doctors — how they spoke and wrote of miracles that will now be done in the latest end of the world — it is to be feared that for the unfaithfulness of men and women, the devil has great power to work many of the miracles that are now done in such places. For both men and women now delight more to hear and know miracles, than they do to know God’s word, or to hear it effectually.’ ⁵⁷”

⁵⁷ Notice how Thorpe points to Scripture for authority, while the archbishop points to the church or to himself.

“And the archbishop said, ‘As holy church has allowed the images of the Trinity, and all other images to be painted and shown, it is enough for those who are members of holy church. But since you are a rotten member, cut away from holy church, you do not savor the ordinances of it. But since the day passes, we will leave this matter.’

“And then he said to me, ‘What do you say to the third point that is certified against you, preaching openly in Shrewsbury, that pilgrimage is not lawful? And beyond this you said that those men and women who go on pilgrimages to Canterbury, to Beverley, to Karlington. to Walsingham, and to any other such places, are accursed and made foolish, spending their goods for nothing.’

“And I said, ‘Sir, I am accused to you that I taught that *no* pilgrimage is lawful. But I never said this. For I know that there are true pilgrimages and lawful, and acceptable to God. And therefore, sir, however my enemies have certified to you about me, I spoke at Shrewsbury of two manner of pilgrimages.’

“And the archbishop said to me, ‘Whom you call true pilgrims.’”

“And I said, ‘Sir, with my protestation I call true pilgrims those who are travelling toward the bliss of heaven, who in the state, degree, or order that God calls them to, busy themselves faithfully occupying their whole mind, bodily and spiritually, to know truly and to keep faithfully the biddings of God, hating and fleeing the seven deadly sins, and every branch of them; ruling themselves virtuously, doing discreetly, willingly, and gladly, all the works of mercy, seeking the gifts of the Holy Spirit, disposing themselves to receive them in their souls, and to hold the right blessings of Christ. And then they will be moved with the good Spirit of God to examine their conscience often and diligently, so that neither willfully nor wittingly will they err in any article of belief, having continually (as frailty allows) all their business, to dread and to flee the offense of God, to love Him above all, and to seek to ever do His pleasant will. Of these pilgrimages I said, whatever good thoughts they think at any time, whatever virtuous words they speak, and whatever fruitful works they accomplish — every such thought, word, and work is a step numbered by God toward him into heaven. These pilgrims of God delight when they hear of saints or of virtuous men and women, how they willingly forsook the prosperity of this life, how they withstood the suggestion of the devil, how they restrained their fleshly lusts, how discreet they were in doing their penance, how patient they were in all their adversities, how prudent they were in counselling men and women, moving them to hate all sins, and to flee them, and to love all virtues, and to draw to them, imagining how Christ, and his followers by this example, suffered scorns and slanders, and how patiently they took the wrongful menacing of tyrants. How homely these pilgrims were, and serviceable to poor men to relieve and comfort them bodily and spiritually, and how devout they were in prayers, how fervent they were in heavenly desires, and how they absented themselves from spectacles of vain sayings and hearings, and how constant they were to prevent and destroy all vices; and how laborious and joyful they were to sow and to plant virtues. These heavenly conditions are what true pilgrims have, or endeavor to have, whose pilgrimage God accepts.’

“And again I said, ‘As their works show, most men and women who now go on pilgrimages do not have these conditions, nor love to have them. For as I well know, since I have often tried, examine whoever he will, twenty of these pilgrims, and he will not find three men or women who know a commandment of God surely, nor can say their Paternoster and Ave Maria, nor say their creed readily in any manner of language. And as I have learned and also know somewhat by experience of these same pilgrims, telling the reason why many men and women go hither and thither now on pilgrimage, it is more for the health of their bodies, than of their souls.

[274]

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“It is more to have riches and prosperity of this world, than to be enriched with virtues in their souls; more to have worldly and fleshly friendship here, than to have the friendship of God and of his saints in heaven. For whatever thing man or woman does, the friendship of God, or of any other saint, cannot be had without keeping God’s commandments. Further with my protestation, I say now, as I said in Shrewsbury, that though those who have fleshly wills travel far, and spend much money, to seek and to visit the bones or images (as they say they do) of this or that saint — 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 they neither know nor keep the commandments of God, nor do they conform themselves to the example of Christ and of his saints. Therefore, sir, I have preached and taught openly, and so I purpose all my lifetime to do with God’s help, saying that such silly people waste blamefully God’s goods in their vain pilgrimages. Also, sir, I know that when several men and women thus go after their own wills, and fix on that pilgrimage, they will arrange beforehand to have with them both men and women who can sing wanton songs; and other pilgrims will have bagpipes with them; so that every town that they come through, what with the noise of their singing, and the sound of their piping, and with the tangling of their Canterbury bells, and with the barking of dogs after them, they make more noise than if the king had come there with all his clarions and minstrels.’

“And the archbishop said to me, ‘You do not see far enough in this matter, for you do not consider the great labor of pilgrims; therefore you blame a thing that is praiseworthy. I say, that it is right well done, that pilgrims have with them both singers and also pipers; that when one of them who goes barefoot strikes his toe upon a stone, and hurts himself sorely, and makes himself bleed, it is well done that he or his fellow then begin a song, or else take out of his cloak a bagpipe, to drive away the hurt of his fellow with such mirth. For with such solace, the labor and weariness of pilgrims is lightly and merrily borne out.’

“And I said, ‘Sir, St. Paul teaches men to weep with those who weep.’ Rom 12.15

“And the archbishop said, ‘Why do you jangle against men’s devotion? Whatever you or such others say, I say that the pilgrimage that is now used, is to those who do it, a praiseworthy and a good means to come to grace.’

“And (as if he had been displeased with my answer) he said to his clerics, ‘What do you think this idiot will speak there, where he has no dread; since he speaks thus here in my presence? Well, well, by God you shall be ordained for it.’ And then he spoke to me angrily.

“Then the archbishop said, ‘Well, well. By God, the king does not do his duty, unless he allows you to be condemned.’

“And then another cleric said to me, ‘Why do you counsel a man of my lord’s, that he should not confess himself to man, but only to God?’

“And with this question I was abashed; and then I knew that I was betrayed by a man who came to me in prison, communing with me in this matter of confession. And certainly by his words I thought that this man came 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 such was his will. And with all my heart when I had thought thus, I said to this cleric, ‘Sir, I pray you that you would fetch this man here; and as near as I can, I will repeat all the words which I spoke to him in the prison. I will recite them here before you all, and before him.’

“And the archbishop then said to me, ‘Those who are now here will repeat them. What did you say to him?’

“And I said, ‘Sir, that man came and asked me about diverse things; and after his asking, I answered him. And as he showed to me by his words, how he was sorry for his living in court,

and right heavy for his own vicious living, and also for the viciousness of other men, and especially of priests' evil living. And therefore he said to me with a sorrowful heart (as I imagined) that he purposed within a short time to leave the court and to apply himself to know God's law, and to conform his whole life to it. And when he had said to me these words and others, which I would repeat if he were present, he asked me to hear his confession. And I said to him, sir, why do you come to me, to be confessed by me? You know well that the archbishop holds me here, as one unworthy either to give or to take any sacrament of holy church.

“And he said to me, ‘Brother, I know well, and so do many others, that you and such others are ‘wrongfully vexed. And therefore I commune with you more gladly.’ And I said to him, ‘certainly I know well, that many men of this court, and specially the priests of this household will be completely evil against both you and me, if they were aware that you were confessed by me.’ And he said, that he did not care, for he had little affection for them. And I thought he spoke these words and many others, from a good will and a high desire to have known and done the pleasant will of God. And so I said to him, as I say to you now, ‘Here, sir, I counsel you to absent yourself from all evil company, and to draw yourself to those who love and busy themselves to know and to keep the precepts of God. And then the good Spirit of God will move you to occupy all your wits in gathering together all your sins, as far as He can have you think, being greatly ashamed of them, and sorrowing heartily for them. Indeed, sir, the Holy Spirit will then put in your heart a good will and a fervent desire to take and to hold a good purpose, to hate ever and to flee all occasion of sin. And so then wisdom will come to you from above, lightening (with diverse beams of grace and of heavenly desire) all your wits, informing you how you should trust steadfastly in the mercy of the Lord, acknowledging to Him alone all your vicious living, praying to Him devoutly for charitable counsel and continuance, hoping without doubt, that if you continue this way, busying yourself faithfully to know and to keep His biddings, He will (for he alone may) forgive you all your sins.’

“And this man said to me, ‘Though God forgives men their sins, yet it behooves men to be absolved by priests, and to do the penance that they enjoin them.’ And I said to him, ‘Sir, it is all one to absolve men of their sins, and to forgive men their sins. Therefore, since it pertains only to God to forgive sin, it suffices to counsel men and women to leave their sin, and to comfort those who do this, to hope in the mercy of God. And again, priests ought to sharply tell sinners, that if they will not make an end of their sin, but continue in sins, all such deserve pain without any end. And therefore priests should ever busy themselves to live well and holily, and to teach the people busily and truly the word of God, showing to all in open preaching, and in private counselling, ‘That the Lord God alone forgives sin.’ And therefore, those priests who take it upon themselves to absolve men of their sins, blaspheme God, since it pertains only to the Lord to absolve men of all their sins. For no doubt, for a thousand years after Christ was man, no priest of Christ dared take it upon himself to teach the people, either secretly or openly, that they must come to be absolved by them as priests do now. But by authority of Christ's word, priests used to bind callous, customary sinners to everlasting pains, who would never have busied themselves faithfully to know the biddings of God, nor to keep them. And sir, accordingly to this sentence, upon Mid-lent Sunday (two years ago) I heard a monk of Feversharr (called Morden), preach at Canterbury at the cross within Christchurch abbey, saying thus about confession: ‘Since the Lord God is readier to forgive sin than the devil is or may be powerful to move anybody to sin, then whoever will shame and sorrow heartily for their sins, knowledging them faithfully to God, amending them according to their power and cunning, without counsel of anybody other than God and himself (through the grace God) all such men and women may find sufficient means to come to God's mercy, and so to be entirely absolved of all their sins.’ This sentence I said, sir, to this man of yours, and the words as near as I can guess.’

[275] A.D. 1409.

“And the archbishop said, ‘Holy church does not approve this teaching.’

“And I said, ‘Sir, holy church, of which Christ is head in heaven and in earth, must approve this sentence. For look, hereby all men and women may, if they will, be sufficiently taught to know and keep the commandments of God, and to hate and to flee continually all occasion of sin, and to love and to seek virtues zealously, and to believe in God steadfastly; and to trust in his mercy steadfastly, and so to come to perfect love, and continue in this perseveringly. And the Lord does not ask more of any man in this life. And certainly, since Jesus Christ died upon the cross, to make men free, men of the church are too bold and too ready to make men captives, binding them under the pain of endless curses, to do many observances and ordinances, which neither the life nor teaching of Christ nor of his apostles approve.

“And a cleric then said to me, ‘You show plainly here your deceit, which you have learned from those who travelled to sow the tares among the wheat. But I counsel you to go clean away from this teaching, and submit to my Lord, and you will find him gracious to you yet.’

“Then a cleric said to the archbishop, ‘Sir, it is late in the day, and you have far to ride tonight. Therefore make an end with him, for he will make none. But the more, sir, that you busy yourself to draw him toward you, the more obstinate he is made.’

“And then Malveren said to me, ‘William, kneel down, and pray my lord’s grace, and leave all your fancies, and become a child of holy church.’

“And I said, ‘Sir, I have prayed the archbishop often, and still I pray him for the love of Christ, that he will cease his indignation against me; and that he will allow me to do my office of priesthood, as I am charged by God to do it. For I desire nothing else than to serve my God to his pleasing in the state that I stand in.’

“And the archbishop said to me, ‘If of good heart you will submit yourself now here meekly, to be ruled from this time forward by my counsel, obeying meekly and willingly my ordinance, you shall find it most profitable and best for you to do this. Therefore delay me no longer; do what I have said to you now here shortly, or deny it utterly.’

“And I said, ‘Sir, as I have before repeated, I will be ready gladly to obey Christ the head of the holy church, and the teachings, and biddings, and counsels of every pleasing member of Him.’

“Then the archbishop, striking with his hand fiercely upon a table, spoke to me with a great spirit, saying, ‘By Jesus, but if you do not leave off such additions, obliging yourself without any exception to submit to my ordinance (before I go out of this place) I will make you as sure as any thief that is in prison; advise yourself now as to what you will do.’ And then as if he had been angered, he went from the table where he stood, to a window.

“And then Malveren and another cleric came nearer to me, and spoke many words to me pleasantly; and another time they menaced me, and counselled me to submit; or else, they said, I would not escape punishment. For they said I would be degraded, cursed, and burned, and then damned. But now they said, ‘You may eschew all these mischiefs, if you will submit yourself willingly and meekly to this worthy prelate, who has cure of your soul. And for the pity of Christ think to yourself, how great were the clerics the bishop of Lincoln, Herford and Purvey, and still are. They too have forsaken and revoked all the learning and opinions that you and such others hold. Therefore, since each of them is much wiser than you are, we counsel you for the best; that by the example of these four clerics, you follow them, submitting yourself as they did.’

“And I said to the clerics who thus counselled me to follow these men, ‘Sirs, if these men 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 lust, and had taken upon themselves simple living and willful poverty, they would have given a good example to me and

to many others, to have followed them. But now, since all of these four men have slanderously and shamefully done the contrary, consenting to receive and to hold temporal benefices, living now more worldly and more fleshly than they did before, conforming themselves to the manners of this world, I forsake them in this, and in all their doings. For I purpose, with the help of God, to flee these men, teaching and counselling whomever I may, to flee and to eschew the way that they have chosen. Therefore sirs, I pray that you do not busy yourselves to move me to follow these men in revoking and forsaking the truth.'

"Then the archbishop said to his clerics, 'Busy yourselves no longer about him, for he and others such as he is, are confederates together, so that they will not swear to be obedient, and to submit themselves to the prelates of holy church. For now, since I stood here, his fellow also sent me word that he will not swear, and that this fellow counselled him that he should not swear to me. But blessed be God, he shall not have his purpose of him. For he has forsaken all your teaching, submitting himself to be ready and obedient to the ordinance of holy church. And he weeps bitterly, and curses you heartily for the venomous teaching which you showed to him.

"And for your false counsel to your fellow, you have great cause to be right sorry. For a long time you have busied yourself in perverting whomever you might. Therefore you are worthy of as many deaths, as you have given evil counsels. And therefore, by Jesus, you shall go to where Nicholas Herford and Thomas Purvey were harbored. And I undertake, before eight days from this day, you will be right glad to do whatever I bid you. And I will try, if I can make you as sorrowful there as you were glad at my last going out of England. By St. Thomas, I will turn your joy into sorrow.'

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

"Then the archbishop said to me, 'Why I went out of England is unknown to you. But let this be well known to you, that God has called me again, and brought me into this land, to destroy you and the false sect that you are of. And by God, I will pursue you so narrowly, that I will not leave a slip of you in this land.'

"And I said to the archbishop, 'Sir, the holy prophet Jeremiah said to the false prophet, When the word of the prophet comes to pass, then the prophet will know that the Lord has truly sent him.' Jer 28.9.

"And the archbishop (as if he had not been pleased with my saying) turned away here and there, and said 'By God, I will set upon your shins such a pair of pearls that you will be glad to change your voice.'

"These and many more words were spoken to me, menacing me and all others of the same sect with punishment and destruction to the utmost.

"And then the archbishop called to him a cleric, and conferred with him. And that cleric went out, and soon he brought in the constable of Saltwood castle, and the archbishop conferred a good while with him. Then the constable went out, and then diverse seculars came in, and they scorned me on every side, and menaced me greatly. Some counselled the archbishop to burn me by and by, and some other counselled him to drown me in the sea, for it is nearby there.

"And a cleric standing beside me, there kneeled down to the archbishop, asking him that he would deliver me to him to say matins with him, and he would undertake that within three days I would not resist anything that my prelate commanded me to do.

"And the archbishop said that he would settle for me himself.

[276]

“And then the constable came again and spoke privately to the archbishop; and the archbishop commanded the constable to lead me out with him, and he did so. And when we had gone out we were sent for again. And when I came in again before the archbishop, a cleric had me kneel down and ask for grace, and submit myself, and I would find it for the best.

“And then I said to the archbishop, ‘Sir, as I have said to you several times today, I will willingly and humbly obey and submit to God and to his law, and to every member of holy church, as far as I can perceive that these members accord with their head Christ, and will teach me, rule me, or chastise me by authority, specifically by God’s law.’

“And the archbishop said, ‘I knew well he would not submit without such additions.’

“And then I was rebuked, scorned, and menaced on every side. And yet after this, diverse persons cried out for me to kneel down and submit myself; but I stood still, and did not say a word. And then many words were spoken of me, and to me, and I stood and heard them menace, curse, and scorn me, but I said nothing.

“Then awhile later the archbishop said to me, ‘will you not submit yourself to the ordinance of holy church?’

“And I said, ‘Sir, I will full gladly submit myself, as I have shown you before.’

“And then the archbishop had the constable to have me led forth from there in haste.

“And so then I was led out, and brought into a foul prison, where I never was before. But thanked be God, when all men had then gone out from me, and barred fast the prison-door after them, I was by myself. I busied myself thinking on God, and thanking him for his goodness. And I was then greatly comforted, not only because I was then delivered for a time from the sight, from the hearing, from the presence, from the scorning, and from the menacing of my enemies — but I rejoiced in the Lord much more, because through his grace he so kept me, both among the flattering and the menacing of my adversaries, that without heaviness and anguish of my conscience, I passed away from them. For as a tree laid upon another tree, lies athwart or crosswise, so the archbishop and his three clerics were always contrary to me, and I to them.

“Now good God for your holy name, and to the praising of your most blessed name, make us one together, if it be your will. And that it may thus be, let all who read or hear this writing, pray heartily to the Lord God, that He who for his great goodness, cannot be expressed with tongue, grant to us and to all others who are separated in the same way, and for the same cause specially, or for any other cause, that they may be knit and made one in true faith, in steadfast hope, and in perfect charity. Amen.”

What the end was of this good man, and blessed servant of God, William Thorpe, I do not as yet find specified in any history. It is thought that the archbishop, Thomas Arundel, being so hard an adversary against those men, would not let him go. Much less is it to be supposed that he would ever retract his sentence and opinion, which he so valiantly maintained before the bishop. Nor does it seem that he had any such recanting spirit. Again, neither is it found that he was burned. Therefore it remains most likely to be true, that being committed to some strait prison (as the archbishop in his examination threatened him), there (as Thorpe himself confesses) he was so straitly kept, that either he was secretly done away with, or else he died by sickness.

I also find the like end happened to John Ashton, another good follower of Wycliffe, 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, in which the good man continued till his death, (A.D. 1382).

Articles Taught By John Purvey.

In the examination of William Thorpe, mention is made of John Purvey, of whom we said something earlier, promising to treat more particularly afterwards. Of this Purvey, Thomas Walden writes,

“John Purvey was the library of Lollards, and glossary upon Wycliffe. He said that the worshipping of Abraham was but a salutation. And that this John Purvey, with Herford, a doctor of divinity, were grievously tormented and punished in the prison of Saltwood, and at the length recanted at Paul’s Cross at London. Thomas Arundel was then archbishop of Canterbury. Afterwards he was again imprisoned under Henry Chichely, archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 1421.”

Thus much writes Walden. Regarding the sacrament of the last supper, the sacrament of penance, the sacrament of orders, the power of the keys, the preaching of the gospel, of marriages, of vows, of possessions, of the punishing and correcting of the clergy, of the laws and decrees of the church, of the state and condition of the pope and the clergy — of all these generally, he left several treatises, gravely and exactly written.

The articles which he taught, and afterward was forced to recant at Paul’s Cross, were these:

1. That in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, there is not, nor can there be any accident without the subject;⁵⁸ but there truly remains the same substance, and the very visible and corruptible bread, and likewise the very same wine which before the consecration were set upon the altar to be consecrated by the priest — as when a pagan or infidel is baptized, he is spiritually converted into a member of Christ through grace, and yet he remains the very same man which he was before in but proper nature and substance.
2. Auricular confession, or private penance, is a certain whispering, destroying the liberty of the gospel, and newly brought in by the pope and the clergy, to entangle the consciences of men in sin, and to draw their souls into Hell.
3. Every layman being holy and predestinate into everlasting life, is a true priest before God.
4. That many prelates and others of the clergy live wickedly, contrary to the doctrine and example of Christ and his apostles. Therefore those who so live, do not have the keys either of the kingdom of Heaven, nor yet of Hell. Nor should any Christian esteem their censure anymore than as a thing of no force. Yes, even if the pope should perhaps interdict the realm, yet he could not hurt, but rather profit us, in that thereby we would be dismissed from the observance of his laws, and from saying the service according to the custom of the church.
5. If any man makes an oath or vow to keep perpetual celibacy, or does anything else to which God has not appointed him, giving him grace to perform his purpose, that same vow or oath is unreasonable and indiscreet. Nor can any prelate compel him to keep it without doing contrary to God’s ordinance. But he should commit him to the governance of the Holy Spirit and of his own conscience; and thus every man who will not fulfill his vow or oath, cannot do it for that cause.

⁵⁸ See note on page 227. Accidents are the incidental *attributes* of bread (e.g., white, round, savory).

6. Whoever takes upon himself the office of priesthood — though he does not have the charge of souls committed to him according to the custom of the church — not only may, but ought to preach the gospel freely to the people; otherwise he is a thief, excommunicated by God, and by the holy church.

7. That Pope Innocent III and six hundred bishops, and a thousand other prelates, with all the rest of the clergy who together with the pope agreed and determined that in the sacrament of the altar, after the conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, the accidents of that bread and wine remain there without any proper subject of the same. He also ordained, that all Christians should confess their sins once a year to a proper priest, and receive the reverend sacrament at Easter; and he made certain other laws at the same time. All those, Purvey says, in so doing, were fools and blockheads, heretics, blasphemers, and seducers of Christian people. Therefore we should not believe the determinations of them or of their successors, nor should we obey their laws or ordinances, unless they are plainly grounded upon the holy Scripture, or upon some reason which cannot be impugned.

[277] A.D. 1409.

*Other Articles drawn out of Purvey's Books
more at large by Richard Levingham.*

“As to the sacrament of thanksgiving, that chapter of repentance and remission (*omnis utriusque sexus*),⁵⁹ in which it is ordained that every faithful man should at least once every year, that is to say at Easter, receive the sacrament of the Eucharist, is a beastly thing, heretical and blasphemous.

“That Innocent III was the head of antichrist, who after the loosing of Satan, invented a new article of our faith, and a certain feigned doctrine touching the **sacrament** of the altar; that is to say, that the sacrament of the altar is an accident without a substance, or else a heap of accidents without a substance. But Christ and his apostles teach manifestly, that the sacrament of the altar is bread and the body of Christ together, in the manner that he spoke. And in that he calls it *bread*, he would have the people to understand, as they should with reason, that it is true and substantial bread, and not false or feigned bread.

“And although Innocent, that antichrist, alleges that in the council at Lyons, where this matter was decided, were six hundred bishops with him, and one thousand prelates, who agreed in this determination — all those notwithstanding, Purvey calls fools, according to that saying in Ecclesiastes 1. ‘Of fools there are an infinite number.’ And so in like manner Purvey calls them false christs and false prophets, of whom Christ speaks in the 24th of Matthew, ‘Many false christs and false prophets will arise, and deceive many.’ And therefore every Christian man ought to believe firmly that the sacrament of the altar is **true bread** indeed, and not false or feigned bread. And although it is true bread indeed, yet notwithstanding, it is the very body of Christ in that way which he spoke, and called it his *body*; and so it is true bread, and the very body of Christ. And as Christ concerning his humanity was both visible and passible, and by his divinity was invisible and impassible: so likewise this sacrament in that it is very bread, may be seen with the corporal eye, and may also abide corruption. But even though a man may see that sacrament, yet notwithstanding, the body of Christ in that sacrament cannot be seen with the corporal eye, even though it is the body of Christ in that manner he spoke of it; for notwithstanding, the body of Christ is now incorruptible in Heaven. So the sacrament of the cup is very wine, and the very blood of Christ, according to his manner of speaking. Also Innocent III, with a great multitude of his secular priests, made a certain new determination,

⁵⁹ That is, all of both sexes.

that the sacrament of the altar is an accident without a substance, whereas neither Jesus Christ, nor any of his apostles taught this faith (but openly and manifestly to the contrary), nor yet did the holy doctors, for a thousand years and more, teach this faith openly.

“Therefore when antichrist or any of his shavelings asks you, who are a simple Christian, whether this sacrament is the very body of Christ or not, affirm it to be manifestly so. And if he asks you whether it is material bread, or whatever other bread, say that it is such bread as Christ understood and meant by his proper word; and such bread as the Holy Spirit meant in St. Paul, when he called that bread which he broke, very bread; ^{1Cor 11.23-24} and wade no further into it. If he asks you how this bread is the body of Christ, say it is as Christ understood it to be his body, who is both omnipotent and true, and in whom there is no untruth. Say also, as the holy doctors say, ‘That the terrestrial matter or substance may be converted into Christ, as the pagan or infidel may be baptized, and hereby be spiritually converted, and be a member of Christ, and so in a certain sense becomes Christ; and yet the same man remains still in his proper nature.’ For so St. Augustine grants that a sinner forsaking his sin, and being made one spirit with God by faith, grace and charity, may be converted into God, and be in a way God, as both David and St. John testify; ^{Psa 139; Joh 17.21} and yet he is the same person in substance and nature, and in soul and virtue is altered and changed. Yet men of more knowledge and reason may more plainly prove the falsity of antichrist both in this matter and in others, by the gift of the Holy Spirit working in them. Notwithstanding, if men will humbly hold and keep the manifest and apparent words of the holy Scripture, and the plain sense and meaning of the Holy Spirit, and proceed no further, but humbly commit to the Spirit of God, which surpasses their understanding, they may safely offer themselves to death, as true martyrs of Jesus Christ.

“As to the sacrament of **penance**, that chapter (*omnis utriusque sexus*) by which a certain new-found auricular confession was ordained, is full of hypocrisy, heresy, covetousness, pride, and blasphemy; Purvey reproveth that chapter verbatim. Also he says that the penance and pains limited by the canons are unreasonable and unjust for their austerity and rigor. And he further shows how Innocent III brought in a new-found confession, whereby the priests oppress the laymen, compelling them to confess themselves to blind and ignorant priests in whom there is nothing but pride and covetousness, who hold those in contempt who are learned and wise. Also that the decretal of Innocent III, regarding the auricular or vocal confession, was brought in and invented to entangle men’s consciences with sin, and to draw them down to hell. And further, that such a manner of confession destroys evangelical liberty, and prevents men from inquiring after, and retaining the wise counsel and doctrine of those who are good priests, who would willingly teach the people the right way to heaven. For this abuse, all Christian men, especially Englishmen, should decry such wicked laws.

“As to the authority of the **keys** and **censures**, Christian men should esteem Satan (whom men call the pope) and his unjust censures, as no more than the hissing of a serpent, or the blast of Lucifer. Also, no man should trust or put confidence in the false indulgences of covetous priests. These indulgences draw away the hope which men ought to repose in God, to a class of sinful men, robbing the poor of those alms which are given to them. Such priests are manifest betrayers of Christ and of the whole church, and are Satan’s own stewards to beguile Christian souls by their hypocrisy and feigned pardons. Also, because those prelates and clergymen live so execrable a life, contrary to the gospel of Christ and examples of his apostles, and do not truly teach the gospel, but only lies and the traditions of sinful wicked men, it appears most manifestly that they do not have the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but rather the keys of hell. And they may be well-assured that God never gave them authority to make and establish so many ceremonies and traditions contrary to the liberty of the gospel, and to put blocks in Christian men’s ways, so that they can neither know nor observe His gospel in liberty of conscience, and so attain a ready way to heaven.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“As regarding the **preaching** of the gospel, whoever receives or takes upon himself the office of a priest, or of a bishop, and does not discharge that office by the example of his good conversation and faithful preaching of the gospel, is a thief, an excommunicate of God and of holy church.’ And further, ‘If the curates do not preach the word of God, they shall be damned, and if they do not know how to preach, they ought to resign their benefices.’ So that those prelates who do not preach the gospel of Christ (even if they could excuse themselves from doing any other evil) are dead in themselves; they are antichrists, and satans, transfigured into angels of light, and betrayers of Christ’s people.

“Now as to the **correction** of the clergy. By the law of God, and by reason, the king and all other Christians may punish Italy, and all the false priests and clerics within it, and reduce them to the humble ordinance of Jesus Christ. Also, the law of Sylvester the pope is contrary to the law of Christ. And that proud and ambitious Sylvester, ⁶⁰ by his law, so defended two cardinals (who were not to be defended by the law of Christ), that they might not be convicted by any means, even though they were both vicious and evil.

[278]

“And although Christ sustained and suffered the judgment of unjust temporal judges, our mitred prelates in these days so magnify themselves beyond Christ and his apostles, that they refuse such judgments. Also, those decretals of accusations which prohibit any clerics from being brought before a secular judge to receive judgment, contain both heresy, blasphemy, and error, and bring great gain and commodity to antichrist’s coffers.

“Furthermore, that all Christian kings and lords ought to exclaim against the pope and those who are his favorers, and banish them out of their lands, till such time as they will obey God and His gospel, His kings, and other ministers of God’s justice. Also that bishops and their favorers, who say it does not pertain to kings and secular lords (but to them and their officials) to punish adultery and fornication, fall into manifest treason against the king, and heresy against the Scripture. Also that it pertains to the king to have the order both of priests and bishops, as king Solomon and king Jehoshaphat had.

“Furthermore, in that chapter (*Nullus iudicium de foro competentis* ⁶¹), by which secular judges are forbidden, without the bishop’s commandment, to condemn any cleric to death, is manifestly against the holy Scripture, which declares that kings have power over clerics and priests, to punish them for their deserved crimes. Also that the decree of Boniface, made against the prosecutors, strikers, and imprisoners of cardinals, is contrary both to the holy Scripture, and to all reason. Also that by the law of God and reason, a secular lord may lawfully take a cardinal and put him in prison for committing the crime of open simony, adultery, and manifest blasphemy. Also that the chapter (*Si Papa*, Dist. 40.), which says that the pope ought to be judged by no one, unless the pope is *Devius a fide* (deviated from faith), is contrary to the gospel, which says, *if your brother sins against you, correct him.* ^{Mat 18.15} Also whereas St. Gregory and St. Augustine called themselves the servants of God’s servants, this proud bishop of Rome, who will not be judged by his subjects (who are indeed his lords, if they are just and good men) destroys the order of God’s law, and all humility; he extols himself above God and his apostles. Also that Christian kings should not only judge this proud bishop of Rome, but also to depose him by the example that Cestrensis declares of Otto the emperor (lib. 6. cap. 8.), who deposed John XII, and instituted Leo in his place. And further, he makes an exhortation

⁶⁰ Pope Sylvester IV, also known as Maginulf, was an antipope from 1105 to 1111, opposing Pope Paschal II during the Investiture Controversy between the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V and the papacy.

⁶¹ *Nullus iudicium de foro competentis*: No judgment from the competent forum.

to the princes to judge the church of Rome, which he calls the great and cursed whore of which St. John writes in Revelation 17.

“Lastly, regarding the laws and determinations of the church: Christians have reasonable excuses and causes to repel the statutes of the pope and of his shavelings, which are not expressly grounded on the holy Scripture, or else upon inevitable reason. Also that simple men reverently receive the sentences of the doctors, and other laws, so far as they are expressly grounded upon the holy Scripture, or good reason. Also that whereas the pope’s laws, and laws of his ministers and clerics are contrary to themselves, and do not have their foundation either upon Scripture or upon reason, simple men ought to bid them farewell. Also that that proud priest of Rome, with all his rabble, might easily err in the faith. And yet the Christian faith is preserved whole and safe in the faithful members of Christ, who are his true church; while the pope and all his rabblement cannot prove that they are any part of His church. Also that the pope with all his favorers may be deceived by a lying spirit, as was Ahab and all his prophets; and that one true prophet, who was Micaiah, may have the truth shown to him. Also that all good Christians ought to cast away from them the pope’s laws, saying, *Let us break their bands asunder*, ^{Psa 2:3} and let us cast from our necks those heavy yokes of theirs. Also that where these prelates burn one good book for perhaps one error contained in it, they ought to burn all the books of the canon-law, for the manifold heresies contained in them.”

And thus much out of a certain old book written on parchment. This book containing diverse ancient records of the university, seemed to belong at one time to the library of the university, bearing the year of its compiling, A.D. 1396. If this date is correct, then it was written before Purvey recanted before Thomas Arundel, archbishop, at Saltwood, where he was imprisoned.

Letter of King Henry IV to Pope Gregory XII – 1407.

Here is to be considered, or at least to be admonished, that all this while the schism in the church of Rome continued; and so it endured till the Council of Constance, which was in total, twenty-nine years. The origin of it (as said before) first began with Urban V. Him being dead (A.D. 1389), next followed Pope Boniface IX, who sat fourteen years. He was so impudent and so past shame, in selling his pardons, that he brought the keys of St. Peter into contempt (as Platina says). After him succeeded Innocent VII, who sat for two years. After his death, the cardinals consulted together. They saw the enormity and inconvenience growing from this schism in their church of Rome (and thought to provide some remedy according to the best device they could find). In their conclave where they were assembled for a new election for the pope, they took this order. They promised among themselves — with a solemn vow made to God, to Mary the Blessed Virgin, to Peter and Paul, and to all the blessed company of saints — that if any of them, within or without the college, should be called to the high place of apostolical pre-eminence, he would immediately renounce the jurisdiction and title of his popedom. The rival pope, for the time being, would in like manner renounce his place and title; and his cardinals would in like manner condescend to the other cardinals of Rome. So that both these colleges of cardinals agreeing together, one chief bishop was to be chosen and taken from them both, to be made the true pope. Provided, moreover, that none would seek any release or absolution from the promise, vow, and bond once passed among them. Everyone subscribed to all these things with his hand. These things thus prefixed and ratified, they proceeded to the election, in which Gregory XII was chosen. The same day of his election, in the presence of all the cardinals, he confirmed the vow, sacrament, and promise made, subscribing to them with his hand, in the following form: “And I, Gregory, this day being the; last of November, A.D. 1407, chosen and elected for bishop of Rome, do swear, vow, and promise, and confirm all the premises above

contained,” etc. This being done, shortly after he was crowned. He was eighty years of age. As the time thus passed, the people and cardinals were in great expectation, awaiting when the pope, according to his oath, would give over, with the other pope also. And not long after, the matter began indeed to be attempted between the two popes, by letters from one to the other; assigning both the day and place, where and when they would meet together; yet nothing followed.

This continuing, there was great murmuring among the cardinals to see their holy perjured father so neglect his oath and vow. At length several of them forsook the pope, as being perjured (as no less he was). Moreover they sent to kings and princes of other lands for their counsel and assistance, to appease the schism. Among the rest, Cardinal Bituriensis was sent to the king of England. He published propositions and conclusions (remaining in the registers of Thomas Arundel), proving that the pope ought to be subject to laws and councils. Then King Henry (moved to write to pope Gregory) directs this letter, A.D. 1409:

*The Letter of King Henry IV
to Pope Gregory XII.*

“Most blessed father, if the discreet providence of the apostolical see would call to mind with what great perils the universal world has been damnified up to now, under the pretense of this present schism. And if he would especially consider the slaughter of some 200,000 Christian people (they say), that has occurred through the occasion of war arising in diverse quarters of the world; and now of late, 30,000 soldiers have been slain through the dissension created over the bishopric of Leodium, between the two set up, one by the authority of one pope, the other by the authority of the other pope, fighting in camp for the title of that bishopric.

[279] A.D. 1409.

“Certainly, you would lament in spirit and be sorely grieved in mind for these things. So that with good conscience you would rather relinquish the honor of the apostolic see, than suffer such horrible bloodshed to ensue under the cloak of dissimulation, following in this the example of the true mother in the book of Kings, who pleading before Solomon for the right of her child, would rather part from the child than have the child be divided by the sword. And although it may be vehemently suspected by the creation of nine new cardinals recently made by you, contrary to your oath (as other men say), that you but little heed or care for ceasing the schism; yet far be it from the hearing and noting of the world, that your circumspect seat should ever be noted and distained with such an inconstancy of mind, whereby the last error may be worse than the first.”

The king likewise directed another letter to the cardinals with the following contents:

King Henry the Fourth to the Cardinals.

“Desiring to show what zeal we have had and have for the reformation of peace of the church, by the consent of the states of the realm, we have directed our letters to the bishop of Rome, in the tenor of the copy enclosed with these presents, to be executed effectually. Therefore we seriously beseech your reverend college, that if it chances to have the said Gregory present at the Council of Pisa, and to render up his popedom according to your desire and his own oath, then you so ordain for his state totally, that chiefly God may be pleased thereby, and that both the said Gregory, and also we who entirely love his honor and advantage, may have cause to give you worthily deserved thanks for the same.”

Three Popes At Once.

This being done in the year A.D. 1409, the next year following, A.D. 1410, the cardinals of both the popes, to wit, of Gregory and Benedict, by common advice assembled together at

the city of Pisa, for the reformation of unity and peace in the church. A great multitude of prelates and bishops having come to this assembly, a new pope was chosen, named Alexander V. But neither Gregory nor Benedict would fully agree to this election. There were thus *three* popes in the Roman church. That is, not three crowns on one pope's head, but three heads in one popish church at the same time! Alexander, being newly made pope, had scarcely warmed his triple crown, that he straight gives out full remission of sins, not of a few, but all manner of sins whatsoever — to all those who conferred anything to the monastery of St. Bartholomew by Smithfield, and resorted to that church on any of the following days: to wit, on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter even, the feast of the Annunciation, from the first even-song to the later. But this pope, who was so liberal in giving remission of many years to others, was not able to give one year of life to himself; for within the same year he died. In his stead came Pope John XXIII.

During the time of Alexander V, a great stir began in the country of Bohemia, occasioned by the books of John Wycliffe, which then came into the hands of John Huss and others, both men and women, especially of the lay sort, and craftsmen. These books began to do much good there. Many of these people, not only men, but women also, were in a short time so ripe in judgment, and prompt in the Scriptures, that they began to ask questions, yes and to reason with the priests regarding matters of the holy Scriptures. This was partly by reading their books translated into their language, and partly by the promoting of John Huss — a remarkably learned man, and a singular preacher at that time in the university of Prague.

Because of this, a complaint was brought to Pope Alexander, who soon caused John Huss to be cited to Rome. But when he did not come at the pope's citation, Pope Alexander addressed his letters to the archbishop of Swinco. In these he straitly charged him to prohibit and forbid, by the authority apostolical, all manner of preaching or sermons to be made to the people, except in cathedral churches or colleges, parish churches, monasteries, or else in their churchyards. And also that the articles of Wycliffe should in no case be permitted to be held, taught, or defended, either privately or openly by any person, of whatever state, condition, or degree. These commanded, moreover, and charged the archbishop, that with four bachelors of divinity, and two doctors of the canon law, he would proceed upon this, and so provide that no person in churches, schools, or any other place, should teach, defend, or approve any of the aforesaid articles. So that, whoever attempted the contrary, would be accounted a heretic; and unless that person solemnly and publicly revoked the said articles, and forever abjured the books in which the articles were contained — so that they may be utterly abolished from the eyes of the faithful — he would be apprehended and imprisoned, without appeal, calling in the help of the secular arm if need required it, etc. These were the contents of this mighty and fierce bull of Pope Alexander.

John Huss justly complained and objected many things against this bull, as appears in his book entitled *De Ecclesia*, cap. 18, where he declares this mandate of the pope to stand directly against the doings and sayings both of Christ and of his apostles. He considered how Christ himself preached to the people in both sea and desert, in fields, houses, synagogues, and villages. And how the apostles also did the same in all places, the Lord mightily working with them. He declared, moreover, that the mandate or bull of the pope redounded to the great detriment of the church, in binding the word of God, so that it might not have free course. It was also prejudicial to chapels newly erected for the word to be preached in them. 'Therefore, (says Huss) from this commandment or mandate of Pope Alexander, I appeal to Alexander, being better informed and advised. And as I was prosecuting my appeal, the lord pope immediately died.'

Then the archbishop of Swinco, to whom this present bull was directed, when he saw the process, bulls, and mandates of the bishop of Rome were thus despised by John Huss and his fellows, and having no hope of redress in king Wenceslaus, who seemed to neglect the matter, the archbishop went to Hungary, to complain to Sigismund king of Hungary, and brother to Wenceslaus. But this archbishop, as soon as he arrived in Hungary (by the just judgment of God) died, as the history says, for sorrow. By this, a little more liberty and quiet was given by the Lord to His gospel, beginning to take root among the Bohemians. This tranquility, however, did not continue long without trouble and persecution, nor could it in those furious days and reign of antichrist. For after Alexander, Pope John XXIII succeeded. Likewise playing his part in this tragedy, he bent all his might and main to disturb the Bohemians, as (Christ willing) will be declared later in the course of our history.

Thus the poor Christians, like the simple Israelites under the tyranny of Pharaoh, were oppressed in every place, but especially here in England, because the English king (unlike Wenceslaus) entirely held with the pope and his prelates against the gossellers.⁶²

Because of this, the kingdom of the pope and his members began to grow so strong in this realm, that none dared stir or move against them. The bishops having the king so entirely on their side, armed moreover with laws, statutes, punishments, sword, fire, and faggot, they reigned and ruled as they pleased, like kings and princes in themselves. They were so strong that no human force was able to stand against them; they were so exalted in pride, and puffed up in glory, that they thought all things were subject to their reverend majesties. Whatever they set forth or decreed, it must be received and obeyed by all men.

[280]

And such was their superstitious blindness and curious vanity, that whatever toy came into their fancy, it was at once determined and established as a law to be observed by all men, however frivolous or superstitious. This appears as well by Thomas Arundel archbishop of Canterbury, and others who now having a little leisure from slaying and killing innocent people, martyrs and confessors of the Lord, and now having brought their enemies (they thought) under their feet, they began to set up themselves, and to invent some new custom, as is the habit of the pope's church. They ever intrude into the church of God, some ceremony or custom of their own making, by which the church of Christ has up to now been exceedingly pestered. So likewise this Thomas Arundel, thinking the church was not yet sufficiently filled with ceremonies and vain traditions of men, brought in a new-found bauble, commonly called "The tolling of Aves," in honor of our lady, with certain Aves to be said, and days of pardon to be given for it. For the ratification of this, under the pretense of the king's request, he directed the following mandate to the bishop of London, well-filled with words of idolatry, as will plainly appear by reading it.

A Mandate of Thomas Arundel, directed to the Bishop of London, to warn men to say certain Prayers at the tolling of the Aves, or ringing of the Curfew.

"Thomas, etc. To the right reverend brother, the Lord Robert, by the grace of God, bishop of London, greeting, etc. While we lift our eyes round about us, and behold attentively with circumspect consideration, how the most high Word that was in the beginning with God, chose for himself a holy and immaculate virgin of kingly stock, in whose womb he took on true flesh by inspiral inspiration, that the merciful goodness of the Son of God, who was uncreated, might abolish the sentence of condemnation which all the posterity of mankind that was created had incurred by sin. Among other labors in the vine of the Lord of Sabaoth, we sing to

⁶² *Gossellers: here, preachers of the gospel of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.*

God our Savior with great joy, thinking that though all the people of the Christian religion extolled with voices of praise so worthy a virgin by whom we received the beginnings of our redemption, by whom the holy day first shined unto us, which gave us hope of salvation; and although all the same people were drawn to reverence her who, being a happy virgin, conceived the Son of God, the King of heaven, the Redeemer and Savior of all nations, ministering light to the people who were miserably drowned in the darkness of death — we truly, as the servants of her own inheritance, and those who are written about, to be of her peculiar dower, as we are acknowledged to be by every man's confession — we, I say, should more watchfully than any others show our devotion in praising her. Being merciful to us up to now, she willed that our power, being as it were spread abroad everywhere through all the coasts of the world, should with a victorious arm be feared among all foreign nations; and that our power, being so defended on all sides with the buckler of her protection, subdued to our victorious standards nations both near at hand and far off, and made them subject to us.

“Likewise our happy estate, all the time that we have passed since the beginning of our lives, may be well attributed only to the help of her medicine, to whom also we may worthily ascribe now of late in these times of ours, under the mighty government of our most Christian king, our deliverance from the ravening wolves and the mouths of cruel beasts who had prepared against our banquets, a mess of meat mingled full of gall, and who hated us unjustly, secretly lying in wait for us, in recompence for the good will that we showed to them. Therefore, she being on high, sitting before the throne of the heavenly Majesty, the defendress and patroness of us all, being magnified with all men's praises, may more plentifully exhibit to us, the sons of adoption, the breasts of her grace, in all those things that we have to deal with. At the request of the special devotion of our Lord, the King himself, we command your brotherhood, straitly enjoining you that you command the subjects of your city and diocese, and of all other suffragans, to worship our Lady Mary the mother of God, and our patroness and protectress, evermore in all adversity, with that sort of prayer and usual manner of ringing, as the devotion of Christ's faithful people is accustomed to worship her at the ringing of *cour le feu* (court of fire). And when you cause them to ring before the morning light, that with like manner of prayer and ringing she may be devoutly honored everywhere by suffragans and subjects, ours and theirs, regular as well as secular, in your monasteries and theirs, and in collegiate-churches. So that humbly calling upon the mercy of the heavenly Father, the right hand of the heavenly piety may mercifully come to the help, the protection, and the defense of the same lord our king, who for the happy remedy of quietness, and for our succor from tempestuous floods, is ready to apply his hands to work, and his eyes to watching, with his whole desire. We therefore desiring more earnestly to stir up the minds of all faithful people to so devout an exercise of God, etc., we grant by these presents, to all and every man, etc. who says the Lord's Prayer and the Salutation of the Angel five times at the morning-peal with a devout mind, *toties quoties* forty days' pardon by these presents.⁶³

“Given under our seal in our manor of Lambeth the 10th day of February.” (Ex Regist. Thomas Arundel).

The proper natures and condition of this generation appear by this frivolous and barbarous constitution, with many others of the same kind, heaped into the church by the papists, whose priests were more solicitous about worldly honor than Christian humility.

For example, what can be more suitable for a true ecclesiastical pastor, than humility of heart and spirit, according to the example of the Head Bishop himself? So what greater show of arrogance and pride could there be, than in this Thomas Arundel, archbishop of

⁶³ *toties quoties* refers to an indulgence in the Roman Catholic Church, that may be gained or granted as often as the required works are performed.

Canterbury? Passing by the High-street of London, he not only looked and waited for the ringing of the bells in honor of his coming, but he took great offense, and suspended all those churches in London (not only from the use of the steeple and bells, but also from the organs) that did not receive his coming with the ringing of bells, as it appears by his own registers, where the following commission is addressed to his own somner.⁶⁴

A Commission directed to the Somner, to suspend certain Churches of London, because they did not ring their Bells at the presence of my Lord the Archbishop of Canterbury.

“Thomas, by the permission of God, etc. To our well-beloved Thomas Wilton, our sworn somner, health, grace, and blessing. The attractiveness of our holy church of Canterbury, over which we bear rule, deserves and requires that while we pass through its province (having our cross carried before us) every parish church in their turns ought and are bound, in token of special reverence that they bear toward us, to ring their bells. Notwithstanding this, on Tuesday last, when between eight and nine o’clock before dinner, we passed openly on foot, as it were, through the midst of the city of London, with our cross carried before us; several churches, whose names are here beneath noted, showed towards us willingly (though they certainly knew of our coming) unreverence rather than reverence, and the duty that they owe to our church of Canterbury, ringing not at all at our coming. Wherefore, we being willing to revenge this injury, for the honor of our spouse, as we are bounden, command you, that by our authority you put all those churches under our inditement, suspending God’s holy organs and instruments in the same.. Which we also suspend by the tenor of these presents, till the ministers of the aforesaid churches are able hereafter to attain from us the benefit of more plentiful grace. Given,” etc.

[281] A.D. 1410-1413.

What reason was there in this, why this archbishop should thus look for the ringing of the bells, or why he should be thus displeased with not ringing, I do not see. Perhaps his mind in the meantime was greatly occupied with some great subject, such as a sense of God’s fear, with repentance and remembrance of his sins, with zealous care and solicitude for his flock, with the earnest meditation of the passion and life of our Savior, who was so despised in this world. Or else he was set upon some grave study, while he waited for the ringing of the bells, which were usually so noisy to all students. And why were the trumpeters not punished as well, because they did not sound before his person? But though the bells did not clatter in the steeples, why should the body of the church be suspended? At least, the poor organs (I think) suffered some wrong in being put to silence in the choir loft, because the bells did not ring in the tower.

Penance for not Bringing Litter for the Archbishop’s Horse.

To show the glorious pomp of these prince-like prelates in these blind days of popish religion, I add another example not much unlike these, nor differing much in time, concerning certain poor men cited and enjoined strict penance by William Courtney, the predecessor of Thomas Arundel, for bringing litter (bedding) to his horse — not in carts as they should, but in little sacks, in a secret manner under their cloaks or coats. For this heinous and horrible sin, the archbishop, sitting in his tribunal seat, called and cited before him the persons (*pro littera*, i.e. for litter, in his own Latin), and after their submission, he enjoined them penance. This penance, below, is taken from the archbishop’s registers”

⁶⁴ Somner: a summoner; especially one who summons to an ecclesiastical court.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“Ignorance, the mother of error, has so blinded and deceived certain persons, to wit, Hugh Pennie, John Forstall, John Boy, John Wanderton, William Hayward, and John White, tenants of the lord of Wengham, that against the coming of the archbishop to his palace of Canterbury, on Palm Sunday evening, A.D. 1390, where being warned by the bailiff to convey and carry hay, straw, and other litter, to the palace as they were bound by the tenor of their lands, which they hold from the see of Canterbury, refusing and disdaining to do their service as they were accustomed, they brought their straw and other litter, not in carts and wagons openly and sufficiently, but piecemeal, and enclosed in bags or sacks, in contempt of their lord, and in derogation of the right and title of the see of Canterbury. Whereupon being cited and presented before the archbishop, sitting in judgment at his manor of Statewood, they yielded and submitted themselves to his lordship’s pleasure, humbly craving pardon of their trespass. Then the aforesaid archbishop absolved the above-named Hugh Pennie, etc. They swore to obey the laws and ordinances of holy church, and to do the punishment that should be appointed them for their deserts — that is, that going leisurely before the procession, every one of them should carry openly on his shoulder his bag stuffed with hay and straw, so that the hay and straw would appear hanging out, the mouths of the sacks being open.”

Parliaments under King Henry IV – 1399-1413.

To proceed now in the reign of this king, and to say something about his parliaments, as we have done with others. First, we will begin with the parliament held in the first year of his reign.

As our papists will not believe the contrary, but only that the jurisdiction of their father the pope has ever extended throughout all the world, here in England as well as in other places, therefore speaking of the parliaments held in this king’s days concerning this matter, I refer them to the parliament of King Henry in his first year, and to the twenty-seventh article. There they may read in the tenth objection laid against King Richard, in plain words, that as the crown of this realm of England, and the jurisdiction belonging to it, and also the whole realm itself at all times recently past, has been at such liberty and enjoyed such prerogative, that neither the pope nor any other from the same kingdom, should intrude himself nor intermeddle in it. It was therefore objected to King Richard II, that he procured the letters apostolical from the pope to confirm and corroborate certain statutes which then seemed to the parliament to tend against the crown and regal dignity, and also against the statutes and liberties of our realm of England. (Act Parl. An. 1. Reg. Hen. 4. Act 27.)

Further, in the second year of king Henry IV, it was required in the parliament that all such persons who are arrested under the statute made against the Lollards, may be bailed, and freely make their purgation, and that they be arrested by none other than by the sheriffs, or such officers.

Moreover, in the eighth year of this king’s reign it was propounded in parliament, that all such persons who procure, or sue in the court of Rome any process regarding any benefice, collation, or presentation of the same, shall incur the pain of the statute of provisors, made in the thirteenth year of Richard II, to which the king granted that the statutes previously provided should be observed.

In the same parliament, a petition was presented that the king might enjoy half the profits of every parson’s benefice who is not resident on it. The king answered that the ordinaries should do their duties in this, or he would provide further remedy to stay their pluralities.

In the same parliament, it was required that none sue to the court of Rome for any benefice, but only to the king’s courts.

Besides these, in the parliament held the eleventh year of this king, the commons of the land put up a bill to the king to take the temporal lands out of spiritual men's hands or possession. The effect of this bill was that the temporalities disorderly wasted by men of the church, might suffice to find for the king 15 earls, 1500 knights, 6200 esquires, and 100 houses of alms for the relief of the poor people; and over all these aforesaid charges, the king might put 20,000 pounds yearly in his coffers.

Provided, that every earl should have of yearly rent 3000 marks; and every knight 100 marks and four plough-lands; every esquire 40 marks a year, with two plough-lands; and every house of alms 100 marks, with oversight of two true seculars to every house, and also with a provision that every township should keep all their own poor people who could not labor for their living — with a condition that if more fell in a town than the town might maintain, then the said almshouses should relieve such townships.

No answer was made to this bill, except that the king would deliberate and advise on the matter.

These things thus narrated, regarding such acts and matters as occurred in the lifetime of this king, next follows the thirteenth year of his reign. In this year, the king fell grievously sick, after he had sent a little earlier a company of captains and soldiers to aid the duke of Burgundy in France (among whom was the Lord Cobham), keeping his Christmas at Eltham. From there the king was conveyed to London, where he began to call a parliament. In the meantime the infirmity of the king increasing more and more, he was taken and brought to a bed in a beautiful chamber at Westminster. And as he lay in his bed, he asked what they called the chamber he was in; and they answered Jerusalem. And then he said it was his prophesy, that he would die in Jerusalem. And so disposing himself toward his end in his chamber, he died on the twentieth of March A.D. 1413.

King Henry V – 1413.

After the death of Henry IV, his son Henry V began to reign. Henry was born at Monmouth in Wales. I will not intermeddle much with his other virtues and great factories in France, especially as the memory of his prowess, being sufficiently described by other writers, may both content the reader, and unburden my labor — especially because these later troubles of the church offer me so much, that little leisure is left to intermeddle with secular matters.

[282]

After the coronation of this new king, which was on the ninth of April (then called Passion Sunday), was an exceedingly stormy day. It was so tempestuous that many wondered at the omen. Not long after, a parliament was called and held at Westminster (A.D. 1413). At this time, Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, collected in St. Paul's church at London, a universal synod of all the bishops and clergy of England.

The Trouble and Persecution of Lord Cobham.

The chief and principal cause of the assembling of this synod, as the chronicle of St. Albans reports, was to repress the growing and spreading of the gospel, and especially to withstand the noble and worthy Lord Cobham, who was then noted to be a principal favorer, receiver, and maintainer of them, whom the bishop misnamed as Lollards, especially in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford. Lord Cobham was setting those up to preach whom the bishops had not licensed; and he sent them about to preach what was against the provincial constitutions. They also held and taught opinions of the sacraments, of images, of

pilgrimage, of the keys, and of the church of Rome, that were contrary and repugnant to the received determination of the Romish church, etc.

In the meantime, as the commotion was in debate concerning the good Lord Cobham, there were sent to them twelve inquisitors of heresies (whom they had appointed at Oxford the year before, to search out heretics), with all Wycliffe's books. They brought 246 conclusions which they had collected as heresies out of the books.

The articles being brought in, they proceeded in their communication, concluding that it was not possible for them to make whole Christ's coat without a seam, unless certain great men were taken out of the way, who seemed to be the chief maintainers of the said disciples of Wycliffe. Among them, this noble knight Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, was complained of by the general proctors to be the principal one. They accused him first of being a mighty maintainer of suspected preachers in the dioceses of London, Rochester, and Hereford, contrary to the minds of the ordinaries. They not only affirmed that he sent the preachers there, but he also assisted them by force of arms, notwithstanding their synodal constitution made to the contrary. Last of all, they accused him of being far otherwise in his 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 before.

In the end it, was concluded among them, that without any further delay, process should be awarded against him, as against a most pernicious heretic.

Some of them who were craftier in experience than the others, thought it best not to have the matter so rashly handled; but considering that Lord Cobham was a man of great birth, and in favor at that time with the king, their counsel was first to know the king's mind. This counsel was well accepted, and the archbishop, with his other bishops, and a great part of the clergy, went directly to the king. They laid most grievous complaints against Lord Cobham, to his great infamy and blemish, being a right godly man. The king gently heard those blood-thirsty prelates, and far otherwise than became his princely dignity. Notwithstanding, he required and desired that in respect to Lord Cobham's noble stock and knighthood, they should deal favorably with him; and that they would, possible, without rigor or extreme handling, reduce him again to the church's unity. The king also promised them, that if they were content to take some deliberation, he himself would seriously commune the matter with him.

Soon after the king sent for Lord Cobham. And when he had come, the king called him secretly, admonishing him to submit himself to his mother, the holy church, and like an obedient child, to acknowledge he was culpable. The Christian knight made this answer:

"You, most worthy prince, I am always prompt and willing to obey, for I know you are a Christian king, and the appointed minister of God, bearing the sword to the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of those who do well. To you (next to my eternal God) I owe my whole obedience, and submit to it, as I have ever done, all that I have, either of fortune or nature, ready at all times to fulfill whatever you command me in the Lord. But regarding the pope and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, for I know him by the Scriptures to be the great antichrist, the son of perdition, the open adversary of God, and the abomination standing in the holy place."

When the king heard this, he would talk no longer with him, but left him. And as the archbishop resorted again to the king for an answer, he gave him his full authority to cite the Lord Cobham, examine him, and punish him according to their devilish decree, which they called "the laws of holy church." Then the archbishop, by the counsel of his other bishops

and clergy, appointed to call before him Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, and to cause him to appear personally, to answer to such articles as they would lay against him.

This most constant servant of the Lord, and worthy knight. Sir John Oldcastle, beholding the fury of antichrist thus kindled against him, perceiving himself also compassed on every side with deadly dangers, took paper and pen in hand, and wrote a Christian confession of his faith, both signing and sealing it with his own hand. In this confession he also answered the four chief articles that the archbishop laid against him. That done, he took the copy with him, and went to the king with it, trusting to find mercy and favor at his hand. This confession of his was none other than the common belief or sum of the church's faith, called *The Apostles' Creed*, then used by all Christian men, with a brief declaration, as follows:

The Christian Belief of the Lord Cobham.

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth: and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried, He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father; Almighty; and from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

“And for a larger declaration of my faith in the catholic church, I steadfastly believe that there is but one God Almighty, in and of whose Godhead are these three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that those three persons are the self-same God Almighty. I believe also, that the second person in this most blessed Trinity, in most convenient time appointed for it beforehand, took flesh and blood of the most blessed virgin Mary, for the safeguard and redemption of the universal kind of man, which was lost before in Adam's offense.

“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 who have been or shall be saved, are members of this most holy church. And this holy church I think to be divided into three sorts of companies.

“The first sort are now in heaven, and they are the departed saints. 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 and all their lusts and evils.

“The second sort are in purgatory (if any such place is in the Scriptures) abiding the mercy of God, and a full deliverance of pain.

“The third sort are here upon the earth, and are 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 lusts of the flesh.

[283] A.D. 1413.

“This last company, by the just ordinance of God, is also divided into three several estates, that is to say, into the priesthood, the 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 to the examples of Christ and the apostles. They should be occupied in preaching and teaching the Scriptures purely, and in giving wholesome examples of good living to the other two degrees of men. They should be more modest, also more loving, gentle, and lowly in spirit, than any sort of people.

“In the knighthood are all those who bear the sword by law of office; these should defend God’s laws, and see that the gospel is purely taught, conforming their lives to the same, and excluding all false preachers. Indeed, these should rather hazard their lives, than suffer such wicked decrees as either blemish the eternal testament of God, or prevent the free passage of it, whereby heresies and schisms might spring in the church. For they arise principally from erroneous constitutions, first creeping craftily in under hypocritical lies, for advantage. They should also preserve God’s people from oppressors, tyrants, and thieves, and see the clergy supported so long as they teach purely, pray rightly, and administer the sacraments freely. And if they see them do otherwise, they are bound by the law or office to compel them to change their doings; and to see all things performed according to God’s prescribed ordinance.

“The last 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 for every man to justly occupy his faculty, be it merchandise, handicraft or cultivating the ground. And so one of them is like a helper to another, always following the just commandments of the Lord God.

“Over and besides all this, I most faithfully believe, that the sacraments of Christ’s church are necessary to all Christian believers; so that they are truly ministered according to Christ’s first institution and ordinance. And as I am maliciously and most falsely accused of misbelief in the sacrament of the altar, to the hurtful slander of many, I signify here to all men, that this is my faith concerning it. I believe in that sacrament Christ’s very body and blood are contained, in the similitude of bread and wine, yes the same body that was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, crucified on the cross, died and was buried, arose the third day from death, and is now glorified in heaven. I also believe the universal law of God to be most true and perfect, and those who do not follow it in their faith and works (at one time or another) can never be saved. Whereas whoever seeks it in faith, accepts it, learns it, delights in it, and performs it in love, shall taste the felicity of everlasting innocency.

“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 of church requires more, or any other kind of obedience, than this, he disdains Christ, exalting himself above God, and so he becomes an open antichrist. All the premises I believe particularly, and generally all that God has left in his holy Scripture, 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 is found in all points agreeing to the truth, then let it be allowed, and that I be acknowledged as none other than a true Christian. If it is proved otherwise, then let it be utterly condemned; provided always, that I be taught a better belief by the word of God, and I shall most reverently at all times obey it.”

This brief confession of his faith the Lord Cobham took to the court, offering it with all meekness to the king to read it over. The king would not receive it, but commanded it to be delivered to those who would be his judges. Then the Lord Cobham desired in the king’s presence, that a hundred knights and esquires might be allowed to come in upon his purgation, whom he knew would clear him of all heresies. Moreover, he offered himself, according to 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 who were present, that he would refuse no manner of correction that would be ministered to him according to the laws of God, but that he would at all times with all meekness obey it. Notwithstanding all this, the king allowed him to be summoned personally in his own privy chamber. There was nothing allowed that the Lord Cobham had requested. But as he would not be sworn to submit himself to the

church, and take whatever penance the archbishop would enjoin him, he was arrested again at the king's commandment, and led to the Tower of London.

As the day of examination had come, which was the 23d of September, Thomas Arundel the archbishop, sitting in Caiaphas' room in the chapter-house of St. Paul's, with Richard Clifford bishop of London, and Henry Bolingbrook bishop of Winchester; Sir Robert Morely, knight and lieutenant of the Tower, brought Lord Cobham before them, to whom the archbishop thus spoke.

“Sir John, in the last general convocation of the clergy of this our province, you were detected of certain heresies, and by sufficient witnesses found culpable. Whereupon you were cited by form of spiritual law, and would in no case appear. In conclusion, upon your rebellious obstinacy, you were both privately and openly excommunicated. Notwithstanding, we neither showed ourselves unready to have given you absolution (nor yet do to this hour) if you would have meekly asked for it.”

To this the Lord Cobham seemed as if he had not heard it, having his mind otherwise occupied, and so he desired no absolution. But said he would gladly before him and his brethren, recite that faith which he held and intended always to stand to, if it would please them to permit him to do so. And then he took out of his bosom a certain writing, concerning the articles of which he was accused, and read it before them, giving it to the archbishop as he concluded it.

Then the archbishop counselled with the other two bishops and with the doctors, what was to be done in this matter; commanding the Lord Cobham to stand aside for the time being. In conclusion, by their common assent, the archbishop thus addressed him:

“Come here. Sir John: in this your writing many good things are contained, and right catholic also; we do not deny it. But you must consider that this day was appointed for you to answer to other points concerning articles of which no mention is made in this your writing. And therefore you must declare to us your mind more plainly:

“Whether you hold, affirm and believe that in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration rightly done by a priest, material bread remains, or not? Moreover, whether you hold, affirm, and believe, that concerning the sacrament of penance, every Christian man is necessarily bound to confess his sins to a priest ordained by the church or not?”

After certain other communications, this was the answer of the good Lord Cobham: that he would not declare his mind, nor yet answer to these articles in any other way, than was expressly contained in his writing. Then the archbishop said to him, “Sir John, beware what you do. For if you do not answer clearly to those things that are here objected against you, the law of the holy church is that, once compelled by a judge, we may openly proclaim you a heretic.” He gave this answer to him: “Do as you think best, for I am determined.” Whatever he or the other bishops asked him, he bid them to refer to his bill; for by it he would stand to the very death. He would not give them any other answer that day. The bishops and prelates were much amazed and disquieted at this.

[284]

The day following, the archbishop sent to him in the Tower, this foolish and blasphemous writing, made by him and by his *unlearned* clergy.

The Determination of the Archbishop and Clergy.

“The faith and determination of the holy church touching the blissful sacrament of the altar, is this: That after the sacramental words are once spoken by a priest in his mass, the material

bread, that before was bread, is turned into Christ's very body. And the material wine, that before was wine, is turned into Christ's very blood. And so there remains in the sacrament of the altar, from then on, no material bread, nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken. How do you believe about this article?

"Holy church has determined that every Christian man, living here bodily upon the earth, ought to confess to a priest ordained by the church, if he may come to him. How do you feel about this 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 to Peter should succeed to all Peter's successors, whom we now call popes of Rome; by whose power in particular churches, are ordained prelates, such as archbishops, bishops, parsons, curates, and other degrees; whom Christian men ought to obey according to the laws of the church of Rome. This is the determination of holy church. How do you feel about this article?"

"Holy church has determined, that it is meritorious to a Christian man to go on pilgrimage to holy places; and there especially to worship holy relics and images of saints, apostles, and martyrs, confessors, and all other saints besides, approved by the church of Rome. How do you feel about this article?"

When Lord Cobham had read over this most wretched writing, he marvelled greatly at their mad ignorance. But he considered again that God had given them over, for their unbelief's sake, into most deep errors and blindness of soul. He perceived by this, that their utmost malice was resolved against him, however he might answer. Therefore he put his life into the hands of God, desiring only his Spirit to assist him in his next answer. When September 25th had come, Thomas Arundel, the archbishop of Canterbury, commanded his judicial seat to be removed from the chapter-house of St. Paul's, to the Dominican friars within Ludgate, at London. And as he sat there with Richard, bishop of London; Henry, the bishop of Winchester; and Bennet, the bishop of Bangor, he called in his council of officers, with other doctors and friars. All these, along with a great many more priests, monks, canons, friars, parish clerics, bell-ringers, and pardoners, disdained Lord Cobham with innumerable mocks and scorns, reckoning him to be a horrible heretic, and a man accursed before God.

Soon the archbishop called for a mass book, and caused all the prelates and doctors to swear that every man would faithfully do his office and duty that day. And that neither for favor nor fear, love nor hate of the one party nor the other, should anything be witnessed, spoken, or done, but according to the truth, as they would answer before God and all the world at the day of doom. Then the two notaries were sworn also to witness and to write the process that would be uttered by both parties, and to say their minds (if they otherwise knew) before they would register it. And all this dissimulation was but to color their mischiefs, before the ignorant multitude.

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

Then the archbishop said to him, "Lord Cobham, you are aware of the words and process which we had on Saturday last in the chapter-house of St. Paul's. I said to you then, that you were accursed for your obstinacy and disobedience to the holy church. "

Then Lord Cobham, with a cheerful countenance, answered: "God said by his holy prophet, 'I will curse your blessings,'" Mal 2.2.

The archbishop continued. "Sir, at that time I gently offered to have absolved you if you would have asked it. And I still do the same if you will humbly desire it in due form and manner as holy church has ordained."

Then the Lord Cobham said, "No, I will 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 confess myself here to you, my eternal living God, that in my frail youth I offended you, O Lord, most grievously in pride, wrath, gluttony, and covetousness. I have hurt many men in my anger, and done many other horrible sins. Good Lord, I ask your mercy." And then weeping, he stood up again and said with a loud voice: "Look! good people, look! for the breaking of *God's* law, and *His* great commandments, they never yet cursed me. But for their *own* laws and traditions they most cruelly handle both me and other men. And therefore both they and their laws, by the promise of God, shall be utterly destroyed."

At this the archbishop and his company were not a little hurt. However, he took courage, and examined the Lord Cobham about his Christian belief.

To which the Lord Cobham made this godly answer: "I believe fully and faithfully in 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." Then the archbishop demanded an answer to the bill which he and the clergy had sent to him to the Tower the day before, concerning the four articles of which he was accused, especially concerning the sacrament of the altar, how he believed about it.

The Lord Cobham said that he had nothing to do with that bill. But this was his belief concerning the sacrament:

"That his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, sitting at his last supper with his most dear disciples, the night before he suffered, took bread in his hand; and giving thanks to his Eternal Father, blessed it, broke it, and so gave it to them, saying, 'Take, and eat this, for this is my body which is given for you: do this in remembrance of me.' This I believe, for I am taught this faith in the gospel of Matthew, in Mark, and Luke, and also in the first epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians."

Then the archbishop asked if he believed that it was bread after the consecration or sacramental words spoken over it. Lord Cobham said,

"I believe that in the sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body in the form of bread, the same who was born of the Virgin Mary, crucified on the cross, dead, and buried, and that the third day arose from death to life, which now is glorified in heaven."

Then one of the doctors of the law said, "After the sacramental words are uttered, there remains no bread, but only the body of Christ." The Lord Cobham then said to one Master John Whitehead:

"You said once to me in the castle of Gowling, that the sacred Host was *not* Christ's body. But I held then against you, and proved that his body *was* in it, though the seculars and friars could not agree in this, but each one held against the other in that opinion. These were my words then, if you remember it."

Then a set of them shouted together, and cried with great noise: "We all say that it is God's body." And many of them asked him, in great anger, whether it was material bread after the consecration or not?

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

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

[285] A.D. 1413.

Then the doctors asked him whether or not it was *only* Christ's body after the consecration of a priest, and not bread? And he said to them:

"It is both Christ's body and bread. I shall prove it thus: for just as Christ dwelling here on 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 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 hidden under it, and is not seen except in faith."

Then they smiled at one another, that the people would judge him taken in a great heresy. And many of them said: "It is a foul heresy." Then the archbishop asked him what bread it was? And the doctors also inquired of him whether it was material or not? Lord Cobham answered:

"The Scriptures make no mention of this word material, and therefore my faith I has nothing to do therewith. But this I say and believe, that it is Christ's body and bread. Therefore I say now again as I said before, 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."

Then said they all with one voice: "It is a heresy." One of the bishops stood up and said: "It is a manifest heresy to say that it is bread after the sacramental words are once spoken." Lord Cobham said:

"St. Paul the apostle was, I am sure, as wise as you are now, and more godly learned, and he called it *bread*, writing to the Corinthians, 'The bread which we break,' he says, 'is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' Behold, he called it *bread* and not Christ's body, but a means by which we receive Christ's body."

Then they asked him if he did not believe in the determination of the church? And he said to them,

"No; for it is no god. In all our creed the word '*in*' is mentioned but thrice concerning belief: In God the Father, in God the Son, in God the Holy Spirit, three persons and one God. The birth, the death, the burial, the resurrection and ascent of Christ, has no '*in*' for belief, but only *in Him*. Nor yet do the church, the sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, the later resurrection, nor the life everlasting, have any '*in*' (for belief), other than *in the Holy God*."

Then one of the lawyers said, "But what is your belief concerning holy church?" The Lord Cobham answered:

"My belief is that all the Scriptures of the sacred Bible are true. All that is grounded upon them I believe. But I have no belief in your lordly laws and idle determinations. For you are no part of Christ's holy church, as your open deeds show. But you 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."

This, they said, was an exceeding heresy: not to believe the determination of holy church. Then said the archbishop: "Can you tell me who is of the church?"

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

Then Lord Cobham answered: “Yes; truly I can. Christ says that, ‘just as the evil tree is known by its fruit, so is a false prophet by his works.’” ^{Mat 7.15-17}

Then Doctor Walden said to him: “You make here no distinction between judgments: rash judgment and right judgment — all is one with you. So swift (sound) judges are always the learned scholars of Wycliffe!” To whom the Lord Cobham answered.

“Your judgments are evermore preposterous. For as the prophet Isaiah says: ‘You call evil good and good evil;’ ^{Isa 5.20} and therefore the same prophet concludes that, ‘your ways are not God’s ways, nor God’s ways your ways.’ ^{Isa 54.8} And as for the virtuous man Wycliffe, whose judgments you so highly disdain, I will say here on 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 to fear my Lord God in this, it has, I trust, been otherwise with me. I could never find so much grace in all your glorious instructions.”

Then Doctor Walden said to him again, “It would not be well with me, if I had no grace to amend my life till I heard the devil preach.” The Lord Cobham said:

“Your fathers, the old Pharisees, ascribed Christ’s miracles to Beelzebub, and his doctrine to the devil. And you, as their natural children, still have the self-same judgment concerning his faithful followers. Those who rebuke your vicious living must be heretics!”

Then he said to them all:

“To judge you as you are, we need go no further than to your own acts. Where do you find in all God’s law, that you should thus sit in judgment on any Christian man, or give sentence upon any other man unto death, as you do here daily? You have no ground in all the Scripture to so lordly take it upon yourself, except in Annas and Caiaphas, who thus sat in judgment upon Christ, and upon his apostles after his ascension. From them alone have you taken it to judge Christ’s members as you do, and from neither Peter nor John.”

Then said some of the lawyers: “Yes, truly, sir, for Christ judged Judas.” The Lord Cobham said:

“No; Christ did not judge him, but Judas judged himself, and thereupon he went out and hanged himself. Since his venom was shed into the church, you never followed Christ.”

Then the archbishop asked him what he meant by the venom of Judas? The Lord Cobham said,

“Your possessions and lordships. Before that time all the bishops of Rome were martyrs in a manner. And since that time we read of very few. But since that time, one has put down another, one has poisoned another, one has cursed another, and one has slain another, and done much more mischief besides, as all the chronicles tell. And let all men consider this well: that Christ was meek and merciful; the pope is proud and a tyrant; Christ was poor and forgave, the pope is rich and a malicious manslayer, as his daily acts prove. Rome is the very nest of antichrist, and out of that nest come all his disciples. Of whom prelates, priests, and monks are the body; these friars are the tail.”

Then he said to them all,

“Christ says in his gospel, ‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.’” ^{Mat 23.13} But you stop up the ways to it with your own traditions, and therefore are you the household of antichrist. You will not permit God’s truth to have passage, nor yet to be taught by his true ministers, fearing to have your wickedness reproved. But by

those flatterers who uphold you in your mischiefs, you allow the common people to be most miserably seduced.”

Then the archbishop said, ‘By our lady, sir, none shall preach such things within my diocese nor yet in my jurisdiction, that either make division or dissension among the poor commons.’ The Lord Cobham said,

“Both Christ and his apostles were accused of sedition making, yet they were most peaceable men. But Daniel and Christ prophesied that such a troublous time would come, as has not been yet since the world’s beginning. And this prophecy is partly fulfilled in your days and doings. For you have slain many already, and you will slay more hereafter, if God does not fulfill his promise.”

Then a doctor of law, called Master John Kemp, plucked from his bosom a copy of the bill they had sent him in the Tower, thinking thereby to make shorter work with him. For they were so amazed by his answers (not unlike all those who disputed with Stephen) that they did not know well how to occupy the time, their wits and sophistry so failed them that day.

“My Lord Cobham,” said this doctor, “we must briefly know your mind concerning these four points here following.

[286]

“The first of them is this (and then he read from the bill). The faith and determination of holy church regarding the blessed sacrament of the altar in this, That after the sacramental words are once spoken by a priest in his mass, the material bread, that before was bread, is turned into Christ’s very body, and the material wine is turned into Christ’s blood. And so there remains in the sacrament of the altar from then on no material bread nor material wine, which were there before the sacramental words were spoken. Sir, do you not believe this?”

The Lord Cobham said, “This is not my belief. But my faith is that Christ’s very body is in the worshipful sacrament of the altar, in the form of bread.”

Then the archbishop said, “Sir John, you must say otherwise.”

The Lord Cobham said, “No, that I will not, if God is on my side (as I trust He is), but that Christ’s body is in the form of bread, as is the common belief.” Then the doctor read again.

“The second point is this; holy church has determined that every Christian man living here bodily on earth, ought to be confessed to a priest ordained by the church, if he may come to him. Sir, what do you say to this?”

The Lord Cobham answered and said,

“A diseased or sorely wounded man has need of a wise surgeon. Therefore, it would be most necessary to first be confessed to God, who alone knows our diseases, and can help us. I do not deny in this, going to a priest, if he is a man of good life and learning. For the laws of God are to be inquired of the priest, who is godly learned. But if the man who is my curate is an idiot, or a man of vicious living, I should flee from him rather than seek him.”

Then the doctor read 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 to Peter should succeed unto all Peter’s successors, whom we now call popes of Rome. By their special power, prelates and archbishops, parsons, curates, and other degrees are ordained in particular churches, whom Christian men ought to obey according to the laws of the church of Rome. This is the determination of holy church. Sir, do you not believe this?”

To this the Lord Cobham answered and said,

“Whoever follows Peter most nearly in pure living, is next to him in succession. But your lordly order does not greatly esteem the lowly behavior of poor Peter, whatever you prate about him. Nor do you care greatly for the humble manners of those who succeeded him till the time of Silvester, who for the most part were martyrs, as I told you before.”

One of the other doctors asked him; “Then what do you say about the pope?” The Lord Cobham answered,

“As I said before, so I say again; That he and you together make up 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. Nor will I in conscience obey any of you all, till I see you, with Peter, follow Christ in your conduct.”

Then the doctor read again.

“The fourth point is this; holy church has determined that it is meritorious to a Christian man, to go on pilgrimage to holy places, and there specially to worship the holy relics and images of saints, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and all other saints besides, approved by the church of Rome. Sir, what do you say to this?”

He answered,

“I owe them no service by any commandment of God. It would be best if you swept them far from cobwebs and dust, and so laid them, or else buried them, far in the ground, as you do other aged people who *are* God’s images. It is a wonderful thing that saints, now being dead, should become so covetous and needy, and thereupon beg so bitterly, who all their lifetime hated all covetousness and begging.”

“Why, sir,” said one of the clerics, “will you not worship good images?”

“What worship should I give to them?” asked the Lord Cobham.

Then friar Palmer said to him, “Sir, will you worship the cross of Christ, that he died upon?”

“Where is it?” asked the Lord Cobham.

The friar said, “I put to you the case, sir, that it is here even now before you.”

The Lord Cobham answered, “This is a wise man, to put me an earnest question about a thing, and yet he himself does not know where the thing itself is. Yet once again I ask you, what worship should I do to it?”

A cleric said to him, “Such worship as Paul speaks of, and that is this: ‘God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ.’” Gal 6.14

Then the Lord Cobham said, spreading his arms broadly, “This is the very cross, yes, and so much better than your cross of wood, in that it was created by God. Yet I will not seek to have it worshipped.”

Then said the bishop of London, “Sir, you know well that he died on a material cross.” The Lord Cobham said,

“Yes, and I also know that our salvation did not come by that material cross, but alone by him who died on it. And well I know, that holy St. Paul rejoiced in no other cross, but in Christ’s passion and death only, and in his own sufferings of like persecution with Christ, for the self-same truth that he had suffered for before.”

Another cleric asked him, “Will you then do no honor to the holy cross?”

He answered him, “Yes, if it were my own, I would lay him up honestly, and see to him that he would take no more scathing abroad, nor be robbed of his goods, as he is now-a-days.”

Then said the archbishop to him,

“Sir John, we have spent much time here about you, and all in vain so far as I can see. We must now be at this short point with you, for the day passes away. You must either submit yourself to the ordinance of holy church, or else throw yourself into deepest danger. See to it in time, or else it will be too late.”

The Lord Cobham said, “I do not know to what purpose I should otherwise submit myself. You have offended me much more than ever I offended you, in troubling me before this multitude.”

Then said the archbishop again to him,

“We once again require you to remember yourself well, and to have no other manner of opinion in these matters, than what the universal faith and belief of the holy church of Rome is. And so, like an obedient child, return again to the unity of your mother. See to it, I say, in time, for you may yet have remedy, whereas soon it will be too late.”

The Lord Cobham said expressly before them all; “I will not otherwise believe in these points than I have told you here before. Do with me what you will.”

Finally the archbishop said; “Well then, I see no other way but that we must do the law; we must proceed to the sentence definitive, and both judge and condemn you as a heretic.” And with that, the archbishop stood up and read a bill of his condemnation as follows:

The Sentence of Condemnation against Lord Cobham.

“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 See of Rome, will have this to be known to all men. In a certain cause of heresy, and upon diverse articles whereupon Sir John Oldcastle, knight, Lord Cobham, after a diligent inquisition made for the same, was detected, accused, and presented before us in our last convocation of all our province of Canterbury, held in the cathedral church of Paul’s at London, at the lawful denouncement and request of our universal clergy of the said convocation, we proceeded against him according to the law (God to witness) with all the favor possible.

[287] A.D. 1413.

“And following Christ’s example in all that we might, ‘who does not will the death of a sinner, but rather that he might be converted and live,’ we took it upon us to correct him, and sought all other ways possible to bring him again to the church’s unity, declaring to him what the holy and universal church of Rome has said, held, determined, and taught in that behalf. And though we found him far wide in the catholic faith, and so stiff-necked that he would not confess his error, nor purge himself, nor yet repent him of it; yet pitying him of fatherly compassion, and entirely desiring the health of his soul, we appointed him a competent time of deliberation, to see if he would repent and seek to be reformed. But since that time we have found him worse and worse. Considering, therefore, that he is not corrigible, we are driven to the very extremity of the law, and with great heaviness of heart we now proceed to the publication of the sentence definitive, against him.”

Then he brought out another bill containing the sentence, and read that also, as follows:

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“We take Christ to witness, that we seek nothing else in this our enterprise, but only his glory. Forasmuch as we have found by diverse acts done, brought forth and exhibited, by sundry evidences, signs, and tokens, and also by many most manifest proofs, the said Sir John Oldcastle, knight, Lord Cobham, not only to be an evident heretic in his own person, but also a mighty maintainer of other heretics 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, as the child of iniquity and darkness, he has so hardened his heart, that he will in no case attend to the voice of his pastor; nor will he be allured by straight admonishments, nor yet be brought in by favorable 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 obstinacy (we being loath that he who is naughty should be worse, and so infect the multitude with his contagiousness) by the sage counsel and assent of the very discreet fathers, our honorable brethren and lord bishops here present, Richard of London, Henry of Winchester, and Bennet of Bangor, and of other great learned and wise men here, both doctors of divinity and of the canon and civil laws, secular and religious, with diverse other expert men assisting us: we sententially and definitively by this present writing judge, declare, and condemn the said Sir John Oldcastle knight, Lord Cobham, as a most pernicious detestable heretic, convicted upon the same, and refusing utterly to obey the church again, committing him here and from now on as a condemned heretic, to the secular jurisdiction, power, and judgment, to put him thereupon to death. Furthermore, we excommunicate and denounce as accursed, not only this heretic here present, but so many others besides, who will hereafter in favor of his error either receive him or defend him, counsel him or help him, or in any other way maintain him; as very favorers, receivers, defenders, counselors, aiders, and maintainers of condemned heretics.

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

After the archbishop had thus read the condemnation before the whole multitude, the Lord Cobham said with a most cheerful countenance,

“Though you judge my body, which is but a wretched thing, yet am I certain and sure that you can do no harm to my soul, no more than Satan could to the soul of Job. He that created that soul, will of His infinite mercy and promise save it. I have no manner of doubt in this. And concerning these articles before recited, I will stand to them even to the very death, by the grace of my eternal God.”

And with that he turned to the people, casting his hands broadly, and saying with a very loud voice, “Good Christian people, for God’s love be well aware of these men, for they will otherwise beguile you, and lead you blindfolded into hell with themselves. For Christ says plainly to you, ‘If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch.’” Mat 15.14

After this, he fell down upon his knees, and thus before them all, prayed for his enemies, holding both his hands and his eyes towards heaven, and saying, “Lord God eternal, I beseech you of your great mercy’s sake to forgive my persecutors, if it is your blessed will.” And then he was delivered to Sir Robert Morley, and led out again to the Tower of London, and thus there was an end of that day’s work.

While the Lord Cobham was thus in the Tower, he sent out secretly to his friends, and at his request they wrote the following letter, causing it to be set up in diverse quarters of London, so that the people would not believe the slanders and lies that his enemies, the bishops’ servants and priests, had made abroad about him.

“In that 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 thinks and speaks of the sacraments of the church, and especially of the blessed sacrament of the altar, otherwise than was written in the confession of his belief, which was written and taken to the clergy, and so set up in several open places of the city of London, be it known here to all the world, that he has never since varied from it, but this is plainly his belief, that all the sacraments of the church are profitable and expedient to all who shall be saved, taking them with the intent that Christ and his true church has ordained. Furthermore he believes that the blessed sacrament of the altar is truly and truly Christ’s body in the form of bread.”

A Forged Abjuration of Lord Cobham Circulated by the Bishops.

After this, the bishops and priests were in great discredit both with the nobility and the commons. It was partly because they had so cruelly handled the good Lord Cobham, and partly because they thought his opinion was right, concerning the sacrament. The prelates feared this would become a further inconvenience to them. They consulted, and consented to take a different course from what they had done before. They caused it to be spread abroad by their servants and friends, that Lord Cobham had submitted himself to holy church, utterly changing his opinion concerning the sacrament. And they counterfeited an abjuration in his name, so that the people would not take hold of his opinion or anything they had heard from him before, and so would stand more in awe of them, considering that he was so great a man, and yet was subdued by them.

[288]

This, they say, is the abjuration of Sir John Oldcastle, knight, sometime Lord Cobham:

An Abjuration counterfeited by the Bishops.

“In the name of God, Amen. I, John Oldcastle, denounced, detected, and convicted of and upon various articles, savoring both of 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, 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, 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 evilly seduced by diverse seditious preachers, have grievously erred, and heretically persisted, blasphemously answered, and obstinately rebelled. And therefore I

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

am lawfully condemned as a heretic by the said reverend father, before the reverend fathers in Christ also, the bishops of London, Winchester, and Bangor.

“Yet, nevertheless, now remembering myself, and desiring by this means to avoid that temporal pain which I am worthy to suffer as a heretic, at the assignation of my most excellent Christian prince and liege lord, King Henry V, now by the grace of God most worthy king both of England and of France; minding also to prefer the wholesome determination, sentence, and doctrine of the holy 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, that 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, who now holds Peter’s seat (and each of them in their succession) has 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 he has full authority and power to rule and govern, bind and loose, save and destroy, accurse and absolve all other Christian men.

“And still agreeably to 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 decrees, 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 times to come, authority and power to rule and govern, bind and loose, accurse and absolve the subjects or people of their aforesaid provinces, dioceses, and parishes, and that their said subjects or people should of right in all things obey them. Furthermore, I confess, grant, and affirm, that the said spiritual fathers, such 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 state, order, and governance of their subjects or people, to make laws, decrees, statutes, and constitutions, yes, and to publish, command, and compel their subjects and people to observe them.

“Moreover, I confess, grant, and affirm, that all these aforesaid laws, decrees, statutes, and constitutions, made, published, and commanded according to the form of the 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 aforesaid powers, as the laws, statutes, canons, and constitutions of our most holy father the pope, incorporated in his decrees, decretals, clementines,⁶⁵ codes, charts, rescripts, sextiles,⁶⁶ and extravagantes over all the world. 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 them, lay my hand here upon this book, or holy gospel of God, and swear that I will never more from now on wittingly hold these heresies, nor any other like them. Nor will I give counsel, aid, help, or favor at anytime, to those who hold, teach, affirm, and maintain them, as God will help me, and these holy evangelists.

“And that I will from now on faithfully obey and inviolably observe all the holy laws, statutes, canons, and constitutions, of all the popes of Rome, archbishops, bishops, and prelates, which are contained and determined in their holy decrees, decretals, clementines, codes, charts, rescripts, sextiles, sums, papal extravagantes, statutes provincial, acts synodal, and other ordinary rules and customs constituted by them, or that will chance hereafter to be

⁶⁵ *Elementines*: the components of the faith, such as beliefs, practices, and traditions.

⁶⁶ *Sextiles*: presumably the rules governing marriage and the legitimacy of children (degrees of sanguinity).

determined or made directly. To these, and all such others, I will apply myself with all power possible. Besides all this, the penance which it pleases 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 others besides, whom I hereafter know to be suspected of heresy or errors, I will effectually present, send, or cause to be presented to my said reverend father lord archbishop, or to those who have his authority, as soon as I can conveniently do it, and see that they are corrected to my utmost power.”

This abjuration never came into the hands of the Lord Cobham, nor was it compiled by them for that purpose, but only to blur the eyes of the unlearned multitude for a time. After Lord Cobham had remained in the Tower a certain time, he escaped one night (it is not known by what means), and fled into Wales, where he continued four years. ⁶⁷

Sir Roger Acton was also apprehended, condemned, and put to death or martyrdom three years and more before the Lord Cobham died. Likewise master John Brown, and John Beverley, the preacher, suffered the same kind of death with him (some say) in the field of St. Giles, with 36 others (if the story is true). This was in January A.D. 1414, after the compilation of our English histories.

These men, as said, suffered about three years before Lord Cobham. Some say they were hanged and burnt in St. Giles' field; others that only some of them were hanged and burnt. Polydore,⁶⁸ speaking only of their burning, makes no mention of hanging. An English Chronicle records about Sir Roger Acton, that his sentence before the justice was to be drawn through London to Tyburn, and there to be hanged. And when certain days were past (the author says) a trumpeter of the king's called Thomas Cliff, got the king's grant to take him down and bury him.

After the decease or martyrdom of these, who were executed in the month of January, A.D. 1414, in the next month of the same year, God took away the great enemy of his word, and rebel to his king, Thomas Arundel archbishop of Canterbury. His death so suddenly following the execution of these good men, by the marvellous stroke of God, may seem somewhat to declare their innocence, and that he was also some great procurer of their death, in that God would not permit him to live longer, striking him immediately with death. But as I did with others before, so I do with this: I refer to the secret judgment of the Lord, who once shall judge all secrets openly.

Henry Chichesly succeeded next in the see of Canterbury, A.D. 1414, and sat for 25 years. Following the steps of his predecessor, he showed himself no small adversary against the favorers of the truth. In his time there was much trouble and great affliction in the church.

[289] A.D. 1414.

For as the preaching and teaching of the word multiplied and spread abroad daily, more and more, so on the contrary side, more vigilant care and strait inquisition increased against the people of God. Because of this, many suffered and were burned. Some for fear fled the country; many were brought for examination, and by infirmity, were constrained to abjure.

As true piety and sincere preaching of Christ's word began to decay at this time; so idle monkery and vain superstition began to increase in its place. For about the same year, the king began the foundation of two monasteries. One, the Friars Observants, was on the one

⁶⁷ For Lord Cobham's recapture and execution, see p. 323.

⁶⁸ Polydore Vergil (c. 1470-1555), an Italian historian who wrote about British history in the 16th century.

side of the Thames. On the other side, was one called Sheen and Zion. It was dedicated to charter-house monks, with certain Bridget-nuns or recluses, numbering sixty, dwelling within the precincts. So that the whole number of these — with priests, monks, deacons, and nuns — totalled 84, equalling 12 apostles, and 72 disciples. Their order was according to the description of St. Paul the apostle, in Col 1.24, “Eat not, taste not, touch not,” etc. They were to eat no flesh, wear no linen, touch no money, etc.

About Michaelmas,⁶⁹ the same year, the king began his parliament at Leicester. In this parliament the commons put up their bill again, which they had put up before in the eleventh year of Henry IV, that temporalities, disorderly wasted by the men of the church, might be converted and employed for the use of the king, of his earls and knights, and to the relief of the poor people, as recited earlier. In fear of this bill, lest the king give it any audience (as Robert Fabian ⁷⁰ and other writers testify) the prelates put the king in mind to claim his right in France. Whereupon Henry Chichesly archbishop of Canterbury made a long and solemn oration before the king to persuade him to do that, offering the king great and noble sums on behalf of the clergy. By this (Fabian says) the bill was again put off, and the king set his mind for the recovery of his right.

I will now return to other matters of the church.

John Huss and the Bohemians.

I declared a little earlier (p. 256) how by the occasion of Queen Anne, who was a Bohemian, and married to King Richard II, the Bohemians thereby came to the knowledge of Wycliffe’s books here in England, and first began to taste and favor Christ’s gospel, till at length, by the preaching of John Huss, they increased more and more in knowledge.

It went so far, that Pope Alexander V, hearing of it, directed his bull to the archbishop of Swinco, requiring him to look to the matter, and to provide that no person in churches, schools, or other places, should maintain that doctrine, citing also John Huss to appear before him. John Huss in answer, declared that the mandate or bull of the pope was opposed to the manifest examples and doings both of Christ and of his apostles, and prejudicial to the liberty of the gospel, in binding the word of God so as not to have free course. And therefore he appealed from this mandate of the pope, to the same pope now better advised. But while he was prosecuting his appeal, Pope Alexander died, as said before (p. 279). After him succeeded Pope John XXIII, who sought by all means possible to suppress the Bohemians. He began to work his malice upon John Huss their preacher, who preaching at Prague, seemed willing to teach the gospel of Christ, rather than the traditions of bishops, and was therefore accused to the pope as a heretic.

The bishop committed the whole matter to Cardinal de Columna who, when he heard the accusation, appointed a day to John Huss, that he should appear in the court of Rome. Once this was done, Wenceslaus king of the Romans and of Bohemia, at the request of his wife Sophia, and of the whole nobility of Bohemia, and also at the earnest suit and desire of the town and university of Prague, sent his ambassadors to Rome, to desire the bishop to deliver John Huss from that sentence and judgment. And if the bishop suspected the kingdom of Bohemia to be infected with any heretical or false doctrine, he should send his ambassadors,

⁶⁹ *Michaelmas*: a quarter day in England, Wales, and Ireland (Sept. 29th) to honor the archangel Michael.

⁷⁰ Robert Fabian (d. 1513), a London draper, Sheriff, and Alderman, was an author who lived in the 15th century. He is known for his work “Fabyan’s Chronicle,” a history of England and France from the founding and naming of Albion by Brutus in the first century (Britain), through King Henry VII.

who might correct and amend it, if there were any errors or faults in them; and that all this should be done at the costs and charges of the king of Bohemia. And to promise in his name that he would aid and assist the bishop's legates with all his power and authority, to punish all such as should be taken or found in any erroneous doctrine. John Huss, also, before his appointed day, sent his proctors to the court of Rome, and proved his innocency with the firmest and strongest reasons. But when the Cardinal de Columna (to whose will and judgment the whole matter was committed) would not allow any defense or excuse, John Huss' proctors appealed to the high bishop. Yet notwithstanding this last refuge, they did not prevail with Cardinal de Columna. He openly excommunicated John Huss as an obstinate heretic, because he did not come on his appointed day to Rome.

However, as his proctors had appealed to the high bishop, they had other judges appointed, such as Cardinal Aquileianus and Cardinal Venetus, with others. The judges, after they had deferred the matter for a year and a half, at last returned to the sentence and judgment of Cardinal de Columna. And confirming it, he commanded John Huss' proctors to cease defending him anymore, for he would allow it no longer. Upon which, when his proctors would not cease their urgent suit, some of them were cast into prison and grievously punished. The others, leaving their business undone, returned into Bohemia.

The Bohemians, however, little cared for all this, continuing still. As they grew more in knowledge, so the less they regarded the pope, complaining daily against him and the archbishop for stopping the word of God and the gospel of Christ to be preached. They said that by their indulgences and other practices of the court of Rome, and of the bishop's consistory, they sought their own profit, and not the glory of Jesus Christ; that they took from the sheep of Christ the wool and milk, and did not feed them, either with the word of God, or with good examples. Moreover, the Bohemians were teaching and affirming that the commandments of the pope and prelates are not to be obeyed, except so far as they follow the doctrine and life of Christ and of his apostles; and that laymen ought to judge the works of prelates, as Paul judged the works of Peter in correcting him, Gal 2.

Furthermore, they had among them certain notes and observations by which they might discern how far and in what they might obey their prelates. They also derided and scorned the pope's jurisdiction, because of the schism that was then in the church, when there were three popes at the same time, one striving against another for the papacy.

After the death of the Archbishop Swinco, one Conrad was appointed by the pope as chief general. This Conrad, conferring with the divines and doctors of the university of Prague, required their advice and counsel as to which way they should best take to assuage the dissension and discord between the clergy and the people. So a council was devised and held, where it was decided in this manner:

“1. That all doctors and masters of the university of Prague should be assembled in the court of the archbishop, and in his presence, every doctor and master should swear not to hold or maintain any of the forty-five articles of John Wycliffe, previously condemned.

“2. Concerning the seven sacraments of the church, the keys and censures of the church, the manners, rites, ceremonies, customs, and liberties of the church, concerning also the worshipping of reliques and indulgences, the orders and religions of the church, that every one shall swear that he holds, believes, and maintains, and will maintain as the church of Rome does, and not otherwise; of this church of Rome, the pope is the head, and the college of cardinals is the body who are the true and manifest successors of blessed St. Peter, prince of the apostles, and they are of the college of the other apostles of Christ.

“3. That everyone shall swear that in every catholic matter belonging to the church, he will stand to the determination of the apostolical see, and that he will obey the prelates in all manner of things, wherever the thing, which is purely good, is not forbidden; or that which is merely bad, is not commanded, but is mean and indifferent between both. This mean or indifferent thing, yet notwithstanding by circumstances of time, place, or person, may be either good or evil.

[290]

“4. That everyone shall swear and confess by his oath, that the opinions of Wycliffe and others, regarding the seven sacraments of the church, and other things above noted, being contrary to the church of Rome, are false.

“5. That an oath is required by them all, that none of them shall hold, defend, or maintain any of the forty-five articles of John Wycliffe aforesaid, or in any other catholic matter, and especially of the seven sacraments and other articles above specified, but only as the church of Rome does, and not otherwise.

“6. That every ordinary in his diocese shall cause the premises contained in the first, second, third, and fourth articles to be published in his synods, and by his preachers to the people in the kingdom of Bohemia.

“7. If any cleric, student, or layman withstands any of the premises, that the ordinary has authority, if that person is convicted of it, to correct him according to the old laws and canons, and that no man shall defend such a one by any means; for none but the ordinary has power to correct such a man, because the archbishop is chancellor both of the kingdom and university of Prague.

“8. That the songs recently forbidden, being odious, slanderous, and offensive to others' fame, not be sung either in the streets, taverns, or any other place.

“9. That Master John Huss shall not preach so long as he shall have no absolution of the court, nor shall he hinder the preaching in Prague by his presence; that by this, his obedience in the apostolical see may be known.

“10. That this council appears to be good and reasonable for putting away the ill report and dissension that is in the kingdom of Bohemia.

“11. If Master John Huss with his accomplices will perform this, which is contained in the four former articles, then we will be ready to say as they would wish us and have us, whenever need requires, that we agree with them in matters of faith. Otherwise, if they will not so do, in giving this testimony, we would lie greatly to our lord the king and the whole world. And moreover, we will be content to write for them to the court of Rome, and do the best we can for them.”

This counsel and devise being considered among the heads of the university of Prague, the aforesaid administrator named Conrad, presented it to the king and to the barons of the realm, and also to the senate of Prague. As soon as information of it came to John Huss and his adherents, they likewise drew out other articles in the manner and form of a council as follows:

“For the honor of God and the true preaching of his gospel, for the health of the people, and to avoid the sinister and false infamy of the kingdom of Bohemia, and of the marquis of Moravia, and of the city and university of Prague, and for reforming peace and unity between the clergy and the scholars of the university:

“1. Let the right and just decree of the princes and of the king's council be held in force, which between the Lord Archbishop Swinco on the one party, and between the rector and Master

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

John Huss on the other party, was made, proclaimed, sealed, and solemnly received and allowed on both parts in the court of our sovereign lord the king.

“2. That the kingdom of Bohemia remain in its former rites, liberties, and common customs, as other kingdoms and lands; that is, in all approvals, condemnations, and other acts concerning the holy mother universal church.

“3. That Master John Huss (against whom the aforesaid Lord Swinco could object no crime before the council) may be present in the congregation of the clergy, and there whoever will object against him either heresy or error, let him object, binding himself to suffer the like pain, if he does not prove it.

“4. If no man will set himself on the contrary part against him, then let the command be made by our sovereign lord the king through all his cities, and likewise let it be ordained and proclaimed through all villages and towns, that Master John Huss is ready to render account of his faith, and therefore if any will object against him any heresy or error, let him write his name in the chancery of the lord archbishop, and bring forth his proofs openly before both the parties.

“5. If none such is be found to object, or who will write his name, then let him be called for who rumored in the pope’s court that in the kingdom of Bohemia in the city of Prague, and in the marquisdom of Moravia there were many whose hearts are infected with heresy and error, that they may prove who they are, and if they are not able to prove it, let them be punished.

“6. That commands be directed to doctors of divinity and of the canon law, and to the chapter of cathedral churches, and that it be required of them all and of every one particularly, that they will bring forth his name, if they know any such person to be a heretic or erroneous, and if they deny to know any such man, then let them recognize that before the public notary, confirming the same with their seals.

“7. These things thus done and premised, that our sovereign lord the king, and also that the archbishop, will then give commandment under pain, that no man shall call one another heretic or erroneous, unless he will stand to the proof of that heresy or error.

“8. That our sovereign lord the king, with the consent of his barons, will then levy a subsidy, or collect from the clergy, and direct an honest embassy to the pope’s court, with which ambassadors let those persons go at their own proper charges or expenses for their purgation, who have caused this kingdom to be falsely and grievously defamed in the apostolic court.

“9. In the meantime, for the presence of Master John Huss, no interdict ought to be made, as it was made of late contrary to the order and determination of our holy mother church.”

As this matter was thus in altercation between the two parties, the one objecting, the other answering, it happened by the occasion of Ladislaus king of Naples, who had besieged the pope’s towns and territories, that Pope John raising up war against Ladislaus, gave full remission of sins to all those who would war on his side to defend the church. When this bull of the pope’s indulgence came to Prague, and was there published, King Wenceslaus, who then favored that pope, gave command that no man should attempt anything against the pope’s indulgences. But Huss with his followers, not able to abide the impiety of those pardons, began to speak against them. There were three certain artificers of this company who, hearing the priest preaching these indulgences, openly spoke against them, and called the pope antichrist, who would set up the cross to fight against his fellow Christians. For this they were brought before the senate, and committed to prison; but the people joining together in arms, came to the magistrates, requiring them to be let loose. The magistrates with gentle words and fair promises satisfied the people, so that every man returning home

to his own house, the tumult was assuaged. But the captains being in prison were beheaded there, whose names were John, Martin, and Stascon. The death and martyrdom of these three being known to the people, they took the bodies of those who were slain, and with great solemnity brought them to the church of Bethlehem. And so their bodies were sumptuously interred in the church of Bethlehem. John Huss preached at the funeral, much commending them for their constancy, and blessing God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who had hidden the way of his truth from the prudent of this world, and revealed it to the simple lay people and inferior priests, who chose to please God rather than men.

Thus the city of Prague was divided. The prelates with most of the clergy, and most of the barons who had anything to lose, held with the pope — especially Steven Paletz, being the primary doer on that side. On the contrary part, the commons with part of the clergy and the students of the university, were with John Huss.

[291] A.D. 1414.

Wenceslaus the king, fearing lest this grew into a tumult, and being moved by the doctors and prelates, and the council of his barons, thought it best to remove John Huss out of the city, who had been excommunicated before by the pope. And further to end this dissension in the church, he committed the matter to the doctors and the clergy. Consulting together among themselves, they set forth a decree, ratified and confirmed by the sentence of the king, containing the sum of eighteen articles, for maintaining the pope and of the See of Rome, against the doctrine of Wycliffe and John Huss. John Huss, thus departing out of Prague, went to his country where, being protected by the lord of the soil, he continued preaching there, to whom resorted a great concourse of people. Nor was he yet so expelled out of Prague, that he did not sometimes resort to his church at Bethlehem, and there also he preached to the people.

Against the decree of the doctors, John Huss with his company replied, and answered to their articles with contrary articles, as follow:

*The Objections of John Huss and of his party
against the Decree of the Doctors.*

“1. The foundation of the doctors, upon which they found all their writings and counsels, is false — which foundation is that part of the clergy in the kingdom of Bohemia is pestilent and erroneous, and holds falsely about the sacraments.

“2. The doctors hereby defame the kingdom of Bohemia, and raise up new discords.

“3. Let them show, therefore, those persons of the clergy, whom they call pestilent, and so let them verify their report, binding themselves to suffer like pain if they are not able to prove it.

“4. It is false what they say of the pope and his cardinals as the true and manifest successors of Peter and of the apostles, and that no other successors of Peter and of the apostles can be found upon the earth besides them, when no man knows whether he is worthy of hatred or of favor, and *all* bishops and priests are successors of Peter and of the apostles.

“5. Not the pope, but Christ only is the head; and not the cardinals, but all Christ’s faithful people are the body of the catholic church, as all holy Scripture and decrees of the holy fathers testify and affirm.

“6. And as regarding the pope, if he is a reprobate, it is plain that he is no head — no, nor even a member of the holy church of God, but of the devil and of his synagogue.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“7. The clergy of the gossellers agreeing with the saying of St. Austin which they allege, and according to the sanctions of the fathers, and determinations of the holy mother church, say and affirm laudably, that the condemnation and prohibition of the forty-five articles (of Wycliffe) is unlawful, and unjust, and rashly done; and that is not only because the doctors — but also all bishops and archbishops, in such great causes, namely, regarding faith, as these articles do — have no authority at all.

“8. The second cause of the discord, which they allege, is also most false; seeing that the faith of all Christendom concerning the church of Rome, is divided into three parts because of three popes which now reign together; and the fourth part is neutral. Neither is it true that we ought to stand in all things to the determination of the pope and of the cardinals, but only so far as they agree with the holy Scripture of the Old and New Testament.

“9. In the fourth article they run into dotage, and are contrary to themselves, because they dotishly reprehended the gossellers who, in all their doings, receive the holy Scripture (which is the law of God, the way of truth and life) for their judge and measure; and afterward they themselves allege the Scripture (Deu 17; Lev 14) where all judges, both popes and cardinals, are taught to judge and discern between leper and leper, and in every ecclesiastical cause, only according to the rule of God’s law. And so they are contrary to their second article, in which they say that in every catholic matter we must run to the pope, which is contrary to the foolish condemnation of the articles aforesaid.

“10. Consequently, like idiots, they most falsely allege for their purpose the canon, under the name and authority of Jerome, where they apply the words of Jerome most impertinently to the pope of Rome, which he writes to St. Austin,⁷¹ calling him a most blessed pope.

“11. By this letter of Jerome it is manifest that the first article of those doctors is false. For by these words it appears that others besides the bishop of Rome and his cardinals are called blessed popes, holding the faith and seat of Peter, and are successors of the apostles, as was Austin and other holy bishops.

“12. It follows moreover, that the church of Rome is not that place where the Lord appointed the principal see of his whole church; for Christ, who was the head priest of all, first sat in Jerusalem, and Peter sat first in Antioch, and afterwards in Rome. Also other popes; some sat in Bononia, some at Perusium, some at Avignon.

“13. The prelates are falsifiers of the holy Scriptures and canons, and therefore are worthy to be punished, who affirm and say that we must obey the pope in all things, because it is known that many popes have erred, and one pope was also a woman (see p. 90); to whom it was not only *not* lawful to give obedience, but also unlawful to communicate with them.

“14. Their sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh articles are grounded upon untrue and false persuasions, and therefore are to be rejected and detested, seeing that they do not induce to peace and verity, but to dissension and falsity.

“15. It is also manifest to the laity, that this dissension among the clergy rises for no other cause, but only for the preaching of the gospel, which reprehends such simoniacs and heretics in the church of God as haunt the court of Rome, spreading out their branches abroad into all the world, who deserved to be removed and extirpated, not only by the clergy gossellers, but also by the secular power. And so these three vices, to wit, simony, luxury, and avarice (which is idolatry), are the causes of all this dissension among the clergy in the kingdom of Bohemia. These three vices being removed, peace and unity would soon be restored in the clergy.

⁷¹ That is, Augustine of Hippo (354-430).

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“16. Moreover, their last article is too gross, and not only without all law, but also without all color of law; whereas they fondly and childishly argue thus: that the processes made against Master John Huss ought to be obeyed, because truly the common sort of the clergy of Prague have received them. By the same reason they may argue also, that we must obey the devil, for our first parents Adam and Eve obeyed him. Also our ancestors before us were pagans, and therefore we must obey them, and be pagans also.

“17. But let this frivolous opinion go: this is certain truth, that the processes made against Master John Huss, are by law null and void; for they were obtained, drawn, wrought, and executed contrary to the commission of the pope, against the determination of the holy mother church.

“18. Finally, whoever wittingly and obstinately defends and executes the said process made, are all to be counted as blasphemers, excommunicate, and heretics.”

To these objections of John Huss the doctors again answered in a long tedious process. The scope of it principally tended to defend the principality of the pope, and to maintain obedience to him above all other potentates in the world, affirming and contending that although Christ alone is the head of the whole multitude of those who are sleeping in purgatory, and who are laboring in the church militant, and who are resting in heaven, yet this does not hinder the pope from being head of the church here militant, that is, of all the faithful, who here in this world live under his office, etc.

Thus then Master John Huss being driven out of Prague by these doctors, and moreover being so excommunicated that no mass could be said where he was present, the people began mightily to grudge and to cry out against the prelates and other popish priests who were the workers of it, accusing them of being simoniacs,⁷² covetous, immoral, adulterers, proud; not sparing to lay open their vices to their great ignominy and shame, and greatly crying for a reformation among the clergy.

[292]

The king seeing the inclination of the people, and not being ignorant of the wickedness of the clergy, began under the pretense of reforming the church, to require greater exactions upon those priests and men of the clergy who were known and accused of being wicked livers. Upon which, those who favored John Huss taking the occasion, complained of all, accused many, and spared none, whoever they knew to be of the popish faction, or enemies to John Huss. Because of this, the popish clergy were brought into great fear and distress, both those who were faulty, and those who were not faulty, so that they were glad to fall in, or at least not to fall out, with the protestants, being afraid to displease them. By this means Master Huss began to take some more liberty, and to preach in his church at Bethlehem. By the same means the people also received some comfort, and the king much gain and money.

And thus the popish clergy, while they went about to persecute John Huss, were entrapped themselves in great tribulation, and afflicted on every side, so that women and children were against them; and by the means through which they thought to entangle Huss, they were overthrown themselves.

Because there was a council held at Rome four years before, against the articles and books of John Wycliffe, it will not be impertinent nor out of purpose to repeat a certain merry

⁷² *Simoniac*: someone who practices simony, the buying or selling of ecclesiastical privileges or offices.

history, and worthy otherwise to be noted, written by Nicholas Clemangis, who was of a certain spirit which ruled the popish councils. His words are these:

“The pope called a council at Rome about four years before, at the earnest suit of several men, and a mass of the Holy Spirit being said at the opening of the council (according to the customary manner), the council being set, and Pope John sitting highest in a chair prepared for him for that purpose, behold, an ugly and dreadful owl, or as the common proverb is, the evil sign of some mischance of death, flew to and fro, with her evil favored voice; and standing upon the middle beam of the church, cast her staring eyes upon the pope. The whole company began to marvel, to see the night-crow, which usually abides no light, how he should mid-day come in the face of such a multitude; and they judged (not without cause) that it was an ill-favored token. For behold, they said (whispering in one another’s ear) the spirit appears in the shape of an owl. And as they stood beholding one another, and advising the pope, they could scarcely keep their countenance from laughter. Pope John himself, upon whom the owl steadfastly looked, blushing at the matter, began to sweat, and to fret, and fume with himself. And not finding by what other means he might solve the matter, and being so confused, he dissolved the council, and rose up and departed. After that there followed another session, in which the owl again was present in the same manner, although not called, I believe, looking steadfastly upon the bishop. Beholding it had come again, he was more ashamed than he was before, saying that he could no longer abide the sight of her, and commanded that she be driven away with bats and shoutings. But being afraid neither with their noise, nor at anything else, she would not go away, until with the strikes of the sticks, which were thrown down at her, she fell down dead before them all.”

The Council of Constance – 1414.

Here is to be noted that during all the time of Pope John, three popes ruled simultaneously for twenty-nine years. On account of this, a general council was held at Constance (A.D. 1414). It was called by the emperor Sigismund, and Pope John XXII, for healing the schism between the three popes who were striving for the popedom. The first was John whom the Italians set up in Pisa. The second was Gregory XII, whom the French set up in Rome.⁷³ The third was Benedict XIII, whom the Spaniards set up in Avignon. In this conflict everyone defended his own pope, to the great disturbance of the Christian nations. This council continued four years, and in it all matters were decided mostly by four nations, viz. the English, German, French, and Italian. Out of these four nations, four presidents were appointed to determine the matters of the council. The names of these presidents were these: John the patriarch of Antioch for France, Anthony, archbishop of Reigen for Italy, Nicholas, archbishop of Geneva for Germany, and Nicholas bishop of Bath for England.

First, John XXII resigned his papacy. The emperor gave him thanks, and kissed his feet. But afterward, John repented that he had done so, and sought means to flee. So, changing his garments, he fled by night with a small company. The emperor pursued and captured him. Being thus deposed, John was carried to the castle of Manheim, where he was kept prisoner for three years.

This Pope John was deposed by the decree of the council, with more than forty-three most grievous and heinous crimes being objected and proved against him — such as, that he had hired a physician to poison his predecessor Alexander; that he was a heretic, a simoniac, a liar, a hypocrite, a murderer, a dice-player, an adulterer, and finally, what crime was he *not* infected with?

⁷³ Because Gregory ruled in Rome, he is considered the pope, and the other two are called antipopes.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

And now to return to the council, first we will declare the order of their sessions, with the things generally concluded in them. Then we will (Christ willing) address such matters as pertain to the history of the Bohemians, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, who were condemned and burned in the same ungodly council.

This council of Constance, was summoned by the emperor Sigismund and Pope John XXIII, and assembled about the latter part of the year (A.D. 1414). Having begun, as the custom is, with a mass of the Holy Spirit, and as they were singing their customary hymn, "Come Holy Spirit," etc., there was at the same time a certain paper set up in the church, containing these words: "We (*i.e.* The Spirit) are otherwise occupied at this time, so we cannot come to you." The council continued for four years, and had forty-five sessions, in which many things were concluded. These were altogether too long to be recited here as the deposition of three separate popes. Yet I mind to make some brief recapitulation of the principal matters.

In the first session, it was chiefly concluded,

1. That this council was lawfully assembled.
2. That the departure of the pope would be no hindrance, but the council might proceed.
3. This council should not be dissolved before the church was reformed, in the superiors as well as inferiors.

In the fourth session, this was first concluded: that a synod assembled in the Holy Spirit, making a general council, representing the whole catholic church here militant, has power directly from Christ, to which power every person, of whatever state or dignity he may be, yes, the pope himself, ought to be obedient in all such things as concern the general reformation of the church, in the heads as well as in the members.

Also the pope should not transfer the court of Rome and the officers of the court from the city of Constance. And that all his censures, doings and workings, to the prejudice of this council, should be of no effect.

In the fifth session the same articles were repeated and concluded again.

In the sixth session commissioners were appointed out of the four nations for the hearing of John Huss.

The memory of John Wycliffe was condemned, and the sentence given in the council held at Rome upon the condemnation and burning of Wycliffe's books, was confirmed.

In the same session, a citation was sent out against Jerome of Prague.

In the seventh session nothing was handled, but that the tenor of the citation against Pope John was recited.

In the eighth session, the sentence and condemnation of John Wycliffe and his forty-five articles was recited, and sentence given against his memory, and his bones to be burned.

[293] A.D. 1414.

In the ninth session, the matter and cause of Pope John was again addressed, and commissioners were appointed to inquire upon his cause, and as judges for the same.

In the tenth session, suspension was given out and read against the pope.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

In the eleventh and twelfth sessions, notaries were assigned and definitive sentence given against the pope. It was also decreed that none of those who sought the papacy, should be chosen pope.

In the thirteenth session it was decreed that no priest, under pain of excommunication, shall communicate to the people under both kinds, bread and wine.⁷⁴

In the fourteenth session came the resignation of Pope Gregory XII, who was one of the three mentioned before who were striving for the papacy, with certain other articles concerning the election of the bishop of Rome.

Then ensues the fifteenth session, in the which silence was commanded under pain of excommunication and the great curse, that no person or persons, high or low, of whatever estate or degree he might be, whether emperor, king, cardinal, or other, should disturb the said session with any manner of noise, either by hand, foot, or voice. This being done, the sentence and condemnation against John Huss was read and published.

In the sixteenth session ambassadors were assigned by the council to go into Aragon to Benedict XIII to negotiate with him for the resignation of his papacy, as the other two had done before.

In the seventeenth session the emperor took a journey to the king of Aragon, to deal with Pope Benedict. An excommunication denounced against all those who would go about to impeach the emperor's journey about that matter, etc.

In the eighteenth session it was also decreed there, that such letters and bulls as were written in the name of that council, should be received with no less credit and authority than the bulls proceeding from the apostolic see, and that those who falsified them should incur no less penalty, than the falsifiers of the other. Also, Legates and ambassadors were sent into Italy.

In the nineteenth session Jerome of Prague was accused of heresy, and cast into prison by the council, and constrained to abjure.

It was also decreed that notwithstanding the safe conduct given by the emperor and kings, etc., inquiry may be made against any man for heresy by a sufficient judge, and process to be made according to the law.

In the twentieth session there was nothing important.

The twenty-first session was in the year 1416, beginning in their customary manner with a mass of the Holy Spirit, with a procession and other such rites. During the mass, James, bishop of Lundy gave a sermon, and Jerome of Prague being present, stood up, replying against the foresaid James and his sermon, whereupon Jerome was delivered to the secular power, and burned.

From the twenty-second to the thirty-first sessions there was nothing of particular importance.

In the thirty-second and thirty-third sessions, the accusation of Pope Benedict was renewed, his obstinacy accused, and witnesses were brought in. The Emperor Sigismund was present.

In the thirty-fourth session, the cause of the pope was heard, and process was given out against him.

⁷⁴ The wine was reserved for the clergy; the laity received only the bread.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

In the thirty-sixth session a citation was made and read against the pope, containing his deprivation, and the sentence against him. And whereas this pope had thundered out his curses, deprivations, and excommunications against them, the synod annihilated all his doings.

The thirty-seventh session renewed again the accusation of the aforesaid pope, and the sentence definitive against him was published.

The thirty-eighth session referred to the king of Aragon.

Thus Pope Benedict being deposed and excommunicated, in the next sessions following they addressed themselves to the election of a new pope, beginning first in the thirty-ninth session, to give out decrees concerning general councils, and provision for avoiding similar schisms hereafter. Decreeing every tenth year to have a general council, after the two councils that would follow immediately after this. Of these, the one should be kept within the next five years following, and the second within seven years after that.

In the same session, a form was drawn out regarding such things as the pope should profess and bind himself to observe at the time of his election. The order and tenor that form is this:

“I, N____. elected for pope, profess with heart and mouth to Almighty God, whose church I take upon myself to govern by his help, and to blessed St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, so long as I shall endure in this frail and brittle life, firmly to believe and hold the holy catholic faith according to the traditions of the apostles, of general councils, and of other holy fathers, and, namely, of the eight general councils; Nicene the first, the second of Constantinople, Ephesine the third, Chalcedon the fourth, the fifth and sixth of them in Constantinople, the seventh of Nice, the eighth of Constantinople. And also of the general councils of Lateran, Lyons, and Vienna, willing to observe the same faith inviolate even to the uttermost, and to preach and defend the same, even to spending my life and blood; and also by all means possible to prosecute and observe the rite of the sacraments canonically delivered to the catholic church. And this, my profession and confession, by my commandment being written out by the notary of the arches of the holy church of Rome, I have subscribed with my own hand, and sincerely with a pure mind and devout conscience I offer it to the Almighty God upon such an altar, etc. In the presence of such witness, etc. Given,” etc.

In the fortieth session, certain decrees were read, as to reformations to be made through the whole church by the pope, with the council, before this synod should break up.

Also, that they should proceed to the election of the bishop of Rome, notwithstanding the absence of those cardinals who were with Pope Benedict in Spain. This done, the order and manner was decreed for the election of the pope.

In the next session, which was forty-one, the constitution of Clement VI was read, concerning the order and diet of the cardinals then in the conclave, about the choosing of the pope, and oaths were ministered to the cardinals and other electors, binding them to observe and keep all such things as they should be bound to during the time of the election.

1. That they should enter into the conclave within ten days after the fortieth session, which was this present day after sunset.
2. That every cardinal should have but two servitors attending him, at most, either of the laity or clergy, as they chose themselves.
3. That they should remain together in the conclave, without any wall between them, or any other cover, except bare curtains, if any were disposed to sleep.

4. That the conclave should be so shut up, and the entry to the privy chamber be kept so straitly, that none of them should come in or out, nor any have recourse to them to talk with them privily or openly.
5. That no man should send to them either messenger or writings.
6. That a competent window should be assigned to them to serve their victuals, but that no person might enter there.
7. That no day after their first ingress into the conclave, besides bread, wine, and water, they should have any more dishes but one of only one kind, either of flesh or fish, eggs, pottage, made of fish or flesh, not of the daintiest sort, besides salads, cheese, fruit, and conserves (candied fruit), of which there shall be no principal mess made except for sauce and taste.
8. That not one should be compelled to go into the conclave; but if they all refused to go in, then they would be compelled.
9. That those who would go out might; but if they would all go out before the pope was elected, they would be compelled to go in again, except those whom infirmity excused; but without the excuse of infirmity, if anyone went out, he would not be admitted again, unless they all went out together.

[294]

10. That those who went out because of infirmity, to be absent, and return before the election is determined, may be admitted again into the conclave in the same state in which they find the election to stand.

Further, and besides these, the keepers of the conclave should also be sworn to see all these premises observed and kept without fraud or guile, and that they should not straiten the cardinals and other electors beyond the order taken here.

These things thus prepared and set in order, the patriarch of Constantinople, with the cardinals and other archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, deans, archdeacons, doctors, with other electors, entered into the conclave on Monday. On Thursday, after they had hatched out a pope, it being St. Martin's eve, they thereupon named him Martin. This Martin thus being elected, was straightway brought in by the emperor and the council into the church of Constance, and there enthroned as pope, with great solemnity and triumph. The twenty-first of that month, this Martin, according to their accustomed pomp, was honorably brought in to be crowned with a sumptuous procession from the high church of Constance, to the monastery of St. Austin. The emperor was on foot leading his horse by the bridle on the right hand, and the marquess of Brandenburgh prince, elector, likewise leading his horse on the left hand, the pope himself riding in the middle on his palfrey.

And thus being brought to the monastery, and round about again from there to the high church of Constance, he was there crowned with all magnificence.

In the forty-third session, certain other decrees and statutes were made by Pope Martin in the synod, annulling all the acts and proceedings of the other popes before, during the time of the schism from the time of Gregory II. Also in matters concerning exemptions, unions, fruits, and profits of the church; benefices, simony, dispensations, tithes, and burdens of the church. Also concerning the apparel of the clergy, and such other things.

Now to finish our tedious reciting of this synod, the Cardinal Umbald, by the commandment of the pope and the council, with a high and loud voice pronounced these words: "Lord, depart in peace;" to which the bystanders answered, "Amen."

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

- The number of the foreigners resorting to this council, both spiritual and temporal, was 60,500; of which the number of archbishops and bishops was 346.
- Abbots and doctors, 564.
- Secular men (princes, dukes, earls, knights, esquires), 16,000.
- Besides women belonging to the same council, 450.
- Barbers, 600.
- Minstrels, cooks, and jesters, 320.

So that the whole multitude which were viewed to be in the town of Constance, between Easter and Whitsuntide, were numbered to be 60,500 strangers and foreigners at that council.

Here is to be noted that in this COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE nothing was decreed or enacted worthy of memory, except this: that the pope's authority is under the council, and that the council ought to judge the pope.

And regarding the communion in both kinds (bread and wine), although the council did not deny that it was used by Christ and his apostles, yet notwithstanding, it was decreed by the council to the contrary.

John Huss Summoned to the Council.

Up to here we have comprehended the order and discourse of this council, with its acts and sessions. This council, although it was principally thought to be assembled for quieting the schism between the three popes, yet a great part of it was for the affair of the Bohemians, and especially John Huss. For, before the council began, the Emperor Sigismund sent certain gentlemen of his own household, to bring John Huss to the council, under his safe conduct. The meaning of this was that John Huss should purge and clear himself of the blame which they had laid against him; and for the better assurance of this, the Emperor not only promised him safe conduct, so that he might come freely to Constance, but also that he would return again into Bohemia, without fraud or interruption. He also promised to receive Huss under his protection, and under the safeguard of the whole empire.

The Safe Conduct Given to John Huss.

“Sigismund, by the grace of God, king of the Romans, of Hungary and Denmark, Croatia, etc. To all princes, ecclesiastical as well as secular, to dukes, marquesses, and earls, barons, captains, borough masters, judges, and governors, officers of towns, burgesses, and villages, and to all rulers of the commonalty, and generally to all the subjects of our empire, to whom these letters shall come, grace and all goodness.

“We charge and command you all, that you respect John Huss, who has departed out of Bohemia, to come to the general council, which will be celebrated and held very shortly at the town of Constance. This John Huss we have received under our protection and safeguard of the whole empire, desiring that you will cheerfully receive him when he comes towards you, and that you treat and handle him gently, showing him favor and good will, and show him pleasure in all things, regarding the forwardness, ease, and assurance of his journey, by land as well as by water.

“Moreover, we will, that he and all his company, with his carriage and necessaries, shall pass throughout all places, passages, ports, bridges, lands, governances, lordships, liberties, cities, towns, boroughs, castles, and villages, and all other of your dominions, without paying any manner of imposition or tribute, or any other manner of toll whatever. We will, also, that you allow to pass, rest, tarry, and sojourn at liberty, without doing to him any manner of

impeachment, or vexation, or trouble; and that if need so requires, you provide a faithful company to conduct him with, for the honor and reverence which you owe to our imperial majesty. Given at Spire, the eighteenth of October, in the year of our Lord God, 1414.”

By this it may appear that this safe conduct was granted not in the time of the council by the *bishop*, but before the council by the *emperor*, who was or ought to be the principal ordainer and director of the council under God. Now, whether the bishops did right in breaking the emperor’s promise, I will defer to a more convenient time to examine it fully.

John Huss seeing so many fair promises, and the assurance which the emperor had given, sent answer that he would come to the council. But before he departed out of the realm of Bohemia, and especially out of the town of Prague, he wrote certain letters, and caused them to be fastened upon the gates of the cathedral churches and parish churches, cloisters and abbeys — a copy of which follows here:

“Master John Huss, bachelor of divinity, will appear before the most reverend father, the Lord Conrad, archbishop of Prague, and legate of the apostolic seat, in their next convocation of all their prelates and clergy of the kingdom of Bohemia, being ready always to satisfy all men who require him to give a reason of his faith and hope that he holds, and to hear and see all those who will lay to his charge, either any stubbornness of error or heresy, that they should write in their names there, as required both by God’s law and man’s. And if it so happens that they could not lawfully prove any stubbornness of error or heresy against him, then they would suffer the like punishment that he should have had, to whom all together he will answer at the next general Council of Constance, before the archbishop and the prelates, and according to the decrees and canons of the holy father, show forth his innocency in the name of Christ. Dated the Sunday next after the feast of St. Bartholomew.”

After this, as all the barons of Bohemia were assembled in the abbey of St. James, about the affairs of the realm, the archbishop of Prague was also present.

[295] A.D. 1414.

There John Huss presented petitions by which he most humbly desired the barons that they would show him that favor towards the archbishop, that if the archbishop suspected him of any error or heresy, he should declare it openly, and that he was ready to endure and suffer correction for the same at his hands. And if he had found or perceived no such thing in him, that he would then give him a testimonial of it. The archbishop confessed openly, before all the assembly of barons, that he did not know that John Huss was culpable or faulty in any crime or offense.

About the ides of October, A.D. 1414. John Huss, accompanied by two noble gentlemen, Wancelat of Duba, and John of Clum, departed from Prague, and took his journey towards Constance.

In all cities as he passed by, and principally when he had departed out of Bohemia, and entered into Germany, a great number of people came to him, and he was very gently received and entertained through all the towns of Germany, and especially by the citizens and burgesses, and oftentimes by the curates. And if it happened that there was any information before of his coming, the streets were always full of people desirous to see and gratify him; and especially at Nuremberg, where certain merchants certified the citizens of his coming. There were many curates who came to him, desiring that they might talk with him secretly. To them he answered that he loved much rather to pronounce and show forth his mind and opinion openly before all men, for he would keep nothing hidden. So, after

dinner, till it was night, he spoke before the priests and senators, and other citizens, so that they all held him in great estimation and reverence.

Twenty days after that, he departed the town of Prague, which was November 3d. He came to Constance, and lodged at an honest matron's house, being a widow named Faith, in St. Galles Street.

The day after his arrival, Master John de Clum, and Master Henry Latzemboge, went to the pope, and certified to him that John Huss had come, under the emperor's safe conduct. They also desired that on his part he would grant John Huss liberty to remain in Constance without any trouble, vexation, or interruption. The pope answered that even if John Huss had killed his brother, yet he might go about as much as it lay in him, and that no outrage or hurt should be done to him during his abode in the town of Constance.

The 20th day after Huss had come to Constance, during all which time he was occupied in reading, writing, and familiar talk with his friends, the cardinals sent two bishops — to wit, the bishops of Augusta, and of Trent — to the place where John Huss lodged, to report to him that they were sent by the pope and his cardinals, to notify him that he should come to render some account of his doctrine before them, as he had often desired, and that they were ready to hear him.

John Huss answered, "I have not come for any such intent, as to defend my cause before the pope and his cardinals," protesting that "I never desired any such thing. But I would willingly appear before the whole assembly of the council, and there answer for my defense openly, without any fear or doubt, to all such things as will be demanded or required of me. Notwithstanding," he said before the cardinals, "because you require me so to do, I will not refuse to go with you. And if it happens that they entreat or handle me evilly, nevertheless I trust in my Lord Jesus, that he will so comfort and strengthen me, that I will desire much to die for His glory's sake, rather than deny the verity and truth which I have learned by his holy Scriptures." Therefore, it came to pass, that the bishops being instant upon him, and not showing any outward appearance that they bore any malice or hatred against him in their hearts, John Huss took his horse which he had at his lodging, and went to the court of the pope and the cardinals.

When he had come, and saluted the cardinals, they began to speak to him in this way:

"We have heard many reports of you, which, if they are true, are in no case to be allowed. For men say that you have taught great and manifest errors against the doctrine of the true church; and that you have sown your errors abroad throughout the realm of Bohemia for a long time. Therefore we have caused you to be called before us, so that we might understand and know how the matter stands."

John Huss answered in few words,

"Reverend fathers, you will understand that I am thus minded, that I would rather choose to die, than be found culpable of only one error, much less of many and great errors. For this cause I have more willingly come to the general council, to show myself ready even with all my heart to receive correction, if any man can prove any errors in me."

The cardinals answered him back, that his sayings pleased them very well, and upon that they went away, leaving John Huss with Master John de Clum, under the guard and keeping of the armed men.

In the meantime, they suborned and furnished out a certain divine, a Franciscan friar, a subtle and crafty man, and a malicious hypocrite, to question John Huss. He was surrounded with armed men. This man drawing near in his monkish gesture, said,

“Reverend master, I, a simple and ignorant man, have come to you to learn. For I have heard many strange and contrary things against the catholic faith ascribed to you. Therefore I desire you, even for the love which you bear to the truth, and to all good and godly men, that you would teach me, a most simple and miserable man, some certainty and truth. And first, men say, that you hold an opinion that after the consecration and pronounciation of the words in the sacrament of the altar, there remains only material bread.”

John Huss answered that it was falsely attributed and imputed to him.” Then the friar asked, “I pray you, is this not your opinion?” “No truly,” said John Huss, “I do not think of it so.” When the monk asked this question the third time, Master John de Clum being moved somewhat with him, said, “Why are you so importunate upon him? Truly, if any man had affirmed or denied anything to me even once, I would have believed him. And you, although he has shown you his mind so often, yet you do not cease to trouble him.” Then the monk said, “Gentle master, I pray you pardon me, an ignorant and simple friar; surely I did it of a good mind and intent, being willing and desirous to learn.” This friar put another question to him, protesting his simplicity and ignorance, what manner of unity of the Godhead and manhood was in the person of Christ? When John Huss heard this question, he turned to Master John de Clum, and said in the Bohemian language, “Truly this friar is not simple as he pretends, for he has propounded to me a very hard question.” And afterward turning himself to the friar, he said to him, “Brother, you say that you are simple, but as I have heard you, I perceive very well that you are double and crafty, and not simple.” “It is not so,” said the friar.

“Well,” said John Huss, “I will cause you to understand that it is so. For as to the simplicity of a man, it is required in things that concern civility and manners that the spirit, the understanding, the heart, the words, and the mouth, should agree together. And I do not perceive this in you. There is in your mouth a certain semblance of simplicity, which would very well declare you to be an idiot and simple, but your deeds show plainly and evidently a great subtlety and craft in you, with a great quickness and liveliness of wit, to propose to me so hard and difficult a question. Notwithstanding, I will not fear to show you my mind in this.”

And when he had made an end, the monk gave him great thanks for his gentleness, and so departed. After that, the pope’s garrison who were around John Huss, told him that this friar was called master Didace, who was esteemed and counted the greatest and most subtle divine in all Lombardy. “ Oh, said John Huss, “if I had known that before, I would have handled him in another fashion; but I would to God they were all such, then through the help and aid of the holy Scriptures I would fear none of them.

[296]

John Huss Imprisoned.

In this manner, Hubs and master John de Clum were left under the keeping of these men-at-arms until four o’clock in the afternoon. After that time the cardinals assembled again in the pope’s court, to devise and take counsel what they should do with John Huss.

A little before night, they sent the provost of the Roman court to master John de Clum, to show him that he might return to his lodging; but as for John Huss, they had otherwise provided for him. When master John de Clum heard this news, he was shockingly displeased, because through their crafts, subtleties, and glossing words, they had so drawn

this good man into their snares. Whereupon he went to the pope, declaring to him all that was done; most humbly beseeching him, that he would call to remembrance the promise which he had made to him and master Henry Latzemboge, and that he would not so lightly falsify and break his faith and promise. The pope answered that all these things were done without his consent or commandment, and said further to master Clum, aside, "What reason is it that you should impute this deed to me, seeing that you know well enough that I myself am in the hands of these cardinals and bishops?"

So the said master Clum returned very pensive and sorrowful, He complained very sorely, both privately and openly, of the injury and outrage that the pope had done, but it all profited nothing. After this, John Huss was led by the officers to the charter-house of the great church of Constance, where he was kept prisoner for eight days. From there he was carried to the Jacobines, nearby the river Rhine, and was shut up in the abbey prison.

After he had been enclosed there a certain time, he fell sorely sick of an ague (fever) because of the stench of the place; he became so weak, that they despaired of his life. And for fear, lest this good man die in prison, as others usually to do, the pope sent to him certain of his physicians to cure and help him. In the midst of his sickness, his accusers made importunate suit to the principals of the council, that John Huss might be condemned. And they presented to the pope these articles written here:

Articles presented against John Huss.

"First, he errs about the sacrament of the church, and specially about the sacrament of the body of Christ, as he has openly preached that it ought to be ministered openly to the people under both kinds, that is to say, the body and the blood. This article is evident, in that his disciples at this instant in Prague minister the same in both kinds. Moreover it is affirmed by several, that he has taught both in the schools and in the church, or at the least that he holds this opinion, that after the words of consecration pronounced upon the altar, material bread still remains in the sacrament. This article shall be known by his examination.

"Secondly, he errs as to the ministers of the church, in that he says they cannot consecrate or minister the sacraments when they are in mortal sin. This article shall likewise be known by his examination. Notwithstanding, all that is contained here may he gathered by his writings on the church, which if he denies them, then let there be some divines and others appointed to peruse and look over his writings. Moreover, he says that other men besides priests may minister the sacrament. This article is evident, because his disciples do the same at Prague, who of themselves violently take the sacrament out of the treasury, and communicate among themselves, when the holy communion is denied to them. By this and also other things, it is sufficiently evident that he has taught that every man, being without mortal sin, has the power of orders or priesthood, because only those who have taken orders ought to minister the sacrament to themselves. And because he proceeds from small matters to great and weightier ones, it consequently appears and follows that those who are in the state of grace can bind and loose.

"Thirdly, he errs as to the church, and specially because he does not allow and admit that 'the church' signifies the pope, cardinals, archbishops, and the clergy underneath them; but he says that this signification was drawn from the schoolmen (Scholastics), and is in no case to be held or allowed. This article is manifest by his treatise on the church.

"Moreover, he errs concerning the church, in that he says, that the church should not have any temporal possessions. And that the temporal lords may take them away from the church and the clergy without any offense. This error is evident, because through his doctrine and enticements, many churches in the kingdom of Bohemia, and in the city of Prague, are already

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

spoiled and robbed of a great part of their temporalities and goods. He also says that Constantine and other secular princes erred by enriching and endowing churches and monasteries. This article is manifest by what goes next before it.

“Fourthly, he errs regarding the church, in that he says that all priests are of like power, and therefore he affirms that the reservations of the pope’s casualties, the ordering of bishops, and the consecration of the priests, were invented only for covetousness. This article somewhat appears by those foregoing articles, but by his examination it shall be more evident.

“Fifthly, he errs concerning the church, in that he says that the church being in sin, has no power of the keys, when the pope, cardinals, and all other of the priests and clergy are in deadly sin — which he says is possible enough. This also appears in his treatise on the church in his first error regarding the ministers of the church.

“Sixthly, he errs regarding the church, for through contempt he does not fear excommunication. This notoriously appears by his own doings, that he scorned and despised the apostolic and ordinary censure, and in all the apostolic excommunications and injunctions he has borne himself upon the divine commandments, and in contempt of the keys, even to setting out his hypocrisy, saying mass all the way between this city and the city of Prague, and thereby he has profaned the process and authority of the church.

“Seventhly, he errs again regarding the church, because he does not keep its institutions and investitures, but holds the opinion that every man has authority to invest and appoint any man to the cure of souls. This is evident by his own doings, for many in the kingdom of Bohemia, by their defenders and favorers, or rather by himself, were appointed and put into parish churches, which they have long ruled and kept, not being appointed by the apostolic see, nor yet by the ordinary of the city of Prague.

“Eighthly, he errs regarding the church, in that he holds the opinion that a man, once ordained a priest or deacon, cannot be forbidden or kept from the office of preaching. This is likewise manifest by his own doings, in that he himself could never be hindered from preaching, neither by the apostolic see, nor yet by the archbishop of Prague.

“And to the intent that John Huss, who is clothed in sheep’s clothing, and inwardly a ravaging wolf, may be better known by his fruits. For better informing you most reverend fathers, I say that from the first time that he took in hand, or went about to sow such errors and heresies, which afterward he did indeed, he understood and perceived himself to be withstood and challenged by the Germans who were in the university of Prague. But he could conclude nothing, because they had three voices, and on his part he had only one voice. So he went about and brought to pass, by the secular power, that the Germans should have but one voice, and he and his parts had three voices. Once the Germans perceived this, rather than lose or forsake any part of their right which they had in voices, or endanger their persons — which would then have ensued upon it — to save themselves, they wholly, with one consent, agreed together to depart Prague. And by this means, this solemn and famous university of Prague was made desolate, that had brought forth so many notable men in diverse sciences.

[297] A.D. 1414

“Behold his first fruits which divided that very famous university, for grapes are not gathered from thorns, nor figs from brambles.

“Moreover, when there were questions moved among the divines of the university of Prague about the forty-five articles of John Wycliffe, and they had called a convocation, and all the divines of Bohemia (for the Germans had already departed), they concluded that every one of those articles was either heretical, seditious, or erroneous. He alone held the contrary opinion, that none of those articles were either heretical, seditious, or erroneous, as afterward he

disputed, held, and taught in the common schools of Prague. By this it is evidently enough foreseen, that he holds and affirms those articles of Wycliffe, which are not only condemned in England, but also by the whole church, because they were first invented and set forth by the members of antichrist.

“Moreover, being complained about to the archbishop of Prague, that he preached and set forth certain articles which were heretical, false, and seditious, he was forbidden by the said archbishop to preach any more. He proceeded against John Huss, according to the canonical sanctions, which process is confirmed by the apostolic see, and published in the court of Rome, as well as without — which John Huss and his adherents have in diverse and manifold ways violated and profaned. And whoever spoke against him, were deprived of their benefices, and others placed in them, who have ruled and still rule the said churches, and their flocks, not having any cure or charge of the souls committed to them, neither by the apostolic see, nor yet by the ordinary of the place.

“Also all those, priests as well as laymen, in the city of Prague and kingdom of Bohemia, who have spoken against the doctrine of Huss, and the profanation of the aforesaid process, or at the least have not allowed the same, have suffered most mortal hatred and persecutions, and still suffer to this day. But at this present, it is dissembled until the end of the process against John Huss. Therefore if he is now let go again, without doubt that people shall suffer great persecution both in body and goods, and throughout all the realm of Bohemia; house shall be against house; and this mischief will creep, yes suddenly spring up throughout all Germany, and innumerable souls will be infected, so that there will be such a persecution of the clergy and faithful, as has not been seen since the time of the emperor Constantine to this present day. For he does not cease to move and stir up the laity against the clergy and faithful Christians. And when any of the clergy would draw him away, or call him from his heresy, and for that cause forbid him to preach, so that he does not teach any heresies — then he says that the clergy do that from envy and malice, because he rebukes their vices and faults; that is to say, their simony, and pride, and covetousness.

“Moreover, he stirs up the secular princes against the prelates of churches, monasteries, and universities, and generally against the whole clergy. Going about by this means, he preaches and teaches that prelates and other men of the church should not have any temporal goods or possessions, but only live upon alms. And by this means he has already done very much hurt, and annoyed diverse and many prelates, clerics, and churches in the kingdom of Bohemia, and city of Prague, so much that thereby they are already spoiled and robbed of their possessions. Indeed, he also teaches that it is lawful for lay-people, without sin, to withhold and keep back their tithes and oblations, or to give the church’s goods to any other minister. All the secular princes are greatly inclined to this, but especially the laity, who each follow their own will.

“He generally has with him all those heretics who but very smally regard the ecclesiastical censures, and hate the authority of the Roman church, even utterly detest and abhor the same. This thing will more and more increase, unless it is effectually and manfully withstood. And if by any means he escapes from the council, he and his favorers will say that his doctrine is just and true, and that it is allowed by the authority of the universal sacred council, and that all his adversaries are wicked and naughty men — so that he would do more mischief than any heretic ever did since the time of Constantine the Great.

“Therefore, most holy fathers, provide and take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you, to rule the church of Christ, which he has purchased with his own blood. And while the disease is new and fresh, help and remedy it, concerning him who so infects and troubles the church of God, as well as the occasions through which he has presumed, and might do the same — because the prelates abuse the ecclesiastical censures, and they as well as those who are under them, do not keep and observe

the order of the church which is appointed them by God. Thereby it comes to pass, that while they themselves walk the broken and unknown paths, their flock falls headlong into the ditch.

“Therefore, let our sovereign lord the pope, and this most sacred council, ordain and depute commissioners, who may examine the said John Huss upon all before-written, and other things in the presence of those who know the matter. Let there also be certain doctors and masters appointed to read over and peruse his books which he has written, of which some are here present, so that the church may be speedily purged and cleansed from these errors.”

Upon this accusation, they ordained and appointed three commissioners or judges, that is to say, the patriarch of Constantinople, the bishop of Castile, and the bishop of Lybuss. These prelates being thus deputed, heard the accusation and the witness who was brought in by certain priests of Prague, confirmed by their oaths, and afterward recited the accusation to Huss in the prison, at the time when his ague was fervent and extreme upon him. Upon this, John Huss requested to have an advocate answer for him; which was utterly denied him.

Thus John Huss remained in the prison of the convent of the Franciscans, until the Wednesday before Palm Sunday. In the meantime, to employ his time, he wrote certain books concerning the ten commandments, of the love and knowledge of God, of matrimony, of penance, of the three enemies of mankind, of the prayer of our Lord, and of the supper of our Lord.

The same day, Pope John XXIII changed his apparel, and conveyed himself secretly out of Constance, fearing the judgment by which he was later deprived of his papal dignity, for the most execrable and abominable doings. This was the reason that John Huss was transported and carried to another prison: for the pope’s servants, who had the charge and keeping of John Huss, understanding that their master had fled and was gone, delivered up the keys of the prison to the Emperor Sigismund, and to the cardinals, and followed their master the pope. Then by the consent of the whole council, John Huss was put into the hands of the bishop of Constance, who sent him to a castle on the other side of the river Rhine, not very far from Constance. There he was shut up in a tower with fetters on his legs, so that he could scarcely walk in the day time, and at night he was fastened to a rack against the wall nearby his bed. In the meantime, certain noblemen and gentlemen of Poland and Bohemia endeavored their best to procure Huss’s deliverance, having respect to the good renown of all the realm, who had been shockingly defamed and slandered by certain naughty persons. The matter had so grown to this point, that all those who were in the town of Constance, who seemed to bear any favor toward John Huss, were made laughing stocks, and derided by all men, yes, even by the slaves and base people. Therefore they took counsel and concluded together to present their request in writing to the whole council, or at the least to the four nations of Germany, Italy, France, and England. This request was presented the 14th of May, A.D. 1415. The tenor of it ensues here.

[298]

The first Schedule or Bill, which the Nobles of Bohemia delivered
to the Council for the deliverance of John Huss,
the 14th of May, A.D. 1415.

“Most reverend fathers and lords, the nobles and lords of Bohemia and Poland here present, by this their present writing do show and declare to your fatherly reverences, how the most noble king and lord, the Lord Sigismund, king of the Romans, always Augustus, king of Hungary, Croatia, Dalmatia, etc. hearing of the great dissension that was in the kingdom of Bohemia, as heir, king, and lord successor, willing to foresee and provide for his own honor,

sent these noblemen, Master Wenceslate de Duba, and John de Clum here present, that they would bring and assure Master John Huss *under the King's name and safe conduct*. So that he would come to the sacred general Council of Constance, under the safe conduct of the said king, and the protection of the sacred empire, openly given and granted to the said Master John Huss, that he might purge himself and the kingdom of Bohemia from the slander that was raised upon them, and there make an open declaration of his faith to every man who would lay anything to his charge. The said nobles, with the forenamed Master John Huss, have performed and done according to the king's commandment.

“When the said Master John Huss had freely of his own accord come to Constance, under the said safe conduct, he was grievously imprisoned before he was heard, and at this present time is tormented both with fetters, and also with hunger and thirst. Although in times past at the council held at Pisa in the year of our Lord 1410, the heretics who were condemned were allowed to remain there at liberty, and to depart home freely, notwithstanding this, Master John Huss, being neither convicted nor condemned, nor so much as heard once, was taken and imprisoned, when neither king nor any prince elector, nor any ambassador of any university had yet come or was present. And even though the lord the king, together with the nobles and lords here present, most instantly required and desired that regarding his safe conduct, they would foresee and respect his honor, and that the said Master John Huss might be openly heard, so that he might render and show a reason for his faith. And if he were found and convicted obstinately to affirm or maintain anything against the truth of holy Scripture, then he ought to correct and amend the same, according to the instruction and determination of the council. Yet he never could obtain this. But the said Master John Huss, notwithstanding all this, is most grievously oppressed with fetters and irons, and so weakened with thin and slender diet, that it is to be feared that his power and strength being hereby consumed and wasted, he would be put in danger of his wit or reason.

“And although the lords of Bohemia here present are greatly slandered because, seeing the said Master John Huss so tormented and troubled, contrary to the king's safe conduct, they have not by their letters put the king in mind of his safe conduct, so that the said lord and king might no longer suffer any such matters, for they tend to the contempt and disregard of the kingdom of Bohemia which, from its first origin and beginning, since it received the catholic faith, never departed or went away from the obedience of the holy church of Rome. Yet, notwithstanding, they have suffered and borne all these things patiently up to now, lest by any means an occasion of trouble or vexation of this sacred council might arise or spring from it.

“Therefore, most reverend fathers and lords, the nobles and lords before named, do wholly and most earnestly desire and require your reverences here present, that both for the honor of the safe conduct of our said lord the king, and also for the preservation and increase of the worthy fame and renown, both of the kingdom of Bohemia, and your own also, you will make a short end about the affairs of Master John Huss. For by means of his strait handling he is in great danger by any longer delay, even as they most specially trust upon the most upright consciences and judgments of your fatherly reverences. And this is because, most reverend fathers and lords, it has now come to the knowledge and understanding of the nobles and lords of Bohemia here present, how certain backbiters and slanderers of the most famous kingdom of Bohemia aforesaid, have declared and told your reverences, how the sacrament of the most precious blood of our Lord is carried up and down through Bohemia in vessels that are not consecrated or hallowed, and that cobblers now hear confessions, and minister the most blessed body of our Lord to others.

“Therefore the nobles of Bohemia here present, request and desire that you will give no credit to false promoters and tale-tellers, for as most wicked and naughty slanderers and backbiters of that kingdom aforesaid, they report and tell untruths. We also request your reverences, that

such slanderous persons of the kingdom aforesaid may be named and known. And the lord the king, together with your reverences, shall well perceive and see that the lords of Bohemia will go about in such a manner as to repel and put away the false and frivolous slanders of these naughty persons, so that they will hereafter be ashamed to appear before the lord the king and your reverences.”

When the noblemen of Bohemia for a long time could obtain no answer to this, nor after a second supplication which they had already put up, they determined the last day of May, by another supplication to the principals of the council, to entreat that John Huss might be delivered out of prison, and defend his own cause openly. In this supplication, among other things, they asked —

“Therefore, most reverend fathers, his enemies through the extreme hatred which they bear to him, by picking out and taking piecemeal certain articles from the books of Master John Huss, rejecting and not looking at the allegations and reasons, have compounded and made of it certain false and feigned articles against him to this end: that all charity and love being set aside, they might better overthrow him and bring him to death. This is contrary to the safe conduct upon good and just occasion, openly assigned and given to the said Master John Huss, by the most noble prince the Lord Sigismund, king of the Romans, and of Hungary. It was for his just defense against all the frivolous accusations and assaults of the enemies, not only of the said Master John Huss, but also of the famous kingdom of Bohemia, and for the quiet appeasing of all such tumult and rumors arising and springing up in the said kingdom of Bohemia, or elsewhere. The said king of the Romans, as the rightful heir and successor of that kingdom, greatly desires and wishes to avoid these most perilous uproars.

“Therefore, may it please your fatherly reverences to command the said Master John Huss, neither convicted nor condemned, to be taken and brought out of his bonds and chains, in which he is now most grievously detained and kept, and put him into the hands of some reverend lord bishops or commissioners, appointed or to be appointed by this present council — that the said Master John Huss may be somewhat relieved, and recover his health again, and be more diligently and commodiously examined by the commissioners. And for greater assurance, the barons and nobles aforesaid of the kingdom of Bohemia, will provide most sure and good sureties, who will not break their fidelity and faith for anything in the world. They shall also promise in this behalf, that Master Huss shall not flee or depart out of their hands until such time as the matter is fully determined by the said commissioners. In the execution of these premises, we have determined to provide and foresee to the fame and honor of the said kingdom of Bohemia, and also to the safe conduct of the most worthy prince, the king of the Romans, lest the enemies and detractors of the honor and fame of the kingdom aforesaid, might not a little slander and reprove the said lords, pretending and showing hereafter, that they had made unreasonable or unlawful requests.

[299] A.D. 1415.

“For withstanding this mischief, we request your fatherly reverences, that you will decree, and most graciously consent, that this our petition and supplication may be drawn out again by your notary, and reduced into a public form and order.”

The same day the said barons and lords presented a supplication to the emperor, embodying the foregoing supplication, and they concluded thus:

“Therefore we most humbly request and desire your princely majesty, that both for the love of justice, and also of the fame and renown of that most famous kingdom of Bohemia, of which we acknowledge you undoubtedly as the true lord, heir, and successor; and also foreseeing to *the liberty of your safe conduct*, that you will with your favorable countenance, beholding these most reasonable and just supplications which we have put up to the lords aforesaid, put

your helping hand toward the said most reverend fathers and lords, that they will effectually hear us, in this our most just petition, which we have offered up to them, as aforesaid, lest the enemies of the renown and honor of the famous kingdom of Bohemia, and such be our slanderers also, hereafter detract and slander us, saying that we would make unreasonable and unlawful requests to the said reverend fathers and lords. And therefore we requested and desired of them, that it would please them to decree by setting to their public hand and seal, to authorize our said publication. Likewise, we do most heartily request your highness, that you would grant in like manner, to give us your testimony of the premises.”

We never could understand or know what answer the emperor made to this. But a man may easily judge by the process of the matter, that this good emperor was brought, through the obstinate mischief of the cardinals and bishops, to break and falsify his promise and faith which he had made and promised. And this was their reason: that no defense could or might be given either by safe conduct, or by any other means, to this man who was suspected or judged to be a heretic. But by the epistles and letters of John Huss, a man may easily judge what the king’s mind was. Now we will proceed to the history.

The fifth day of June, the cardinals, bishops, and the rest of the priests, all that were in Constance, assembled to a great number, at the convent of the Franciscans in Constance. And there it was commanded that before John Huss would be brought forth, in his absence they would rehearse the witnesses and articles which they had slanderously gathered out of his books. By chance there was then present a certain notary, named Mladoniewitz, who bore great love and amity to Huss,. As soon as he perceived that the bishops and cardinals were already determined and appointed to condemn the said articles in the absence of John Huss, he went with all speed to Master Wencelate de Duba, and John de Clum, and told them the whole matter. They immediately reported it to the emperor, who understanding their object, sent to signify to them that nothing would be resolved or done in the case of John Huss, before they sent him all the articles which were laid against him, which were either false or heretical, and he would do so much, that the said articles would be examined by good and learned men. Then according to the emperor’s will, the judgment of the principals of the council was suspended until such time as John Huss was present.

In the meantime, these gentlemen, master of Duba and of Clum, gave to the two princes whom the emperor had sent, certain small treatises which John Huss had made, out of which they had drawn certain articles to present to those who rule the council, under this condition: that they would render them in response, when those rulers demanded them. The intent and meaning of these barons was that by this means the adversaries of John Huss might more easily be reproved — those who, from a naughty and corrupt conscience, had picked out corrupt sentences from the books of John Huss. The books were delivered to the cardinals and bishops; and then John Huss was brought forth, and the princes who were sent by the emperor, departed. After the books were shown to John Huss, he confessed openly before the whole assembly that he had written them, and that he was ready, if there were any faults in them, to amend them.

Now hearken a little to the holy proceedings of these reverend fathers, for here a strange and shameful matter happened. With much ado they had scarcely read one article, and brought forth a few witnesses upon the same against him, than as he was about to open his mouth to answer, all this mad herd or flock began to so cry out upon him, that he was not able to speak one word. The noise and trouble was so great and so vehement, that a man might well have called it an uproar, or the noise of wild beasts and not of men. Much less was it to be judged a congregation of men gathered together to judge and determine such grave and weighty matters. And if it happened that the noise and cry ceased ever so little,

that he might answer anything at all, out of the holy Scriptures, or ecclesiastical doctors, by and by Huss would hear such replies as were nothing to the purpose.

Besides all this, some outraged in words against him, and others spitefully mocked him, so that seeing himself overwhelmed with these rude and barbarous noises and cries, and that it profited nothing to speak, he determined finally to hold his peace and keep silence. From that time forward, the whole rout of his adversaries thought that they had won the battle, and cried out all together "Now he is dumb, now he is dumb! This is a certain sign and token that he consents and agrees to these errors of his." Finally, the matter came to this point, that certain of the most moderate and honest among them, seeing this disorder, determined to proceed no further, but that all should be deferred and put off until another time. Through their advice, the prelates and others departed from the council for the present, and appointed to meet there again on the morrow to proceed in judgment.

The next day, which was the seventh of June, the sun was almost wholly eclipsed. A little after seven o'clock, this same flock assembled again in the cloister of the friars minors, and by their appointment, John Huss was brought before them, accompanied with a great number of armed men. The emperor also went there, whom the gentlemen, master of Duba and Clum, and the notary named Peter, who were great friends of Huss, followed to see what the end would be. When they had come there, they heard that in the accusation of Michael de Causis, they read the following words:

"John Huss has taught the people diverse and many errors both in the chapel of Bethlehem, and also in many other places of the city of Prague, some of which errors he has drawn out of Wycliffe's books, and the rest he has forged and invented out of his own head, and maintains the same very obstinately.

"First, that after the consecration and pronunciation of the words in the supper of the Lord, there remains material bread. To this, John Huss, taking a solemn oath, answered that he never spoke any such word; but this much he did grant, that at whatever time the archbishop of Prague forbade him to any longer use that term or word *bread*, he could not allow the bishop's command, as Christ himself, in the sixth chapter of John, often names it the bread of life, which came down from heaven, to give life to the whole world. But regarding 'material bread,' he never spoke anything at all."

Then they returned again to the witnesses, who every man for himself affirmed with an oath, that which he had said. Among whom John Protyway, when he confirmed his testimony, added that John Huss said St. Gregory was but a rhymer, when he alleged his authority against him. John Huss answered him, that in this point they did him great injury, as he always esteemed and reputed St. Gregory as a most holy doctor of the church.

[300]

Then a certain article of accusation was read, in which it was alleged that John Huss had taught, and obstinately defended certain erroneous articles of Wycliffe's in Bohemia. To which Huss answered, that he never taught any errors of John Wycliffe's, or of any other man's. But to confirm their article, it was alleged that John Huss withstood the condemnation of Wycliffe's articles. He answered that he dared not agree to the condemnation for offending his conscience, and especially the articles saying that Silvester the pope and Constantine erred in bestowing great gifts and rewards upon the church. Also, that the pope or priest, being in mortal sin, cannot consecrate nor baptize. "This article," he said, "I have thus determined, as if said that he unworthily consecrates or baptizes when he is in deadly sin, and that he is an unworthy minister of the sacraments of God." Here his

accusers, with their witnesses, were earnest and instant that the article of Wycliffe was written in the very same words of the treatise of John Huss. "Truly," said John Huss; "I do not fear to submit myself, even under the danger of death, if you will not find it so as I have said." When the book was brought out, they found it written as John Huss had said. Then another article was recited from his accusation, in this manner:

"That John Huss, to confirm the heresy which he had taught the common and simple people out of Wycliffe's books, said openly these words, that at what time a great number of monks and friars, and other learned men were gathered together in England, in a certain church, to dispute against John Wycliffe, and could by no means vanquish him, suddenly the church door was broken open with lightning, so that with much ado Wycliffe's enemies hardly escaped without hurt. He added, moreover, that he wished his soul to be in the same place where John Wycliffe's soul was. To which John Huss answered that a dozen years before any books of divinity of John Wycliffe's were in Bohemia, he saw certain works of philosophy of his which, he said, marvellously delighted and pleased him. And when he understood the good and godly life of Wycliffe, he spoke these words: 'I trust that Wycliffe is saved; and although I doubt whether he is damned or not, yet with a good hope, I wish that my soul were in the same place where John Wycliffe's is.' Then again all the company jested and laughed at him."

It is also contained in his accusation, that John Huss counselled the people, according to the example of Moses, to resist with the sword against all those who challenged his doctrine. And the next day after he had preached that, there were found openly in diverse places certain intimations that every man, being armed with his sword about him, should stoutly proceed, and that brother should not spare brother, nor one neighbor spare another.

John Huss answered that all these things were falsely laid to his charge by his adversaries; for at all times when he preached, he diligently admonished and warned the people that they should all arm themselves to defend the truth of the gospel, according to the saying of the apostle, 'with the helmet and sword of salvation;' and that he never spoke of any material sword, but of that which is the word of God. And regarding intimations, or Moses' sword, he never had anything to do with that.

When all the articles were gone through in this way, John Huss was committed to the custody of the bishop of Reggeo, under whom Jerome of Prague was also prisoner. But before he was led away, the cardinal of Cambray called him back again in the presence of the emperor, and said, "John Huss, I have heard you say, that if you had not been willing of your own mind to come to Constance, neither the emperor himself, nor the king of Bohemia, could have compelled you to do it." John Huss answered, "Under your license, most reverend father, I never used any such talk or words. But I did say this, that there was in Bohemia a great number of gentlemen and noblemen, who favored and loved me, who also might easily have kept me in some sure and secret place, so that I would not have been constrained to come into this town of Constance, neither at the will of the emperor, nor of the king of Bohemia." With that, the cardinal of Cambray, from very anger, began to change his color, and spitefully said, "Do you not see the unshamefacedness of the man here?" And as they were murmuring, and whispering on all parts, the Lord John de Clum, ratifying and confirming what John Huss had spoken, said that John Huss had spoken very well.

"For on my part," he said, "who in comparison to a great many others, am but of small force in the realm of Bohemia. Yet if I would have taken it in hand, I could have defended him easily for a year, even against all the force and power of both these great and mighty kings. How much better they might have done it who are of more force or power than I am, and have stronger castles and places than I have."

After the Lord de Clum had spoken, the cardinal of Cambray said,

“Let us leave this talk. And I tell you, John Huss, and counsel you, that you submit yourself to the sentence and mind of the council, as you promised in the prison; and if you will do so, it will be greatly both for your profit and honor.”

And the emperor himself began to tell him the same tale, saying,

“Although there are some who say that the fifteenth day after you were committed to prison, you obtained from us our letters of safe conduct, notwithstanding I can well prove by the witness of many princes and noblemen, that the safe conduct was obtained and gotten from us by my Lords de Duha and de Clum, before you had departed out of Prague, under whose guard we have sent for you, to the end that none should do you any outrage or hurt, but that you should have full liberty to speak freely before all the council, and to answer as regarding your faith and doctrine. And as you see, my lords the cardinals and bishops have so dealt with you, that we do very well perceive their good-will towards you, for which we have great cause to thank them. And inasmuch as diverse people have told us, that we may not, or should not, of right defend any man who is a heretic, or suspected of heresy. Therefore we now give you the very same counsel which the cardinal of Cambray has given you already, that you not be obstinate to maintain any opinion, but that you submit yourself under such obedience as you owe to the authority of the holy council, in all things that shall be laid against you, and confirmed by credible witnesses. If you do this thing according to our counsel, we will order that for the love of us, of our brother, and the whole realm of Bohemia, the council will allow you to depart in peace, with an easy and tolerable penance and satisfaction. If you refuse to do this, the presidents of the council shall have sufficient authority to proceed against you. And for our part, be well assured that we will sooner prepare and make the fire with our own hands, to burn you with, than we will endure or any longer permit you to maintain or use this stiffness of opinions which you have maintained and used up to now. Therefore our advice and counsel is that you submit yourself wholly to the judgment of the council.”

John Huss answered, “O most noble emperor, I render to your highness most immortal thanks for your letters of safe conduct.” Upon this, Lord John de Clum broke him of his purpose, and admonished him that he did not excuse himself of the blame of obstinacy.

Then John Huss said, “O most gentle Lord, I do take God to my witness, that I was never minded obstinately to maintain any opinion, and that for this same intent and purpose I came here of my own good will, that if any man could lay before me any better or more holy doctrine than mine, that I would then change my opinion without any further doubt.”

After he had spoken and said these things, he was sent away with the sergeants. The morrow after, which was the eighth of June, the very same company which was assembled the day before, assembled now again at the convent of the Franciscans. And in this assembly were also John Huss’ friends, Lord de Duba, Lord de Clum, and Peter the notary.

[301] A.D. 1415.

John Huss was also brought there, and in his presence there were read about thirty-nine articles which they said were drawn out of his books. Huss acknowledged all those that were faithfully and truly collected and gathered, to be his; of this sort there were but very few. The rest were counterfeited and forged by his adversaries, for they could find no such thing in the books, out of the which they said they had drawn and gathered them.

These were the same articles in a way which were shown to John Huss before in the prison, and are recited here in another order. Although there were some more articles added to

them, and others were corrected and enlarged, mention is made in them of his appeal, which is as follows:

The Appeal of John Huss from the Pope to Christ.

“In that the most mighty Lord, one in essence, three in person, is both the chief and first, and also the last and utmost refuge of all those who are oppressed; and that he is the God who defends verity and truth throughout all generations, doing justice to those who are wronged, being ready and at hand to all those who call upon him in verity and truth, unbinding those who are bound, and fulfilling the desires of all those who honor and fear him; defending and keeping all those who love him, and utterly destroying and bringing to ruin the stiff-necked and impenitent sinner; and that the Lord Jesus Christ, very God and man, being in great anguish, encompassed with the priests, scribes, and Pharisees, wicked judges and witnesses, willing by the most bitter and ignominious death to redeem the children of God, chosen before the foundation of the world, from everlasting damnation, has left behind him this godly example as a memory to those who would come after him, to the intent they should commit all their causes into the hands of God, who can do all things, and who knows and sees all things, saying in this manner — O Lord, behold my affliction, for my enemy has prepared himself against me, and you are my protector and defender. O Lord, you have given me understanding, and I have acknowledged you. You have opened to me all their enterprises; and for my own part, I have been like a meek lamb which is led to sacrifice, and have not resisted against them.

“They have wrought their enterprises upon me, saying. Let us put wood in his bread, and let us banish him out of the land of the living, that his name is no more spoken of, nor held in memory. But you, O Lord of Hosts, who judges justly, and sees the devices and imaginations of their hearts, hasten to take vengeance upon them, for I have manifested my cause to you, for as the number of those who trouble me is great, and have counselled together, saying, the Lord has forsaken him, pursue him and catch him. O Lord my God, behold their doings, for you are my patience; deliver me from my enemies, for you are my God; do not separate yourself far from me, for tribulation is at hand, and there is no man who will succor. My God, my God, look down upon me, why have you forsaken me? So many dogs have compassed me in, and the company of the wicked have besieged me round about, for they have spoken against me with deceitful tongues, and have encompassed me with words full of spite, and have compelled me without cause. Instead of love towards me, they have slandered me, and have recompensed me with evil for good; and in place of charity they have conceived hatred against me.

“Therefore, behold, staying myself upon this most holy and fruitful example of my Savior and Redeemer, I appeal before God for my grief and hard oppression, from this most wicked sentence and judgment, and the excommunication determined by the bishops, scribes, Pharisees, and judges, who sit in Moses’s seat, and resign my cause wholly to Him; even as the holy patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom, appealed twice from the council of the bishops and clergy; and Andrew, bishop of Prague, and Robert, bishop of Lincoln, appealed to the sovereign and most just Judge, who is not defiled with cruelty, nor can he be corrupted with gifts and rewards, nor yet be deceived by false witness. Also I desire greatly that all the faithful servants of Jesus Christ, and especially the princes, barons, knights, esquires, and all others who inhabit our country of Bohemia, should understand and know these things, and have compassion upon me, who am so grievously oppressed by the excommunication which is out against me, and which was obtained and gotten by the instigation and procurement of Michael de Causis, my great enemy, and by the consent and furtherance of the canons of the cathedral church of Prague, and given out and granted by Peter of St. Angelo, dean of the church of Rome, and cardinal, and also ordained judge by Pope John XXIII, who has continued almost two years, and would give no audience to my advocates and procurators,

which they should not deny (no, not to a Jew or pagan, nor to any heretic whatever he was) nor yet would he receive any reasonable excuse, for I did not appear personally; nor would he accept the testimonials of the whole university of Prague with the seal hanging at it, or the witness of the sworn notaries, and those who were called to witness. By this all men may evidently perceive that I have not incurred any fault or crime of obstinacy or disobedience because I did not appear in the court of Rome, which was not for any contempt, but for reasonable causes.

“And moreover, because they had laid in ambush for me on every side by ways where I would pass, and also because the perils and dangers of others have made me more circumspect and advised; and seeing that my proctors were willing and content to bind themselves even to abide the punishment of fire to answer to all those who would oppose or lay anything against me in the court of Rome; and also because they imprisoned my lawful procurator in the said court, without any cause, demerit, or fault, as I suppose. Because then, as the order and disposition of all the ancient divine laws of the old and new testament, as well as the canon laws, is this — that the judges should resort to the place where the crime or fault is committed or done, and there to inquire about all such crimes as are objected and laid against the one who is accused or slandered; and that from those men who by conversation have some knowledge or understanding of the party so accused (who may not be evil-willers or enemies of the one who is so accused or slandered, but must be men of an honest conversation, no common quarrel-pickers or accusers, but fervent lovers of the law of God); and finally, that there should be a fit and appropriate place appointed to where the accused party might resort or come without danger or peril, and that the judge and witnesses should not be enemies of the one who is accused. And also because it is manifest that all these conditions were wanting and lacking, regarding my appearance for the safeguard of my life, I am excused before God from the frivolous pretended obstinacy and excommunication. Whereupon I, John Huss, do present and offer this my appeal to my Lord Jesus Christ, my just Judge, who knows and defends, and justly judges every man’s just and true cause.”

Articles Alleged Against John Huss.

Articles formerly contained or picked out of the Treatise of John Huss of Prague, which he entitled “Of the Church,” following in this part or behalf the errors, as they term them, of John Wycliffe, with the judgment against them.

The first article. “No reprobate is true pope, lord, or prelate.” The error of this is in the faith, behavior, and manners, condemned many times before against the poor men of Lyons, as well as against the Waldenses and Pikards. The affirmation of these errors is reckless, seditious, offensive and pernicious, and tending to the subversion of all human policy and government, because no man knows whether he is worthy of love or hatred, for all men offend in many points, and thereby all rule and dominion would be made uncertain and unstable if it were founded on predestination and charity; nor would the commandment of Peter have been good, who desires all servants to be obedient to their masters and lords, even if they are wicked.

[302]

The second article. “That no man who is in deadly sin, whereby he is no member of Christ, but of the devil, is true pope, prelate, or lord.” The error of this is like the first.

The third article. “No reprobate or person in deadly sin, sits in the apostolic seat of Peter, neither does he have any apostolical power over the Christian people.” This error is also like the first.

The fourth article. “No reprobates are of the church, nor any who do not follow the life of Christ.” This error is against the common opinion of the doctors, concerning the church.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

The fifth article. “Only those are of the church, and sit in Peter’s seat, and have apostolic power, who follow Christ and his apostles in their life and living.” The error of this is in faith and manners, as in the first article, but containing more arrogance and rashness.

The sixth article. “That every man who lives uprightly, according to the rule of Christ, may and ought to openly preach and teach, even if he is not sent, yes, even if he is forbidden or excommunicated by any prelate or bishop, even as he might or ought to give alms; for his good life in living together with his learning, sufficiently sends him.” This is a rash and reckless error, offensive, and tending to the confusion of the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The seventh article. “That the pope of Rome being contrary to Christ, is not the universal bishop, nor does the church of Rome have any supremacy over other churches, unless perhaps it is given to him by Caesar, and not by Christ.” An error recently and plainly reprov’d.

The eighth article. “That the pope should not be called most holy, nor that his feet are holy and blessed, nor should they be kissed.” This error is recklessly, irreverently and offensively published.

The ninth article. “That according to the doctrine of Christ, heretics, however obstinate or stubborn they are, should not be put to death, nor be accursed or excommunicated.” This is the error of the Donatists, recklessly, and not without great offense, affirmed against the laws of the ecclesiastical discipline, as St. Augustine proves.

The tenth article. “That subjects and the common people, may and should publicly and openly detect and reprove the vices of their superiors and rulers, having power given to them by Christ, and the example of St. Paul to do so.” This error is pernicious, full of offense, inducing all rebellion, disobedience, and sedition.

The eleventh article. “That Christ alone is head of the church, and not the pope.” It is an error according to the common interpretation of the doctors, if all the reason for the supremacy, and of being head, is secluded and taken away from the pope.

The twelfth article. “That the only church, which comprehends the predestined and good lives, is the universal church, to which subjects owe obedience. And this is consequent to the former article.” The error contained is like those in the former articles.

The thirteenth article. “That tithes and oblations given to the church, are public and common alms.” This error is offensive, and contrary to the determination of the apostle, 1Cor 9.9⁷⁵

The fourteenth article. “That the clergy living wickedly ought to be reprov’d and corrected by the lay-people, by taking away their tithes and other temporal profits.” A most pernicious and offensive error, inducing the secular people to perpetrate sacrilege, subverting ecclesiastical liberty.

The fifteenth article. “That the blessings of those of the clergy who are reprobate or evil-livers, are maledictions and cursings before God, according to the saying, I will curse your blessings.” This error was reprov’d by St. Augustine against St. Cyprian and his followers; nor is the master of the sentences allowed by the masters, in that point when he seems to favor this article.⁷⁶

The sixteenth article. “That in these days, and a long time before, there has been no true pope, no true church or faith which is called ‘the Romish church,’ to which a man ought to obey, but

⁷⁵ 1Cor 9.9: For it is written in the law of Moses, “Do not muzzle the ox while it treads out the grain.”

⁷⁶ That is, where Augustine seems to favor this, other masters disallow such an interpretation.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

that it both was and is the synagogue of antichrist and Satan.” The error in this article is in this point: that it is derived and makes its foundation upon the former articles.

The seventeenth article. “That all gift of money given to the ministers of the church for the ministration of any spiritual matter, makes such ministers in that case users of simony.” This error is seditious and reckless, in that something may be given to the clergy under the title of sustentation or maintaining the minister, without selling or buying any spiritual thing.

The eighteenth article. “That whoever is excommunicated by the pope, if he appeals to Christ, he is preserved, so that he need not fear the excommunication, but may utterly disdain and despise the same.” This error is reckless and full of arrogancy.

The nineteenth article. “That every deed done without charity, is sin.” This error was reprovved and revoked previously at Paris, especially if it is understood of deadly sin; for it is not necessary that someone who lacks grace, should continually sin and offend anew, even though he is continually in sin.

The masters of Paris, by their whole voice and consent, added and joined the following to these nineteen articles, as their reason and determination:

“We affirm that these articles aforesaid are notoriously heretical, and that they are judicially condemned for such, and are to be diligently rooted out with their most seditious doctrines, lest they infect others. For although they seem to have a zeal against the vices of the prelates and the clergy, which (more is the pity and grief) do abound too much, yet it is not according to learning. For a sober and discreet zeal suffers and laments those sins and offenses which one sees in the house of God, that he cannot amend or take away. For vices cannot be rooted out and taken away by other vices and errors, because just as devils are not cast out through Beelzebub, but by the power of God, which is the Holy Spirit, who wills that in correction the measure and mean of prudence always be kept according to the saying, ‘Mark who, what, where and why, by what means and when, prelates and bishops are bound under grievous and express penalties of the law, diligently and vigilantly to bear themselves against the foresaid errors, and such other like, and the maintainers of them; for let it always be understood and noted that the error which is not resisted is allowed. Nor is there any doubt of secret affinity or society by the one who is slow to withstand a manifest mischief.’

“These things are intermeddled by the way under correction, as by way of doctrine.

(Signed) “John Gerson,
“Chancellor of Paris, unworthily.”

These things thus declared, a man may easily understand that John Huss was not accused for holding any opinion contrary to the articles of our faith, but because he stoutly preached and taught against the kingdom of antichrist for the glory of Christ, and the restoring of the church.

Now to return to the history. When the articles which I listed before, were all read over, the cardinal of Cambray, calling to John Huss, said,

“You have heard what grievous and horrible crimes are laid against you, and what a number of them they are. And now it is your part to devise with yourself what you will do. Two ways are proposed and set before you by the council, one of which you must of necessity enter into.

[303] A.D. 1415.

“First, that you humbly and meekly submit yourself to the judgment and sentence of the council, that whatever shall be determined there, by their common voice and judgment, you will patiently bear and suffer. If you will do this thing, we on our part, both for the honor of the

most gentle emperor here present, and also for the honor of his brother the king of Bohemia, and for your own safeguard and preservation, will treat and handle you with as great humanity, love, and gentleness as we may. But if you are still determined to defend any of those articles which we have propounded to you, and you desire or require to be further heard upon them, we will not deny you power and license to do so. But you shall well understand this, that there are such men, so clear in understanding and knowledge, and having such firm and strong reasons and arguments against your articles, that I fear it will be to your great hurt, detriment, and peril if you should any longer will or desire to defend them. This I speak and say to you, to counsel and admonish you, and not as a judge.”

Many others of the cardinals, every man for himself, exhorted and persuaded John Huss in the same way. With a lowly countenance he answered them,

“Most reverend fathers, I have often said that I came here of my own free will, not to defend anything, but if in anything I should seem to have conceived a perverse or evil opinion, that I would meekly and patiently be content to be reformed and taught. Whereupon I desire that I may yet have further liberty to declare my mind. Of which, unless I allege most firm and strong reasons, I will willingly submit myself.”

Then the cardinal of Cambray said,

“Because then, you submit yourself to the information and grace of this council, this is decreed by all almost sixty doctors.

“First of all, you shall humbly and meekly confess yourself to have erred in these articles which are alleged and brought against you.

“Moreover, you shall promise by an oath, that from now on you shall not teach, hold, or maintain any of these articles.

“And last of all, that you shall openly recant all these articles.”

Upon this sentence, when many others had spoken their minds, at length John Huss said,

“I once again say that I am ready to submit myself to the information of the council; but this I most humbly require and desire you all, even for His sake, who is the God of us all, that I not be compelled or forced to do the thing which my conscience rejects or strives against, or which I cannot do without danger of eternal damnation — that is, that I should make revocation by oath to all the articles which are alleged against me. For I remember that I have read in the book of universalities, that to *abjure*, is to renounce an error which a man has held before. And forso much as many of these articles are said to be mine, which were never in my mind or thought to hold or teach, how should I then renounce them by an oath? But regarding those articles which are mine indeed, if there is any man who can teach me contrariwise to them, I will willingly perform what you desire.”

Then the emperor said, “Why may you not without danger also renounce all those articles which you say are falsely alleged against you by the witnesses? For truly, I would not at all doubt to abjure all errors; nor does it follow that therefore by and by I have professed any error.” John Huss answered, “Most noble emperor, this word, to *abjure*, signifies much more than your majesty gives it here.” Then the cardinal of Florence said, “John Huss, you will have a form of abjuration, which will be gentle, and tolerable enough, written and delivered to you, and then you will easily and soon determine with yourself, whether you will do it or not.” Then the emperor, repeating again the words of the cardinal of Cambray, said, “You have heard that there are two ways laid before you: first that you should openly renounce those errors of yours, which are now condemned, and subscribe to the judgment of the council, whereby you should try and find their grace and favor. But if you proceed to

defend your opinions, the council will have sufficient power, whereby according to their laws and ordinances, they may decree and determine upon you.” John Huss answered,

“I refuse nothing, most noble emperor, whatever the council shall decree or determine upon me. Only this one thing I except, that I do not offend God or my conscience, or say that I have professed those errors which were never in my mind or thought to profess. But I desire you all, if it may be possible, that you will grant me further liberty to declare my mind and opinion, that I may answer as much as will suffice, regarding those things which are objected against me, and especially concerning ecclesiastical offices, and the state of the ministry.”

Here a certain very old bishop of Pole put in his verdict. He said, “The laws are evident regarding heretics, with what punishment they ought to be punished.” But John Huss constantly answered as before, insomuch that they said he was obstinate and stubborn. Then a certain well-fed priest, and gaily apparelled, cried out to the presidents of the council, saying, “He should by no means be admitted to recantation, for he has written to his friends, that even if he swears with his tongue, yet he will keep his mind unsworn without oath; therefore he is not to be trusted.” To this slander John Huss answered, as is said in the last article, affirming that he was not guilty of any error.

In the meantime there was exhibited to the council a certain article, in which it was accused that John Huss had slanderously interpreted a certain sentence of the pope’s. He denied that he did this, saying that he never saw it except in prison, when the article was shown to him by the commissioners.

Then was there another article read, which said that three men were beheaded at Prague, because through Wycliffe’s doctrine and teaching they were obstinate and slanderous against the pope’s letters; and that they were, with the whole pomp of the scholars, and with a public convocation or congregation, carried out to be buried by the same Huss, and placed among the number of saints by a public sermon. Then John Huss said that it was false that these corpses were conveyed by him with any such pomp into their sepulcher or burial.

Other charges of the same kind were made and denied again, and then there was great silence kept for a while. Then Paletz, who had conducted the process against John Huss, rising up, having now finished his accusation, said,

“I take God as my witness before the emperor’s majesty here present, and the most reverend fathers, cardinals, and bishops, that in this accusation of John Huss, I have not used any hatred or evil will; but that I might satisfy the oath which I took when I was made doctor, that I would be a most cruel and sharp enemy of all manner of errors, for the profit of the holy catholic church.”

Michael de Causis did the same. “And I,” said John Huss, “commit all these things to the Heavenly Judge, who shall justly judge the cause or quarrels of both parties.” Then the cardinal of Cambray said,

“I cannot a little commend and praise the humanity and gentleness of Master Paletz, which he has used in drawing out the articles against Master John Huss. For as we have heard, there are many things contained in his book that are much worse, and more detestable.”

When he had spoken these words, the bishop of Reggeo, to whom John Huss was committed, commanded that John Huss be carried back safely to prison. Then John de Clum following him, not a little encouraged and comforted Huss. No tongue can express what courage and stomach he received by the short talk which he had with him; when in so great a broil and grievous hatred, he saw himself in a way forsaken by all men. After John

Huss was carried away, the emperor began to exhort the presidents of the council in this manner, saying,

“You have heard the manifold and grievous crimes which are laid against John Huss, which are not only proved by manifest and strong witnesses, but also confessed by him; of which, every one of them by my judgment and advice, have deserved, and are worthy of death.

[304]

“Therefore, unless he recants them all, I judge and think it fitting that he be punished with fire. And even if he does what he is willed and commanded to do, notwithstanding I counsel you, that he be forbidden the office of preaching and teaching, and also that he return no more into the kingdom of Bohemia. For if he is admitted again to teach and preach, and especially in the kingdom of Bohemia, he will not observe and keep that which he is commanded, but hoping upon the favor and goodwill of those who are his adherents and favorers there, he will return again to his former purpose and intent, and then, besides these errors, he will also sow new errors among the people; and so the last error shall be worse than the first.

“Moreover, I judge and think it good that his articles which are condemned, should be sent to my brother, the king of Bohemia, and afterward to Pole, and other provinces, where men’s minds are replenished with his doctrine — with this commandment: that whoever holds or keeps them, should by the common aid of both the ecclesiastical and civil powers, be punished. So at the length remedy will be found for this mischief, if the boughs, together with the root, are utterly pulled up by the roots; and if the bishops and other prelates who here in this place have labored for the extirpating of this heresy, are commended by the voices of the whole council, to the king and princes under whose dominion they are. Last of all, if there any are found here at Constance who are familiars of John Huss, they also should be punished with such severity and punishment as is due to them, and especially his scholar, Jerome of Prague.”

Then said the rest, “Once the master is punished, we hope we will find that the scholar is much more tractable and gentle.” After they had spoken these words, they departed out of the cloister where they were assembled and gathered together. The day before his condemnation, which was the sixth of July, the Emperor Sigismund sent four bishops to him, accompanied by Master Wincelate de Duba, and John de Clum, so that they might learn and understand from him what he intended to do. When Huss was brought out of prison to them, John de Clum began to speak to him first, saying,

“Master John Huss, I am a man unlearned, nor am I able to counsel or advise you, being a man of learning and understanding. Notwithstanding, I do require you, if you know you are guilty of any of those errors, which are objected and laid against you before the council, that you will not be ashamed to alter and change your mind to the will and pleasure of the council. If contrariwise, I will be no author to you, that you should do anything contrary to or against your conscience, but rather to suffer and endure any kind of punishment, than to deny what you have known to be the truth.”

John Huss, with lamentable tears, said;

“Truly, as I have oftentimes done before, I take the most High God for my witness, that I am ready with my heart and mind, if the council can instruct or teach me any better by the holy Scripture; and I will be ready with all my whole heart to alter and change my purpose.”

Then one of the bishops who sat by, said to him that he should never be so arrogant or proud that he would prefer his own mind or opinion before the judgment of the whole council. John Huss answered him, “Neither do I otherwise mind or intend. For if he who is

the meanest or least in all this council can convict me of error, I will with a humble heart and mind perform and do whatever the council requires of me.” “Mark,” said the bishops, “how obstinately he perseveres in his errors.” And when they had thus talked, they commanded the keepers to carry him back to prison, and so they returned again to the emperor with their commission.

The day after, which was Saturday, and the sixth of July, there was a general session held by the princes and lords of both the ecclesiastical and temporal estates, in the head church of the city of Constance. The Emperor Sigismund was president, sitting in his imperial robes and habit. In the midst of it a certain high place was made, being square like a table. And close by it there was a desk of wood, upon which the garments and vestments pertaining to priesthood were laid for this purpose, so that before John Huss would be delivered over to the civil power, he would be openly deprived and spoiled of his priestly ornaments. When John Huss was brought there, he fell down upon his knees before the same high place, and prayed a long time. In the meanwhile, the bishop of Londy went up into the pulpit, and gave the following sermon.

*The Sermon of the Bishop of Londy,
before the Sentence was given upon John Huss.*

“In the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Trusting by humble invocation upon the divine help and aid, most noble prince, and most Christian emperor, and you, most excellent fathers, and reverend lords, bishops and prelates, also most excellent doctors and masters, famous and noble dukes, and high counts, honorable nobles and barons, and all other men worthy of remembrance; that the intent and purpose of my mind may more plainly and evidently appear to this most sacred congregation: I am first of all determined to treat or speak of that which is read in the epistle on the next Sunday, in the sixth chapter to the Romans; that is to say, ‘Let the body of sin be destroyed,’ etc.

“It appears by the authority of **Aristotle**, in his book entitled *De Cielo et Mundo*, how wicked, dangerous, and foolish a matter it seems to be, not to withstand perverse and wicked beginnings. For he says, that a small error in the beginning, is very great in the end. It is very damnable and dangerous to have erred, but harder to be corrected or amended. Whereupon that worthy doctor St. Jerome, in his book on the exposition of the catholic faith, teaches how necessary a thing it is that heretics and heresies should be suppressed, even in the first beginning of them, saying thus: the rotten and dead flesh is to be cut off from the body, lest the whole body perish and putrefy. For a scabbed sheep is to be put out of the fold, lest the whole flock be infected; and a little fire is to be quenched, lest the whole house be consumed and burned. Arius was first a spark in Alexandria, who, because he was not quenched at the start, he presumed, and went about with his wicked and perverse imaginations, and phantastical inventions, to spot and defile the catholic faith, which is founded and established by Christ, defended with the victorious triumphs of so many martyrs, and illuminated and set forth with the excellent doctrines and writings of so many men. Such, therefore, must be resisted; such heretics must of necessity be suppressed and condemned.

“Therefore I have truly propounded, regarding the punishment of every such obstinate heretic, that the body of sin is to be destroyed. Whereupon it is to be considered according to the holy traditions of the fathers, that some sins are adverse and contrary to another. Others are annexed or conjoined together; others are, as it were, branches and members of others; and some are, as it were, the roots and heads of others. Among all of which, those are to be counted more detestable, out of which the most and worst have their origin and beginning. Therefore, although all sins and offenses are to be abhorred by us; yet those are especially to be eschewed, which are the head and root of the rest. For by how much the perverseness of

them is of greater force and power to hurt, with so much more speed and circumspection they ought to be rooted out and extinguished, with apt preservatives and remedies. Forsomuch, then, as among all sins, none appears to be more inveterate than the mischief of this most execrable schism. Therefore have I right well propounded, 'That the body of sin should be destroyed.'

[305] A.D. 1415.

"For by the long continuance of this schism, great and most cruel destruction has sprung up among the faithful, and it has long continued; abominable divisions of heresies have grown; threatenings are increased and multiplied; the confusion of the whole clergy has grown upon it, and the opprobriums and slanders of the Christian people, have abundantly sprung up and increased. And truly it is no marvel, in that this most detestable and execrable schism is, as it were, a body and heap of dissolution of the true faith of God. For what can be good or holy in that place where such a pestiferous schism has reigned for so long a time? For as St. Bernard says, 'As in the unity and concord of the faithful, there is the habitation and dwelling of the Lord, so likewise in the schism and dissipation of the Christians, there is made the habitation and dwelling of the devil. Is not schism and division the origin of all subversion, the den of heresies, and the nourisher of all offenses? For the knot of unity and peace, once it is troubled and broken, there is free passage made for all strife and debate. Covetousness is uttered in others for lucre's sake; lust and will is set at liberty, and all means are opened to slaughter; all right and equity is banished, the ecclesiastical power is injured, and the calamity of this schism brings in all kinds of bondage; sword and violence rule; the laity have the dominion; concord and unity are banished; and all prescribed rules of religion are utterly despised and set at naught.'

"Consider, most gentle lords, during this most pestiferous schism, how many heresies have appeared and shown themselves, how many heretics have escaped unpunished. How many churches have been spoiled and piddled down, how many cities have been oppressed and regions brought to ruin? What confusion has happened in the clergy? What and how great the destruction among the Christian people? I pray you, mark how the church of God, the Spouse of Christ, and the Mother of all the faithful, is scorned and despised. For who reverences the keys of the church? Who fears the censures or laws? Or who is it that defends its liberties? Or rather, who is it that does *not* offend them? Or who does not invade it? Or else, who is it that dare not violently lay hands on the patrimony or heritage of Jesus Christ? The goods of the clergy, and of the poor, and the relief of pilgrims and strangers — gotten together by the blood of our Savior, and of many martyrs — are spoiled and taken away. Behold the abomination of desolation brought upon the church of God, the destruction of the faith, and the confusion of the Christian people, to the ruin of the Lord's flock or fold, and the whole company of our most holy Savior and Redeemer. This loss is greater or more grievous than any which could happen to the martyrs of Christ, and this persecution is much more cruel than the persecution of any tyrant. For they but punished the bodies; but in this schism and division the souls are tormented. There only the blood of men was shed; but in this case the true faith is subverted and overthrown. That persecution was salvation to many; but this schism is destruction to all men. When the tyrants raged, then the faith increased; but by this division it is utterly decayed. During their cruelty and madness the primitive church increased; but through this schism it is confounded and overthrown. Tyrants ignorantly offended; but in this schism many wittingly and willingly, even out of obstinacy, offend. There came in heretics, users of simony, and hypocrites, to the great detriment and deceit of the church; under those tyrants the merits of the just were increased.

"But during this schism, mischief and wickedness are augmented. For in this most cursed and execrable division, truth is made an enemy to all Christians, faith is not regarded, love and

charity are hated, hope is lost, justice overthrown, no kind of courage or valiantness, but only mischief. Modesty and temperance are cloaked, wisdom turned into deceit, humility feigned, equity and truth falsified, patience utterly fled, conscience small, all wickedness intended, devotion counted folly, gentleness abject and cast away, religion despised, obedience not regarded, and all manner of life reproachful and abominable. With how great and grievous sorrows is the church of God replenished and filled with, while tyrants oppress it, heretics invade it, users of simony spoil and rob it, and schismatics go about utterly to subvert it? O most miserable and wretched Christian people, whom now for forty years have been tormented and almost brought to ruin with such indurate and continual schism! O the little barque and ship of Christ, which has for so long a time wandered and strayed now in the midst of the whirlpools, and by and by sticks fast in the rocks, tossed to and fro with most grievous and tempestuous storms! O miserable and wretched boat of Peter, if the most Holy Father were to allow you to sink or drown, into what dangers and perils would the wicked pirates have brought you? Among what rocks have they placed you? O most godly and loving Christians, what faithful devout man is there, who beholding and seeing the great ruin and decay of the church, would not be provoked to tears? What good conscience is there that can refrain from weeping, because contention and strife is poured upon the ecclesiastical rulers who have made us to err in the way, because they have not found, or rather would not find the way of unity and concord, upon which so many heresies and such great confusion has sprung up, and grown in the flock of Peter and the fold of the Lord.

“Many princes, kings, and prelates, have greatly labored and worked for the rooting out of these things; yet they could never bring to pass or finish that most wholesome and necessary work. Therefore, most Christian king, this most glorious and triumphant victory has tarried only for you, the crown and glory of it shall be yours forever, and this most happy victory shall be continually celebrated to your great honor and praise, that you have restored again the church which was so spoiled, that you have removed and put away all inveterate and overgrown schisms and divisions, that you have trodden down users of simony, and rooted out all heretics. Do you not behold and see how great, perpetual, and famous the renown and glory it will be to you? For what can be more just, what more holy, what better, what more to be desired; or, finally, what can be more acceptable than to root out this wicked and abominable schism, to restore the church again to her ancient liberty, to extinguish and put away all simony, and to condemn and destroy all errors and heresies from among the flock of the faithful? Nothing, truly, can be better, nothing more holy, nothing more profitable for the whole world; and, finally, nothing more acceptable to God.

“For the performance of this most holy and godly work, you were elected and chosen by God. You were first deputed and chosen in heaven before you were elect and chosen upon earth. You were first appointed by the celestial and heavenly Prince, before the electors of the empire elected or chose you, and specially, that by the imperial force and power you should condemn and destroy those errors and heresies which we have presently in hand to be condemned and subverted. For the performance of this most holy work, God has given to you the knowledge and understanding of his divine truth and verity, power of princely majesty, and the just judgment of equity and righteousness. As the Most High himself says, ‘I have given you understanding and wisdom’ ^{1Kng 3.12} — to speak and utter my words, and have set you to rule over nations and kingdoms, that you should help the people, pluck down and destroy iniquity, and by exercising justice you should, I say, destroy all errors and heresies, and specially this obstinate heretic here present, through whose wickedness and mischief many places of the world are infected with most pestilent and heretical poison; and by this means and occasion they are almost utterly subverted and destroyed. This most holy and godly labor, O most noble prince, was reserved only for you. Upon you alone it lies, to whom the rule and ministration of justice is given. Therefore you have established your praise and renown, even by the mouths of

infants and suckling babes, for your praises shall be celebrated for evermore, that you have destroyed and overthrown such and so great enemies of the faith. That you may prosperously and happily perform and bring to pass, our Lord Jesus grant you his grace and help, who is blessed for ever and ever. Amen.”

[306]

When this sermon was thus ended, the proctor of the council rose up, named Henry de Piro. He requested that the process of the cause against John Huss might be continued, and that they might proceed to the definitive sentence. Then a certain bishop, who was appointed one of the judges, declared the process of the cause which was pleaded long since in the court of Rome and elsewhere, between John Huss and the prelates of Prague.

At last he repeated those articles which we mentioned before, among which he repeated one article, that John Huss should teach the two natures of the Godhead and manhood, to be one Christ. John Huss went about briefly with a word or two to answer every of them; but as often as he was about to speak, the cardinal of Cambray commanded him to hold his peace, saying, “Hereafter you shall answer all together, if you will.” Then John Huss said, “How can I at once answer all these things which are alleged against me, when I cannot remember them all?” Then the cardinal of Florence said, “We have heard you sufficiently.” But when John Huss for all that would not hold his peace, they sent the officers to force him to hold it. Then he began to entreat, pray, and beseech them, that they would hear him, so that those who were present might not credit or believe those things to be true which were reported about him. But when all this could not prevail at all, he knelt down on his knees and committed the whole matter to God and the Lord Jesus Christ; for at their hands he believed he would easily obtain what he desired.

When the articles mentioned above ended, last of all there was added a notable blasphemy, which they all imputed to John Huss — that is, that he said there should be a fourth person in divinity, and that a certain doctor heard him say it. When John Huss desired that the doctor might be named, the bishop who alleged the article said that it was not needful to name him. Then John Huss said, “O miserable and wretched man that I am, who am forced and compelled to bear such a blasphemy and slander.”

Afterwards the article was repeated, how he had appealed to Christ, and that appeal was called heretical. To which John Huss answered,

“O Lord Jesus Christ, whose word is openly condemned here in this council, to you again I appeal, who when you were evilly treated by your enemies appealed to God your Father, committing your cause to a most just Judge, that by your example we also being oppressed with manifest wrongs and injuries should flee to you.”

Last of all, the article was repeated regarding the contempt of the excommunication by John Huss. To which he answered as before, that he was excused by his advocates in the court of Rome, and therefore he did not appear when he was cited; and also that it may be proved by the acts, that the excommunication was not ratified; and finally, to the intent that he might clear himself of obstinacy, he had for that reason come to Constance under the emperor’s safe conduct. When he had spoken these words, one of them, who was appointed judge, read the definitive sentence against him, which follows thus word for word:

*The Sentence or Judgment of the Council of Constance
against John Huss.*

“The most holy and sacred general Council of Constance, being congregated and gathered together, representing the catholic church, for a perpetual memory of the thing, as the verity and truth witnessed, ‘An evil tree brings forth evil fruit.’ Hereupon it comes that the man of most damnable memory, John Wycliffe, through his pestiferous doctrine, not through Jesus Christ by the gospel, as the holy fathers in times past have begotten faithful children, but contrary to the wholesome faith of Jesus Christ, as a most venomous root, has begotten many pestilent and wicked children whom he has left behind him, successors and followers of his perverse and wicked doctrine, against whom this sacred synod of Constance is forced to rise up, as against bastards and unlawful children, and with diligent care, with the sharp knife of the ecclesiastical authority, to cut their errors out of the Lord’s field, as most hurtful brambles and briars, lest they grow to the hurt and detriment of others.

“Forsomuch then as in the holy general council, lately celebrated and held at Rome, it was decreed that the doctrine of John Wycliffe, of most damnable memory, should be condemned, and that his books which contained the same doctrine should be burned as heretical; and this decree was approved and confirmed by the sacred authority of the whole council. Nevertheless, one John Huss here personally present in this sacred council, not the disciple of Christ, but of John Wycliffe, an arch heretic, after and contrary, or against the condemnation and decree, has taught, preached, and affirmed the articles of Wycliffe, which were condemned by the church of God, and in times past, by certain most reverend fathers in Christ — lords, archbishops, and bishops, from diverse kingdoms and realms, masters of divinity of diverse universities. John Huss especially resisted in his open sermons, and also with his adherents and accomplices in the schools, the condemnation of the said articles of Wycliffe’s, oftentimes published in the said university of Prague, and has declared the said Wycliffe, for the favor and commendation of his doctrine before the whole multitude of the clergy and people, to be a catholic man, and a true evangelical doctor. He has also published and affirmed certain and many of Wycliffe’s articles (worthily condemned) to be catholic, which are notoriously contained in the books of the said John Huss.

“Therefore, after diligent deliberation and full information first had upon the premises by the reverend fathers and lords in Christ of the holy church of Rome, cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and other prelates, doctors of divinity, and of both laws, in great number assembled and gathered together, this most sacred and holy Council of Constance, declares and determines the articles above said (which, after due conference was had, are found in his books, written with his own hand, which also the said John Huss in open audience, before this holy council, has confessed to be in his books), not to be catholic, nor worthy to be taught. But that many of them are erroneous, some of them wicked, others offensive to godly ears, many of them reckless and seditious, and the greater part of them notoriously heretical, and even now of late reprovèd and condemned by the holy fathers and general councils. And because the said articles are expressly contained in the books of the said John Huss, therefore this sacred council condemns and reprovès all those books which he wrote, in whatever form or phrase they may be, or whether they are translated by others, and it determines and decrees that they shall all be solemnly and openly burned in the presence of the clergy and people of the city of Constance and elsewhere; adding moreover for the premises, that all his doctrine is worthy to be despised and eschewed by all faithful Christians. And to the intent that this most pernicious and wicked doctrine may be utterly excluded and shut out of the church, this sacred synod straitly commands that diligent inquisition be made by the ordinaries of the places by the ecclesiastical censure, for such treatises and works, and that those which are found be consumed and burned with fire. And if there are any found, who scorn or despise this sentence or decree, this sacred synod ordains and decrees, that the

ordinaries of the places, and the inquisitors of heresies, shall proceed against every such person as they suspect of heresy.

[307]

“Therefore, after due inquisition made against the said John Huss, and full information had by the commissaries and doctors of both laws, and also by the statements of the witnesses which were worthy of credit, and many other things openly read before the said John Huss, and before the fathers and prelates of this sacred council (by which allegations of the witnesses, it appears that the said John Huss has taught many evil and offensive, seditious and perilous heresies, and has preached the same for a long time), this most sacred and holy synod, lawfully congregated and gathered together in the Holy Spirit (the name of Christ being invoked and called upon) by this their sentence which here is set forth in writing, determines, pronounces, declares, and decrees that John Huss was and is a true and manifest heretic, and that he has openly preached errors and heresies recently condemned by the church of God, and many seditious, reckless, and offensive things, to no small offense of the Divine Majesty, and of the universal church, and to the detriment of the catholic faith and church, neglecting and despising the keys of the church, and ecclesiastical censures. In this error he has continued with a mind altogether indurate and hardened for many years, much offending the faithful Christians by his obstinacy and stubbornness, in his having made his appeal to the Lord Jesus Christ as the most high Judge, omitting and leaving all ecclesiastical means. In his appeal he alleges many false, injurious, and offensive matters, in contempt of the apostolic see, and the ecclesiastical censures and keys.

“Whereupon, both for the premises and many other things, the said synod pronounces John Huss to be a heretic, and judges him by these presents to be condemned and judged as a heretic, and reproveth the said appeal as injurious, offensive, and done in derision to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and judges the said Huss not only to have seduced the Christian people by his writings and preachings, and especially in the kingdom of Bohemia, nor to have been a true preacher of the gospel of Christ to the said people, according to the exposition of the holy doctors, but also to have been a seducer of them, and also an obstinate and stiff-necked person, yes, and such a one who does not desire to return again to the lap of our holy mother the church, nor to abjure the errors and heresies which he has openly preached and defended. Therefore this most sacred council decrees and declares that the said John Huss shall be publicly deposed and degraded from his priestly orders and dignity, etc.”

While these things were thus read, John Huss, although he was forbidden to speak, notwithstanding, often interrupted them. And especially when he was reproveth of obstinacy, he said with a loud voice:

“I was never obstinate, but as always before, even so now I again desire to be taught by the holy Scriptures, and I do profess myself to be so desirous of the truth, that if I might by only one word subvert the errors of all heretics, I would not refuse to enter into whatever peril or danger it may be.”

When his books were condemned, he said: “Why have you condemned those books, when you have not proved by any one article that they are contrary to the Scriptures or articles of faith? And moreover, what injury is this that you do to me, that you have condemned these books written in the Bohemian tongue, which you never saw, nor yet read?” And oftentimes looking up to heaven he prayed.

When the sentence and judgment was ended, kneeling down on his knees, he said: “Lord Jesus Christ, forgive my enemies, by whom you know that I am falsely accused, and that they have used false witness and slanders against me. Forgive them, I say, for your great

mercy's sake." This prayer and oration the greater part of the clergy, and especially the chief of the priests, derided and mocked.

The Degradation of John Huss.

At last, the seven bishops who were chosen to degrade him of his priesthood commanded him to put on the garments pertaining to priesthood. When he had done this, he came to putting on the alb (white robe); he called to his remembrance the purple vesture which Herod put on Jesus Christ to mock him with. So likewise in all other things he comforted himself by the example of Christ. When he had now put on all his priestly vestures, the bishops exhorted him that he might yet alter and change his mind, and provide for his honor and safety. Then (according to the manner of the ceremony) he went up to the top of the scaffold. Being full of tears, he spoke to the people in this way:

"These lords and bishops exhort and counsel me, that I should here confess before you all that I have erred. To do this thing, if it were such as might be done with the infamy and reproach of man only, they might perhaps easily persuade me to it. But now truly I am in the sight of the Lord my God, without whose great displeasure and the hurt of my own conscience, I can by no means do what they require of me. For I well know that I never taught any of those things which they have falsely alleged against me, but I have always preached, taught, written, and thought contrary to them. With what countenance then should I behold the heavens? With what face should I look upon those whom I have taught, of whom there is a great number, if through me it should come to pass that those things which they have previously known to be most certain and sure, should now be made uncertain? Should I by my example astonish or trouble so many souls, so many consciences, indued with the most firm and certain knowledge of the Scriptures and gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and his most pure doctrine, armed against all the assaults of Satan? I will never do it, nor commit any such kind of offense, that I should seem to esteem this vile carcass appointed unto death, more than their health and salvation."

At this most godly word he was forced again to hear, by the sentence of the bishops, that he obstinately and maliciously persevered in his pernicious and wicked errors.

Then he was commanded to come down to the execution of his judgment, and in his coming down, one of the seven bishops before named, first took away from him the chalice which he held in his hand, saying: "O, cursed Judas, why have you forsaken the council and ways of peace, and have counselled with the Jews? We take away from you this chalice of your salvation." But John Huss received this curse in this manner: "But I trust to God the Father omnipotent, and my Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake I suffer these things, that he will not take away the chalice of his redemption; but I have a steadfast and firm hope that this day I shall drink from it in his kingdom."

Then the other bishops followed in order, each one of them taking the vestments away from him which they had put on, each one of them giving him their curse. To this John Huss answered that he willingly embraced and bore those blasphemies for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the last they came to erasing his shaven crown. But before the bishops would take that in hand, there was a great contention between them, as to what instrument it should be done with — a razor or a pair of shears.

In the meantime, John Huss, turning himself toward the emperor, said: "I marvel that seeing they are all of like cruel mind and spirit, they cannot agree on their kind of cruelty." Notwithstanding, they at last agreed to cut off the skin of the crown of his head with a pair of shears. And when they had done that, they added these words: "Now the church has taken away all her ornaments and privileges from him. Now there rests nothing else, but

that he be delivered over to the secular power.” But before they did that, there yet remained another reproach. For they had a certain crown of paper made, almost a cubit deep, in the which were painted three devils of wonderfully ugly shape, and this title set over their heads, “ARCH-HERETIC.” When he saw it, he said: “My Lord Jesus Christ for my sake wore a crown of thorns. Why should I not then for his sake again wear this light crown, however ignominious? Truly I will do it, and willingly.”

[308]

When it was set upon his head, the bishop said: “Now we commit your soul to the devil.” “But I,” said John Huss, lifting his eyes up towards the heavens, “commit my spirit into your hands, O Lord Jesus Christ; to you I commend my spirit which you have redeemed.” These degradations thus ended, the bishops turned themselves towards the emperor and said, “This most sacred synod of Constance now leaves John Huss, who no longer has any office in the church of God, to the civil judgment and power.” Then the emperor commanded Louis, duke of Bavaria, who stood before him in his robes, holding the golden apple with the cross in his hand, that he should receive John Huss from the bishops, and deliver him to those who would do the execution. As Huss was led by them to the place of execution, before the church doors he saw his books burning, at which he smiled and laughed. And he exhorted all men who passed by, not to think that he would die for any error or heresy, but only for the hatred and ill-will of his adversaries, who had charged him with most false and unjust crimes. Nearly the whole city followed him in armor.

The Execution of John Huss – 1415.

The place appointed for the execution was before the Gotlebian gate, between the gardens and gates of the suburbs. When John Huss had come there, kneeling down on his knees, and lifting his eyes up to heaven, he prayed, and said certain Psalms, and especially the thirty-first and fiftieth Psalms. And those who stood nearby heard him oftentimes in his prayer, with a lively and cheerful countenance, repeat this verse: “Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit,” etc. When the lay people who stood next to him beheld this thing, they said: “What he has done before we do not know; but now we see and hear that he speaks and prays very devoutly and godly.” Others wished that he had a confessor. There was a certain priest nearby, sitting on horseback in a green gown, drawn about with red silk, who said: “He should not to be heard, because he is a heretic.” Yet, notwithstanding, while he was in prison, he was both confessed, and also absolved by a certain doctor, a monk, as Huss himself witnesses in an epistle which he wrote to his friends from prison. Thus Christ reigns unknown to the world, even in the midst of his enemies. In the meantime, while Huss prayed, and as he bowed his neck backward to look upward to heaven, the crown of paper fell off from his head upon the ground. Then one of the soldiers, taking it up again, said, “Let us put it back on his head, so that he may be burned with his masters, the devils, whom he has served.”

When, by the commandment of the tormentors, he was raised up from his prayer, he said with a loud voice, “Lord Jesus Christ assist and help me, that with a constant and patient mind, by your most gracious help, I may bear and suffer this cruel and ignominious death, to which I am condemned for the preaching of your most holy gospel and word.” Then, as before, he declared the cause of his death to the people. In the meantime the hangman stripped him of his garments, and turning his hands behind his back, tied him fast to the stake with ropes that were made wet. And whereas by chance he was turned towards the east, certain ones cried out that he should not look towards the east, for he was a heretic; so he was turned towards the west. Then his neck was tied with a chain to the stake. When he

beheld this chain, smiling, he said that he would willingly receive the same chain for Jesus Christ's sake, who he knew was bound with a far worse chain. Under his feet they set two fagots, mixing straw with them, and so likewise from the feet up to the chin he was enclosed round about with wood. But before the wood was set on fire, Louis, duke of Bavaria, with another gentleman, who was the son of Clement, came and exhorted John Huss, that he should yet be mindful of his safety, and renounce his errors. He said to them:

“What errors should I renounce, when I know myself guilty of none? As for those things which are falsely alleged against me, I know that I never did so much as once think them, much less preach them. For this was the principal end and purpose of my doctrine, that I might teach all men repentance and the remission of sins, according to the verity of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the exposition of the holy doctors. Therefore with a cheerful mind and courage I am here ready to suffer death.”

When he had spoken these words, they left him, and shaking hands together, they departed. Then the fire was kindled, and John Huss began to sing with a loud voice, “Jesus Christ the Son of the living God have mercy upon me.” And when he began to say the same the third time, the wind drove the flame so upon his face, that it choaked him. Yet notwithstanding, he moved a while after, for the space in which a man might almost say the Lord's Prayer three times. When all the wood was burned and consumed, the upper part of the body was left hanging in the chain, so they threw down stake and all. And making a new fire, burned the remains, the head first being cut into small pieces, so that it might the sooner be consumed to ashes. The heart, which was found among the bowels, being well beaten with staves and clubs, was at last stuck on a sharp stick, and roasted at a separate fire until it was consumed. Then with great diligence gathering the ashes together, they cast them into the river Rhone, so that not the least remnant of the ashes of that man should be left upon the earth, whose memory notwithstanding cannot be abolished out of the minds of the godly, neither by fire, neither by water, neither by any kind of torment.

“I know very well that these things are very sparingly written by me regarding the labors of this most holy martyr, John Huss, with whom the labors of Hercules are not to be compared. For that ancient Hercules slew a few monsters; but this our Hercules, with a most stout and valiant courage, has subdued even the world itself, the mother of all monsters and cruel beasts. This history would be worthy of some other kind of a more intricate handling; but because I cannot otherwise perform it myself, I have endeavored according to the very truth, as the thing was indeed, to commend the same to all godly minds. Nor have I heard it reported by others, but I myself was present at the doing of all these things, and as I was able, I have put them in writing, so that by this labor and endeavor of mine, however it may be, I might preserve the memory of this holy man and excellent doctor of the evangelical truth.”

What was the name of the author who wrote this history it is not stated.⁷⁷ Cochleus, in his second book “*Contra Hussitas*,” supposes his name was Johannes Pizibrara, a Bohemian.

John Huss, this godly servant and martyr of Christ, was condemned by the cruel council, and burned at Constance, A.D. 1415, about the month of July. How grievously his death was taken among the nobles of Bohemia and of Moravia, will appear later (Christ willing) by their letters which they sent to the council, and by the letters of Sigismund, the king of the Romans. In those he labors, all that he can, to purge and excuse himself of Huss's death.

⁷⁷ It is unclear where this excerpt began; but I enclosed the last paragraph in quotes, to distinguish it from Foxe.

Although he was not altogether free from that cruel act, and innocent from that blood, he pretends in words to wipe away that blot from himself, so that the greatest part of the crime seems to rest upon the bloody prelates of that council. But it appears that the emperor, partly ashamed and sorry, would gladly have cleared himself of it, and along with Pilate, would have washed his hands of it. Yet he could not so clear himself, that a great portion of that murder did not remain on him, as may appear by his last words spoken in the council to John Huss. John Huss complains of it in his epistles, writing to his friends in Bohemia in his thirty-third epistle, as follows:

“I desire you again, for the love of God, that the lords of Bohemia joining together, will desire the king for a final audience to be given to me. Forsomuch as he alone said to me in the council, that they would give me an audience shortly, and that I should answer for myself briefly in writing, it will be to his great confusion if he does not perform that which he has spoken. But I fear that word of his will be as firm and sure, as the other was concerning my safe conduct granted by him.

[309] A.D. 1415.

“There were some in Bohemia, who desired me to beware of his safe conduct. And others said he will surely give you to your enemies. And the lord Mikest Dwaky told me before Master Jessenitz, saying, ‘Master, know it for certain, you shall be condemned.’ And this I suppose he spoke, knowing beforehand the intention of the king. I hoped that he had been well affected toward the law of God and the truth, and had a good understanding in it. Now I conceive that he is not very skillful, nor so prudently circumspect in himself. He condemned me even before my enemies did. If it had pleased him, he might have kept the moderation of Pilate the Gentile, who said, ‘I find no cause in this man;’ or at least, if he had but said this, ‘Behold, I have given him his safe conduct safely to return. And if he will not abide the decision of the council, I will send him home to the king of Bohemia with your sentence and attestations, so that he with his clergy may judge him.’”

Letters of John Huss to the People of Prague, etc.

John Huss, while in prison, wrote several treatises, such as, “Of the Commandments;” “Of the Lord’s Prayer;” “Of Mortal Sin;” “Of Matrimony;” “Of the Knowledge and Love of God;” “Of the Three Enemies of Mankind, the World, and Flesh, and the Devil;” “Of Penance;” “Of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of the Lord;” “Of the Sufficiency of the Law of God to Rule the Church,” etc. He also wrote many epistles and letters to the lords, also to his friends in Bohemia. Some of those letters I thought to insert here, so the reader may have some taste, and take some profit, from the Christian writings and doings of this blessed man — beginning with a letter of the Lord de Clum, concerning the safe conduct of John Huss.

A Letter of the Lord John de Clum, concerning the safe conduct of John Huss.

“To all and singular who see and hear these presents, I John de Clum do it to understand how Master John Huss — bachelor of divinity, under the safe conduct and protection of the renowned prince and Lord Sigismund of the Romans, ever Augustus, and king of Hungary, etc. my gracious lord, and under the protection, defense, and safeguard of the holy empire of Rome, having the letters patent of the said my lord, king of the Romans, etc. — came to Constance to render a full account of his faith in public audience to all who would require the same. This the said Master John Huss, in this imperial city of Constance, under the safe conduct of the said my lord king of the Romans, has been and still is detained. And although the pope, with the cardinals, have been seriously required by solemn ambassadors of the said my lord king of the Romans, in the king’s name and behalf, that the said Master John Huss

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

should be set at liberty, and be restored to me, yet notwithstanding, they have and still do refuse up to now to set him at liberty, to the great contempt and derogation of the safe conduct of the king, and of the safeguard and protection of the empire, or imperial majesty. Therefore I, John aforesaid, in the name of the king, do here publish and make it known, that the apprehending, and detaining of the said Master John Huss, was done wholly against the will of the forenamed king of the Romans my lord, seeing that it is done in the contempt of the safe conduct of his subjects, and of the protection of the empire, because the said my lord was then absent, far from Constance; and if he had been present there, he would never have permitted it. And when he comes, it is to be doubted by no man, but that for this great injury and contempt of this safe conduct done to him and to the empire, he will be grievously molested for it. — “Given at Constance, in the day of the Nativity of the Lord, 1414.

An Epistle of John Huss to the People of Prague.

“Grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ, that you being delivered from sin may walk in his grace, and may grow in all modesty and virtue, and after this may enjoy eternal life.

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you who walk according to the law of God, that you do not cast away the care of the salvation of your souls, when hearing the word of God you are forewarned wisely to understand that you are not to be deceived by false apostles who do not reprehend the sins of men, but rather extenuate and diminish them; who flatter the priests, and do not show to the people their offences; who magnify themselves, boast their own works, and marvellously extol their own worthiness, but do not follow Christ in his humility, in poverty, in the cross, and other manifold afflictions. Our merciful Savior warned us before, saying, ‘False christians and false prophets will rise, and will deceive many.’^{Mat 24.24} And when he had forewarned his well-beloved disciples, he said to them, ‘Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves: you will know them by their fruits,’^{Mat 7.15-16} And it is true that the faithful of Christ have much need to diligently beware and take heed to themselves. For, as our Savior himself says, ‘The elect also, if it were possible, shall be brought into error.’ Wherefore, my well-beloved, be circumspect and watchful, so that you are not circumvented with the crafty trains of the devil. And the more circumspect you ought to be, for antichrist labors all the more to trouble you. The last judgment is near at hand: death shall swallow up many, but for the elect children of God, the kingdom of God draws near, because for them he gave his own body. Do not fear not death; love one another together; persevere in understanding the good will of God without ceasing. Let the terrible and horrible day of judgment always be before your eyes so that you do not sin; and also the joy of eternal life, for which you must endeavor. “

“Furthermore, let the passion of our Savior never be out of your minds, so that you may bear with him, and for him gladly, whatever will be laid upon you. For if you consider well in your minds his cross and afflictions, nothing will be grievous to you, and you will patiently give way to tribulations, cursings, rebukes, stripes, and imprisonment, and will not doubt to give your lives moreover for his holy truth, if need requires. Know, well-beloved, that antichrist being stirred up against you, he devises various persecutions. Many he has not hurt, no not the least hair of their heads, as by my own example I can testify, even though he has been vehemently incensed against me. Therefore, I desire you all, with your prayers, to make intercession for me to the Lord: to give me understanding, sufferance, patience, and constancy, so that I never swerve from his divine verity. He has brought me now to Constance. In all my journey, openly and manifestly, I have not feared to utter my name as becomes the servant of God. In no place have I kept myself secret, nor used any dissimulation. But I never found in any place, more pestilent and manifest enemies than at Constance. Nor would I have had these enemies there, had it not been for certain of our own Bohemians — hypocrites and deceivers who, for benefits received, and stirred up with covetousness, with boasting and bragging — have persuaded the

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

people that I went about to seduce them away from the right way. But I am in good hope that through the mercy of our God, and by your prayers, I shall persist strongly in the immutable verity of God to the last breath. Finally, I would not have you ignorant, that whereas everyone here is put in his office, I alone, like an outcast, am neglected, etc. I commend you to the merciful Lord Jesus Christ, our true God, and the Son of the immaculate Virgin Mary, who has redeemed us by his most bitter death, without any merits [of our own], from eternal pains, from the thralldom of the devil, and from sin. — “From Constance the year of our Lord, 1415.”

Another Letter of John Huss to his Benefactors.

“My gracious benefactors and defenders of the truth, I exhort you by the compassion of Jesus Christ, that now setting aside the vanities of this present world, you will give your service to the Eternal King, Christ the Lord. Do not trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom there is no help. For the sons of men are dissemblers and deceitful. Today they are, tomorrow they perish, but God remains forever.

[310]

“He has his servants, not for any need he has of them, but for their own profit, to whom he performs what he promises, and fulfills what he purposes to give. He casts aside no faithful servant from him. For he says, ‘Where I am, there also shall my servant be.’ ^{Joh 12.26} And the Lord makes every servant of his to be the lord of all his possessions, giving Himself to him, and with Himself, all things, so that without tediousness or fear, and without defect, he may possess all things, rejoicing with all saints in infinite joy. O! happy is that servant whom, when the Lord comes, he shall find watching. ^{Mat 24.46} Happy is the servant who will receive that King of Glory with joy. Therefore, well beloved lords and benefactors, serve that King in fear, who shall bring you, I trust by His grace, at this present time to Bohemia, in health, and hereafter to eternal life of glory. Fare you well, for I think that this is the last letter that I shall write to you — who tomorrow, as I suppose, shall be purged in hope of Jesus Christ, through bitter death for my sins. The things that happened to me this night I am not able to write. Sigismund has done deceitfully with me in all things; God forgive him, and only for your sakes. You also heard the sentence which he awarded against me. I pray you have no suspicion of faithful Vitus.”

Another Epistle of John Huss, in which he declares why God does not allow his People to perish.

“The Lord God be with you. There were many causes, my dear friends, well-beloved in God, which moved me to think that those letters were the last, which I sent to you before, looking at that same time for instant death. But now understanding the same to be deferred, I take it for great comfort to me, that I have some leisure more to talk with you by letters. And therefore I write again to you, to declare and testify at least my gratitude and mindful duty toward you. And as touching death, God knows why he defers it both to me, and to my well-beloved brother, Master Jerome, who I trust will die holily and without blame. And know also that he does and suffers now more valiantly than I myself, a wretched sinner. God has given us a long time, that we might better call to memory our sins, and repent for them more fervently. He has granted us time, so that our long and great temptation should put away our grievous sins, and bring consolation all the more. He has given us time in which we should remember the horrible rebukes of our merciful King and Lord Jesus, and should ponder his cruel death, and so we might more patiently learn to bear our afflictions. And moreover, that we might keep in remembrance, how the joys of the life to come are not given immediately after the joys of this world, but through many tribulations the saints have entered into the kingdom of heaven. For some of them have been cut and chopped all to pieces, some have had their eyes bored through, some been boiled, some roasted, some flayed alive, some buried alive, stoned,

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

crucified, ground between millstones, drawn here and there unto execution, drowned in waters, strangled and hanged, torn in pieces, vexed with rebukes before their death, kept in prisons, and afflicted in bonds. And who is able to recite all the torments and sufferings of the holy saints, which they suffered under the Old and New Testament for the verity of God; namely, those who have at any time rebuked the malice of the priests, or have preached against their wickedness? And it will be a marvel if any man now shall also escape unpunished, whoever dares to boldly resist the wickedness and perversity, especially of those priests, who can abide no correction. And I am glad that they are compelled now to read my books, in which their malice is somewhat described. And I know they have read the same more exactly and willingly, than they have read the holy gospel, seeking to find errors in them. — “Given at Constance upon Thursday, the 28th of June, A.D. 1415.”

Another Letter of John Huss, in which he confirms the Bohemians, and describes the wickedness of the Council.

“John Huss, in hope the servant of God, to all the faithful in Bohemia, who love the Lord, greeting, through the grace of God. It comes to my mind, in what I must admonish you, who are the faithful and beloved of the Lord, how the Council of Constance being full of pride, avarice, and all abomination, has condemned my books written in the Bohemian tongue, as heretical, which books they never saw, nor ever heard. And if they had heard them, yet they could not understand them, some being Italians, some Frenchmen, some Britons, some Spaniards, Germans, with other people of other nations; unless perhaps John bishop of Litomyšl understood them, who was present in that council, and certain other Bohemians and priests who are against me, and labor all they may, how to deprave both the verity of God, and the honesty of our country of Bohemia — which I judge in the hope of God, to be a godly land, right well given to the true knowledge of the faith, for it so greatly desires the word of God, and honest manners. And if you were here at Constance, you would see the grievous abomination of this council, which they call so holy and infallible. I have heard it reported of this council, that the city of Constance cannot in thirty years be purged of those abominations committed in that council. And almost all are offended with that council, being sorely grieved to behold such execrable things perpetrated in it.

“When I first stood to answer before my adversaries, seeing all things were done there with no order, and hearing them also outrageously crying out, I said plainly to them, that I looked for more honest behavior and better order and discipline in that council. Then the chief cardinal answered, ‘Do you say so? But in the Tower you speak more modestly.’ To whom said I, ‘In the Tower no man cried out against me, whereas now all rage against me.’ My faithful and beloved in Christ, do not be afraid with their sentence in condemning my books. They shall be scattered here and there abroad, like light butterflies, and their statutes will endure like spider-webs. They went about to shake my constancy from the verity of Christ; but they could not overcome the virtue of God in me. They would not reason from Scripture against me, as diverse honorable lords can witness with me, who being ready to suffer abuse for the truth of God, took my part stoutly; namely. Lord Wenceslate de Duba, and Lord John de Clum. For they were let into the council by King Sigismund. And when I said that I was desirous to be instructed if I erred in anything, then they heard the chief cardinal answer in reply, ‘Because you would be informed, there is no remedy but that you must first revoke your doctrine according to the determination of fifty bachelors of divinity, appointed.’ O high instruction!

“In like manner, St. Katherine should also have denied and revoked the verity of God and faith in Christ, because the fifty masters likewise withstood her.⁷⁸ Notwithstanding, that good virgin

⁷⁸ Or St. Catherine of Alexandria, martyred in the 4th century by emperor Maxentius. He summoned 50 of his best philosophers and orators to dispute with her, hoping to refute her Christian arguments, but she won the debate.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

would never do this, standing in her faith unto death. But she did win her masters to Christ, whereas I cannot win these, my masters, by any means. These things I thought good to write to you, that you might know how they have overcome me without any grounded Scripture, nor with any reason: but only tried to persuade me with terrors and deceits to revoke and to abjure. But our merciful God, whose law I have magnified, was and is with me, and I trust will continue, and will keep me in His grace unto death.

“Written at Constance, after the feast of John Baptist, in prison and in bonds, daily looking for death; although for the secret judgments of God, I dare not say whether this is my last epistle: for even now, Almighty God is able to deliver me.”

[311] A.D. 1415.

*Another Letter of John Huss, in which he comforts his Friends,
and wills them not to be troubled by the condemning of his Books;
and also declares the wickedness of the Clergy.*

“Master John Huss, in hope the servant of God, to all the faithful who love Him and His statutes, he wishes the truth and grace of God.

“Beloved, I thought it needful to warn that you should not fear or be discouraged, because the adversaries have decreed that my books should be burnt. Remember how the Israelites burned the preachings of the prophet Jeremiah, and yet they could not avoid the things that were prophesied in them. For after they were burnt, the Lord commanded to write the same prophecy again, and make it larger, which was also done. For Jeremiah, sitting in prison spoke, and Baruch, who was ready at his hand, wrote. This is written either in the thirty-fifth or forty-fifth chapter of the vision of Jeremiah. ^{Jer 36.26f} It is also written in the books of the Maccabees, ^{1Mac 1.56-57} ‘That the wicked burned the law of God, and killed those who had them.’ Again, under the New Testament, they burned the saints, with the books of the law of God. ^(?) The cardinals condemned and committed to fire certain of St. Gregory’s books, and would have burnt them all if they had not been preserved by God through means of Peter, Gregory’s minister. Having these things before your eyes, take heed lest through fear you omit to read my books, and deliver them to the adversaries to be burnt. Remember the saying of our merciful Savior, by which he forewarned us. ‘There shall be,’ he says, ‘before the day of judgment, great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world until this day, no, nor yet shall be: so that even the elect of God should be deceived, if it were possible. But for their sakes those days shall be shortened.’ ^{Mat 24.21-22} When you remember these things, beloved, do not be afraid, for I trust in God that this school of antichrist will be afraid of you, and He will allow you to be in quiet, nor will the Council of Constance extend to Bohemia. For I think, that many of those who are of the council, will die before they get my books from you. And they will depart from the council, and be scattered abroad, throughout the parts of the world like storks, and then they will know when winter comes, what they did in summer.

“Consider that they have judged their head, the pope, worthy of death, for the many horrible acts that he has done.⁷⁹ Go to now; answer to this, you preachers, who preach that the pope is the god of the earth; and that he may, as the lawyers say, make a sale of the holy things; that he is the head of the whole holy church, in verity well-governing it; that he is the heart of the church in quickening it spiritually: that he is the well-spring from which flows all virtue and goodness: that he is the sun of the holy church: that he is the safe refuge to which every Christian man ought to fly for succor. Behold now, that head is [figuratively] cut off with the sword; now the god of the earth is bound; now his sins are declared openly; now that well-

⁷⁹ Pope John XXII, the 2nd pope of Avignon, was condemned by the Faculty of Theology of the Sorbonne in January 1334, accusing him of heresy. This favored King Louis IV, who opposed this pope; but it went no further.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

spring is dried up, that sun darkened, that heart is plucked out and thrown away, lest any man seek succor there. The council has condemned that head, and that is for this offense: because he took money for indulgences, bishoprics, and other such things.

“I would that in that council God had said, ‘He among you who is without sin, let him give the sentence against Pope John.’ Then surely they would all have gone out of the council-house, one after another. Why did they always bow the knee to him before his fall, kiss his feet, and call him the most holy father, seeing they saw apparently before, that he was a heretic, that he was a killer, that he was a wicked sinner, all of which things they have now found in him? Why did the cardinals choose him to be pope, knowing before that he had killed the holy father? Why did they allow him to meddle with holy things, in bearing the office of the popedom? For to this end they are his counsellors, that they should admonish him about that which is right. Are they not themselves as guilty of these faults as he is, seeing that they accounted these things vices in him, and were partakers of some of them themselves? Why did no man dare to lay anything to his charge before he had fled from Constance? But as soon as the secular power, by the sufferance of God, laid hold of him, then and never before, they all conspired together that he should not live any longer? Surely, even at this day the malice, the abomination and filthiness of antichrist, is revealed in the pope and others of this council.

“Now the faithful servants of God may understand what our Savior Christ meant by this saying, ‘When you see the abomination of desolation, which is spoken of by Daniel, etc. whoever can understand it,’ etc. ^{Mat 24.15} Surely, these are great abominations: pride, covetousness, simony, sitting in a solitary place; that is to say, in a dignity void of goodness, of humility, and other virtues; as we now clearly see in those that are constituted in any office and dignity. O how acceptable a thing it would be (if time would allow me) to disclose their wicked acts, which are now apparent, so that the faithful servants of God might know them. I trust in God that he will send after me those who will be more valiant. And there are alive at this day, those who will make more manifest the malice of antichrist, and will give their lives to the death for the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will give both to you and me the joys of life everlasting.

“This epistle was written on St. John Baptist’s day, in prison and in cold irons, having this meditation with myself, that John the Baptist was beheaded in his prison and bonds, for the word of God.”

Another Letter of John Huss.

“John Huss, in hope the servant of God, to all the faithful at Bohemia who love the Lord, wishes to stand and die in the grace of God, and at last to attain to eternal life.

“You who bear rule over others, and are rich, and you also who are poor, well-beloved and faithful in God, I beseech you, and admonish you all, that you will be obedient to God, make much of his word, and gladly hearing the same, will humbly perform what you hear. I beseech you, stick fast to the verity of God’s word, which I have written and preached to you out of his law, and the sermons of his saints. Also I desire that if any man either in public sermon or in private talk heard anything from me, or have read anything written by me which is against the verity of God, that you do not follow it — even though I do not find my conscience guilty that I have ever spoken or written any such thing among you.

“I desire, moreover, that if any man, at any time has noted any levity either in my talk or in my conditions, that you do not follow it, but pray to God for me, to pardon me that sin of lightness. I pray that you will love your priests and ministers who are of honest behavior, to prefer and honor them before others; namely, those priests who travel in the word of God. I pray you take heed to yourselves, and beware of malicious and deceitful men, and especially of these wicked priests of whom our Savior speaks, who are under sheep’s clothing, but inwardly

are ravening wolves. I pray those who are rulers and superiors, to behave themselves gently towards their poor inferiors, and to rule them justly. I beseech the citizens, that every man will walk in his degree and vocation, with an upright conscience. The craftsmen also, I beseech that they will exercise their occupations diligently, and use them with the fear of God. I beseech the servants that they will serve their masters faithfully. And likewise I beseech the schoolmasters, that they living honestly, will bring up their scholars virtuously, and teach them faithfully, first to learn to fear God; then for the glory of God and the public utility of the commonwealth, and their own health, and to employ their minds to honest arts, not for avarice or for worldly honor. I beseech the students of the university, and all schools, to obey their masters in all honest things, and to follow them; and that with all diligence they will study to be profitable both to setting forth the glory of God, and to the soul's health, of themselves as well as of other men.

[312]

“Together I beseech and pray you all, that you will yield most hearty thanks to the right honorable lords, the Lord Wenceslaus de Duba, Lord John de Clum, Lord Henry Lumlovio, Lord Vilem Zagecio, Lord Nicholas, and other lords of Bohemia, of Moravia, and Polonie; so that their diligence towards me may be appreciated by all good men. Because like valiant champions of God's truth, they have oftentimes set themselves against the whole council for my deliverance, contending and standing against the same to the uttermost of their power; but especially Lord Wenceslaus de Duba, and Lord John de Clum. Whatever they report to you, give credit to them; for they were in the council when I answered many there. They know who they were from Bohemia — how many false and slanderous things they brought in against me, and that council cried out against me, and how I also answered to all things of which I was demanded. I beseech you also that you will pray for the king of the Romans, and for your king, and for his wife, your queen, that God of his mercy would abide with them and with you, both now and henceforth in everlasting life. Amen.

“This epistle I have written to you from prison and in bonds, looking the next day after the writing this, for the sentence of the council upon my death. I have a full trust that He will not leave me, nor allow me to deny his truth, and will revoke the errors which false witnesses have maliciously devised against me. How mercifully the Lord God has dealt with me, and was with me in marvellous temptations, you shall know when hereafter, by the help of Christ, we shall all meet together in the joy of the world to come. As concerning Master Jerome, my dearly beloved brother and fellow, I hear no other but that he is remaining in strait bonds, looking for death as I do; and that for the faith which he valiantly maintained among the Bohemians, our cruel enemies of Bohemia have given us into the power and hands of other enemies, and into bonds. I beseech you, pray to God for them.

“Moreover, I beseech you, namely of Prague, that you will love the temple of Bethlehem, and provide so long as God permits, that the word of God may be preached in it. For because of that place, the devil is angry, and he has stirred up priests and canons against the same, perceiving that his kingdom would be disturbed and diminished in that place. I trust in God that he will keep that holy church so long as it shall please him, and in there He will give greater increase of his word by others, than he has done by me, a weak vessel. I beseech you also, that you will love one another; and withholding no man from the hearing of God's word, that you will provide and take care that good men are not oppressed by any force and violence. Written at Constance, the year of our Lord 1415.”

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

*Another right godly letter of John Huss to a certain priest,
admonishing him about his office, and exhorting him
to be faithful; worthy to be read by all Ministers.*

“The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc. My dear brother, be diligent in preaching the gospel, and do the work of a good evangelist; do not neglect your vocation; labor like a blessed soldier of Christ. First, live godly and holily. Secondly, teach faithfully and truly. Thirdly, be an example to others in well-doing, so that you will not be reprehended in your sayings: correct vice and set forth virtue. To evil-livers, threaten eternal punishment; but to those who are faithful and godly, set forth the comforts of eternal joy. Preach continually, but be brief and fruitful, prudently understanding, and discreetly dispensing the holy Scriptures. Never affirm or maintain those things that are uncertain and doubtful, lest your adversaries take hold of you, who rejoice in depraving their brethren, whereby they may bring the ministers of God into contempt. Exhort men to the confession of their faith, and to the communion of both kinds, both of the body and blood of Christ, whereby those who earnestly repent of their sins may come to the holy communion more often. And I warn you that you not enter into taverns with guests, and you not be a common company-keeper. For the more a preacher keeps himself from the company of men, the more he is regarded. However, do not deny your help and diligence wherever you may profit others. Against fleshly lust, preach continually all that you ever can; for that is the raging beast which devours men, for whom the flesh of Christ suffered. Finally, whatever you do, fear God and keep his precepts; so shall you walk wisely, and not perish; so shall you subdue the flesh, disdain the world, and overcome the devil; so shall you put on God, find life, confirm others, and crown yourself with the crown of glory, which the just Judge will give you. Amen.”

*This letter of John Huss contains a confession of the infirmity of man's flesh,
how weak it is, and repugnant against the spirit. In which
he also exhorts to persevere constantly in the truth.*

“Health be to you from Jesus Christ, etc. My dear friend, know that Paletz came to me to persuade me that I should not fear the shame of abjuration, but to consider the good which will come of it. I said to him that the shame of condemnation and burning is greater than to abjure.

“Almighty God shall confirm the hearts of his faithful, whom he has chosen before the foundation of the world, that they may receive the eternal crown of glory. And let antichrist rage as much as he will, yet he shall not prevail against Christ, who shall destroy him with the spirit of his mouth, as the apostle says. And then the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption, into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God, as the apostle says in the following words. ‘We also groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.’ Rom 8.23

“I am greatly comforted in those words of our Savior, ‘Happy are you when men hate you, and separate you, and rebuke you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice and be glad, for behold, great is your reward in heaven,’ Luke 6.22-23. O worthy, yes, O most worthy consolation which, not to understand it, but to practice it in time of tribulation, is a hard lesson.

“This rule St. James, with the other apostles, well understood, when he says, ‘Count it exceeding joy, my brethren, when you fall into diverse temptations, knowing that the trial of your faith works patience: let patience have her perfect work.’ Jas 1.4 For certainly it is a great matter for a man to rejoice in trouble, and to take it for joy to be in diverse temptations. It is a light matter to say it and to expound it, but a great matter to fulfill it. Why? For our most patient and most valiant champion himself was troubled in spirit after his last supper,

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

knowing that he would rise again the third day, overcoming his enemies by his death, and redeeming his elect from damnation. He said, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.' ^{Mat 26.37-38} The gospel also says of him, 'He began to fear, to be sorrowful and very heavy.' Then being in an agony, he was confirmed by the angel, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling upon the ground. ^{Luk 22.43-44} And yet notwithstanding, being so troubled, he said to his disciples, 'Let not your hearts be troubled;' ^{Joh 14.1} neither fear the cruelty of those who persecute you, for you shall have me with you always, that you may overcome the tyranny of your persecutors. Whereupon those soldiers of his, looking upon the Prince and King of Glory, sustained great conflicts. They passed through fire and water, and were saved, and received the crown of the Lord God. St. James speaks of this crown in his canonical epistle, saying, 'Blessed is the man who suffers temptation, for when he is proved, he shall receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him.' ^{Jas 1.12} I trust steadfastly that the Lord will make me a partaker of this crown also with you, who are the fervent sealers of the truth, and with all those who steadfastly and constantly love the Lord Jesus Christ who suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps. ^{1Pet 2.21}

[313] A.D. 1415.

"It behooved him to suffer,' as Jesus says; ^{Luk 24.46} and it also behooves us to suffer, so that the members may suffer together with the Head. For he says, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me.' ^{Mat 16.24}

"O most merciful Christ! draw us weak creatures after you. For unless you draw us, we are not able to follow you. Give us a strong spirit, that it may be ready, and although the flesh is feeble, let your grace go before us, go with us, and follow us. For without you we can do nothing, and much less enter into a cruel death for Your sake. Give us that prompt and ready spirit, a bold heart, an upright faith, a firm hope, and perfect charity, that we may give our lives patiently and joyfully for your name's sake. Amen.

"Written in prison in bonds on the vigil of St. John the Baptist, who being in prison and in bonds for rebuking wickedness, was beheaded."

By the life, acts, and letters of John Huss that I recited up to here, it is evident and plain that he was condemned not for any error of doctrine — for he neither denied their popish transubstantiation, nor spoke against the authority of the church of Rome, if it were well governed; nor yet against the seven sacraments, but said mass himself. And in almost all their popish opinions, he was a papist with them. But only through evil will was he accused by his malicious adversaries, because he spoke against the pomp, pride, avarice, and other wicked enormities of the pope, cardinals, and prelates of the church; and because he could not abide the high dignities and livings of the church, and thought the doings of the pope were antichrist-like. For this cause he procured so many enemies and false witnesses against him, who straining and picking matter out of his books and writings, and having no one just article of doctrine to lay to his charge, they made him a heretic, whether he would have it or not, and brought him to his condemnation.

Jerome of Prague Taken and Brought to Constance – 1415.

*The tragic and lamentable history of the famous learned man
and godly martyr of Christ, Master Jerome of Prague,
burned at Constance for like cause and quarrel
as Master John Huss, A.D. 1416.*

The things regarding the life, acts, and constant martyrdom of Master John Huss, with part of his letters, have been discoursed. His death was on the sixth of July (AD. 1415). It now remains to describe the like tragedy and cruel handling of his Christian companion, Master

Jerome of Prague. Grievously sorrowing for the slanderous reproach and defamation of his country of Bohemia, and also hearing of the manifest injuries done to that man of worthy memory, Master John Huss, Jerome freely and of his own accord came to Constance the fourth of April (A.D. 1415). There perceiving that John Huss was denied being heard, and that watch and wait was laid for himself on every side, Jerome departed to Iberling until the next day; this city was a mile from Constance. From there he wrote his letters to Sigismund, king of Hungary, to his barons, and also to the council, most earnestly requesting that the king and the council would give him a safe conduct to freely come and go, and that he would then come in open audience to answer to every man, if there were any of the council who would lay any crime to him, as it will appear more at large by the tenor of his intimation.

When the king of Hungary was requested to do this, being in the house of the lord cardinal of Cambray, he refused to give Master Jerome any safe conduct, excusing himself for the evil dealings he had with the safe conduct of John Huss before, and also alleging certain other causes. The deputies of the four nations of the council being moved to this by the lords of the king of Bohemia, also answered, "We will give him a safe conduct to *come*, but not to *depart*." Their answers were reported to Master Jerome. The next day he wrote certain intimations which he sent to Constance to be posted on the gates of the city, on the gates of the churches and monasteries, and on the houses of the cardinals and other nobles and prelates. The tenor of them follows word for word, in this manner:

"To the most noble prince and lord, the Lord Sigismund, by the grace of God, king of the Romans, always Augustus, and of Hungary, etc. — I, Jerome of Prague, master of arts of the general universities of Paris, Cologne, Heidelberg, and Prague, by these my present letters, do notify the king, together with the whole reverend council, and as much as it lies in me, to all men, to understand and know that because of the crafty slanderers, backbiters, and accusers, I am ready freely, and of my own will, to come to Constance, there to declare openly before the council, the purity and sincerity of my true faith, and my innocency, and not secretly in corners before any private or particular person. Therefore, if there are any of my slanderers, of whatever nation or estate they are, who will object against me any crime of error or heresy, let them come forth openly before me in the presence of the whole council, and in their own names object against me, and I will be ready, as I have written, to answer openly and publicly before the whole council, of my innocency, and to declare the purity and sincerity of my true faith. And if it so happens that I am found culpable in error or heresy, then I will not refuse openly to suffer such punishment as will be fitting and worthy for an erroneous person, or a heretic.

"Therefore I most humbly beseech my lord the king, and the whole sacred council, that I may have, to this end and purpose aforesaid, safe and sure access. And if it happens that offering such equity and right as I do, before any fault is proved against me, I am arrested, imprisoned, or have any violence done to me; then it may be manifest to the whole world, that this general council does not proceed according to equity and justice, if they would by any means keep me back from this profound and straight justice, having come here freely of my own mind and accord, which thing I suppose to be far from so sacred and holy a council of wise men."

When he could not get any safe conduct, then the nobles, lords, and knights, especially of the Bohemian nation, who were present in Constance, gave to Master Jerome their letters patents, confirmed with their seals for a testimony and witness of the premises. With these letters Master Jerome returned again to Bohemia. But by the treason and conspiracy of his enemies he was taken in Hirsaw by the officers of Duke John, and brought back to the presence of the duke. In the meantime, those who were the instigators of the council against Master John Huss, and Master Jerome, that is to say, Michael de Causis, and Master Paletz,

and other accomplices of theirs, required that Master Jerome be cited because of his intimations. Certain days after, a citation was set upon the gates and porches of the city and churches.

After Sigismund, king of Hungary, with the rest of the council, understood that Master Jerome was taken, they earnestly required that he be brought before them to the council. The Duke John, after he had received letters from the king and the council, brought Master Jerome bound to Constance, whom his brother, Duke Louis, led through the city to the cloisters of the friars minors in Constance, where the chief priests and elders of the people — Scribes and Pharisees — were gathered together, attending and waiting for his coming. Master Jerome carried a great hand-bolt of iron with a long chain in his hand; and as he passed, the chain made a great rattling and noise, and for more confusion and spite towards him, they led him by that same chain after Duke Louis, holding and stretching it out a great way from him. With this chain they also kept him bound in the cloister. When he was brought into the cloister, they read before him the letter of Duke John to the council, containing in effect how the duke had sent Master Jerome, who by chance had fallen into his hands. The reason was that the duke had heard an evil report about him, that Jerome was suspected of the heresies of Wycliffe. Thus the council might take order for him, whose part it was to correct and punish those who erred and strayed from the truth. Besides this, many other flattering tales were written in the said letter for the praise of the council.

[314]

After this, they read the citation which was published by the council against Master Jerome. Then certain of the bishops said to him: “Jerome, why did you flee and run away, and not appear when you were cited?” He answered:

“Because I could not get any safe conduct, neither from you nor from the king, as it appears by these letters patents of the barons, which you have; nor by my open intimations could I obtain any safe conduct. Therefore, perceiving many of my grievous and heavy friends to be present here in the council, I would not myself be the occasion of my perils and dangers. But if I had known or had any understanding of this citation, without all doubt, even if I had been in Bohemia, I would have returned again.”

Then the whole rabble rising up, alleged various accusations against him with a great noise and tumult. When the rest held their peace, Master Gerson ` , the chancellor of Paris: “Jerome, when you were at Paris you thought yourself by means of your eloquence to be an angel, and troubled the whole university, alleging openly in the schools many erroneous conclusions with their corollaries, and especially on the question *de universalibus et de Idoeis* (about universals and the Jews),⁸⁰ with many other very offensive questions.” To whom Master Jerome said:

“I answer to you. Master Gerson, those matters which I put forth there in the schools at Paris, in which I also answered the arguments of the Masters, I put forth philosophically, and as a philosopher, and master of the university; and if I have put forth any questions which I should not have put forth, teach me that they are erroneous, and I will most humbly be informed, and amend them.”

⁸⁰ "De universalibus" refers to medieval discussions about the ontological status of universals, abstract concepts or properties that apply to multiple particular things. These discussions were among the most sophisticated in the history of philosophy, involving scholastics such as Duns Scotus, William of Ockham, and Avicenna. Wycliffe wrote a book on it, opposing the *nominalism* of Ockham (which challenges the existence of universal properties), and laying the foundation for the *realism* of the Reformation.

While he was still speaking, another rose up said: "When you were also at Cologne, in your position which you there determined, you propounded many erroneous matters." Then Master Jerome said to him: "Shew me first one error which I propounded." With this, the man being in a way astonished, said: "I do not remember them now, at the first, but hereafter they will be objected against you."

By and by a third man rose up and said: "Also, when you were at Heidelberg, you propounded many erroneous matters touching the trinity, and there you painted a certain shield or escutcheon comparing the trinity of persons in the divinity to water, snow, and ice, and such things." Master Jerome answered him: "Those things that I wrote or painted there, I will also speak, write, and paint here. Teach me that they are erroneous, and I will most humbly revoke and recant them."

Then certain others cried out: "Let him be burned, let him be burned!" To them he answered: "If my death delights or pleases you, in the name of God let it be so." Then the archbishop of Saltzburg said: "Not so, Master Jerome, for as it is written, I do not will the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live." ^{Eze 18.23}

When these and many other tumults and cries had passed, by which they most disorderly and outrageously witnessed against him, they delivered him bound to the officers of the city of Constance, to be carried to prison for that night. And so every one of them returned to their lodgings.

In the meantime, one of the friends of Master John Huss, looking out at a window of the cloister, said to him: "Master Jerome." He said, "You are welcome, my dear brother." Then Peter said to him: "Be constant and do not fear to suffer death for the truth's sake, of which, when you were at liberty in times past, you preached so much and so well." Jerome answered: "Truly brother I do not fear death. And as we know that we have spoken much about it in times past, let us now see what may be known or done in effect." By and by, his keepers coming to the window threatening him with blows, they pulled Peter away from the window of the cloister. Then one Vitus came to Master Jerome, and said: "Master, how do you do?" He answered, "Truly brother, I do very well." Then his keepers coming about him laid hold of Vitus, saying: "This is also one of the number," and kept him. When it drew towards evening, the archbishop of Riegen sent his servants, who led away Master Jerome, being strongly bound with chains both by the hands and by the neck, and kept him that way for some hours. When night drew on, they carried him to a tower of the city, where tying him fast to a great block, and his feet in the stocks, his hands also being made fast, they left him. The block was so high, that he could by no means sit upon it, so that his head must hang downward. They also carried Vitus to the archbishop of Riegen, who demanded of him, "Why did you dare be so bold as to talk with such a man, being a reprobate of all men, and a heretic?" When he could find no cause to imprison him, and Vitus said he was Master John de Clum's friend (taking an oath and promise from Vitus that he would not go about damaging the council because of his imprisonment and captivity), he dismissed him.

Master Jerome, whose friends did not know where he was carried to, lay in the tower two days and two nights, relieved only with bread and water. Then one of his keepers, coming to Master Peter, declared to him how Master Jerome lay nearby in bonds and chains, and how he was fed. Then Master Peter desired that he might have leave to give him food, because he would procure it for him. The keeper of the prison, granting his request, carried food to him. Within eleven days, so hanging by the heels, he had such little repast, that he fell sorely sick, even unto death. When living in that captivity and prison, he desired to have a confessor.

The council denied him this, until such time as, by great importunity, he obtained one. His friends were then present in the prison and tower in which he lay for a year, less seven days.

After they had put John Huss to death, around the time of the feast of the nativity of the Virgin Mary, they brought forth Master Jerome, whom they had kept so long in chains. Threatening him with death, and being instant (demanding) upon him, they forced him to abjure and recant, and consent to the death of Master John Huss: that he was justly and truly condemned and put to death by them. For fear of death, and hoping thereby to escape from their hands, according to their will and pleasure, and according to the tenor which was exhibited to him, he made abjuration in the cathedral church, in open session. The draft of it, penned for him by the papists, ensues here:

The Abjuration of Master Jerome of Prague.

“I, Jerome of Prague, master of arts, acknowledging the catholic church, and the apostolic faith, do accurse and renounce all heresies, and especially that of which I have previously been notorious, and that which in times past John Huss and John Wycliffe have held and taught in their works, treatises, and sermons, made to the people and clergy; for which cause the said Wycliffe and Huss, together with the said doctrines and errors, are condemned by this synod of Constance as heretics, and all the said doctrine sententially condemned, and especially in certain articles expressed in the sentences and judgments given against them by this sacred council.

“Also I accord and agree to the holy church of Rome, the apostolic seat in this sacred council, and with my mouth and heart profess in all things, and touching all things, and especially as touching the keys, sacraments, orders, and offices, and ecclesiastical censures, of pardons, relics of saints, ecclesiastical liberty, also ceremonies, and all other things pertaining to the Christian religion, as the church of Rome, the apostolic see, and this sacred council profess; and especially that many of the said articles are notoriously heretical, and lately reprovved by the holy fathers, some of them blasphemous, some others erroneous; some offensive to godly ears, and many of them reckless and seditious. And such also were counted the articles lately condemned by the sacred council, and it was inhibited and forbidden to all and singular catholic men to hereafter preach, teach, or presume to hold or maintain any of the said articles, under pain of being accursed.

[315] A.D. 1416.

“And I, the said Jerome, because I have labored by scholastical arts to persuade the opinion, *de universalibus realibus* — that one substance of the common kind should signify many things subject under the same, and every one of them, as St. Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine affirm, and likewise others — for teaching this, by a plain example I described, as it were, a certain triangle, form, or figure, which I called the shield of faith.

“Therefore utterly to exclude and take away the erroneous and wicked understanding of it, which perhaps some men may gather thereby, I say, affirm, and declare that I never made the said figure, nor named it the *shield of faith* to that intent or purpose, that I would extol or prefer the opinion of universalities above or before the contrary opinion, in such a way, as though that were the shield of faith, and that without the affirmation of it, the catholic faith could not be defended or maintained; when as I myself would not obstinately stick to this. But this I said because I had put an example in the description of the triangle or form, that one divine essence consisted in three subjects or persons in themselves distinct, that is to say, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The article of this Trinity is the chief shield of faith, and foundation of the catholic truth.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“Furthermore, that it may be evident to all men what the causes were for which I was reputed and thought to stick to, and sometimes favor John Huss, I signify to all men by these presents, that when I heard him oftentimes, both in his sermons, and also in the schools, I believed that he was a very good man, nor that he did in any point challenge the traditions of our holy mother the church, or holy doctors — insofar that when I was recently in this city, and the articles which I affirmed were shown to me, which were also condemned by the sacred council, at the first sight of them I did not believe that they were his, at least not in that form. But when as I had further understood, by certain famous doctors and masters of divinity, that they were his articles, I required for my further information and satisfaction to have the books of his own handwriting shown to me, in which it was said these articles were contained. These books when they were shown to me, written with his own hand, which I did know as well as my own, I found all and every one of those articles in it, written in like form as they are condemned. Therefore I do worthily judge and think him and his doctrine, with his adherents, are to be condemned and reprov'd by the sacred council as heretical and without reason. All these premises, with a pure mind and conscience, I here pronounce and speak, being now fully and sufficiently informed of the foresaid sentences and judgments given by the sacred council against the doctrines of the said John Wycliffe, and John Huss, and against their own persons, to which judgment, as a devout catholic in all things, I most humbly consent and agree.

“Also I, the foresaid Jerome, who before the reverend fathers, the lords cardinals, and reverend lords, prelates, and doctors, and other worshipful persons of this sacred council in this same place, did until now freely and willingly declare and expound my intent and purpose among other things, speaking of the church, divided it into three parts. And as I perceived afterwards, it was understood by some that I would affirm that in the triumphant church there was faith, whereas I firmly believe that there is the blessed sight and beholding of God, excluding all dark understanding and knowledge; and now also I say, affirm, and declare that it was never my intent and purpose to prove that there should be faith, speaking of faith as faith is commonly defined, but knowledge far exceeding faith. And whatever I said generally, either there, or at any time before, I refer and most humbly submit myself to the determination of this sacred Council of Constance.

“Moreover, I swear both by the Holy Trinity, and also by the most holy gospel, that I will for evermore remain and persevere without all doubt in the truth of the catholic church; and all those who by their doctrine and teaching shall impugn this faith, I judge them, together with their doctrines, worthy of eternal curse. And if I by myself at any time (which God forbid I should) presume to preach or teach contrary to this, I will submit myself to the severity of the canons, and be bound to eternal pain and punishment. Whereupon I deliver up this my confession and tenor of my profession willingly before this sacred general council, and I have subscribed and written all these things with my own hand.”

After all this they caused him to be carried back to the same prison, but not so straitly chained and bound as he was before. Notwithstanding, he was kept every day with soldiers and armed men; and when his enemies understood and knew by the words and talk of Master Jerome, and by other certain tokens, that he made the same abjuration and recantation, not of a sincere and pure mind, but only to escape their hands, they put up new accusations against Master Jerome, and drew them into articles, being very instant and earnest that he should answer to them. And as his judges and certain cardinals — such as the cardinal of Cambray, the cardinal de Ursinus, the cardinal of Aquilegia, and of Florence — considering the malice of the enemies of Master Jerome, saw the great injury that was done to him, they labored before the whole council for his delivery.

It happened on a certain day, as they were laboring in the council for the delivery of the said Master Jerome, that his enemies with all force and power resisted it, crying out that he

should in no case be dismissed. Then one called Doctor Naso started up, who said to the cardinals, "We marvel much about you, most reverend fathers, that your reverences will make intercession for such a wicked heretic, for whose sake we in Bohemia, with the whole clergy, have suffered much trouble and mischief, and perhaps your fatherhoods will suffer. And I greatly fear, lest you have received some rewards either from the king of Bohemia, or from these heretics." When the cardinals were thus rebuked, they discharged themselves from Master Jerome's cause and matter.

Then his enemies had other judges appointed, such as the patriarch of Constantinople, and a German doctor, knowing that the patriarch was a grievous enemy to Master Jerome, because having been previously appointed judge by the council, he had condemned John Huss to death.

But Master Jerome would not answer them in prison, requesting to have an open audience, because he would there finally declare his mind to them; nor would he by any means consent to those private judges. Whereupon the presidents of the council, thinking that Master Jerome would renew his recantation before the audience, and confirm it, granted him open audience.

In the year A.D. 1416, the 25th of May, Master Jerome was brought to an open audience before the whole council, in the great cathedral church of Constance, where the commissioners of the council laid against him a hundred and seven articles, to the intent that he should not escape the snare of death, which they provided and laid for him. He answered to more than forty articles most subtly objected against him; denying that he held or maintained any such articles as were either hurtful or false, and affirming that those witnesses had deposed them against him falsely and slanderously, as his most cruel and mortal enemies. In the same session, they had not yet proceeded to death, because noon-time drew near so fast, that he could not answer to the articles. Therefore, for lack of sufficient time to answer to the remainder of the articles, another time was appointed, early in the morning, at which he was again brought to the cathedral church to answer to the remainder of the articles.

[316]

In all of these articles, those which he had answered before, as well as in the remainder, he cleared himself very learnedly, refuting his adversaries in such a way that they were themselves astonished at his oration, and by the refutation of their testimonies against him; and with shame enough, they were put to silence. Such as when one of them had demanded of him what he thought of the sacrament of the altar, he answered, "Before consecration," he said, "it is bread and wine; after the consecration it is the true body and blood of Christ," adding more words according to their catholic faith. Then another rising up, said "Jerome, there is a great rumor about you, that you hold bread remains upon the altar." To whom he pleasantly answered that he believed "bread is at the baker's." At these words one of the Dominican friars rose angrily, and said, "What! do you deny, what no man doubts?" Jerome well repressed his peevish sauciness with these words, "Hold your peace, you monk, you hypocrite!" And thus the monk being nipped in the head, sat down dumb. After him another started up, who with a loud voice cried out, "By my conscience I swear that to be true, which you deny." To whom Jerome replied, "Thus to swear by your conscience is the next way to deceive." There was another, a spiteful and bitter enemy of his, whom he called by no other name than *dog*, or *ass*. After he had thus refuted them, one after another, so that they could find no crime against him, neither in this matter, nor in any other, they were all driven to keep silence.

Then the witnesses were called, who gave testimony to the articles produced before. By reason of which the innocent cause of Jerome was oppressed, and began to be concluded in the council. Then Jerome, rising up, began to speak, "Considering that you have heard my adversaries so diligently, it is convenient that you should also now hear me speak for myself." Whereupon, with much difficulty, at last audience was given in the council for him to say his mind. This being granted, he continued from morning to noon, addressing many matters with great learning and eloquence. Beginning with his prayer to God, he besought Him to give him spirit, ability, and utterance, which might both tend to the profit and salvation of his own soul. And then he began his oration as follows: "I know, reverend lords, that there have been many excellent men who have suffered much otherwise than they deserved, being oppressed with false witnesses, and condemned with wrong judgments." And so beginning with Socrates, he declared how he was unjustly condemned by his countrymen, nor would he escape when he might — taking from us the fear of two things which seem most bitter to men, to wit, imprisonment and death. Then he introduced the captivity of Plato, the banishment of Anaxagoras, and the torments of Zeno. Moreover, he brought in the wrongful condemnation of many Gentiles, such as the banishment of Rupilius, reciting also the unworthy death of Boetius, and of others whom Boetius himself writes about.

From there he came to the examples of the Hebrews, and began with Moses, the deliverer of the people and the lawgiver, how he was oftentimes slandered by his people as being a seducer and despiser of the people. Also Joseph, who for envy was sold by his brethren, and was cast into bonds for false suspicion of a crime. Besides these, were Isaiah, Daniel, and almost all the prophets, who as despisers of God, and seditious persons, were oppressed with wrongful condemnation. From there he proceeded to the judgment of Susanna, and of diverse others besides, who being good and holy, were yet unjustly cast away under a wrongful sentence. At length he came to John Baptist. And so, in a long process he descended to our Savior, declaring how it was evident to all men, by what false witnesses both he and John Baptist were condemned. Moreover, how Stephen was slain by the college of the priests, and how all the apostles were condemned to death, not as good men, but as seditious stirrers up of the people, and despisers of the gods, and evil-doers. It is unjust, he said, to be unjustly condemned, one priest by another, and yet he proved that the same so happened most unjustly in that council of priests. These things he discoursed at large, with marvellous eloquence, and with singular admiration by all who heard him.

And because the whole sum of the cause rested only in the witnesses, by many reasons he proved that no credit was to be given to them, especially seeing that they spoke all things not from truth, but only from hatred, malice, and envy. And so prosecuting the matter, he so lively and expressly opened to them the causes of their hatred, that he had almost persuaded them. In so lively and likely a way was their hatred exposed, that almost no credit was given to their testimonies, except for the cause and quarrel in which they stood regarding the pope's doctrine. All men's minds were moved and bending to mercy toward him. For he told them how, of his own accord, he came up to the council, and to purge himself he opened to them his whole life and doings, being full of virtue and godliness. This was (he said) the old manner of ancient and learned men, and most holy elders, that in matters of faith, they differed many times in arguments, not to destroy the faith, but to find out the truth. So Augustine and Jerome dissented from one another, yet without any suspicion of heresy.

All this while the pope's holy council waited, still expecting him to begin to excuse himself, and to retract those things which were objected against him, and to crave pardon from the

council. But still persisting, in his constant oration he acknowledged no error, nor gave any indication of retraction.

At last entering to the praise and commendation of Master John Huss, he affirmed that he was a good, just, and holy man, and much unworthy of that death which he suffered. He knew him from his youth upward, to be neither immoral, a drunkard, nor any evil or vicious person, but a chaste and sober man, and a just and true preacher of the holy gospel. And whatever things Master John Huss and Wycliffe had held or written, especially against the abuse and pomp of the clergy, he would affirm even to the death, that they were holy and blessed men, and that in all points of the catholic faith, he believes as the holy catholic church holds or believes. And finally, he concluded that all those articles which John Wycliffe and John Huss had written and put forth against the enormities, pomp, and disorder of the prelates, he would firmly and steadfastly, without recantation, hold and defend even to the death. And last of all he added that all the sins that he had ever committed, did not so much gnaw and trouble his conscience as did that sole sin which he had committed in that most pestiferous act, when in his recantation he had unjustly spoken against that good and holy man and his doctrine; especially in consenting to his wicked condemnation, concluding that he utterly revoked and denied that wicked recantation which he made in that most cursed place, and that he did it through weakness of heart and fear of death. And moreover, that whatever he had spoken against that blessed man, he had altogether lied about him, and that he repented with his whole heart that he ever did it.

At hearing this, the hearts of the hearers were not a little sorry. For they wished and desired greatly that such a singular man should be saved, if otherwise their blind superstition would have allowed it. But he continued in his opinion, seeming to desire death rather than life. And persisting in the praise of John Huss, he added moreover, that he never maintained any doctrine against the state of the church, but only spoke against the abuses of the clergy, against the pride, pomp, and excess of the prelates. For as the patrimonies of the churches were first given for the poor, then for hospitality, and thirdly to the reparations of the churches; it was a grief to that good man (he said) to see the same misspent and cast away upon great feasting, keeping horses and dogs, upon gorgeous apparel, and such other things that are unbecoming to the Christian religion. And herein he showed himself marvellously eloquent; indeed, never more so.

[317] A.D. 1416.

And when his oration was interrupted many times by several of them, carping at his sentences as he was in speaking, there was yet none of all those who interrupted him who escaped unscathed, but he brought them all to confusion, and put them to silence. When any noise began, he ceased speaking, and afterward began again, proceeding in his oration, and desiring them to give him leave to speak a while, whom they would hereafter hear no more; nor was his mind ever dashed at all by these noises and tumults.

And this was marvellous to behold in him, notwithstanding that he continued in prison three hundred and forty days, having neither book, nor almost any light to read by. Yet how admirably his memory served him — declaring how all those pains of his strict handling did not grieve him so much, as their unkind humanity towards him.

When he had spoken these and many things regarding the praise of John Wycliffe and John Huss, those who sat in the council whispered together, saying by these his words it appears that he is resolved with himself. Then he was again carried to prison, and grievously fettered by the hands, arms, and feet, with great chains and fetters of iron.

The next Saturday before Ascension-day, early in the morning, he was brought with a great number of armed men to the cathedral church, before the open congregation, to have his judgment given him. There they exhorted him that those things which he had spoken before in the open audience, as aforesaid, regarding the praise and commendation of master John Wycliffe and master John Huss, confirming and establishing their doctrine, he might yet recant. But he stoutly and marvellously, without any fear, spoke against them. Among other things, he said to them,

“I take God to my witness, and I protest here before you all, that I believe and hold the articles of the faith, as the holy catholic church holds and believes them. But for this cause I shall now be condemned, because I will not consent with you to the condemnation of those most holy and blessed men, whom you have most wickedly condemned for certain articles, detesting and abhorring your wicked and abominable life.”

Then he confessed there before them all his belief, and uttered many things very profoundly and eloquently, insomuch that all men there present could not sufficiently commend and praise his great eloquence and excellent learning, and by no means could they induce or persuade him to recant. Then a certain bishop, named the Bishop of Londy, made a certain sermon against Master Jerome, persuading them to condemn him. After the bishop had ended the sermon. Master Jerome said again to them,

“You will condemn me wickedly and unjustly. But after my death I will leave a remorse in your conscience, and a nail in your hearts. And here I cite you to answer to me before the most high and just Judge, within a hundred years.”

No pen can sufficiently write or note those things which he most eloquently, profoundly, and philosophically had spoken in that audience; nor can any tongue sufficiently declare it. This is why I have but superficially touched the matter of his talk here, partly and not wholly noting it. Finally, when they could by no means persuade him to recant the premises, the sentence and judgment of his condemnation was immediately given against him, and read before him.

The Sentence.

“In the name of God, Amen. Christ our God, and our Savior being the true vine, whose Father is the husbandman, taught his disciples and all other faithful men, saying, ‘If any man does not abide in me, let him be cast out like a bough or branch, and let him wither and dry,’ etc. The doctrine and precepts of this most excellent doctor (Teacher) and Master, this most sacred synod of Constance executing and following in the cause of inquisition against heretics, being moved by this sacred synod, through report, public fame, and open infamy, proceeds against Jerome of Prague, master of arts, layman. By the acts and processes of whose cause it appears that the said Master Jerome has held, maintained, and taught diverse heretical and erroneous articles, lately reprov'd and condemned by the holy fathers, some being very blasphemous, some others offending godly ears, and many reckless and seditious, which have been affirmed, maintained, preached and taught by the men of the most damnable memory, John Wycliffe and John Huss, which are also written in many of their works and books. These articles of doctrine and books of the said John Huss, and John Wycliffe, together with their memory, and the person of the said John Huss, were condemned of heresy by the said sacred synod. This sentence of condemnation Jerome afterwards during the time of inquisition, acknowledged in the said sacred synod, and approved the true catholic and apostolic faith, consenting to it, cursing all heresy, especially that of which he was notorious, and confessed himself to be notorious, and that which in times past John Huss and John Wycliffe maintained and taught in their works, sermons, and books, for which the said Wycliffe and Huss, together with their doctrine and errors, were condemned as heretical by the said sacred synod. The condemnation

of all these premises he openly professed and allowed, and swore that he would persevere and continue in the verity of that faith. And if he should presume at any time to hold an opinion, or preach contrary to it, that he would submit himself to the trial and truth of the canons, and be bound to perpetual punishment. And this profession of his, written with his own hand, he delivered up to the holy council.

“Not many days after his said profession and abjuration, like a dog returning to its vomit, to the intent he might openly vomit up the most pestilent poison which had long lurked and lain hidden in his breast, he requested and desired that he might be openly heard before the council. This being granted to him, he affirmed, said, and professed before the whole synod, being publicly gathered together, that he had wickedly consented and agreed to the sentence and judgment of the condemnation of the said Wycliffe and Huss, and that he had most shamefully lied in approving and allowing the said sentence, nor was he ashamed to confess that he had lied; indeed, he also revoked and recanted his confession, approbation, and protestation, which he had made upon their condemnation, affirming that he never at any time had read any errors or heresy in the books and treatises of the said Wycliffe and Huss. Although he had confessed it before, and it is evidently proved that he diligently studied, read, and preached their books, in which it is manifest that many errors and heresies are contained in them. Also the said Master Jerome professed, regarding the sacrament of the altar and the transubstantiation of the bread into the body of Christ, that he holds and believes as the church holds and believes, saying also that he gives more credit to St. Augustine, and the other doctors of the church, than to Wycliffe and Huss. It appears moreover, by the premises, that the said Jerome is an adherent and maintainer of the said Wycliffe and Huss, and their errors, and both is, and has been, a favorer of them. Therefore the said sacred synod determines the said Master Jerome is a rotten and withered branch, not growing upon the vine, to be cut off and cast out. The said synod also pronounces, declares him excommunicate and accursed, and condemns him as a heretic, and drowned in all kinds of heresies, leaving him to the sentence and judgment of the secular judge, to receive just and due punishment, according to the quality of so great an offense. The sacred synod notwithstanding, entreats that the said judge would moderate his sentence of judgment without peril of death.”

This sentence so given before his face, being ended, a great and long miter of paper was brought to him, painted about with red devils. When he beheld and saw them, he threw his hood on the ground among the prelates. He took the miter and put it on his head saying, “Our Lord Jesus Christ, when he would suffer death for me, a most wretched sinner, wore a crown of thorns upon his head. And for his sake, instead of that crown, I will willingly wear this miter and cap.”

[318]

Afterwards he was laid hold of by the secular power. And after that, he was led out of the said church to the place of execution. When he was going out of the church, with a cheerful countenance and loud voice lifting his eyes up to heaven, he began to sing, “I believe in one God,” etc., as it is customarily sung in the church. Afterward as he passed along, he sung some canticles of the church. These being ended upon exiting the gate of the city, as men go to Gothlehem, he sang this hymn, *Felix Namque* (Indeed Fortunate). After that, he came to the place of execution where Master John Huss had innocently suffered death before. And kneeling down before an image resembling Master John Huss, as they prepared to burn Master Jerome, he made a certain devout prayer.

While he was thus praying, the tormentors took and lifted him up from the ground, spoiled him of all his garments, left him naked, and afterwards girded him about the loins with a linen cloth. They bound him fast with cords and chains of iron, to the image which was

fastened to the earth. And so standing on the ground, as they began to lay the wood about him, he sang *Salve Festa Dies*.⁸¹ When the hymn was ended, he sang again with a loud voice, “I believe in one God,” to the end. That being ended, he said to the people in the German tongue, in effect as follows.

“Dearly beloved children, even as I have now sung, so I believe, and none otherwise. And this creed is my whole faith, notwithstanding that now I die for this cause, because I would not consent and agree to the council and affirm with them and hold that Master John Huss was holily and justly condemned by them. For I knew well enough that he was a true preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

After that he was compassed about with wood up to the crown of the head. They cast all his garments on the wood also, and with a fire-brand they set it on fire. Once fired, he began to sing with a loud voice, “Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.” When that was ended, and he began to burn vehemently, he said in his native Bohemian tongue, “O Lord God, Father Almighty have mercy upon me, and be merciful to my offenses, for you know how sincerely I have loved your truth.” Then his voice was choked and stopped by the vehemence of the fire, so that it was no longer heard. But he moved his mouth and lips continually, as though he had still prayed or spoken within himself.

When his whole body with his beard was so burned round about, certain great blisters, big as an egg, appeared on his body, seen through the great burning. Yet he continually moved very strongly and stoutly, and shook his head and mouth, for almost a quarter of an hour. So burning in the fire, he lived with great pain and martyrdom, while one might easily have gone from St. Clement’s over the bridge to our lady church. After he was thus dead in the fire, by and by they brought his bedding, his straw bed, his boots, his hood, and all other things that he had in the prison, and burned them all to ashes in the same fire. After the fire was out, they diligently gathered these ashes together, and carried them in a cart, and cast them into the river Rhone, which ran nearby the city.

The man who was the true reporter of this, and testified to us the acts and doings surrounding the condemnation of Master Jerome, sent the same to us to Prague in writing. He thus concludes”

“All these things I beheld, saw, and heard done in this form and manner. And if any man tells you the contrary, do not credit him; for all those things which happened to him when he came toward Constance, and also at his first coming to Constance of his own free will, and afterward when he was brought bound to Constance, as aforesaid, I myself saw and perfectly beheld. And for a perpetual memory of it to be had forever, I have directed the same to you, not lying or falsifying any point of it, as He who is the Searcher of all men’s hearts can bear witness. I am willing to sustain the charge of ignorance and rudeness of style, to bear witness to the truth, rather than by any means be compelled — by tickling, or flattering the ears of the hearers with feigned and cloaked speech — to swerve or go aside from the truth.”

Thus end the tragic histories of Master John Huss, and Master Jerome of Prague, faithfully gathered and collected by a certain Bohemian, being a present eyewitness and beholder of the events, written and compiled first in Latin, and sent by that Bohemian into his country of Bohemia; and then translated from Latin into our English tongue with like fidelity.

⁸¹ *Salve Festa Dies* (Hail Festival Day!): a well-known Easter hymn originally written by Venantius Fortunatus in the sixth century. Ralph Vaughan Williams composed a tune for this hymn in 1906.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

In the meantime, while Master Jerome was in this trouble and before the council, the nobles and lords of Bohemia and of Moravia directed their letters to this barbarous council of popish murderers: in the following tenor and form of words.

*The Letter of the fifty-four Nobles of Moravia,
written to the Council of Constance in defense of
Master John Huss and Jerome of Prague.*

“To the right reverend fathers and lords in Christ, the lords cardinals, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, ambassadors, doctors, and masters, and to the whole Council of Constance; We, the nobles, lords, knights, and esquires, of the famous marquisdom of Moravia, wish the desire of all goodness, and the observation of the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Because every man, both by the law of nature and also by God’s law, is commanded to do unto another man, that which he would have done unto himself, and is forbidden to do that thing to another, which he would not have done to himself; as our Savior says, ‘All things whatever that you would have men do to you, even so do to them: for this is the law and the prophets.’ ^{Mat 7.12} Yes, the law is fulfilled in this one point, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ ^{Ga; 5.14} We, therefore (God being our author), having respect as much as it lies in us to the said law of God, and the love of our neighbor, previously sent our letters to Constance for our dearly beloved friend of good memory, Master John Huss, bachelor of divinity, and preacher of the gospel. Of late in the Council of Constance (we know not with what spirit being led) you have condemned him as an obstinate heretic; neither having confessed an thing, nor being lawfully convicted as was expedient; having no errors or heresies declared or laid against him, but only at the sinister, false, and importune accusations, suggestions, and instigations of his mortal enemies, and the traitors of our kingdom and marquisdom of Moravia. And being thus unmercifully condemned, you have slain him with a most shameful and cruel death, to the perpetual shame and infamy of our most Christian kingdom of Bohemia, and the famous marquisdom of Moravia (as we have written to Constance, to the most noble prince and lord, the Lord Sigismund, king of the Romans, and of Hungary, the heir and successor of our kingdom) which was also read and published in your congregations, which we will here also have enrolled. And you have burned him, as it is reported, in reproach and contempt of us.

“Therefore, we thought it good even now to direct our letters patent to your reverences now present in behalf of Master John Huss, openly professing and protesting, both with heart and mouth, that he, the said Master John Huss, was a just, good, and catholic man, and for a long season worthily commended and allowed in our kingdom for his life and conversation. He also preached and taught us and our subjects the law of the gospel, and of the holy prophets, and the books of the Old and New Testament, according to the exposition of the holy doctors approved by the church. And he left many monuments in writing, most constantly detesting and abhorring all errors and heresies, continually admonishing both us and all faithful Christians to do the like, diligently exhorting all men — as much as it lay in him by his words, writings, and labors — to quietness and concord.

[319] A.D. 1416.

So that using all the diligence that we might, we never heard nor could understand what Master John Huss had preached, taught, or by any means affirmed any error or heresy in his sermons, or that by any manner of means he had offended us, or our subjects, either by word or deed, but that he always led a quiet and a godly life in Christ, exhorting all men diligently, both by his word and works, as much as he might, to observe and keep the law of the gospel, and the institutions of the holy fathers, according to the preaching of our holy mother the church, and to the edifying of men’s souls. Nor did these premises which you had so

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

perpetrated to the reproach both of us and our kingdom and marquisdom, suffice and content you, but that also without all mercy and pity, you have apprehended, imprisoned, and condemned, and even now perhaps, as you did to Master John Huss, you have most cruelly murdered the worshipful man, Master Jerome of Prague, a man abounding in eloquence, master of the seven liberal arts, and a famous philosopher, not being seen, heard, examined, nor convicted, except at the sinister and false accusations of his and our accusers and betrayers.

“Furthermore, it has come to our knowledge and understanding (which we do not repeat without great grief) as we may also evidently gather by your writings, how certain detractors, odious both to God and men, privy enviers and betrayers, have wickedly and grievously, although falsely and traitorously, accused us, our kingdom and marquisdom aforesaid, before you in your council, that in the said kingdom of Bohemia, and marquisdom of Moravia, diverse errors have sprung up, which have grievously and manifoldly infected both our hearts, and also the hearts of many faithful men; so much so, that without a speedy stop or stay of correction, the said kingdom and marquisdom, together with the faithful Christians in it, would incur an irreparable loss and ruin of their souls.

“These cruel and pernicious injuries which are laid to us, and to our said kingdom and marquisdom, although most falsely and slanderously, how may we allow it? Forsomuch as through the grace of God (when in a manner all other kingdoms of the world have oftentimes wavered, making schisms and antipopes) our most gracious kingdom of Bohemia, and most noble marquisdom of Moravia, since the time they received the catholic faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, have always without reproof stuck constantly to the church of Rome, and have sincerely done their true obedience. Also with what great costs and charges, and great labor, with what worship and due reverence, they have revered the holy mother the church and her pastors, by their princes and faithful subjects, is more manifest than daylight to the whole world; and yourselves, if you will confess the truth, can witness the same also.

“Therefore, so that we, according to the mind of the apostle, may procure honest and good things, not only before God, but before men also, and lest by neglecting the famous renown of the kingdom and marquisdom, we be found cruel toward our neighbors — having a steadfast hope, a pure and sincere conscience and intent, and a certain true faith in Christ Jesus our Lord — by the tenor of these, we signify and declare to your fatherhoods, and to all faithful Christians, openly professing both with heart and mouth, that whatever man, of whatever estate, pre-eminence, dignity, condition, degree, or religion he is, who has said or affirmed, or either does say or affirm, that in the said kingdom of Bohemia, and marquisdom of Moravia, heresies have sprung up which have infected us and other faithful Christians, as aforesaid (the only person of our most noble prince and lord, Sigismund, king of Romans, and of Hungary, etc. our Lord and heir successor, being set apart, whom we trust and believe is not guilty in the premises) all and every such man (as aforesaid) lies falsely upon his head, as a wicked and naughty traitor and betrayer of the said kingdom and marquisdom, and is most traitorous to us, and is a most pernicious heretic, the son of all malice and wickedness, yes, and of the devil himself, who is a liar, and the father of all lies.

“Notwithstanding, for this present committing of the foresaid injuries unto God, to whom vengeance pertains, who will also abundantly reward the workers of iniquity, we will prosecute them more amply before him whom God shall appoint in the apostolic see, to govern his holy church, as the only and undoubted pastor. To whom, God willing, exhibiting our due reverence and obedience as faithful children, in those things which are lawful, honest, and agreeable to reason and the law of God, we will make our request and petition, that speedy remedy may be provided for us, our said kingdom and marquisdom upon the premises, according to the law of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the institutions of the holy fathers. The premises notwithstanding,

setting apart all fear and men's ordinances provided to the contrary, we will maintain and defend the law of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the devout, humble, and constant preachers of it, even to the shedding of our blood.

"Dated at Sternberg, in A.D. 1415, upon St. Wenceslaus' day, martyr of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Round about these letters hung fifty-four seals, and the names of those noblemen who subscribed to it, whose seals they were.

After these things concerning the history of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, the order of time calls me back to other matters here of our own country, which passed in the meantime with us in England. Once these things are finished, we will (Christ willing) return to the troubles and conflicts of the Bohemians, with other things besides, that pertain to the latter end of the Council of Constance, and the election of Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431).

You heard before, how after the death of Thomas Arundel, archbishop of Canterbury, Henry Chichesley succeeded him (A.D. 1414), and sat twenty-five years. In his time there was much trouble and great affliction of good men here in England. Many of them were compelled to abjure, some were burned, several were driven to exile. Of these, we will partly treat them as we find them recorded in various registers and histories. We will begin with John Claydon of London, and Richard Turming. Their history in the registers is declared as follows.

The History of John Claydon, Currier; and Richard Turming, Baker.

The 17th of August, 1415, John Claydon, currier of London (arrested by the mayor of the city on suspicion of heresy) personally appeared before Henry, archbishop of Canterbury, in St. Paul's church. It was objected to him by the archbishop, that in the city of London, and in other places of the province of Canterbury, he was suspected of heresy by diverse godly and learned men, and to be contrary to the catholic faith and determination of the church. He openly confessed, and did not deny that for twenty years he had been suspected both about the city of London, and also in the province of Canterbury, and especially by the common sort, of holding the opinions of the **Lollards** and heresy, contrary to the catholic faith and determination of the church of Rome, and was defamed by the same all the time aforesaid.

It went so far, that in the time of Master Robert Braybrook, bishop of London (deceased), he was committed for two years to the prison of Conway for the foresaid defamation and suspicion, and for the same cause he was also in prison in the Fleet for three years. In the reign of King Henry IV, he was brought out of this prison, and stood before the Lord John Scarle, who was then chancellor to the king, and there he abjured all heresy and error.

[320]

Being asked by the archbishop whether he abjured the heresy of which he was suspected before any other, this John Claydon confessed that in a convocation at London, in St. Paul's church, before Thomas Arundel, late archbishop, deceased, he abjured all such doctrine, which they called heresy and error, contrary to the catholic faith and determination of the church. He confessed that he had not only left such articles and opinions in which he was defamed, but also abstained from all company who were suspected of such opinions, so that he would give neither aid, help, counsel, nor favor to them.

And, moreover, the said John was asked by the archbishop, whether he had ever since his abjuration had in his house or in his keeping, any books written in English. To which he confessed, and would not deny, that he had in his house and in his keeping, many English books. For he was arrested by the mayor of the city of London for such books as he had,

which (he thought) were in the mayor's keeping. Upon which the mayor openly confessed that he had such books in his keeping, which in his judgment were the worst, and the most perverse that he ever read or saw. The mayor gave up to the archbishop one book that was well-bound in red leather, of parchment, written in a good English hand, which was among the other books found with the said John Claydon. Whereupon the said John Claydon, being asked by the archbishop if he knew that book, openly confessed that he knew it very well, because he caused it to be written with his own costs and charges, for he spent much money on it since his abjuration. Then he was asked who wrote it. He answered, someone called John Grime.

And further, being required to say what the said John Grime was, he answered that he could not tell. Again, being demanded whether he ever read the same book, he confessed that he could not read, but he had heard a fourth of it read by one John Fullar. He was asked whether he thought the contents of that book were catholic, profitable, good and true? He answered that many things which he had heard in the same book, were both profitable, good, and healthful to his soul; and he said that he had great affection for that book, for a sermon that was preached at Horslydown, was written in the book. Being further asked whether, since the time of his said abjuration, he communed with one Richard Turming of that city, he answered yes: for the said Richard Turming often came to his house to have communication with him. And being asked whether he knew that Richard was suspected of and defamed by heresy, he answered again that he knew well that the said Richard was suspected and defamed by many men and women in the city of London, as one whom they thought to be a heretic.

This confession being made, he caused the said books to be delivered to Master Robert Gilbert, doctor of divinity, to William Lindewood, doctor of both laws, and other clerics, to be examined. In the meantime, David Beard, Alexander Philip, and Balthasar Mero, were taken as witnesses against him, and were committed to be examined by Master John Escourt, general examiner of Canterbury. This done, the archbishop adjourned his session till the next Monday, in the same place. This Monday having come, which was the 20th of August, the said Master Escourt openly and publicly exhibited the evidences, being openly read before the archbishop, and other bishops. This being read, they were then read diverse treatises found in the house of the said John Claydon. Being examined, various points were gathered out of them, and noted as heresies and errors — especially out of the aforesaid book, which John Claydon confessed was written and bound at his own cost. This book was entitled “The Lanthorn (lantern) of Light.”

For the articles contained in this and other books, the archbishop, with other bishops and learned men, communing together, first condemned the books as heretical, and then burned them in the fire. And then, because they thought John Claydon was forsworn and had fallen into heresy, the archbishop proceeded to his definitive sentence against him. Claydon personally appeared before him in judgment (his confessions being read and deposed against him) in this manner:

“In the name of God, Amen. We, Henry, by the grace of God, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the apostolical see, in a certain cause of heretical pravity, and of relapse into the same, whereupon John Claydon, layman of the province of Canterbury, was detected, accused and denounced, and in the said province of Canterbury publicly defamed (as known to us by public fame, commonly and notoriously reported), first, sitting in the judgment-seat, and observing all things lawfully required in this behalf, we proceed to the pronouncing of the sentence, definitive in form as follows. The name of Christ being invoked and only set before our eyes, forasmuch as by the acts and things enacted, produced, exhibited

and confessed before us; also by diverse signs and evidences, we have found the said John Claydon to have been, and to be publicly and notoriously relapsed again into his former heresy, previously abjured by him; according to the merits and deserts of the said cause, being diligently searched, weighed, and pondered by us before, to the intent that the said John Claydon shall not infect others with his scab, by the consent and assent of our reverend brethren, Richard, bishop of London, John, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, and Stephen, bishop of St. David's, and by other doctors of divinity as well as of both laws, and also of other discreet and learned men assisting us in this behalf, we do judge, pronounce, and declare the said John Claydon to be relapsed again into his heresy, which he abjured before, finally and definitively appointing him to be left to the secular judgment, and so leave him by these presents."

Thus John Claydon, receiving his judgment and condemnation by the archbishop, was committed to the secular power, and was committed by them to the fire at Smithfield, where he was meekly made a burnt offering to the Lord, A.D. 1415.

Robert Fabian and other chronologers who follow him, also add that Richard Turming, baker, of whom mention was made before in the examination of John Claydon, was likewise at the same time burned with him at Smithfield. But in the register I find no sentence of condemnation given against the said Turming, nor in the history of St. Albans is there any such mention of his burning made, but only of the burning of John Claydon as aforesaid. Therefore I leave the judgment of it free to the reader. Notwithstanding, concerning the said Turming this is certain: that he was accused to the bishops, and no doubt was in their hands and bands. What was done with him afterwards, I refer to the authors.

The next year after the burning of these two aforesaid men, and also John Huss being burnt at Constance, which was A.D. 1416, the prelates of England seeing the daily increase of the true gospel, and fearing the ruin of their papal kingdom, were busily occupied with all their counsel and diligence to maintain it. Therefore, to make their state and kingdom sure, by statutes, laws, constitutions, and terror of punishment, as Thomas Arundel and other prelates had done before, so Henry Chichesley, archbishop of Canterbury, in his convocation at London, made another constitution against the poor **Lollards** (as though there had not been enough made before). The copy and tenor of it he sent abroad to the bishop of London, and to other suffragans of his, to be put into strait execution by them, as follows:

"Henry, by the grace of God archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England, and legate of the chief seat: to our reverend brother in the Lord, Richard, by the grace of God bishop of London, health and brotherly love, with continual increase. Lately in our last convocation in St. Paul's church in London, being kept by you and other our brethren and clergy of our province, we remember having made this order underwritten, by your consents.

[321] A.D. 1416.

"When as among many other cares of ours, this ought to be chief, that by some means we may take those heretics who, like foxes, lurk and hide themselves in the Lord's vineyard; and so that the dust of negligence may be utterly shaken from our feet and from the feet of our fellow brethren; in this said convocation of the prelates and clergy, we have ordained that our fellow brethren, our suffragans and archdeacons of our province of Canterbury, by themselves, their officials or commissaries in their jurisdictions, and every one of their charges in their country, twice every year at least, diligently inquire about those persons who are suspected of heresy. And that in every such parish in which any heretics are reported to inhabit, their archdeacons cause three or more of the most honest men, and best reported of, to take their oath upon the

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

holy evangelists, that if they know or understand that anyone is frequenting either in secret conventicles, or else differing in life or manners from the common conversation of other catholic men, or else hold any heresies or errors, or else have any suspected books in the English tongue, or receive any such persons suspected of heresies and errors into their houses, or who favor those who are inhabitants in any such place, or are conversant with them, or else have any recourse to them — that they make certifications about those persons in writing, with all the circumstances with which they are suspected, to the said suffragans or archdeacons, or to their commissaries, as soon and with as much speed as they possibly can; and that the said archdeacon, and every one of their commissaries aforesaid, declare the names of all such persons denounced, together with all the circumstances of them, the diocese and places, and send the same over to us secretly under their seals. And that the same diocesans effectually direct lawful process against them, as the quality of the cause requires, and that with all diligence they discern, define, and execute the same.

“And if perhaps they do not leave such convicted persons to the secular court, notwithstanding let them commit them to the perpetual or temporal prisons, as the quality of the cause requires, until the next convocation of the prelates and clergy of our province of Canterbury, there personally to remain. And that in the same prisons, they cause them to be kept according as the law requires; and that of all and singular the things aforesaid — that is, whatever inquisition they have made, and whatever they have found, and how in the process they have behaved themselves, and what persons so convicted they have caused to be put in safe keeping, with what diligence or negligence of the commissaries aforesaid, with all and all manner of other circumstances premised and in any way pertaining to these, and especially of the abjurations, if in the meantime they chance to abjure any heresies, that then in the next convocation of the prelates and clergy under the form aforesaid, they cause the same to be distinctly and openly certified to us and our successors; and that they deliver effectually to the official of our court, the same process, to remain with them, or else in the register of our court of Canterbury, so that everyone to whom such things pertain, for the further execution of the same process, may have recourse to the same official with all effect.

“We therefore command that, as regards the constitution brought to your city and diocesan, you cause the same to be published in a convenient place and time, and that in all points you both observe the same yourselves, and also cause it to be diligently observed by others; commanding, furthermore, all and singular of our fellow brethren and suffragans, that they likewise cause the same to be published throughout all their cities and dioceses, and both diligently observe the same themselves, and also cause all others to do the same; and whatever thing you do in the premises, that you certify to us between this and the Feast of St. Peter *ad vinculo* next coming, that you duly certify these things to us by your letters patent, containing the same effect, sealed with your seals. Dated at our house in London, the first day of July, A.D. 1416.”⁸²

During the time of this convocation, two priests were presented and brought before the bishops, defamed as heretics, one named John Barton, to whom it was objected by Philip, bishop of Lincoln, that he had been excommunicated about six or seven years before, upon articles concerning religion, and yet they would neither appear when cited, nor seek to be reconciled again to the church. These things being so proved against him, he was committed to the custody of Philip, bishop of Lincoln, to be held in prison till he heard further what should be done.

The other was Robert Chapel, otherwise named Holbech, sometime chaplain to the Lord Cobham; to whom it was likewise objected that being under the sentence of

⁸² [Adding auricular confession to this, it creates a shockingly effective, though abusive, spy network.](#)

excommunication for about three or four years, he nonetheless continued saying mass and preaching, and did not seek to be reconciled. Chapel denied knowing of any such excommunication given out against him. Then the copy of his excommunication, first made by the bishop of Rochester, and afterward denounced by the bishop of London at St. Paul's cross, was brought and read before Chapel. That being done, the session broke up for that time, which was about the latter end of May, A.D. 1416.

The twelfth of July next following, Chapel appeared again before the archbishop and the prelates. And confessing and submitting himself, he desired pardon. The bishop of Rochester putting in his hands the decree of the canon law, made Chapel abjure all his former articles and opinions as heretical and schismatical, never to hold the same again, according to the contents of the canon. Upon which, Robert Chapel being absolved by the authority of the archbishop (except that he could not intermeddle with saying mass before he had been dispensed from the pope himself for irregularity), he was enjoined by the archbishop himself for his penance, to stand at St. Paul's, and to publish the following articles to the people, given him to be read as his confession.

“1. I confess that bishops, priests, and other ecclesiastical persons, having no other possession to the contrary, may lawfully have, receive, and retain temporal lands and possessions, to dispense and dispose the same and their rents, to behoove themselves or their church where they dwell, as seems good to them.

“2. I confess that it would be very unlawful, indeed, rather unjust, that temporal men on any occasion whatsoever, should take away temporal lands and possessions from the church, either universal or particular, to which they are given — the consideration of the abuse of mortal prelates, priests, or other ministers in the church conversant⁸³ (which are mixed together good with bad) abusing the same, to the contrary notwithstanding.

“3. I confess that pilgrimages to the relics of saints, and to holy places, are not prohibited, nor to be despised by any catholic, but are available for the remission of sins, and approved by the holy fathers, and worthy to be commended.

“4. I confess that to worship the images of Christ or of any other saints, being set up in the church or in any other place, is not forbidden; nor does it conduce to idolatry, being so used as the holy fathers will them to be worshipped; but rather such images profit much to the health of Christians, because they put us in remembrance of the merits of those saints whom they represent, and the sight of them moves and stirs up the people to prayers and devotion.

“5. I confess that auricular confession used in the church is necessary for a sinner to the salvation of his soul, and necessary to be done by such a priest as is ordained by the church to hear the confession of the sinner, and to enjoin him to penance for the same; without which confession (if it may be had) there is no remission of sins to one who is in mortal sin.

[322]

“6. I confess and firmly hold, that even if the priest is in mortal sin, yet he makes the body of Christ, and ministers other sacraments and sacramentals, which nevertheless are profitable to all the faithful, whoever receives them in faith and devotion of the church.

“7. I confess that bishops in their own dioceses may forbid, decree, or ordain on reasonable grounds, that priests should not, without their special license, preach the word of God, and that those who do this against the same, should suffer ecclesiastical censures.

⁸³ Church conversant: that is, the *familiar* church, or local congregation.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

“8. I confess that private religions of monks, canons, and others, as well as the begging friars, being allowed by the church of Rome, are profitable to the universal church, and by no means contrary to God’s law, but rather founded and authorized by it.

“9. I promise and swear upon these holy evangelists, which I hold here in my hands, that I will henceforth never hold, affirm, nor by any means teach anything contrary to these premises either openly or privately.”

After setting out the aforesaid constitution in the days of Henry Chichesley, archbishop of Canterbury, great inquisition followed in England, and many good men, whose hearts began to be won to the gospel, were brought to much vexation, and caused outwardly to abjure.

Thus, while Christ had the inward hearts of men, yet the catholic antichrist would possess their outward bodies, and make them sing his song. In the number of those who were compelled to abjure, besides the others aforesaid, was John Taylor of the parish of St. Michael’s at Quern; William James, master of arts and physician, who had long remained in prison; at length, after abjuration, he was licensed with his keeper to practice his medicine.

Also John Dwarf, so named for his low stature, who was sent by the duke of Bedford to the aforesaid Chichesley, and other bishops, to be examined before them or the convocation. There at length, revolting from his doctrine, he recanted and did penance.

In like manner John Jourdelay of Lincolnshire, well commended in the registers for his learning, was accused by the priests of Lincoln for a certain book which he, contrary to the former decree of the bishops, concealed and did not exhibit to them, was therefore forced to abjure. After him, one Katharine Dertford, a spinster, was likewise brought before the bishops. Being accused and examined upon these three articles concerning the sacrament of the pope’s altar, adoration of images, and of pilgrimage, answered that she was not able, being unlearned, to answer to such high matters. Nor did she have any further skill, but only her creed and ten commandments; and so she was committed to the vicar general of the bishop of Winchester (for she was of the same diocese), to be kept and further examined by the same.

At the same sitting, the parson of Heggeley in Lincolnshire, named Master Robert, was also brought before the archbishop and his fellow bishops, by the lieutenant of the Tower. Being long kept in the Tower, at length by the king’s writ, he was brought and examined at the same time upon like articles — to wit, regarding the sacrament of their altar, pilgrimage, adoration of images, and whether it was lawful for spiritual men to enjoy temporal lordships, etc. To these articles he answered (says the register) doubly and mockingly; except that in the sacrament, he seemed somewhat more conformable, though not yet fully to their content. Therefore, being committed to the custody and examination of Richard, bishop of Lincoln, in the end he was also induced to submit himself.

William Henry of Tenterden did likewise, being suspected and arrested for keeping company with those whom the bishops called **Lollards**, and for having suspected books.

Besides these, there were many others who were assembled in the same convocation, and revoked their opinions, such as John Galle, a priest of London, for having a book in English, entitled “A Book of the New Law.” Richard Monk, vicar of Chesham in Lincolnshire, who likewise submitted himself. In this race and number followed, moreover, Bartholomew Commonger, Nicholas Hoper, servant to the Lord Cobham, and Thomas Granter, with others mentioned in the register.

Among the rest who were at this time troubled for their faith, was one Radulph Mungin, priest. For the same doctrine he was arrested and sent by the lord chancellor of England to the archbishop, and committed by him to David Price, vicar-general to the bishop of London. There, after he had endured four months in prison, he was presented to the convocation, against whom diverse articles were objected.

But to better explain the matter, it is first to be noted here, that regarding the time of this provincial convocation, Pope Martin had sent down to the clergy of England, to gather a subsidy from the church, to maintain the pope's war against the **Lollards** of Bohemia (for so the papists termed them). Also, another subsidy was demanded to persecute one Peter Clerk, master of arts of Oxford, who fleeing out of England, was at the Council of Basel, disputing on the Bohemians' side. And thirdly, another subsidy was also required to persecute William Russel, warden of the Gray Friars in London, who at the same time had fled from England to Rome, to maintain his opinion before the pope, and there escaped from prison. We will treat him more at large afterward (Christ willing). In the meantime, mark here the petty shifts of the pope to hook in the English money, by all manner of pretenses possible.

Thus Ralph Mungin, appearing before the bishops in the convocation, had objected against him, first, that he affirmed and held that it was not lawful for any Christian to fight and make war against the heretics of Bohemia. It was also objected that he held and said that it was not lawful for any man to have property of goods, but that they should be held in common, which he expressly denied that he ever said or affirmed. Whereby we have to observe how the crafty malice of these adversaries used to falsely collect and surmise about men, what they never spoke, to oppress wrongfully those whom they cannot impugn by plain truth.

Moreover, they objected against him, that he kept company with Master Clerk, and also that he dispersed in the city of London certain books of John Wycliffe and of Peter Clerk, namely the book 'Triologus,' and the gospel of John Wycliffe, etc. He was charged, moreover, to have spoken against the pope's indulgences, affirming that the pope had no more power to give indulgences than he had.

Upon these and other such articles that were objected against him, Mungin was asked if he would revoke them. He answered that it seemed to him it was not just or fitting to do so, not knowing himself to be guilty of any heresy. Thus being postponed for the time, he was committed to prison till the next sitting. Then being called afterward before the bishops, after a long inquisition and strait examination, and also after depositions were brought in against him, so many as they could find, he notwithstanding refused to recant, as before. Therefore the aforesaid Henry, the archbishop, proceeded to his sentence definitive, condemning him to perpetual imprisonment.

After this followed the recantation of Richard Monk, and Thomas Granter. Also of Edmund Frith who was previously butler to Sir John Oldcastle [*i.e.*, the Lord Cobham].

Besides these, many are recorded in the register, who were greatly vexed and troubled for their faith and religion, especially in the diocese of Kent, in the towns of Romney, Tenterden, Woodchurch, Cranbrook, Staplehurst, Benenden, Halden, Rolvenden, and others. There whole households, both man and wife, were driven to abandon their houses and towns for danger of persecution. This sufficiently appears in the process of the archbishop Chichesley against those persons, and in the certificate of Burbath, his official, in which the following persons are named:

1. W. White, priest.
2. Thomas Grenested, priest.
3. Bartholomew Commonger.
4. John Wadnon.
5. Joan his wife.
6. Thomas Everden.
7. William Everden.
8. Stephen Robin.

9. W. Chiveling.
10. John Tame.
11. John Fowlin.
12. William Somen.
13. Marian his wife.
14. John Abraham.
15. Robert Munden.
16. Laurence Coke.

[323] AD. 1418.

These being cited up together by the bishop, would not appear. Upon which a great inquisition was made for them by his officers. These people were constrained to flee their houses and towns, and shift for themselves as secretly as they could.

The Execution of the Lord Cobham.

Concerning Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham, his first apprehension with his whole history and life, has been sufficiently expressed before (see pp. 282-288) — how being committed to the Tower, and falsely condemned of heresy, he escaped afterwards out of the Tower, and was in Wales about four years. In this time, a great sum of money was promised by proclamation of the king, to whoever could take Sir John Oldcastle, either alive or dead. About the end of the four years, the Lord Powis — whether for love and greed of the money, or for hatred of the true and sincere doctrine of Christ — sought all manner of ways to play the part of Judas. At length he obtained his bloody purpose, and brought the Lord Cobham bound to London; this was about December, A.D. 1417. At this time there was a parliament assembled in London. The records of this parliament say that:

“On Tuesday the fourteenth day of December, and the twenty-ninth day of the said parliament, Sir John Oldcastle of Cowling, in the county of Kent, knight, being outlawed (as mentioned before) in the king’s bench, and previously excommunicated by the archbishop of Canterbury for heresy, was brought before the lords; and having heard his said convictions, he did not answer to these in his excuse. Upon which record and process it was adjudged that he should be taken as a traitor to the king and the realm; that he should be carried to the Tower of London, and from there down through London, to the new gallows in St. Giles outside Temple Bar, and there to be hanged, and burned hanging.”

Thus, after a long process, they condemned him again for heresy and treason, by force of the aforementioned act. He rendered thanks to God, that He had so appointed him to suffer for his name’s sake.

On 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 a hurdle (sled), as though he had been a most heinous traitor to the crown, and so he was drawn to St. Giles’s-fields, where they had set up a new pair of gallows. As he was coming to the place of execution, and was taken from the hurdle, he fell down devoutly upon his knees, desiring Almighty God to forgive his enemies. Then he stood up and beheld the multitude, exhorting them in a most godly manner, to follow the laws of God written in the Scriptures, and in any case, to beware of those teachers who they see are contrary to Christ in their conversation and living; with many other special counsels. Then he was hanged 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 hand of God, and so departed from here most christianly, his body being resolved into ashes. This was done A.D. 1418, which was the fifth year of the

reign of King Henry V. The people there present, showed great sorrow. It would take too long to write about how the priests at that time fared, blaspheming and cursing the people, requiring them not to pray for the lord Cobham, but to judge him damned in hell because he did not depart in the obedience of their pope.

This terrible kind of death (with gallows, chains, and fire) does not appear very precious in the eyes of men who are carnal — no more than did the death of Christ, when he was hung between two thieves. The wise man says,

“The righteous seems to die in the sight of those who are unwise, and their end is taken for very destruction. Ungodly souls think the lives of the righteous are true madness, and their passage from here without any honor. But though they suffer pains before men, their expectation is full of immortality. They are accounted the children of God, and have their portion among the saints. As gold in the furnace, God tries his elect, and as a most pleasant burnt offering, He receives them to rest.” ^{Wis 3.2-6}

The harder the passage, the more glorious they shall appear in the latter resurrection. It is not that the afflictions of this life are worthy of such glory, but that it is God’s heavenly pleasure to so reward them. The judgments and ways of men are never like the judgments and ways of God, but evermore contrary, unless they are taught by Him. “In the latter time,” says the Lord to Daniel, “many shall be chosen, proved, and purified by fire; and yet the ungodly shall still live wickedly, and have no understanding; that is of faith.” ^{Dan 12.10} By an angel from heaven, John was earnestly commanded to write that “blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.” ^{Rev 14.13} “Right dear in the sight of God,” says David, “is the death of his servants.” ^{Psa 116.15}

Thus rested this valiant Christian knight, Sir John Oldcastle, under the altar of God, which is Jesus Christ, among that godly company who, in the kingdom of patience, suffered great tribulation with the death of their bodies for His faithful word and testimony; He abiding there with them; He fulfilling their whole number and the full restoration of his elect — which He grants in effect, who is one God eternal! Amen.

Thus have you heard the whole matter concerning the martyrdom of the good Lord Cobham, as we have gathered it partly out of the collections of John Bale ⁸⁴ and others. Moreover, in the records mentioned above, it follows how in the parliament, after the martyrdom of this valiant knight, a motion was made that Lord Powis might be thanked and rewarded, according to the proclamation made for his great pains taken in the apprehension of “Sir John Oldcastle, knight, heretic.” Thus stand the words of the record. Two things are to be noted here: first, how Sir John is not called *traitor* in the record, but only *heretic*. Secondly, mark how this brother of Judas (Lord Powis) here craves his reward for betraying innocent blood. In this, it is not to be doubted that his light fee, and “what will you give me?” in this world, will have a heavy reward in the world to come, unless he repented.

And now from our English matters, to return again to the history of the Bohemians, from where we have digressed a little, When the news of the barbarous cruelty exercised at Constance against John Huss and Jerome of Prague were noised in Bohemia, the nobles and gentlemen of Moravia and Bohemia, those who favored the cause of John Huss, gathered themselves together in the zeal of Christ. First they sent their letter to the council; expostulating with them for the injury done to those godly men, as expressed is before. For this letter they were all cited up to the council. Sigismund the emperor gives an answer to

⁸⁴ [John Bale \(1495-1563\), historian, playwright, and reformer; Bishop of Ossory in Ireland \(1552-1553\).](#)

this letter in the name of the whole council. First, he excused himself of John Huss's death, which he said was against his safe conduct and against his will — insomuch that he rose in anger from the council and departed from Constance, as remembered before. Secondly, he requires them to be quiet, and to conform themselves peaceably to the order of the catholic church of Rome, etc. Also, the council hearing or fearing some stir to rise among the Bohemians, made several laws and articles by which to bridle them.

The Bohemians, however, notwithstanding these cruel articles, disdain the vain devices of these prelates and fathers of the council, did not cease to proceed in their league and purpose, joining themselves together more strongly.

[324]

In the meantime it happened that during this council of Constance, after deposing Pope John and spoiling him of his goods — which came to 75,000 pounds of gold and silver, as reported in the history of St. Alban's — Pope Martin V was elected to the pontifical chair, on St. Martin's Day.⁸⁵ Concerning his election, great preparation was made beforehand by the council, so that besides the cardinals, five other bishops of every nation entered into the conclave. There they were kept together on a thin diet till they had chosen a pope; at last they agreed upon this man. And not tarrying for opening the door, like mad men, in haste they broke open a hole in the wall, crying out, "We have Pope Martin!" The emperor hearing of it, came with similar haste, and falling down he kissed the new pope's feet. Then they all went to the church together, and sang *Te Deum* (an ancient liturgical hymn)

The next day, this Martin was made priest (for he was only a cardinal deacon before). The day after he was consecrated bishop, and sang his first mass, at which 140 mitred bishops were present. After this, the new holy pope ordained a general procession, where a certain cleric was appointed to stand with flax and fire. Setting the flax on fire, he said, "Behold, holy father, thus the glory of this world passes away." Which being done, the same day the holy father was brought up to a high scaffold, the history says (I will not say to a high mountain), where he was offered all the glory of the world, etc. there to be crowned as a triple king. This done, after dinner the same day, the newly crowned pope was brought through the midst of the city of Constance with great triumph, where all the bishops and abbots followed wearing their miters. The pope's horse was all in scarlet trappings down to the ground. The cardinal's horses were all in white silk; the emperor on the right side, and prince elector on the left, went on foot (both playing the pope's footmen), leading the pope's horse by the bridle.

As this pageant thus proceeded with the great giant, and came to the market place, there the Jews (according to the custom) offered him their law and ceremonies. The pope receiving these, cast them behind him saying, "Let old things pass away, all things are become new," etc. This was A.D. 1417. (Ex Hist. St. Alb. ex paralip. Ursperg.)

Thus the pope, now being confirmed in his kingdom, first begins to write his letters to the Bohemians, in which partly he moves them to catholic obedience, and partly he dissembles with them, pretending that if it were not for the emperor's request, he would enter process against them. Thirdly, and finally, he threatens to attempt the utmost against them, and with all force to invade them with the apostolic as well as with the secular arm, if they still persisted as they began. However, these new threats of the new bishop did not move the

⁸⁵ Antipope John XXII was deposed the 29th of March 1415, for notorious simony, abetting schism, and leading a scandalous life. He fled Constance but was eventually arrested and returned to the council. The council also deposed antipope Benedict XIII and accepted Gregory XII's resignation, **thus ending the Western Schism.**

constant hearts of the Bohemians, whom the inward zeal of Christ's word had inflamed before. And although it could have been wished that such bloodshed and wars had not followed, yet, to say the truth, how could these men greatly blame the Bohemians in this, whom their own bloody tyranny had provoked so unjustly before, if now with their glossing letters they could not so easily appease them again?

Therefore, these Bohemians, partly for the love of John Huss and Jerome their countrymen, and partly for the hatred of the malignant papistry, assembled together. They first agreed to celebrate a solemn memorial of the death of John Huss and Jerome, decreeing that it would be held and celebrated yearly. And afterward, by means of their friends, they obtained certain churches from king Wenceslaus, in which they might freely preach and minister the sacraments to the congregation. This done, they suppressed several monasteries, pharisaical temples, and idolatrous fanes (temples), beginning first with the great monastery of the Blackfriars, eight miles from Prague, driving the wicked and vicious priests and monks away from them, or compelling them to a better order. And thus their number more and more increasing under the safe conduct of a certain nobleman named Nicholas, they went again to the king, requesting to have more and ampler churches granted to them. The king at first seemed willingly and gently to give ear to Nicholas entreating for the people, and he commanded them to come again the next day.

When the people had departed, the king turned to the nobleman Nicholas, who tarried behind. He said, "You have begun a web to put me out of my kingdom, but I will make a rope of it with which I will hang you." Whereupon Nicholas immediately departed out of the king's presence, and the king himself went into the castle of Vissegrade. Soon after, he entered a new castle, which he himself had built five stones' cast from there, and sent ambassadors to his brother to require aid.

These protestants ⁸⁶ were assembled in the town of Prague, holding their meetings. The king sent his chamberlain with three hundred horsemen to fall upon them; but the chamberlain fled, fearing for his life. ⁸⁷ When the news was brought to the king, all who were around him were shocked, utterly detesting the act. But the king's cup-bearer standing by, said "I knew before, that these things would thus come to pass." The king taking hold of him in a rage, threw him down before his feet, and would have slain him with his dagger, but was prevented by those who were about him. With much persuasion the king pardoned his life. Immediately the king was taken with a palsy and fell sick. Eighteen days after (16 Aug 1419), when the king had marked the names of those whom he appointed to be put to death, and incessantly called for the aid of his brother and his other friends, he departed this life — before the princes whom he sent for had come. He reigned fifty-five years, and died about the age of fifty-seven.

Ziska of Bohemia – Hussite Wars – 1419-1434

Immediately after the death of Wenceslaus, there arose a certain nobleman named John Ziska, born at Trosnovia (c. 1360). From his youth upward, he was brought up in the king's court, and had lost one of his eyes in a battle, where he had valiantly conducted himself. This man being grieved for the death of John Huss and Jerome of Prague, and minding to

⁸⁶ Our author is speaking of events about a century before the Reformation, and he gives the appellation of *protestants* to those who in that age were opposed to the papal system. There were many such in all ages of the church. [Ed.]

⁸⁷ [30 July 1419, a Hussite procession headed by the priest Jan Želivský attacked New Town Hall in Prague and threw the king's representatives, the burgomaster, and some town councillors from the windows into the street. This was known as the first "Defenestration of Prague."](#)

revenge the injuries which the council had done to the great dishonor of the kingdom of Bohemia, gathered together a number of men of war. He pulled down the monasteries and idolatrous temples, pulling down and breaking in pieces the images and idols, driving away the priests and monks whom he said were kept in their cloisters, like swine in their styes, to be fatted. After this, his army being increased, he gathered together about 40,000 men, and attempted to take the castle of Vissegrade, which was but slenderly defended. From there Ziska went speedily to Pelzina, where he knew he had many friends of his faction, and took the town into his power, fortifying it very strongly. Those who tarried behind, took the castle of Vissegrade.

Then Queen Sophia sent letters and messengers to the Emperor Sigismund and other nobles, requiring aid and help. But the emperor was making preparations against the Turks, who had recently won certain castles from him. Upon which the queen, seeing all aid so far off, together with Zenko Warterberge, gathered a host with the king's treasure, and fortified the castle of Prague, and the lesser city which joins to the castle — making gates and towers of wood upon the bridge, so that the protestants would have no passage that way. Then it happened that at the Isle of St. Benedict,⁸⁸ one Peter Steremberge fought an equal or indifferent battle with them.

[325] A.D. 1419.

In the meantime, the number of the protestants being increased in Prague, they fought for the bridge. In this battle many were slain on both sides, but at length the Hussites won the bridge and the lower part of Lesser Prague. The queen's party fled into the upper part, where turning again, they fiercely renewed the battle, and fought continually day and night for five days. Many were slain on both sides, and goodly buildings were destroyed. The council house, which was in a low place, was utterly defaced and burned.

During the time of this troublous estate, the ambassadors of the Emperor Sigismund had come, who took upon themselves the rule and government of the realm. They made a truce with the city of Prague on these conditions: that the castle of Vissegrade being surrendered, it should be lawful for them to send ambassadors to the Emperor Sigismund to negotiate as to their estate, and that Ziska should surrender Pilzina and Piesta, with the other forts which he had taken. These conditions thus agreed upon and received, all the foreign protestants departed out of the city, and the senate of the city began to govern again according to their accustomed manner; all things were quieted. However, the papists, who had left town, dared not return. But they still looked to the emperor, by whose presence they thought they should have been safe. But their hope was frustrated when certain letters were sent from the emperor, saying that he would shortly come and rule the kingdom, even in the same manner as his father Charles had done before him. Upon this, the protestants understood that their sect and religion would be utterly banished.

About Christmas, the Emperor Sigismund came to Brunna, a city of Moravia, and there he pardoned the citizens of Prague, on condition that they would let down the chains and bars of the city, and receive his rulers and magistrates. The whole city obeyed, and the magistrates, lifting up their hands to heaven, rejoiced at the coming of the new king. But the emperor turned another way, and went to Uratislavia, the head city of Silesia, where a little earlier the commonalty of the city had slain the magistrates in an insurrection (whom his brother Wenceslaus had set in authority); the leaders of that insurrection he beheaded.

⁸⁸ There is no "Isle" of St. Benedict, but there is a Benedictine monastery in the Břevnov district of Prague, and the Church of St. Benedict is in the Hradčany district, near the old royal palace and Lesser Town.

When news of this was reported at Prague, the citizens were terrified by the example of the Uratislavians. Distrusting their pardon, they rebelled. And having influenced Cencho to join them, who had the government of the castle of Prague, they sent letters into all the realm, that no man should allow the emperor to enter, as he was an enemy to Bohemia, and sought nothing else but to destroy the kingdom. He had also bound the ancient city of the Prutenians under order, by pledges, and removed the marquess of Brandenburg from the Bohemian crown. The emperor had not only allowed John Huss and Jerome of Prague to be burned at the Council of Constance, but he also procured it; and with all his endeavors he impugned the doctrine and faith which they taught and followed. While these things were thus done, Ziska, having given back Pelzina by arrangement, was twice assaulted by his enemies. But through his skill he was victor each time. The places where they fought were rough and unknown; his enemies were on horseback, and his soldiers on foot; nor could any battle be fought except on foot. Whereupon, when his enemies alighted from their horses, Ziska commanded the women, who usually followed the host, to cast their kerchiefs on the ground. The horsemen being entangled in them by their spurs, they were slain before they could unloose their feet.

After this, he went to Ausca, a town situated on the river Lucinitius. Procopius and Ulricius, two brethren papists, had cast many protestants out of this town. Ziska took it by force of arms the first night of Lent, and set it on fire. He also took the castle of Litius, which was a mile off, where Ulric had fled, and put Ulric and all his family to the sword, except one.

Then, as he had no walled or fenced town to inhabit, he chose a certain place on the river, which was fenced by nature, about eight miles from the city of Ausca. This place he compassed with walls, and commanded every man to build bouses where they had pitched their tents. He named this city Tabor, and the inhabitants, his companions, Taborites, because their city was built on the top of some hill or mount. This city, though it was fenced with high rocks and cliffs, yet it was compassed with a wall and ramparts; and the river of Lucinitius fences a great part of the town. The rest is compassed with a great brook which, running straight into the river Lucinitius, is stopped by a great rock, and driven back towards the right side of the city, the whole length of it. At the further end it joins with the great river. The way into it by land is scarcely thirty feet broad, for it is almost an island. In this place a deep ditch was cast, and a triple wall made of such thickness that it could not be broken with any engine. The wall was full of towers and forts set in their convenient and strategic places. Ziska was the first to build the castle, and those who came after him fortified it, every man according to his own device.

At that time the Taborites had no horsemen among them, until such time as Nicholas, master of the mint (whom the emperor had sent into Bohemia with a thousand horsemen to set things in order, and to withstand the Taborites. They lodged all night in a village named Vogize, and was surprised by Ziska coming upon him suddenly in the night, taking away all his horse and armor, and setting fire to the village. Then Ziska taught his soldiers to mount on horseback, to leap, to run, to turn, and to cast a ring; so that after this he never led an army without his wings of horsemen.

In the meantime, Sigismund, the emperor, gathering together the nobles of Silesia, entered Bohemia, and went into Grecium, and from there to Cuthna with a great army. He allured Cencho with many great and large promises, to surrender the castle of Prague, and placed him there to annoy the town. This Cencho, infamous for double treason, returned home. The citizens of Prague sent for Ziska, who speeding himself there with the Taborites, received the city under his government. In the Bohemian's host there were but two barons,

Hilco Crusina of Lituburge, and Hilco Waldestene, and a few other nobles; all the rest were of the common people. They went first to subdue the castle, which was by nature very strongly fenced, and could not be won by any other means than with famine. Whereupon all the passages were blocked so that no victuals should be carried in. But the emperor opened the passages by dint of sword. And when he had supplied the city with all things necessary, he sent for aid outside of the empire. Ziska determined shortly after to besiege the city. In the emperor's camp were the duke of Saxony; the marquess of Brandenburg; and his son-in-law, Albert of Austria. The city was assaulted for six weeks. The Emperor Sigismund was crowned in the metropolitan house in the castle; Conrad, the archbishop, solemnizing the ceremonies of the coronation. In the meantime, the captains Rosenses and Chragery, who had taken the tents of the Taborites, were overcome in battle by Nicholas Huss (whom Ziska had sent with part of his force for that purpose), and driven out of their tents. Grecium, the queen's city, was also taken.

Above the town of Prague was a high hill, which is called Videchon (or Vitkov). On this hill Ziska had strongly embedded a garrison, so that his enemies should not possess it. The marquis of Misnia skirmishing with them, lost a great part of his soldiers (A.D. 1420). For when the Misnians had gotten to the top of the hill, they were driven back into a corner, which was broken and steep, and fiercely set upon. When they could no longer withstand the violent force of their enemies, some of them were slain, and some falling headlong from the hill, were destroyed. Upon which the Emperor Sigismund raising his siege, departed to Cuthna. Ziska with his company departed to Tabor, and subdued many places. Among them he subverted a town pertaining to the captain of Vissegrade. During this time the castle of Vissegrade was strongly besieged; when other victuals failed, they were compelled to eat horse-flesh. Last of all, unless the emperor aided them by a certain day, they promised to yield it up — but on this condition: that if the emperor came, those within the castle would no longer be molested.

[326]

The emperor arrived before the appointed day. But being ignorant of the truce taken, he entered into a strait underneath the castle, and was suddenly set upon by the soldiers of Prague. He was greatly overthrown there; and so, leaving his purpose unperformed, he turned back again. In that conflict, fourteen noblemen of the Moravians were slain, and a great number of the Hungarians and others. While these things were in progress, Ziska took by force a very strong town under the command of Boslaus, a captain, surnamed Cigneus — Ziska brought him to his religion. A few years after, leading the protestant army in Austria, Boslaus was wounded at Rhetium, and died. There were many monasteries in the territory of Pelzina. Ziska pulled down and burned five of them. As the monastery of St. Clare was the strongest, he pitched himself there.

The emperor also came with his army: but when Ziska brought forth his forces against him, the emperor most cowardly fled. Not long after, he departed and left Bohemia. Then Ziska went with his army to Pelzina. But as he saw the city so fenced in that he was in doubt of winning it, he went to Committavia, a famous city, which he took by force, burning all the priests in it.

Afterwards, as he lay before the town of Raby and strongly besieged it, he was struck with an arrow in the only eye he had left to see with. From there he was carried to Prague by physicians, where he was cured of his wound, and his life saved. Even though he lost his sight, he would not forsake his army, but still took charge of them.

After this, the garrisons of Prague went to Verona where there was a great garrison of the emperor's, and took it by force, many being slain on both sides. They also took the town of Broda, in Germany, and slew the garrison. Afterward they took Cuthna, and many other cities, by composition.⁸⁹ Further, when they led their army into a town called Pons, which was inhabited by the Misnians, the Saxons met them on the way. Because they dared not join battle, they turned back. After all this, the emperor appointed the princes electors,⁹⁰ so that they would invade the west part of Bohemia with their army. And he, with a host of Hungarians, would enter the east part. Coming to his aid were the archbishop of Mentz, the county palatine of Rhein, the dukes of Saxony, the marquis of Brandenburg, and many other bishops out of Almaine; all the rest sent their aids. They encamped before the town of Sozius, a strong and well-fenced place, which they could by no means subdue. The country round about was spoiled and wasted, and the siege continued until the feast of St. Galle (*i.e.*, Oct 16th). Then it was broken up, because the emperor had not come by his appointed day. But having gathered together a great army of the Hungarians and West Moravians, about Christmas the emperor entered into Bohemia and took certain towns by force; Cuthna was yielded to him. But when Ziska (although he was blind) came towards him, and set upon him, and many of his nobles were slain. The emperor being afraid, fled. But first he burned Cuthna, which the Taborites called the Pouch of Antichrist, because of its silver mines. Ziska, pursuing the emperor a day's journey, got great and rich spoil. Taking the town of Broda by force, he set it on fire; afterwards the town remained uninhabited for almost fourteen years.

The emperor passed by a bridge over the river of Iglaria. And Piso, a Florentine, who had brought 15,000 horsemen out of Hungary to these wars, passed over the ice, which broke because of the number of his horsemen, drowning and destroying a great number of them. Ziska having obtained this victory, would not permit any image or idol to be in the churches; nor did he think it tolerable that priests should minister with copes or vestments. For this reason he was even more envied among the states of Bohemia. The consuls of Prague, being grieved at the insolence of John Premonstratensis,⁹¹ called him and nine others of his adherents, whom they supposed to be the principals of this faction, into the council-house, as though they would confer with them regarding the commonwealth. When they had come in, they slew them, and afterward departed home, each man to his own house, thinking the city had been quiet, as though nothing had happened. But their servants not being circumspect enough, in washing down the court or yard, they also washed out the blood of those who were slain, through the sinks or channels. Once this was seen, the people understood what was done. By and by there was a tumult; the council-house was straightway overthrown, and eleven of the principal citizens who were thought to be the authors of it, were slain, and many houses plundered.

About the same time, the castle of Purgel, in which the emperor had left a small garrison (where many papists with their wives and children had fled), through negligence, was burned; those who escaped the fire went to Pelzina. After this, many of the Bohemian captains, and the senate of Prague, sent ambassadors to Vitold, duke of Lithuania, and made him their king, though Ziska and his adherents disputed this. Vitold sent Sigismund Coributus with 2,000 horsemen into Bohemia, and was honorably received by the

⁸⁹ *By composition*: by treaty, truce, or payment of a levy.

⁹⁰ *Elector*: a German prince entitled to elect the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire.

⁹¹ John belonged to the Order of Canons Regular of Prémontré, founded in 1120 by Norbert of Xanten. They are also known as the *Premonstratensians*, the *Norbertines*, or in Britain and Ireland, the *White Canons*.

inhabitants of Prague. At his coming, they determined to lay siege to a castle situated on a hill, which was called Charles' Stone. Here Sigismund had left a garrison of four centurions of soldiers. The tents were pitched in three places. The siege continued six months, and the assault never ceased day and night. Five great slings continually threw great stones over the walls, and about two thousand vessels, tubs, or baskets, filled with dead carcasses and other excrements, were cast in among those who were besieged. This so infected them with stench, that their teeth either fell out, or became loose. Notwithstanding, they bore it with stout courage, and continued their fight until the winter.

In the meantime, Frederick the Elder, prince of Brandenburg, entering into Bohemia with a great army, caused those of Prague to raise the siege. And Vitold, at the request of Vladislaus, king of Poland, who had talked with the emperor on the borders of Hungary, called Coributus, his uncle, with his whole army, out of Bohemia. Whereupon the emperor, supposing that the protestants now being destitute of foreign aid, would sooner submit to his commandment. But he was far deceived in this. For leading their armies out of Bohemia, the Hussites subdued the adjoining borderers. It is also reported that Ziska went into Austria, and when the husbandmen of the country carried away a great number of their cattle by water into an isle of the river Danube, and by chance left certain calves and swine in their villages behind them, Ziska drove those to the riverside. He kept them there so long, beating them, and causing them to roar and cry out, until the cattle feeding on the island, hearing the lowing and grunting of the cattle on the other side the water, for the desire of their like, swam over the river. By this means he got and drove away a great booty.

About the same time the Emperor Sigismund gave to his son-in-law, Albert, duke of Austria, the country of Moravia, because it should not lack a ruler. At the same time, Eric king of Denmark, and Peter Infant, brother to the king of Portugal, and father of James cardinal of St. Eustace, came to the emperor. Both were very expert in the affairs of war, which augmented the emperor's host with their aid and power. Whereupon they straightway pitched their camp before Lutemperge, a town in Moravia, and continued the siege for three months. At that time there was a certain knight in Prague, surnamed Aqua, who was very rich, and of great authority. This man, because he had no child of his own, adopted his sister's son, named Procopius. Once he was older, he carried Procopius with him into France, Spain, and Italy, and to Jerusalem. At his return, he caused Procopius to be made priest. When the gospel began to flourish in Boliemia, Procopius took sides with Ziska. Because he was strong and valiant, and also industrious, he was greatly esteemed.

[327] A.D. 1421.

For his valiant acts, he was afterwards called Procopius Magnus. The charge of the whole province of Moravia, and the defense of the Lutemperges were committed to him. Receiving great power, by force he carried victuals into that town which was besieged, and so he frustrated the emperor's siege. The emperor before this, had delivered to the marquises of Misnia the bridge and town of Ausca on the river Elbe, that they should fortify them with their garrisons. Whereupon Ziska besieged Ausca. Frederick, the marquis of Misnia, with his brother, the landgrave of Turing, gathered together a great army out of Saxonia, Turing, Misnia, and both the Lusaces, determined to rescue and aid those who were besieged at Ausca. There was a great battle fought before the city, and the victory was long uncertain. But at last it fell on the protestants' side. Slain in the battle were the burgraves of Misnia or Chyrpogenses, the barons of Glychen, and many other nobles, besides 9,000 common soldiers. The town of Ausca was taken and utterly razed.

At last, dissension arose between Ziska (with his radical Hussites) and those of Prague (moderate Hussites called Ultraquists), who prepared an army against Ziska. Perceiving he was overmatched, he fled to the river Elbe, and was almost taken, but had passage through the town of Poggiebras. Those of Prague, pursuing the tail of the battle, slew many of Ziska's Taborites. At length they came to certain hills where Ziska, going into the valley, knew the passes of the place, and that his enemies could not spread their army. He commanded his standard to stand still; then, exhorting and encouraging his soldiers, he engaged the Ultraquists in battle.

This battle was very fierce and cruel; but Ziska having the upper hand, slew 3,000 of those of Prague, and put the rest to flight. He took the city of Cuthna by force (which those of Prague had repaired) and set it on fire. Then with all speed he went with his army to besiege Prague, and encamped within a bowshot of the town. There were many both in the city, and also in his host, who grudged sorely at that siege. Some accused Ziska, others those of Prague. There were great tumults in the camp, the soldiers saying that it was not reasonable to suppress that city, which was both the head of the kingdom, and also did not dissent from them in opinion. They said that the Bohemians' power would soon decay if their enemies knew they were divided among themselves: also that they had sufficient wars against the emperor, and it was but a foolish device to engage in wars among themselves. This talk came to the ear of Ziska. Calling together his army, and standing on a high place to be heard, he spoke these words:

“Brethren, do not be grieved against me, nor accuse the one who has sought your health and safety. The victories which you have obtained under my conduct are still fresh in memory. Nor have I brought you at any time to any place from where you have not become victors. You have become famous and rich, and for your sake I have lost my sight, and dwell in darkness. I have gotten nothing by all these fortunate battles, except a vain name. For *you* I have fought, and for *you* I have vanquished. Nor do I repent of my toil; nor is my blindness grievous to me, except that I cannot provide for you in my customary manner. Nor do I persecute those of Prague for my own cause; for it is *your* blood that they thirst and seek for, and not mine. It would be but a small pleasure for them to destroy me, now being an old man and blind. It is your valiantness and stout courage which they fear. Either you or they must perish. While they seem to lie in wait for me, they seek your lives. You must fear civil wars rather than foreign, and civil sedition should first be avoided. We will subdue Prague and banish the seditious citizens, before the emperor has any news of this sedition. And then having but a few of his faction left, we may look for [victory] with less fear, better than if these doubtful citizens of Prague were still in our camp. But because you will accuse me no longer, I give you free liberty to do what you will. If it pleases you to allow those of Prague to live in quietness, I will not be against it, so that no treason will be wrought. If you determine to have war, I am also ready. Look, whichever part you incline to, Ziska will be your aid and helper.”

When he had spoken these words, the soldiers' minds were changed, and wholly determined to make war, so that by and by they ran to take up their armor and weapons, to run to the walls, and to provoke their enemies to fight for the gates of the city. Ziska, in the meantime, prepared all things for the assault. There is near Pelzina, a certain village named Rochezana. In this place, there was a child born of poor and base parentage, whose name was John. He came to Prague, and got his living there by begging; he also learned grammar and logic. When he came to man's estate, he became the schoolmaster of a nobleman's child. As he was of an excellent wit, and ready tongue, he was received into the college of the poor. And last of all, being made a priest, he began to preach the word of God to the citizens of Prague. He was named John of Rochezana, by the name of the town where he was born. The man

grew to be of great name and authority in the town of Prague. Upon which, when Ziska besieged Prague, by the consent of the citizens, this man went out into the camp, and reconciled Ziska again to the city.

When the emperor perceived that all things came to pass according to Ziska's will and mind, and that the whole state of Bohemia depended upon him alone, he sought secret means to reconcile and get Ziska into his favor, promising him the government of the whole kingdom, the guiding of all his hosts and armies, and great yearly revenues — if he would proclaim him king, and cause the cities to be sworn to him. Upon these conditions, when Ziska went to the emperor for the performance of these covenants, during his journey at the castle of Priscovia, he was struck with sickness, and died (11 Oct 1424).⁹²

It is reported that when he was asked, while sick, in what place he would be buried, he commanded the skin to be pulled from his carcass, and the flesh to be thrown to the fowls and beasts, and that a drum be made of his skin, which they should use in their battles — affirming that as soon as their enemies heard the sound of that drum, they would not abide, but take their flight. The Taborites, despising all other images, set up a picture of Ziska over the gates of the city.

The Epitaph of John Ziska, the valiant Captain of the Bohemians.

“I, John Ziska, not inferior to an emperor, or captain in warlike skill, a severe punisher of the pride and avarice of the clergy, and a defender of my country, do lie here. That which Appius Claudius, by giving good counsel, and M. Furius Camillus by valiantness, did for the Romans, the same, I being blind, have done for my Bohemians. I never slacked opportunity for battle, nor did fortune at any time fail me. I, being blind, foresaw all opportunity of well ordering or doing my business. Eleven times in joining battle I left the field a victor. I seemed to have worthily defended the cause of the miserable and hungry against the delicate, fat, and gluttonous priests, and for that cause, to have received help at the hands of God. If their envy had not promoted it, without doubt I would have deserved to be numbered among the most famous men. Notwithstanding, my bones lie here in this hallowed place, even in spite of the pope. Signed,

“John Ziska, a Bohemian, enemy to all wicked and covetous priests, but with a godly zeal.”

And thus you have the acts and doings of this worthy Ziska, and other Bohemians, which for more credit, we have drawn from Eneas Sylvius.⁹³ We have suppressed only his railing terms.

[328]

Bull of Pope Martin Against the Followers of Wycliffe – 1418.

All this while the emperor, with the whole power of the Germans, was not so busy on the one side; but Martin the pope was very much occupied on the other side. About this time (March 1418) he directed down a terrible bull, full of poison, to all bishops and archbishops, against all those as took any part or side with Wycliffe, John Huss, Jerome, or with their doctrine and opinions. A copy of this bull, which I found in an old written monument, I wish the reader to thoroughly peruse, in which he will see the pope pour out at once all his poison.

⁹² [The Hussite Wars would continue another ten years.](#)

⁹³ [Eneas Sylvius \(1405-1464\): author, diplomat, and orator who served as the private secretary to Antipope Felix V, and to Emperor Frederick III. He later became Pope Pius II. His autobiography was titled “Commentaries.”](#)

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

*The Bull of Pope Martin directed forth against the Followers
of John Wycliffe of England, of John Huss of Bohemia,
and Jerome of Prague.*

“Martin, bishop, the servant of God’s servants, to our reverend brethren the archbishops of Salzeburg, Gueznen, and Prague, and to the bishops of Olumzen, Luthomuslen, Bambergen, Misnen, Patavien, Uratislaviem, Ratisponen, Cracovian, Posnamen, and Nitrien, and also to our beloved children, the inquisitors appointed by the prelates above recited, or wherever else to whom these present letters shall come, greeting, and apostolical benediction. Among all other pastoral cares with which we are oppressed, this chiefly and specially enforces us, that heretics with their false doctrine and errors, being utterly expelled from among the company of Christian men, and rooted out (so far as God will make us able to do), the right and catholic faith may remain sound and undefiled; and that all Christian people, immoveable and inviolate, may stand and abide in the sincerity of the same faith, the whole veil of security being removed. But lately, in diverse places of the world, especially in Bohemia and the dukedom of Moravia, and in the straits adjoining them, certain arch-heretics have risen and sprung up, not against one only, but against diverse and sundry documents of the catholic faith, being land-lopers, schismatics, and seditious persons, fraught with devilish pride and wolfish madness, deceived by the subtlety of Satan, and from one evil vanity brought to a worse. Who although they rose up and sprang in diverse parts of the world, yet they all agreed in one, having their tails knit together as it were, to wit: John Wycliffe of England, John Huss of Bohemia, and Jerome of Prague, of damnable memory, who draw with them no small number to miserable ruin and infidelity. For when those and such like pestiferous persons in the beginning of their poisoned doctrine obstinately sowed and spread abroad perverse and false opinions, the prelates who had the government and the execution of the judicial power, like dumb dogs not able to bark, nor yet speedily revenging with the apostle all such disobedience, nor regarding to cast out of the Lord’s house (as they were enjoined by the canons) those subtle and pestilent arch-heretics, and their wolfish fury and cruelty, with all expedition, but allowing their false and pernicious doctrine negligently — by their overly-long delays — to grow and wax strong; a great multitude of people, instead of true doctrine, received those things which they long, falsely, perniciously, and damnably sowed among them, and giving credit to them, fell from the right faith, and are entangled (more the pity) in the foul errors of paganism.

“Insomuch, that these arch-heretics, and those who spring from them, have infected the catholic flock of Christ in diverse climates of the world, and parts bordering upon the same, and have caused them to putrefy in the filthy dunghill of their lies. This is why the general synod of Constance was compelled with St. Augustine to exclaim, against so great and ruinous a plague, of faithful men and of the sound and true faith itself, saying, ‘What shall the sovereign medicine of the church do, with motherly love, seeking the health of her sheep, chafing as it were, among a company of frantic men, and having the disease of lethargy? What, will she desist and depart from her good purpose? No, not so. But rather let her, if there is no remedy, be sharp to both these sorts, which are the grievous enemies of her body. For the physician is sharp to the man distracted and raging in his frenzy, and yet he is a father to his own rude and unmannerly son — in binding the one, in beating the other — by showing in this his great love to them both. But if they are negligent, and allow them to perish,’ says St. Augustine, ‘this gentleness⁹⁴ is rather to be supposed a false cruelty.’

“And therefore the foresaid synod, to the glory of Almighty God, and preservation of his catholic faith, and augmenting of Christian religion, and for the salvation of men’s souls, has corporally rejected and cast out of the household of God, the foresaid John Wycliffe, John

⁹⁴ Originally *mansuetude*: gentleness, tameness, or mildness of manner — *i.e.*, inaction, as with Eli and his sons.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

Huss, and Jerome, who among other things believed, preached, taught, and maintained about the sacrament of the altar and other sacraments of the church, and articles of the faith, contrary to that the holy church of Rome believes, holds, preaches, and teaches; and they have presumed obstinately to preach, teach, hold, and believe many other things, to the damnation of themselves and of others. And the said synod has separated them as obstinate and malapert heretics ⁹⁵ from the communion of the faithful people, and has declared them to be spiritually thrown out. The same council has established and decreed many other things, both wholesome and profitable, regarding the premises whereby they may, by the canonical rules, be returned to the straight path of truth and verity— which by means of those arch-heretics and their false doctrine, they have spiritually departed from the Lord's house.

“And moreover (as we to our great grief hear) not only in the kingdom of Bohemia, and dukedom of Moravia, and other places recited above, but also in certain parts and provinces near adjoining and bordering upon the same, there be many other of the sectaries and followers of the foresaid arch-heretics and heretical opinions, casting behind their back the fear of God as well as the shame of the world, neither receiving the fruit of conversion and repentance by the miserable destruction of the foresaid John Huss and Jerome, but as men drowned in the dungeon of their sins, do not cease to blaspheme the Lord God, taking his name in vain (whose minds the father of lies has damnably blinded), and they read and study the foresaid books or works containing heresies and errors, being lately condemned to be burned by the foresaid synod; also to the peril of themselves and many other simple men, and against the statutes, decrees, and ordinances in the synod aforesaid, and the canonical sanctions, they presume to preach and teach the same, to the great peril of souls, and derogation of the catholic faith, and slander of many others besides. We therefore considering that error, where it is not resisted, seems to be allowed and liked; and having a desire to resist such evil and pernicious errors, and utterly root them out from among the company of faithful Christians, especially from the afore-recited places of Bohemia, Moravia, and other straits and islands joining and bordering upon the same, lest they stretch out and enlarge their limits, we will and command your discretions by our letters apostolical, the holy Council of Constance approving and allowing the same, that you who are archbishops, bishops, and others of the clergy, and every one of you by himself, or by any other or others, being grave and fit persons to have spiritual jurisdiction, see that all and singular persons, of whatever dignity, office, pre-eminence, state, or condition they are, and by whatever name they are known, who presume otherwise to teach, preach, or observe, regarding the most high and excellent, the most wholesome and super-admirable sacrament of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, or else of the sacrament of baptism, confession of sins, penance for sins, and extreme unction, or else of any other sacraments of the church, and the articles of the faith, than that which the right holy and universal church of Rome holds, teaches, preaches, and observes; or else who presume obstinately by any ways or means, privately or openly, to hold, believe, and teach the articles, books, or doctrine of the foresaid arch-heretics, John Wycliffe, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, being damned and condemned by the aforesaid synod of Constance with their authors (as is said);

[829] A.D. 1422.

or who dare presume publicly or privately to allow or commend in any way the death and end of the said arch-heretics, or of any other their receivers, aiders, and favorers, in favor or support of the foresaid errors, and also their believers and adherents; that then as before, you see and cause them, and every one of them, to be most severely punished; and that you judge and give sentence upon them as heretics, and that as arrant heretics you leave them to the secular court or power. Let the receivers also, and the favorers and defenders of such most

⁹⁵ *Malapert*: boldly disrespectful or impudent.

pestiferous persons, notwithstanding that they neither believe, favor, nor have devotion towards their errors, but haply receive or entertain such pestiferous persons because of earthly affection or friendly love, besides the punishment due to them by both laws, over and above the same punishment by competent judges, be so afflicted, for such heinous acts of theirs, and excruciated with such severe pain and punishment, that the same may be an example of terror to others in like case offending; so that at least those whom the fear of God may by no means keep from such evil doing, yet the severity of our discipline may force and constrain them.

“Regarding the third sort, who are in any manner of ways infected with this damnable sect, and after competent admonition repent and amend themselves of such errors and sects aforesaid, and will return again into the lap and unity of our holy mother the church, and fully acknowledge and confess the catholic faith, towards them let the severity of justice, as the quality of the fact requires, be somewhat tempered with a taste of mercy.

“And furthermore we will and command, that by this our authority apostolical, you exhort and admonish all the professors of the catholic faith, such as emperors, kings, dukes, princes, marquises, earls, barons, knights, and other magistrates, rectors, consuls, proconsuls, shires, countries, and universities of the kingdoms, provinces, cities, towns, castles, villages, their lands and other places, and all other executing temporal jurisdiction, according to the form and exigence of the law, that they expel from their kingdoms, provinces, cities, towns, castles, villages and lands, and other places, all and all manner of such heretics, according to the effect and tenor of the Council of Lateran, beginning *Sicut ait Ecclesia* (as the Church says), etc., that those who publicly and manifestly by the evidence of their deeds are known to be those, like sick and scabbed sheep, who infect the Lord’s flock, they expel and banish them till such time as from us, or you, or else other ecclesiastical judges or inquisitors, holding the faith and communion of the holy church of Rome, they receive other order and countermand; and that they allow none such within their shires and circuits to preach or to keep either house or family, nor yet to use any handicraft or occupations, or other trades of merchandise, or else to solace themselves in any way, or to frequent the company of Christian men.

“And furthermore, if such public and known heretics chance to die (even if not so denounced by the church), yet in this so great a crime let him and them have no Christian burial, and let no offerings or oblations be made for them, nor received. His goods and substance also, from the time of his death, being confiscate according to the canonical sanctions, let no such persons enjoy them to whom they pertain, till sentence is declared by the ecclesiastical judges, having power and authority in this behalf, and promulgated upon his or their crime of heresy. And let those owners who are found, suspected, or noted with any such suspicion of heresy, show and declare his proper and own innocency with devotion, before a competent and ecclesiastical judge, according to the consideration and exigence of that suspicion, and according to the quality of the person, by the arbitrement of such a judge, as appropriate in that behalf. And if in his purgation,⁹⁶ being canonically interdicted,⁹⁷ he fails or is not able canonically to make his purgation, or he refuses to take his oath by damnable obstinacy to make such purgation, then let him be condemned as a heretic. But those who through negligence or through slothfulness omit to show their innocency, and to make such purgation, let him be excommunicate, and so long put out from the company of Christian men, till they make appropriate satisfaction; so that if they remain in such excommunication for one whole year, then let them be condemned as heretics.

“And further, if any are found culpable in any point of the aforesaid pestiferous doctrine of the aforesaid arch-heretics, or in any article of it, whether it is by the report of the seditious, or

⁹⁶ *Purgation*: the act of clearing yourself (or another) from some stigma or charge.

⁹⁷ *Interdict*: to exclude someone from participation in church services, and from receiving the sacraments.

else well-disposed, let them yet be punished according to the report of the canons. If only through infamy and suspicion of the aforesaid articles, or any of them, any man is suspected, and fails in his canonical purgation, being interdicted for this, let him be accounted convicted, and as a convicted person, let him be punished by the canons (priests).

“And furthermore, we invoke and put into execution the canon of our predecessor of happy memory, Pope Boniface VIII, which begins thus, *Ut inquisitionis negotium*, (as an inquiry into the matter) etc. In exhorting-wise require, and also command all temporal potentates, lords and judges before recited, by whatever dignities, offices and names they are known, that as they desire to be had, esteemed, and counted for the faithful members and children of the church, and they rejoice in the name of Christ, so likewise for defense of that faith, they will obey, attend, give their aid and favorable help to you who are archbishops, bishops, and ecclesiastical men, inquisitors of all heretical depravity, and other judges and ecclesiastical persons by you in this regard, as aforesaid, appointed (holding the faith and communion of our holy mother the church) for the searching out, taking, and safe custody of all the aforesaid heretics, their believers, their favorers, their receivers, and their defenders, whenever they are required for this purpose.

“And that they bring and cause to be brought (all delay set apart) the aforesaid pestiferous persons so seeking to destroy others with them, into such safe keeping and prisons, as are to be appointed by you the archbishops, bishops, clergy and inquisitors aforesaid, or else to such other place or places, as either you or they shall command within any of their dominions, governments and rectories, where they by catholic men — that is, by you, the archbishops, bishops, the clergy and inquisitors, or any others who shall be appointed by you, or are already appointed by any of you — may be held and kept in safe keeping by putting them in fetters, shackles, bolts, and manacles of iron, under most strait custody for escaping away, till such time as all that business which belongs to them, is by the judgment of the church finished and determined, and that they be condemned of such heresy by a competent ecclesiastical judge (who firmly holds the faith and communion of the aforesaid holy church of Rome).

“The remainder let the aforesaid temporal lords, rectors, judges, or other their officers and pursuivants take among them, to punish with deserved deaths, without any delay. But fearing lest to the prejudice and slander of the aforesaid catholic faith and religion, through the pretext of ignorance, any man should be circumvented in this, or that any subtle and crafty men should under the veil of frivolous excuse, cloak and dissemble in this matter; and that as regards the convincing or apprehending of the aforesaid heretics, their receivers and defenders, favorers, believers, and adherents; and also of those who are suspected of heresy, and in any way spotted with similar perverse doctrine, we might give more perfect instruction — therefore, to the kingdom of Bohemia, and parts nearby adjoining it, as well as all others where this superstitious doctrine began to spread, we have thought it good to send the articles here underwritten concerning the sect of those arch-heretics, for the better direction of the aforesaid catholic faith.

[330]

“Regarding these articles, by virtue of holy obedience, we charge and command you and all other archbishops and bishops, all manner of commissaries and inquisitors, that every one of them within the diocese and limits of their jurisdiction; and also in the foresaid kingdom and dukedom, and places nearby adjoining, even if the same places are beyond their jurisdiction, in favor of the catholic faith, give most diligent and vigilant care about the extirpation and correction of those aforesaid errors, arch-heresies, and most pestiferous sect; and also that they compel all defamed persons and those suspected of so pestiferous a contagion, whether it is under the penalty of the crime confessed, or of excommunication, suspension, or interdict, or any other formidable pain, canonical or legal, when and wherever it seems good to them,

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

and as the quality of the act requires, by an oath taken corporally, either upon the holy Evangelists, or upon the relics of saints, or upon the image of the crucifix, according to the observances of certain places, and according to the interrogatories, to make convenient answer to every article written in it. For we intend against all and singular archbishops, bishops, ecclesiastical persons, or inquisitors who show themselves negligent and remiss in the extirpation of the leaven of this heretical pravity, and purging their territories, dioceses, and places appointed to them, of such evil and wicked men, to proceed and cause to be proceeded unto the deprivation and deposition of their pontifical dignities, and substitute others in their places, who can and may be able to confound the said heretical pravity, and proceed to further pains against them by the limited laws, and to others still more grievous (if need requires), we ourselves will proceed and cause to be proceeded, according to what the party, his act, and the filthiness of his crime committed, deserves. The tenor of those articles of which we mentioned in this, our own writing, is in the following words:

The Articles of John Huss to be inquired upon.

1. There is one only universal church, which is the university of the predestinate, as will after be declared.
2. There is only one universal church, and one university of those who are predestinate.
3. Paul was never a member of the devil, even though he did certain acts like the acts of the church malignant.
4. The reprobate are not parts of the church, for no part of that church finally falls from her, because the charity of predestination, which binds the same church together, never fails.
5. The two natures (that is) the Divinity and the humanity, are one Christ.
6. The reprobate, although he is sometimes in grace according to present justice, yet he is never a part of the holy church; and the predestinate is ever a member of the church, although he sometimes falls from adventitial (extrinsic) grace but not from grace of predestination; ever taking the church as the convocation of the predestinate, whether they are in grace or not, according to present justice. And in this way, the church is an article of our belief.
7. Peter is not, nor ever was the head of the holy catholic church.
8. Priests living viciously defile the authority of priesthood, and so, as unfaithful children, they unfaithfully believe [the teachings] of the seven sacraments, of the keys of the church, of offices, of censures, of ceremonies, of the worshipping of relics, indulgences, orders, and other holy things of the church.
9. The papal dignity came and grew from the emperor; and his government and institution sprang from the emperor's government.
10. No man can reasonably affirm either about himself or others, that he is the head of any particular church, or that the bishop of Rome is head of the church of Rome.
11. A man should not believe that the one who is bishop of Rome is the head of every particular church, unless God has predestined him.
12. None is the vicar of Christ, or else of Peter, unless he follows him in manners and conditions, seeing that there is no other following more pertinent, nor otherwise apt to receive from God this procuratory power. For the office of a vicegerent of Christ requires the conformity of manners, and the authority of the institutor.
13. The pope is not the manifest and true successor of Peter the prince of apostles, if he lives contrary to Peter in manners; and if he hunts after avarice, then he is the vicar of Judas Iscariot. And likewise the cardinals are not the true and manifest successors of the college of

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

the other apostles of Christ, unless they live according to the manner of the apostles, keeping the commandments and councils of our Lord Jesus Christ.

14. The doctors alleging that a man who will not be amended by ecclesiastical censures, is to be delivered to the secular powers, follow in this point the bishops, scribes and Pharisees, who delivered Christ to the secular power, saying, 'it is not lawful for us to kill any man,' because he would not obey them in all things; and such are greater homicides than Pilate.

15. The ecclesiastical obedience is such an obedience as the priests of the church have discovered outside the express authority of the Scripture. The immediate division of human works is that they are either virtuous or vicious: and if a man is vicious and does anything, then he does it viciously; and if he is virtuous, and does anything, then he does it virtuously. For just as vice, which is called a great offense or mortal sin, stains all the doings of a vicious man, so virtue quickens (animates) all the doings of a virtuous man.

16. A priest of God living under His law, and having a knowledge of the Scripture, and a desire to edify the people, ought to preach, notwithstanding any excommunication pretended by the pope. And further, if the pope, or any other magistrate, forbids a priest so disposed to preach, he should not be obedient to him. For everyone who takes upon himself the order of priesthood, receives in charge the *office* of a preacher; and he should well discharge himself of that burden, notwithstanding any excommunication pretended against him in any way.

17. By ecclesiastical censures, such as excommunication, suspending and interdicting the clergy to their own advancement, the lay people are caused to aid them; they multiply their avarice, they defend their malice, and prepare the way for antichrist. And it is an evident sign that such censures proceed from antichrist, which in their process they call *fulminations*; that is, their thunderbolts with which the clergy principally proceeds against those who declare the wickedness of antichrist, and who has so greatly abused them for his own commodity.

18. If the pope is evil, especially if he is a reprobate, then with Judas he is a very devil, a thief, and the son of perdition, and is not the head of the holy church militant, nor any member of it.

19. The grace of predestination is the bond with which the body of the church and every member of the same is indissolubly joined to their head Christ.

20. The pope or prelate who is evil and reprobate, is a pastor in name and not in deed, then he is a thief and a robber in very deed.

21. The pope should not be called the most holy one for his office' sake, for then the king should be called the most holy one by his office; and the hangman, with other such officers also, should be called holy; indeed, the devil himself ought to be called holy, in as much as he is God's officer.

22. If the pope lives contrary to Christ, even though he climbs up by right and lawful election according to the common custom of men; yet notwithstanding, he should not otherwise climb than by Christ; indeed, though we admit that he should enter by the election principally made by God. For Judas Iscariot was lawfully elect of God Christ Jesus to his bishopric; and yet he did not come the same way he ought to do to the sheepfold.

23. The condemnation of the forty-five articles of John Wycliffe made by the doctors is unreasonable, wicked, and nothing, and the cause alleged by them is feigned — that is, that none of them are catholic, but every one of them is heretical, erroneous, or slanderous.

[331]

24. It is not that the electors, or most of them, have consented together with lively voice according to the custom of men, upon the person of anyone, that a person is therefore lawfully elect, or is therefore the true and manifest successor and vicar of Peter the Apostle, or of any

other apostle in the ecclesiastical office. Therefore, whether the electors have either well or evilly made their election, it behooves us to believe it by the works of the one who is elected. For everyone who works more meritoriously to the profit of the church, has that much more authority from God.

25. There is not so much as one spark of appearance that there ought to be one head ruling and governing the church in spiritual causes, who should always be conversant in the church militant; for Christ could rule his church a great deal better, without any such monstrous heads, by his true disciples dispersed throughout the world.

26. The apostles and faithful priests of God have right worthily, in all things necessary to salvation, governed the church before the pope's office took place, and so they might do again by like possibility, until Christ comes to judgment, if the office should fail.

“Let every one who is suspected in the foresaid articles, or otherwise found with the assertion of them, be examined in manner and form as follows:

1. Whether he knew John Wycliffe of England, John Huss of Bohemia, and Jerome of Prague, or any of them, and how he came by the knowledge of them; whether during their lives, or any of them, they had been conversant with them, or found any friendship at their hands?

2. Whether knowing them, or any of them, to be excommunicate, he willingly participated with them; esteeming and affirming their participation with them to be no sin.’

3. Whether after their deaths, he ever prayed for them, or any of them, openly or secretly, doing any work of mercy for them, affirming them to be either saints, or else to be saved?

4. Whether he thought them, or any of them to be saints, or whether he ever spoke such words, and whether he ever exhibited any worship to them as to saints?

5. Whether he believes, holds, and affirms that every general council, as also the Council of Constance, represents the universal church?

6. Whether he believes that that what the holy Council of Constance, representing the universal church, has and allows in the favor of the faith, and salvation of souls, is to be approved and allowed by all the faithful Christians; and that whatever the same council has condemned and does condemn, that is contrary both to faith and to all good men, is to be believed, held, and affirmed as condemned, or not?

7. Whether he believes that the condemnations of John Huss, John Wycliffe, and Jerome of Prague, made of their persons as well as their books and doctrine by the holy general Council of Constance, is rightly and justly made, and are so to be held or affirmed by every good Catholic man, or not?

8. Whether he believes, holds, and affirms that John Wycliffe of England, John Huss of Bohemia, and Jerome of Prague, were heretics or not, and to be named and preached as heretics, yes or no; and whether their books and doctrines were and are perverse or not; for which, together with their pertinancy, they were condemned by the holy sacred Council of Constance as heretics?

9. Whether he has in his custody any treatises, small works, epistles, or other writings, in whatever language or tongue, set forth and translated by any of these heretics, John Wycliffe, John Huss, and Jerome, or any other of their false disciples and followers, that he may deliver them to the ordinaries of that place, or to his commissary, or to the inquisitors upon his oath? And if he says that he has no such writing about him, but that they are in some other place, then you swear him to bring them before his ordinary, or other aforementioned, within a certain time to him, prefixed.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

10. Whether he knows anyone who has the treatises, works, epistles, or any other writings of the aforesaid John Wycliffe, John Huss, and Jerome, in whatever tongue they are made or translated, and that he detects and makes them known, for the purgation of their faith and execution of justice?
11. Especially let the learned be examined, whether he believes that the sentence of the holy Council of Constance on the forty-five articles of John Wycliffe, and the thirty articles of John Huss are not Catholic — which Council says that some of them are notorious and heretical, some erroneous, others blasphemous, some slanderous, some rash and seditious, some offensive to godly ears?
12. Whether he believes and affirms that in no case is it lawful for a man to swear?
13. Whether he believes that at the commandment of a judge or any other, it is lawful to take an oath to tell the truth in any convenient cause, even if it is but purging infamy or not?
14. Whether he believes that perjury wittingly committed, upon whatever cause, whether it is for the safeguard of his own life, or of any other man's life (yes, even if it is in the cause and defense of the faith), is a sin or not?
15. Whether a man purposely disdaining the rites of the church, and the ceremonies of exorcism, of catechism, and the consecration of the water of baptism, is in deadly sin or not?
16. Whether he believes that after the consecration of the priest, in the sacrament of the altar under the figure of bread and wine, are not material bread and wine, but in all points the very same Christ who was crucified upon the cross, and sits at the right hand of the father?
17. Whether he believes that after the consecration made by the priest, under the only form of bread, and besides the form of wine, is the very flesh of Christ; and his blood, his soul and his deity, and so wholly Christ as he is; and likewise, whether under the form of wine, without the form of bread, is the very flesh of Christ and his very blood, his soul and deity, and so wholly Christ, and the same body absolutely under every one of those kinds severally?
18. Whether he believes that the custom of administering to the lay people under the form of bread only, observed by the universal church, and allowed by the only Council of Constance, is to be used, and not to be altered without the authority of the church at men's pleasures, and that those who obstinately affirm the contrary to this are to be punished as heretics, or not?
19. Whether he believes that those which condemn the receiving of the sacraments of confirmation, or extreme unction; or else the solemnization of matrimony, commit deadly sin or not?
20. Whether he believes that a Christian man, over and besides the contrition of his heart, being licensed by a convenient priest, is bound to confess himself only to a priest, and not to any layman, however devout or good he is, upon the necessity of salvation?
21. Whether he believes that in the cases put before, a priest may absolve a sinner from all sins — confessing himself, and being contrite — and enjoin him penance for the same?
22. Whether he believes that an evil priest, with due manner and form, with the intention of doing, truly consecrates, truly absolves, truly baptizes, and truly disposes all other sacraments even as the church does?
23. Whether he believes that St. Peter was the vicar of Christ, having power to bind and loose upon the earth?
24. “Whether he believes that the pope being canonically elect (which he is for the time), by that name (pope) is expressly the successor of Peter or not, having supreme authority in the church of God?

25. Whether he believes that the authority or jurisdiction of the pope, an archbishop, or a bishop, in binding or loosing, is more than the authority of a simple priest or not, even though the priest has charge of souls?

[332]

26. Whether he believes that the pope may, upon a just and good cause give indulgences and remission of sins to all Christian men, being truly contrite and confessed, especially to those who go on pilgrimage to holy places and good deeds?

27. Whether he believed that by such grant, the pilgrims who visit those churches, and give them anything, may obtain remission of sins or not?

28. Whether he believes that all bishops may grant to their subjects, according to what the holy canons limit, such indulgences, or not?

29. Whether he believes and affirms that it is lawful for faithful Christians to worship images and the relics of saints, or not?

30. Whether he believes that those religions which the church has allowed, were lawfully and reasonably brought in by the holy fathers, or not?

31. Whether he believes that the pope, or any other prelate for the time being, or their vicars, may excommunicate their subject, ecclesiastical or secular, for disobedience or obstinacy, so that such a person is to be held and taken as excommunicated, or not?

32. Whether he believes that for the increasing disobedience and obstinacy of excommunicate persons, the prelates or their vicars have power in spiritual things to aggravate and to reagravate, to put upon men the interdict, and to call for the secular arm; and that the same secular arm or power ought to be obedient to the censures called for by their inferiors?

33. Whether he believes that the pope and other prelates, or else their vicars, have power in spiritual things to excommunicate priests and laymen who are stubborn and disobedient, from their office, benefice, or entrance into the church, and from the administration of the sacraments of the church, and also to suspend them?

34. Whether he believes that it is lawful for ecclesiastical persons, without committing sin, to have any possessions and temporal goods; and whether he believes that it is not lawful for laymen to take away those possessions and goods from them by their authority: but rather that such takers away and encroachers upon ecclesiastical goods, are to be punished as committing sacrilege, yes, even if such ecclesiastical persons who have such goods, live naughtily?

35. Whether any such taking away or encroaching upon any priest rashly or violently made, even if the priest is an evil liver, is sacrilege, or not?

36. Whether he believes that it is lawful for the laity, whether men or women, to preach the word of God, or not?

37. Whether he believes that it is lawful for all priests to freely preach the word of God wherever, whenever, and to whomever it pleases them, even if they are not sent at all?

38. Whether he believes that all mortal sins, and especially those which are manifest and public, are to be corrected and extirpated, or not.'

“Furthermore, we will, command, and decree, that if anyone by secret information, to be received by you or any other, is found to be either infamous or suspected of any kind of the pestiferous sect, heresy, and doctrine of the most pestilent men, John Wycliffe, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, the arch-heretics aforesaid, or of favoring, receiving, or defending the aforesaid damned men while they lived on earth, their false followers and disciples, or anyone

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

who believes their errors, or any who after their death pray for them or, any of them, or who identifies them as among the number of catholic men, or who defends them being placed among the number of the saints, either by their preaching, worshipping, or other ways, in which they deserve to be suspected — that then they may be cited by you or some of you, to personally appear before you or some of you, without either proctor or doctor to answer for them, an oath being openly taken by them as aforesaid, to speak the plain and mere verity (truth) of the articles above written, and every of them, or other opportune, as case and circumstance require, according to your discretion, as you or any of you see expedient to proceed against them, or any of them, according to these presents, or otherwise canonically, as you think good.

“Also that you solemnly publish, and cause to be published these present letters, omitting the articles and interrogatories contained in it, in the cities and other places of your diocese, where you may do so conveniently, under our authority, and there denounce and cause to be denounced all and singular such heretics, with their abettors and favorers of their heresies and errors; of whatever sex or kind, who hold and defend the said errors, or participate in any manner with heretics, privately or openly; of whatever state, dignity, or condition he or they may be — patriarch, archbishop, king, queen, duke, or of whatever other dignity he may be, either ecclesiastical or secular; also with their advocates and procurators, whoever are believers, followers, favorers, defenders, or receivers of such heretics, or suspected to be believers, followers, favorers, defenders, or receivers of them, to be excommunicated every Sunday and festival day, in the presence of the people.

“Furthermore, that you diligently cause to be inquired, by our said authority, upon all and singular such persons, both men and women, who maintain, approve, defend, and teach such errors, or that are favorers, receivers and defenders of them, whether exempt or not exempt, of whatever dignity, state, pre-eminence, degree, order, or condition. And those you find in your said inquisition, either by their own confession, or by any other means, who are defamed or otherwise infected with the spot of such heresy or error, that you through the sentence of excommunication, suspension, interdiction, and privation of their dignities, parsonages, offices, or other benefices of the church, and fees which they hold from any church, monastery, and other ecclesiastical places, also of honors and secular dignities and degrees of sciences, or other faculties, as also by other pains and censures of the church, or by any ways and means whatever that seem to you expedient, by taking and imprisoning their bodies, and other corporal punishments with which heretics are punished, or are customary, and are commanded to be used by canonical sanctions; and if they are clerics, correct and punish them by degradation, and cause them to be corrected and punished with all diligence.

Furthermore, that you rise up stoutly and courageously against such heretics and the goods of them, as well of the laymen, according to the canonical sanction made against heretics and their followers, under which we will and command them and their partakers to be subject. And also those persons who are infamous for the heresies or errors aforesaid, or any of the premises, shall be bound to purge themselves at your arbitration; but the others, who either by witnesses, or by their own confessions, or other allegations or probations, shall be convicted of the aforesaid heresies or articles, or of any the premises, they shall be compelled to revoke and abjure publicly and solemnly the said articles and errors, and to suffer deserved penance and punishment, yes, even to perpetual imprisonment (if need be) for the same.

“And to the intent that they will not nourish any kind of heresies hereafter, either in word, deed, or gesture, nor induce others either in word or deed, secretly or openly, directly or indirectly to believe the same, they shall be forced to put in sufficient surety. Who, if it so changes that they will not publicly and solemnly renounce and abjure their articles and errors, and take deserved penance at your hands, even if it is to perpetual or temporal punishment

according to your discretion, nor will be content to put in sufficient surety so that they will not hereafter hold or nourish these errors and heresies, nor will induce others by word or deed secretly or openly, directly or indirectly, or by any other manner of color to believe the same, that you shall then proceed against them according to the quality of their errors and demerits.

[333] A.D. 1422.

Yes, and if you see it so expedient, as against heretics, and those infected with heresy, by our authority, according to the canonical sanctions summarily, and simply, and plainly, *Sine strepitu et figura iudicii* (without judicial dispute and form), ceasing all office, appellation or appellations whatsoever; and that you punish the same, according to the sanctions and traditions canonical, yes if need be, in leaving and committing them to the secular power; and against those who are superiors or learned doctors, laying the censures of ecclesiastical excommunication, all appellation set aside, also invoking, if need requires, the aid of the secular arm; as well as the constitution of our predecessor Pope Boniface VIII, of blessed memory, in which it is decreed that no man outside his city or diocese (except in certain cases) or in places one day's journey distant from where he inhabits, shall be called into judgment, and that no man presume to depute judges from the apostolic see, outside the city and diocese where they are deputed to proceed against anyone; and presume to commit their authority to any other person or persons, or to fetch and remove any man beyond one day's journey from outside his diocese where he dwells, or at most two days' journey, if it is in a general council; and also all other constitutions of any bishop of Rome, regarding delegate judges, as well as persons not be called to judgment beyond a certain number; or else any other edict, indulgence, privilege, or exemption, general or special, granted from the apostolic see, for any person or persons not to be interdicted, suspended, or excommunicated, or cited up to judgment without the compass (if certain limits, or else whatever thing may otherwise hinder, stop, or impeach your jurisdiction, power, and free proceeding in this, by any means to the contrary notwithstanding. Given at Constance the first year of our popedom.”

An Exhortation of the Bohemians to Kings and Princes.

This bloody and abominable commission of Pope Martin, which I have copied out of a certain old monument remaining in the hands of Master Hackluyt, student in the Temple, seems to be directed and given out to the public destruction of all faithful Christian men, about the latter end and breaking up of the Council of Constance (A.D. 1418). By which the prudent reader may note and consider what labor, what policy, what counsel, and what laws have been set, what ways have been taken, what severity has been shown, how men's power, wit, and authority of the whole world have conspired together from time to time, continually by all manner of means, to subvert and supplant the word and way of the Lord. And yet, notwithstanding, man has not prevailed; but all his force and devised polices have been overthrown, dispatched and, like the counsel of Ahithophel and Ammon, brought to nothing. And contrary to the fury of the world, the gospel of Christ has still increased. Nor yet for all this will the pope cease to spurn and rebel against the kingdom of Christ and his gospel, against which neither he nor the gates of hell shall ever prevail. The Lord of hosts be merciful to his poor persecuted flock! Amen.

Against this pestilent bull and inquisition of Pope Martin the great, antichrist, I thought it good to annex here another contrary writing of the Bohemians, bearing the name and subscription of Procopius, Conrad, and other captains of the Bohemians. This seems to have been written not long after the death of Ziska, against the pestiferous See of Rome, the tenor of which follows here.

*A fruitful and Christian Exhortation of the Bohemians
to kings and princes, to stir them up to the zeal of the Gospel.*

“May the Almighty God the Father, by his well-beloved Son Jesus Christ, and by his Holy Spirit, open the understanding both of you and of all Christians, and lighten your hearts with the light of his doctrine of righteousness, and make you to continue in it surely established to the end. This we desire of you for your salvation, all you honorable, wise, and honest noblemen, and all the commonalty, yes rich and poor. Hear and consider with diligent heed the words of this present letter, which is sent to you from the country of the Bohemians. It is manifest and well known to you and many other cities, kings, princes, and lords, that now for a certain number of years there has been great discord between us and you; and there have been some who have moved you by letters, and provoked you to make war against us, and to destroy us. And on your part as well as ours many men, noble as well as un noble, have foolishly lost their lives. Yet never up to now have you in any way understood our faith by our own confession, nor whether we are able to prove the same out of the Scriptures, or not; and yet in the meantime kings, princes, lords, and cities, have sustained great damage. And we greatly marvel about this, that you so much trust and believe the pope and his priests, who give you drink full of poison, and such comfort as no man can understand, in that they say that they will give you forgiveness of all your sins, and great grace and pardon, to this end that you should war upon us and destroy us. Whereas their graces and pardons are none other than great lies, and a great seducing of the body and soul of all those who believe them, and put their trust in them. This we would prove to them, and convince them by the holy Scripture; and we would allow that whoever is desirous to hear, the same should hear it. For the pope and all his priests deal with you in this as the devil would have done with our Lord Jesus Christ. Luke writes of him in his fourth chapter, that he brought Jesus up on a high hill, and showed him in the twinkling of an eye, all the kingdoms that are in the compass of the earth, and said to him, ‘I will give you,’ etc. So the devil deceives the pope, and all the priests, with the riches of the world, and worldly power. And they think they can give grace and pardon when they will; and yet they themselves shall never find favor before Almighty God, unless they repent and make amends, because of their great deceiving of Christendom. How can they give that to others, which they themselves do not have? So did the devil, who was rich in promising, and poor in giving. And just as the devil is not ashamed to tell a lie, so all those are not ashamed to speak that which will never be found true, nor be proved by the holy Scriptures, because for no cause they stir up kings, princes, lords, and citizens, to make war against us — not to the end that the Christian faith should thereby be defended, but because they fear that their secret vices and heresies will be disclosed and made manifest.

“For if they had a true cause, and a godly love for the Christian faith, they would then take the books of the holy Scripture, and would come to us, and confute us with the weapons of God’s word, and that is our chief desire. For so did the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, who came to the Pagans and Jews, and brought them from their infidelity to the true faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. And they did this in the spirit of meekness, as the apostle Paul writes in the sixth chapter of the Galatians, ‘Brethren, if any man is grieved,’ etc. So they should also do, if they perceived that they were just and we are unjust. And if we would not abide instruction, then they might take themselves to kings, princes, lords, and imperial cities, and resist us according to the commandments of the holy Scripture. But this is the subtle defense of all the bishops and priests: they say that Master Huss and Jerome, who were burnt at Constance, were confuted by the holy father the pope, and by the whole council. For you must understand that they were not overcome by the Holy Spirit, but unjustly overcome with wrongful violence, which God may yet hereafter grievously punish in all those who gave their counsel and aid to it. And they say it should not be allowed that we be heard in confessing our faith. How may that be proved by the holy Scripture, since Christ heard the devil, as it is written in the fourth

chapter of Matthew? And they are not better than Christ, nor are we worse than the devil. If they are just and have the truth with them (as they say they have) and we are unrighteous, why do they fear, since the truth should not be afraid of falsehood, as Esdras writes in his second book, the third chapter? Zerubbabel declares that truth is of all things the mightiest, and overcomes all things. ^{1Esd 4:35}

[334]

“For Christ is the truth, John 14. ‘I am the way, the truth,’ etc. And the devil is the father of lies, John 8. ‘He is a liar from the beginning, and never abided in the truth, and there is no truth in him.’ Therefore, if the pope and his priests have the truth, let them overcome us with the word of God. But if they have lies, then they cannot long abide in their presumption. Therefore, we exhort and beseech all the imperial cities, all kings, princes, noblemen, rich and poor, for God’s sake, and for his righteousness, that one of them write of this to another, and that there may be some means made, how we may commune with you safely and friendly, at some such place that will be fit both for you and us, and bring your bishops and teachers with you, and let them and our teachers fight together with the word of God, and let us hear them. And do not let the one overcome the other by violence or false subtlety, but only by the word of God. And if your bishops and teachers have better proofs of their faith out of the holy Scripture than we do, and our faith is found untrue, we will receive penance and satisfaction, according to the gospel. But if your bishops and teachers are overcome by ours, by the holy Scripture, then repent and hearken to us, and hold with us. And if your bishops and teachers will cease from their spiritual pride, and repent and make satisfaction, then we will help you according to our power; and we will compel them, either to join with us, or else we will expel them out of Christendom. And if your bishops and teachers say that it is not lawful for laymen to hear such reasoning, or to be present at it, you may understand that this tends to no other end, but that they fear they would be overcome and put to shame in the sight of you. For if they knew that *they* would overcome in this, no doubt they would desire that every man should hear it, and thereby their glory would become the greater, and their fame and praises should be increased upon the earth. And if your bishops and teachers counsel you not to come to any hearing with us, then do it whether they will have it or not, and do not allow yourselves at any time to be so foolishly seduced with their foolish pardons, but tarry at home in your houses with your wives and children. And let the pope of Rome come to us with all his cardinals and bishops, and with all his priests, with his own person and power, to war with us, and let them deserve the absolution of sins, grace and pardon, which they preach to you (for they have great need of forgiveness of sins, grace, and pardon); and by the grace of God, we will give them pardon enough as they need. But their subtle excuse is this: they say that it does not belong to priests to fight with bodily weapons. And it is true that it does not belong to them; but it belongs as little to them to stir up, to counsel, and to fortify others to fight. For Paul says in the first chapter of the Romans, ^{Rom 1:32} and in the fifth of the Galatians, ‘That all who do such things are worthy of everlasting death.’ ^{Gal 5:21}

“And if you will not determine to do any other thing than to fight against us, then will we take the Lord to our help and his truth, and we will defend it to the death, and we will not be afraid for the excommunication or curse of the pope, or his cardinals, or of the bishops, because we know that the pope is not God, as he makes himself out to be, that he can curse and excommunicate when he will, or bless when he will. He has now these many years cursed and excommunicated us, and yet notwithstanding, God and his gracious blessing has been our help. But perhaps you will say that though we see that bishops and priests are evil and wicked, yet we cannot do without them; for who would baptize our children, who would hear confessions, and minister the holy sacraments? And then we too would be within the excommunication of the pope, and of his bishops. Well-beloved, you need to take no care for these matters. The excommunicating of the pope does not hurt you at all. Fear the

excommunicating by God, and the Lord will provide for those things well enough. If you would banish evil bishops and priests, you should have good priests who should baptize your children, hear confessions, and minister the holy mysteries; because when the devil is banished, then a place is made for the Holy Ghost. So too, when bad bishops and priests are banished, a place will be made for good priests and bishops.

“Also, your bishops and priests say that we are miscreants and heretics, and that we do not believe in purgatory, upon the Virgin Mary, nor upon the saints, and that we are mistaken in this, for we will prove (they say) by the holy scripture, that we know better by God’s grace how we ought to believe in purgatory, and upon Mary the mother of our Lord, and upon his well-beloved saints, than they can tell us. Also they say that we will not be obedient to the pope. Truly, when he becomes holy and just, then we know well that we ought to be obedient to him in all things, *and not before*.

“They also say that we destroy God’s holy service, in that we destroy monasteries, banishing the wicked monks and nuns from them. Truly we did it, thinking that once they were holy, they would do the reverend service of God. But after we well perceived and considered their life and works, we perceived that they were false and lowly hypocrites, wicked builders on high, sellers of pardons and masses for the dead, and those who devoured in themselves the sins of the people. And whereas they said that they rise at midnight when other men sleep, and pray for the sins of the people, yet their selling of their prayers and masses for the dead for gifts, is no better than hypocrisy and heresy. Therefore, if do speak against them and destroy their monasteries, we do not destroy the service of God in this, but rather the service of the devil, and the schools of heretics. If you knew them as we know them, you would as diligently destroy them as we do. For Christ our Lord did not ordain any such order, and therefore it must come to pass that shortly it will be destroyed, as our Lord said in the gospel of St. Matthew, chap. 15.13. ‘Every plant which my Father has not planted, shall be rooted up.’”

[Here were added sixteen articles against the Romish priests, which we omit.]

(Signed) *Procopius, Smahors, Conrad, Samssmolich; captains of Bohemia.*

Division in the Bohemian Army on Choosing a Captain.

Now to return to the wars of the Bohemians again. After Ziska was dead, there was great fear, sorrow, and lamentation in the army, the soldiers accusing fortune (fate) which gave up such an invincible captain to be overcome with death. Immediately there was a division in the host, the one part choosing Procopius Magnus to be their captain, and the other part saying there was none who could be found worthy to succeed Ziska. Whereupon, choosing certain ones to serve the wars, they called themselves orphans.

Thus the Taborites being divided into two armies, the one part retained their old and accustomed name, and the other, because of the death of their captain, named themselves orphans. And although there was often dissension between them, yet whenever any foreign power came towards them, they joined their powers together in one camp, and defended themselves. They seldom went to any fenced towns, except to buy necessaries, but lived with their wives and children in their camp and tents. They had many carts among them, which they used as a bulwark; for whenever they went into battle, they made two wings of them, which closed in the footmen. The wings of the horsemen were on the outside, and when they saw their time to join battle, the wagon-men who led the wings, going forth to the emperor’s standard and compassing that part of their enemies as they could, closed themselves in together. Thereby the enemies being enclosed so that they could not be rescued, they were slain partly by the footmen, and partly by the men who were in the carts, with their spears. The horsemen fought without the fortification; and if it happened that they were oppressed,

or put to flight, by and by the carts opening up, received them as if into a fenced city. And by this means they got many victories, in that their enemies were ignorant of their strategies.

[335] A.D. 1422.

War Between the Pope and the Bohemians.

These two armies went forth, the one into Silesia, and the other into Moravia, and returned again with great prey, before their enemies knew of their coming. After this they besieged the town of Swietla in Austria, where the Taborites and the Orphans during two nights, assaulted the walls without ceasing. But Albert, duke of Austria, coming with his host to aid the citizens, they fought for almost four hours, the most valiant warriors being slain on both sides. At length the battle was broken off. The Taborites lost their carts, and Albert was put out of his camp and tents. Awhile later, Procopius Magnus came again and enclosed the city of Rhetium in Austria with a notable siege. Those of Prague were in his army, and Boslaus Cygnens, whom we spoke of before, was slain there with a spear. The city of Rhetium was taken by force, sacked and burnt. The burgrave of Malderburg, lord of the town, was also taken and carried to Prague, where he too died in prison.

These things being done, the emperor sent for the nobles of Bohemia. They went to him at a town in Hungary called Posonium. It was on the border of Austria, on the banks of the river Danube. They would not enter the town, but remained outside of it in their tents. The emperor going out to them there, communed much with them, regarding his right and title, and the recovery of his father's kingdom. He promised that if there were any cause which alienated the Bohemians' minds from him, he would remove all occasion for it. They answered that he had made war upon them without cause, and that he had allowed their countrymen, *contrary* to his promise, to be burnt at Constance, not being heard; and that the kingdom was contemptuously interdicted, and the nobles of Bohemia condemned by the church of Rome as heretics; and that he should not think the force and power of the Bohemians was so small that they would not provide for their own honor. To this the emperor answered very gently, and offered them a general council, in which they might declare their innocency, if they would submit themselves to the judgment of the universal church. But the Bohemians, who had become valiant victors in arms, would not be overcome with words. And so nothing being finally concluded, the emperor returned home.

Then Pope Martin, perceiving that the true gospel was increasing daily more and more, sent the cardinal of Winchester, an Englishman, born of a noble house, into Germany, to move them to war against the Bohemians. The emperor also assisted him.

There were three armies provided. In the first army included the dukes of Saxony, and the lower cities. The second army, which was gathered by the Franconians, was under the conduct of the marquis of Brandenburg. The third army was led by Otto, the archbishop of Treves, whom the Rhenenses, the Bavarians, and the imperial cities of Swabia followed. These armies entering into Bohemia in three separate parts, after they had passed the wood, joined together and pitched before Misna. A certain learned and eloquent protestant named Prichicho, had won this town the night before from the papists. Therefore the army was determined to recover that city first, before they would go any further. But when news came to the host, how the protestants had gathered an army, and came with all speed towards them, they fled before they saw their enemies, and went to Tacovia, leaving behind them their warlike engines with a great prey. The cardinal had not yet come to the camp, but meeting them in their flight at Tacovia, he marvelled at the cowardly flight of so many noble and valiant men, desiring that they would turn back to their enemies, which he said were far

weaker than they. When he had long labored about this in vain, he was glad to be a companion with them in their flight. They had scarcely entered the wood, when the Bohemians coming upon them, set upon the rearward. Then their flight was much more disordered and fearful than before, nor did they leave off fleeing before the Bohemians left off following. Then all impediment or hindrance being taken away, the Bohemians vanquished Tacovia; and having obtained great store of warlike engines, they destroyed Misna. And when they would have returned home by Franconia, they had great sums of money sent to them, so that they would not waste or destroy the countries of Bamberg and Nuremberg. Thereby the host of the Bohemians was greatly enriched.

Sigismund, the emperor, having news of these things, went straight to Nuremberg, and there gathered fresh aid and help. Also Pope Martin sent Julian, the cardinal of St. Angelo, into Germany, with his ambassage, to make war against the Bohemians, and said that in the Council of Basel, which would shortly gather, Julian should be president in the pope's name. Entering into Germany, he went straight to Nuremberg, to the emperor, where many of the nobles of Germany were assembled.

There was a new expedition decreed against the Bohemians, the eighth of July. Frederick, marquis of Brandenburg, was appointed general of that war, who would follow the cardinal. He entered into Bohemia by the way that leads to Thopa; and Albert, prince of Austria, was appointed to bring his army through Moravia. In this expedition were Albert and Christopher of Bavaria, and Frederick, dukes of Saxony, John and Albert, princes of Brandenburg, with their father, who was general of those wars. Also the bishops of Hyperbolic, Bamberg, and Eysten. Also the company of the Swabians, which they called the company of St. George. And the magistrates of the imperial cities, the bishop of Mentz, Treves, and Cologne, sent their aids, and with them the chieftains of their provinces. It is said that the number of their horsemen was over 40,000, but their footmen were not so many, for the Germans for the most part fight their battles on horseback.

Also Rhenatus, prince of Lorraine, promised to come to these wars. But being hindered by his civil wars, in that he set about to vanquish the earl of Vandome, he could not keep his promise, and the county palatine of Rheine, who aided and succored the earl of Vandome, could not go against the Bohemians. The cardinal, waiting for them, deferred his journey until the first of August. In the meantime Albert, leading his army out of Austria, understanding that the cardinal was not present at the appointed day, and seeing himself unable to encounter with the Bohemian power, he turned back again. After this the cardinal entered into Bohemia with a huge army, and destroyed many of the protestants' towns, killing men, women, and children, sparing neither old nor young. Notwithstanding this, his tyranny was exercised only in the uttermost borders of Bohemia, for his captains feared to enter very far into the land. The Bohemians, as soon as they heard that their enemy had come, made ready and gathered their host with all speed, and laid siege to a tower called Stiltverge, and brought it under subjection.

In the meantime there fell such a marvellous sudden fear among the papists throughout the whole camp, that they began to run away most shamefully, before any enemy came in sight. The cardinal Julian, marvelling at this most sudden fear, and what would move so great an army to flee, went about to the captains, exhorting them to put on armor, to order their battles, and to courageously abide their enemies, saying they did not fight for the glory of their kingdom, or for the possession of lands, but for their lives, honor, and religion of Christ, and for the salvation of souls. How ignominious a thing would it be (he said) for the Germans to flee in battle, whose courage and vallantness all the world extols? It would be

much better to die, than to give way to any enemies before they were even seen. For they can by no means live in safety within the walls, who give way to their enemy in the field. For it is the weapon that defends a man and not the walls; and unless they quickly defend their liberty with the sword, they would shortly be in greater bondage, more miserable than any death. But this exhortation was all in vain, for fear had put away all boldness. The ensigns were snatched up, and as though there had been no captain in the host, every man ran away headlong. No man regarded any command, nor once took his leave of his captain, but casting away their armor with speedy flight, they ran away, as though their enemy had been at their backs. The cardinal also, although it was against his will, was forced to do the same.

[336]

Thus the protestants, by their enemy's fear, made even bolder and more courageous, pursued them through the woods, and had a great prey and spoil of them. Notwithstanding, when Albert heard that the cardinal had entered into Bohemia, he came back with all speed from Austria with his army, and besieged the strong town of Prezorabia. But when he understood how the cardinal had fled, he abandoned his purpose, and returned through Moravia, which was not yet subject to him. He destroyed over fifty towns with fire and sword, took many of their cities by force, and spoiled them, committing great murder and slaughter. And so he afflicted those who took his yoke upon themselves, and promised to be subject and obedient to him under this condition: that regarding religion, he would be bound to do that which the Council of Basel should determine.

Then was there an ambassage sent out of Bohemia to Basel, where Sigismund held the council. During the time of the wars, he had kept himself at Nuremberg. When he would take his journey to Rome to be crowned emperor, he wrote letters to the nobles of Bohemia, in which he said that he was a Bohemian born, and that he was attached to no nation more than to his own, and that he went to Rome for no other purpose than to be crowned, which honor should also be to the renown of the Bohemians; for it had been always his especial care to advance them. He also said that through his endeavor the council had begun at Basel, exhorting all those who were desirous to be heard regarding religion, that they should come there, and that they would not maintain any quarrel contrary to the holy mother the church; that the council would lovingly and gently hear their reasons; that they would only endeavor to agree with the synod as regards religion, and reserve and keep a quiet and peaceable kingdom for him, against his return. Nor should the Bohemians think to refuse his government, whose brother, father, and uncle had reigned over them, and that he too would reign over them, by no other means or way than other Christian kings used to do.

The Council of Basel also wrote their letter to the Bohemians, that they should send their ambassadors who should show a reason for their faith, promising safe conduct to go and come, and free liberty to speak what they would. The Bohemians on this point, were of two opinions. For the protestants and almost all the common people said it was not good to go, alleging the examples of John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, who going to Constance under the safe conduct of the emperor, were there openly burned. But the nobility, following the mind of Maynard, prince of the new house, said that they ought to go to the council, and that they are not to be allowed who had invented those new and strange opinions of faith, and new kind of religion, unless they would render an account of their doings and sayings before the universal church, and defend those things which they had openly taught before learned men. This opinion prevailed, and an ambassage of three hundred horse was sent to Basel. The chiefs of these were William Cosca, a valiant knight, and Procopius, surnamed Magnus, a man of worthy fame for his manifold victories, John Rochezana, preacher of

Prague, Nicholas Galecus, minister of the Taborites, and one Peter, an Englishman, of excellent, prompt, and pregnant wit. The people came in great numbers out of the town, and many out of the synod and council, attending before the gates to see the coming of this valiant and famous people. Others gathered together in great numbers into the streets where they would pass through. The matrons, maids, and children filled the windows and houses to behold and see, and to marvel at their strange kind of apparel, and stout courageous countenances, saying that it was not untrue which was reported of them. Notwithstanding, all men beheld Procopiuni, saying, this is the one who has overthrown the papists in so many battles, who has subverted so many towns, and slain so many men, whom both his enemies, and also his own soldiers fear and reverence; also, that he was a bold, valiant and invincible captain, who could not be overcome with any terror, labor, or travail.

These Bohemian ambassadors were gently received. The day after, Cardinal Julian, sending for them to the council-house, made a gentle, long, and eloquent oration to them, exhorting them to unity and peace, saying that the church was the spouse of our Savior Christ, and the mother of all faithful, that it has the keys of binding and loosing, and also that it is white and fair, without spot or wrinkle, and cannot err in those points that are necessary to salvation, and that whoever despises that church is to be counted as a profane heathen and publican; nor can this church be represented better by any means than in this council. He also exhorts them to receive the decrees of the council, and to give no less credit to the council than to the gospel, by whose authority the Scriptures themselves are received and allowed. Also that the Bohemians, who call themselves the children of the church, ought to hear the voice of their mother, who is never unmindful of her children; how of late they have lived apart from their mother; although (he said) that is nothing new or strange, for there have been many in times past who have forsaken their mother, and yet seeking salvation, they have returned to her again; that in the time of Noah's flood, as many as were outside the ark perished; that the Lord's Passover was to be eaten in one house; that there is no salvation to be sought for outside of the church, and that this is the garden and famous fountain of water, from which whoever drinks, shall not thirst everlastingly; that the Bohemians have done as they should, in that they have sought the fountains of this water at the council, and have determined now at length to give ear to their mother. Now all hatred ought to cease, all armor and weapons ought to be laid apart, and all occasion of war utterly rejected. For the fathers would lovingly and gently hear whatever they would say in their own cause or quarrel, requiring only that they would willingly receive and embrace the good counsels and determinations of the sacred synod; to which not only the Bohemians, but also all other faithful Christians, ought to consent and agree, if they would be partakers of eternal life.

This oration of the cardinal was heard and very well approved by the fathers. To which the Bohemians answered in a few words, that they had neither despised the church nor the council; that the sentence given at Constance, against those who were unheard, diminishes nothing of the Christian religion; that the authority of the fathers has always remained inviolate among them; and that whatever the Bohemians have taught, was confirmed by the Scriptures and gospel; and that they have now come to manifest their innocency before the whole church, and to require open audience, where the laity may also be present. Their request was granted them; and being further demanded in what points they disagreed from the church of Rome, they propounded four articles.

- *First Article.* They affirmed, that all those who would be saved, should of necessity receive the communion of the last supper under both kinds, of bread and wine.

Bk. V. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1360-1422)

- *Second Article.* They affirmed all civil rule and dominion was to be forbidden to the clergy by the law of God.
- *Third Article.* That the preaching of the word of God is free for all men, and in all places.
- *Fourth Article.* Regarding open crimes and offenses, these are in no way to be allowed for avoiding greater evil.

These were the only propositions which they propounded before the council in the name of the whole realm. Then another ambassador affirmed that he had heard from the Bohemians very many things offensive to Christian ears, among which this was one point: that they had preached that the invention of the order of begging friars was diabolical.

[337] A.D. 1422.

Then Procopius, rising up, said, “Nor is it untrue; for if neither Moses, nor the patriarchs before him, nor the prophets after him, nor in the new law did Christ and his apostles institute the order of begging friars, who doubts but that it was an invention of the devil, and a work of darkness?”

This answer of Procopius was derided by them all. And cardinal Julian went about to prove, that not only the decrees of the patriarchs and prophets, and those things which Christ and his apostles had instituted, were of God, but also that all such decrees as the church should ordain, being guided through the Holy Spirit, are the works of God. Even though, as he said, the order of begging friars might seem to be taken out of some part of the gospel.

The Bohemians chose four divines who would declare their articles to be taken out of the Scriptures. Likewise on the contrary part there were four appointed by the council. This disputation continued for fifty days, where many things were alleged on either part, of which more will be said later (by the grace of Christ), as space serves, when we come to the time of that council.

In the meantime, while the Bohemians were thus in long conflicts with Sigismund the emperor and the pope, fighting for their religion, to whom, notwithstanding all the fulness of the pope’s power was bent against them, God of his goodness had given such noble victories, as expressed above, and ever prospered them so long as they could agree among themselves. As these things (I say) were going on in Bohemia, King Henry V of England, fighting likewise in France, although for no similar matter of religion, fell sick at Blois and died. He had reigned nine years, five months, three weeks, and odd days from his coronation. This king in life, and in all his doings, was so devout and serviceable to the pope and his chaplains, that he was called by many, the Prince of Priests. He left behind him a son, still an infant, nine months and fifteen days of age, whom he had by Queen Katharine, daughter to the French king, who married him two or three years before. The name of this prince, succeeding his father, was Henry VI. He was left under the government and protection of his uncle Humphrey, duke of Gloucester.

The names of the Archbishops of Canterbury contained in this Fifth Book.

55. Simon Islepe.

56. Simon Langham.

57. William Witlesey

58. Simon Sudbury.

59. William Courtney

60. Thomas Arundel

61. Henry Chichesley

THE END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

ACTS AND MONUMENTS

BOOK VI.

PERTAINING TO

The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan 1422-1516.

Preface To The Reader

Up to here I have divided the order of this present church history into five principal parts, according to the five different periods and states of the church, each part containing three hundred years — never coming to the *last* three hundred years, that is, to the last times of the church, counting from the time of Wycliffe. This is because, in the compass of the last three hundred years are contained great troubles and perturbations of the church, with the marvellous reformation of the same, through the wondrous operation of the Almighty. All these things cannot be comprehended in one book. I have therefore disposed the later three hundred years into several books, beginning now with the sixth book, at the reign of King Henry VI.

In this book, besides the many and grievous persecutions raised up by antichrist, it is also to be observed that for a long time it has been received and thought by the common people, that this religion now generally used, has sprung up and arisen only recently, even (as many think) in the last twenty or thirty years. It may now manifestly appear, not only by the Acts and Monuments previous reviewed, but also by the histories following hereafter, how this profession of Christ's religion has been spread abroad in England, from old and ancient times — not only for these past two hundred years, from the time of Wycliffe, but it has continually from time to time sparkled abroad, even though its flames have never so perfectly burst out, as they have done within these hundred years and more. This will manifestly appear by these histories collected and gathered here out of registers, especially of the diocese of Norwich, in which it may be seen how many there have been within the diocese of Norwich, both men and women, who have defended the same doctrine which is now received by us in the church. These persons, although they were not then so strongly armed in their cause and quarrel as they have been in recent years, yet they were warriors in Christ's church, and fought to their power in the same cause. And even if they stepped back through tyranny, yet judge the best of them, good reader, and refer the cause of it to God, who reveals all things according to His determinate will and appointed time.

This young prince Henry being under the age of one year, after the death of his father, succeeded to the throne and kingdom of England (September A.D. 1422). In his eighth year (1437) he was crowned at Westminster; and the second year after he was also crowned at Paris. Henry, bishop of Winchester, cardinal, was present at them both. King Henry reigned thirty-eight years, and then was deposed by Edward IV, as will be declared later in his time (Christ willing).⁹⁸

In the first year of his reign, **William Tailor**, a priest and the constant witness-bearer of Christ's doctrine, was burned under Henry Chichesley, archbishop of Canterbury. I read of this William Tailor, that he was first apprehended and abjured in the days of Thomas

⁹⁸ Henry VI was born in 1421 during the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453) between England and France. He reigned 1422-1461, and 1470-1471. He was king of France from 1422-1453, succeeding his maternal grandfather, Charles VI. Humphrey duke of Gloucester, and John duke of Bedford served as regents, the one in England the other in France.

Arundel. Afterwards, in the days of Henry Chichesley, about A.D. 1421, which was a year before his burning, William Tailor appeared again in the convocation before the archbishop, being brought by the bishop of Worcester. Tailor was complained of, as having taught the following articles at Bristol:

First, That whoever hangs any Scripture around his neck, takes away the honor due only to God, and gives it to the devil.

Secondly, That no human person is to be worshipped, but God alone is to be adored.

Thirdly, that the saints are not to be worshipped nor invoked.

Upon these articles William Tailor being examined, denied that he preached or held them in a way of defending them, but only communed and talked about them, especially the second and third articles — only in a way of reasoning, and for argument's sake. And to justify his opinion to be true in what he held, he brought out of his bosom a paper in which were contained certain articles, with the testimonies of the doctors alleged, and he exhibited the same to the archbishop.

[339] A.D. 1423—1424.

Tailor was bid to stand aside, as the archbishop consulted together with the bishops and other prelates as to what was to be done in the matter. He delivered the writings to Master John Castle and John Rikinhale, the vice-chancellors of Oxford and of Cambridge, and to John Langdon, monk of Canterbury. Advising with themselves and with other divines about the articles and allegations, on the following Monday they presented the articles of William Tailor to the archbishops and prelates, as erroneous and heretical. Upon which, William Tailor being called before them, in conclusion was content to revoke the same, and for his penance was condemned by them to perpetual prison.

Notwithstanding, through a favor they were content that he should be released from his incarceration, if he would put sufficient surety in the king's chancery, and swear that he would never hold nor favor such opinions thereafter. And thus William Tailor, appointed to appear before the archbishop the next Wednesday at Lambeth, to take his absolution from his long excommunication during the time from Thomas Arundel. He appeared again before him, where laying aside his cloak, his cap, and stripped to his doublet, he kneeled at the feet of the archbishop, who then stood up with a rod in his hand, and began the psalm *Miserere*, etc. His chaplains responded with the second verse. After that was said, the collect, *Deus cui proprium*, etc. (God to whom belongs) with certain other prayers.⁹⁹ And so taking an oath from him, the archbishop committed him to the custody of the bishop of Worcester, to whom power and authority was permitted to release him upon those conditions. And thus William Tailor was absolved for that time, being enjoined notwithstanding to appear at the next convocation, whenever it should be, before the archbishop or his successor who would follow him.

In the meantime, while William Tailor was thus in the custody of the bishop of Worcester, certain writings passed between him and one Thomas Smith, priest at Bristol, in which William Tailor replied against Thomas, concerning the question of worshipping saints. On the occasion of his reply being brought to the hands of the bishop of Worcester, William Tailor began to be troubled anew. He was again brought before the public convocation of the clergy by the said bishop of Worcester, to answer to his writings. This was the eleventh of

⁹⁹ The collect is a short prayer said at the beginning of the Mass.

February, A.D. 1422. William being presented to this convocation, his writings were read to him. He would not and could not deny they were of his own hand-writing.

The tenor and effect of whose writing only tended to prove that every petition and prayer for any supernatural gift ought to be directed to God alone, and not to any creature. Although in his writing he did not utterly deny that it was lawful in any respect to pray to saints (and brings Thomas Aquinas to bear for that), but only in respect to that worship which is called *latria* (worship given to God alone). He seems to differ little or nothing at all from the superstition of the papists. And yet the writing, being delivered by the archbishop to the four orders of friars of London, for William to be examined by them, was found erroneous and heretical in these points: —

1. That every prayer, which is a petition of some supernatural gift or free gift, is to be directed only to God.
2. That prayer is to be directed to God alone.
3. To pray to any creature is to commit idolatry.
4. There was another opinion, much like the others, to make up the fourth.

Hereupon a writ came down from the king, directed to the lord mayor and sheriffs of London, "*De hoeretico comdurendo*," i.e. "the writ for burning a heretic," dated the first day of March, the first year of his reign.¹⁰⁰ Upon which, William Tailor, condemned as a relapse, was first degraded, and then sentenced to be burned, and so he was committed to the secular power. Then being brought to Smithfield on the first of March, with Christian constancy, after a long imprisonment, he consummated his martyrdom there (A.D. 1422).

The manner of his degrading was the same as John Huss's before,¹⁰¹ for the papists use but one form for all men First, Degrading them from priesthood, by taking from them the chalice and patine. From deaconship, by taking from them the gospel-book and tunicle. From sub-deaconship, by taking from them the epistle-book and tunicle. From acolyteship, by taking from them the cruet and candlestick. From an exorcist, by taking away the book of exorcisms or gradual. From sextonship, by taking away the church-door key and surplice. And likewise from benedict, in taking away the surplice, and first tonsure, etc. All of which they accomplished in due order upon this godly martyr, before his burning.

John Florence, a Turner.

John Florence, a turner (wood-worker), dwelling in Shelton, in the diocese of Norwich, was attached, because he held and taught the following heresies (as they called them) contrary to the determination of the church of Rome.

- That the pope and cardinals have no power to make or constitute any laws.
- That there is no day to be kept holy, except Sunday which God has hallowed.
- That images are not to be worshipped, nor should the people set up any candles before them in the churches, nor go on pilgrimage, nor offer for the dead.
- That curates should not take the tithes of their parishioners, but that such tithes should be divided among the poor parishioners.
- That all those who swear by their life or power, will be damned, unless they repent.

On the second of August 1424, John Florence personally appeared before William Bernam, chancellor to William, bishop of Norwich. There, being threatened by the judge, he

¹⁰⁰ Foxe is confused here. Yes, 1422 was the first year of king Henry VI. But this is February; and infant Henry won't become king until September. So this writ was issued by his father, Henry V, in his *last* year.

¹⁰¹ That is on p. 307; but see also p. 263, where the degradation of William Sautre is described in such detail.

acknowledged that he had erred, and submitted himself to the correction of the church, and abjured, taking an oath that from that time forward he would not hold, teach, preach, or willingly defend any error or heresy contrary to the determination of the church of Rome, nor maintain, help, or aid anyone who teaches or holds any such errors or heresies, either privately or publicly; and for his offense he was enjoined this following penance: —

That for three Sundays, in a solemn procession in the cathedral church of Norwich, he would be disciplined, *i.e.* have a rod or scourge laid on him before all the people. The same would also be done around his parish-church of Shelton, on three other separate Sundays, he being bareheaded, bare-footed, and bare-necked, in the manner of a public penitent, his body being covered with a canvass shirt, and canvass breeches, carrying in his hand a taper of a pound weight; and that being done, he was dismissed.

Richard Behcard of Ersham.

Richard Belward of Ersham, in the diocese of Norwich, was accused of holding and teaching these errors and opinions here under-written, contrary to the determination of the church of Rome.

- That ecclesiastical ministers have no power to excommunicate. And that if a bishop excommunicates any man, God absolves him.
- That he held the erroneous opinions that Sir John Oldcastle held when he was in prison, and affirmed that Sir John Oldcastle was a true catholic man, and falsely condemned and put to death without reasonable cause.
- That those who go on pilgrimage, offering to images made of wood and stone, are excommunicate, because they ought to offer to the living, and not to the dead; and that the curates sell God on Easter day, when they receive offerings of those who communicate, before they minister the sacrament to them.
- That he counselled women, that they should not offer in the church for the dead.
- That the saints who are in heaven should in no case to be prayed to, but God only.

[340]

The fifth of July (A.D. 1424), Richard Belward was brought before John, bishop of Norwich. Articles were objected against him, which he denied. Therefore the bishop appointed him another day on which he appeared again before the bishop, and brought with him nine of his neighbors to purge him of those articles, and there he solemnly purged himself. Afterwards, the bishop commanded him to swear upon the evangelists: that from that day forward he should not wittingly preach, teach, or defend any error or heresy, contrary to the church of Rome; nor aid, assist, favor, or maintain, privately or openly, any manner of person or persons who would hold or maintain the said errors or heresies.

John Goddesel of Ditchingham.

In like manner, John Goddesel of Ditchingham was accused upon the same articles, and brought before the bishop there. Denying them, he purged himself by his neighbors, as Richard Belward had done before, being sworn in like manner as he was. And so he was dismissed and set at liberty, until the year 1428. Then he was again apprehended, accused, and abjured, as will be declared more at large in the history when we come to that year.

Sir Hugh Pie of Ludney.

Also Sir Hugh Pie, chaplain of Ludney, in the diocese of Norwich, was likewise accused and brought before the bishop of Norwich the fifth of July (A.D. 1424), for holding the following opinions:

Bk. VI. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1422-1516)

- That the people should not go on pilgrimage.
- That the people should not give alms, except to those who beg at their doors.
- That the image of the cross and other images are not to be worshipped.
- And that the said Hugh had cast the cross of Bromehold into the fire to be burned, which he took from one John Welgate, of Ludney.

These articles being objected against him, he utterly denied. Whereupon he had a day appointed to purge himself by the witness of three laymen and three priests. That so done, he was sworn as the others mentioned before, and so he was dismissed.

After this, (A.D. 1428), King Henry VI ¹⁰² sent down most cruel letters of commission to John Exeter and Jacolet Germain, keeper of the castle of Colchester, for apprehending Sir William White, priest, and others suspected of heresies, the tenor of which ensues.

*The Copy of the King's Letters directed to John Exeter
and Jacolet Germain, keeper of the Castle of Colchester,
for apprehending Sir William White, priest:
and other (as they called them) Lollards.*

“Henry, by the grace of God, king of England and of France, lord of Ireland, to his well-beloved John Exeter, and Jacolet Germain, keeper of the castle of Colchester, health;

“You shall understand that we, fully trusting to your fidelity and circumspection, have appointed you jointly and severally to take and arrest William White, priest; and Thomas, late chaplain of Setling, in the county of Norfolk; and William Northampton, priest; and all others, whatever they are, who are suspected of heresy or Lollardy, wherever they may be found, within the liberties or without; and being so taken, to send them straightway to our nearest jail or prison, until such time as we have taken other orders for their delivery. And therefore we straitly command you, that you diligently attend about the premises, and fulfill the same in form aforesaid. Also we charge and command all and singular justices of the peace, mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, and all other our faithful officers, by the tenor of these presents, that they assist, aid, and counsel you and every one of you, in the execution of the premises, as appropriate for them. In witness of which we have caused these our letters patent to be made.

“Witness myself at Westminster, the sixth of July, the sixth of our reign.”

By virtue of this commission, we find in old monuments that a short time after, John Exeter, who was appointed one of the commissioners, attached (arrested) six persons in the town of Bungay, in the diocese of Norwich. He committed them, within the next ten days, to be sent under safe custody to the castle of Norwich.

Besides these, we also find in the old monuments within the diocese of Norfolk and Suffolk, especially in the towns of Beccles, Ersham, and Ludney, that a great number of both men and women were vexed and cast into prison, and after their abjuration, brought to open shame in churches and markets, by the bishop of the diocese, named William, and his chancellor William Bernham; John Exeter was the registrar. So that within three or four years, that is, from 1428 to 1451, about one hundred and twenty men and women were examined, and sustained great vexation for the profession of the Christian faith. Some of them were only taken upon suspicion of eating meats prohibited on vigil days. Upon their purgation, they escaped more easily, and with less punishment. Others were more cruelly handled, and some were put to death and burned. Among them we specially find these three mentioned: Father Abraham of Colchester; William White, priest; and John Waddon, priest.

¹⁰² Henry was only six or seven years old. This was the work of his regent, Humphrey duke of Gloucester.

A great number of good men and women, seventy-eight in all, were forced to abjure, sustaining such cruel penance as the bishop and his chancellor pleased to lay upon them. These soldiers of Christ, being much beaten with the cares and troubles of those days, although they were constrained to relent and abjure — that is, to protest with their tongues otherwise than their hearts thought, partly through correction, and partly through infirmity (being as yet but newly trained soldiers in God's field). Yet for the good-will they bore to the truth, even though they dared not express it with their tongues, we have thought it good to mention them here. And it is for this reason: either to stop the mouths of malignant adversaries, or else to answer to their ignorance. They follow blind prejudice rather than the true knowledge of history, and for lack of knowledge, they blame what they do not know, accusing the true doctrine of the word of God of being a novelty, and carping at the teachers of it as newly-made brethren. Whoever would understand by these histories, how this doctrine of the grace of God, lacking no antiquity, has continually from time to time sought to burst out, and in some places prevailed. Although in most places, through tyranny and the malice of men, Christ's proceedings have been suppressed and kept from rising, so much as men's power and strength joined with craft and subtlety, could labor to keep it down — as it may well appear by these good men of Norfolk and Suffolk. For if the knowledge and the goodness of those men had the same liberty of time, with the help of the same authority as we now have, and had not been restrained through the iniquity of the times and the tyranny of prelates, it would well have appeared how old this doctrine was, which they now despise and reject for its "newness." Nor did Bonner need to ask Thomas Hawks and others,¹⁰³ where their church was forty years ago, since forty years ago and more, within the country of Norfolk and Suffolk, plenty of persons were then found of the same profession and the like doctrine which we now profess. And thus much for the number of these persons.

Now, regarding their articles which they maintained and defended:

Concerning the articles, many of them were either falsely objected against them, or not truly reported, as was the usual manner of these adversaries. The notaries reported them erroneously, either mistaking what they said, or misunderstanding what they meant, especially in the two articles concerning baptism and paying of tithes. For when speaking against the ceremonial and superfluous traditions then used in baptism, such as salt, oil, spittle, taper, light, chrismes, exorcising of the water, and other such things, they accounted them as immaterial in the holy institution of baptism.

[341] A.D. 1424-1428.

The notaries slanderously corrupted this assertion, to make it more odious to the ears of the people. And so they gave out the article, as if they held that the sacrament of baptism by water, used in the church, is but a light matter and of small effect.

Again, in speaking against women christening newborn infants in private houses, against the opinion of those who think children who depart before they come to their baptism are damned, they are falsely reported — as if they said that Christian people are sufficiently baptized in the blood of Christ, and need no water, and that infants are sufficiently baptized if their parents are baptized before them.

Moreover they thought, or said, perhaps, that in certain cases tithes might be withheld from wicked priests, and be conferred to better uses to benefit the poor. Therefore they are falsely

¹⁰³ Thomas Hawkes was burned to death in 1555 during the Marian Persecutions, rather than allow his son to be baptised into the Roman Catholic Church. Edmund Bonner was the Bishop of London who urged him to recant.

slandered as saying and affirming that no tithes were to be given to the ministers and curates of the churches.

And likewise for matrimony, in which they are reported to hold and affirm that it consisted only in the mutual consent between the man and the woman, needing no other solemnizing in the public church — and all because they denied it was a sacrament. Other articles were objected against them, such as these which follow:

- That auricular confession is not to be made to a priest, but to God only; because no priest has any power to absolve a sinner from his sin.
- That no priest has power to make the body of Christ in the sacrament of the altar; but that, after the sacramental words, pure material bread remains as before.
- That every true Christian man is a priest to God.
- That no man is bound under pain of damnation, to observe Lent or any other days prescribed ¹⁰⁴ by the church of Rome.
- That the pope is antichrist, and his prelates the disciples of antichrist, and the pope has no power to bind and loose upon earth.
- That it is lawful for every Christian to do any bodily work (sin only excepted) on holy days.
- That it is lawful for priests to have wives.
- That excommunications and ecclesiastical censures given out by the prelates, are not to be regarded.
- That it is not lawful to swear in private cases.
- That men should not go on pilgrimages.
- That there is no honor to be given to the images of the crucifix, of our lady, or any other saint.
- That the holy water, hallowed in the church by the priest, is not holier or of more virtue than other running or well-water, because the Lord blessed all waters in their first creation.
- That the death of Thomas Becket was neither holy nor meritorious.
- That the relics, as dead men's bones, should not be worshipped or dug out of their graves, or set up in shrines.
- That prayers made in all places are acceptable to God.
- That men should not pray to any saint, but only to God.
- That the bells and ringing in the church was ordained for no other purpose, but to fill the priests' purses.
- That it is no sin to withstand the ecclesiastical precepts.
- That the catholic church is only the congregation of elect.

These were the articles which were generally objected against them all, in which they so agreed in one uniform faith, that whatever one held, all the others maintained and held the same. By their consent and doctrine it appears that they all received it from some one instructor, who was William White. Being a scholar and follower of John Wycliffe, he later resorted into this country of Norfolk, and there he instructed these men in the light of the gospel. Now it remains to speak of their troubles, how they were handled, beginning with William White.

¹⁰⁴ Originally, "*prohibited by the the church of Rome.*"

William White.

William White was a follower of John Wycliffe, and a priest — not the common sort of priests, but rather reputed among the number of those whom the wise man speaks of, “He was as the morning star in the midst of a cloud,” etc. ^{Sir 50.6} This man was a well-learned, upright, and well-spoken priest. He gave up his priesthood and benefice, and took a godly young woman to be his wife. Notwithstanding, he did not therefore cease from his former office and duty, but continually labored to the glory and praise of the spouse of Christ, by reading, writing, preaching. The principal points of his doctrine were these, which he was forced to recant at Canterbury.

- That men should seek the forgiveness of their sins only at the hands of God.
- That the wicked living of the pope, and his holiness, is nothing but a devilish estate and the heavy yoke of antichrist, and therefore he is an enemy to Christ’s truth.
- That men should not worship images, or other idolatrous paintings.
- That men should not worship the holy men who are dead.
- That the Romish church is the fig-tree which the Lord Christ cursed, because it has brought forth no fruit of true belief.
- That those who wear cowls, or are anointed or shorn, are the lance-knights and soldiers of Lucifer; and that all of them, because their lamps are not burning, will be shut out when the Lord comes.

Upon these articles, he was attached at Canterbury under archbishop Henry Chichesley (A.D. 1424). There for a certain space of time, he stoutly and manfully witnessed the truth which he had preached. But as he lost his courage and strength there, so afterwards he became much stouter and stronger again in Jesus Christ, and confessed his own error and offense. For after this, he went into Norfolk with his wife, and there occupied himself in busily teaching and converting the people to the true doctrine of Christ. At last, by means of the king’s letters sent down for that intent and purpose, he was apprehended and brought before William, bishop of Norwich, by whom he was convicted and condemned of thirty articles. And there he was burned in Norwich, in September, A.D. 1424.

William White and his wife lived much with one Thomas Moon of Ludney. White was of so devout and holy a life, that all the people held him in great reverence, and desired him to pray for them. So that one Margaret Wright confessed that if any saints were to be prayed to, she would rather pray to him than any other. When he came to the stake, thinking to open his mouth to speak to the people, to exhort and confirm them in the truth, one of the bishop’s servants struck him on the mouth, to force him to keep silence. And thus this good man, receiving the crown of martyrdom, ended this mortal life to the great sorrow and grief of all the good men of Norfolk. His wife followed her husband’s footsteps according to her power, teaching and sowing abroad the same doctrine, confirming many men in God’s truth. She suffered much trouble and punishment the same year at the hands of the bishop.

Father Abraham of Colchester, and **John Waddon**, priest, were also burned for like articles at about the same time.

It might be set out at large here concerning those who abjured, how and by whom they were examined, what depositions came in against them, and what was the order and manner of the penance enjoined them. But to avoid wordiness, it will be sufficient to briefly touch upon certain of the principals. In this way, better understanding may be given to the reader, as to the manner and order that all the others were treated.

First, among those who were arrested and forced to abjure (A.D. 1428), were **Thomas Pie**, and **John Mendham**, who, being convicted upon the articles mentioned before, were enjoined penance in their own parish church, as it more at large appears by the bishop's letter directed to the dean of Rhodenhall, and the parish priest of Aldborough.

[342]

The copy of the Bishop of Norwich's Letter.

“William, by the sufferance of God, bishop of Norwich, to our well-beloved sons in Christ, the dean of Rhodenhall of our diocese, and to the parish priest of the parish church of Aldborough of the same our diocese, health, grace, and benediction. In that we, according to our office, lawfully proceeding to the correction and amendment of the souls of Thomas Pie and John Mendham of Aldborough, of the diocese aforesaid, because they have held, believed and affirmed diverse and many errors and heresies, contrary to the determination of the holy church of Rome, and the universal church and catholic faith, have enjoined the said Thomas and John, appearing before us personally, and confessing before us judicially, that they have held, believed, and affirmed diverse and many errors and heresies, this penance written hereunder for their offenses, is to be done and fulfilled in manner, form, and time written hereunder, according to what justice requires; that is to say, six whippings, or disciplinings about the parish church of Aldborough aforesaid, before a solemn procession on six separate Sundays; and three disciplinings about the marketplace of Kerelstone, of our said diocese; three principal market days, with bare neck, head, legs, and feet, their bodies being covered only with their shirts and breeches, each of them carrying a taper in his hand of a pound weight, round about the church, as well as about the marketplace, on each of the aforesaid appointed days. These tapers, the last Sunday after the penance is finished, we will that the said John and Thomas humbly and devoutly offer to the high altar of the parish church of Aldborough. at the time of the offertory of the high mass the same day; and that either of them, going about the marketplace aforesaid, shall make four separate pauses and stays, and at each of those same pauses, humbly and devoutly receive at your hands three disciplinings.

“Therefore, we straitly charge and command you, and either of you, jointly and severally, by virtue of your obedience, that every Sunday and market-day after the receipt of our present commandment, you effectually admonish and bring forth the said Thomas Pie and John Mendham to begin and accomplish their said penance, and so successfully to finish the same in manner and form afore-appointed. But if they will not obey your monitions, or rather our commandments, in this behalf, and begin and finish their said penance effectually, you or one of you, shall cite them peremptorily, that they, or either of them, appear before us or our commissary, in the chapel of our palace at Norwich, the twelfth day after the citation so made, if it is a court day, or else the next court day following, to declare if they, or any of them, have any cause why they should not be excommunicated for their manifest offense committed in this behalf, according to the form and order of law; and further to receive such punishment as justice shall provide in that behalf. And what you have done in the premises, whether the said Thomas and John have obeyed your admonitions, and performed the same penance or no, we will that you, or one of you, who have received our said commandment for the execution of it, distinctly certify to us between this and the last day of November next coming. Dated at our palace of Norwich, under our commissary's seal, the eighth day of October, A.D. 1428.”

This, gentle reader, was for the most part, the order of their whole penance. However, some were more cruelly handled; and after their penance they were banished out of the diocese. Others were more straitly used by longer imprisonment, about which we will briefly recite one or two examples.

John Beverly, alias Battild.

John Beverly alias Battild. a laborer, was attached by the vicar of Southcreke, the parish priest of Waterden, and a lawyer. And so he was delivered to Master William Barnham the bishop's commissary, who sent him to the castle of Norwich there to be kept in irons. Afterward he was brought before the commissary, and having nothing proved against him, he took an oath that afterward he would confess his sins to his curate once a year, every year, and receive the sacrament at Easter, as other Christians did. And for his offense he was enjoined that the next Friday and Saturday he would fast on bread and water, and on the Saturday would be whipped from the palace of Norwich, going round about by Tomblands, and by St. Michael's church, by Cottlerew, and about the market, having in his hand a wax candle of twopence, to offer to the image of the Trinity after he had done his penance. And because he confessed that he had eaten flesh on Easter day, and was not shriven all of Lent, nor received on Easter day, the judge enjoined him to fast Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday in Whitsun-week, having but one meal a-day of fish and other white meats; and after this penance, he would depart out of the diocese, and never come back.

John Skilley of Flixon, Miller.

John Skilley of Flixon, miller, being apprehended and brought before the bishop of Norwich, the fourteenth of March, A.D. 1428, for holding and maintaining the articles above-written, was thereupon convicted and forced to abjure. After this abjuration was solemnly made, he had a most sharp sentence of penance pronounced against him: that because he was convicted by his own confession, for holding and maintaining the articles before-written, and for receiving certain good and godly men into his house, such as Sir William White, priest, and John Wadden — whom they called famous, notorious, and damnable heretics — and had now abjured the same, he was first absolved from the sentence of excommunication which he had incurred by means of his opinions, and then he was enjoined for penance, seven years' imprisonment at the monastery of Langly in the diocese of Norwich. And because in times past he used to eat flesh on Fridays, he was enjoined to fast on bread and water every Friday for seven years to come; and for the next two years immediately following the seven years, every Wednesday at the beginning of Lent, and every Maundy Thursday, he would appear before the bishop, or his successor, or the commissary at the time, in the cathedral church of Norwich, together with the other penitents, to do open penance for his offenses.

Besides these there were others of the same company, who in the same year were forced to similar abjuration and penance. And so to proceed to the next year, which was A.D. 1429, there ensued sixteen or seventeen persons in the same register, who were examined and also did penance. Among them was **John Baker**, otherwise called *Usher Tonstal*, who for having a book with the Lord's Prayer and the Ave and Creed in English, and for certain other articles of fasting, confession, and invocation, contrary to the determination of the Romish church, after much vexation, was caused to abjure and sustain such penance, as others before him had done.

The History of Margery Backster.

Another was Margery Backster, against whom one Joan, wife of Cliffland, was brought in by the bishop, and compelled to depose.

First, the said Margery Backster informed this deponent, that she would in no case swear, saying to her in English: "Dame, beware of the bee, for every bee will sting; and therefore

take heed you do not swear, not by God, nor by our lady, nor by any other saint. And if you do the contrary, the bee will sting your tongue and venom your soul.”

[343] A.D. 1428-1430.

Also, this deponent was demanded by Margery, what she did every day at church. She answered that she “kneeled down and said five Pater Nosters in worship of the crucifix, and as many Ave Marias in worship of our lady.” Margery rebuked her, saying, “You do evil to kneel or pray to such images in the churches, for God does not dwell in such churches, nor will He come down out of heaven. He will give you no more reward for such prayer, than a lighted candle, and set under the cover of the font, He will give light by night to those who are in the church.” Saying, moreover, in English, “Ignorant workmen hew and form such crosses and images. And after that, ignorant painters gloss them with colors. If you desire so much to see the true cross of Christ, I will show it to you at home in your own house.” This deponent being desirous to see this, Margery, stretching out her arms abroad, said to this deponent, “This is the true cross of Christ, and this cross you should and may behold and worship in your own house every day, and therefore it is but vain to run to the church to worship dead crosses and images.”

Also, this deponent being asked by Margery how she believed touching the sacrament of the altar, replied that she, “believed the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, to be the very body of Christ in the form of bread.” To whom Margery said,

“Your belief is wrong; for if every such sacrament were God, and the very body of Christ, there would be an infinite number of gods, because a thousand priests and more every day make a thousand such gods, and afterwards eat them. And therefore know for certain that by the grace of God it will never be my God, because it is falsely and deceitfully ordained by the priests in the church, to induce the simple people to idolatry; for it is only material bread.”

Moreover Margery said to this deponent that,

“Thomas of Canterbury, whom the people called St. Thomas, was a false traitor, and damned in hell, because he injuriously endowed the churches with possessions, and raised up many heresies in the church, which seduce the simple people. Therefore if God is blessed, Thomas is accursed. And those false priests who say that he suffered his death patiently before the altar, lie; for as a cowardly traitor, he was slain in the church door, as he was fleeing away.”

Moreover, this deponent says, that Margery told her that the cursed pope, cardinals, archbishop, and bishops, and especially the bishop of Norwich and others who support and maintain heresies and idolatry, reigning and ruling over the people, will shortly have the very same or worse mischief fall upon them, than that cursed man Thomas of Canterbury had. For they falsely and cursedly deceive the people, to extort money from the simple folk to sustain their pride, riot, and idleness. And know assuredly that the vengeance of God will speedily come upon those who have most cruelly slain the children of God, father Abraham, and William White, a true preacher of the law of God, and John Wadden, with many other godly men. This vengeance would have come upon the said Caiaphas — the bishop of Norwich and his ministers, who are members of the devil — before this time, if the pope had not sent over these false pardons to those parties. The said Caiaphas had falsely obtained them to induce the people to make procession for the state of them and of the church. These pardons brought the simple people to cursed idolatry.

Also Margery said to this deponent, that every faithful man and woman is not bound to fast during Lent, or other days appointed for fasting by the church, and that every man may lawfully eat flesh and all other meats on those days and times. And that it would be better to

eat the fragments left on Thursday at night on the fasting days, than to go to the market to go into debt to buy fish. And that it was Pope Silvester who made the Lenten season.

Margery also said to this deponent, that William White was falsely condemned as a heretic, and that he was a good and holy man, and that he desired her to follow him to the place of execution. There she saw that when he would have opened his mouth to speak to the people to instruct them, that a devil, one of Bishop Caiaphas's servants, struck him on the lips, and stopped his mouth, so that he could in no case declare the will of God.

This deponent says that Margery taught her that she should not go on pilgrimage, neither to our lady of Walsingham, nor to any other saint or place.

Also this deponent says that Margery desired of her, that she and Joan her maid would come secretly in the night to her chamber, and there she might hear her husband read the law of Christ to them. This law was written in a book that her husband usually read to her at night, and that her husband is well-learned in the Christian verity.

Margery said to this deponent, that the people worshipped devils which fell from heaven with Lucifer. These devils in their fall to the earth, entered into the images which stand in the churches, and have long lurked and dwelled in them. So that, the people worshipping those images commit idolatry.

She said also to this deponent, that holy bread and holy water were but trifles of no effect or force, and that the bells are to be cast out of the church, and that they are excommunicated who first ordained them.

Moreover, that she would not be burned, even if she were convicted of Lollardy, for she had a charter of salvation in her body.

Also the said deponent says that Agnes Berthem, her servant, being sent to the house of the said Margery, on the Saturday after Ash-Wednesday, and the said Margery not being within, found a brass pot standing over the fire, with a piece of bacon and oatmeal seething in it, as the said Agnes reported to this deponent.

Besides this deponent, there were others sworn and examined against the said Margery, such as John Grimley and Agnes Berthem, servants to William Clifland, who altogether confirmed the former depositions.

Thus much we have thought it good to note concerning Margery Backster. But we are not able to declare what became of her after this accusation, because we find no mention made of it in the registers.

The same year, like depositions were also made by one William Wright against diverse good men, as follows:

First, this deponent says that William Taylor told John Piry of Ludney — in the house of John Bungay of Beghton ;and in the presence of John Bungay, Robert Grigges, wright of Martham, and John Usher — that all the good men of Martham who were favorers and helpers to that good man William White, are evilly persecuted now-a-days, and that William White was a good and holy doctor. And that the best doctor after him was William Everden, who worked with William Taylor of Ludney for one month, and that the first Sunday of the month, William Everden sat all day on the table at work, saying to William Taylor, that he would not go to church to show himself as a scribe or Pharisee. And the second Sunday he

put on gentleman's apparel, and went to Norwich to listen to how the bishop and his ministers used the poor Christians in prison there.

Also the said William Wright deposed that William Taylor of Ludney was one of the sect, and went to London with Sir Hugh Pie, and often had conversation with Sir William White, often conferencing about the Lollards' doctrine.

Also that Anise, wife of Thomas Moon, is of the same sect, and favored them, and receives them often. And also the daughter of Thomas Moon is partly of the same sect, and can read English.

Also that Richard Fletcher of Beckles is a most perfect doctor in that sect, and can very well and perfectly expound the holy Scriptures, and has a book of the new law in English, which first was Sir Hugh Pie's.

Also that Nicholas Belward, son of John Belward, dwelling in the parish of Southelem, is one of the same sect, and has a new testament which he bought at London for four marks and forty pence, and taught the said William Wright and Margery his wife, and worked with them continually for one year, and studied the New Testament diligently.

[314]

That Thomas Gremner, turner of Dychingham, is perfect in that sect and law.

John Clark the younger, of Bergh, had the bedding and apparel of William Everden in his custody after the return of William White from Bergh, and is of the same sect.

Also William Bate, tailor of Sething, and his wife, and his son, who can read English very well, are of the same sect.

Also William Skirving of Sething, received Joan the wife of William White into his house, being brought there by William Everden after their departure from Marthain.

Also William Osbourn of Sething, John Reve, glover, and Bawdwin Cooper of Beckles, are of the same sect.

Also John Pert, recent servant of Thomas Moon, is of the same sect, and can read well, and did read in the presence of William White, and was the first who brought Sir Hugh Pie into the company of the Lollards. They oftentimes assembled together at the house of Thomas Moon, and there conferred upon their doctrine. Also Sir Hugh Pie bequeathed a New Testament to Alice, a servant to William White, which they then called the Book of the New Law, and it was in the custody of Oswald Godfrey of Colchester.

John Perker, mercer of a village by Ipswich, is a famous doctor of that sect. Also he said that father Abraham of Colchester is a good man.

Also the said William Wright deposes that it is read in the prophecies among the Lollards, that the sect of the Lollards will be destroyed in a manner; but notwithstanding, at length the Lollards will prevail and have the victory against all their enemies.

Also he said that Tucke knows all of that sect in Suffolk, Norfolk, and Essex.

Besides these, there were many others the same year, whose names were expressed earlier in the table of Norfolk men, we omit to treat here for brevity's sake, and pass over to the next year, which was 1430. [Ex Regist. Norw.]

John Burrel, servant to Thomas Moon of Ludney, in the diocese of Norwich, was apprehended and arrested for heresy, the ninth of September in this year (A.D. 1430), and examined by Mr. William Bernham, the bishop's commissary, upon the articles before mentioned, and others.

- That the catholic church is the soul of every good Christian man.
- That no man is bound to fast during Lent or other fasting days appointed by the church, for they were not appointed by God, but ordained by the priests.
- That every man may eat flesh or fish on the same days indifferently, according to his own will; and every Friday is a free day to eat both flesh and fish indifferently.
- That pilgrimage should not be made, except to the poor.
- That it is not lawful to swear, except in case of life and death.
- That masses and prayers for the dead are but vain; for the souls of the dead are either in heaven or hell: and there is no other place of purgatory but this world.

Upon being convicted of these articles, he was forced to abjure, and suffered a similar penance as the others had done before.

Thomas Moon of Ludney was apprehended and attached for suspicion of heresy. Against him the articles written before were objected by the bishop, but especially this article: that he had familiarity and communication with several heretics, and had received, comforted, supported, and maintained several of them, such as Sir William White, Sir Hugh Pie, Thomas Pet, and William Callis, priests, with many more. Being convicted on these articles before the bishop, he was forced to abjure, and received penance in like manner as before.

Robert Griggis of Martham was in like manner brought before the bishop on the seventeenth of February in the same year, for holding and affirming the aforesaid articles, but especially the following”

- That the sacrament of confirmation ministered by the bishop did not avail to salvation.
- That it was no sin to withstand the ordinances of the church of Rome.
- That holy bread and holy water were but trifles, and that the bread and water were the worse for the conjurations and characters which the priests made over them.

Upon being convicted of these articles, he was forced to abjure, and received penance in manner and form as the others had done before him.

The same also (though somewhat sharper) happened to John Finch of Colchester, the twentieth of September. Although he was of the diocese of London, being suspected of heresy, he was attached in Ipswich in the diocese of Norwich, and brought before the bishop there. Being convicted of the articles, like all the others before him, he was enjoined for penance, three disciplinings in solemn procession about the cathedral church of Norwich, three separate Sundays; and three disciplinings about the marketplace of Norwich, on three principal market-days — his head, neck, and feet being bare, and his body covered only with a short shirt or vesture, having in his hand a taper of wax of a pound weight which, the next Sunday after his penance, he would offer to the Trinity. For three years afterward, every Ash-Wednesday and Maundy-Thursday, he was to appear in the cathedral church at Norwich, before the bishop or his vicegerent, to do open penance among the other penitentiaries for his offenses.

About the same time, in the same year, 1430, shortly after the solemn coronation of King Henry VI, a certain man named Richard Hoveden, a wool-winder and citizen of London, received the crown of martyrdom. This man, when he could by no persuasions be withdrawn

or plucked back from the opinions of Wycliffe, he was condemned for heresy by the rulers of the church: and as Fabian writes, he was burned hard by the Tower of London.

Nicolas, Canon of Eye.

Now to proceed in our account of the persecution of Norfolk and Suffolk, we find that in the year 1431, Nicolas, canon of Eye, was brought before the bishop of Norwich for suspicion of heresy, with witnesses sworn to depose against him. These witnesses appointed one William Christopher to speak for them, and he deposed as follows:

First, that on Easter day, when all the parishioners went about the church of Eye solemnly in procession, as the manner was, this Nicolas Canon, as it were, mocking and deriding the other parishioners, went about the church the contrary way, and met the procession.

This article Nicolas confessed, and affirmed that he thought he did well in doing so. He then asked of Master John Colman, of Eye, this question, "Master Colman, what do you think of the sacrament of the altar?" Colman answered, "I think that the sacrament of the altar is very God, and very man, the very flesh and very blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the form of bread and wine." Nicolas answered him in derision, saying, "Truly, if the sacrament of the altar is very God and very man, and the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, then very God and very man may be put in a small space; as when it is put in the priest's mouth. Why then may we laymen not eat flesh on Fridays as well, and all other prohibited days, like the priest, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of our Lord every day indifferently?" Nicolas thought he had spoken well in that matter too.

Also, that on Corpus Christi day, at the elevation of high mass, when all the parishioners and strangers knelt down, holding up their hands, and doing reverence to the sacrament, Nicolas went behind a pillar of the church, and turning his face from the high altar, mocked those who revered the sacrament. Acknowledging this article, Nicolas affirmed that he believed he did well in doing so.

[345] A.D. 1430-1431.

Also, when his mother would have him lift up his right hand, and cross himself from the crafts and assaults of the devil, when he deferred doing so, his mother took up his right hand, and crossed him, saying, "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen." And then Nicolas, immediately deriding his mother's blessing, put up his right hand of his own accord, and blessed himself otherwise. This article Nicolas acknowledged to be true.

Also, that upon All-Hallows day, in the time of elevation of high mass, when many of the parishioners of Eye lit many torches and carried them up to the high altar, kneeling down there in reverence and honor of the sacrament, Nicolas carrying a torch went up to the high altar, and standing behind the priest's back, who was saying mass. At the time of the elevation, Nicolas stood upright on his feet, turning his back to the priest, and his face toward the people, and would not do reverence to the sacrament. He acknowledged this article, affirming that he thought he had done well in that behalf.

All of these articles the bishop's commissary caused to be copied out, word for word, and sent to Master William Worsted, prior of the cathedral church of Norwich, and to other doctors of divinity, so that they might deliberate upon them, and reveal their minds between that and the following Thursday. Upon that Thursday, Nicolas was again examined on two other articles, that he doubted whether, in the sacrament of the altar, it was the very body of Christ or not. This article he confessed before the commissary to be true.

Also, that he believed that a man should not confess his sins to a priest. This article he also confessed that he doubted the practice.

Now it remains to declare what these doctors concluded upon the articles. Their answer was this:

- As to the first article, they said that the article in the terms as it was propounded, is not simply a heresy, but an error.
- Also, as to the second article, the doctors agree as in the first.
- Also, as to the third article, they affirm that it is a heresy.
- To the fourth article, they answered as to the first and second.
- Also, the doctors affirm the fifth article to be a heresy.
- Also, as to the sixth article, the doctors conclude that if the said Nicolas, being of perfect mind and remembrance, doubted whether the sacrament of the altar was the very perfect body of Christ or not, then the article is simply a heresy.

Upon this, the commissary declared and pronounced Nicolas to be a heretic, and forced him to abjure. They enjoined Nicolas to do penance for his offenses, three disciplinings about the cloister of the cathedral church of Norwich, before a solemn procession, bare-headed and barefoot, carrying a taper of half-a-pound in his hand.

Thomas Bagley, priest.

I find in Fabian's *Chronicles*, that in the same year (A.D. 1431), Thomas Bagley, a priest, vicar of Monenden, beside Maiden, being a valiant disciple and adherent of Wycliffe, was condemned by the bishops of heresy at London, about the middle of Lent, and was degraded and burned in Smithfield.

Paul Crow, a Bohemian.

The same year also, Paul Crow, a Bohemian, was taken at St. Andrews by the bishop Henry, and delivered over to the secular power to be burnt, for holding opinions contrary to the church of Rome, touching the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the worshipping of saints, auricular confession, with other of Wycliffe's opinions.

History of Thomas Rhedon.

We declared before how this cruel storm of persecution, which first began in England after it had long raged here against many good and godly men, broke out and passed into Bohemia; and after a short time, increasing little by little, it invaded Scotland; and now, with greater force and violence, this furious devouring flame entered Italy, and did not allow any part of the world to be free from the murder and slaughter of good and godly men. It happened about this time that one Thomas Rhedon, a Carmelite friar, came with the Venetian ambassadors into Italy. This man, although he was a Carmelite, he understood the word of God, judging that God should not be worshipped either in that mount, nor at Jerusalem only, but in spirit and truth. This man being a true Carmelite, prepared himself to go into Italy, trusting that he would find there some by whose good life he might be edified and instructed. For where should there be more abundance of virtue, than in that place which is considered to be the fountain of all religion? And how could it be otherwise, that where such great holiness is professed, where all men's eyes are turned as upon a stage, where St. Peter's seat is, and which is thought to be the ruler and governor of the whole church, all things should flourish and abound worthy of so great a place? This holy man, having these things before his eyes, forsook his own country, and went to Rome, conceiving a firm and

sure hope that by the example of so many notable and worthy men, he would greatly profit in godliness and learning.

But the success of the matter utterly frustrated his hope, for all things were clean contrary. Whatever he saw was nothing else but mere dissimulation and hypocrisy. Instead of heavenly gifts, there reigned among them the pomp and pride of the world; in place of godliness, riot; instead of learning and study, slothfulness and superstition. Tyranny and haughtiness of mind had possessed the place of apostolic simplicity. So that now there no longer remained any place or liberty for a man to learn that which he did not know, or to teach that which he perfectly understood. Finally, all things were reversed — all things happened contrary to his expectation. But nothing so much offended this good man's mind, as the intolerable ambition and pompous pride in those whom an example of humility should especially commend and praise to the whole world. And although he saw nothing which accorded with the rule of the apostles, yet these things so much passed all measure and patience, that he could by no means refrain his tongue in so much abuse and corruption of the church — seeing such ambitious pride in their buildings, apparel, in their palaces, in their dainty fare, in their great trains of servants, in their horse and armor, and finally in all things.

These things, so far as they differed from the prescribed rule of the gospel, so much farther this good man was forced to speak, even though he well understood how little he would prevail by speaking. For if admonition would profit anything at all, the books of Wycliffe, and others were not lacking. The famous testimonies of John Huss, and of Jerome of Prague, and their bloodshed for the same, was still present before their eyes. By their most effectual exhortations, they were so little corrected and amended, that they seemed twice as cruel as they were before. Yet all this could not terrify this good man. So by this means, he who came to be a *scholar* to others, was now forced to be their *teacher*; and he who determined to follow other men's lives and manners had now, on the other hand, set his own life before them to be marked and followed. For he lived so among them, that his life might be a rule to them all, and so taught, that he might also be their schoolmaster. For even as Paul had foreshown to those who desired to live godly in Christ, that they might suffer persecution, such a reward happened to this man. He gave them the fruit of godliness which they should follow; they in return set upon his head the diadem of martyrdom. He showed them the way of salvation; and for the benefit of life, they rewarded him with death; and whereas no rewards had been worthy of his great labors and troubles, they persecuted him with the most extreme ignominy, even to the fire.

[346]

For when, by his continual preaching, he had gotten great envy and hatred, the rulers began to consult together by what means they might circumvent this man's life. Here they had recourse to their accustomed remedies. For it was a peculiar and continual custom among the prelates of the church, that if any man displeased them, or his talk was not according to their mind, or was by any means hurtful or a hindrance to their lucre and gain, by and by they would frame out articles of some heresy which they charged him with. And as every living thing has its peculiar and proper weapon to defend itself from harm — just as nature has armed the boar with his tusks, the hedgehog with his prickles; just as the lion is feared for his claws, the dog for his biting, the bull fights with his horns; nor does the ass lack his hoofs to strike with — even so, this is the only armor of the bishops: to strangle a man with heresy once he goes about muttering against their will and ambition. This may be easily perceived and seen in this most holy man, besides a great number of others. When he began

to grow grievous to them, and could no longer be suffered, what did they do? Straightway they flew to their old devices. And as they had done with Huss, and Jerome of Prague, even so, they went about to practice against this man. They overwhelmed him with suspicion; they sought to entangle him with questions; they examined him in judgment; they compiled articles against him, and laid heresy to his charge; they condemned him as a heretic. And being so condemned, they destroyed and killed him! This was their godliness; this was the peaceable order of those Carmelites. Their religion was to wear no sword or shield; and yet they bore in their hearts malice, rancor, vengeance, poison, craft, and deceit, sharper than any sword. With how great care and policy is it provided by law, that none of these clergymen should fight with sword in the streets? When in judgment and accusations there is no murderer who has more ready vengeance, or more vilely esteems his brother's soul than they. They shed no blood themselves; they neither strike nor kill — but they deliver them over to others to be slain! What difference is there, I pray you, if not that they are the authors, and the others are but the ministers of the cruel act? They kill no man as murderers do. How then? Although it is not in the same way, yet they do it by other means.

The articles which they falsely gathered against this man, are affirmed by some to be these:

- That the church lacks reformation, and that it shall be punished and reformed.
- That infidels, Jews, Turks, and Moors, shall be converted to Christ in the latter days.
- That abominations are used at Rome.
- That unjust excommunication by the pope is not to be feared; and therefore those who do not acknowledge it, do not sin or offend.

Yet a minister was lacking for these articles. However, he could not long be lacking at Rome, where all things are to be sold, even men's souls. For this office and ministry there was no man thought more fitting than William of Rouen, cardinal of St. Martin's in the mount, vice-chancellor of the court of Rome. Eugenius IV was pope at that time. He had a little earlier succeeded Pope Martin mentioned above. This godly Rhedon, the Frenchman, was brought before Eugenius, and from there he was sent to prison. After his imprisonment, and diverse and sundry grievous torments, he was brought before the judges. The wolf sat in judgment; the lamb was accused. Why? Because he had troubled the spring. But here not many words are needed. This good Thomas Rhedon not being able to resist the malice of these mighty potentates, had offended enough, and was easily convicted and condemned to be burned, but not before he was deprived of all the degrees of priesthood which he had taken.

After the death of Pope Martin V, who reigned fourteen years, Eugenius IV succeeded, about the year A.D. 1431. Antonius thus writes of him, that he was given much to wars, as his conflicts and fighting with the Romans may declare; also the battles between the Venetians and the Florentines.

This pope began first to celebrate the Council of Basel, which Martin his predecessor had intended to assemble earlier, according to the direction of the Council of Constance. Eugenius, however, perceiving afterward that this Council of Basel would not favor him and his doings, and fearing some injury, afterwards labored by all subtle practice to dissolve and interrupt the council, and to transfer it first from Basel to Ferrara, then to Florence, which was nearer to his own See of Rome. Concerning this Council of Basel, as we have begun to mention it here, it will be no great digression to discourse somewhat more at large about those things which seem sufficient or necessary to be known.

The Order and Manner of the Council of Basel – 1431-1449.

*With the principal matters concluded in this,
briefly collected and abridged here in this present book.*

In the thirty-ninth session of the Council of Constance, it was decreed and provided concerning those General Councils which would hereafter follow: that the first council which would ensue, should be assembled the fifth year after the Council of Constance; that the second should be held the seventh year after that; and so all others would follow successively every tenth year. Therefore, according to this decree, a general council followed five years after the Council of Constance, celebrated and held at Siene, under Pope Martin, A.D. 1424; but it soon broke up. After that council, the term of seven years having expired, another council was held at Basel, A.D. 1431. This council is noted to have been the most troublesome, and to have endured longer than any other council previously celebrated and held in the church. This council continued almost seventeen years, in which it was concluded, as in the Council of Constance, *that the general councils were above the pope*, and both these councils attributed to the general council the chief authority in decreeing and determining. This is the reason that the opposite party depreciated so much the authority of this council.

Pope Martin V appointed Julian, cardinal and deacon of St. Angelo, his legate, to celebrate and hold a general council at Basel for the reformation of the church, and for rooting out heresies. But Pope Martin died a short time later (1431). Eugenius IV succeeded, and confirmed to Cardinal Julian the same authority which his predecessor had given him. To this Council of Basel came the Emperor Sigismund. During his lifetime, with his presence and authority, he protected and defended the synod. After the emperor's death, however, Pope Eugenius altered his mind and purpose, and wished to remove the council to Bononia, and thus check the authority of the Council of Basel. First he held an opposition council at Ferrara, and afterwards at Florence. For after the death of the Emperor Sigismund (1437), there were no princes or noblemen who had any care or regard for the council. Eugenius cited Cardinal Julian, and the fathers of the council, to appear at Bononia, under a great penalty. They in return cited the pope, that either he come to the council himself, or else send ambassadors under the same penalty. For this reason, the ambassadors of Albert king of the Romans, and of the other princes of Germany, assembled together at Nuremburg. And when they could determine nothing there, they assembled again at Frankfort, to appease the dissension between the council and the pope. For it was thought that the electors of the empire could best assemble and meet in that place. In the meantime, the emperor's ambassadors, and the ambassadors of the electors went to Basel. And conferring with the ambassadors of the other princes who were there, they earnestly exhorted the fathers of the council, that they would embrace the unity which they would offer. The request of the princes was that the fathers would transport the council, and go to another place; which was the very thing Pope Eugenius always seemed to seek and desire, so that he might either divide the fathers of the council, or else take away their liberty.

[347] A.D. 1437.

This sacred synod, however, thought it good neither to deny the princes' request, nor to grant what Pope Eugenius required. During this doubt, the emperor's ambassadors, the bishops of Patavia and Augusta, appointed a noble and valiant baron called Conrad Weinsperge, by the king's command, to be protector and defender of the council and the fathers. By doing this, the enemies perceived the emperor to be alienated from the *pope*, and the fathers of the council understood his good-will towards *them*, as he would not have

sent them a protector if he had not judged it to be a lawful council. Neither would the emperor have judged it to be a council in Basel, if he had given credit to Pope Eugenius. But owing to a great pestilence which began to spread there, the assembly that should have been held at Frankfort was transported to Mentz.

The assembly was very famous, for there were present the archbishops of Mentz, Cologne, and Treves, electors of the sacred empire, and all the ambassadors of the other electors. The archbishop of Cologne was the chief favorer of the council in this assembly, who with all his labor and diligence went about to bring the matter to a good end. Rabanus, the archbishop of Treves, showed himself somewhat more rough. The sacred synod also thought good to send their ambassadors, and appointed the patriarch of Aquileia, the bishop of Vicene, and the bishop of Argen; divines, John Segovius, and Thomas de Corcellis, with others. There was no man there present who would name himself the ambassador of Eugenius, although there were many of his favorers and friends, both from the council, and also out of Florence. Although they had sworn to the contrary, they favored Eugenius more than the council. But the chief Hercules of all the Eugenians was Nicolas Cusan, a man singularly well-learned, and of great experience. After several consultations, the electors of the empire, and the ambassadors of the other princes of Germany, gave command throughout their nation and country, that the decrees of the Council of Basel should be received and observed.

While these things were thus debated at Mentz, there sprang a certain very doubtful question among the divines who remained at Basel, whether Eugenius might be called a heretic, who had so rebelliously despised the commandments of the church. They gathered themselves together, disputing long among themselves, some affirming, and others holding the negative part. Upon this, three distinct opinions arose, some affirming that he was a heretic; others, not only a heretic, but also a relapse. The third sort would neither grant him to be a heretic nor a relapse. Among these divines, the chief and principal both in learning and authority, was the bishop of Ebrun, ambassador of the king of Castile; and also a certain Scottish abbot. Like two most valiant champions, they subdued all their enemies, so that the rest either consented to their arguments, or gave way to them. And so their determination took precedence, and Eugenius was pronounced both a heretic and relapse. Eight conclusions were determined and allowed there among the divines, which they called *verities*, a copy of which they published throughout Christendom.

When the ambassadors of the council had returned from Mentz, by the commandment of the deputies, all the masters, doctors, and clergy were called together, with all the other prelates, into the chapter of the great church. There they openly disputed and discussed Eugenius' heresy. This disputation continued six days, both forenoon and afternoon. Cardinal Louis, archbishop of Arelata, was appointed judge and arbiter among them. Besides many other notable virtues, he was both valiant and constant. Nicholas Amici, who was also a protector of the faith, a famous man among the divines of Paris, demanded from every man what his opinion was. John Deinletist, public notary, wrote every man's sentence and judgment. The conclusions of the divines, which were the ground and foundation of their disputation, were the following:

1. It is a verity of the catholic faith, that the sacred general council has power over the pope, or any other prelate.
2. The pope cannot by his own authority, either dissolve, transport, or prorogue the general council being lawfully congregated, without the consent of the whole council, and this is of like verity.

3. Whoever obstinately resists these verities, is to be counted a heretic.
4. Pope Eugenius IV has resisted these verities, when at the first, by the fulness of his apostolic power, he attempted to dissolve or to transport the Council of Basel.
5. Eugenius being admonished by the sacred council, recanted the errors repugnant to these verities.
6. The dissolution or translation of the council, attempted the second time by Eugenius, is against the aforesaid verities, and contains an inexcusable error regarding the faith.
7. Eugenius, in going about to dissolve and transport the council again, has fallen into his errors revoked before.
8. Eugenius being warned by the synod that he should revoke the dissolution or translation attempted the second time, after his noncompliance was declared, persevering in his rebellion, and erecting a council at Ferraria, thereby showed himself obstinate.

These were the conclusions which were read in the chapterhouse before the fathers of the council. Upon which, when they desired to speak their minds, they all confirmed and allowed them, in a manner. Archbishop Panormitan, however, disputed much against them. Also the bishop of Burgen, the king of Aragon's almoner. Yet they did not oppose the first three conclusions, but only those regarding Pope Eugenius. This Panormitan, as he was subtle, he subtly disputed against the recent conclusions, endeavoring to declare that Eugenius had not relapsed, and that he had great contention with the bishop of Argens, John Segovius, and Francis de Fuxe, divines.

The oration of Panormitan was more praised than allowed by men. Yet it wrought this effect: that afterwards this word "relapse" was taken out of the conclusions, and the word "prolapse" put in. Nor did Panormitan dare to altogether excuse Eugenius of heresy, but he defended more the first dissolution than the second. Yet he did not depart without answer. For John Segovius, an expert divine, rising up, answered him reverently, as was seemly for such a prelate.

Segovius could scarcely finish his oration without interruption; for Panormitan, often interrupting him, went to confute now this, and now that reason. Whereupon the bishop of Argens rising up, a man not only eloquent, but also of stout courage, assailed Panormitan in his reasons and arguments, and shifted him from his purpose. Yet they proceeded so far, that they did not abstain from disgraceful taunts.

When the bishop of Argens chanced to say that the bishop of Rome ought to be the minister of the church, Panormitan could not suffer that, so much that he so forgot himself, and his knowledge (which otherwise was great) failed him, so that he was not ashamed to say that the pope was lord over the church. Segovius answered, "Mark, O Panormitan, what you say; for this is the most honorable title of the bishop of Rome, in which he calls himself the 'servant of the servants of God.' That is gathered upon this point, that when Christ said to his disciples, when they demanded of him which of them was the greatest, you know he answered them, 'The princes of the Gentiles have rule and dominion over them, but among you it is not so,' etc. In this He utterly prohibits lordship and dominion. And to Peter, who was the first vicar of Christ, he said, 'Feed the flock of Christ which is committed to you, providing for them not by compulsion, but willingly.' And immediately after, Christ said, 'not as lords over God's heritage.' For if Christ, the Son of God, did not come to be ministered to, but to minister and to serve, then how can his vicar have any dominion, or be called lord, as you Panormitan will affirm? The disciple is not above his Master, nor the

servant above his Lord. And the Lord himself says, ‘ Nor be called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.’” Panormitan, being somewhat disquieted with this answer, the council broke up and departed.

[348]

The next day there was a general congregation, and they all returned again to the chapter-house after dinner, where the archbishop of Lyons, the king’s orator was required to speak his mind. After he had proved Eugenius to be a heretic, he bitterly complained about those who had preferred such a man to the papacy. He so moved all their hearts who were present, that they altogether with him bewailed the calamities of the universal church.

Then the bishop of Burgen, the ambassador of Spain, divided the conclusions into two parts. Some he called general, and others personal, disputing very excellently as to the three first conclusions. He affirmed that in no point did he doubt them, but only that the addition, which mentioned the faith, seemed to be doubtful to him. But he stayed much on this point, to prove that the council was above the pope. After he had sufficiently proved this, both by God’s law and man’s law, he also taught it by physical reason, alleging Aristotle as a witness. He said that, “In every well-ordered kingdom it should especially be desired that the whole realm have more authority than the king. If it happened otherwise, it would not be called a kingdom but a tyranny. So likewise he thinks of the church, that it ought to have more authority than the prince of it; that is to say, the pope.” He gave his oration so eloquently, learnedly, and truly, that all men depended on him, and desired him to continue.

But when he entered into the other conclusions, he seemed to have forgotten himself, and to no longer be the same man that he was. For there was neither the same eloquence in his words, nor gravity in oration, nor cheerfulness of countenance. So that if he could have seen himself, he would perhaps greatly have marvelled at himself. Every man might well see and perceive then the power and force of the truth, which ministered material to him so long as he spoke in the defense of it. But once he began to speak against truth, she took from him even his natural eloquence.

After this there were long and heated debates about the authority of councils, and about Pope Eugenius, and about the sessions of the council, and certain conclusions which were proposed. These discussions continued for many days. And it happened in them, even as it does in warlike affairs. For just as there, those who are strongest and most valiant, and who do the most worthy feats, obtain the most fame — such as in the battle of Troy, Achilles and Hector were the heroes — so in these spiritual wars and contentions, those who most excel in learning and eloquence and do more than others, should be most renowned. For on the one part, Panormitan was prince and captain; on the other, it was Arelatensis. When all was finally determined, the protector also desired from the sacred council, that none should be allowed to bring any weapon to the session which was to be held next day, as he was ready to enforce the safe conduct of the emperor, and together with the senate of the city, also to prohibit all quarrels that would lead to injury.

When the sixteenth of May had come, all those whom the session pleased assembled. The ambassadors of the princes had also come together into the choir of the church, to further attempt what they could do. Sending the bishop of Lubeck and Concense, and the dean of Turnon (an excellent, learned man), they offered themselves to be present at the session if the deposing of Pope Eugenius were deferred four months. When they received a gentle answer from Arelatensis and the other principals, returning again to the ambassadors, they would only have the first conclusion decreed. Thereupon they sent again to Arelatensis, who

answered that, “The chief force consisted in the two other conclusions, and that the council would specially determine them. If the ambassadors would not be present, they should understand that the concord was broken by those who would not observe what they had offered.” With this answer they departed, and the session began to be celebrated. “There was no prelate of Aragon present at the session — neither out of Spain, nor out of Italy; only the bishop of Grossetane, and the abbot of Dona. For their constancy and steadfast good will toward the universal church, they could not be changed from their purpose. But of the doctors and other inferiors, there were a great number of Aragon, and almost all the inferiors of Spain and Italy (for the inferiors did not fear the princes, as the bishops did). And then the worthy stoutness of the Aragon and Castilians appeared in the inferior sort, who would not shrink away in the necessity of the church. Of the two other nations, there were only twenty bishops present. The rest lurked in their lodgings, professing the faith in their hearts, but not in their mouths. Arelatensis seeing beforehand what would come to pass, asked that prayers be made. And after prayers to Almighty God, with tears and lamentation, that He would send them his Holy Spirit to aid and assist them, they were greatly comforted and encouraged. This congregation was famous. Although there were not many bishops present, yet all the seats were filled with the bishops, proctors, archdeacons, presidents, priors, priests, and doctors of both laws (secular and spiritual), who numbered four hundred or more. There was no noise among them, no chiding, no disgraceful words or contention, but one exhorted another to the profession of the faith. And there appeared a full and whole consent of them all to defend the church. The bishop of Massilia, a nobleman, read the decree, which was attentively hearkened to; not one word interrupted. When it was ended, “*Te Deum laudamus*” was sung with great joy and gladness.¹⁰⁵ and so the session dissolved, which was in number the thirty-third session, and among all the preceding ones the most quiet and peaceable.

The following day, the 22d of May, the prince’s ambassadors, against all men’s expectation, came to the general congregation; and by so doing, they at least gave their assent to the previous session. In celebrating it, if the fathers had erred, then it would not been lawful for the princes and ambassadors to hold the council with those fathers. But it was thought that they were touched with remorse of conscience, and even now detested and abhorred what they had done; just as it was not hidden to the ambassadors of the empire and France. For the bishop of Lubeck said, “The cause of his absence was, that he was appointed by the emperor’s commandment to treat for peace. Therefore it was not suitable for him to be present at any business by which he might be vexed or troubled, and with whomever that peace might be treated.” Notwithstanding, he much commended the previous session, and believed the decree promulgated in it to be most good and holy, and the verities contained in it to be undoubted. He said he, “would stick to it both now and ever, even to the death.” But the bishop of Tournon, a man both learned and eloquent, speaking for him and his fellows, said that he heard “how they were evilly spoken of, in that they had not honored their king in that most sacred session, the one whom it is specially suitable to exalt and defend the faith; and who also for that reason, above all other kings, was named most Christian, notwithstanding.” He said that, “they had a lawful excuse, in that it was convenient that those who were sent to treat for peace, should do nothing by which their ambassage might be stopped or hindered.”

¹⁰⁵ *Te Deum laudamus* (We Praise Thee, O God) is a Latin hymn to God the Father and Christ the Son, traditionally sung on occasions of public rejoicing. It is also known as the Ambrosian Hymn.

After the bishop of Tournon had made an end, Cardinal Arelatensis gave thanks to God, who had so defended his church, and after great storms and clouds, had sent fair and clear weather. And commending the good will of the emperor and the king of France toward the church, he also praised the bishops of Lubeck and Tournon, for often in the council, and also of late at Mentz, they had defended the authority of the council. But especially he commended their present doings, that they had openly confessed the truth, and had not separated themselves from the faith of the church.

[349] A.D. 1431—1439.

Afterward, entering into the declaration of the matter, he said that he was at Pisa and at Constance, and never saw a quieter or more devout session than this. Affirming that this decree was most necessary to repress the ambition of the bishops of Rome who, exalting themselves above the universal church, thought it lawful to do all things according to their own pleasure, and also affirming that no one man should transport the council from one place to another, as Eugenius attempted to do — now to Bononia, now to Florentia, then back to Bononia, afterward to Ferrara, and after that back to Florentia. And he said that hereafter the bishops would withdraw their minds from carefulness about temporal goods. Therefore, by however much this session was most holy and necessary, by that much more the assent of the ambassadors was most laudable and acceptable to all the fathers. These words thus spoken, he rose up, and the congregation was dissolved.

Now after Pope Eugenius was deposed (removed) from the bishopric of Rome, the principal fathers of the council, being called together in the chapter-house of the great church, consulted together, whether it was expedient that a new bishop be created at once, or deferred for a time. Those who thought it good that the election should be done with speed, showed how dangerous a thing it was for such a congregation to be without a head; also a contagious sickness was spreading throughout the city, which not only consumed young men and children, but also men of middle age, and old men in like manner; and that this plague came first by strangers to the poor of the city, and then infected the rich; and now it had come to the fathers of the council — exaggerating and making the thing worse than it was. The other party which thought there should be a delay, said the council lacked no head, for Christ was the head of it; nor did it lack a ruler, for it was governed by the presidents and other officers. And they said that no mention should be made of any pestilence in such a case, seeing that to stout and strong men, death is not to be feared, nor can anything daunt or frighten those who contend for the Christian faith. The matter being thus discussed among them (although there were as many minds as there were men), it seemed to them all, that it was most profitable to choose the bishop later, and most honest to defer it.

Hereupon John Segovius, a man of excellent learning, said,

“Most reverend fathers, I am drawn by various reasons to this side and to that. But as I weigh the matter more deeply in my mind, this is my opinion: that to come to a speedy election seems good, to speak according to man’s judgment. But to delay it for two months, to speak according to God’s judgment, seems much better. I judge that not only the words, but also the meaning of our decree, ought to be observed. Therefore, if you will give any credit to me, follow dangerous honesty, rather than secure utility — even if indeed utility cannot be discerned from honesty.”

This opinion of delay took place among the fathers, and they determined to stay for two months. In the meantime, messengers were sent to the princes to declare the deposition of Eugenius by the synod, and publish it abroad.

During this time, the infected air was not at all purged; mortality daily increased. Many died and were sick. Whereupon a sudden fear came upon the fathers. Nor were they sufficiently advised what they ought to do; for they thought it was not without danger, either to depart or tarry. However they thought it good to tarry, since they had overcome famine and the assaults of their enemies on earth. Thus, they would not seem to shrink for the persecution of any plague. When the dog-days came, and all the herbs withered with heat, the pestilence daily increased more and more, so that it was incredible how many died. It was horrible to see the corpses hourly carried through the streets, and when on every side there was weeping, wailing, and sighing. There was no house void of mourning; no mirth or laughter in any place, but matrons bewailing their husbands, and husbands their wives. Men and women went through the streets, and dared not speak to one another. Some tarried at home; others who went abroad had perfumes to smell, to preserve them against the plague.

The common people died without number. As in the cold autumn the leaves of the trees fall, even so the youths of the city were consumed and fell away. The violence of the disease was such that you might have met a man merry in the street now, and within ten hours heard that he had been buried. The number of the dead corpses was such, that they lacked places to bury them in. All the church-yards were dug up and filled with dead corpses. Great holes were made in the parish churches, where a great number of corpses were thrust in together; they covered them over with earth. For this reason, the fathers were so afraid that no blood appeared in their faces; and especially, the sudden death of Louis the prothonotary ¹⁰⁶ made all men afraid. For he was a strong man, and flourishing in age, and singularly learned in both laws; yet the same envious and raging sickness took him away in a few hours. By and by, Louis the patriarch of Aquileia died, a man of great age, and always brought up in troubles and adversity. He would not see the day of the pope's election which he had long wished for. However, he had taken some consolation, in that he had seen Eugenius deposed before his death. This man's death was regretted by all the fathers. For now, they said, two pillars of the council were decayed and overthrown, meaning the prothonotary and the patriarch — the one by the law, and the other with his deeds, had defended the verity of the council.

Likewise a great number of the registers and doctors died. Of who fell into that disease, few or none escaped. One among all the rest, Eneas Sylvius, being stricken with this disease, escaped by God's help. This man lay three days at the point of death, all men being in despair of him. Notwithstanding, it pleased God to grant him longer life. When the pestilence was most fervent and hot, and about one hundred died daily, there was great entreaty made to Cardinal Arelatensis, that he would go to some other town or village nearby. For these were the words of all his friends and household:

“What are you doing, most reverend father? At least avoid this wane of the moon and save yourself. If you are safe, all of us will be safe also; if you die, we all perish. If the plague oppresses you, to whom will we fly? Who will rule us? Or who will be the guide of this most faithful flock? The infection has already invaded your chamber. Your secretary and chamberlain are already dead. Consider the great danger, and save both yourself and us.”

But neither the entreaty of his household, nor the corpses of those who were dead, could move him. He was willing to preserve the council with peril of his life, rather than save his life with the peril of the council. For he knew that if he were to depart, few would have tarried behind, and deceit would have been wrought in his absence.

¹⁰⁶ [Member of the College of Prothonotaries Apostolic, high-ranking papal officials who document papal acts.](#)

Therefore, as in war the soldiers fear no danger when they see their captain in the midst of their enemies, so the fathers of the council were ashamed to flee from this pestilence, seeing their president remain with them in the midst of all dangers. This utterly subverted the opinion of those who babbled abroad, that the fathers tarried in Basel, to seek their own profit and not the verity of the faith. For there is no commodity on earth which men would exchange for their lives. For all those who serve the world prefer it above all other things. But these fathers showed themselves as an invincible wall for the house of God, overcoming all the difficulties which this most cruel and pestiferous year brought upon them. At length, all desire for life also being set apart, they overcame all dangers, and did not hesitate to defend the verity of the council with most constant minds, even till the present.

The time of the decree having passed after the deposition of the pope, it seemed good to the fathers to proceed to the election of another bishop. First of all, they nominated those who, together with the cardinals, would elect the pope. The first and principal of the electors was Cardinal Arelatensis, a man of invincible constancy, and incomparable wisdom. To his virtue may justly be ascribed whatever was done in the council; for without him, the prelates would not have persevered in their purpose, nor could the shadow of any prince have so defended them.

[350]

This man did not come to the election by any favor or denomination, but by his own proper right. The rest of the electors were chosen out of the Italian, French, German, and Spanish nations. Their cells and chambers were appointed to them by lots, without respect to dignity or person; as the lots fell, so they were placed. Thereby it chanced that a doctor had the highest place, and a bishop the last.

The next day a session was held. Marcus, a famous divine, made an oration to the electors. He counter up the manifold crimes of Pope Eugenius, who was deposed. He endeavored to persuade the electors to choose such a man who would in all points be contrary to Eugenius, and eschew all his vices; that as Eugenius, through his manifold reproaches, was hurtful to all men, so the one who would be chosen, should show himself acceptable to all men.

There was so great a number of people gathered together to behold this matter, that no man could pass either in the church or in the streets. John earl of Dierstein was present, who took the place of the emperor's protector; so also the senators of the city, with many other noblemen, beheld the process. The citizens were outside in arms, to ensure there would be no uproar. The electors received the communion together, and afterwards they received their oath. The Cardinal Arelatensis, opening the book of decrees, read the form of the oath in the audience of all men; and first of all, taking the oath himself, he began in this manner:

“Most reverend fathers, I promise, swear, and vow before my Lord Jesus Christ (whose most blessed body I, an unworthy sinner, have received, to whom in the last judgment I shall give an account of all my deeds) that in this business of election, to which we are now sent by the will of the council, I will seek nothing else, but only the salvation of the Christian people, and the profit of the universal church. This shall be my whole care and study, that the authority of the general councils are not despised, that the catholic faith is not impugned, and that the fathers who remain in the council are not oppressed. This I will seek; this shall be my care; to this, with my whole force and power, I will bend myself; nor in this point will I respect anything, either for my own cause or for any friend, but only God, and the profit of the church. With this mind and intent, and with this heart, I take my oath before the council.”

His words were lively and fearful. After him all the other electors in their order, swore and take their oath. Then they went with great solemnity to the conclave, where they remained seven days. The manner of their election was in this way. A desk was set before the cardinals' seat, upon which stood a basin of silver, into the which all the electors cast their schedules. The cardinal receiving these, read them one by one, and four other electors wrote as he read them.

Amadeus VIII Duke of Savoy, Elected Pope Felix V – 1440.

The tenor of the schedules was in this manner: "I, George, bishop of Vicenza, choose such or such a man for bishop of Rome;" and perhaps he named one or two. Every one of the electors subscribed his name to the schedule, so that he might thereby know his own, and say *nay*, if it were contrary to what was spoken; thereby all deceit was utterly excluded. The first scrutiny thus ended, it was found that there were many named to the papacy; yet none had sufficient voices, for that day there were seventeen of different nations nominated. Notwithstanding, Amadeus duke of Savoy, a man of singular virtue, surmounted them all. For in the first scrutiny (count) he had the voice of sixteen electors, who judged him worthy to govern the church.

After this, a diligent inquisition was had in the council regarding those who were named by the electors. And as every man's opinion served him, he either praised or discommended those who were nominated. But there was such report made of Amadeus, that in the next scrutiny, which was held in the nones of November, Amadeus had twenty-one voices, and in the third and fourth scrutiny, twenty-one voices. As none was found in all the scrutiny to have two parts, all the other schedules were burnt. And as there lacked but only one voice to the election of the high bishop, they fell to prayer, desiring God to grant direction to their minds to unity and concord, to worthily elect and choose the one who should take charge over the flock of God. As Amadeus seemed to be nearer to the papacy than all others, there was great communication had among them, touching his life and disposition. Some said that a layman should not so suddenly be chosen; for it would seem a strange thing for a secular prince to be called to the bishopric of Rome. This would also derogate too much from the ecclesiastical state, as though there were none in it fit or worthy for that dignity. Others said that a man who was married and had children, was unfit for such a charge. Others again affirmed that the bishop of Rome ought to be a doctor of law, and an excellent learned man.

When these words were spoken, others rose up, speaking far otherwise. They said that although Amadeus was no doctor, yet he was learned and wise, as he had bestowed all his youth in learning and study, and had sought not only the name, but even the ground of learning. Then another said,

"If you are desirous to be instructed further about this prince's life, I pray you give ear to me, who know him thoroughly. Truly this man from his youth upward, and even from his young and tender years, has lived more religiously than secularly, always being obedient to his parents and masters; and always being indued with the fear of God; never given to any vanity or wantonness; nor has there been at any time any child of the house of Savoy, in whom greater wit or decency has appeared. Thereby all those who beheld and knew this man, judged and foresaw some great matter in him; nor were they deceived. For if you desire to know his rule and government, what and how noble it has been; first know this, that this man has reigned since his father's decease, about forty years.

"During his time, justice, the lady and queen of all other virtues, has always flourished. For hearing from his subjects himself, he would never suffer the poor to be oppressed, or the weak

to be deceived. He was the defender of the fatherless, the advocate of the widows, and the protector of the poor. There was no rapine or robbery in all his territory. The poor and rich all lived under one law. Nor was he burdenous to his subjects, or importune against strangers throughout his country; there were no grievous exactions of money throughout his dominion. He thought himself rich enough if the inhabitants of his dominions abounded and were rich; knowing that it was the point of a good shepherd to shear his sheep, and not to devour them. In this also was his chief study and care: that his subjects might live in peace, and those who bordered upon him might have no occasion to grudge.¹⁰⁷

“By these policies he not only quietly governed his father’s dominions, but also augmented the same by others who willingly submitted themselves to him. He never made war upon any, but resisting those who made war upon him, he studied to make peace rather than seek any revenge, desiring to overcome his enemies with benefits, rather than with the sword. He married only one wife, who was a noble maiden, and of singular beauty and virtue. He would have all his family live virtuously, and throughout his house, honesty and integrity of manners was observed. When his wife departed this life, and he perceived his duchy to be established, and that it would come without any controversy to his posterity, he declared his mind, which was always religious, and dedicated himself to God, and showed what will and affection he had long borne in his heart. For despising the pomp and state of this world, and calling his dear friends to himself, he departed and went into a wilderness. Building a goodly abbey there, he devoted himself wholly to the service of God; taking his cross upon himself, he followed Christ.

[351] A.D. 1439.

“Living in this place for many years, he displayed great examples of holiness, wearing no other garments but those which could withstand the cold; nor using any kind of dainty fare, but only to resist hunger; and watching and praying most of the night. Therefore this prince has not newly come to the church (as some suppose), but being a Christian, born of progenitors who have been Christians a thousand years and more, he now serves God in a monastery.

“But as to that which is said concerning a wife, I do not regard it, when not he only who has *had* a wife, but also he who *has* a wife may be elected and chosen pope. For why do the doctors dispute whether a married man chosen pope, ought to continue to live with his wife? Is it only because a married man might be received and chosen? For as you know well enough, there were many popes who had wives; and Peter also was not without a wife. But why do we stand about this? For perhaps, it would have been better that more priests had been married; for many would be saved through marriage, who are now damned through their single life. But we will speak of this in another place. I pray you, choose this man. He will augment the faith; he will reform manners; and preserve the authority of the church. Have you not heard these troubles of the church to have been spoken of before, and that the time now present, might be an end of all these troubles? Have you not heard that about this time a pope would be chosen who would comfort Zion, and set all things in peace? *Zec 1.17* And who, I pray you, should he be that could fulfill these things, unless we choose this man? Believe me, these sayings must be fulfilled, and I trust that God will move your minds to it. Notwithstanding, do whatever you think most good and holy.”

When he had spoken these words, the greatest number of the electors seemed to consent to him; and his words had such an effect that in the next scrutiny the matter was finished and ended. When the scrutiny was opened, it was found that Amadeus, the most devout duke of Savoy, according to the decree of the council, was chosen pope. Therefore suddenly there was great joy and gladness among them, and all men highly commended their doings. Then Cardinal Arelatensis published the name of the elect bishop. After this, all the prelates in

¹⁰⁷ *Grudge*: to resent something strong enough to justify retaliation.

their pontifical robes and miters, and all the clergy of the city coming to the conclave, the electors being likewise adorned, they brought Amadeus to the great church, where after great thanks given to God, and the election again declared to the people, a hymn was sung for joy, and the congregation was dissolved.

This Amadeus was a man of reverend age, of attractive stature, of grave and discreet behavior; and also married before. Thus being elected pope (antipope) about November, he was called Felix V, and crowned in the city of Basel, in the month of July. Present at his coronation were Louis, duke of Savoy; Philip, Earl Gebenensis; Louis, marquis of Salutz; the marquis of Rotelen; Conrad of Winsperg, chamberlain of the empire; the earl of Dierstein; the ambassadors of the cities of Strasburg, Berne, Friburgh, Solatorn, with a great multitude of others besides, numbering 50,000 persons. At this coronation, the pope's two sons served and ministered to their father. Louis, cardinal of Hostia, set on his head the pontifical diadem, which was valued at 30,000 crowns. It would take too long here to recite the whole order and solemnity of the procession of the pope's riding about the city. But first proceeded the pope under his canopy of cloth of gold, having on his head a triple crown, and blessing the people as he went. Beside him went the marquis of Rotelen and Conrad of Winsperg, leading his horse by the bridle. When the procession finished, they went to dinner, which lasted four full hours, being excessively sumptuous. There the pope's two sons were butlers to his cup; the marquis of Salutz was the steward, etc.

Volaterane in his third book ¹⁰⁸ thus writes about this Felix, that being asked by certain of the ambassadors if he had any dogs or hounds, to show them, he desired them to come to him the next day, and he would show them what he had. When the ambassadors had come according to the appointment, he showed to them a great number of poor people and beggars sitting at his tables at meal, declaring that those were his hounds which he fed every day, hunting with them (he trusted) for the glory of heaven to come.

And thus you have heard the state of this council up to here. It continued a long season of seventeen years. About the sixth year of the council, Sigismund the emperor died, leaving but one daughter to succeed him in his kingdoms. He had married her to Albert, the second duke of Austria, who first succeeded in the kingdoms of Hungary and Bohemia, and was a sore adversary to the Bohemians. Afterwards he was made emperor, A.D. 1458. He reigned but two years, leaving his wife, who was Sigismund's daughter, great with child. After this, his brother Frederick, the third duke of Austria, succeeded in the empire, etc.

We have thus far proceeded in the matters of this council, until the election of Amadeus, called pope Felix V. Before we prosecute the rest, order requires us to intermix the matters concluded between this council and the Bohemians. The Bohemians then were invited to Basel, where the council was appointed. After much delay and some treaty, having procured a safe conduct from the council, from the princes, and from the city of Basel, they appeared by their ambassadors, and addressed the council.

Then John Rochezanus of Bohemia made an oration, requesting to have a day appointed when they might be heard, which was appointed the sixteenth of that month. On that day, having given his preface, he began to propound the first article of four articles regarding the communion being ministered under both kinds, and disputed on that for three days, always before noon. Then Wenceslaus the Taborite, disputed for two days on the second article, regarding the correction and punishing of sin. After him Ulderic, priest of the Orphans,

¹⁰⁸ Volaterane, *Ecclesie Actus Vel Patrimonium Quod* (Voluntary Acts or Patrimony of the Church).

propounded and disputed for two days on the third article, regarding the free preaching of the word of God.

Last of all, Peter Pain, an Englishman, disputed for three days on the fourth article, regarding the civil dominion of the clergy. Afterward he gave copies of their disputations in writing to the council, with hearty thanks that they were heard. The last three articles somewhat inveighed against the council for condemning John Huss and John Wycliffe for their doctrine. Whereupon John of Ragusa (*Ragusinus*),¹⁰⁹ a divine, rose up desiring that he might have leave to answer in his own name, to the first article of the Bohemians. The council consented; so that for eight days, in the morning, he disputed upon it.

But before [they] began to answer, this John Ragusinus, who was the Abbot of Sistertia ¹¹⁰ (a catholic divine from Bohemia), made an oration to the Bohemians, that they should submit themselves to the determination of the holy church, which this council represented. This did not a little offend the Bohemians. In scholars' fashion, he had spoken often in his answer, about heresies and heretics. Procopius could not suffer it, but rising up with an angry spirit, complained openly to the council about this injury. "Our countryman does us great injury, often calling us heretics." Ragusinus answered: "As I am your countryman both by tongue and nation, I desire all the more to return you again to the church." It almost came to the point that, through this offense, the Bohemians would depart from Basel, and could scarcely be appeased. Certain of the Bohemians would not hear Ragusinus finish his disputation.

After him a famous divine, Egidius Carlerius, dean of the church of Cambray, answered to the second article for four days. To the third article, one Henry answered for three days. Last of all, one John Polomarius answered to the fourth article, likewise for three days, so that the length of time which they used in disputations seemed tedious to the Bohemians. Notwithstanding this answer, the Bohemians still defended their articles, and especially the first, so much so, that John Rochezanus strongly impugned Ragusinus's answer, for another three days.

[352]

But as one disputation bred another, and it was perceived that by this means no concord could be made, Prince William, duke of Bavaria, protector of the council, attempted another remedy: that all disputations being set aside, the matter should be debated friendly.

There were certain ones appointed on either part to address the concord. Coming together on the eleventh of March, those who were appointed for the council were demanded to say their minds. "It seemed good," they said, "if these men would be united to us, and be made one body with us, so that this body might then accord, and declare and determine all manner of diversities of opinions and sects, what is to be believed or done in them."

The Bohemians, when they had paused a while, said, "This way does not seem apt enough, unless first of all, the four articles were exactly discussed, so that either we might agree with them, or they with us. For otherwise it would be but a frivolous matter if being now united, they again disagree in deciding the articles." Here an answer was made to the Bohemians, that "if they were rightly united, and the aid of the Holy Spirit called for, they would not err in deciding the matter, as every Christian ought to believe that determination which, if they would do this, it would breed a most firm and strong concord and amity on either part." But

¹⁰⁹ John of Ragusa (c. 1380-1443) was a president at the Council of Basle (Basel), and a legate to Constantinople. He was made a cardinal by antipope Felix V.

¹¹⁰ More likely *Silesia*, a region in Bohemia (now the Czech Republic).

this answer did not satisfy them, so that the other three rose up, and disputed against the answers which were given. At that time Cardinal Julian, president of the council, made this oration to the Bohemian ambassadors.

“This sacred synod has now for ten days patiently heard the propositions of your four articles. But we understand that, besides these four, you have many other strange doctrines in which you dissent from us. Therefore it is necessary, if a perfect unity and fraternity will follow between us, that all these things be declared in the council, to the end that by the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is the author of peace and truth, due provision may be made in this. Therefore we desire that you will certify to us on these and certain other points, what you believe, or what credit you give to them. But we do not require that you should now declare your reasons. It will satisfy us if you answer to every article by this word: ‘We believe, or we do not believe.’ If you will do this (as we trust you will) then we will perceive that you desire that we should conceive a good estimation of you. If there is anything of which you would be certified by us, ask it boldly, and we will give you an answer out of hand. For we are ready, according to the doctrine of St. Peter, to render account to every man who requires it, regarding the faith which we hold.”

To this the Bohemian ambassadors answered in a few words, saying that they “came only to propound those four articles, not in their own name, but in the name of the whole kingdom of Bohemia,” and spoke no more. Whereupon William, the noble protector of the council, called upon four men on either side, regarding pacifying the matter. Taking their advice, the council decreed to send a famous ambassage with the Bohemian ambassadors, to Prague, where the people would assemble on Sunday. But they would not receive these conditions of peace which were offered, and made haste to depart. Whereupon, on the fourteenth of April, ten were chosen out of the council, to go with the Bohemian ambassadors to Prague.

After the ambassadors arrived, much contention arose between the parties. It first began with John Rochezanus (the Bohemian), who spoke in behalf of the commonalty. He labored to commend and prefer the four verities of the Bohemians propounded before. He also charged the prelates and priests for their slanderous and undeserved insults with which they defamed the noble kingdom of Bohemia. He complained that they would not receive those Christian verities, which were left and allowed by their king. Wenceslaus (now departed) requested in behalf of the whole nation, that they would cease hereafter to oppress them as they had, and would restore to them their Joseph’s vesture — that is, the ornament of their good fame and name, of which their brethren, their enemies, had despoiled them, etc.

To this Polomar replied with a long and curious oration, exhorting them to the peace and unity of the church. If they would embrace this, then all other obstacles and impediments (he said) would be soon removed. He also promised that their vesture of honor and fame would be amply restored again; and afterward, if there were any doubtful matters, they might and should be better discussed.

But all this did not please the Bohemians, unless they might first have a declaration of their four articles, which, if they might obtain it, they promised then to embrace peace and concord. This peace (they said) was first broken by [the Roman Catholics] when the Council of Constance, by their unjust condemnation, burned John Huss, and Jerome of Prague; and also by their cruel bulls and censures, first raising up excommunication, and then making war against the whole kingdom of Bohemia.

When the ambassadors saw the matter could not otherwise be settled, they requested to have those articles delivered to them in a certain form, which they sent to the council by three Bohemian ambassadors.

Afterward the council sent a declaration into Bohemia, to be published by the ambassadors. They were commanded to report to the Bohemians, in the name of the council, that if they would receive the declaration of those three articles, and the unity of the church, a means would be found whereby the matter touching the fourth article, about communion under both kinds, might be passed with peace and quietness.

After the Bohemians deliberated, they said, “They would give no answer before they understood what would be offered them regarding the communion.” Therefore, it was necessary to declare the matter, as it was written in the following form: —

“In the name of God and our Savior Jesus Christ, upon the sacrament of whose most blessed last supper we shall treat, that He who has instituted this most blessed sacrament of unity and peace, will grant to work this effect in us, and to make us one in the Lord Jesus our Head, and that He will subvert all the subtleties of the devil, who through his envious craftiness, has made the sacrament of peace and unity an occasion of war and discord; that while Christians contend regarding the *manner* of communicating,¹¹¹ they are not deprived of the *fruit* of communion. This was thought good to be premised above all things, that the general custom of the church, which your fathers and also you have observed in times past, has a long time had and still uses, that those who do not consecrate [i.e. priests], communicate only under the kind of bread [and not wine]. This custom being lawfully brought in by the church and holy fathers, and now observed a long time, it is not lawful to reject or to change at your will and pleasure, without the authority of the church. Therefore, to change the custom of the church, and to take in hand to communicate to the people under both kinds, without the authority of holy church, is altogether unlawful. For holy church, on reasonable occasions, may grant liberty to the people to communicate under both kinds. And every communion which is attempted without the authority and license of the church, should be unlawful; when it is done with the authority of holy church, it will be lawful, if other things do not prevent it; because, as the apostle says, ‘He that eats and drinks unworthily, eats and drinks his own damnation.’

“Moreover, doctors (theologians) say that the custom of communicating to the people, only under the kind of bread, was reasonably introduced by the church and holy fathers, for reasonable causes, especially for avoiding two perils — of error and irreverence. Of error, such as to think that the one part of Christ’s body was in the bread, and the other part in the cup, which was a great error.

[353] A.D. 1439.

“Of irreverence, as many things may happen on the part of the minister, as well as on the part of the receiver. As it is said to have happened when a certain priest carried the sacrament of the cup to a sick man. When he should have ministered it, he found nothing in the cup, being all spilled on the way, with many other such chances. We have heard, moreover, that it has often happened that the sacrament consecrated in the cup has not been sufficient for the number of communicants, by which a new consecration must be made; this is not agreeable to the doctrine of the holy fathers. And also that oftentimes they minister unconsecrated wine for consecrated wine, which is a great peril. By this means, when it is brought to pass that if you will effectually receive the unity and peace of the church in all other things besides the use of the communion under both kinds, conforming yourselves to the faith and order of the universal church, you who have that use and custom will still communicate by the authority of the church under both kinds. And this article shall be discussed fully in the sacred council, where you will see what, regarding this article, is to be held as a universal verity, and is to be done for the profit and salvation of the Christian people. All things thus being thoroughly

¹¹¹ [Communicating: that is, partaking of the Lord’s Supper together \(taking communion\).](#)

Bk. VI. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1422-1516)

handled, if you persevere in your desire, and your ambassadors request it, then the sacred council will grant license in the Lord to your ministers, to communicate to the people under both kinds — that is to say, to those who are of lawful years and discretion, and will reverently and devoutly request it. This being always observed, the ministers will say to those who communicate, that they ought to firmly believe, ‘that not only the flesh is contained under the form of bread, and only the blood under the wine, but under each kind is the whole and perfect Christ.’”

Thus, we have declared the decree of the council. As to the other questions, a concord and unity was concluded and confirmed by setting to their hands. The Bohemians promised to receive the peace and unity of the church, and the declaration of the three articles. This was done in the year 1438.

At last the concord was confirmed by writing with their seals at Inglavia, a city of Moravia, the fifth of July, in the presence of the emperor.

*Certain petitions which the Bohemians put up last of all
in the sacred Council of Basel, A.D. 1438, in the month of November.*

“To the most reverend fathers in Christ, and our most gracious lords: we the ambassadors of the kingdom of Bohemia do most humbly and heartily request you, for the perpetual preservation of peace and concord, and for the firm preservation of all things contained in the composition, you will grant your clemency to give and grant to us all and singular requests of ours here underwritten, with effectual execution of the same.

“First, and above all things, we desire and request of you, for the extirpation of diverse dissensions and controversies which will undoubtedly follow among our people under the diversity of the communion, and for abolishing infinite evils which we are not able to express as we have conceived them, that you will gently grant of your goodness and liberality, to give, grant, and command to our kingdom of Bohemia and marquisdom of Moravia, one uniform order of the communion to all men, under both kinds — that is to say, to the archbishop of Prague, the bishop of Luthonus, Olmutz, and other prelates of the kingdom and marquisdom, having charge of souls, and to their vicars, and also to their flocks and subjects, and that according to those things which are contained in the bull of the ambassadors, and in the compositions made in the name of the whole council, written in the chapter, *pro firmitate* (for strength), where it is said, ‘And all other things shall be done, which shall be fit and necessary for the preservation of the peace and unity.’ For this being done, by your benefit the whole kingdom will be comforted above measure, and established in brotherly love; whereby a uniform subjection and obedience will be perpetually attributed to the holy church.

“Also, we request and desire (as before) that to avoid all suspicion and doubtfulness by many who suppose that the sacred council has granted the communion under both kinds to us only for a time, as neither profitable nor wholesome, but as a writ of divorcement; that you will grant, wholesomely and speedily to provide for our safety. and with your grant in this behalf, and with the bulls in your letters, to confirm that chapter, together with the others pertaining to the office of your ambassadors.

“Also, we beseech you (as before) that for the confirmation of obedience, and for the discipline of all the clergy, and for the final defense and observation of all things determined and agreed upon, and for the good order in spiritualities, you will grant effectually to provide for us a good and lawful pastor, archbishops, and bishops, who will seem to us most fit and acceptable for our kingdom, to execute those offices and duties.

“Also, we request that your fatherly reverences will grant, for the defense of the worthy fame of the kingdom and marquisdom, to declare and show our innocency, in that they have

communicated, do, and hereafter shall communicate under both kinds; to distribute, ordain, and direct the letters of the sacred council, in a manner and form most apt and fitting for such a declaration, to all princes, secular as well as spiritual, cities and commonalties, according to the compositions, and as the lord ambassadors are bound to us to do.

“Also, we desire of you, that in discussing the matter of the communion under both kinds, and of the commandment given to all faithful, you will not proceed otherwise than according to the *Concordatum* agreed upon in Egra: that is to say, according to the law of God, the order of Christ, and his apostles, the general councils, and the minds of the holy doctors, truly grounded upon the law of God.

“Also, we desire that your fatherly reverences, considering the great affection of our people, will give us the desired liberty to communicate to the younger sort the sacrament of the supper. For if this use of communicating should be taken away, which our kingdom being godly, moved by the writings of most great and holy doctors, and brought in by example, has received as catholic, and exercised for a long time now; truly it would raise up an intolerable offense among the people, and their minds would be grievously vexed and troubled.

“Also, we request of you (as before) that for like causes, your fatherly reverences would grant to permit at least the gospels, epistles, and creed, to be sung and read in the church in our vulgar (native) tongue, before the people, to move them to devotion; for in our language it has been used of old in the church, and likewise in our kingdom.

“Also, we request of you in the name of the said kingdom, and of the famous university of Prague, that your fatherly reverences would grant to show such diligence and care toward the desired reformation of that university, that according to the manner and form of other universities reformed by the church, prebends and collations of certain benefices of cathedral and parish churches may be annexed and incorporated into the said university, so that thereby it may be increased and preferred.

“Also, we desire you (as before) as heartily as we may, and also (saving always your fatherly reverences) request of you — and by the former compositions we most instantly admonish you — that with your whole minds and endeavors, and with all care and study, your reverences will watch for and seek that long desired and most necessary reformation of the church and Christian religion, and effectually labor for rooting out all public evils, in the head as well as in the members, as you have often promised to do in our kingdom, in the compositions, and as our fourth article, regarding avoiding all public evils, exactions, and requirements.”

Council of Basel Dissolved.

There were certain answers provided by the council to these petitions of the Bohemians, which were not delivered to them, but kept back — for what purpose and intent we do not know. Therefore, because we thought them not greatly necessary for this place, and to avoid prolixity, we judged it appropriate to omit them. Thus have you heard compendiously the chief and principal matters addressed and done in this famous Council of Basel.

Concerning the authority of this general Council of Basel, what is to be thought of it, may be learned by all good men from the acts and fruits of it. Neither was it doubted by any man in the beginning, so long as the pope agreed and consented to it. But after the pope began to draw back, many others followed, especially the richer sort of prelates, who had anything to lose. In the number of those inconstant prelates was Cardinal Julian, the first collector of this council, and vicar-general of the pope, as it appears by his fervent and vehement letter written to Pope Eugenius in defense of this council. In it he most earnestly expostulates with Pope Eugenius, who sought to dissolve the council. He declares many reasons why he should rather rejoice, and give God thanks for the godly proceedings and joyful agreement

between the council and the Bohemians. And so he exhorts him with many persuasions to resort to the council himself, and not to seek its dissolution.

Epistle of Eneas Sylvius

In like manner, Eneas Sylvius, in his own handwriting, not only gave testimony to the authority of this council, but also bestowed his labor and pains in setting forth the whole history of it. Notwithstanding, Sylvius afterward being made pope, with his new honor, altered and changed his old opinion. But his epistle regarding the commendation of the council, because it is short, I thought to insert it here, to satisfy the reader's mind:

*An Epistle of Eneas Sylvius to
the Rector of the University of Cologne.*

“To a Christian man, who would be a true Christian indeed, nothing ought to be more desired than that the sincerity and pureness of faith, given to us from Christ by our forefathers, be kept immaculate by all men. And if at any time anything is wrought or attempted against the true doctrine of the gospel, the people should with one consent provide lawful remedy, and every man bring with him some water to quench the general fire; nor must we fear how we are hated or envied; so we bring the truth. We must resist every man to his face, whether he is Paul or Peter, if he does not walk directly to the truth of the gospel. I am glad, and so are we all, to hear of what your university has done in this Council of Basel. For a certain treatise of yours is brought to us here, in which you reprehend the rudeness, or rather the rashness of those who deny that the bishop of Rome, and the consistory of his judgment, are to be subject to the general council; and that the supreme tribunal seat of judgment stands in the church, and not in any one bishop. Such men who deny this, you so confound with lively reasons and the truth of the Scriptures, that they are neither able to slide away like slippery eels, nor to cavil or bring any objection against you.”

The deposed Pope Eugenius, not acknowledging the acts deposing him, called a council at Florence, and in the meantime prevailed on the French king to make war on the Council of Basel. The dauphin was defeated, but the council was at last dissolved.

As these things were going on at Basel, Pope Eugenius brought to pass in his convocation at Florence, that the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople, with the rest of the Greeks there present, were persuaded to receive the sentence of the church of Rome, concerning the proceeding of the Holy Spirit; and also to receive the communion in unleavened bread, to admit purgatory, and to yield themselves to the authority of the Romish bishop. However, the churches of Greece would in no way assent to this at their coming home, so that they condemned with a public anathema all those legates who had consented to these articles, so that none of them would be buried in Christian burial (A.D. 1439).

And thus ends the history, both of the Council of Basel and of the Council of Florence, also of the emperor Sigismund, and of the schism between Pope Eugenius and Pope Felix (who was induced to resign the popedom to the successor of Eugenius), and also of the Bohemians. The Bohemians, notwithstanding all these troubles and tumults, did right well, and were strong enough against all their enemies, till at length through discord — partly between the two preachers of the old and new city of Prague, and partly through the discord of the messengers and captains taking sides against one other — they made their enemies strong, and enfeebled themselves. However, they so defended the cause of their religion, not by sword, but by argument and disputation, that the bishop of Rome could never, nor even to this day, remove the Taborites and city of Prague from the communion of both kinds, nor

could he ever cause them to keep the conditions which, in the beginning of the council, were enjoined their priests to observe.

During this business beyond the sea, our bishops here in England were not unoccupied. Whether it is the nature of the country, or the great livings and wealthy promotions of the clergy that influences them, it is certain that in England there is more burning and slaying for religion, and more bloodshed for all other matters among us, than in any other land or nation in Christendom besides. After the burning of Richard Hoveden, Nicholas Canon, and Thomas Bagley, priest, recorded above, whom the bishops condemned to death in A.D 1431, not long after (about A.D. 1439), which was the 17th year of the reign of King Henry VI, they had another poor man named Richard Wiche, priest, who was first degraded, and then burnt at Tower-hill for heresy.

After the burning of this man, a convocation was called by Henry, archbishop of Canterbury, in which it was propounded among the clergy, to consult what way would be best for removing the law of *Praemunire facias* (p. 220);¹¹² for the hearts of the temporalty¹¹³ were then so set against the ecclesiastical sort, that where any advantage might be given them by the law, they spared nothing. This was because the churchmen at that time were greatly molested by the law of *Praemunire*, and by the king's writs and other indictments. By long consultation and good advisement, at last this way was taken: that a petition or supplication should be drawn and presented to the king, for abolishing the law of *Praemunire facias*, and also for restricting other briefs, writs, and indictments which seemed then to lie heavily on the clergy. This bill or supplication was contrived and exhibited by the archbishops of Canterbury and of York to the king, when he was standing in need of a subsidy to be collected from the clergy. This answer was given to their supplication, on the king's behalf: that because Christmas time was drawing near, whereby the king did not have sufficient leisure to advise on the matter, he would take a further pause regarding it. In the meantime, as one tending to his quiet, he would send to all his officers and ministers within his realm, that no such brief of *Praemunire* should pass against them, or any of them, from Christmas time till the next parliament, in A.D. 1441.¹¹⁴

The Invention of Printing – 1450.

In following the course of years, we find this year of our Lord, 1450, to be famous and memorable, for the divine and miraculous inventing of printing. Nauclerius, and Wymselingus following him, refer the invention to A.D. 1440. Others refer it to A.D. 1446, and 1450. The first inventor is thought to be a German, dwelling first in Strasburg, afterwards a citizen of Mentz, named John Faustus, a goldsmith. The occasion of this invention was by engraving the letters of the alphabet in metal; and then by laying black ink upon the metal, it gave the form of letters on paper. The man being industrious and active, he thought to proceed further, and to test whether it would frame as well in words and whole sentences, as it did in letters.

[355] A.D. 1440.

¹¹² *Praemunire facias*: a writ directing a sheriff to forewarn a person that he or she must appear before a court to answer a criminal charge of having brought a suit in a foreign jurisdiction, or obeyed a foreign (especially papal) court or authority, thus challenging the supremacy of the English Crown.

¹¹³ *Temporality*: laity; members of the church who do not have the priestly responsibilities of ordained clergy.

¹¹⁴ Originally "A.D. 1439"; but one had just been held in Sep 1439. The next would be held in Dec 1441.

When he perceived it did so, he acquainted one John Gutenberg, and Peter Schafferd, binding them by their oath to keep silence for a season. After ten years, John Gutenberg, copartner with Faustus, first began to broach the matter at Strasburg. The art, being yet but rude, in the course of time was advanced by various men of inventive genius, adding more and more to its perfection. Among them, John Mentel, John Pruss, and Adolphus Ruschius, were great helpers. Ulricus Han, in Latin called *Gallus*, first brought it to Rome.

However, whatever man was the instrument, without all doubt God himself was the ordainer and disposer of it, in no other way than He was of the gift of tongues, and that was for a similar purpose. And well may this gift of printing correspond to the gift of tongues; for as God then spoke with many tongues, yet all that would not turn the Jews. So it is now; when the Holy Spirit speaks to the adversaries in innumerable sorts of books, yet they will not be converted, nor turn to the gospel.

Now to consider to what end and purpose the Lord has given this gift of printing to the earth, and it is not hard to judge to what great utility and necessity it serves.

And first, regarding the time of this invention being given to man, this is to be observed: that when the bishop of Rome, with the whole and full consent of the cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, lawyers, doctors, provosts, deans, archdeacons, assembled together in the Council of Constance, had condemned poor John Huss and Jerome of Prague to death for heresy, even though they were no heretics; and after they had subdued the Bohemians and the whole world under the supreme authority of the Romish see; and had made all Christian people obedient vassals, having (as one would say) all the world at their will — the matter was now past not only the power of all men, but also the hope of any man, to be recovered. In this very time, which was so dangerous and desperate, where man's power could do no more, then the blessed wisdom and omnipotent power of the Lord began to work for his church — not with sword and target to subdue his exalted adversary, but with printing, writing, and reading to convince darkness by light, error by truth, and ignorance by learning. So that by this means of printing, the secret operation of God has heaped a double confusion upon that proud kingdom.

For the bishop of Rome had burned John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who neither denied his transubstantiation, nor his supremacy, nor yet his popish mass; but said mass, and heard mass themselves. Neither did they speak against his purgatory, nor any other great matter of his popish doctrine; but only exclaimed against his excessive and pompous pride, his unchristian, or rather anti-Christian abomination of life. Thus while the pope could not abide to have his wickedness of life touched, but made whatever was spoken against his detestable conversation and manners a heresy, or at least a matter of death, God of his secret judgment, seeing a time to help his church, has found a way by this art of printing, to not only confound the pope's life and conversation, which before he could not abide to be touched, but also to cast down the foundation of his standing — that is, to examine, confute, and reveal his most detestable doctrine, laws, and institutions in such a way, that though his life was ever so pure, yet his doctrine standing as it does, no man is so blind that he may not see that either the pope is antichrist, or else that antichrist is near cousin to the pope. And all this does and will hereafter appear more and more by printing.

The reason for it is this: Hereby tongues are known, knowledge grows, judgment increases, books are dispersed, the Scripture is seen, the doctors are read, histories opened, times compared, truth discerned, falsehood detected — and all, as I said, through the benefit of printing. Therefore, I suppose that either the pope must abolish printing, or he must seek a new world to reign over. For otherwise, as this world stands, printing doubtless will abolish

him. But the pope, and his entire college of cardinals, must understand this: that through the light of printing, the world now begins to have eyes to see, and heads to judge. He cannot walk so invisible in a net, that he will not be spied. Although through his might he stopped the mouth of John Huss and of Jerome so that they might not preach, thinking to make his kingdom sure — yet instead of John Huss and others, God has opened the *press* to preach, whose voice the pope is never able to stop with all the puissance of his triple crown. By this printing, as by the gift of tongues, and by the singular organ of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of the gospel sounds to all nations and countries under heaven. What God reveals to one man, is dispersed to many; and what is known in one nation, is opened to all.

The first and best were for the bishop of Rome to learn and know the truth, by the benefit of printing. If he will not, then let him well understand that printing is not set up for nothing. To strive against the stream will not avail. What the pope has lost since printing and the press began to preach, let him cast his counters. First, when Erasmus wrote, and Frobenius printed, what a blow was thereby given to all friars and monks in the world! And who does not see that the pen of Luther following after Erasmus, and furthered by printing, has set the triple crown so awry on the pope's head, that it is likely never to be set straight again?

Briefly, if there were no other demonstration, yet by this one argument of printing, the bishop of Rome might understand that the counsel and purpose of the Lord are working against him. He has provided such a way on earth, that there are as many printing presses in the world, as there are bulwarks against the high castle of St. Angelo.¹¹⁵ So that either the pope must abolish knowledge and printing, or else printing will at length root him out. Just as nothing made the pope strong in times past as the lack of knowledge and ignorance of simple Christians, so contrariwise, nothing now debilitates and shakes the high spire of his papacy so much as reading, preaching, knowledge, and judgment — that is to say, the fruit of printing. We have seen and experienced some of this already, and more is likely to follow (by the Lord's blessing). For although through outward force and violent cruelty, tongues dare not speak, yet the hearts of men are no doubt daily instructed through the benefit of printing. Though the pope now has all under his possession by cruelty, and in times past by ignorance, yet he must not think that violence will always continue, nor must he hope now for what he had then. In former days books were scarce, and so expensive that few could buy them, and still fewer could read and study them. Those books now, by the means of this art, are made accessible to all men. You heard before how Nicholas Belward bought a New Testament in those days for four marks and forty pence; whereas now the same price will well serve forty persons with so many books!

Moreover, it was noted and declared before, by the testimony of Armachanus, how for a lack of books and good authors, universities were decayed and good men kept in ignorance, while begging friars, scraping all the wealth from other priests, heaped up all books that could be gotten, in their own libraries. There they either did not diligently apply them, or else did not rightly use them; or at the least they kept them from those who would more fruitfully have perused them. Therefore Almighty God, of his merciful Providence, seeing both what lacked in the church, and also how to remedy it for the advancement of his glory, gave the understanding of this excellent art or science of printing, by which three singular benefits at one time came to the world. First, the price of all books is reduced. Secondly, the help of reading is speedily furthered. And thirdly, the plenty of all good authors is enlarged.

¹¹⁵ The high castle of St. Angelo at Rome had several bulwarks added to enhance its defensive capabilities. These were constructed between the 15th and 16th centuries to adapt the structure to the new firearms technology of the time.

Because of this, just as printing books ministered to reading, so reading brought learning; and learning showed light, by the brightness of which blind ignorance was suppressed, error was detected, and finally, God's glory was advanced with the truth of his word.

[356]

The Lamentable Losing of Constantinople.

In A.D. 1453, Constantinus Paleologus was emperor of Constantinople. On the 29th of May, the great city of Constantinople was taken by the Turk Mahomet (Mehmed II), after a siege of 54 days, which started at the beginning of April. Within the city, besides the citizens, there were only 6,000 rescuers from the Greeks; and 3,000 from the Venetians and Genoese. Against these Mahomet brought an army of 400,000, collected out of the countries and places adjoining nearby, such as Grecia, Illyrica, Wallachia, Dardanis, Triballis, Bulgaria, out of Bithynia, Galatia, Lydia, Sicily, and such other places which still bore the name of Christians. Thus one neighbor, for lucre's sake, helped to destroy another.

The city was compassed with the Turks, both by sea and land. Mahomet, the Turk, divided his army into three parts, which in three parts of the city so beat the walls and broke them down, that they attempted to enter the city by those breaches. But the valiantness of the Christians in the city won much commendation. Their duke was called John Justinian of Genoa. But the assaults were great, and the number of the Christian soldiers daily decreased. Fighting both at the walls and at the haven, against such a multitude of the Turks, they were not able to hold out long. Beside the armies which lay battering at the walls, the Turk had on the sea his navy of 250 sailing ships lying upon the haven of the city, reaching from the one side of the haven's mouth to the other, as if a bridge might be made from one bank to the other. This haven was barred with iron chains by the citizens, whereby the Turks were kept out a certain distance. Against this navy there were seven ships of Genoa within the haven, three from Crete, and certain one from Chios, which stood against them. Also the soldiers issuing out of the city, as occasion would serve, manfully withstood them. With wild-fire they set their ships on fire, so that for a while they could serve no use. At length the chains were broken, and a way was made. The Turk's navy entered the haven, and assaulted the city, whereby the Turk began to conceive great hope, and was eager to obtain the city. The assault and skirmish then growing hotter, Mahomet the tyrant stood by on a hill, with his warriors about him, crying and howling out to them to scale the walls and enter the town. Otherwise, if any recoiled, he threatened to kill them, and so he did. Therefore a great number of his soldiers, in their repulse and retreat, were slain by the Turk's own men, sent by his commandment to slay them. And so they were justly served, and well paid for their hire.

Although this was some comfort to the Christians to see and behold outside the city the Turk's retinue so consumed, that hope did not last long. Shortly after, by the rage of war, it happened that one Justinian, the duke named above, was wounded. Notwithstanding that he was earnestly desired by Paleologus the emperor, not to leave the tower which he had to keep, seeing that his wound was not deadly; yet he could not be entreated to tarry, but left his standing and his fort undefended, setting no one in his place to guard it. And so this doughty duke hurt more by his false heart than with the force of a weapon, gave up and fled to Chio, where shortly after he died for sorrow, rather than for soreness of his wound. Many of his soldiers, seeing their captain flee, followed after him, leaving their fort utterly destitute and without defense. The Turks, understanding that advantage, soon burst into the city. The Emperor Paleologus, seeing no other way than to flee, made toward the gate. He

was either slain, or else trampled by the multitude. In that gate, 800 dead men's bodies were found and taken up.

The city of Constantinople thus being gotten, the Turks sacked and ranged about the streets, houses, and corners, putting to the sword most unmercifully whomever they found, both aged and young, matrons, maidens, children, and infants, sparing none. The noble matrons and maidens were horribly assaulted; the goods of the city, the treasuries in houses, the ornaments in churches were all sacked and spoiled. Pictures of Christ were contemptuously handled in hatred of Christ. The spoil and havoc of the city lasted for three days, while the barbarous soldiers murdered and rifled whatever they liked.

These things being done, and the tumult ceased, after three days Mahomet the Turk (Mehmed II) entered the city. He first called for the leaders and ancients of the city; those whom he found alive he commanded to be mangled and cut in pieces. It is also reported (says my author), that in the feasts of the Turks, all those who were of the king's stock, after other barbarities, were hewn and cut in pieces for their sport.

And this was the end of that princely and famous city of Constantinople, begun first by a Constantine, and also ending with a Constantine, which for its princely royalty was named and ever honored equally with the city of Rome, from the time of the first Constantine, and was also called the New Rome, It had continued for 1123 years. I pray God that Old Rome may learn from New Rome, to take heed and beware in time.

This terrible destruction of the city of Constantinople, the queen of cities, I thought to describe here, not so much to set forth the barbarous cruelty of these filthy and merciless murderers, as especially for this: that being admonished by the doleful ruin and misery of our fellow Christians, we may call to mind the deserved plagues and miseries which seem to hang no less over our own heads. And thereby we may sooner learn to invoke and call more earnestly upon the name of our terrible and merciful God, that for his Son's sake He will keep us, and preserve his church among us, and mitigate those plagues and sorrows which we no less deserved, than those mentioned above did before us. Christ grant it, Amen.

History of Reynold Peacock.

*The history of Reynold Peacock bishop of Chichester,
afflicted and imprisoned for the gospel of Christ.*

After the death of Henry Chichesley, mentioned before, next succeeded John Stafford (A.D. 1445), who continued for eight years. After him came John Kemp (A.D. 1453), who sat but three years. Then succeeded Thomas Burschere. In the time of this archbishop, Reynold Peacock, bishop of Chichester, was afflicted by the pope's prelate for his faith and profession of the gospel. This man (says Hall) began to prompt questions not privately, but openly in the universities, concerning the Annates,¹¹⁶ Peter-pence, and other jurisdictions, and the authorities pertaining to the See of Rome. He not only put forth the questions, but he declared his mind and opinion about them. He was for this reason abjured at Paul's Cross. This bishop, first of St. Asaph, then of Chichester, so long as Duke Humphrey lived (by whom he was promoted and made much of) was quiet and safe. He was also bold to dispute and to write his mind in several books and treatises. But after that good duke was removed, this good man was open to his enemies, and matter was soon found against him. Being

¹¹⁶ *Annate*: payments made to the papacy from the first year's revenue of a benefice.

complained about, and accused to the archbishop, letters were directed down from the archbishop to cite all men to appear who could say anything against him.

This citation being thus issued, the bishop came before the judges and bishops to Lambeth, where Thomas the archbishop, with his doctors and lawyers, were gathered together in the archbishop's court. The duke of Buckingham was present, accompanied with the bishops of Rochester, and of Lincoln. What opinions and articles were objected against him will be specified in his revocation. In answering for himself, in such a company of the pope's friends, although he could not prevail, yet he stoutly defended himself. He declared many things worthy of great commendation for learning, if learning could have prevailed against power. But on the contrary part, they exerted themselves with all labor and diligence, either to reduce him, or else to confound him.

[357] A.D. 1440—1457.

Briefly, no stone was left unturned, no ways unproved, either by fair means to entreat him, or by terrible menaces to terrify his mind, till at length, being vanquished and overcome by the bishops, he began to faint, and gave up. Whereupon, by and by, a recantation was put to him by the bishops, which he should declare before the people. The copy of this recantation follows here:

“In the name of God, Amen. Before you, the most reverend father in Christ and Lord, the Lord Thomas, by the grace of God, archbishop of Canterbury, primate of all England and legate of the apostolic see, I, Reynold Peacock, unworthy bishop of Chichester, do purely, willingly, simply, and absolutely confess and acknowledge, that in times past, that is to say, for these past twenty years and more, have conceived, held, taught, and written, regarding the sacraments, and the articles of the faith, otherwise than the holy church of Rome, and universal church; and also that I have made, written, published, and set forth many and diverse pernicious doctrines, books, works, writings, heresies, that are contrary and against the true catholic and apostolic faith, containing in them errors contrary to the catholic faith, and especially these errors and heresies written hereunder.

1. First of all, that we are not bound by the necessity of faith, to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ after his death descended into hell. ¹¹⁷
2. That it is not necessary to salvation to believe in the holy catholic church.
3. That it is not necessary to salvation to believe the communion of saints.
4. That it is not necessary to salvation to affirm the material body in the sacrament.
5. That the universal church may err in matters which pertain to faith.
6. That it is not necessary to salvation to believe what every general council universally ordains, approves, or determines, should necessarily, for the help of our faith and the salvation of souls, is to be approved and held by all faithful Christians.

“Therefore I, Reynold Peacock, wretched sinner, who have long walked in darkness, and now by the merciful disposition and ordinance of God, am reduced and brought again to the light and way of truth, and restored to the unity of our holy mother the church, renounce and forsake all errors and heresies aforesaid.”

It is probable that this bishop repented afterward of his recantation. This may easily be supposed, because he was committed again to prison, and detained captive, where it is

¹¹⁷ In the Apostle's Creed, the line "He descended into hell" was a late addition, post-fourth century. See Philip Schaff's *History of the Christian Church* (1858), Vol. 2, pp. 535-536 for examples of the original texts.

uncertain whether he was oppressed with private and secret tyranny; or whether there he obtained the crown of martyrdom.

From the persecutions and burnings in England we will now digress a little, to speak of foreign matters of the church of Rome.

Pope Nicholas V, to get and gather great sums of money, appointed a jubilee in A.D. 1450, at which time a greater number of people resorted to Rome, than had been seen at any time before. We read in the history of Platina, that something happened at this time, which I thought not unworthy to be noted here as an example. As there was a great concourse of people resorting to the mount Vatican to behold the image of our Savior, which they had there to show to the pilgrims, the people were thick going to and fro between the mount and the city. By chance, a certain mule of the cardinals of St. Mark came by the way. The people not being able to avoid them, one or two fell upon the mule. There was such a throng of people on the bridge on that occasion, that some two hundred men and three horses were smothered there; and on each side of the bridge many others besides these fell over into the water and were drowned.

During the time of pope Nicholas, one Matthew Palmerius wrote a book *On Angels*. For defending it, he was condemned by the pope, and burned at Coma.

After Nicholas succeeded Calixtus III (1455), who among other things ordained that both at noon and evening, the bell was to toll the *Aves*, as it was used in the popish time, to help the soldiers who fought against the Turks. And for this cause he also ordained the feast of the transfiguration of the Lord, solemnizing it with like pardons and indulgencies, and also on *Corpus Christi* day.

Also this pope, proceeding contrary to the councils of Constance and Basel, decreed that no man should appeal from the pope to any council. Also by him, St. Edmund of Canterbury, with various others, were made saints.

Next after this Calixtus succeeded Pius II (1458), otherwise called Eneas Sylvius. He wrote the two books of commentaries on the Council of Basel mentioned before. This Eneas, at the time of the writing of those books, seemed to be a man of tolerable judgment and doctrine, from which he afterward, being pope, seemed to decline and swerve, seeking by all means possible, how to deface and abolish the books which he himself had written.

Statements attributed to Pius II.

“The divine nature of God may be comprehended by faith rather than by disputation.

“Christian faith is to be considered, not by what reason it is proved, but from whom it proceeds.

“Neither can a covetous man be satisfied with money, nor a learned man with knowledge.

“Learning ought to be [given] to poor men instead of silver, to noblemen instead of gold, and to princes instead of precious stones.

“An artificial oration moves fools, but not wise men.

“Suitors in the law are like birds: the court is the bait; the judges are the nets; and the lawyers are the fowlers.

“Men are to be given to dignities, and not dignities to men.

“The office of a bishop is heavy, but it is blessed to him who bears it well.

“A bishop without learning may be likened to an ass.

“An evil physician destroys bodies, but an unlearned priest destroys souls.

“Marriage was taken from priests not without great reason; but with much greater reason it ought to be restored again.”

He utters a similar sentence to this last one in his second book of the Council of Basel, saying,

“Perhaps it would not be the worst, that most priests had their wives; for many would be saved in priestly marriage, who now are damned in unmarried priesthood.”

As Celius reports, the same Pius also dissolved certain orders of nuns, of the orders of St. Bridget and St. Clare, bidding them to depart, so that they would no longer disgrace the profession of religion.

This Pius, if he had brought so much piety and godliness as he brought learning to his popedom, he would have excelled many popes that went before him. Before his elevation he preferred general councils above the pope. Now being pope, he decreed that no man should appeal from the high bishop of Rome to any general council. And likewise for priests' marriage: whereas, before he thought it best to have their wives restored, yet afterward he altered his mind.

After Pius II succeeded Paul II (1464), a pope wholly set on his own gratification and ambition, and not so much void of all learning, as filled with hatred of learned men.

After Paul came Sixtus IV (1471). This pope, among his other acts, reduced the year of jubilee from the fiftieth year to the twenty-fifth. He also instituted the feast of the Conception, and the presentation of Mary and of Anna her mother, and of Joseph. He canonized Bonaventure and St. Francis as saints. He also introduced beads, and instituted our lady's Psalter. Sixtus made thirty-two cardinals in his time.

[358]

Next after Sixtus IV came Innocent VIII (1484), as rude and as far from all learning as his predecessor was before him.¹¹⁸ Among the noble acts of this pope was this one: that in the town of Polus apud Equicolos, he caused eight men and six women, with the lord of the place, to be apprehended and taken, and judged as heretics, because they said none of those who came after Peter was the vicar of Christ, except those who followed the poverty of Christ. He also condemned George king of Bohemia as a heretic, and deprived him of his dignity and also of his kingdom; and he had George's whole line utterly rejected and put down, giving his kingdom to Matthias king of Pannonia.

Henry VI Deposed — Succeeded by Edward IV.

Now, from the popes let us descend to other estates, beginning with our troubles here at home pertaining to the overthrow of King Henry VI and his seat. Here it is to be remembered how, after the death of the duke of Gloucester, mischiefs came in by heaps upon the king and his realm. For after giving away Anjou and Maine to the Frenchmen by the unfortunate marriage of Queen Margaret,¹¹⁹ the Frenchmen perceived that now, by the

¹¹⁸ Sixtus IV also founded the Spanish Inquisition in 1478 at the request of Isabella and Ferdinand, and was known for his nepotism, often promoting his relatives to high positions within the Church and state.

¹¹⁹ Margaret of Anjou (1430-1482), had married Henry VI, becoming Queen of France as well as England.

death of Humphrey the duke of Gloucester, the stay and pillar of this commonwealth was decayed. And seeing, moreover, the hearts of the nobility were divided among themselves, they lost no time having such an open way into Normandy. In a short time they recovered it and also got Gascony, so that of all the parts beyond the sea, no longer remained England's except Calais. Nor did the calamity of the realm only rest in this. For the king now having lost his friendly uncle as the stay and staff of his age, who had brought him up so faithfully from his youth, Henry was now more open to his enemies, and they were more emboldened to set upon him. This appeared first by Jack Cade, the Kentish captain who encamped on Blackheath, and afterward aspired to London. He gained its spoil, the king being driven into Warwickshire (A.D. 1450). Not long after the suppression of Cade's insurrection, the duke of York, accompanied by three earls, set upon the king near St. Alban's. There the king was taken captive, and the duke of York was declared protector by parliament in the same year. After this followed long division and mortal war between the two houses of Lancaster and York, continuing many years.¹²⁰ At length, in the year 1450, the duke of York was slain in battle by the queen near the town of Wakefield, and with him also his son, the earl of Rutland. The queen also, shortly after, discomfited the earl of Warwick, and the duke of Norfolk, to whom the keeping of the king had been committed by the duke of York. And so the queen again delivered her husband.

After these victories, the northern men, advancing not a little in pride and courage, began to take upon themselves great attempts not only to spoil and rob churches, religious houses, and villages, but also fully intending — partly by themselves, partly by the inducement of their lords and captains — to sack, waste, and utterly subvert the city of London, and to take its spoil. No doubt (says my history) they would have proceeded in their conceived greedy intent, had not the opportune favor of God provided a speedy remedy. For as these mischiefs were in brewing, suddenly the noble Prince Edward came to London with a mighty army, on the twenty-seventh of February (1461). He was the son and heir to the duke of York mentioned above, and was accompanied by the earl of Warwick, and diverse others. In the meantime, King Henry went up to York with his victory. When Edward was at London, he caused certain articles to be proclaimed there, concerning his title to the crown of England. On the second of March, and then on the fourth, accompanied with the lords spiritual and temporal, and with a large concourse of people, he rode to Westminster-hall. There, by the full consent of the lords as well by the voice of all the commons, he took possession of the crown, and was called King Edward IV.

These things thus accomplished at London, King Edward proceeded northward against Henry. He had passed over the river of Trent with his army, and had come near Ferrybridge, where the army of King Henry was not far off. On Palm Sunday, between Ferrybridge and Tadcaster, the armies of both the southern and northern men engaged each other in battle. At the beginning, some horsemen on King Edward's side turned their backs, and yet the courageous prince, with his captains, little discouraged, fiercely and manfully set upon their adversaries. The battle was so cruelly fought on both sides, it was reported that besides men of name, 36,000 of the poor commons were slain in the conflict. Notwithstanding, the conquest fell on King Edward's part, so that King Henry having lost all, was forced to flee

¹²⁰ This is the beginning of the Wars of the Roses (1455–85), a series of dynastic civil wars whose violence and civil strife preceded the strong government of the Tudors. It was fought between the houses of Lancaster and York for the English throne. The name comes from the badges of the contending parties: the white rose of York, and the red rose of Lancaster. Queen Margaret was instrumental on the Lancaster side. — *Ency. Brit.*

into Scotland, where he gave the town of Berwick to the Scots in return for helping him against the Yorks He had reigned thirty-eight and a half years.

King Edward IV – 1461.

King Edward, after his conquest and victory achieved against King Henry, returned again to London. There, upon the vigil of St. Peter and Paul being a Sunday (A.D. 1461), he was crowned king of England, and reigned twenty-two years.

When it was proposed that the king should marry, several alliances were suggested. First, Lady Margaret was thought of, sister to James IV king of Scots. Afterward Lady Elizabeth, sister to Henry king of Castile, but she was underage. The earl of Warwick then turned to the French king Louis XI, to obtain Lady Bona, daughter of the duke of Savoy, and sister to the French queen. He obtained consent. Meanwhile the king was pleased with Elizabeth Grey, the widow of Sir John Grey, a knight who slain earlier in the battle of St. Albans. She was daughter to the duchess of Bedford and Lord Rivers. The king first endeavored to have her as his mistress. But being unworthy (she said) to be the wife of such a high personage, and thinking herself too good to be his mistress, she so won the king's heart, that before the return of the earl of Warwick from France, he married her. At this marriage only the duchess of Bedford, two gentlewomen, the priest and cleric, were present. Upon this hasty and unlucky marriage ensued no little trouble for the king, much bloodshed to the realm, the undoing of almost all her kindred, and finally, confusion to King Edward's two sons, who were afterward declared to be illegitimate, and deprived of their lives. The earl of Warwick, who had earlier been the faithful friend and chief maintainer of the king, upon hearing of this marriage, was so angry that he ever afterwards endeavored to work displeasure to the king. He concealed his wrathful mood, till he might find a convenient time and a world to set forward his purpose. At last finding an occasion that served his mind, he made known his purpose to his two brethren, the Lord Montague, and the archbishop of York, conspiring with them to bring it about. Then he also thought to discover the mind of the duke of Clarence, King Edward's brother. He likewise won him to his side, giving him his daughter in marriage.

The matter thus being prepared against the king, the first flame of his conspiracy began to appear in the north country. There the northern men shortly gathered themselves in an open rebellion, and found captains for their wicked purpose; then they came down from York toward London. Against them the king appointed William Lord Herbert, earl of Pembroke, with the Lord Stafford, and certain other captains. The Yorkshiremen first overthrew Lord Stafford, then the earl of Pembroke and his company of Welshmen at Banbury Field. At last they joined together with the army of the earl of Warwick, and the duke of Clarence, in the dead of the night. They secretly stole onto king Edward's field at Wolney by Warwick, killed the watch, and took the king prisoner. He was first held in the castle of Warwick, then conveyed by night to Middleham castle in Yorkshire, under the custody of the archbishop of York. Being kept loosely there, with liberty to go hunting, he met with Sir William Stanley, Sir Thomas of Borough, and other friends. He was too good for his keepers, and escaped the hands of his enemies. And so king Edward came to York, where he was well received. From there he went to Lancaster, where he met with Lord Hasting his chamberlain, who was well accompanied, and by whose help the king came safely to London.

[359] A.D. 1457-1471.

After this tumult, when reconciliation could not come to perfect peace and unity, even though much labor was put into it by the nobility, the earl of Warwick raised up a new war in Lincolnshire. The captain there was Sir Robert Wells, knight. Shortly after, he was taken in battle with his father and Sir Thomas Duncock, and they were beheaded, A.D. 1470. The rest tossed their coats and fled, for which the field (at Empingham) came to be called Losecoat Field. After this, the earl of Warwick, without comfort and hope of prevailing at home, fled England — first to Calais, then to Louis the French king, accompanied by the duke of Clarence.

At that time, the fame of the earl of Warwick and of his famous acts was greatly admired, and he was so highly favored that both in England and in France all men were glad to behold his person. Therefore the arrival of this earl, and of the duke of Clarence, was not a little gratifying to the French king, and no less opportune to Queen Margaret, King Henry's wife, and Prince Edward her son. They too came to the French court to meet and confer together regarding their affairs. A league was concluded there between them. Moreover, a marriage was wrought between Edward prince of Wales, and Anne the second daughter of the earl of Warwick. Thus all things falling luckily on the earl's part, besides the large offers and great promises made by the French king, that he would do his best to set forward their purpose. The earl also had intelligence by letters, that the hearts of almost all men went with him, and longed sorely for his presence against king Edward. So that there now lacked only haste to return to England with all possible speed. Well-fortified with the French navy, he and the duke of Clarence set out towards England. For so it was previously decreed between them, that these two would prove the first venture, and then Queen Margaret, with Prince Edward her son, would follow after. The arrival of the earl was no sooner heard of at Dartmouth in Devonshire, than a great concourse of people by the thousands went to him from all quarters to receive and welcome him back. He immediately made a proclamation in the name of King Henry VI, charging all men who were able to bear armor, to prepare themselves to fight against Edward duke of York, the *usurper* of the crown. He lacked no friends, strength of men, furniture, nor policy convenient for such a matter.

When King Edward (who was passing the time in hunting, hawking, and in all pleasure and dalliance, heard what a great resort of multitudes incessantly repaired more and more daily around the earl and the duke, he began to provide for a remedy, but it was too late. Trusting too much to his friends and previous fortune, he now right well perceived what a variable and inconstant thing the people are, and especially the people of England, whose nature is never to be long content with the present state. But always delighting in newness, they seek a new variety of changes, either envying that which stands, or pitying that which has fallen. This inconstant mutability of the people, changing with the wind and wavering with the reed, well appeared in the course of King Edward's story. For through the favor of the people, when he was down, he was exalted; now being exalted by them, he was forsaken. This then should be noted by all princes: that just as there is nothing in this mutable world that is firm and stable, so there is no trust or assurance to be had, except in the favor of God, and in the promises of His word — except in Christ his Son, whose kingdom alone shall never end, and never change.

While these things were passing on in England, King Edward, accompanied by the duke of Gloucester his brother, and the Lord Hastings, who had married the earl of Warwick's sister, and yet was ever true to King Edward; and the Lord Scales, brother to the queen, sent abroad to all his friends for able soldiers to withstand his enemies. When he could obtain but little assistance, the king departed into Lincolnshire. There, he perceived his enemies were daily increasing, and all the country was in disturbance, making fires, and singing

songs, crying, “King Henry, King Henry! a Warwick, a Warwick!” and hearing that his enemies the Lancastrians were within half a day’s journey of him, he was advised to flee across the sea to the duke of Burgundy, who not long before had married King Edward’s sister.

Charles, duke of Burgundy, upon hearing of the condition of his brother-in-law, King Edward was greatly amazed and perplexed, doubting what he should do. For being then at war with the French king, he could not well provoke the English nation against him, nor could he, without great shame, leave King Edward in that necessity. So he demeaned himself through fair speech, pretending to the Englishmen to take sides with the house of Lancaster, being partly descended from the same family on his grandmother’s side. So that he was Henry’s friend openly, and Edward’s friend covertly, pretending what he did not, and doing what he did not pretend.

When tidings were spread in England of King Edward’s flight, innumerable people resorted to the earl of Warwick, to take his part against King Edward, and only a few of Edward’s constant friends took sanctuary. Among them was Elizabeth his wife, who, in despair almost of all comfort, took sanctuary at Westminster, where in great penury she was delivered of a fair son named Edward, who was baptized without any pomp, like any poor woman’s child. The godfathers were the abbot and prior of Westminster, the godmother was lady Scroope.

To make the story short, the earl of Warwick having now brought all things to his wishes, upon the 12th of Oct. rode to the Tower, which was then delivered to him, and there he took King Henry out of the ward, and placed him in the king’s lodging. The 25th of that month, the duke of Clarence, accompanied by the earls of Warwick, Shrewsbury, and the Lord Stanley, and with a great company, brought King Henry in a long gown of blue velvet through the high streets of London, first to St. Paul’s church, then to the bishop’s palace of London, and there he again resumed the royal crown, (A.D. 1470). After this followed a parliament, in which King Edward with all his partakers were judged traitors. King Edward made urgent and successful suit to Duke Charles his brother, to rescue him with such forces as he could give him; for he was fully resolved to wait no longer.

The duke secretly gave him 50,000 florins, and further had four great ships appointed for him in a haven in Zealand,¹²¹ where it was free for all men to come. Also the duke had hired fourteen ships for him from the Easterlings well-appointed, taking security from them to serve him faithfully till he had landed in England, and for fifteen days afterward.

Thus King Edward with only 2,000 men of war, took his voyage into England, and landed at Ravenspur in Yorkshire. Concealing his purpose, he pretended not to claim the crown and kingdom, but only to claim the duchy of York, which was his own title, and he caused that to be published. This being notified to the people, that he desired no more than his just patrimony and lineal inheritance, they began to be moved with mercy and compassion towards him, either to favor him or at least not to resist him. And so, journeying toward York, he came to Beverley. He then proceeded to York without resistance, where he requested from the citizens to be admitted into their city. They dared not grant it to him, but on the contrary sent him word to approach no nearer, if he loved his own safety. The desolate king was here driven into a narrow strait. He could not retire, for in the opinion of the country, it would be the loss of his cause. Nor could he advance, because of the present danger of the city. So using policy as before, with loving words and gentle speech, he desired the messengers to declare to the citizens, that his coming was not to demand the realm of

¹²¹ Zealand: the largest island of Denmark and the site of Copenhagen.

England, but only the duchy of York, his old inheritance. And therefore he had determined to set forward, with neither army nor weapon. The messengers were no sooner inside the gates, than he was there with them.

[360]

The citizens hearing his courteous answer, and that he intended nothing to the prejudice of the king, nor of the realm, were somewhat softened toward him. They began to parley with him from the walls, desiring him to withdraw his soldiers to some other place, and that they would then be more ready to aid him, or at least he would have no damage by them.

However, he again used such humble language, and delivered so fair a speech to them, treating them so courteously, and saluting the aldermen by their names, requiring at their hands no more than his own town, of which he had the name and title, that at length the citizens, after long talks and debating on the matter — also partly enticed with fair and large promises, agreed that if he would swear to be true to King Henry, and gentle in entertaining his citizens, they would receive him into the city.

This being concluded, the next morning upon entering the gate, a priest was ready to say mass, in which after receiving the sacrament, the king received a solemn oath to observe the two articles agreed to before. By this he obtained the city of York where, in a short time forgetting his oath, he set garrisons of armed soldiers. King Edward, soon being more fully furnished at all points, by the accession of his friends, came to the town of Leicester, and there hearing that the earl of Warwick, with the earl of Oxford were at Warwick with a great army, he marched his army, hoping to give battle to the earl. In the meantime, the duke of Clarence had levied a great host and was coming toward the earl of Warwick. But when the earl saw the duke delay the time, he began to suspect that he had changed to his brother's party. When the armies of the two brothers. King Edward and the duke of Clarence, were in sight of each other, Richard, duke of Gloucester, brother to them both, as an arbiter between them, first rode to the one, and then to the other. Whether all this was for appearances, is uncertain. But hereby both brothers, laying all army and weapons aside, first lovingly and familiarly communed. After that, they brotherly and naturally joined together. And that fraternal amity was ratified by proclamation, and thereby put out of all suspicion.

Then it was agreed between the three brothers, to test the earl of Warwick, if he likewise would be reconciled; but he stood in utter defiance, crying out *shame* upon the duke of Clarence. From there King Edward, being so strongly supported and daily increasing, makes his way to London. After it was known that the duke of Clarence had joined him, much fear fell upon the Londoners, as to what was best to be done. So the citizens consulting with themselves, having no walls to defend them, thought it best to take that way which seemed to them the surest and safest; and therefore they concluded to take part with King Edward. This was no sooner known abroad, than the commonalty ran out by heaps to meet King Edward, and to salute him as their king. The duke of Somerset, with others of King Henry's council, hearing of this, and wondering at the sudden change in the world, fled and left King Henry alone.

The earl of Warwick had now passed a great part of his journey to London, when hearing the news how affairs had changed, and that King Henry was again a prisoner in the Tower, he was not a little appalled. And so he stayed with his army at St. Albans, to see what course to take. And then he removed to Barnet, ten miles from St. Albans.

King Edward set out against him with a strong army of picked and able persons, with artillery and every requisite; also bringing with him his prisoner King Henry. On Easter

evening he came to Barnet, and there he entrenched himself. On the morning of Easter day the battle began, and fiercely continued till almost noon, with murder on each side, till both sides were almost weary with fighting and murdering. King Edward then, with a great body of fresh soldiers set upon his wearied enemies. The earl's men, encouraged with the words of their captain, fought stoutly, but being already wounded and wearied, they could hold out not long. The earl, rushing into the midst of his enemies, ventured so far, that he could not be rescued. There he was struck down and slain (April 14, 1471). The Marquis Montague thinking to succor his brother, whom he saw to be in great jeopardy, was likewise overthrown and slain. After Richard Nevil, earl of Warwick, and his brother were gone, the rest fled, and many were taken.

In the same year, about the same time, on the Ascension evening, king Henry, being prisoner in the Tower, departed, after reigning thirty-eight years and six months. Polydore (and Hall following him) affirms that he was slain with a dagger by Richard, duke of Gloucester, for the quieter safeguarding of his brother King Edward.

Polydore, after describing the virtues of king Henry VI, records that King Henry VII afterward removed his corpse from Chertsey, where he was buried, to Windsor, and he adds that certain miracles were done by him. For this reason, he says, King Henry VII labored with Pope Julius to have him canonized as a saint; but the death of the king prevented the matter proceeding. Edward Hall writing about this matter, declares that the reason why King Henry's sainting was not completed was that the fees for canonizing a king were so great at Rome (more than of bishop or prelate) that the king thought it better to keep the money in his chests, than to buy so dear, and pay so much, for a new holiday of St. Henry in the Calendar.

During the time of these doings, about A.D. 1465, there was a Carmelite friar in England, who preached at St. Paul's, in London, that our Lord Jesus Christ, while here in this world, lived in poverty, and begged. The provincial of that order also seemed to incline to this doctrine, defending it both in his reading and preaching, with other doctors and brethren of the same order; and also certain of the Jacobites. On the contrary side, many doctors and also lawyers, both in their public lectures and preaching, withstood their assertion, as most pestiferous in the church. Such a bitter contention arose among them, that its defendants were driven for a while to keep silence. This question of the begging friars, whether Christ begged or not, went so far that at length it came to the ears of Pope Paul II, who was no beggar you may be sure. After the fame of this doctrine had mounted over the Alps, and came flying to the court of Rome, A.D. 1465, it brought with it such an evil smell to the fine noses there, that there was no need to bid them to stir; for to them, begging was worse than high heresy. Therefore the holy father. Pope Paul II, to repress the sparks of this doctrine, which otherwise might have set his whole kitchen on fire, takes the matter in hand, and directs his bull into England, insinuating to the prelates here, that this heresy, which pestiferously affirms that Christ openly begged, was condemned of old by the bishops of Rome and his councils, and that it ought to be declared in all places as a damned doctrine, worthy to be trodden under all men's feet, etc.

I will omit speaking about the rest of the affairs of King Edward, who had been victorious in nine battles, himself being present, and other such things, making a supersedeas of them. This is partly because they are sufficiently described in our common English histories, and also because they are not matters greatly pertaining to the church.

These would include how afterward, through the incitement of his brother-in-law Charles, duke of Burgundy, Edward ventured into France with a powerful army, and how the duke

failed him in his promise; also how peace between these two kings was at length concluded in a solemn meeting of them both (which is marked in histories by a white dove sitting on top of King Edward's tent the day of the meeting); also of the marriage promised between the young dauphin and Elizabeth, King Edward's eldest daughter, but afterwards broken off on the French king's part; moreover, regarding the death of the duke of Burgundy, slain in war, and of his daughter Mary, niece to King Edward, wrongfully spoiled of her lands and possessions by Louis, the French king, and afterward married to Maximilian; furthermore, regarding the expedition of King Edward into Scotland, because King James broke his promise in marrying with Cicely, the second daughter of King Edward, and of driving out his brother, and how the matter was composed there, and of the recovery of Berwick.

[361] A.D. 1471-1473.

But I do find two things here, among many others, that are especially to be remembered.

The first concerns a godly and constant servant of Christ, named John Goose, who in the time of this king, was unjustly condemned and burnt at the Towerhill, A.D. 1473, in the month of August. Thus England had its John Huss (Huss signifies a goose) as well as Bohemia. It is to be noted in this, that since the time of King Richard II, there is no reign of any king in which some good man or other has not suffered the pains of fire for the religion and true testimony of Christ Jesus. I find it recorded of this John Goose (or John Huss), that being delivered to one of the sheriffs to see him burnt in the afternoon, the sheriff, like a charitable man, brought him home to his house; and there he exhorted him to deny his alleged errors. But the godly man, after long exhortation, desired the sheriff to be content, for he was satisfied in his conscience. However, he desired this of the sheriff: for God's sake to give him some food, saying that he was very sorely hungered. The sheriff commanded food for him; which he took and ate, as if he had been in no danger at all. And he said to those who stood around him, "I now eat a good and competent dinner, for I will pass a little sharper shower before I go to supper." When he had dined, he gave thanks, and requested that he might shortly be led to the place where he would yield up his spirit to God.

The second thing to be noted in this, is the death of George, duke of Clarence, the king's second brother; of whom mention was made earlier, how he assisted King Edward his brother at Barnet Field against the earl of Warwick, and helped him to the crown. Now, after all these benefits given, he was at length requited by being apprehended and cast into the Tower (for what cause it is uncertain). There being judged a traitor, he was secretly drowned in a butt of malmsey.¹²² What the true cause of his death was cannot be affirmed with any certainty.

Now having long tarried at home in describing the tumults and troubles within our own land, we will proceed more at large, to consider the afflictions and perturbations of other parties and places, also of Christ's church, here in Europe under the pope, as well as in the eastern parts under the Turk. We begin our history from the time of Sigismund, who was engaged in the Council of Constance against John Huss and Jerome of Prague, as recorded above. This emperor always had evil luck fighting against the Turks. Twice he warred against them, and in both battles he was discomfited and put to flight. Once he was near the city of Mysia, fighting against Bajazet I, the Great Turk, A.D. 1395. The second time was fighting against Celebinus, the son of Bajazet, near a town called Columbacium. But especially after the Council of Constance, in which those two godly martyrs were condemned

¹²² [That is, in a cask of Sweet Madeira wine.](#)

and burned, more unprosperous results followed Sigismund fighting against his own subjects, the Bohemians, A.D. 1420. During the times of Ziska and of Procopius, the emperor was repulsed in so many battles (described earlier), it was to his great dishonor. Having been beaten by the Turks abroad, and then by his own people at home, he never encountered the Turks again. The Council of Basel then followed in A.D. 1431. Sigismund, who was emperor, king of Hungary, and king of Bohemia, died in Moravia, A.D. 1437.

The Emperor Albert.

Sigismund left behind him only one daughter, Elizabeth, who was married to Albert, duke of Austria, by which he was advanced to the empire, and so he was both duke of Austria, emperor, king of Hungary, and also king of Bohemia. This Albert was an enemy and a disquieter to the Bohemians, and especially to the good men of Tabor. As he was preparing to set forth against the Turks, he died. This was in the second year of his reign, A.D. 1439, leaving his wife great with child. Being then in Hungary, and believing she would bear a daughter, called to her the princes and the chieftains of the realms. She declared to them that she was but a woman, and insufficient to govern such a state; moreover, she thought she might bear a daughter. So she required them to provide among themselves such a prince and governor (reserving the right of the kingdom to herself) as was fit and able under her, to manage the empire committed to him. The Turk, meanwhile, being elevated and encouraged with his victories against Sigismund, began more fiercely to invade Hungary and those parts of Christendom. Therefore the Hungarians, making haste, consulted among themselves to make Duke Vladislaus their king, who was brother to Casimir, king of Poland.

But while this was in progress between the Hungarians and Vladislaus, Elizabeth brought forth a son named Ladislaus. Being the lawful heir of the kingdom, the queen annulled her former word, minding to reserve the kingdom for her son. Therefore she refused marriage with Vladislaus, which she had previously designed. But Vladislaus, joining with a great part of the Hungarians, persisted in the condition granted before, and would not give over. Thus great contention and division was kindled among the people of Hungary. Amurath, the Great Turk, took advantage of their discord, and partly elated with pride at his former success against Sigismund, invaded the realm of Hungary with his whole main and force. Huniades, surnamed Vainoda, prince of Transylvania, joined with Vladislaus, the new king of Hungary, and both together set against the Turk, A.D. 1444. Vladislaus, in the fourth year of his kingdom, was slain. Meanwhile, Elizabeth fled with her son, to Frederick the emperor. More shall be said hereafter of Huniades Vainoda, the noble captain, and of his acts, and also of Ladislaus (Christ willing), in his time and place.

Frederick III, Emperor – 1440.

After the decease of Albert, Frederick III, duke of Austria (a Habsburg), succeeded to the empire, A.D. 1440. As we signified before, he procured that Pope Felix, elected by the Council of Basel, would resign his popedom to Nicholas V, on this condition: that Pope Nicholas would ratify the acts decreed in the Council of Basel. In the days of this emperor, much war and dissension raged throughout the Christian realms, in Austria, Hungary, Poland, France, and in Burgundy; and also here in England, between King Henry VI and King Edward IV. So that it would have been easy for the Turk to overrun all the Christian realms in Europe, had not the providence of our merciful Lord otherwise provided to keep Amurath the Turk occupied in other civil wars at home. Elizabeth came with her son Ladislaus to Frederick, by whom he was nourished and entertained. After the death of Vladislaus, king of Hungary, the men of Austria rose up in arms, through the instigation of

Ulric Eizingerus, and of Ulric, earl of Cilicia. They required Frederick either to give them their young king, or else stand to his own defense.

When Frederick heard this, he would neither give a sudden answer, nor abide delaying any longer. And so the matter went to war. The new city was besieged,¹²³ where many were slain, and much harm was done. At length, the emperor's part being the weaker, and through the intervention of certain nobles of Germany, he restored Ladislaus to the Austrians' hands. But because the boy was under age, Frederick committed his three kingdoms to three governors. John Huniades, the worthy captain mentioned above, had the rule of Hungary; George Pogiebracius had Bohemia; and Ulric, the earl of Cilicia, had Austria. Ulric, having chief custody of king Ladislaus, had the greatest authority. He was a man as full of ambition and tyranny, as he was hated by almost all the Austrians. Shortly after, by means of Eizingerus, he was also excluded from the king and the court.

[382]

But he was later restored again, and Eizingerus was thrust out. Such is the unstable condition of those who are in a place about princes. Not long after, Ladislaus, the young king, went to Bohemia to be crowned there (A.D. 1453),¹²⁴ where George Pogiebracius had the government. But Ladislaus, during all his time there, though being much requested, he would neither enter into the churches, nor hear the service of those who followed the doctrine of Huss. A certain priest, in the high tower of Prague, was appointed and addressed in the manner of priests to say service before the king. He was known to hold with John Huss and Rochezana. But the king disdained him, and commanded him to give way and depart, or else he would send him headlong from the rock of the tower; and so the good minister repulsed by the king, departed. At another time, when Ladislaus saw the sacrament being carried by a minister of the Hussites, he would pay no reverence to it.

At length the presence of the king, although it was not very long, seemed to the godly-disposed to be longer than they wished. This was not unknown to the king, which made him hastier to leave Bohemia. But before he departed, he thought first to visit the noble city Uratislavia, in Silesia. In that city, Ladislaus attended the [catholic] high church at service, with many great princes about him. Among them was George Pogiebracius, who then stood nearest to the king. One Chilian (jester), playing the parasite about king Pogiebracius (as the fashion is of those who feign being fools, to make other men as foolish as they are) spoke as follows:

“With what sort of countenance you behold our service I see right well, but I do not see your heart. Say, then, does the order of our religion not seem decent and fair to you? Do you not see how many and what great princes, yes, the king himself, follow one order and uniformity? Why then would you rather follow your preacher Rochezana than these? Do you think a few Bohemians are wiser than all the church of Christ besides? Why then do you not forsake that rude and rustic people, and join these nobles, as you are a nobleman yourself?”

To whom Pogiebracius sagely answered,

“If you speak these words about yourself, you are not the man whom you feign yourself to be; and so I answer to you not as to a fool. But if you speak this by the suggestion of others, then must I satisfy them. Hear, therefore: As to the ceremonies of the church, every man has a conscience of his own to follow. As for us, we use such ceremonies as we trust will please God.

¹²³ Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor, founded a new city named Friedrichstadt after ascending the throne.

¹²⁴ “Ladislaus the Posthumous,” was crowned King of Bohemia and Hungary, and Duke of Austria.

Nor is it for our choice to believe what we will ourselves. The mind of man, being persuaded with great reasons, is captivated whether he wills it or not. And as nature is instructed and taught, so she is drawn in some one way, and in some another. As for myself, I am fully persuaded in the religion of my preachers. If I were to follow your religion, I might perchance deceive men, going contrary to my own conscience; but I cannot deceive God, who sees the hearts of all. Nor will it become me to frame myself to your disposition. What is fit for a jester, is not likewise convenient for a nobleman. Either take these words to yourself as spoken to you, if you are a wise man, or else I refer them to those who set you to work.”

After the king had returned from the Bohemians to Austria, the Hungarians likewise made their petitions to the king, that he would come to them. The governor of Hungary was John Huniades, whose victorious acts against the Turks are famous. Against this Huniades, wicked Ulric, earl of Cilicia, did all he could to bring him to destruction. And therefore he caused the king to send for Huniades to come to Vienna, and there to secretly work his death. But Huniades having intelligence, offered himself in Hungary, to serve his prince in all affairs. He said it was neither best for the king, nor safest for himself to leave the land where he was. Ulric being so disappointed, came down with certain nobles of the court to the borders of Hungary, thinking either to apprehend Huniades and bring him to Vienna, or else to dispatch him there. Huniades said he would commune with him in the open fields, but he would not be brought within the town. After that, another trap was laid for Huniades. Under the pretense of having the king’s safe conduct, he should meet the king in the broad fields of Vienna. But Huniades, suspecting deceit, indeed came to the appointed place. But neither seeing the king come, nor the earl having any safe conduct for him, he was moved (and not without cause) against the earl, declaring how it was in his power there to slay him who went about to seek his blood. But out of reverence to the king he would spare him and let him go.

Not long after this, the Turk, with a great army of fighting men, numbering 115,000, arrived in Hungary, where he laid siege to the city of Alba. But through the merciful hand of God, John Huniades, and Capistranus, a certain Minorite, with a small garrison of Christian soldiers, repulses him and put him to flight, with all his mighty host. Huniades died shortly after this victory. When the king and the earl were informed of his death, they came the more boldly into Hungary. Being received into the town of Alba by Ladislaus, Huniades’ son, they viewed the place where the Turks had pitched their tents before. When this Ladislaus heard that the king was first coming toward the town, he obediently opened the gates to him. But he prevented 4,000 armed soldiers from entering the city.

In the meantime, while the king was resident in the city, earl Ulric, with other nobles, sat in council, requiring Ladislaus also to come to them. At first doubting what he might do, he at length put on secret armor, and came to them. Whether the earl first began with him, or he with the earl, is not known. The opinion of some is that Ulric first called Ladislaus a traitor for shutting the gates against the king’s soldiers. However the occasion began, this is undoubted: that Ulric, taking his sword from his page, struck at Ladislaus’ head. To break the blow, some putting up their hands had their fingers cut off. The Hungarians, hearing a noise and tumult within the chamber, broke it open, and there instantly slew Ulric the earl, wounding and cutting him almost to pieces. The king hearing of this, although he was not a little discontented at it in his mind, saw that there was then no other remedy; he dissembled his grief for a time. From there the king journeyed to Buda (now Budapest) accompanied with Ladislaus. They passed by the town where the wife of Huniades was mourning the death of her husband. The king seemed to comfort her with many fair words. After he had sufficiently refreshed himself there, with such a pretense of dissembled love and feigned

favor, that they were not suspected or feared. He set out from there on his journey, taking with him the two sons of Huniades, Ladislaus and Matthias, who were right ready to wait upon him. The king having come to Buda (whether by his own head, or set on by sinister counsel) when he had them at a disadvantage, he caused both sons to be seized. And first, Ladislaus, the elder son, was brought to the place of execution, there to be beheaded, where he meekly suffered, being charged with no other crime than this, published by the voice of the crier, saying, "Thus are they to be chastened who are rebels against their lord." Peucer, writing of his death, adds that after the hangman had struck three blows at his neck, yet Ladislaus, having his hands bound behind him, after the third stroke, rose upright on his feet, and looking up to heaven, called upon the Lord, and protested his innocency in that behalf; and so laying down his neck again, he was dispatched at the fourth blow. Matthias, the other brother, was led captive with the king into Austria. The rest of the captives broke out of the prison, and escaped.

Not long after this act of cruelty, the king being about twenty-two years of age, talk was made of the king's marriage to Magdalen, daughter to the French king. The place of the marriage was appointed at Prague, where great preparation was made. At the first entrance of the king into the city of Prague, Rochezana, with a company of ministers who were favorers of John Huss and of sincere religion, came with all solemnity to receive the king.

[363] A.D. 1473-1475.

There making his oration to congratulate the king's most joyful and prosperous access into his own realm and country of Bohemia. After he ended his oration, the king would scarcely open his mouth to thank him, or give any cheerful countenance to his company, but seemed to fiercely frown upon them. In the next pageant after these, the priests of the high minister came forth in the most popish manner, meeting him with a procession, and with the sacrament of the altar. For just as a panacea among physicians serves for all diseases, so the sacrament of the pope's altar serves for all pomps and pageants.

(First it must lie upon the altar; then it must be held up with hands; then it must hang in the pix;¹²⁵ it must serve for the living; it must also help the dead; it must visit the sick; it must be walked about the churchyard; it must go about the streets; it must be carried about the fields to make the grass grow; it must be had for the battle; it must ride on horseback before the pope. And finally, it must welcome kings into cities. These catholic fathers seem to forget themselves somewhat. For if the pope, being inferior to the sacrament of the altar, sits still while the kings come and kiss his feet, what reason is there that the sacrament of the altar, which is above the pope, should meet kings by the way, and welcome them to the town? But this by way of parenthesis. Let us now continue the text.)

When this catholic king, Ladislaus, who had previously shown himself so stout and stern against Rochezana and his company, had seen these catholic priests with their procession, and especially with their blessed sacrament, come with all reverence and much devotion, he lighted down from his horse, embraced and kissed the cross, and with cheerful countenance saluted the priests in order. All this while his young wife had not yet left France, but legates were sent in the most sumptuous way to conduct her. Other legates were sent at the same time to Emperor Frederick for a conclusion of peace. The third legacy was likewise directed to Pope Calixtus III about religion, how to reduce the Bohemians to the church of Rome. The author of this history (which was Pope Pius himself) further declares that the opinion of some was that King Ladislaus at that time intended to make a final end and destruction of

¹²⁵ *Pix*: Any receptacle in which wafers for the Eucharist are kept.

all that sect in Bohemia, who held with the doctrine of John Huss and Jerome. He would do it by the assembly and concourse of the catholic princes, and popish prelates, who were appointed to meet together at that marriage in Prague. For there were to have been the Emperor Frederick, Elizabeth the king's mother, his sisters Elizabeth and Anna, the princes of Saxony, Bajoria, Silesia, Franconia, the Palatine, and other princes of the Rhine. Also present were many of the lords of France, besides the pope's cardinals, legates, prelates, and other potentates of the pope's church who, if they had assembled altogether in Bohemia, no doubt some great mischief would have been wrought there against the Hussites. But though man purposes, God disposes as it pleases Him.¹²⁶

And therefore it is truly written by Eneas Sylvius, in the same place, saying, "De regimine civitatum, de mutatione regnorum, de orbis imperio, minimum est quod homines possint (tum vero de religionis constitutione multo minus) magna magnus disponit Deus." That is, in the government of cities, in alteration of kingdoms, in ruling and governing the world, it is less than nothing that man can do; it is the high God that rules high things. To which I may then well add this, and say that if the governance of worldly kingdoms does not stand in man's power, but in the disposition of God, then there is much less that man's power can do in the ordering and governing of religion. An example of this evidently appears in this purposed device of princes. For as this great preparation and solemnity of marriage was in progress, and the princes were ready to implement it, with a little turn of God's holy hand, all these great purposes were suddenly turned and dashed. For in the midst of this business, about the twenty-first of November 1461, this great adversary of Christ's people, King Ladislaus — king of Bohemia, of Hungary, and prince of Austria — sickened and died within thirty-six hours. Just it did not come without the just judgment of God, revenging the innocent blood of Ladislaus, Huniades' son, so by the opportune death of this king, the poor churches of Bohemia were graciously delivered. And this was the end of Ladislaus, one of the mightiest princes at that time in all of Europe, in whom three mighty kingdoms were conjoined and combined together, Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia.

After the death of Ladislaus, the kingdom of Bohemia fell to George Pogiebracius, whom Pope Innocent VIII excommunicated and deposed for his religion.

The kingdom of Hungary was given to Matthias, son of Huniades, who was in captivity (as said above) under King Ladislaus, and would have been put to death after his brother, had not the king been overtaken by death.

The noble acts of John Huniades, and of Matthias his son, were not only great stays to Hungary, but to almost all Christendom, in repelling the Turk. For besides the other victories of John Huniades, the father, his son Matthias succeeded no less in valiantness than his father. He so recovered Sirmiura and the confines of Illyrica from the hand of the Turks, and so vanquished their power, that both Mahomet (Mehmed II) and his son Bajazet (Bayezid II) were forced to seek a truce.

Matthias, conducting his army into Bosnia, recovered Jaitza, the principal town of that kingdom, from the Turks' possession, and if other Christian princes had joined him, he would have proceeded farther into Thrace. But behold here the malicious subtlety of Satan, working by the pope. For while Matthias was thus occupied in this expedition against the Turks, in which he should have been furthered and aided by Christian princes and bishops, the bishop of Rome wickedly and sinfully arranged a matter of civil discord between him

¹²⁶ This is a paraphrase of the Latin "Homo proponit, sed Deus disponit" from *The Imitation of Christ*, by Thomas à Kempis (bk. I, ch. 19): *Man proposes, but God disposes*.

and Pogiebracius, in removing him from the right of his kingdom, and transferring it to Matthias. By this, not only was the tide of victory against the Turks stopped, but also great war and bloodshed followed in Christian realms: between Matthias and Pogiebracius, with his two sons Victorinus and Henry, as well as between Casimir Vladislaus and Matthias, warring over Uratislavia, till at length the dispute was taken up by the princes of Germany.

Notwithstanding all the execrable excommunication of the pope against Pogiebracius, a great part of Bohemia would not be removed from the obedience of their king, whom the pope had cursed and deposed. Yet Matthias took Moravia from him, and a great portion of Silesia, and adjoined it to his kingdom of Hungary, A.D. 1474.

This is to be noted by the way: that the religion in Bohemia, planted by John Huss, could not be extinguished or suppressed with all the power of four mighty princes — Vinceslaus, Sigismund, Albert, and Ladislaus — even though, with the popes, these four did all they possibly could. But still the Lord maintained them, as we see by Pogiebracius, king of Bohemia, whom the pope could not remove from the kingdom of Bohemia.

Matthias, besides his other memorable acts of chivalry, is no less to be commended for his singular knowledge and love of learning and of learned men, whom he brought into Pannonia with great salaries. By means of good letters and supplies of learned men, he reduced in a short time the barbarous rudeness of that country into a flourishing commonwealth. Moreover, he erected such a library there, and replenished it with all kinds of authors, sciences, and histories — which he caused to be translated from Greek into Latin — that next to Italy, its equal is not to be found in all of Europe.

Immediately after this, there was contention and war in every part of Europe. Almost no angle or portion of all Christendom was free from discord, tumults, and dissensions, whether we consider the church, or civil government. This cankered worm of ambition so mightily creeps, and everywhere prevails in these latter ends of the world, that it allows neither rest in commonwealths, nor peace in the church, nor scarcely any spark of charity to remain in the life of men.

[364]

Why marvel then, if the Lord seeing us degenerate so far, not only from His precepts and counsels, but almost from the sense and bond of nature, that brother with brother, uncle with nephew, blood with blood, cannot agree; that in striving, killing, and fighting for worldly dominions, the Lord sends these cruel Turks upon us, to scourge and devour us? Later we will discourse more at large about their bloody tyranny and daily spilling of Christian blood (by the grace of Christ), when we come to the particular consideration of the Turkish histories. In the meantime, we will not so much note and observe how grievous the scourge is, but rather behold the causes which bring the whip upon us, which is our own miserable ambition and the wretched wars among ourselves.

And yet, if this Christian peace and love — left and commended so heartily to us by the mouth of the Son of God, now banished out of Christian realms and civil governance — might at last find some refuge in the church, or take sanctuary among men professing nothing but religion, we would have less cause to mourn. Now, however, we see little peace and amity among civil potentates. And we find less in those who are spiritual, who chiefly take upon themselves the administration of Christ's church. So that it may well be doubted whether the scourge of the Turk or the civil sword of princes have slain more in the fields, than the pope's keys have burnt in towns and cities. Even though those who are professed to the church, do not fight with sword and target for dominions and revenues, as warlike

princes do, yet ambition, pride, and avarice appear in them not at all inferior to worldly potentates — especially if we behold the doings and insatiable desires of the court of Rome. Great arguments and proofs of this are neither hard to find, nor far to be sought. What realm almost throughout Christendom has not only seen with their eyes, but felt in their purses, the intolerable ambition and insatiable avarice of that devouring church; and have also complained of the grievance, but could never obtain redress! What exactions and extortions have occurred here in England by bishoprics, monasteries, benefices, deaneries, archdeaconries, and all other offices of the church, to fill the pope's coffers! And when they had done all, yet almost every year they brought some new invention from Rome to fetch our English money. If all the floods in England (yes in all of Europe) ran into the See of Rome, still that ocean would never be able satisfy it.

In France likewise, what floods of money were swallowed up into this See of Rome! It was openly complained about in the Council of Basel, A.D. 1436, as testified by Henry Token, canon and ambassador of the archbishop of Maidenburg. He said the archbishop of Lyons declared that in the time of Pope Martin, nine million in gold came out of France to the court of Rome. This was gathered by the bishops and prelates, besides those of the inferior clergy who could not be counted. Daily, without number, they ran to the court of Rome, carrying with them their whole substance. The archbishop of Tours also said at Basel, A.D. 1439, that three million in gold came to Rome in his time, within fourteen years, from the prelates and prelacies, besides the inferior clergy who daily ran to that court.

And what made Pope Pius II labor so earnestly to Louis XI, the French king, that he should promise to abolish and utterly extinguish the constitution established at the Council of Bourges by King Charles VII, his predecessor, called the *Pragmatic Sanction*;¹²⁷ but not the ambition of that see, which had no measure, and their avarice which had no end? The story is this: King Charles VII was willing to obey and follow the Council of Basel. He summoned a parliament at Bourges, where by the full consent of all the states in France, both spiritual and temporal, a certain constitution was decreed and published, called the *Pragmatic Sanction*. In this was briefly comprehended the pith and effect of all the canons and decrees concluded in the Council of Basel. King Charles commanded through all his realm, that this constitution was to be observed inviolably and ratified for the honor and increase of Christian religion forever. This was A.D. 1438.

It followed that after the decease of Charles, succeeded King Louis XI. While he was dauphin, he promised Pope Pius, that if he ever came to the crown, the *Pragmatic Sanction* would be abolished. Pius hearing of his being crowned, sent to him John Balveus, a cardinal, with his letters patent, desiring him to be mindful of his promise. The king, either willing, or else pretending a willingness to perform and accomplish what he had promised, directed the pope's letters patent, with the cardinal, to the Council of Paris, requiring them to consult upon the cause. Thus the matter was brought and proposed in the parliament.

The king's attorney, named John Romane, was a man well-spoken, singularly witted, and well-reasoned, who stepped forward with great eloquence and no less boldness. He proved the sanction to be profitable, holy, and necessary for the wealth of the realm, and was in no case to be abolished. To his sentence the university of Paris adjoined their consent, and appealed from the attempts of the pope to the next general council. The cardinal, Balveus,

¹²⁷ The Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges required holding a General Church Council with authority superior to the papacy every ten years. It mandated election rather than appointment for ecclesiastical offices; prohibited the pope from bestowing and profiting from benefices; forbade appeals to the Roman Curia from places further than two days' journey from Rome; and stipulated that interdicts could not be placed on a city unless the entire city was culpable.

understanding this, was not a little indignant at it. He fretted and fumed, and threatened many terrible things against them. But notwithstanding all his threatening words, he returned to the pope, not having obtained his purpose, A.D. 1438.

Thus the pope's purpose in France was disappointed. Also in Germany it would have come to the same effect, if Frederick the emperor had done his part there toward the Germans. They (bemoaning their miserable estate) went with humble suit to persuade the emperor that he should no longer be under subjection to the popes of Rome, unless they first obtained certain things regarding the charter of appeals; declaring their state to be far worse than the French or Italians. The nobles and commonalty of Germany entreated with most weighty reasons, to have the emperor's aid and help as he was bound to them by an oath. They also alleged great dishonor and ignominy, in that they alone did not have the use of their own laws, declaring how the French nation had not made their suit to their king in vain against the exactions of popes. The emperor being moved and partly overcome by their persuasions, promised that he would provide no less for them than the king of France had done for the French, and to make decrees in that behalf. But the grave authority of Eneas Sylvius, as Platina writes in the history of Pius II,¹²⁸ broke off the matter. By his subtle and pestiferous persuasions, he so bewitched the emperor that, despising the equal, just, and necessary requests of his subjects, he chose Eneas to be his ambassador to Calixtus, the newly chosen pope, to swear to him, in his name, and to promise the absolute obedience of all Germany.

And here ceasing with the history of Frederick III, we will now proceed to the reign of his son Maximilian. I must not pass over the Christians who were condemned, and suffered the pains of fire for the testimony of Christ and His truth. One of them was John, a pastor or a neat-herd, a keeper of cattle. The other was John de Wesalia. Although he was not burned, he was persecuted nearly to death under the reign of emperor Frederick.

First, regarding John the neat-herd. Munster writes that the bishop of Herbipolis condemned and burned as a heretic, one John, who was a keeper of cattle at a town called Nicholas Hausen in Franconia, because he taught and held that the life of the clergy was ignominious and abominable before God.

The other was doctor John de Wesalia, who was complained about to Dietherus the archbishop of Mentz, by the Thomists, concerning certain articles and opinions gathered out of his books. Therefore Dietherus directed commissions to the universities of Heidelburgh and Cologne, to take the matter under examination. They called this Doctor de Wesalia before them, making him swear that he would present and surrender all his treatises, works, and writings, whatever he had made or preached. That being done, they divided his books among themselves, severally, each man to discover whatever heresies and errors they could. His articles and opinions are these:

[365] A.D. 1475-1479.

“That all men are saved freely, and through mere grace by faith in Christ. Free will is nothing. That we should only believe the word of God, and not the gloss of any man, or the fathers. That the word of God is to be expounded by collating one place with another. That prelates have no authority to make laws, nor to expound the Scriptures, by any peculiar right given to them more than to another. That men's traditions, such as fastings, pardons, feasts, long prayers, pilgrimages, and such things, are to be rejected. Extreme unction and confirmation are to be

¹²⁸ Bartolomeo Sacchi, known as Platina: an Italian writer and historian born in 1421. He is renowned for his work "Lives of the Popes," a biographical compendium of Roman popes from St. Peter to his own time.

reproved; confession and satisfaction are to be reprehended. The primacy of the pope he also affirmed to be nothing.”

Certain other articles were also gathered out of his books by his adversaries, but in such a way that they might seem to follow their own malicious gathering, rather than the true intention of his mind. Thus when Wesalia was commanded to appear, there was the archbishop, the inquisitor, the doctors of Cologne, and the doctors of Heidelberg, with the masters of the same, and the rector of the university of Mentz, the dean of faculties, bachelors of divinity, and many other masters of the same university; also canons, and doctors, with the bishop’s chancellor and his counsellors, besides many religious prelates, scholars, with a doctor from Frankfort, the sumner and beadles (constables), who all met together in the great hall of the minorites, for the examination of this John de Wesalia.

Friar Elton, the inquisitor, sat first in the highest place, then after him, others according to their degree. At the beginning of the examination, the inquisitor began with these words,

“Most reverend fathers and honorable doctors, etc. Our reverend father and prince elector has caused this present convocation to be called, to hear the examination of Master John de Wesalia, in certain suspected articles concerning the catholic faith. But I will say something before, that may do him good, and desire that two or three of those who favor him, or some other, will rise up and give him counsel to forsake and depart his errors, to acknowledge himself, and to ask pardon. If he will do this, he will have pardon; if he will not, we will proceed against him without pardon.”

And thus Wesalia being cited, and brought in the midst between two minorites, being very aged, and having a staff in his hand, was set before the inquisitor. Beginning to answer for himself with a long protestation, he was not allowed to go on with his oration, but was cut off. He was required briefly to make an end, and to tell them in a few words whether he would stand to his opinions, or to the determination of the church. To this he answered, that he never spoke anything against the determination of the church, but said that he had written several treatises in which, if he had erred, or was found to say other than what was good, he was contented to revoke and withdraw it, and do all things that were requisite. Then the inquisitor asked, “Do you then ask pardon?” Wesalia answered, “Why should I ask pardon, when I know that no crime or error was committed?” The inquisitor said, “Well, we will call you to the remembrance of it, and proceed to the examination.”

In the meantime, others called upon him to immediately ask pardon. Then Wesalia said, “I ask pardon.” Notwithstanding this, the inquisitor proceeded to the examination, reading two instruments declaring that he had authority from the apostolic see. After this, he cited John to appear to his examination. Thirdly, he commanded him under pain of disobedience, in the virtue of the Holy Spirit, and under pain of excommunication of the greater curse (from which no man could absolve him, except the pope, or the inquisitor, but only at the point of death), to tell plainly the truth about those things which would be demanded of him concerning his faith, without doubts or sophisticated words. And so being demanded, first, whether he believed upon his oath, that he was bound to tell the truth, even if it was against himself or any other. To this he answered, “I know it.” Then the inquisitor bid him say, “I believe it.” To which he replied, “Why do I need to say that I believe the thing which I know?” The inquisitor, somewhat stirred up by this, cried with a loud voice, “Master John, Master John, Master John, say *I believe*, say *I believe*.” Then he answered, “I believe.”

Many other interrogatories were ministered to him, of which some were vain, some false.

Being demanded whether he was a favorer of the Bohemians, he said he was not. Also, being demanded concerning the sacrament of the holy body and blood of our Lord, whether he

thought Christ was contained there really, or only spiritually, and whether he believed that in the sacrament, the substance of bread remained, or only the form of it? To this he answered, not denying that the body of Christ was really contained there, and also that with the body of Christ the substance of bread remained.

After this, his opinion was demanded concerning religious persons, such as monks and nuns, whether he thought they were bound to the vow of chastity, or to keeping any other vow, and whether he said to the Minorite friars any such words in effect, "I cannot save you in your state and order." This he confessed that he had said, "how it is not your religion that saves you, but the grace of God," etc. not denying they might be saved.

Being required whether he believed or had written that there is no mortal sin, except what is expressed as mortal in the canon of the holy Bible? To this he answered that he did believe as he had written, till he was better informed. Likewise, being required what he thought of the vicar of Christ on earth, he answered that he believed that Christ left no vicar in earth. To confirm this he said that Christ, ascending up to heaven, said, 'Behold I am with you,' etc. In these words he plainly declared, that he would substitute under him no vicar here on earth. He said, moreover, "if a vicar signified any man who in the absence of the principal has to do the works of the principal, then Christ has no vicar here in earth."

In like manner, concerning indulgences and pardons, they demanded of him whether they had any efficacy, and what he thought of them. He answered that he had written a certain treatise of that matter, and what he had written in that treatise he would persist in, which was this: he believed that the treasure-box of the merits of saints could not be distributed by the pope to others, because that treasure is not left here in earth. For so it is written in the book of Revelations, 'their works follow them;' and their merits could not be applied to other men to satisfy the pain due them. Therefore the pope and other prelates cannot distribute that treasure to men.

Also, being demanded what he thought of the hallowing and blessing of altars, chalices, vestments, wax candles, palms, herbs, holy-water, and other divine things, etc., he answered, "They have no spiritual virtue and power in them to drive away devils; and holy-water has no more efficacy than other water that is not hallowed, as it concerns remission of venial sins, driving away devils, and other effects, which the school doctors attribute to it."

He believed, "God may give grace to a man, having the use of reason, without any motion of free will." Also, he thought that "St. Paul, in his conversion, did nothing of his own free will for his conversion." He believed, moreover, "God may give such grace to a man having the use of reason, of not doing that which is in him."

He affirmed that, "Nothing is to be believed which is not contained in the canon of the Bible." Also that, "The elect are saved only by the grace of God."

This examination being ended, and the articles condemned by the inquisitor and his assistants, he said: "As you do with me, if Christ himself were here, he might be condemned as a heretic."

[366]

After this they sent several men to him to have communication with him, and to persuade him. At length, within three or four days, he was content to yield to them, and to submit to their holy mother church, and the information of the doctors. Although this aged and feeble old man, was constrained by weakness to give over to the Romish clergy by the outward profession of his mouth, yet notwithstanding, his opinions and doctrine declared his inward

heart, of what his judgment was, if fear of present death had not forced him to say otherwise than he thought.

In the year 1484, in Emperor Maximilian's time, Pope Sixtus IV died, who was more a monster of nature than a prelate of the church. Platina writes of him, that he unjustly vexed all of Italy with war and dissension, and he openly countenanced and encouraged gross vice and immorality. Of this pope it is recorded that he was a special patron and tutor to all begging friars, granting them to have and to enjoy revenues in this world, and everlasting life in the world to come. Among these friars there was one named Alanus de Rupe, a black friar, who made the rosary of our lady's psalter. Concerning the institution of this rosary, there was a book published (about A.D. 1480). In its beginning, it declares that, "The blessed virgin entered into the cell of this Alanus, and espoused him to herself as her husband." For the truth of this story Alanus swore deeply, cursing himself, if it were not just as he had related it!

But leaving Pope Sixtus with his vices, and before proceeding to the history of Maximilian, we keep the order of our kings here in England. For a little before the reign of Maximilian, King Edward IV died (A.D. 1483), after he had reigned twenty-two years.

Richard, Protector of King Edward V – 1483.

King Edward IV left behind him his wife Elizabeth, two sons, Edward and Richard, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Cecilia. These two sons, Edward and Richard, as they were under age and not ripe to govern, a consultation was called among the peers. They debated whether the young prince and king should be under the government of his mother, or else that Richard, duke of Gloucester, brother to King Edward IV and uncle to the child, should be governor of the king, and protector of the realm. The duke of Buckingham was then among other noble peers of the realm, a man of great authority, who had married King Edward's sister-in-law. Because the duke was so near allied to the king, and had been treated unkindly by the king (he thought), having no advancement by the king, nor any great friendship shown toward him, he took part with Richard, duke of Gloucester, both against the queen and her children, to make the duke the chief governor and protector.

This being brought to pass by the aid, assistance, and working of the duke of Buckingham, the queen took sanctuary with her younger son. The elder brother, who was the king, remained in the custody of his uncle Richard, duke of Gloucester. Now being in a good position to obtain what he had long looked for, Richard sought all the needed means, and soon compassed the matter by false color of dissembled words, by perjury, and by the labor of friends — namely, of the duke of Buckingham, and the cardinal archbishop of Canterbury, so that the other brother would also be committed to his care. Thus the ambitious protector and unnatural uncle, having possession of his two nephews, innocent babes, thought himself almost up the wheel where he would climb, even though he could not walk in such mists and clouds. But his purposes began to be seen, which caused him to slyly remove from himself all suspicion, and to blind the people's eyes. But before he could accomplish his execrable enterprise, there were some whom he thought must first be gotten rid of; namely the Lord Hastings, and the Lord Stanley. As these two were sitting together in council within the Tower, the protector suddenly rushed in among them, and after a few words there, he suddenly hastened out again, his mind full of mischief and fury. Within an hour he returned into the chamber, with a stern countenance and a frowning look, and so he sat down in his place. Shortly afterwards he charged them as traitors, and had them both arrested without any cause whatsoever.

The Lord Hastings was commanded to speedily confess his sins, for the protector swore by St. Paul that he would die before dinner; and so without further judgment, his head was struck off.

After this tyrannous murder, the mischievous protector still aspired to the crown. To further his devices, first through gifts and fair promises, he suborned Doctor Shaw, a famous preacher then in London, at St. Paul's Cross. Richard wanted him to insinuate to the people, that neither King Edward IV, with his two sons, nor the duke of Clarence, were the lawful children of Richard, the duke of York. Rather, they were the children of the duchess their mother, by some other person; and that this protector, Richard, was the only true and lawful heir of the duke of York. Moreover, Doctor Shaw was to declare and signify to the audience, that King Edward IV was never lawfully married to the queen, but to his wife before, who was dame Elizabeth Lucy. Thus, the two children of King Edward IV were illegitimate, and therefore the title of the crown most rightly pertained to the lord protector. Thus this false flatterer, and loudly lying preacher, to serve the protector's humor, was not ashamed to most impudently abuse that holy place, that reverend auditory, and the sacred word of God. Whereupon such disdain of the people followed him, that for shame of the people crying out against him, he pined away a few days later.

When this sermon would take no effect with the people, the protector, who was unmercifully drowned in ambition, did not rest with this. But a few days later he excited the duke of Buckingham, to first broach the matter in a private talk to the mayor and certain heads of the city picked out for the purpose; and that done, to come to the Guildhall, to move the people by all flattering and lying persuasions to the same lies which shameless Shaw had before preached at St. Paul's Cross. The duke of Buckingham, with all diligence and helps of eloquence, being both learned and well spoken man, endeavored to accomplish this, making a long and artificial oration to the people, supposing no less than that the people, allured by his crafty insinuations, would cry out, "King Richard, King Richard!" But there was no King Richard in their mouths, much less in their hearts. Whereupon the duke looking to the lord mayor, and asking what this silence meant, contrary to the promise of the one and the expectation of the other, it was then answered by the mayor, that the people perhaps did not understand him. Therefore the duke, reiterating his narration in other words, declared again what he had said before. Likewise a third time he repeated his oration again and again. Then the commons who stood mute before, now in amazement seeing this opportunity, began to mutter softly among themselves. Yet no "King Richard" could sound from their lips, except that in the nether end of the hall, certain of the duke's servants, with one Nashfield and others belonging to the protector, thrusting into the hall among the press, suddenly began to cry out, "King Richard, King Richard!" throwing up their caps, at which the citizens, turning their heads, marvelled not a little, but said *nothing*.

The duke and lord mayor taking this as sufficient testimony, went to the protector, who was then at Baynard's castle. The matter being arranged before, was now so contrived that humble petition was made in the name of the whole commons, to the protector, that he — although it was utterly against his will to take it — would of his humility stoop so low as to receive the heavy kingdom of England upon his shoulders. At this, their tender request and suit of the lords and commons being made, the mild duke, seeing no other remedy, was contented at length to yield, although sorely against his will (you must so imagine), and to submit himself so low as from a protector, to be made king.

[367] A.D. 1483-1485.

This is not much unlike our prelates in the popish church, who when they have before well compounded for the pope's bulls, for manner's sake, they must still be courteous, and thrice deny that for which they have gaped so long before, and have so sweetly paid for.

King Richard III, Usurper – 1483.

And thus Richard duke of Gloucester took it upon himself to be made and proclaimed king of England, in the month of June, A.D. 1483.

The triumph and solemnity of his usurped coronation being finished, this unquiet tyrant could not yet think himself safe, so long as young Edward, the rightful king, and his brother were alive. Therefore the next enterprise which he did set upon was this: how to get those innocent babes out of the way, so that he might reign as king alone.

In the meantime, while all this ruffling was in hand, it is not so hard as grievous for tender hearts to understand what dread and sorrow the tender hearts of these fatherless and friendless children were in, what little joy by themselves, and what small joy of life they had. As the younger brother lingered in thought and heaviness, so the prince, who was eleven years old, was so out of heart, and so fraught with fear, that he never tied his points, nor enjoyed a good day, till the traitorous impiety of their cruel uncle had delivered them from their wretchedness. Their uncle Richard first attempted to compass his devilish device through Robert Brakenbury, constable of the Tower. When he could not win him to such a cruel act, he got one James Tyril, and with him John Dighton and Miles Forrest, to perpetrate this heinous murder. Dighton and Forrest, entered into the princes' chamber about midnight. They so wrapped and entangled them among the clothes, holding down the feather-bed and pillows hard to their mouths, that in a while they smothered and stifled them in their bed.

And thus these two young princes ended their lives, through the wretched cruelty of these tormentors who, for their detestable and bloody murder, did not long escape being punished by the just hand of God. For first Miles Forrest miserably rotted away piece-meal. John Dighton lived at Calais long after, so disdained and hated, that he was pointed at by all men, and died there in great misery. Sir James Tyril was beheaded at Tower Hill for treason. Also King Richard himself, within a year and half after, was slain in the field, hacked and hewn by his enemies' hands.

Furthermore, the justice of God's hand let not the duke of Buckingham escape free. For less than a year after, God so wrought things, that he was beheaded for treason by the very king whom he had so unjustly advanced before.

Doctor Morton, bishop of Ely, had devised bringing Henry, earl of Richmond, to England, and marrying him to Elizabeth, King Edward's daughter, thereby joining the two houses of York and Lancaster together. This device was first proposed to the duke of Buckingham, and it soon after cost him his life. But bishop Morton, more crafty to save himself, fled into Britany. The device, however, once broached, was so plausible and had such an effect, that a message was sent over the sea to Henry Tudor, earl of Richmond, by his mother. And it was sent by the queen, mother to the Lady Elizabeth, that if Henry would make his return, and promise to marry the Lady Elizabeth, he would be received.

Embracing this offer, the earl of Richmond crossed the seas at Harfleur, in August 1485, accompanied with only 2,000 men, and a small number of ships. He arrived at Milford Haven in Wales and first came to Dale, then to Harford West, where he was joyfully received. And also by the alliance of Arnold Butler and the Pembroke men, he was increased

in power. From there he travelled by Cardigan across to Shrewsbury in England, and then to Newport, and so to Stafford; from there to Lichfield — his army being more and more augmented along the way. As a great flood comes in from many small rivers, gathering a greater abundance of water, so many noble captains and men of power joined themselves to this earl — such as Richard Griffith, John Morgan, Rhys ap Thomas; then Sir George Talbot, with the young earl of Shrewsbury, his ward; Sir William Stanley, Sir Thomas Burchier, and Sir Walter Hungerford, knights. At last, hearing of the king's coming, the earl Henry conducted his whole army to Tamworth.

King Richard, at first hearing of the arrival of the Earl Henry in the parts of Wales with so small a force, gave little or no regard to it. But understanding that he had come to Lichfield without resistance or incumbrance, he was sorely moved, cursing and crying out against those who had so deceived him. With all speed he sent for John duke of Norfolk, Henry earl of Northumberland, Thomas earl of Surrey, with other friends of special trust. Also Robert Brakenbury (lieutenant of the Tower) was sent for, with Sir Thomas Burchier,¹²⁹ and for Sir Walter Hungerford with certain other knights and esquires whom he partly misdoubted. Thus, King Richard, well-fortified and accompanied, leaving nothing undone that diligence could require, set out toward his enemies. The earl Henry by this time had come to Tamworth, to whom Sir John Savage, Sir Bryan Sanford, Sir Simon Digby, and many others resorted secretly in the evening, forsaking the part of King Richard — whom all good men hated, as he indeed deserved. The king, having perfect knowledge that the earl was encamped at Tamworth, entrenched himself in a place near a village called **Bosworth**, not far from Leicester. He determined to encounter his adversaries there. Here the matter lay in great doubt and suspense concerning the Lord Stanley (who was the earl's father-in-law, and had married his mother), as to whose part he would incline.¹³⁰ His heart (no doubt) went with the earl, and he had secret conference with him the night before. Yet because of his son and heir, George Lord Strange, then being in the hands of King Richard, and lest the king attempt anything against him, he dared not be openly seen to go in that way which his heart favored. And therefore he closely kept himself between both, till the push came that his help might be of signal service.

The number of the earl's party was not more than half of King Richard's. When the time and place was appointed where the two armies should encounter and join in battle, sore stripes and great blows were given on both sides, and many were slain. If number and multitude might govern the success of battle, King Richard had double the earl's. But it is God, not man, that gives victory, by what means it seems best to His divine providence. In what order, and by what occasion this field was won and lost, the certain intelligence we do not possess, only the history of Polydore Virgil, whom Sir Thomas More follows word for word. In this history it appears that as these two armies were coupling together, King Richard understood by his spies where the earl of Richmond was, and how he was but slenderly accompanied. Seeing Henry approach nearer to him, carried by courage rather than ruled by reason, Richard set spurs to his horse, and ranging out of the compass of his ranks, he

¹²⁹ Foxe names "Sir Thomas Burchier" twice, one joining earl Henry, the other called upon by king Richard. They may be the same man. But the second one may instead be Thomas Bouchier (1404-1486) Archbishop of Canterbury. He crowned Edward IV, and his queen, Elizabeth Woodville. In 1457 Bouchier took the chief part in the trial for heresy of Reginald Pecock, Bishop of Chichester. In 1473 he was created a cardinal, under Edward IV. In 1483 Bouchier persuaded the queen to allow her younger son, Richard, 1st Duke of York, to join his elder brother King Edward V in "protective" residence in the Tower of London. Though Bouchier had sworn to be faithful to King Edward V, he nonetheless crowned King Richard III in July 1483.

¹³⁰ Recall that Lord Stanley was one of two men Richard wanted out of the way, by accusing him of being a traitor.

pressed toward the earl, and set upon him so sharply, that first he killed Sir William Brandon, the earl's standard-bearer, father to the Lord Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk. Then afterward he overthrew Sir John Cheinie, thinking likewise to oppress the earl. But as the Lord by his secret providence disposed the event of all things, as the earl with his men about him, being overmatched, began to despair of victory, suddenly and opportunely, Sir William Stanley came with three thousand well-appointed able men. Thereby King Richard's men were driven back, and Richard himself, cruelly fighting in the thick of his enemies, was slain and brought to his confusion and death, which he worthily deserved.

In the meantime, the earl of Oxford, who was guiding the forward troops, discomfited the forefront of King Richard's host, and put them to flight. In this chase many were slain, of noblemen especially above others, John duke of Norfolk, Lord Ferrers, Sir Richard Radcliff, and Robert Brankenbury, lieutenant of the Tower. etc.

[368]

Lord Thomas Haward, earl of Surrey, there submitted himself. Although he was not received at first to grace, but remained long in the Tower, yet at length, for his fidelity, he was delivered and restored to his honor and dignity.

King Richard had but one son, who, shortly after the cruel murder of King Edward's sons, was taken with sickness and died. Moreover, as to the Lord Stanley, the history reports that King Richard being in Bosworth field, sent for Lord Stanley by a messenger, to advance with his company, otherwise he swore by Christ's passion, that he would strike off his son's head before dinner. Lord Stanley sent word back, that if he did, he had more sons alive. The king immediately commanded the Lord Strange to be beheaded, at the very time when both armies were within sight of each other, and ready to join battle. Therefore the king's councillors, pondering the time and the case, persuaded the king that it was now time to fight, and not to execute, advising him to delay the matter till the battle was ended. And so (as God would have it) King Richard broke his oath, or rather kept his oath, for he himself was slain before dinner. The Lord Strange was committed to be kept prisoner within the king's tent. After the victory was gotten, he was sought out and brought to his joyful father. And thus you have the tragic life and end of this wretched King Richard.

Henry, the earl of Richmond, after hearty thanks given to Almighty God for his glorious victory, proceeded to the town of Leicester, where the crown was brought to him by the Lord Strange, and put on the earl's head.

In the meantime, the dead corpse of King Richard was shamefully carried to the town of Leicester, naked and despoiled to the skin. And being trussed behind a servant of arms, he was carried like a hog or a dog, having his head and arms hanging on one side of the horse, and the his on the other, all sprinkled with mire and blood. And thus ended the usurped reign of King Richard, who reigned two years and two months.

King Henry VII – 1485-1509.

When King Henry VII, by the providence of God, had obtained this triumphant victory and the diadem of the realm, he first sent for Edward Plantagenet, earl of Warwick, son of George duke of Clarence, and committed him to safe custody within the Tower. From Leicester he removed to London, and not long after, according to his oath and promise made before, he espoused the young Lady Elizabeth, heir of the house of York. Thereby both houses of York and Lancaster were joined together, to no little rejoicing of all English

hearts, and no less quiet to the realm, which was A.D. 1485.¹³¹ He reigned twenty-three years and eight months. He was a prince of great policy, justice, and temperance, kept his realm in good tolerable rule and order. And here, interrupting a little the course of our English matters, we will now (Lord willing) enter the history promised above (p. 366), about Maximilian the emperor and matters of the empire, especially those which pertain to the church.

Maximilian the Emperor – r. 1508-1519.

Happy was the education of this emperor in good letters. So expert was he in languages and sciences — but especially his dexterity and quickness in the Latin tongues — that imitating the example of Julius Caesar, he wrote and comprehended in Latin histories, his own acts and feats. Moreover, as he was learned himself, so he was a singular patron and advancer of learned students, as may well appear by his erecting and setting up the University of Wittenberg. Because of this emperor, many in those days were excited to embrace other liberal arts, as well as searching out old histories. By this, several persons were induced to exercise their diligence in collecting and explaining matters pertaining to the history of ancient as well as later times — such as Cuspinianus, Nauclerus, Conradus, Peutingerus, Manlius, and others.

Here now it began to appear what a great benefit was conferred on the world by the art and faculty of printing (c. 1450). Through means of this, the church and commonwealth of Christ now began to be replenished with learned men. Among the many learned men of this time must be numbered Weselus Groningensis, otherwise named Basilius.¹³² He was so notable and worthy a man, that the people called him “The Light of the World.”

Concerning his doctrine, he reprehended the opinion of the papists regarding repentance, which they divided into three parts. Of these three parts, he disallowed satisfaction and confession. He likewise disproved purgatory and supererogation of works and pardons, both at Rome and at Paris. He spoke against the pope’s indulgences. On the occasion of this, several of the pope’s court, being persuaded by him, began to speak more freely against the matter than he himself had done.

He disallowed the abuses of masses, and praying for the dead; and likewise he utterly rejected the supremacy of the pope, denying that any supreme head or governor ought to be in the world over all others. He also affirmed and said many times that, “The pope had no authority to do anything by commandment, but only by truth. That is, so far as truth goes with him, only so far is his sentence to stand; nor should he prevail by commanding, but only by teaching, as every true Christian bishop may prevail over another.” Also in some places in his writings he does not deny that, “popes and their spiritual prelates, proceeding against Christ’s doctrine, are plain antichrists.”

Also, Weselus witnesses that the fathers who came before Albert¹³³ and Thomas (Aquinas) resisted and withstood the pope’s indulgences, calling them plain *idolatry* in their writings, mere fraud and error; adding moreover, that unless the severity of some good divines had withstood these pardons and indulgences of the pope, innumerable errors would have overflowed the church.

¹³¹ Thus bringing the War of the Roses to an end.

¹³² Johan Wessel, (c. 1420–1489), a Dutch theologian born at Groningen. *Wessel* was a corruption of *Basilius*.

¹³³ Albertus Magnus (c. 1200–1280), known as Saint Albert the Great; Thomas Aquinas was his student.

By this it may be seen and noted how, by the grace of God and gift of printing, learning first came forth in abundance, and by learning light came to judge and discern the errors of the pope from the truth of God's word.

About the same time, when the gospel thus began to branch and spring out in Germany, the host of Christ's true church also began to muster and multiply here in England. For not long after the death of this Weselus, in the ninth year of the reign of Henry VII, on the 28th of April A.D. 1494, a very old woman named Joan Boughton, widow, and mother to the Lady Young, was burned. Lady Young was also suspected of having the same opinion as her mother. Her mother was eighty years of age or more, and held eight of Wycliffe's opinions (my author does not show which opinions), for which she was burnt in Smithfield. Our author says she was a disciple of Wycliffe, whom she considered a saint, and held so fast and firmly to eight of his ten opinions, that all the doctors of London could not turn her from even one of them. And when it was told her that she would be burnt for her obstinacy and false belief, she set nothing by their menacing words, but defied them. For she said she was so beloved of God, and his holy angels, that she did not care about the fire, and in the midst of it she cried to God to take her soul into his holy hands. The following night, most of her ashes were taken away by those who had a love for the doctrine that she died for.

Shortly after the martyrdom of this godly aged mother, on the 17th of January, A.D. 1497, being a Sunday, two men — one called Richard Milderale, and the other James Sturdy — performed the penance of carrying faggots (kindling) before the procession of St. Paul's, and afterwards stood before the preacher during his sermon.

[369] 1485-1499.

And on the Sunday following, two other men stood at Paul's Cross the whole sermon time; the one garnished with painted and written papers, the other having a fagot loaded on his neck. After that, in Lent season, on Passion Sunday, one Hugh Glover bore a fagot before the procession of St. Paul's, and afterward stood with the fagot before the preacher the entire sermon time at Paul's Cross. On the next Sunday four men stood, and did their open penance at Paul's Cross during the sermon time, and many of their books were burnt before them at the cross.

The next year, which was the beginning of May A.D. 1498, the king then being at Canterbury, a priest was burnt, who was so strong in his opinion, that all the clerics and doctors who were then there could not remove him from his faith. The king being informed of this, had the priest brought before him. By his persuasion, the king caused him to revoke, but still he was burnt immediately.

In July of the same year (1498), after the beheading of Edward Plantagenet, earl of Warwick, and son to the duke of Clarence, the king and queen being removed to Calais, a certain godly man and a constant martyr of Christ, named Babram, in Norfolk, was burnt. Likewise, about that year or the next, the 20th of July, an old man was burnt in Smithfield.

Martyrdom of Jerome Savanarola, under Pope Alexander VI.

In the year 1499, the martyrdom and burning of Jerome Savanarola took place, a man no less godly in heart than constant in his profession of faith. Being a monk in Italy, and singularly well-learned, he preached against the evil living of the spirituality, and especially of his own order, complaining against them as being the springs and authors of all mischiefs and wickedness. Whereupon, by the help of certain learned men, he began to seek reformation in his own order. The pope perceiving this, and fearing that Jerome, who was

now held in great regard among all men, should diminish or overthrow his authority, he ordained his vicar or provincial to oversee reformation in these matters. This vicar began to reform things with great superstition, but Jerome always withstood him. Whereupon he was complained about to the pope. And because he withstood this vicar contrary to the pope's commandment, he was accursed. But despite all that, Jerome did not quit preaching, but threatened Italy with the wrath and indignation of God, and prophesied to them, that the land would be overthrown for the pride and wickedness of the people, and for the untruth, hypocrisy, and falsehood of the clergy, which God would not leave unrevenge. This afterwards came to pass, when King Charles VIII came into Italy and to Rome, and so straitly beset Pope Alexander, that he was forced to draw up a compact with the king.

Now as Jerome would not quit preaching, he was commanded to appear before the pope, to give account of his new learning (for so they called the truth of the gospel then); but he made his excuse that he could not come. Then he was again forbidden by the pope to preach; his learning was pronounced and condemned as pernicious, false, and seditious.

Jerome, as a worldly-wise man, foreseeing the great perils and dangers that might come to him, for fear he quit preaching. But when the people, who sorely hungered and longed for God's word, were urgent upon him to preach again, he began again to preach A.D. 1496, in the city of Florence. Although many counselled him that he should not do so without the pope's commandment, he did not regard it, but went forward freely of his own good-will. When the pope and his shavelings heard news of this, they were grievously incensed and inflamed against him. And now again they cursed him as an obstinate and stiff-necked heretic. But for all that, Jerome proceeded in teaching and instructing the people, saying that men should not regard such curses, which are against the true doctrine and the common advantage, by which alone the people should be taught and amended, Christ's kingdom enlarged, and the kingdom of the devil utterly overthrown.

In all his preaching he desired to teach nothing else than the pure and simple word of God, often protesting that all men should certify him if they had heard him teach or preach anything contrary to it, for upon his own conscience he did not know that he had taught anything but the pure word of God. As to what his doctrine was, all men may easily judge by the books that he has written.

After this (A.D. 1498), he was taken and brought out of St. Mark's cloister, and two other friars with him, named Dominic and Sylvester, who favored his learning. He was carried into prison, where he wrote a godly meditation upon that most comfortable thirty-first Psalm: "In you, O Lord, I put my trust, let me never be ashamed: deliver me in Your righteousness." In this he excellently describes and sets forth the continual strife between the flesh and the spirit.

After this, the pope's legates came to Florence, and summoned these three good men, threatening them shockingly; but they continued constant. Then came the chief counsellors of the city, with the pope's commissioners, who had gathered certain articles against these men, upon which they were condemned to death. The tenor of these articles ensues:

1. The first article regarded our free justification through faith in Christ.
2. That the communion ought to be ministered under both kinds (bread and wine).
3. That the indulgences and pardons of the pope were of no effect.
4. For preaching against the filthy and wicked living of the cardinals and clergy.
5. For denying the pope's supremacy.

6. That he had affirmed that the keys were not given to Peter alone, but to the universal church.
7. That the pope followed neither the life nor doctrine of Christ, for he attributed more to his own pardons and traditions, than to Christ's merits, and therefore he was antichrist.
8. That the pope's excommunications are not to be feared, and that he who fears or flees them is excommunicated by God.
9. That auricular confession is not necessary.
10. That he had moved the citizens to uproar and sedition.
11. That he had neglected and condemned the pope's citation.
12. That he had shamefully spoken against and slandered the pope.
13. That he had taken Christ to witness his naughtiness and heresy.
14. Also, that Italy must be cleansed through God's scourge, for the manifold wickedness of the princes and clergy.

These and other such articles were laid against them and also read before them. Then they demanded of Jerome and his companions, whether they would recant and give up their opinions. They answered, that through God's help they would steadfastly continue in the manifest truth, and not depart from it. Then were they degraded one after the other by the bishop of Vasion, and so were delivered over to the secular rulers of Florence, with the commandment to carry them out, and handle them as obstinate and stiff-necked heretics.

Thus this worthy witness of Christ, with the other two, was first hanged openly in the marketplace, and afterward burnt to ashes. The ashes were gathered up, and cast into the river Arum, the 24th of May 1499. Savanarola suffered under Pope Alexander VI.

Now to return to the order of popes, where we left off with Innocent VIII. After Innocent succeeded Pope Alexander VI. In Alexander, among other horrible things, this is to be noted: that Djemes, brother to Bajazet the great Turk, was committed by the Rhodians to the safe custody, first of Pope Innocent, and then of Alexander VI (for whose keeping, the pope received forty thousand crowns every year).

[370]

Yet, when Pope Alexander was compelled to send Djemes to Charles VIII, the French king, as a pledge, being bribed by the Turk, he had Djemes poisoned at Terracina. Moreover, it appears that Alexander being displeased with Charles about winning Naples, sent to have Bajazet the Turk fight against Charles.

Munsterus declared the history of Gemes somewhat otherwise, saying that he was first committed by the Rhodians to the French king. And when Alexander the pope, through his fraudulent flattery, got him out of the hands of the French king and into his own hands, then he had Gemes poisoned, as expressed above.

To these poisoning acts of the pope, let us also add his malicious wickedness, with like fury exercised upon Antonius Mancinellus, a man of excellent learning, because he wrote an eloquent oration against the pope's wicked manners and filthy life, with other vices. The pope therefore commanded both his hands and his tongue to be cut off, playing with him, as M. Antonius the tyrant before did with M. Cicero, for writing against his horrible life. At length, as one poison requires another. This poisoning pope, as he was sitting with his

cardinals, and other rich senators of Rome at dinner, his servants unawares brought him a wrong bottle, by which he was poisoned, and some of his cardinals who were about him.

In the time of Pope Alexander also it happened, that the angel statue, which stood high atop the pope's church, was struck down with terrible thunder. After pope Alexander, succeeded Pius III (A.D. 1503). After him came Julius II, a man so far surpassing all others in iniquity, that Wigelius, and others of his own friends, were compelled to say of him, "that he was more given to war and battle, than to Christ." Concerning the madness of this man, it is most certainly known that when he was going to war, he cast the keys of St. Peter into the river Tiber, saying that as the keys of St. Peter would not serve him to his purpose, he would take up the sword of St. Paul.

It is certainly reported about this Julius, that partly by his wars, and partly by his cursings, as good as 200,000 Christians were destroyed in seven years. First, he besieged Ravenna against the Venetians, then Servia, Imolia, Faventia, Forolivium, Bononia, and other cities, which he got from the princes' hands, but not without much bloodshed. The chronicles of John Sleidan mention that when Julius was made pope, he took an oath, promising to have a council within two years. But when he had no leisure, being occupied with his wars in Italy among the Venetians, and with the French king, and in Ferrara, and in other countries, nine of his cardinals departed from him, came into Milan, and there appointed a council at the city of Pisa. Among them, the chief were Bernard, Cruceius, William Prenestinus, Francis, Constantine, with others; to whom also were added the proctors of Maximilian the emperor, and of Charles VIII, the French king. So the council was appointed (A.D. 1511) to begin in the kalends of September. The reason why they called this council was that the pope having broken his oath, gave no hope of having any council; and also because there were other crimes of which they had to accuse him. Their purpose was to remove him from his seat, which he had procured through bribes and ambition. Julius hearing this, commanded, under great penalties, that no man should obey them. And he himself called another council the next year, to begin the 19th of April. The French king understanding that Pope Julius had joined with the Venetians to take their part against him, assembled a council at Turin, in the month of September. In this council these two questions were proposed:

1. Whether it was lawful for the pope to wage war against any prince without cause?
2. Whether any prince in defending himself, might invade his adversary, and deny his obedience?

To these questions it was answered that the bishop should not invade, and that it was lawful for the king to defend himself. Moreover, the *Pragmatic Sanction* (see note on p. 364) was to be observed through the realm of France and that excommunications should not be feared, if they were found to be unjust. After this the king sent to Julius the answer of his council, requiring him either to agree to peace, or to appoint a general council somewhere else, where this matter might be more fully decided. Julius would do neither of these, but immediately accursed Charles, the French king, with all his kingdom. At length at Ravenna, in a great battle, the pope was overcome by the French king, and after much slaughter, great bloodshed, and mortal war, this pope died, the twenty-first of February A.D. 1513.

History of the Turks— Mahomet — the Koran.

Though I am afraid of filling this volume with foreign histories, when I have professed to chiefly treat the Acts and Monuments done here at home, I will yet add after these popes, something about the Turks' history — of their rise and cruel persecution of the saints of God,

to the great peril of Christendom. There are certain causes which necessarily require their wicked proceedings, their cruel tyranny and bloody victories, the ruin and subversion of so many Christian churches, with the horrible murders and captivity of infinite Christians, to be made known to our country of England, as well as to other nations.

The great victories of the Turks, and the lack of success of our men fighting against them, may admonish and teach us, following the example of the old Israelites, how to seek greater strength to encounter these enemies of Christ than we have done up to now. First, we must consider that the whole power of Satan, the prince of this world, goes with the Turks, which the strength of no man's arm is sufficient to resist. Only the name, spirit, and power of our Lord Jesus is sufficient, the Son of God going with us into our battles— just as the ark of God's covenant and promise went with the old Israelites who also fought against the enemies of God. For so are we taught in the Scripture, that we Christian men have no strength but in Christ alone. Whether we war against the devil, or against the Turk, it is true what the Scripture says, "without me you can do nothing." ^{Joh 15:5} There is no power to stand against the devil, or to conquer the world, except our faith alone, to which all the promises of God (regarding salvation) are annexed. We must not go beyond these promises, for the word must be our rule. Whoever presumes beyond the promises expressed in the word, does not go, but wanders, and he cannot tell where. Nor must we tell God how to save the world, but we must take that way which He has appointed. Let us not set God to school, nor comprehend his Holy Spirit within our knowledge. He that made us without our counsel, also redeemed us as it pleased Him. If he is merciful, let us be thankful. And if His mercies surmount our capacity, let us not therefore resist his word but search it out, and apply our will to it. If we do this, all our contentions will soon come to an end. Let us therefore search the will of our God in his word; and if He wills his salvation to stand free to all nations, why do we make merchandise of it? If he has graciously offered his waters to us, without money or money's worth, ^{Is 55:1} then let us not hedge in the plenteous springs of His grace that are so freely given to us.

And if God has determined to have his own Son stand alone, let us not presume to mix any of our trumpery (nonsense) with his majesty. Whoever brings St. George or St. Dennis as patrons to the field, to fight against the Turk, no doubt leaves Christ at home. Now, how we have fought these many years against the Turk, even if history keeps silent, yet the success declares. We fight against a persecutor, being no less persecutors ourselves. We wrestle against a bloody tyrant, and our hands are as full of blood as his. He kills Christ's people with the sword, and we burn them with fire. Observing the works of the law, the Turk seeks his justification by that, and we do the same. But neither he nor we seek our justification as we should, that is, by faith alone in the Son of God.

[371] A.D. 1499.

What marvel is it then, our doctrine being almost as corrupt as his, and our conversation worse, if Christ does not fight alongside us, as we fight against the Turk? The Turk has prevailed so mightily, not because Christ is weak, but because Christians are wicked, and their doctrine is impure. Our temples are polluted with images, and our hearts with idolatry; our priests sin before God in adultery, being restrained from lawful matrimony. The name of God is in our mouths, but the fear of Him is not in our hearts. We war against the Turk with our works, masses, traditions, and ceremonies, but we do not fight against him with Christ, and with the power of his glory, which if we did that, then the field would be won.

I do believe that when the church of Christ with its sacraments are so reformed, that Christ alone will be received as our justifier, with all other religions, merits, traditions, images,

patrons and advocates set apart, the sword of the Christians, with the strength of Christ, will soon vanquish the Turks' pride and fury. But I will address this more largely in the process of this history.

As to the time when this sect of Mahomet first began, history does not fully consent, but it is generally reckoned to be from his flight from Mecca to Medina (A.D. 622), which they call the Hegira, and in the eleventh year of Heraclius, the emperor of Constantinople.¹³⁴

All writers agree in this, that this damnable Mahomet was born in the country of Arabia, bordering on the eastern part of Judea (A.D. 571). His father was an Arabian of the tribe of Koreish, and his mother was an Ishmaelite, a people of Arabia called the Hagarenes (sons of Hagar), which Mahomet afterwards changed to *Saracens*. Mention was made earlier of this wretched Mahomet, where we showed how he made himself the highest prophet of all others. And yet he does not deny that Christ was a holy prophet (next to him), and Moses was another. Moreover, he does not deny that Mary the mother of Christ was a virgin, and conceived Christ by the Holy Spirit. He affirmed further, that Christ in his own person was not crucified, but another called Judas was crucified for him. He greatly commends John (the Baptist), son of Zachary,^{Luk 1.13} as a chaste man, while he himself permits a man to have four wives, and as many concubines as he is able to find. And he says that whereas Christ and other prophets had the gift given them to work miracles, he was sent to compel men to his religion by force of the sword.

The prodigious vanities, lies, and blasphemies contained in his law, called The Alkoran,¹³⁵ are rather to be laughed at than recited. It is thought that Sergius, a Nestorian, assisted Mahomet, in contriving this Alkoran, and so it appears by the scope, which especially tends to this end: to take the divinity from the person of Christ, whom Mahomet notwithstanding grants to be a most holy man, and also that he is received up to God, and shall come again to kill antichrist, etc.

Moreover, this ridiculous Alkoran is so intermingled with mixtures of the Christian, Jewish, and Gentile laws, giving such liberty to all the lusts of the flesh, setting up circumcision, abstaining from swine's flesh, and Jewish washings, and so much stands upon father Abraham, that it is supposed by some that this filthy Alkoran was indeed set out in the days of Mahomet, but that certain Jews also had some handling in the matter, and they put it out after his death.¹³⁶

After Mahomet had thus seduced the people, teaching them that he did not come by miracles, but by the sword to give his law, and that those who will not obey it must either be put to death, or else pay tribute (for such are the words of the Alkoran). After he had gathered the strength of the Arabians about him, these Arabians then had occasion to rebel against the emperor. Because their stipends were not paid to them by the emperor's officers, Mahomet began to range with force and violence in parts of Syria. He subdued Mecca, then Damascus, and further increasing in power he entered Egypt, and subdued that too. From there he turned against the Persians. Chosroes, the king of Persia, encountered him with a powerful army, and overthrew the Saracens, and put Mahomet to flight. From these

¹³⁴ When Mohammed arrived at Medina, he tried to win over the Jews by claiming to be one of their prophets. Their rabbis treated him with contempt. He never forgave that, and gave his followers permission to slay a Jew wherever they met one. When he came to Coraitza, he had 600 Jewish men beheaded and thrown into pits. At his death, he is said to have cursed all Jews and Christians, and called for their destruction. Thus began this "religion of peace."

¹³⁵ That is, the Koran, or Quran.

¹³⁶ In Sunni tradition, it is believed that the first caliph, Abu Bakr, ordered Zayd ibn Thabit to compile the written Quran, relying on textual fragments and the memories of those who memorized it during Mohammed's lifetime.

Persians came the Turks, who afterward joined with the Saracens, and maintained them against the Christians.

After the death of this beast (A.D. 632), who some say was poisoned in his house, he was succeeded by his father-in-law, Abu Bakr, who took upon himself the government of their followers, and got the city of Gaza, and also besieged Jerusalem. He reigned two years at Damascus.

After him followed Omar, who conquered a great part of Syria, Egypt, and Persia.

The fourth king of the Saracens, after Mahomet, was Otman; then followed Ali the son-in-law of Mahomet, and after him Mahuvias, or Moawiyah. After a siege of seven years, he obtained the Christian city of Caesarea. He also overcame the Persians, and subdued that country to his law.

Thus the wicked Saracens, in the space of thirty years, subdued Arabia, got Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria, Egypt, and Persia.

Not long after Heraclius, emperor of Constantinople, his nephew Constans succeeded him. In the sixteenth year of his empire, fighting unluckily against the Saracens in Lycia, he was overthrown by Mahuvias, A.D. 657. The Saracens after this victory spoiled all of Rhodes.

These cursed Saracens, in these great victories and conquests, were not without domestic sedition and divisions. Yet the princes of the Saracens, then called *Sultans*, had in their possession the government of Syria, Egypt, Africa, and a great part of Asia, for about four hundred years. At length the Saracen king who ruled in Persia, fighting against the Saracens of Babylon, sought aid from the Turks to fight with him against the sultan of Babylon. The Turks little by little surprised the sultan of Persia, and not long after usurped the kingdom of Persia. And this is the beginning of the Turkish dominion (*i.e.*, the Ottoman Empire).

These Turks, after they had thus overcome many countries and provinces, and made their power large, and were mighty both in Asia and Europe, they began to divide their kingdoms and countries among themselves. But when they could not agree except by deadly war, they contended for the bounds of those kingdoms and dominions. Four of the principal families conquering and subduing all the rest, parted the whole empire among themselves. And yet they were not contented either, but fell to such cruel hatred, contention, war, and slaughter (no doubt by the just judgment of God against His blasphemous enemies), that there was no end of it, until the remnant of the ancient Turks was utterly rooted out.

These four families, with their captains and armies, went raging throughout Asia and Europe about A.D. 1330. Every one of them conquered some part of the countries where they passed.¹³⁷

The causes of these great invasions and victories, were the dissension and discord, falsehood, idleness, inconstancy, greedy avarice, lack of truth and fidelity among Christian men of all states and degrees, both high and low. For by the willful defection and backsliding of the Christians, the Turkish power exceedingly increased. Many who desired the licentious life and liberty of war, and allured with the prosperous success of things, forsook the church of God, and made themselves bondslaves to Mahomet and his devilish sect. This was both because liberty is delightful to all men, and also partly because the wills of men commonly incline to what fortune favors. Again, those in all ages who are profane and without the fear

¹³⁷ The Ottoman fleet was undefeated for centuries, until the battle of Lepanto, Oct 1571. It involved 500 ships and 100,000 combatants. It was the last great naval conflict dominated by armed rowing vessels.

of God (of whom there is an infinite number in the church) commonly judge religion according to the success of realms and kingdoms. For many, not only for the variety of opinions, but also for the diversity of events and fortune among men, have inquired and still inquire whether there is any church of God distinct from other nations, what that church is, and where it is — especially as most men, in olden times when the four monarchies flourished, were ignorant of this doctrine, which is peculiar to the church alone; and also now, when the barbarity of Mahomet prevails and reigns in most of the world.

[372]

How does this stand with man's reason? That a small number, both miserable and feeble, and broken with many battles, should be regarded and loved by God; and that the other, flourishing in all wealth, prosperity, victory, authority, and power, should be rejected and despised by God — seeing that there is no power and authority, except by the ordinance of God? Therefore, although the power of the Turks has been, for two hundred years, of greater force than any other monarchy of the world, there is no imperial dignity to be regarded in that Turkish tyranny, but only among those nations where the heavenly doctrine of the gospel is preached; where other disciplines necessary for the church of God and the common life of man are maintained and regarded; where the laws of God, and other honest and civil ordinances agreeable to it, flourish and reign; where lawful judgment is exercised; where virtue is honored and rewarded; where sin and wickedness is punished; where honest families are maintained and defended.

These things are not regarded among the Turks, the enemies of the Son of God, and of all lawful empires, because the Turks dissolve and reject all godly societies, honest discipline, good laws, politics, righteous judgment, the ordinance of matrimony, and godly families. For what has the empire of the Turks brought up to now, but the most deadly, cruel, and perpetual war, to work all mischief, destruction, and desolation? To subvert good laws, cities, kingdoms, policies, and to enlarge their cruel power and dominion? The stay and strength of the Turks is not love and favor proceeding of virtue and justice, as in lawful and well governed empires; but fear, violence, oppression, swarms, and many thousands of barbarous and most wicked people, ministers of Satan's malice and fury. This kind of dominion and tyranny has been condemned by the voice of God many years ago; the testimonies of which the Lord would have remain in the church, lest the godly, being moved with the power and success of such tyranny, might fall away and forsake the Son of God.

Therefore, let us not seek any imperial state in that barbarity; but let us be thankful, and acknowledge the great benefit of God, that He has reserved to us certain remnants of the Roman empire. And let us call upon him daily with hearty petitions and groans, and with zeal and love to the house of God, that this Turkish power joined with the malice of Satan against the Son of God, not prevail against the poor congregations and little remnant of his church, as it has done against those strong and noble Christian kingdoms and churches, where now we see the Turkish tyranny reign, and Satan has taken full possession. Their state was once far better than ours is now, and more likely to continue without such horrible overthrows and desolation. O that we might foresee a little, the great danger that hangs over our heads! For though the Turk seems to be far off, yet we nourish within our breasts at home, that which may soon cause us to feel his cruel hand and worse (if worse is possible) to overrun us; to lay our land waste; to scatter us among the infidels, the enemies and blasphemers of the Son of God.

Now, although those four families mentioned above long continued together in bloody wars, deadly hatred, one of them surpassed the rest in all cruelty and tyranny. Subduing the other

three families, he took upon himself the government alone. And so he became the first monarch, or emperor, who reigned among those called *Ottoman*, from whom all who reigned after him were called *Ottomans*. Succeeding in the order of his line, twelve of them have occupied the same dominion and seat of the Turks, from A.D. 1300 to this present time. Of these twelve, in such order as they lived and reigned, I intend (Christ permitting) to treat them severally and compendiously. I will shortly and briefly abstract out of prolix and tedious writers, those particulars for us Christians, which are requisite to be known.

The Twelve Great Emperors of the Turks.

I. Ottoman. — This man was at first of poor estate, and obscure among the common sort of men, coming from a base progeny, and born of rustic parents. But through his valiantness and activity in war, he acquired a great name among the Turks. For being a man of fierce courage, refusing no labor, delighting in war, and gathering together a multitude of common soldiers by great subtlety, he began to make war, and to advance himself and his family by conquest and victories. First, he began to rob and spoil with a great band of rovers; afterward he attempted to set upon all men. Nor did he vex and destroy the Christians only, but set upon his own nation also, and sought all occasion to subdue them wholly to himself. For now the princes and captains of the Turks, inflamed with ambition and a desire to rule, began to fall out and contend among themselves, insomuch that they fell into domestic war, with all the power they could.

Ottoman, considering this occasion very fit and opportune to accomplish what he had long sought, gathered to himself all those he thought given to robbing and spoiling, and set them upon mischief. In a short time he began to grow in authority, and to set upon certain towns as he saw opportunity. Of these towns, he took some by force, some by surrender, others he spoiled and overthrew to terrify the rest, thus laying the first foundation of his rising. In the meantime, the discord which was among the Christians was no small advantage to this Ottoman. Because of it, within ten years' he subdued Bithynia, and all the provinces about Pontus; also Natolia, which comprehends all the dominion of the Greeks within Asia; Ancyra, a city in Phrygia; Synope, a city in Galatia; and Sebastia, a city in Cappadocia. And thus, still prevailing, he increased in a short time to a mighty power, either through the secret judgment of God against that nation, or else because God would have them prevail so far and so cruelly, for the punishment of the sins of other nations.

After he had reigned twenty-eight years, Ottoman died in A.D. 1328, leaving behind him three sons. Orchanes, being the youngest, killed his two brothers while they were at variance between themselves.

II. Orchanes. After he had slain his two brethren, he took the government of the Turks after his father. After he had drawn the hearts of the multitude to himself, those who had their dispositions set upon the licentious life of war, he applied his power to further enlarge his father's dominion, winning and subduing Mysia, Lydia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, and Caria. All these countries he added to the Turkish empire, being within the compass of Asia, up to the seaside of Hellespont and the Euxine sea. Also he won Prusa, which was the metropolitan city of Bithynia. He then made this the chief seat of the Turks' empire. Besides these, he conquered Nice, and got Nicomedia; all of which were previously Christian cities and regions. Yet all this could not make the Christian princes in Greece cease their civil wars, and to join and accord among themselves. Because of this, the Turk's aid was sent for out of Asia to help our Christians to kill one another, and at length to get all those parts of Europe from them both. Orchanes, after these victories, when he had reigned thirty-two years, was struck, some say, with an arrow in the shoulder, at the siege of Prusa. The opinion of others

is that fighting against the Tartarians, where he lost a great part of his army, he too was slain there (A.D. 1359).

III. Amurath. — The Greek writers inform us that Orchanes had two sons, Suleiman and Amurath; but Suleiman, who was very distinguished, died shortly before his father. After him followed Amurath. After Asia was subdued by his predecessors, he sought by all means and ways how to proceed further, and to invade Europe. To his ambitious purpose the domestic wars of the Christians gave a most prosperous occasion. This occasion is declared as follows. Certain discord fell between the princes of Greece, and John Paleologus, emperor of Constantinople.

[373] A.D. 1499.

Whereupon Paleologus, as he was not able to make his party good with the Grecians, most unwisely sent for Amurath to help him. He was glad to have such an occasion offered, which he had so long sought. To aid Paleologus, Amurath sent 12,000 Turks into Thrace; but first he used all the delays he could of crafty policy, with the intent that the Greeks would waste their strength and power upon themselves. By this means he might be better able afterward to set upon them, and to accomplish his conceived desire.

The Turks were thus called into Europe by the Christians. Whether they induced Amurath to invade, tasting the sweetness of the soil; or whether Amurath of his own head thought it good to use the time, in A.D. 1363, he came into Europe himself, with 60,000 Turks. They fell upon the Greeks, who had wasted and spent themselves with their long wars and battles. The pretense of the devilish Turk was to aid and assist the emperor Paleologus, whether he would have it or not, and to subdue what had fallen from him.

Thus the Turks' army being conveyed over by the Grecian sea, called the Hellespont, first got Calipolis, with other towns and cities bordering about the sea. Planting themselves there, and preparing ships of their own for transporting their munitions out of Asia, they advanced their power further into Thrace, and there won Philippolis; then they got Adrianople, which was not far from Constantinople; and there Amurath made his chief seat. Then Paleologus, the emperor, began at length to bewail his offer and covenant made with Amurath. When the Turks had thus conquered a great part of Thrace, they extended their army to Mysia, which they soon subdued. From there they proceeded against and conquered the Bessos and Triballos, then entered into Servia and Bulgaria. Joining battle with the prince of Servia, and with other dukes of Dalmatia and Epirus, they won the field, and defeated them, the prince being taken, committed to prison, and ended his life. This prince had a certain faithful client or servant, who to revenge his master's death with bold courage. Though seeing death before his eyes, he risked his life so far, that he came to the tyrant and thrust him through with his dagger. Amurath reigned thirty years, and was slain A.D. 1389.

IV. Bajazet (Bayezid I). The power of the Turks began to increase in Europe, when Bajazet, the first of that name, after the death of his father, took possession of the Turkish kingdom. This Bajazet had two brethren, Suleiman and Saucus. Saucus had his eyes put out by his father, for striving for the kingdom. Suleiman was slain by his brother. Thus Bajazet, beginning his kingdom with the murder of his brother, brought his imperial seat from Prusa, a city of Bithynia, to Adrianople, intending to subdue both Asia and Europe. First he set upon the Servians and Bulgarians, thinking to revenge his father's death. There he overthrew all the nobility of the Servians and Bulgarians, and put all those parts under his subjection, up to the borders of the Illyrians (western Balkans). He likewise brought all of Thrace under his yoke, with only Constantinople and Pera excepted. That done, he invaded

the rest of Grecia, prevailing against the countries of Thessaly, Macedonia, Phocia, and Attica, spoiling and burning as he passed without any resistance. And so, returning to Adrianople with innumerable spoils from the Christians, laid siege to Constantinople for eight years. He would have taken it, except that Paleologus, pushed to extremity, was driven to crave aid from the French, and from Sigismund the emperor. Accompanied with a sufficient power of French and Germans, the emperor came down to Hungary, and towards Servia, against the Turk. Bajazet hearing of their coming, raised his siege from Constantinople, and came to Nicopolis with 60,000 horsemen. There encountering them, he overthrew the Christian army, and made a prisoner of John, the captain of the French (A.D. 1392). Sigismund, the one who in the Council of Constance had burned John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, barely escaped by fleeing. After the victory, Bajazet carried away duke John, with five others in bands, into Prusa, where before John's face he caused all the other Christian prisoners to be cut to pieces. Afterward John, being ransomed with 200,000 crowns, was delivered up. Some authors refer this history to the time of Calepinus (below).

Bajazet, the cruel tyrant, after this victory, and the tyranny shown upon the Christians, returned again to the siege of Constantinople, fully determined to conquer and subdue the city. He would have no doubt have accomplished this, except that the providence of God had found such a means to prevent it. Tamerlane, king of Parthia, with a 100,000 horsemen, and swarms of footmen, like a violent flood, overran Asia and pressed upon Syria and Sebastia. He had taken Orthobule prisoner, the son of Bajazet, and afterwards slew him, exercising the same cruelty upon his prisoners as Bajazet had done before upon the Christians. He went so far that he spared neither sex nor age of the Turkish multitude. He caused 12,000 of them at one time to be overridden and trodden down under his horses' feet. By this, Bajazet, the tyrant, was forced to raise the siege of Constantinople, and to return with his army into Asia. There, near the hill called Stella, he pitched his tent to encounter Tamerlane.

The fight between these two was long and great on both sides (A.D. 1402). It was the second year after the slaughter of our Christians at Nicopolis in Pannonia; but at length the victory of this battle fell to Tamerlane. In this battle, as Munster writes, 200,000 Turks were slain. Bajazet, the tyrant, having his horse slain under him, was taken prisoner. To make a spectacle of his wretched fortune, he was bound in golden fetters, and enclosed in an iron cage (whom all of Greece could not hold before). He was led about and shown throughout Asia, to be scorned and laughed at. Moreover, he was used by Tamerlane in place of a footstool or a block, as often as he mounted his horse. Some add also that he was made to feed under Tamerlane's table like a dog. The tyranny of this Bajazet against the Christians, just as it was not much unlike the cruelty of Valerian, the Roman emperor, so neither was the example of his punishment much different. For just as Sapor, king of the Persians, did with Valerian in the eighth persecution of the primitive church, so likewise Bajazet the persecutor was worthily handled by Tamerlane, king of the Parthians, as mentioned above.

Tamerlane, after this conquest, passed with his army into Mesopotamia, into Egypt, and into Syria, where he victoriously subdued the cities and munitions of the Turks, and at length also conquered Damascus. In his sieges his manner was, the first day, to go all in white attire, the second day in red, and the third day in black, signifying thereby mercy the first day to those who yielded; the second day the sword; the third day fire and ashes. At last, after having gotten great victories, and the spoils of the Turks, he returned to his own country, and there he died (A.D. 1465).

In writing of Tamerlane, it is recorded that he had 800,000 men in his army; and that he overcame the Parthians, Scythians, Iberians, Albans, Persians, Medes, and conquered all of Mesopotamia. After he had also subdued Armenia, he passed over the river Euphrates and invaded all of Asia Minor, conquering and subduing from the river Tanais to the Nile in Egypt. He was called the terror of the world. He left behind him two sons who, falling into discord for their possessions, lost again all that their father had gotten.

In the meantime, Bajazet had died in the second year of his captivity (A.D. 1403), leaving behind him twelve sons. The four eldest at the time were Suleiman, Isa, Musa, and Mahomet (Mehmed I), who disputed with Isa and Musa over the right of succession to the remainder of Bajazet's empire. This civil war ended in the triumph of Mahomet, after the death of his brothers. In these discords and divisions among the Turks, an occasion was given to the Christians to recover from the Turks that which they had lost, if they had not been either negligent, or otherwise occupied in their own private wars among themselves.

[374]

V. Suleiman Calepinus. — Calepinus or Chelebi, was the second son of Bajazet (the first died in 1400). Encouraged by the sloth and negligence of the princes of Europe, and by the discord of the Greeks among themselves and other nations near them, Suleiman long troubled and vexed the Bulgarians, Servians, and Macedonians, even to the time of king Sigismund. When this king saw that Bajazet had been overcome and taken by Tamerlane, and the power of the Turks was weakened in Europe, he saw an occasion offered him from heaven, as it were, to destroy and utterly root out that barbarous nation, cruel enemies to the name and religion of Christ — not only from Asia, but also from all of Europe. It was also an occasion to revenge the great slaughter and discomfiture of his army when he fought with Bajazet at Nicopolis, a city in Mysia. And so, with great power he made war against Calepinus at Columbatium, a town in Servia, as mentioned before — but as unluckily and with as little success as he had before against Bajazet his father. For in that battle 20,000 Christians were slain, and the rest utterly discomfited. The king himself so barely escaped, that he did not enter his kingdom again for eighteen months. After this, Suleiman was overcome by his brother Musa, in the civil contention which was still raging among the brothers. He was killed (A.D. 1409), after reigning nearly eight years.

VI. Masa Chelebi. — After the captivity of Bajazet above mentioned, histories vary. The Greek writers make no mention at all of Calepinus, only the sons of Bajazet generally, and of the contention among them until the time of Mahomet. The Latin histories, writing of the children of Bajazet and their succession, do not agree. Some affirm that Bajazet had only two sons, others that he had more. After the death of Suleiman, Musa was saluted as the emperor by the European army, but shortly after he was attacked by his brother Mahomet, and killed in battle. He too had reigned about eight years. ¹³⁸

VII. Mahomet (Mehmed I). — The last of the ruling sons of Bajazet, Mahomet secured to himself alone the kingdom, or rather the tyranny of the murdering Turks (A.D. 1413). He sorely afflicted the Christians with wars within Europe, especially the country called Wallachia, lying not far from the river Danube, between Hungary and Thrace. From there he moved into Asia, where he recovered diverse parts in Galatia, Pontus, Cappadocia, Cilicia, which Tamerlane had taken from the Turks before. This Mahomet planted his chief imperial seat in Adrianople not far from Constantinople, within the country of Thrace. In some

¹³⁸ The period from the death of Bajazet to the accession of Mahomet is usually styled "The Interregnum," the kingdom being divided by the contention of the brothers; but it was again united under Mahomet. — [Ed.]

writers, the conflict between Sigismund and the great Turk, in which the Christians were so discomfited, is attributed to this Mahomet, rather than to Calepinus. This conflict was mentioned above in the history of Sigismund. Mahomet reigned eight years after the death of Musa, and died A.D. 1421.

VIII. Amurath the Second (Murad II, r. 1421-1444). He was the son of Mahomet. He proved to be a wretched tyrant, and yet he was permitted, as a scourge of God, to correct the sins of the Christians. Soon after Amurath began his reign, a person sprung up calling himself Mustafa, the son of Bajazet; but it would seem that he was an impostor, as the real Mustafa was supposed to have been killed in battle before the death of Bajazet. However the Greeks supported this man, and set him up with sufficient materials and supplies of war, to fight against Amurath. But in conclusion, not being able to make his party good, he came into the hands of his enemy, and had his neck broken with a bow-string, in the manner of the Turkish execution.

The Greeks, then terrified with this sinister adversity, requested a truce from the Turk. But when that would not be granted, they set up another Mustafa, who likewise being armed by the Greeks, got the city of Nice in Bithynia, back from Amurath. Although it was not long before he was overcome in the same city, and brought to Amurath. He caused him likewise to taste the same death as the other Mustafa had done. Amurath now beyond all fear and doubt of brethren and kinsfolk rising against him, collected all his power against the Greeks. First he ranged throughout Thrace, where many cities surrendered to him, which before belonged to the emperor of Constantinople. From there he set forward to the noble and famous city of Thessalonica, then under the liege and protection of the Venetians. After Thessalonica was subdued, Phocis with all the country about Athens, Boetia likewise, also Aetolia, Acarnania, with all the region beyond Peloponnesus, to the coast of Corinth, were brought into bondage and slavery to the Turk.

In Epirus, and in that quarter that adjoins Macedonia named Albania, one John Castriot then reigned. Perceiving himself too weak to match the Turk's power, he made this convention with the Turk: that he might have Croya, a famous city in Greece. He also gave him his three sons for hostages; to wit, Constantine, Reposius, and George.

In his son George there appeared such noble courage, such vigor of mind and strength of body, that the Turk caused him to be more freely instructed in the Turkish religion and manner in his own court. Being trained up there, George so excelled in feats of activity, as well as strength of body, that he excelled all his companions — so that he was named *Scanderbeg*, which is the same as Alexander the Great.

After this Alexander had grown up to mature ripeness of age, and was well-trained in feats of war, he was sent out by the Turk to war against Caraman of Cilicia, the Turk's enemy. In this expedition he showed himself most manfully, fighting hand to hand, first with a footman of Scythia, then with a horseman of Persia, being challenged by them both to an encounter, first with the one, after with the other. He so valiantly overthrew them, that he won great renown with the Turk — insomuch that, trusting to the Turk's favor, when he heard of the decease of his father, he dared ask a grant of the Turk that his father's dominion be given to him. Though Amurath the Turk did not deny him this request, Alexander perceived the matter was dallied out only with fair words. So by subtle means and policy he slipped out of the Turk's court, and came to Epirus, his own inheritance, where first by forged letters he recovered Croya. The other cities voluntarily yielded themselves to him. Then gathering to himself the people of Epirus and Macedonia (who though not many in number, yet with good willing minds they stuck to him) he so manfully and valiantly

behaved himself, that against all the power both of Amurath, and also of Mahomet, he maintained his own, repelled their violence, and put to flight their armies for many years.

But to return again to the course of Amurath's victories, after he had prevailed against the eastern parts of Europe and Greece, and had thus strived for the dominion of Epirus, he invaded Illyricum (now called Sclavonia). It contained Dalmatia, Croatia, Istria, and Liburnia. These countries he despoiled and wasted, and then continued his course to Albania and Bosnia. In these regions, once he had subdued a large part, and led away an innumerable multitude of captives, he moved further to Wallachia and Servia, hoping to conquer all of Pannonia.¹³⁹

At the same time, there reigned in Servia a certain prince named George Despota, who made great suit to the Turk for truce and peace, promising to give him his daughter in marriage; for by the Turks' law they may marry as many wives as they please.

[375] A.D. 1499.

It was not long after Amurath had married the daughter of Despota, that contrary to his league and promise, he made war upon Despota, now his father-in-law, and expelled him from his kingdom, taking from him diverse cities, such as Scopia, Novomonte, Sophia, and all of Mysia. George himself fled into Hungary, leaving his son behind to defend the town of Sinderonia. Amurath hearing of Despota's flight, compassed the city with a strong siege. Once he had taken Sinderonia, he took his wife's brother, the son of Despota, and without any regard of mercy and affinity, in the barbarous tyranny of the Turks, he put out his eyes with a red hot basin set before his eyes. After that he led him about in derision, to spite his cowardly father.

Servia thus being won, Amurath, thought to go further into Hungary. He besieged the city called Belgrade, and no doubt would also have destroyed it, had the providence of God not found means that, partly through the slaughter of his men, partly for lack of food and other forage, he was compelled to raise his siege and retire.

In the meantime John Huniades (who was mentioned earlier) had gotten great victories against the Turkish power. He had recovered part of Servia, and all Moldavia; against whom Amurath the Turk, with a mighty army, moved into Pannonia. But Huniades with the power and aid of Ladislaus king of Poland (and more especially by the power of the Lord) soon weakened the power of the Turk, and overthrew him, recovering to the Christians the greatest part of Servia and Bulgaria.

In this battle, Huniades had five conflicts with the Turks in one day; and with five victories he put them to the worse. Toward night he so discomfited and overthrew the great captain of Amurath, called Bassa, the duke of Anatolia (otherwise named Asia Minor) that he slew 30,000 of the Turks that day. Amurath, although he was not a little discouraged at this, yet setting aside his fear, and with stout countenance, he sent for Carambeius, his principal stay and captain, with a new army brought out of Asia to assist him in his wars. Carambeius arrived in the downs of Transylvania. Ladislaus the king of Poland (the Lord so working), through the industry of John Huniades, received and overcame him with such celerity (speed), that his entire stout and sturdy army was either slain outright, or else put to flight. Carambeius the captain was himself taken prisoner in the same field.

¹³⁹ *Pannonia*: western Hungary, western Slovakia, eastern Austria, northern Croatia, north-western Serbia, northern Slovenia, and northern Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These victories of Huniades struck no little terror to Amurath. So that for distress of mind he was ready to destroy himself (as some write). But being confirmed by Helibeus Bassa his counsellor, he kept himself within the straits of Mount Rhodope. Then hearing that Caramannus (with a Christian army) had invaded Bithynia and Pontus in Asia, Amurath was glad to make a truce with Ladislaus and Huniades upon whatever conditions they were pleased to make. Their conditions were these: that Amurath should depart from the whole region of Servia, and remove from there all his garrisons; also, he that should restore George Despota, prince of Servia, to his possession, and set his children free, whom he held in captivity, and restore their inheritance to them. And that he would make no more claim or title to the country of Moldavia mentioned above, nor to that part of Bulgaria which he had lost; and that he should desist hereafter from all wrongs and injuries against the Christians. The Turk having agreed to these conditions, a truce was concluded on both parts for ten years, and confirmed with a solemn oath between them.

This done, Amurath the tyrant addressed himself toward Asia, to resist the invasion of Caramannus. At this time Pope Eugenius, as soon as he heard the Turk had returned to Asia, sent cardinal Julian Caesarian to Ladislaus, with full dispensation and absolution to break his oath and league with the Turk, moreover promising great hope and aid if he would stoutly go to arms against the tyrant.

Here, by the way, it is to be noted that just as there is no truth of promise in that pestilent See of Rome, nor did any war ever prosper which was taken in hand by the pope's council, so there was never any council of the pope that brought with it more detriment to Christianity than this. But the pope seemed to think that just as he might lawfully break his promise with John Huss and with other Christians, so too he need not observe any league or truce taken with the Turk. But it turned much otherwise than the pope imagined, as is seen by the sequel. For Ladislaus, being thus excited by the ill-advised and sinister instigation of Pope Eugenius, and contrary to the truce established a little before, set out with his army and proceeded to Wallachia and Bulgaria. When he came to Varna, he fell sick.

It was not long before the Turk, having intelligence of this, left his wars in Asia, and made haste into Europe, passing over by the straits near Callipolis, where the entire Italian navy was looking on. But whether on purpose, or for cowardliness, they would not stir one oar to stop the passage of the Turkish army. When Amurath had come to Adrianople in Thrace, using such celerity as no man looked for, within eight days he was in Bulgaria; and there he encamped himself against Ladislaus. The day of the battle being set, the armies joined on both sides. Huniades himself was present. But the whole matter was ruled by Julian the cardinal, and the pope's clergy. The fight continued three days and three nights together, with great courage and much bloodshed on each side; so that the field was covered with lakes of blood. It seemed at first to incline to the Christians, by breaking the first ranks of the Turks. But the priests and prelates who were at the field (who were better fitted to be in the church) seeing the Turks to begin to flee, unskillfully left their array to pursue the enemy. So that leaving the other posts of the Christians naked, they gave great advantage to the Turks with their arrows and shot, to disturb the Christian ranks. By this occasion, Amurat, enclosed the Christians with his army, and obtained the victory. In this field, Ladislaus, the young king of Poland, having his horse killed under him, was struck down and slain. The pope's bishops fleeing to save themselves, fell into the marshes, and were destroyed there; they sustained a death worthy of their filthy falsehood and untruth. Julian the cardinal, who with the pope was the chief actor in breaking the league, was found dead on the way, full of wounds, and stripped naked. Of the rest of the army that escaped by fleeing, part was drowned in the marshes, some perished miserably from hunger, some from

cold, watching and wandering in the woods. Huniades barely escaped the danger, by the merciful providence of God, being reserved to the further profit of Christendom. This battle of Amurath against the Christians was fought at Varna, in A.D. 1444.

John Huniades, the worthy warrior, was born in Wallachia, being the earl of Bistice. Of all the captains who ever went against the Turks, he was most famous and singular, prudent and discreet in council, expert and politic in war, prompt of hand, circumspect before he attempted anything, and quick in expedition. In him almost no good property requisite in a warlike captain was lacking. Against two most mighty and fierce tyrants, Amurath and Mahomet, through the Lord's might, he defended all of Pannonia, And therefore he was called the thunderbolt and terror of the Turks. As Achilles was to the Grecians, so Huniades was set up by God to be like a wall or bulwark of all Europe against the cruel Turks and enemies of Christ, and of His Christians. Nor was there any king or prince who ever achieved such noble victories, either in number, or so profitable for the public utility of all Europe, as he did. And that not only in the days of this Amurath, but also of Mahomet his successor, as further remains to be seen hereafter.

Amurath, because of this victorious overthrow of the Christians, was filled with no small pride. He directed his journey immediately toward the Greeks, where John Castriot was (mentioned above), otherwise called Scanderbeg.

[376]

First coming to Peloponnesus, and breaking down the wall around the straits of Corinth, Amurath encountered the brother of the emperor of Constantinople, whom he oppressed with his sudden coming, along with all the Greeks' army, before they were supplied. After that, Paleologus the emperor built up the wall again. But at the Turk's bidding, he was compelled to undo it again, which afterwards the Venetians repaired. After this demolition, however, Amurath entered into Peloponnesus. He took several towns and cities, and made tributaries of all the parts of Thessaly and Achaia.

In the following year, the Turk bent all his force against the country of Epirus, which the noble and victorious Scanderbeg valiantly defended against all the power of Amurath. So that he discomfited and vanquished seven of the most expert dukes of the Ottoman emperor, one after another, with all their armies of most chosen soldiers, and expelled them utterly out of all Epirus.

After this discomfiture, the saying is that Amurath gave himself to a religious order, living a contemplative life with certain other priests, in the forests of Bithynia. He renounced the government of his realm into the hands of Haly, one of the princes (the reader must understand that the Turks are not without their sundry sects of religion, any more than we Christians are without our friars and monks).

While Amurath was cloistered in his monkish religion, John Huniades, in the kingdom of Hungary; and Castriot Scanderbeg in Greece, kept a great stir against the Turks. Because of this, Amurath was taken back from his monkish vow and profession, and brought again into the field. For Huniades had rescued the whole country of Hungaria, and had repulsed all the army of the Turks far from Servia. Although the peevish practice of George, prince of Servia, had oftentimes disclosed his councils to the Turks, whereby twice Huniades was brought into danger, yet notwithstanding (through the Lord's gracious protection) he was preserved and delivered by George to the Hungarians again. After that, he manfully vanquished the Turks, so that they had no resting place around those parts of Servia and Bulgaria, so long as he lived.

Castriot Scanderbeg so foiled the Turk, and kept Amurath so short, that coming from Epirus in the straits, Amurath was so entangled by Castriot, that he was forced to give battle. In this battle he was so vanquished, and most part of his army slain, that for grief and sorrow, falling into a raving sickness, Amurath was transported out of his pavilion to Adrianople, and there he died in fury and madness, about the year 1451, after reigning thirty years.

Amurath first established the order of the Janizaries, who were the male children of those Christians that he conquered and took captive. He forced them to renounce the faith of Christ, in which they were baptized, and brought them up in Mahomet's law. He exercised them in the same feats of war as he did his own people. And after they came to adulthood, he named them Janizaries, (that is to say) soldiers of a strange country, and he made them guard his person. They wear on their head, instead of a helmet, a white attire made of the coarsest sort of wool, in so many folds around their head that it cannot be pierced with a sword. It hangs down on the back with a tail, and on the forehead, it is garnished with gold and silver. They formerly used bows and lances in the field; but now they use sabres and firearms, as our cavalry do.

At the first institution there were but 8,000; but now there are twice as many. This, of all bondage and servitude that the Christians suffer under the Turks, is the most intolerable, and greatly to be lamented by all true Christians. For what can godly minds behold more to their grief, than to see their children pulled from the faith of Christ in which they were baptized, and by whose blood they should eternally be saved, and to be instructed and nourished with the blasphemous doctrine of Mahomet — to be professed enemies of Christ and his church, to make war against heaven, and to perish everlastingly? And finally, what a lamentable thing it is, to see and behold our own children, born of our own bodies, become our mortal and cruel enemies, and to cut our throats with their own hands! This servitude of mind is far greater than death itself. If our princes would well consider this, it would cause them to agree, and bend their whole force and power against this cruel enemy.

IX. Mahomet the Second (Mehmed II). Amurath left behind him three sons, — Mahomet, born of the daughter of Despota, being twenty years of age; the second son, called Turcines; the third, named Calepinus. This Turcines, being an infant but eighteen months old, was strangled at the commandment of the Turk, by his servant Moses. He was present there himself and beheld the horrible murder. When Moses, the executioner of the murder, desired him not to pollute his hands with the blood of his brother, he answered that it was the manner of all the Ottoman Turks, that all the other brethren being destroyed, none should be left alive but one to govern the empire. Therefore, Moses was commanded by the tyrant, there present and in his sight, to kill the infant. Once the mother of the child understood this horrible fact, she cried out, and almost mad for sorrow, cursed the tyrant to his face. But to mitigate the rage of his mother, at her request, being desirous to be revenged upon the executioner of her son's death, he delivered Moses bound into her hands. She then, in the presence of the tyrant, thrust him to the heart with a knife; and opening his side, she took out his liver and threw it to the dogs to be devoured.

The third son, called Calepinus, was but six months old. Amurath had commended him to the custody of Halibassa, one of his nobles. To gratify and please the tyrant, Halibassa betrayed the infant, and brought him to Amurath, and at the tyrant's command, he was strangled. Some say that instead of Calepinus, another child was offered to the tyrant, and that Calepinus was conveyed to Constantinople, and after the taking of Constantinople he was carried to Venice, and then to Rome to Pope Calixtus. There he was baptized, and afterward came to Germany, to Frederic the emperor, and there was honorably entertained,

and kept in Austria during his life. If so, note how the merciful providence of God can fetch out of the devil's mouth. And note, moreover, Halibassa, the betrayer of the infant, did not escape. For Mahomet, understanding him to be a man of great substance and riches, through forging false crimes against him, put him to death with great torments, to have his riches. For this tyrant was given to insatiable avarice. Thus this bloody Mahomet began his reign with horrible murder, following the example of his predecessors, other cursed tyrants.

Although Mahomet came from a Christian mother, being the daughter of Despota, prince of Servia, and was brought up by her and instructed from his childhood in the precepts of Christian religion and manners, yet he soon forgot it, and gave himself to Mahomet's religion,. And yet, being addicted to neither religion, he became an atheist, believing and worshipping no God at all, but only the goddess of good fortune. He mocked the minds and judgments of men who believe that God, by His providence, governs and regards the state of human things on earth.

After hearing of the victories and conquests of his predecessors, and understanding how Bajazet surrounded Constantinople for eight years, and could not win it, Mahomet dispraised Bajazet — that such a long time should be spent about the siege and yet no victory gotten. And so he bent all his study and devices to know how to subdue the city. But first, having a secret hatred against the city of Athens, and having his hands lately imbrued with the blood of his brethren, this murdering Mahomet first of all voyaged to subvert and destroy that famous school of all good learning and discipline. He so furiously raged against it out of hatred for its good letters, that he thought he must not allow its foundation to stand, because that city was a good nurse and fosterer of arts and sciences.

[377] A.D. 1499.

Therefore he commanded the city to be razed and utterly subverted. Wherever any monuments or books could be found, he had them cast into dirty sinks, and the filthiest places of the city, or put to the most vile uses that could be devised, for extirpating and abolishing all good literature. If he understood that anyone lamented the loss and ruin of that noble place, he grievously punished them and put them to death.

Thus the famous and ancient school of Athens being destroyed, he turned his army toward Thrace. There, in all haste, he gathered his power both by sea and land, and with a mighty multitude, he compassed the city of Constantinople, and laid siege against it in the year 1453. On the fifty-fourth day of the siege it was taken and sacked, and the Emperor Constantine was slain. A sufficient relating of this, with a full description, was made before regarding the cruelty and fierceness of the Turks in getting this city — what slaughter there was of men, and women, and children, and what calamity and misery was to be seen there. It would be superfluous to now repeat it. This alone is not to be omitted: the principal causes of the overthrow of this city. The first of these was the filthy avarice of those citizens who, hiding their treasures in the ground, would not employ them for the necessary defense of their city. For so I find it in history, that when the Turk, after taking the city, had not found as much treasure as he looked for, suspected (as was the truth) that the treasures and riches were hidden underground, He commanded the earth to be dug up, and the foundations of the houses to be searched; there he found incredible treasures. "What?" (he asked) "How could it be that this place could lack ammunition and fortification, when it flowed and abounded with such great riches, and plenty of all things?" The second cause was the absence of the navy of the Venetians. If they had been ready in time, they might have been a safeguard against the invasion of the enemies.

Joannes Ramus, writing of the destruction of this city, among other matters related about the image of the crucifix, there in the high temple of Sophia. The Turk took this image, and wrote this superscription upon its head, "This is the God of the Christians." He gave it to his soldiers to be scorned. He commanded that the image, with trumpet sound, be carried throughout his army, and he made every man spit at it most contemptuously. The reader, by the way, may note what an occasion for slander and offense we Christians give to the barbarous infidels by our ungodly superstition, in having images in our temples, contrary to the express commandment of God in his word. For if St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, says, "We know Christ no longer after the flesh;" ^{2Cor 5:16} then how much less is Christ to be known by us in blind stocks and images set up in our temples, serving no other purpose than for infidels to laugh us to scorn, and our God, and to provoke God's vengeance?

To make the history short, such was the cruelty of these Turks in winning the city, that when Mahomet had given license to the soldiers for three days straight to spoil, kill, and do whatever they pleased, there was no corner in all of Constantinople, which did not either flow with Christian blood, or else was the scene of abomination and cruelty. Some of its citizens they murdered, some they roasted on spits, some they flayed off their skin, hanging others up to be consumed with famine. Still others they put salt into their wounds to more terribly torment them, so that one Turk contended with another as to who could devise the strangest kinds of new torments and punishments. They exercised such cruelty that the place where the city was before now seemed to be no city at all, but a slaughter-house or the shambles of Christian men's bodies. Among the dead bodies, the body of Constantine the emperor was also found. His head being brought to Mahomet, he commanded it to be carried on a spear throughout the city, as a public spectacle and derision to all the Turkish army. And because he would diminish the number of captives, who seemed to him to be very great, he never rose from his table each day, without putting some of the nobles to death, in order to fill his cruel mind with blood, as his body was filled with wine. He used to do this so long as any of the nobles of that city were left alive. And of the other sort too, as histories credibly report, no day passed in which he did not slay more than 300 persons. The rest he gave to his soldiers to kill, and to do with them what they would. It is here to be noted that as Constantine, the son of Helena, was the first emperor of Constantinople, so Constantine, also the son of Helena, was the last emperor.

Not far from the city of Constantinople, there was another little city, called Pera, once called Galata. It was situated by the seaside. Hearing of the miserable destruction of Constantinople, and seeing the city flaming with fire, they sent certain of the chief men with speed to Mahomet, declaring to him that they had neither sent any help to the city of Constantinople, nor done any injury to his army. Therefore they desired and asked him, that as they would gladly yield to him, so he would be favorable to them, and spare them, and not punish the guiltless with the guilty. Mahomet, although he was not ignorant that it was for fear, rather than any good-will, that they submitted themselves, and that they would rather have resisted him if they had been able, he received at that time the submission of their messengers. But he sent his ambassador back with them into their own city, and also commanded his army to follow, and to enter with him into the city. Although this was greatly suspected and disliked by the citizens, they dared not do otherwise, but allowed them to enter. This being done, the ambassador gave a sign to the soldiers, every man to do whatever he was bidden. Some of them ran to the walls, some to the temples and churches, some to the streets and houses of the city, pulling all things down to the ground, sacking and ranging with no less fury and abomination than they had done at Constantinople before — except that they abstained from murder. But the same day, letters came from Mahomet to

the ambassador, that he would spare no one, but destroy and murder all who were in the city. This message, because it seemed to the ambassador to be too cruel, as they had yielded themselves, he stayed his hand until night came. In the meantime, drunken Mahomet, coming somewhat to himself (whom drunkenness had overcome before) sent his second letters to revoke the first. Here again is to be noted the merciful providence of God towards his people in their deserved plagues, by staying the hands, and bridling the fury many times of their enemies, when otherwise the case seems to be past all remedy.

Mahomet, not a little exultant by winning Constantinople, made it the imperial seat of the Turkish dominion. The third year following (A.D. 1456), he set out to besiege Belgrade, a city of Hungary, lying near the banks of the Danube. He thought to have the same success there, as he had in winning Constantinople. But through the Lord's disposing, it fell out much otherwise. Within the city of Belgrade, at the time of the siege, was John Huniades, the valiant captain mentioned before. With a sufficient strength of picked soldiers, though not at all equal in number to the Turk's army, he valiantly defended the city with great courage, and no less success. In this siege great diligence was shown, and many of the Turks were slain. Among them was Mahomet himself. Being wounded under the left arm, he was carried out of the field half dead. The rest were so put to flight, that not much under 40,000 of the Turks were destroyed, besides the loss of all their ordnance, which the Turks were forced to leave behind them in the haste of their flight.

Jerome Zieglerus, writing of the siege of Belgrade, adds that when Mahomet was at the siege, seeing the town so small and weak of itself, and yet that it could not be won with all his great multitude, commanded all his bronze pieces to be laid out, to batter down the walls and towers of the town. So that, the Christians within the walls were vehemently distressed; for the siege continued both night and day without intermission.

[378]

Among the rest of the Christians who defended the town, was a certain Bohemian worthy of much commendation. Being on the walls, and seeing that a Turk with a banner or ensign of the Turks had gotten up, and thereby realizing the whole town was in danger of being conquered and taken, he runs to the Turk. Claspings him around the middle, and speaking to John Capistranus standing below, he asked whether he would be in any danger of damnation if he voluntarily threw himself with that dog (so he termed him) headlong from the wall, to be slain with him? What would become of his soul? Might he be saved or not? When Capistranus answered that he would be saved without doubt, he immediately tumbled himself with the Turk down off the wall. By his death, he saved the life of the whole city at the same time. Mahomet being so wounded, and in despair of winning the city, was carried out of the field, as this writer heard. At length coming again to himself, partly for fear, and partly for shame, Mahomet was ready to kill himself. Thus the town of Belgrade was at that time rescued through God's providence, by means of John Huniades and this Bohemian.

This siege of Belgrade began A.D. 1456, and endured forty-six days. There were 200,000 Turks at this siege, of whom 40,000 were slain. Victory fell to the Christians through the prosperous success given by God to John Huniades. Not long after the victory, through his labor and fatigue in defending the town, Huniades was taken with a sore sickness and died. Histories give great praise and commendation to his valiant prowess and singular courage.

After this, Mahomet was done in Europe. He returned into Asia to war with Usumcassanes, a Persian, with whom he had three battles. The first was near the river Euphrates, where the Turk lost 10,000 men, and had the worse of it. In the second field he was likewise

discomfited. The third battle was at Arsenga, where through the terrible noise of the bronze pieces, the Persian horses disturbed the camp, and so Usumcassanes was overcome.

From there the Turk. reduced again his power against the Christians, and first subdued Synope and all Paphlagonia (in northern Asia Minor); also the kingdom of Trebizond, which besieging it both by land and water, he won from the Christians. He sent David the king with his two sons, and Calus his uncle, to Constantinople, where they were miserably and cruelly put to death. The whole family of the Comneni, who were of the king's family, were destroyed by the Turk. This was about A.D. 1461, at which time this mischievous Mahomet was first saluted emperor.

Not long after, he got Corinth and Mitylene from the Grecians, but not without the great slaughter of Christian men — it was so extensive that the whole city of Mitylene was destroyed almost to the ground. He also won the isles of Lemnus and Lesbos from the Venetians; on this island of Lesbos was the city of Mitylene.

Not far from this isle of Lesbos and Mitylene, there is a country in Asia toward the sea side, bordering Europe, called Mysia, or called by some Maesia, in which the city of Troy stood. Mahomet coveted to win this country by policy and falsehood, rather than by the doubtful danger of war. So he secretly sent for the prince to come to speak with him for certain causes (he pretended) which would concern the profit and commodity of them both. When the king of Mysia, either for shame or for fear, dared not deny him, he came to Mahomet to confer about necessary affairs pertaining to them in common. Mahomet had the king apprehended and cruelly slain, or rather torn in pieces. And so, invading the land of Mysia, he exercised the same tyranny upon the king's kindred and affinity.

Mysia being taken and lost by fraud, Mahomet flew again towards Europe, where he assailed the island Euboia, otherwise called Nigropont. He made a bridge of marvellous fame over the sea Euripus, to convey his army out of Greece. And there he laid his siege to the city Chalois, which at length he overcame in thirty days, but not without a great slaughter of his army. In the siege he is said to have lost 40,000 of the Turks. But the slaughter of the Christians was greater, for when the city was won, the tyrant commanded, most cruelly, that none were to be spared within the whole city, but to be put to the sword, whoever was above the age of twenty years. This cruelty was shown by the barbarous tyrant out of anger and fury, because such a number of his Turks were slain at the siege, being reckoned (as said) at 40,000. In the fierce siege of this city it is memorable, as recorded in histories, how the women of that city, seeing the men begin to faint, and the city to be in present danger, took the matter in hand themselves. Playing the men, they went to the walls, and there defended the city with no less trouble to the enemy than the men had done before. And so they continued for as long as any man's strength and diligence could do any good. A great cause of the loss of this city and island, is imputed to the cowardly timidity of the Venetian navy. Being present there, and having a prosperous wind, yet they did not dare, and would not venture upon the Turks' bridge. If they had done this, the island of Euboia and Chalcis would not have been so soon overmatched by the Turks.

Thus all the eastern parts of Greece were subdued to the Turkish tyrant, with all Achaia, Attica, Acarnania, and Euboia. Shortly after, Peloponnesus also followed in like subjection to the Turk. Within Peloponnesus were contained these provinces: Achaia, Messenia, Laconia, Argolica, Archadia, etc. The Venetians had great possessions in this Peloponnesus, and had reconstructed the wall toward the sea side, near the straits of Corinth. There, for greater speed in the work, they had 30,000 workmen in rebuilding it. When this came to the knowledge of the Turk, he broke into the country of Peloponnesus with an army of 8,000,

and first wasted the regions of the Coroneans and Methoneans, and made a great slaughter of the Venetians. In a short time he brought the whole dominion of Peloponnesus under his yoke and tribute.

It is long and more lamentable to recite all the victories of Mahomet against the Christians, both by land and sea. It was declared earlier how a truce was made between Georgius Scanderbeg and the Turk for ten years. This truce being expired, Mahomet left no time unspent, no diligence unsought, but made with all his power toward Epirus and Albania, which after long siege, he overcame and subdued. When the valiant captain Scanderbeg had done against the Turk what laid in man's strength to do, he was still overmatched by the Turk's power and multitude. Seeing no possibility to make his party good, he was forced to depart his country as an exile. He went to Italy, and there being sent for by the pope's letters, he openly declared that it was not otherwise possible to resist the furious rage of the barbarous Turks by the strength of any one king or prince, unless all Europe with one consent joined their power and force together. And thus, Scanderbeg, a man of influential courage, being driven out of his country, continued his life in exile. His courage and vehemence is reported to have been such, that in fighting against the barbarous enemy, for very eagerness of spirit, his blood was seen to burst out of his lips. It is also testified of him, that being challenged, he never refused to fight; and in fighting, he never turned his back, nor was he ever wounded but once with a light shaft in his foot. Nor did he ever set against the Turk with more than 6,000 horsemen and 3,000 footmen. He is said to have slain over 2,000 Turks with his own hand, whom he struck with such violence, that many of them he cleaved asunder, from the head to the middle.

Even so, the insatiable greediness of this Turkish hell-hound was not satisfied with all this. He still conceived greater things in his mind, thinking to conquer the whole world. And so, passing forward towards Europe, he subdued all Ulyria. Then passing into Wallachia, he set upon Dracula, its prince. Dracula, although he had no great power of soldiers, yet he so enclosed and environed the Turk, that he almost lost his army, of whom a great part was destroyed, and many of his ensigns taken.

[379] A.D. 1499.

Shortly afterwards Mahomet sent Ahmet, his captain, with one hundred ships into Italy. Passing by the coast, he despoiled and wasted several places, till at length he came to Hydruntium (Otranto) a city in Calabria in Italy, which after a long siege he overcame and subdued. He brought such a terror into all Italy, that the pope, forgetting all other things, and yet mindful of himself, fled Rome with all haste. After the city of Hydruntium was taken, A.D. 1481, Matthias Corvinus, Huniades' son, was sent for by the Italians, to set upon the city for its rescue when Ahmet was about to make his return with 25,000 Turks. In the meantime, news came that Mahomet the great Turk was dead. The siege broke up, and the city was returned to the Italians, and so Italy was delivered from peril and danger. Mahomet II won from the Christians two hundred cities, twelve kingdoms, and two empires, which he joined together. He died A.D. 1481, after having reigned fifty years.

X. Bajazet the Second (Bayezid II). — Mahomet had three sons; of which Mustafa, the eldest, through voluptuousness, died before his father. The other two were Bajazet and Djemes. A great controversy arose among the Turks about which should succeed in their father's kingdom, for neither of them was present at Constantinople when Mahomet died. Djemes was in Lycaonia, and Bajazet was in Cappadocia, when great dissension arose among the nobles about the succession, with great strife and bloodshed. The Janizaries, who were the Turk's guard, proclaimed Bajazet emperor. Bajazet, at length having come from

Cappadocia, had gotten the wills of the Janizaries, partly through yielding, and partly by corrupting them with money, and was made emperor. Djemes, the half brother, being in Lycaonia, which was nearer, made no less speed in his coming, but he was prevented by Bajazet, and excluded from Constantinople. Therefore, being put from all hope of his kingdom, and incited by some of his friends, he moved war against his brother. But being overcome by Ahmet in three battles, Bajazet's captain, he fled to the great master of Rhodes, leaving his mother and two young children in a place called Carrae — whom Bajazet slew.

Djemes being with the master of the knights of Rhodes, was sent to the bishop of Rome, where he was kept, and afterwards sent to Charles VIII, as a hostage of Pope Alexander VI. He was poisoned on the way by Pope Alexander, as declared before (p. 370). After his death, Bajazet, to requite Ahmet for his good service, put him to the halter, partly suspecting his power, partly for lucre's sake, to have his treasure. His death was of great profit to the Christians, as he was ever an utter enemy to the religion and name of Christ.

Bajazet thus being confirmed in his tyranny, he made an expedition against Wallachia, where he subdued two great forts. He removed his power from there, voyaging into Asia, thinking to be revenged of the sultan of Egypt, where he lost two great battles — the one fought at Adena, the other at Tarsus. But especially at Tarsus, the army of the Turk was so overthrown, that of a 100,000 brought into the field, scarcely a third remained unslain.

Thus Bajazet being overthrown and terrified with evil luck fighting against the sultan of Egypt, left Asia, and directed his army into Europe. Leading them against the Venetians, he had many and doubtful conflicts with them. The Turk was sometimes put to the worse, and sometimes prevailed. Out of Jadra and other cities around Dalmatia, he carried away great multitudes of Christians into captivity, about A.D. 1498.

Two years after this, which was A.D. 1500, Bajazet with 150,000 armed men, entered into Peloponnesus. Although Mahomet II had overrun it before, the Venetians had all this while defended Methone, or Modon, against the Turks. The Turk besieged this city with three armies. He had 500 great bronze cannons about the walls, with which he battered the city day and night. But the citizens within committed themselves to God. They defended their city as well as they could, choosing to die rather than yield to the Turk's tyranny. But the Turk prevailed, and they were not able to withstand the siege. The Christians assembled together in a certain house prepared for the purpose, men, women, and children. There they set the house on fire, giving themselves to be burned rather than come into the tyrant's hands. Certain women also, with their children, cast themselves headlong into the sea to avoid Turkish captivity. Some writers affirm that the Methonians, seeing five great ships of the Venetians coming with men and provisions toward them, issued down from the walls to the sea side to receive them; but they were all taken captives, numbering over a thousand. All were tied with long ropes, and brought before the tyrant. In his sight they were cruelly slain, except for certain nobles whom Cherseogles, son-in-law to Bajazet, got pardoned. Among them was Andreas Gritti.¹⁴⁰

The Turk had to maintain war in Asia against Ismail Sophi, king of Persia. Sophi was stirred up by God's providence to war against Bajazet, whereby the Christian churches in Europe might have some breathing time, and freedom from the Turk's cruel tyranny and bloodshed. Sophi was a valiant Turk, who with great power and victories had overrun a great compass of the eastern parts of Asia, and defeated many of the generals of Bajazet.

¹⁴⁰ [Andreas Gritti would later become the Doge of the Venetian Republic, 1523-1538 \(in Foxe's time\).](#)

Thus, these Turks were kept occupied through the admirable example of God's justice and providence. And so came it to pass, that these barbarians, being blasphemous against the Son of God, should thus horribly run on to the destruction one of another, being worthily punished with mutual slaughter and bloodshed for their impiety and blasphemy against Christ and his religion. And thereby some rest was given to the Christians in the meantime.

Bajazet, partly discouraged by these victories, partly diseased and languishing from the gout, and also partly broken with age, found himself unequal to the government of that tumultuous kingdom. He began to talk with his nobles about choosing someone to succeed him. The occasion of this provoked inward wars among the Turks. Bajazet had in all six sons; three of them died before him, and three were still alive: to wit, Ahmet, Korkud, and Selim. Bajazet himself had Ahmet most in mind, but the chief of his nobles rather favored Selim. And so he provoked him to stir up war against his father. Though he was overcome in that war, yet through intercession, he was reconciled to his father. Afterwards he was proclaimed emperor again, against his father's will, through the help and favor of the soldiers. Selim then entered the beginning of his kingdom by murdering his own father. In some authors, the story is declared as follows.

The Janizaries had persuaded Bajazet that being unsteady himself, he would therefore do well to constitute some successor. Having assigned Ahmet to succeed him, the Janizaries were offended by Ahmet, because he would not enlarge their stipends, and bribe them. Compassing about the king's palace with their swords hidden under their garments, and with a mighty cry, they required Selim to be appointed as their emperor. When Bajazet answered that he had assigned Ahmet, they refused him, because he was fat, gross, and unfit to the task; but they would have Selim as their emperor, who was stout and warlike. And with this they drew out their swords, crying Selim, Selim! Then Bajazet, giving way to their fury, showed himself content to give them Selim. The Janizaries receiving him, brought him into the palace. Bajazet his father, giving way to him, desired him not to be so hasty and furious in his doings, but to be modest and take heed what he did; and not to follow his fury, but to give way to time, which reveals all things; and to think of himself as a man subject to dangers and jeopardies as other men are.

[380]

Thus speaking, Bajazet resigned his imperial throne and seat to Selim, and went away heavy, entering into a certain order of their religion. Whereupon great acclamations of the people followed, saluting Selim as emperor. Then taking the rule upon himself, he began to govern with great cruelty, destroying many of his nobles who as had stood against him, some with poison, some by other cruel means, and advancing his own side with great honors and promotions.

Not long after Selim was thus settled in his kingdom, Bajazet his father, intending to see and prove how he behaved himself in his government, first entered into his treasure-house, where he found all his riches scattered and gone. Afterward he came into his armory, where all the spoils gotten by war were likewise wasted. Then he entered into the jewel-house, where all his plate and gifts sent from kings and princes were kept; they likewise were dispersed and given away. At length he came into the stable, where also seeing his principal horses wanting, he sighed with himself, and cried vengeance upon Selim. He prepared himself with the remaining treasure, to sail over into Natolia, to his eldest son Ahmet. Passing by an orchard near the seaside, where he had scheduled to take ship, he sat down under a tree, and began to curse his son, and to ask vengeance upon him, for he had so despised his father, and had become so impious a wretch.

Selim hearing of his father's departure, came into the orchard where he was, seeming to be very heavy, and much lamenting that his father would so depart and go away, seeing that he did not desire the government of the empire, but was content with the title alone. "O father, (he said) do not thus secretly depart away; do not procure this shame to your son, who so tenderly loves you. Let me have but the name alone, and you be the emperor indeed. The end of your natural life I shall most patiently expect, which I pray God may long continue." And thus using many fair and flattering words to his father, he commanded a banquet with many dainty delicacies to be brought to him — but tempered and infected with poison. Which as soon as Bajazet had begun to taste, and felt the strength of the poison working in his body, he took his last farewell of his son. Going out of the city accompanied with a great retinue of men, yelling and crying out in the streets, in the middle of his journey he fell down and miserably died (A.D. 1512). Here you may see, good reader, a cursed brood of this Turkish generation, where the father dies in cursing the son, and the son reigns by poisoning his father.

XI. Selim I. — After this wretched Selim had exercised his barbarous cruelty upon his father, with like impiety he sought the destruction of his brethren and their children, beginning with the murder his five nephews, who were the sons of his three brethren who had previously died. His other two brothers who remained alive, Ahmet and Korkud, with their children, were likewise to be destroyed. The one had three sons, whom the father had sent to Selim, his brother and their uncle, with fair and gentle words, to entreat him to be good to their father, offering Selim their duty and service in all things, honoring him also as emperor. But cruel Selim immediately commanded his nephews to be strangled. The father hearing of the cruel murder of his sons, left house and home, and went and hid himself in the mountains. There he lived for a while on herbs and wild honey; but being betrayed by one of his men, he was brought to Selim, and was also strangled.

The wars and conquests of Selim were very many in various parts of Asia. Triumphant there, he departed to Constantinople, intending to spend the rest of his time persecuting the Christians. But in that mean space of time he was stricken with an inward cankered sore, and died after he had reigned about eight years (A.D. 1520).

The reign of this Turk was short in number of years; but in the number of his murders and cruel bloodshed it might seem exceedingly long. He lived more like a beast than a man, for he never spared any of his friends or kindred. He first poisoned his father; his brethren and all his cousins he quelled, leaving none of his kindred alive. Moreover, his chief and principal captains he put to death for small occasions — such as Mustafa, Calogere, Chendeme, Bostang his son-in-law, and Juno Bassa.

It is said that he intended to poison his own son Suleiman, sending him a shirt infected with a poison, because he seemed to somewhat freely speak against the cruel demeanor of his father. But the gift being suspected by his mother, it was given to another who was his chamberlain. Putting on the shirt, he was struck with the poison, and died.

As to this Turk Selim, here it may be noted, by the way, how the secret providence of the Lord kept him occupied with his Turkish wars at home, so that the reformation of Christian religion here in Europe, begun by Martin Luther, might more quietly take some root without disturbance or interruption. For so it appears, that in the days of this Selim, Martin Luther first began to write against the pope's indulgences, which was A.D. 1516.

XII. Suleiman. ¹⁴¹ The only son of Selim, succeeded after his father's death. In the beginning he seemed to some to be simple and sheepish, and not fit for the Turkish government. Therefore certain of his nobles, consulting as to how to depose him, intended to set up another emperor. In this conspiracy, Cajerbeius and Gazelli especially are named. This Cajerbeius was the one who betrayed Campson, sultan of Egypt, to Selim. Now being in consultation with Gazelli and others about this matter, he also revealed them to Suleiman. Therefore Gazelli and his fellows being thus detected, they were put to death by Suleiman, proving that he was not as sheepish as they thought he was, and as more fully appeared by his acts afterwards.

Suleiman, after this execution of the conspirators, taking his voyage into Europe, first besieged Belgrade, in Hungary. It was the strongest fort in the Roman empire, and the chief defense at that time for all of Christendom. The kingdom of Hungary at that time was under the government of Louis, a young king without experience or knowledge. Other princes, and especially the covetous churchmen, so plundered it, that they left him nothing but the bare name and title of his kingdom. Thus being unsupplied both with men and money, he was unable to match such an enemy.

Another advantage which the Turks had in besieging Belgrade, was that the Christian princes at that time were in civil dissension and at variance among themselves. Also the pope with his churchmen were so busy in suppressing Luther and the gospel, then newly springing up, that they minded nothing else, unless it was to maintain their wealth. This pope, Leo X (r. 1513-1521), if he had set his care (as was his duty) so much in stirring up princes against the common enemy, as he was bent on defacing the gospel, and persecuting the true professors of the gospel, Belgrade might have been defended against the Turk.

Certainly whatever else the pope did then, this would have been his duty: setting all other things aside, to have an earnest compassion for so many miserable and lost captives, who had fallen from their faith and religion into the misery and slavery of the Turk, and the thralldom of the devil. He should have sought all means possible to bring them, as lost sheep, into the fold again. This might have been done if prelates and princes, joining together in Christian concord, had loved so well the public glory of Christ, and the souls of Christians, as they regarded their own private, worldly, and frivolous quarrels. And even supposing that the pope had conceived ever so much malice against Luther, and supposing also that his quarrel was good — the public church standing in such danger as it then did by the invasion of the Turk, reason willed, nature led, religion taught, and time required, that a good prelate, forgetting lighter matters, should rather have put his shoulder to excluding so great a danger as was then imminent to himself, and to the universal church of Christ.

[381] A.D. 1521.

But now, his quarrel being unjust, and the cause of Luther being most just and godly, what is to be said or thought of such a prelate? Forbearing the Turk, whom in so dangerous a time, the pope should chiefly have resisted, he instead persecuted the truth which he should specially have maintained.¹⁴²

Suleiman therefore taking this occasion, while our princes were thus at variance, without any resistance or interruption, brought his army to Belgrade (May 1521). The city was but

¹⁴¹ Known as *Suleiman the Magnificent*, or *Suleiman the Lawgiver*. He was born in 1494, ruled 1520-1566. Foxe used the anglicized name *Solyman*; but *Suleiman* is the typical spelling today.

¹⁴² Leo X issued his bull against Luther Jun 15, 1520, and excommunicated him Jan 3, 1521; Leo died Dec 1, 1521.

slenderly defended. The Turk through his underminers, guns, and other engines of war, without great difficulty, and with little loss of his soldiers, soon subdued and overcame it.

After this victory Suleiman rested himself a whole year. Casting in his mind how to make all sure behind him, thought it expedient for his purpose, if he might obtain the island of Rhodes. For that was the only Christian place that remained between him and Asia. Therefore the next year he brought his fleet of 450 ships, and 300,000 men, to besiege it. Rhodes was a mighty and strong island. The inhabitants at the first manfully resisted the Turk, sparing no labor nor pains for the defense of themselves and of all Christendom. But afterwards, being brought to extremity and pinched with penury, also seeing no aid come from the Christians, they began to languish in themselves. The Turks in the meantime cast up two great mountains with strength of hand, two miles off from the city, like rolling trenches before them, that carried them near to the city. At the tops of them they planted their ordnance and artillery to batter the city. The master of the knights of Rhodes was then Philip Villadamus, a Frenchman, in whom no diligence was lacking requisite to the defense of the city. The Rhodians likewise so valiantly behaved themselves upon the walls, that with their shot, all the ditches about the city were filled with the carcasses of dead Turks. Besides this, such a disease reigned in the Turk's camp, that 30,000 of them died. And yet for all this, Suleiman would not cease from his siege. At length, by underminers tearing down the ramparts, and the outermost parts of the city, he won still more and more ground upon the Rhodians. And with his mortar-pieces he so battered the houses, that there was scarcely a free place left standing in all the city. And thus the siege continued for five or six months. And yet all this while, no help came to them from the Christians. Therefore, the Rhodians being out of all hope, through the advice of Villadamus, yielded themselves to the Turk, on condition that he would spare them life and goods, which compact the Turk kept with them faithfully and truly.

Thus Suleiman got the noble Isle of Rhodes, to his great glory and to the utter shame of all Christian princes, and to the ruin of all Christendom. But it was not without great loss to his army. At one assault, 20,000 Turks about the walls were slain with fire, sword, stones, and other engines. By this it may be conjectured what these Rhodians might or would have won, if succor had come to them from other Christian princes, as they looked for. This city was won on Christmas-day, A.D. 1522.

This conquest of Rhodes being secured, Suleiman, four years later, brought back his army into Hungary, where he found no one to resist him but Louis the young king. Being accompanied with a small army, and not able to match with the Turk, yet with hasty rashness and a vain hope of victory, he would set upon him. If he had but stayed a little he would have prospered better. For John Vaivoda, a captain well exercised in Turkish wars, was not far off, coming with a sufficient force of able soldiers. But Paulus, the archbishop of Colosse, a Franciscan friar, a man more bold than wise, troubled all their doings with his temerity and rashness. For the army of the Hungarians contained in all but 24,000 horsemen and footmen. At length coming to the battle, and being compassed about with a great multitude of the Turk's army, they were brought into great distress. The Turks twice fired their cannons against the Christian army, yet scarcely was any Christian touched. This was thought to be done on purpose, because at the time the special gunners of the Turks were Christians, whom for the sake of their fellow Christians they spared. Then the Turk's horsemen, coming upon the rear of the Christian army, compassed them about, and because of their multitude, they charged over their horsemen. Among whose slain were the archbishop of Colosse, with the bishops of Strygone and Varadine, and many other nobles besides. The king himself was compelled to flee into a marsh, where falling from his horse,

and being heavy laden with the harness, he was not able to rise again, but miserably perished there.

Suleiman the Turk marvelled at the foolishness of Louis, who with so small an army would presume to encounter with such a great host of 200,000. This battle in Hungary was fought in A.D. 1526.

After the decease of Louis, Ferdinand succeeded in the kingdom, being duke of Austria and king of Hungary. Then Suleiman, setting contention between John Vaivoda and Ferdinand for the kingdom of Hungary, marched to the city of Buda, which in a short time he also made to surrender, on condition that they would escape with their lives and goods.

In the year 1529, Ferdinand, king of Hungary, recovered several holds, and warring against his enemy John Vaivoda, expelled him from his kingdom. Whereupon Vaivoda, flying to the Turk, desired his aid. The Turk, glad to take that occasion, with great preparation addressed himself to return into Hungary. There recovering again the city of Buda, which Ferdinand had gotten from him a little before, he removed his army into Austria, despoiling and destroying along the way all that came to his hands, showing many examples of great cruelty and tyranny that is most lamentable to hear and understand. For some, he put out their eyes, some he cut off their hands, of some their ears and noses. These are examples of the horrible and barbarous tyranny that this wretched Turk perpetrated along the way coming toward Vienna, a noble city in Austria. Besides these, he took 30,000 captives along the way, and led them into most miserable slavery.

Among other strongholds, as the Turks came by the way, was a castle called Altenburch, strongly situated by nature, and defended by craft. The Turk did not intend to bypass this castle, because he would make all things sure behind him. So he began to make his assault, and lay his ordinance against it. The warders and keepers of the castle, as soon as the Turk began to lay siege against them, made no resistance. Out of womanly cowardice, they sent their messengers to the Turk to yield themselves, ready to do his commandment, and to further him with their supplies. Among them were 300 Bohemians who were commanded to follow the army, so that the Turk might learn by them what strength was in the city of Vienna; also where the king was, and what was to be done for winning it.

The Turk understood from them how all things stood, and how there were but 20,000 men in Vienna able to bear armor, and that other cities of Austria would soon yield if that were taken, and that Vienna had but two months supply of food, and that the king was of late in Bohemia. The Turk being certified of all these things, had no doubt in his mind of victory, and so he made speed toward Vienna. First coming to Neapolis, a city but eight miles distant from Vienna, he required them to yield themselves. Even so, the Neapolitans withstood, and repulsed them valiantly. Then the Turks assigned a place for pitching of their tents; and because it seemed somewhat too little for such a great multitude, they took in more ground, compassing a seven mile circuit. The multitude of his army which he planted there, is accounted by some to be 250,000 soldiers. The Turk thus being planted, he made daily excursions around the country of Austria, especially around the city of Vienna, wasting and despoiling with great cruelty and murder among the poor Christians.

[382]

Moreover, to make all things more sure for the preparation of the siege, scouts were sent abroad and ambushments were laid on the sides of the river Danube, to provide that no aid nor provisions should be brought to Vienna. It so pleased the providence of the Lord (who disposes all things) that three days before the coming of the Turk, Frederick the earl

palatine, who was then assigned by the empire to take the charge of Vienna, had come down by the river Danube, with 14,000 men, and with a certain troop of horsemen, well equipped and picked for the purpose. After Frederick's arrival, provision was also appointed to follow shortly after by the river.

In the meantime, those who had the carriage and transport, hearing how the ways were laid, and all the passages for ten miles around Vienna were stopped by the Turks, although they knew the city to stand in great need of provisions, they saw there was no other remedy. And rather than have it come into the enemy's hand, they thought it best to sink their boats with their carriage, and so they did. Thereby, although the Christians lacked their relief, yet the Turks were disappointed of their prey and purpose.

The captains who had the keeping of the city, were chiefly Frederick the earl palatine, William Rogendorff, and Nicolas earl of Salme. They saw themselves so straightened contrary to their expectation, and had great cause to be discouraged. Yet calling their courage to themselves, they consulted together for the best way to be taken. They saw that the little city of Neapolis (mentioned above), eight miles distant from them, had so valiantly withstood the Turks, that in one day they sustained seven assaults against the main force of the Turkish army. By their example and manful standing, and being more animated and encouraged, they determined to abide the utmost before they would give up. First plucking down all the suburbs and buildings outside the walls by which the enemy might have any succor, they commanded all the farmers and inhabitants around the city to save themselves, and to bring their goods within the walls. Those places which were weak within the walls, they made strong. Around the towers and munition of the walls they provided ramparts and bulwarks eighty feet distant one from another, to keep off the shot. And every man had his place and standing awarded to him upon the wall, and his office appointed for what to do. But especially that side of the city which lies to the river Danube, they fortified in the best manner. For only that way now remained for victuals to be transported from the Bohemians to them. Therefore eight ensigns were assigned to keep the bridge. And in the plain, which was like an island enclosed within the river, a sufficient garrison of horsemen were placed, lying within gunshot of the city, that if any grain or victuals were sent from the Bohemians, they might provide for it to be safely brought into the city.

These things thus being disposed and set in order, Lord William Rogendorff, to test the strength of the Turks, made diverse sallies out with his horsemen. This was much against the minds of the Austrians, who knowing the manner of the Turks, thought it better to suffer them, lest they might be wearied with time, or consumed for lack of victuals. Among many skirmishes which the Christians had with the Turks, one especially was unfortunate to our men. Certain of the horsemen spying a small troop of the Turks scattering abroad from their company, made out after them. They were suddenly and guilefully enclosed by the Turks, before they could return to the gates of the city. And so were all taken alive; of whom three were sent from the Turks into the city, to declare to the Viennians what strength they had seen in the camp of their adversaries, and to solicit them to yield their city for fear of the punishment which would follow. The rest they reserved for torments and punishment, whom in the sight of the whole army, and of the Christians (who were to tell of it to the citizens), they caused every man to be drawn and quartered by horses.

After this was done, the barbarous Turk immediately sent his herald to talk with the captains of the city, whether they would yield the city upon honest conditions, or else abide the arbitrament of war. If they would gently submit themselves, they would have all gentleness shown to them. If they would be stubborn, and stand to their defense, he would

also stand to his siege, so that he would spare neither man, woman, or child. To this the captains answered that they were contented that Suleiman should stand to his siege, and do his utmost, whatever he would or could. As for them, they were resolved to defend themselves and their city so long as they could. The event and result of victory, they said, was doubtful, and many times it happens, that those who begin the war, are wearied sooner than those who are challenged.

Suleiman, disdaining this answer, first burned and consumed all the villages, houses and places round about the city, poisoning the springs and fountains which gave water to the city. And stopping all passages, so that no relief should have a way to them, he began to approach the city, with three great camps; sending word in scorn and insult by one of his captains, that if they stood in need of soldiers, he would send them the 300 Bohemians (mentioned a little earlier) to aid them in their defense. To whom the palatine answered that they had more soldiers in the city than they needed. As for the Bohemians who had yielded, he might do with them what he would, for Vienna stood in no great need of them.

In the meantime, a messenger coming from Ferdinand was privately let in by night into the city. He brought word that they should occupy the men in keeping out the enemy awhile; for it would not be long before both Ferdinand and his brother Charles, with the strength of all Germany, would be ready to rescue them. At this message the hearts of the soldiers began to be cheered somewhat, and to scorn the multitude of the adversaries, whose army extended in compass seven miles round the city walls.

In the meantime Suleiman beat down to the ground the ramparts, with all the suburbs of the city, and did this in such a short time, that the hearts of the inhabitants were appalled with fear, lest the Turk with celerity and violence should prevail against the walls, as he did in beating down the ramparts. No doubt the Turk had put the city in great hazard, if night coming on had not broken off the siege for that day.

In the meantime, the citizens labored all night in repairing and refreshing the walls, to make all things sure against the next assault. The next day early in the morning, the Turks approaching the city again for a new assault, thinking to scale the walls, were so repulsed and manfully resisted by the Germans, that the ditches around the walls could not be seen for the bodies of the dead Turks that filled them — so that the Turks were obliged to fight standing upon the bodies of the slain.

It happened at the same time, that a company of the Turks being seen wandering out of order, Captain Rogendorff with two legions of horsemen issuing out of the city gate called Sahnaria, and passing closely under the hillside, so set upon them, that they slew a great number of them. The rest, driven to take the river, they destroyed, and so they retired back to the city. By this victory, Captain Rogendorff began to be terrible to the Turks. For so many were slain in the skirmish (as it was known afterwards), that 5,300 horsemen and footmen, scarcely 150 escaped alive.

Suleiman thought to try this matter another way. And so, bringing his forces toward the gate called the King's Gate, making his trenches and bulwarks there, he planted his ordnance, with the violence of which the walls were so battered and shaken, that no man was able to stand there. The Turk, seeing two great breaches made in the wall, commanded his soldiers in the dark smoke of the gunpowder, to press into the city.

[383] A.D. 1529

The same thing was also done at the Scottish Tower, by which the city was invaded in two places at one time. The inhabitants at first began to withstand them, new soldiers still coming in the place of those who were slain. And so this assault continued more than six hours, our men began at length to languish and faint, not only in strength but also in courage, by which the city was in great danger, had not the two captains, Rogendorff in one place, and the earl of Salme in the other, manfully encouraged the soldiers to abide the brunt, and to bear for awhile the violence of the Turks, promising that immediately they would have aid from Ferdinand.

In the meantime the Turks came so thick for greediness of victory, scaling, climbing, and fighting upon the walls, that had it not been for the press and throng of the great multitude of the Turks, coming so thick that one of them could not fight for another, Vienna would have been taken and utterly lost. But by the policy of the captains, giving a sign within the city, as though new soldiers were being called for, our men began to be encouraged, and the Turks' hearts began to be discomfited.

When Suleiman saw his army repulsed the second time, he attempted a new way, purposing to overthrow the city by undermining it. In this work especially, he used the help of the Illyrians, of whom he had a great number in his camp, expert in that kind of feat. These Illyrians beginning to break up the earth at the gate Carinthia, and coming near the foundations of the tower which they had attempted to burst into, could not work so closely under the ground, that they were not perceived by certain men above who, countermining against them, and filling their trenches as they went with gunpowder, so conveyed their train that when fire would be set to it, the explosion would burst out by the trenches of the enemies. This done, suddenly the ground beneath made a great shaking, so that the tower was split apart, and all the underminers of the Turks, working in their trenches, were smothered and destroyed, numbering (it was supposed afterward) 8,000 persons.

When Suleiman saw that this way too would not serve, he received private intelligence that the walls about the gates of Stubarium were negligently kept; thus he might have easier entrance there. He secretly moved about ten garrisons of fresh soldiers, so as the townsmen would not perceive them. These garrisons came so suddenly upon them, that they had filled their ditches, and were upon the top of the fortresses, before our men were aware of them, or could make themselves ready to resist them. For although there was no lack of soldiers within the city, yet the whole brunt of the siege lay especially at the two gates, from where the soldiers could not be well removed. However, men were sent to the spot now attacked. And thus the assault continued terrible and doubtful until (the dark night coming upon them) they could not well know one from the other. In this affair, more than 5,000 Turks were counted slain.

Then Captain Rogendorff, commending the valiant standing of his soldiers, providing with all diligence against another assault, closed the breaches of the walls, and prepared all things necessary for resistance. The next morning, which was dark and misty, the Turks thinking to anticipate our men with their sudden coming, began to busily mount the walls.

It would require a long treatise here to describe the great distress and danger that the city was in for the three days following. During all that time there was no rest, no intermission, nor diligence lacking either in the enemy's fighting against the city, or in our men in defending it. For the Turks, besides the great ordnance with which (as with a great tempest of gunshot) they never ceased battering the walls, and beating the fortifications of the city, they also sent such heaps and multitudes of the Turks to scale and climb the walls, that notwithstanding all their defeats, the number of them never seemed diminished. Till at last

the soldiers of the Turks, perceived themselves unable to prevail by any means, but only to attack in danger of life, and to do no good. They began to wrangle among themselves, repining against their dukes and captains, imputing the whole cause to them, that the city was still untaken; and so the siege ceased for that time.

After this, Suleiman had purposed with his last and strongest siege to test the city to the utmost that he was able to do, and he had encouraged his soldiers to prepare themselves. But the soldiers showed themselves very unwilling to return again to where they had so often been repulsed before. So that a great commotion began to rise in the Turk's camp. When the rumor came to Suleiman's ears, he sent his grand captain to keep all the soldiers in order and obedience, or if they would be stubborn, to compel them, whether they would or not, to accomplish his commandment. Coming to the soldiers, he showed them the great Turk's message. And to animate and encourage them, he declared that the opportunity was not to be neglected, nor could they give up now, after so many assaults without great shame. If they would sustain but one brunt more, the victory would be in their own hands. The townsmen, he said, were wasted, and their victuals spent; and to further inflame their minds, he promised them not only great thanks and reward of their emperor, but also the whole spoil of the city.

But when all this could not stir up the tired Turks, using compulsion where persuasion would not serve, he appointed a number of horsemen to be set at their backs to force them either to go forward, or if they refused, to destroy them with guns and spears. The Turks seeing themselves in such a strait, that whether they went or tarried, it was the same peril to them, they would still not set forward unless the captain would take the lead before them. He spoke thus: "Forsake your faith and allegiance, and betray the emperor of Constantinople to the Christians if you will; but I will discharge my duty towards the commonwealth and my emperor." And with that word he advanced his ensign, making toward the city walls. When others followed him, and still more and more pressed after him, it came to pass that whole bodies of them were overthrown and slain by our men upon the walls, before it was known what they meant. Others terrified by their example, turned back and left their array. Winding themselves along by-ways and under covert of the hills, they returned again to their tents. And so it came to pass, that the strength of the enemies daily more and more decreasing, they had less hope every day of obtaining the city. For besides the innumerable slaughter of Turks upon the walls, the townsmen also watching the forages and purveyors of the Turks, as they ranged about for victuals for the camp, as occasion served them encompassed and encountered them. So that, of a whole legion, scarcely a tenth returned alive, by which the courage of the enemy began to faint greatly. As our men began to receive more hope and courage, so the Turks began still more to droop and to languish with despair. So that at length they scarcely dared appear outside the bounds where they were entrenched, except in light skirmishes, when they were challenged by our men to come out and to show themselves.

Suleiman perceiving his soldiers thus daily to go to wreck, of whom he had already lost more than 80,000, and that with long tarrying he could do no good, also being in lack of forage, for the country about him was wasted, he began to consult with his captains and counsellors, what remained best to be done. Most advised him to raise his siege, and provide for himself. The chief motive was that he heard Frederick, the Palatine, was coming with a great army at Ratisbon towards Vienna (about 200 miles away). When Suleiman had intelligence of this, thinking it not best to await the coming of the Palatine, made haste with bag and baggage to remove his camp, and to retire. First sending his carriage before him, he made speed himself, with his army to follow shortly after.

The Viennians, when they heard of the departure of the Turks, though at first scarcely believing it to be true, but afterward being certified of their departure, and how it was in a flight, they greatly desirous to make their way out of the city after them.

[384]

In this pursuit, though the presence of the Palatine with his army, had he been there, might have stood them in great stead, yet they took the opportunity, and issued out of the city, setting after the Turks with their horsemen. First passing the tents (where the Turks had pitched their pavilions) they made such a pursuit of them, that in a little time they overtook the rearward of the army. They made such havoc and destruction that, as the author reports, there was not a shot discharged, nor a weapon drawn, nor a stroke struck by the pursuers, which did not tell on the enemy.

Thus through the merciful protection of Almighty God, Austria was delivered from the fierce and barbarous hostility of the cruel Turks. Notwithstanding that neither Ferdinand, the king, nor his brother the emperor, were present, but only the power of God, that city was defended through the valiant efforts of the worthy Germans. The safety and deliverance of all these western parts of Christendom consisted in the defense of that city. For which immortal praise and thanks be unto our immortal God in Christ our Lord, according as he has most graciously and worthily deserved from us. In this, by the way, take notice gentle reader, how and in what manner God's blessing goes with the true followers of his religion. For the Turks in so many battles and sieges had never before been so repelled and foiled, as at this time in encountering the protestants and defenders of sincere religion. This city of Vienna was besieged and delivered in A.D. 1529. The assaults of the Turk against the city numbered twenty, and his repulses were as many. The number of his army which he first brought was 250,000, of which more than 80,000 were slain.

In the year 1537, Suleiman — who could not be quiet at home, nor rest in peace — returned from his wars in Asia, entering into Europe with 270 ships, great and little. He set upon Corcyra, another island belonging to the Venetians. He besieged it ten days, wasting and burning the towns and fields as he went, besides the destruction of many people there, part of whom he slew, and part he led away captives. From there he sailed to Zacynthus and Cythera, another island not far from Corcyra, bordering the coasts of Epinis and Greece. There by night he suddenly invaded the husbandmen in villages and fields, who were sleeping and expecting no harm. He drew them out of their houses and possessions, men and women, besides children, numbering 900, whom he made his bondslaves. Moreover, he burned their houses, and carried away all the goods and cattle outside the cities of Zacynthus and Cythera.

From there the Turks turned their course to the siege of Egina, a rich and populous island, lying between Greece and Asia. At first the Eginians manfully resisted them in battle, and would likely have prevailed. But at length, wearied and oppressed with innumerable thousands of fresh Turks, continually sent in to rescue the others who were overcome, they were compelled to flee the city. The cruel Turks, with much labor, and violence of their great ordinance brought out of their ships, subdued Egina and tore it down to the ground. After the Turk had burned their houses, and ransacked their goods, he commanded that every one of the male citizens and inhabitants were to be slain. The women, both noble and ignoble, with their infants, were shipped to Constantinople — led away to perpetual misery and slavery. This was A.D. 1537.

In the year 1540, the restless Turk made his return toward Hungary. Passing by Dalmatia, he laid siege to the town called Novum Castellum, defended by the Spaniards. In this town, because they refused to yield themselves, all the inhabitants and soldiers were put to the sword, and every one slain. This Novum Castellum, or Newcastle, was a strong fort of the Christians, which now being in the Turk's power, he had great advantage over all those quarters of Dalmatia, Stiria, Carinthia, and Hungaria. From there he proceeded further, keeping his course into Hungary, where he planted his forces against the city of Buda.

Buda (now Budapest) was a principal city in Hungary, under the government of George Monachus. He had quarrelled with king Ferdinand, and said that he would never again trust the promises of Christians. Immediately upon that, he sent to Suleiman the Turk, for aid against the Christians, promising that he would surrender to him free possession of Hungary, if he would come and vanquish the army of Ferdinand lying around the siege of Buda. The Turk did not tarry long, but glad of the occasion, he came with a mighty army into Hungary, and soon overpowered the host of Ferdinand. He got the city into his own hands, commanding George Monachus with his mother, to follow after his camp.

In the history of Joannes Ramus, it follows that once Suleiman the Turk had prevailed against the city of Buda, and against other parts of Hungary, then by the assent of the empire, one Joachim, duke of Brandenburg, prince elector, was appointed with a powerful army of chosen soldiers from all nations, to recover the city of Buda from the Turk, and to deliver the other parts of Christendom from the fear of the Turk, A.D. 1542. Joachim, at his first setting out, appeared so courageous and valiant, as if he would have conquered the whole world. But this great heat was cooled in such a short time by the Turk, that before any great danger confronted him, Joachim was glad to be discharged from the voyage, and with shame enough, he returned home again. And would to God that he had left behind him in the fields no more than his own shame. For the enemies having intelligence of his cowardly departure, thinking to work some point of mastery or victory before his going, set upon the right wing of his army, out of which they took away with them over 500 strong and valiant soldiers, not killing them, but carrying them away alive. For them it would have been much better to have stood to their weapons, and died manfully upon the Turks, than by yielding themselves, to be deprived of their weapons and armor, and to be left to the cursed courtesy of the foul Turks. What courtesy was shown in the sequel, soon appeared. For after the Turks had led them out of Hungary into their own dominions, in a most horrible way, they disfigured and mangled them, and so sent them abroad throughout Greece, to be witnesses of the Turkish victory. Their punishment was this: first, they had their right arm thrust through with a red hot iron, by which they would be unable and unfit for any labor or warfare; secondly, their heads were shaven to the very skulls, in the manner of our friars and monks when they are newly shaven; thirdly, they had all their limbs cruelly and shamefully mangled and mutilated.

But to return again to the city of Buda, from where we digressed, here we must not omit what falsehood and what cruelty the Turks used towards the Christians there after their victory. For after Suleiman the Turk had given his promise of safety and life, upon the men of Buda yielding and submitting to him, a short time later he picked a quarrel with them for selling oxen to the Christians. For bargaining with them, he slew all the magistrates of the city of Buda. As in all other cities, wherever the Christians yielded to him, he never, or very rarely, kept his promise with them. Nor did any Christians ever succeed better with the Turk, than those who most valiantly resisted him.

Just as his promise with the magistrates of Buda was false and wretched, so his cruelty with the soldiers was much more notorious and abominable. For two cohorts or bands of Christian soldiers came alive into his hands. When he seemed at first to grant pardon of life to them, he commanded that they should put on their armor again, and dispose themselves in order and battle array, in the warlike manner of the Christians. When they had readily accomplished this according to his commandment, and when riding about the ranks, he had diligently viewed and beheld them a certain time, at length he commanded them to put off their armor again. This done, he picked out certain of the tallest and strongest of them; the rest he commanded by his soldiers coming behind them with swords, to be cut in pieces and slain. Of the others, whom he had elected and chosen, some he set for marks and targets to be shot at; some he appointed to his two sons, for them to slash with their swords and test their strength as to which of them could give the deeper wound, and (as they termed it) the fairer blow, by which the most blood might flow out of their Christian bodies.

[385] A.D. 1537.

After winning Buda, the Turk, purposing not to cease till he had subdued and brought under his obedience all of Hungary, proceeded further with his army. First conquered a stronghold of the Christians named Pestum or Pesta, where a great number of Christian soldiers were slain, and many were led away to crueler affliction.

Then he came to another castle called Walpo, situated in the confines of Bosnia, Croatia, and Hungary. He besieged this fort or castle for three months. No rescue or aid was sent to them, either from Ferdinand, king of Hungary, or from any other Christian prince or princess. At length the fort was given up to the Turk; but it was more through the false treachery or cowardly heart of the soldiers than of the captain. In this is to be noted an example that is not unworthy of memory. For when the cowardly soldiers, either for fear or flattery, would surrender themselves and the place to the Turk, contrary to the mind of the captain, who in no case would agree to their yielding. Thinking to find favor with the Turk, they apprehended their captain, and gave him to Suleiman. But see how the justice of God, sometimes by the hand of the enemy, disposes the end of things to the rewarding of virtue, and the punishing of vice. For where they thought to save themselves by endangering the faithful captain, the event turned clean contrary. So that the Turk was bountiful and very liberal to the captain, and the soldiers, notwithstanding that they had all yielded themselves, they were all commanded to be slain.

The Turk proceeding from one fortified town to another, took them, and greatly and cruelly extended his conquests throughout Hungary till he came to Alba. There the Turks, using the occasion of a misty darkness, approached the walls, and got up to a certain fortress where the Germans were, before our men could well perceive them. There they pressed in so thick, and in such numbers, that even though the Christian soldiers, standing strongly to the defense of their lives, did what valiant men in cases of such extremity were able to do — yet being over-matched by the multitude of the Turks, and the suddenness of their coming, they gave way. They sought to retire to the inward walls. Between the outward walls and inward gate of the city, there was a strait, or narrow passage, cast up in the manner of a bank or causeway. This passage happened to be barred and stopped. Because of this, the poor soldiers were forced to throw themselves into the ditch, thinking to swim as well as they could into the city. Many of them sticking in the mud were drowned, one pressing upon another; many were slain by their enemies coming behind them. A few who could swim out were received 'into the city, but the chief captains and warders of the town were slain there.

The citizens being destitute of their principal captains and warriors, were in great perplexity and doubt among themselves as to what to do. Some thought it good to yield, some counselled the contrary. Thus, while the citizens were distracted, the magistrates, thinking to depend on the Turk's gentleness, sent out one of their heads to the Turk, who in the name of them all would surrender the city to him, and become tributaries, on condition that they might enjoy liberty of life and goods. This was granted in the Turkish faith and assurance. The soldiers who were within the city, putting off their armor, were discharged and sent away. Now see what happened to the yielding citizens. When the Turk had entered the town, and visited the sepulcher of the kings, for three or four days he pretended much clemency toward the citizens, as though he did not come to oppress them, but to be revenged upon Ferdinand their king, and to deliver them from the servitude of the Germans. On the fourth day, all the chief and head men of the city were commanded to appear before the Turk in a plain not far from the city, as though they would come to swear to the Turk; it was where condemned persons were usually executed. When the citizens were assembled in great number, and in their best attire, at the Turk's command, contrary to his faith and promise, suddenly a general slaughter was made of them all. This was the end of the citizens of Alba.

The false and cruel Turk was thus raging in Hungary, and intended to further rage without any mercy and pity for the Christians. He might easily have prevailed and gone wherever he would then, for Charles the emperor, and Francis the French king, were at the same time in war and hostility; and also other Christian princes, such as Henry, duke of Brunswick against John Frederick, duke of Saxony; also princes and rulers were contending among themselves. Behold the gracious providence of our Lord and God towards us, who seeing the misery, and having pity on his poor Christians, suddenly reined in this raging beast. He brought him out of Europe into his own country again, on the occasion of the Persians, who were then in great preparation of war against the Turks, and had invaded his dominion. By this, the Turks were kept occupied there, fighting with the Persians for a long time (1532-1555). These wars at length being achieved and finished (in which the Turk lost great battles, with the slaughter of many thousands of his Turks) he was not only provoked by the instigation of certain evilly-disposed Hungarians, but he was also induced by the discord of Christian princes, to return again into Europe hoping to subdue all parts to his dominion. Once he had levied an army, incredible in multitude, see again the merciful providence and protection of our God toward his people. As the Turk was intending to set out with his innumerable multitude against the Christians, the hand of the Lord sent such a pestilence throughout the Turk's army and dominions, reaching from Bithynia and Thrace, to Macedonia and also to Hungary, that all the Turk's possessions seemed nothing but a heap of dead corpses, whereby his voyage for that time was stopped, and he was almost compelled to seek a new army.

Besides this plague, which was worse to them than any war, other domestic calamities, through God's providence, happened to Suleiman, the great rover and robber of the world. These kept him at home, and from vexing the Christians, especially concerning his eldest son Mustafa. Mustafa being hated and feared by Rustanus, the chief counsellor of the Turk, and by Rosa, the Turk's concubine, and afterwards by his wife, he was complained of to his father, then accused, and at length brought into such suspicion and displeasure by the Turks, that his father had him sent to his pavilion, where six Turks with masks were appointed to put him to death. They put (in their manner) a small cord or bow-string full of knots around his neck. Throwing him down on the ground, not allowing him to speak one word to his father, with the twisting of it strangled him to death. His father was standing in a secret corner nearby, and beheld it. This fact being known, afterwards when the Turk

would have given to another son, called Gianger, the treasures, horse, armor, ornaments, and province of Mustafa his brother, Gianger cried out for sorrow at his brother's death. He said to his father, "Shame on you, you impious and wretched dog, traitor, murderer! I cannot call you father. Take the treasures, the horse and armor of Mustafa to yourself." And with that, Gianger took out his dagger, and thrust it through his own body. Thus Suleiman was the murderer and parricide of his own sons. This was A.D. 1552.

In this is to be noted the singular providence and love of the Lord towards his afflicted Christians. For this Mustafa, just as he was courageous and greatly expert and exercised in all practices of war, so he had a cruel heart, maliciously set to shed the blood of the Christians. Therefore, we have great cause to congratulate, and to give thanks to God, for the happy removal of Mustafa.

[386]

We may conceive no less hope and good comfort from our loving Lord, to think that, after these sore afflictions of his Christians under these twelve Turks recited above, our merciful God now intends some gracious good work toward Christendom, to reduce and release us from this long and miserable Turkish captivity, by taking away these young imps of this impious generation, before they might work their conceived malice against us. The Lord therefore be glorified and praised. Amen.

Moreover, as I was writing of this, a certain writing out of Germany opportunely came to my hands, certifying such news and victory recently achieved against the Turk, that it may not a little increase our hope, and comfort us, regarding the decay and ruin of the Turk's power and tyranny against us. The news is that the Turkish tyrant had besieged with an army of 30,000 men, the famous strong town and castle of Jula (Gyula) in Hungary (lying forty Dutch miles beyond the river Danube). The town sustained many grievous assaults for six weeks. But God, through his great mercy and goodness, so comforted the town, and the poor Christians in it, at their earnest prayers, that the Turk, with all his host, was driven back by the hands of a general named Karetshim Laslaw, and his valiant company. They not only defended the town, but also constrained the Turks to retire, to their great shame and confusion, with a great slaughter of the Turkish rabble — for which the everlasting God be praised forever.

The manner of the overthrow was this. As the general saw his advantage, with Captain George, and other horsemen of the Silesians and Hungarians, they set on the rearward of the Turks and killed about 8,000 of them, and also took some of their artillery. They followed them so fast, the Turks were constrained to flee into a marshy ground, and to break the wheels of the rest of their artillery to save themselves. Thereby the Hungarians got a very rich booty, besides rescuing from the Turks a great number of Christian prisoners.

Suleiman reigned forty-six years. He began the same year in which Emperor Charles V was crowned, which was A.D. 1520. And so he continued by God's permission, as a scourge to the Christians, till the year 1566. By one of his concubines, Suleiman had his eldest son Mustafa. By another concubine called Rosa, he had four sons: Mohamet, Bajazet, Zelymus, and Gianger. Of his sons, Mustafa and Gianger were slain (as you heard before) by their own father. And thus much concerning the wretched tyranny of the Turks.

The Suffering of Christians under the Turks.

Thus from time to time the church of Christ has had little or no rest in this earth — what for the heathen emperors on the one side; the proud pope on another side; the barbarous Turk

on the third side. For these are and have been from the beginning, the three principal and capital enemies of the church of Christ. The cruelty and malice of these enemies against Christ's people has been such, that to it is hard to say which of them most exceeded in cruelty of persecution. But it may be thought that the bloody and beastly tyranny of the Turks incomparably surmounts all the afflictions and cruel slaughters that were ever seen in any age, or read of in any history. There is no history so perfect, no writer so diligent, who writing about the miserable tyranny of the Turks, is able to express or comprehend the horrible examples of the unspeakable cruelty and slaughter exercised by these twelve Turkish tyrants upon poor Christian men's bodies, within the compass of these later three hundred years. Though a sufficient relating of this cannot be made, nor the number of casualties expressed, yet to give the reader some general guess or view of it, let us first consider what dominions and empires, how many countries, kingdoms, provinces, cities, towns, strongholds, and forts, these Turks have surprised and won from the Christians. In all these victories, there is almost no place to where the Turks ever came and subdued, where they did not either slay all the inhabitants, or lead away most of them into such captivity and slavery, that they did not live long afterward; or else, they so lived that death might almost have been more tolerable.

As in the time of the first persecutions of the Roman emperors, the saying was that no man could take a step in all of Rome, without treading on a martyr. So it may be said here. There is almost not a town, city, or village in all of Asia, Greece, or in a great part of Europe and Africa, whose streets have not flowed with the blood of the Christians whom the cruel Turks have murdered. There is to be seen in histories, heaps of soldiers slain, of men and women cut in pieces, of children stuck on poles and stakes, whom those detestable Turks most spitefully (and in the sight of their parents) used to gore to death. Some they dragged by their horse tails, or famished to death; some they tore in pieces, tying their arms and legs to four horses; others they made targets to shoot at; on some they tried their swords to see how deep they could cut and slash. The aged and feeble they tread under their horses; women and children were barbarously murdered without regard to sex. Whether the Christians yielded to them or not, it is all the same. Just as there is no truth in their promises, so in their victories there is no sense of manhood or mercy, but they make havoc of all.

So the citizens of Croja, after they had yielded and were promised their lives, were all horribly destroyed. In Mysia, after the king had given himself to the Turks, having promise of life, Mahomet the Turk slew him with his own hands. The princes of Rasia had both their eyes put out, with red hot basins set before them. Theodosia, otherwise called Capha, was also surrendered to the Turk, having like assurance of life and safety; and yet, contrary to the league, the citizens were put to the sword and slain. At the winning and yielding of Lesbos, what a number of young men and children were put upon sharp stakes and poles, and so thrust through! At the winning of the city of Buda, what tyranny was shown and exercised against the poor Christians who had yielded themselves, and against the two dukes, Christopher Bisserer and John Tranbinger — contrary to the handwritten promise of the Turk — as seen in the history of Melchior Soiterus.

The like is also to be read in the history of Bernard de Breydenbach. Writing of the taking of Hydruntum, a city in Apulia, he testifies of the miserable slaughter of the young men there; of old men trodden under the horses' feet; of matrons and maidens horribly outraged and murdered; of women with child cut and torn in pieces; of the priests slain in the churches; and of the archbishop of that city, who, being an aged man, and holding the cross in his hands, was cut asunder with a wooden saw, etc. The same Bernard, also writing of the overthrow of Nigropontus, otherwise called Chalcides (A.D. 1471), describes the like terrible

slaughter which was exercised there, where the Turk, after his promise was given to the contrary, most cruelly caused all the youth of Italy to be pricked upon sharp stakes; some to be dashed against hard stones, others to be cut asunder in the middle, and others put to death with various kinds of torments. It was so much, that all the streets and ways of Chalcides flowed with the blood of those who were slain there. In this history the writer records one memorable example of maidenly courage, worthy to be noted and commended by all Christians. The history is told of the pretor's daughter of that city. Being his only daughter father, and noted for her singular beauty, she was saved from the slaughter, and brought to Mahomet the Turk. But refusing to join the Turk's seraglio (harem), or embrace the Mahometan faith, she was commanded to be slain, and so died she a martyr.

The same cruelty was shown to those who kept the castle; afterwards yielding themselves upon hope of the Turk's promise, they were slain every one. What should I say of the miserable slaughter of Methone and its citizens, dwelling in Peloponnesus?

[387] A.D. 1566.

Seeing no remedy, but that they must come into the Turks' hands, they set the barn on fire where they were gathered together, men, women, and children; some women also voluntarily cast themselves into the sea, rather than sustain the Turks' captivity.

It is miserable to behold, long to recite, and incredible to believe all the cruel acts and horrible slaughters wrought by these miscreants against the Christians in all places of the world, both in Asia and Africa, but especially in Europe. Who is able to recite the innumerable societies and companies of the Grecians martyred by the Turks' sword in Achaia, Attica, Thessaly, Macedonia, Epirus, and all Peloponnesus? That was besides the island of Rhodes and other islands in the adjacent sea, about fifty-two in number. Patmos was one of these, where St. John wrote his Revelations. Where did the Turks ever set foot, that the blood of Christians was not shed there, without pity or measure? And what place or province is there almost anywhere in the world, where the Turks either have not pierced, or are not likely to enter shortly? In Thrace, and throughout the coasts of the Danube, in Bulgaria, Dalmatia, in Servia, Transylvania, Bosnia in Hungaria, also in Austria, it will pain any Christian heart to remember what havoc they have made of Christian men's bodies. At the siege of Moldavia and many other places; also at the battle of Varna, where Ladislaus, king of Poland, with almost his entire army were slain, through the rashness of the pope's cardinal; at Xabiacchus, Lyssus, Dynastrum; at the siege of Gunza, and of the faithful town Scorad, where the number of shots against their walls at the siege, were reckoned at 2,539. Likewise at the siege of Vienna, where all the Christian captives were brought before the whole army and slain, and many were drawn and quartered; but especially at the conquest of Constantinople mentioned above: also at Croja and Methone — what beastly cruelty was shown is unspeakable. For as in Constantinople, Mahomet, the drunken Turk, never rose from dinner, without causing every day, for his sport, 300 Christian captives of the nobles of that city to be slain before his face; so also in Methone, after his captain Omar had sent to him 500 prisoners of the Christians, the cruel tyrant commanded them all to be cut asunder by the middle, and so being slain, to be thrown into the fields.

What Christian heart will not pity the incredible slaughter done by the Turks in Euboa, where Faber testifies that "innumerable people were stuck and gored upon stakes; diverse were thrust through with a hot iron; children and infants, not yet weaned from the mother, were dashed against the stones, and many cut asunder in the midst"?

But never did any country taste and feel more the bitter and deadly tyranny of the Turks, than Rasia, called Mysia Inferior, and now Servia. There (as Wolfgang Drechsterus writes) the prince of the same country being sent for to come and speak with the Turk, under a fair pretense of words and promises, after he had come of his own gentleness expecting no harm, he was apprehended and wretchedly and falsely put to death, and his skin flayed off. His brother and sister were brought to Constantinople for a triumph, and all the nobles of his country had their eyes put out.

Briefly to conclude, by the vehement and furious rage of these cursed caitiffs, it may seem that Satan the old dragon, for the great hatred he bears to Christ, has stirred them up to be the butchers of all Christian people, inflaming their beastly hearts with such malice and cruelty against the name and religion of Christ, that degenerating from the nature of men to devils, they will neither be ruled by reason, nor satisfied by any blood or slaughter. Like in the primitive age of the church, and in the time of Diocletian and Maximilian, when the devil saw that he could not prevail against the person of Christ who was risen again, he turned all his fury upon his servants, thinking by the Roman emperors utterly to extinguish the name and profession of Christ from the earth — so in this later age of the world, Satan being loosed again, rages by the Turks, thinking to make no end of murdering and killing, till he has brought (as he intends) the whole church of Christ, with all its professors, under foot. But the Lord (I trust) will send a Constantine to vanquish proud Maxentius, a Moses to drown indurate Pharaoh, a Cyrus to subdue the stout Babylonian.

The Life of Christian Captives.

And thus much, touching our Christian brethren who were slain and destroyed by these blasphemous Turks. Now, many others were torn away violently from their country, from their wives and children, from liberty, and from all their possessions, into wretched captivity and extreme penury. It likewise remains to address somewhat concerning the cruel manner of the Turks' handling of the said Christian *captives*. And here is to be noted first, that the Turk never comes into Europe to war against the Christians, that there does not follow after his army a great number of brokers or merchants — those who buy men and children to sell again, bringing with them long chains in hope of great bargains. In these chains they link fifty or sixty together, who remain undestroyed by the sword; those whom they buy from the soldiers as part of the spoils of those who rob and spoil the Christian countries.

Those who belong to the Sultan's share, *i.e.* a tenth of the whole, are sold for the use of husbandry or keeping beasts. If they are young men or women, they are sent to certain places to be instructed in their language and arts, as will be most to their advantage. And the first care of the Turk is this: to make them deny the Christian religion; after that they are appointed, each one as he seems most apt either to learn their laws, or else to learn their feats of war. Their first rudiment of war is to handle the bow, beginning with a weak bow, and as they grow in strength, coming to a stronger bow. If they miss the mark, they are sharply beaten. Their allowance is twopence or threepence a-day, till they earn wages to serve in war. Some are brought up for the purpose of being placed in the number of the wicked Janizaries.

Those who are young maidens and beautiful, are assigned to seraglios. Those who are of little beauty, serve as matrons to do the drudgery work in their houses and chambers, or else they are put to spinning and other such labors. But even so, it is not lawful for them either to profess their Christian religion, or to ever hope for any liberty.

The others who are bought and sold among private subjects, are first allured with fair words and promises to embrace Mahometanism. If they do so, they are more favorably treated, but all hope is taken from them of returning to their own country; and if they attempt that, the penalty is burning. If those coming at length to liberty want to marry, they may; but then their children remain bondslaves to the master for him to sell at his pleasure. Therefore, those who are wise among them will not marry. Those who refuse to become Mahometans are miserably handled. For example, the author who gives testimony of this adduces his own experience. Any captives who are expert in any manual art or occupation, can better shift for themselves; but those who have no handicraft to live upon, are in a worse situation. And therefore, those who have been brought up in learning, or are priests or noblemen, and others whose tender education can abide no hardness, are the least reputed. Of all others they are most neglected by the one who has the sale or keeping of them, because he sees less profit to arise from them than from the others. Therefore, no cost of clothing is bestowed on them; they go about bareheaded and barefoot, both summer and winter, in frost and snow. And if any of them faint and are sick along the way, there is no rest for him in any inn. Rather, he is first driven forward with whips, and if that will not serve, he is set perhaps upon some horse. Or if his weakness is such that he cannot sit, then is he laid overthwart the horse on his belly like a calf; if he chances to die, they take off his garment, such as he has, and throw him in a ditch.

[383]

They are brought to the market for sale. There the buyer, if he is disposed, plucks off their garments to view all the bones and joints of their body. If he likes them he gives his price, and carries them away into miserable servitude, either to till their ground, or to pasture their cattle, or to some other strange kind of misery incredible to speak of. It goes so far, that the author reports he has seen himself certain of such Christian captives yoked together like horse and oxen, and to draw the plough. The maid servants likewise are kept in perpetual toil and work in close places, where they neither come into the sight of any man, nor are they permitted to talk with their fellow-servants, etc. Those who are committed to keep beasts, lie abroad day and night in the wild fields, without house or harbor. Changing their pasture, they go from mountain to mountain. Besides the office of keeping the beasts, other handy labor is exacted from them in their spare hours, whatever it pleases their masters to put to them.

There is no way for them to flee out of this misery, especially for those who are carried into Asia beyond the seas. Or if any attempts to do so, he takes his chance chiefly about harvest time, when he may hide himself during the day in the corn, or in woods or marshes, and find food. Only in the night does he flee, and would rather be devoured by wolves and other wild beasts, than to return to his master. In their fleeing they used to take with them a hatchet and cords, so that when they came to the sea-side, they might cut down trees, and bind together the ends of them. And so, where the sea of Hellespont is narrowest, about the Sestos and Abydos, they take to the sea, sitting upon trees. If the wind and tide serve luckily, they may run over in four or five hours. But most either perish in the floods, or are driven back upon the coasts of Asia; or else they are devoured by wild beasts in woods, or perish with hunger and famine. If any escape over the sea and make it alive into Europe, they enter into no town along the way, but wander upon the mountains, following only the North Star for their guide.

Regarding those **towns and provinces** which are won by the Turk, and in which the Christians are allowed to live under tribute: the Turk first kills all the nobility there and

make away with them; they hardly spare the churchmen and clergy. The churches, with the bells and all the furniture, they either tear down, or else they convert them to the use of their own blasphemous religion, leaving to the Christians certain old blind chapels, which when they decay, it is permitted to our men to repair them again for a great sum of money given to the Turk. Nor are they permitted to use any open preaching or ministration, but only to frequent together in silence and by stealth. Nor is it lawful for any Christian to bear office within the city province, nor to bear a weapon, nor to wear any garment like the Turks. And if any contempt or blasphemy is spoken against them, or against Christ, however great, you must bear it and hold your peace. And then if you speak one word against Mahomet, your punishment is fire and burning. If it chances that a Christian on horseback meets or passes by a Mussulman, that is, a Turkish priest, he must alight from his horse, and with a lowly look devoutly reverence and adore the Mussulman. If he does not, he is beaten down from his horse with clubs and staves.

Furthermore, for their tribute they pay a quarter of their substance and gain to the Turk, besides the ordinary tribute of the Christians, which is to pay a ducat ¹⁴³ to the Turk for every poll within his family. If the parents cannot do this, they are compelled to sell their children into bondage. Others not being able to pay, go chained in fetters from door to door begging, to makeup their payment, or else they must lie in perpetual prison.

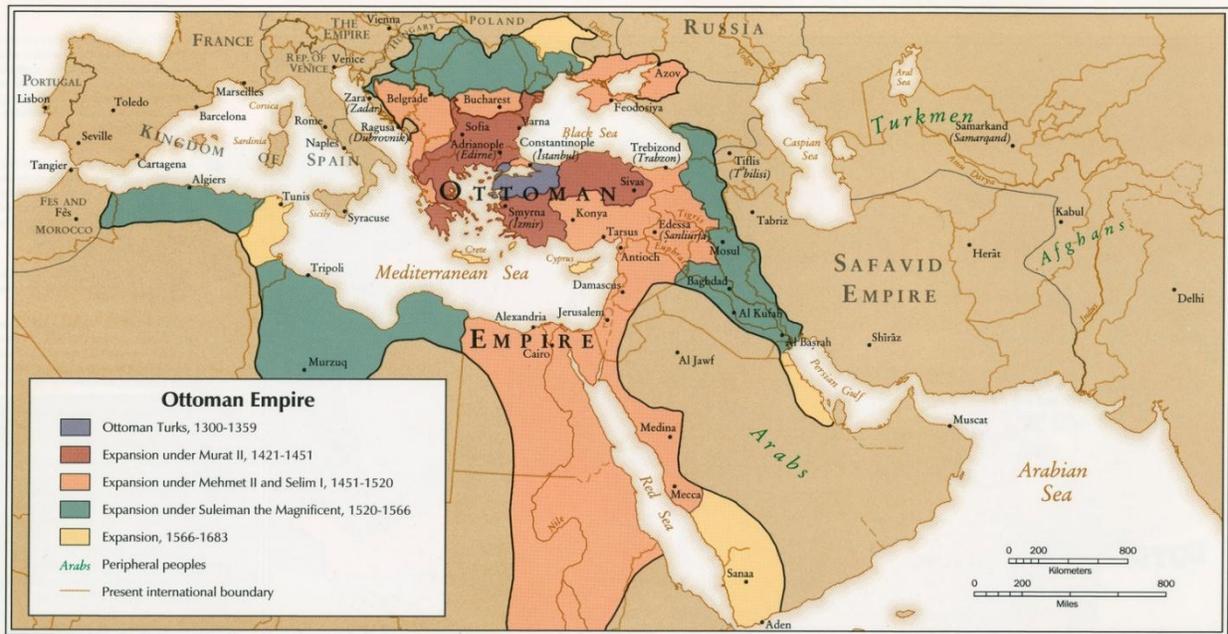
The Value in Hearing of such Suffering.

And thus have you heard the lamentable afflictions of our Christian brethren under the cruel tyranny and captivity of the Turks, surpassing all other captivities that God's people have ever endured, either under Pharaoh in Egypt, or under Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, or under Antiochus in the time of the Maccabees. Under this captivity, if it so pleases the Lord to have his spouse the church be nurtured, then His good will be done and obeyed. But if this misery comes by the negligence and discord of our Christian guides and leaders, then we have to pray and cry to our Lord God, either to give better hearts to our guides and rulers, or else better guides and rulers to his flocks.

I thought it good and profitable for our country people here of England to know of these troubles and afflictions of our Christian brethren suffered by the Turks. For by their ignorance of these and similar histories worthy of consideration, I see much inconvenience follows from it. Thereby, because we Englishmen are far off from these countries, and little know what misery is abroad, are less moved with zeal and compassion to receive their grievances, and to pray for whose troubles we do not know. Whereupon it also follows that not considering the miserable state of others, we are less grateful to God when any tranquility is granted to us. And if any little cloud rises upon us, however little, such as poverty, loss of living, or a little banishment out of our country for the Lord's cause, we make a greater matter of it than it deserves, all because we go no farther than our own country. And only feeling our own cross, we do not compare what we feel with the great crosses to which the churches of Christ are commonly subject in other places abroad. If we rightly understood this, and earnestly considered and pondered it in our minds, we would not so excessively forget ourselves in times of prosperity, nor be so impatiently troubled as we are in times of adversity. And this is all because either we do not hear, or else we do not ponder the terrible crosses which the Lord lays upon our brethren in other nations.

¹⁴³ *Ducat*: a gold coin weighing 3.50 grams. It could pay for a week's groceries, a fine suit, or a good horse.

Bk. VI. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1422-1516)



Expansion of the Ottoman Empire confronting Foxe's generation.

Prophecies from Scripture Concerning the Turks.

The Prophecies of the Holy Scriptures considered, regarding the rise and final ruin and destruction of this wicked kingdom of the Turk, with the revelations and foreshowings of other authors concerning the same.

You have sufficiently heard to what extent the dominion of the Turks has increased, and now understand what cruel tyranny these wretched miscreants have and do daily practice most heinously, wherever they come against the servants and professors of Christ. It will therefore not be unprofitable, but rather necessary, and to our great comfort, to consider and examine in the Scriptures, what prophecies the Holy Spirit of the Lord forewarned us with concerning the heavy persecutions that would come upon His people by this horrible antichrist. For the government and constitution of times and states of monarchies and policies do not fall to us by blind chance, but are administered and allotted to us from above. So it is not to be supposed that such a great alteration of kingdoms, such a terrible and general persecution of God's people through almost all of Christendom, and such a terror of the whole earth as is now moved and engendered by these Turks, comes without the knowledge, sufferance, and determination of the Lord, for such ends and purposes as his divine wisdom knows best. As the evidence and testimony of this, He has left sufficient instruction and declarations in his Scriptures. By these we may plainly see to our great comfort, how these grievous afflictions and troubles of the church, even though they are sharp and heavy to us, yet they do not come by chance, or only by man's working, but even as the Lord himself has appointed it.

In the later 300 years of the Jewish kingdom, what troubles and afflictions that people sustained by Antiochus and his fellows, as the history of the Maccabees report. But it was chiefly the last 166 years before the coming of Christ, in which we may also come to understand the notorious, miserable vexations and persecutions of the Christian churches in these later ends of the world by antichrist.

We read that Antiochus Epiphanes IV, in the eighth year of his reign, in his second coming to Jerusalem, first commanded that all the Jews should relinquish the law of Moses, and worship the idol of Jupiter Olympius which he set up in the temple of Jerusalem.

[389] A.D. 1566.

He burned the books of Moses and of the Prophets. He set garrisons of soldiers to guard the idol. In the city of Jerusalem he caused the feasts and revels of Bacchus to be kept, full of all filth and wickedness. Old men, women, and virgins — those who would not leave the law of Moses — he murdered with cruel torments. The mothers that circumcised their children he slew. The children that were circumcised he hanged. The temple he spoiled and wasted. The altar of God, and candlestick of God, with the other ornaments and furniture of the temple, he partly cast out, and partly carried away. Contrary to the law of God, he caused them to offer and to eat swine's flesh. He made great murder and slaughter of the people, causing them either to leave their law, or lose their lives. Besides many others, he put to death with cruel torments a godly mother with her seven sons, sending his cruel proclamations throughout the land, that whoever kept the observances of the Sabbath, and other rites of the law, and refused to condescend to his abominations, would be executed. No kind of calamity, nor face of misery, could be shown in any place, which was not seen there. The tyranny of this Antiochus is historied at large in the book of Maccabees. And Daniel had prophesied of the same, declaring that the people of the Jews deserved no less for their sins and transgressions.

By consent of all writers, this Antiochus is a figure of the great antichrist which was to follow in the latter end of the world, and has already come, and works what he can against us. Although, as St. John says, there have been and there are many antichrists, as parts and members of the body of antichrist. These are forerunners, so to speak, of the head and principal antichrist, and great enemy of Christ's church. He has come in the latter end of the world, at which time there shall be such tribulation as was never seen before. By this is meant (no doubt) the Turk, prefigured by Antiochus. By this antichrist I also mean all those who follow the same doctrine of the Turks, thinking to be saved by their works, and not by faith alone in the Son of God, of whatever title and profession they may be; especially if they use the same force and violence for the same purpose as he does, etc.

Let us hear and consider the words of Daniel in the eleventh chapter, and also in his seventh chapter, prophesying of the tyranny of this Antiochus, and of the tribulations of the church in the latter times — both of the Jews' church, and also of the Christian church to come, as follows:

“For the ships of Chittim (Cyprus) shall come against him. Therefore he shall be grieved, and return, and have indignation against the holy covenant. So shall he do: he shall even return, and have intelligence with those who forsake the holy covenant. And arms shall stand on his part, and they will pollute the sanctuary of strength, and take away the daily sacrifice, and they will place the abomination that makes desolate. And those who do wickedly against the covenant he will corrupt by flatteries; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And those who understand among the people will instruct many; yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they fall, they will be heled with a little help: but many will cling to them with flatteries. And some of whose who have understanding shall fall, to test and purge them, and to make them white, even to the time of the end — because it is yet for the appointed time. And the king will do according to his will; and he will exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and will speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and will prosper till the indignation is

accomplished: for what is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he will magnify himself above all. But in his estate he will honor the God of forces: and a God whom his fathers did not know he will honor with gold, and silver, and with precious stones, and pleasant things.

“Thus he will do in most strongholds with a strange god, whom he will acknowledge and increase with glory: and he will cause them to rule over many, and will divide the land for gain. And at the time of the end, the king of the south will push at him: and the king of the north will come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he will enter into the countries, and will overflow and pass through. He will also enter into the glorious land, and many countries will be overthrown. But these will escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He will stretch out his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps. But tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him: therefore he shall go out with great fury to destroy, and to utterly annihilate many. And he shall plant the tabernacles of his palaces between the seas in the glorious holy mountain; yet he shall come to his end, and none will help him.” (Dan 11.30-45)

To this place in Daniel, might also be added the prophecy written in the seventh chapter, tending to the same effect; where regarding his vision of four beasts (which signify the four monarchies), and speaking now of the fourth monarchy, he has these words:

“After this I saw in the night-visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and exceedingly strong; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and broke in pieces, and trampled the residue with its feet: and it was different from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom three of the first horns were plucked up by the roots: and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things — whose look was more stout than his fellows. I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” (Dan 7.7-8; 20-22)

Thus you have the plain words of Daniel, in which as he manifestly describes the coming of Antiochus the great adversary, towards the latter end of the Jews; and so by Antiochus is prefigured to us the great adversary of Christ, which is the Turk.

Although there are some with great learning and judgment, who apply this passage of Daniel not to the Turk, but to the pope, and they do that for six or seven special causes touched upon and noted here.

The first is this, that the wicked transgressors of the covenant will join with him deceitfully and hypocritically, who will pollute the tabernacle of strength, and take away the perpetual sacrifice, and bring in the abomination of desolation.

The second note is, that the prophet declares how the learned among the people will teach many, and that they will fall upon the sword, into fire and captivity, and will be banished, whereby they will be tried, chosen, and made bright and pure, etc. All of which (they say) is not among the Turks, but only in the pope's church, where the faithful preachers and teachers of the people are slain and burned, etc. Likewise it follows that they will be helped against antichrist, and that many false brethren will join them dissemblingly, etc. To this they allege that the Christians have no such help against the Turk, to whom false brethren would join themselves, as is (and has been) commonly seen from time to time, among the Christians against the pope, in almost all countries.

Thirdly, that the king will exalt himself above all that has the name of God, and will lift up his mouth to speak presumptuously against God.

Fourthly, that he does not care for the desires of women, which may seem to note how the pope's doctrine will forbid the honest and lawful marriage in churchmen.

[390]

The fifth specialty which they apply to the pope, is what follows in the prophet (11.37-38), saying, "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor any god; but instead of him shall set up his god of fortresses, and he shall worship him with silver and gold, and precious stones," etc. — which they apply to the pope, setting up his god of bread, and worshipping him with glistening golden ornaments, and most solemn service.

Sixthly, it follows (11.39), "And he shall increase them with much glory and riches, and shall apportion them lands and possessions," etc.; meaning that the pope, having dominion over treasures of gold and silver, and all precious things of the land, will endue his cardinals, prelates, his flattering doctors, along with friars, monks, and priests, and all those who will take his part, with great privileges, liberties, revenues, and possessions. And thus I say, there are some who apply this prophecy of the seventh and eleventh chapters of Daniel to the bishop of Rome. Although I take him to be an extreme persecutor of Christ's church, yet I rather judge those two chapters of Daniel (concerning the little horn in the middle of the ten horns, and the great destroyer of the pleasant land and glorious holy mountain), to first mean Antiochus; and by him, secondly, to mean the great antichrist the Turk, who has now already set the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, according to the prophecies of Daniel.

Let us come now to the prophecies of the New Testament, and mark the words of St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians. They were then Christian, and are now either Turkish or under the Turk. His words are these:

"That you not be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit, word, or letter as if from us, as though the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day will not come, unless there is a falling away first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2The 2.2-4).

Although this falling away and departing may have a double understanding — both of the pope's sect (which has departed from free justification by faith alone in Christ through the promise of grace), and also of the Turks — we will set aside speaking of the pope for now. Because the passage seems to apply more notoriously to the Turk, we will chiefly apply this passage to him. If this great apostasy from the faith had not happened in so many churches, *because* of the Turk, it would have been hard to understand the apostle's mind. But now, the history of the Turks is easily and evidently known. Consider what ruin has occurred to the church of Christ by these miserable Turks — what empires, nations, kingdoms, countries, towns, and cities, he has removed from the name and profession of Christ; how many thousands, and infinite multitudes of Christian men and children, in Asia, in Africa, and in Europe, are carried away from Christ's church to Mahomet's religion, some to serve for the Turk's guard among the Janizaries, some for soldiers, some for miners, some for gunners, to fight and war against the Christians. So that most of the churches, once planted by the apostles, have now degenerated into Turks. Only a small handful of Christians are still reserved in these western parts of Europe. What will become of this small remnant shortly, unless Christ himself helps, He alone knows.

Notwithstanding, this text of the holy apostle may also be verified with no less reason upon the bishop of Rome than upon the Turk, because he is a man of sin — that is, his seat and city is a great maintainer of wickedness; and also because he is an adversary, that is, he is contrary in all his doings and proceedings toward Christ.

Thirdly, for he sits in the temple of God, and Mahomet did not.

Fourthly, because he is an exalter of himself, and sits more like a god than a man in Rome.

Fifthly, because he seduces, and has seduced by his apostasy, most of Christendom away from the doctrine and free promises of God, into a wrong and strange way of salvation. That strange way is not to be justified freely before God except by our faith alone in Christ, his well-beloved Son (to which faith alone the promise of God has freely and graciously annexed all our salvation, and to nothing else). But the pope has taught us to work out our salvation by an infinite number of other things; so that he binds the necessity of our salvation also to this: that if we would be saved, we must believe he is and receive him as the vicar of Christ on earth, etc.

But to return again to the Turks. Among all the prophecies, both of the Old Testament and of the New, there is none that points out the antichristian kingdom of the Turks better than the Revelation of St. John, whose words let us weigh and consider. Speaking of opening the seventh and last seal (which signifies the last age of the world), and writing of the seven trumpets of the seven angels, he says that at the sounding of the sixth angel,

“Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, to slay a third of mankind. And the number of the army of the horsemen was two hundred million; I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and those who sat on them had breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were like the heads of lions; and out of their mouths came fire, and smoke, and brimstone. By these three a third of mankind was killed by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which came out of their mouths.” (Rev 9.14-18)

By the seventh seal is meant the seventh and last age of the world. That last age of the world is from Christ to the judgment and resurrection of the dead.

By the seven angels with their seven trumpets is signified the seven plagues that come in this seventh and last age of the world.

By the sixth trumpet of the sixth angel is meant the sixth plague coming last and next before the plague of the great judgment-day. That sixth plague is here described to come by the eastern kings (Rev 16.12); that is, by the Turks.

By loosing the angels who had rule of the great river Euphrates, is signified letting out the eastern kings, that is, the Turks out of Scythia, Tartary, Persia, and Arabia, by whom a third of Christendom will be destroyed, as we see has come to pass this day.

It follows in the prophecy, “For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like serpents with heads, and they do harm with them.” (Rev 9.19) Meaning that these Turks with the words of their mouths will threaten great destruction by fire and sword, to those who will not yield to them. And in the end, when the Christians yield to them, trusting to their promises, then like serpents, they will deceive them in the end, and kill them.

The same prophecy, in similar words and sense, is also to be seen and read in Revelation 16, where St. John, speaking of seven cups filled with the wrath of the living God, given to the hands of seven angels by one of the four beasts (that is, in the time of one of the four monarchies, which was the monarchy of Rome), speaks likewise of the sixth angel, "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." (Rev 16.12)

By the sixth angel with the *sixth vial* is meant, as before, the last plague save one that will come upon the Christians. By the *kings of the east* is meant the Saracens, and twelve Ottoman Turks. By *drying up the river Euphrates*, is signified the way of these Turks: to be prepared by the Lord's appointment, to come out of the eastern to the western parts of the world, to molest and afflict the Christians. It follows more in the text (v. 13): —

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

[391] A.D. 1566.

And it follows shortly after, "And he gathered them together to a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." And immediately it follows in the same place, "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and a great voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." (Rev 16.13, 16, 17) By this it is to be understood that towards the consummation of the world, great force will be seen, and a mighty army of the enemies will be collected and gathered against the people and saints of the Highest; and then comes the consummation.

Therefore, it is not for nothing that the Holy Spirit of God, in the same place, a little before the sixth angel pours out his vial, exhorts all the faithful, saying, "Behold, I come like a thief in the night; blessed is he that watches and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked, and men see his filthiness," etc. (Rev 16.15)

Nicholas de Lyra; and Paul, bishop of Burdens; and Matthias Dorinke, wrote concerning the thirteenth chapter of the Apocalypse, and expounded on the mystery of the second beast rising out of the earth, having the horns of a lamb, etc. They applied it to Mahomet and the Turks, with a solemn declaration made upon it. Their interpretation, although it may seem probable in some points, yet regarding the proper and natural meaning of the apostle in that place, speaking of the false Lamb, etc. if we well consider all the circumstances of that beast, and we mark the sequence of the text, both of that which goes before and follows after, we must grant that the description and interpretation of that false horned lamb must necessarily be applied only to the bishop of Rome, and no other. This is to be proved by six principal causes or arguments.

The first is that this beast is described as bearing the horns of a Lamb; by this Lamb, no doubt, is meant Christ. By the horns of the Lamb is signified the outward show or resemblance of Christ our Savior. This show or resemblance can have no relation to Mahomet, for he made himself out to be above Christ, and Christ as an excellent prophet of God sitting at his feet. Therefore, seeing that Mahomet comes neither as an equal to Christ, nor as a vicar under Christ, this prophecy cannot apply to him, but only to the one who openly and in plain words protests that all Christ's lambs and sheep — not singularly, but universally, throughout the world — are committed to him as vicar of Christ, and successor

of Peter, and that all men must confess the same of necessity, or else they are none of Christ's sheep, etc. In this, it is easy to see where the pretended horns of the lamb grow.

The second argument, "And he spoke like a dragon," etc. (Rev 13.11) A lamb's horns and the mouth of a dragon do not agree with each other. And just as they do not agree in nature, neither can they be found so lively in any person, Turk or other, as in the bishop of Rome. When you hear him call himself "The apostolical bishop, the vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter, the servant of God's servants," etc., you see in him the two horns of a lamb, and you might think him to be a lamb indeed, and such a person as would wash your feet out of humility. But hear him speak, and you will find him a dragon. See and read the epistle of Pope Martin V, charging, commanding, and threatening emperors, kings, dukes, princes, marquises, earls, barons, knights, rectors, consuls, proconsuls, with their shires, counties, and universities, about their kingdoms, provinces, cities, towns, castles, villages, and other places. See the answer of Pope Urban II, and his message to King William Rufus. Behold the works and doings of Pope Innocent III against King John.

Note also the answer of another pope to the king of England. For the price of the king's head, he would not grant to him the investing of his bishops. Mark well the words and doings of Pope Hildebrand against the Emperor Henry IV; also of Pope Alexander II treading on the neck of Frederick Barbarossa, not like a lamb treading on a dragon, but like a dragon treading upon a lamb.

It follows, moreover, in the same prophecy in Rev 13.12, for the third argument, "And he exercises all the power of the first beast before him, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed," etc.

In this prophecy two things are to be noted; first, what the first beast is, whose power the second beast executes. Secondly, what this second beast is which so exercises his power in his sight. The first of these beasts having seven heads and ten horns, must signify the city of Rome, which may easily be proved by two demonstrations. First, by the exposition of Revelation 17.9-12, where the beast is declared and described as standing on seven hills, containing ten kings, having the whole power of the dragon given to it. Also the same city is named "The whore of Babylon, drunken with the blood of the saints," (17.6). All of these properties joined together, can in no way agree to any kingdom but the heathen empire of Rome. That city, at the time of writing these prophecies, had the government of the whole world. The second demonstration or evidence may be reduced out of the number of the months assigned to this beast. For so it is written, that this beast had power to war — that is, to work his malice against Christ's people 42 months. These months counted by Sabbaths of years (that is, each month is seven years) makes up the exact number of years in which the primitive church was under the terrible persecutions of the heathen emperors of Rome, as specified before.

This thing being thus proved, that the first beast must signify the empire and city of Rome, it must necessarily follow that the second beast with the lamb's horns, must signify the bishop and pope of the same city of Rome. The reason for this is evident by what follows in the prophecy, where it is declared that the second beast, having two horns of a lamb, received and exercised all the power of the first beast, before or in the sight of the said beast. This cannot be valid either in the Turks or in any other, but only in the pope of Rome, who (as you see) receives, usurps, and derives to himself all the power of that city and monarchy of Rome. So that he says, that when Constantine or Ludovicus yielded to him the rule and kingdom of that city, he gave him but his own, and that which of right and duty belonged to him before.

And this authority or power over the whole empire of Rome, he does not work in Asia or in Constantinople, as the Turk does, but in the sight of the beast which gave him the power — that is, in the city of Rome itself, which is the first beast described here in this prophecy of the Revelation.

Fourthly, It follows further (Rev 13.12), “And he causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed,” etc. The interpretation of this part, as of all the other parts of the same chapter, stands upon the definition of the first beast. For it being granted, and cannot be denied, that the first beast signifies the city and empire of Rome, it must consequently follow that the bishop (whom we call the pope) of the city of Rome, must be understood as the second beast. Because neither Turk nor any other, but only the bishop of Rome, has upheld the estimation and dignity of that city, which began to be in ruin and decay by the Vandals, Goths, Herulians, and Lombards, about A.D. 456. But afterward, by the bishop of Rome, the pristine state and honor of that city revived again, and flourished in as great a veneration as it ever did before. And that is what the Holy Spirit seems to mean here by the first beast, saying that, “he had a wound from the beast, and was cured.” (Rev 13.3) For so it follows:

Fifthly, “Saying to those who dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which was wounded by a sword, and lived. And he had power to give life to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed. And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark on their right hand, or on their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, unless he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name,” etc. (Rev 13.14-17).

[392]

By giving life to the image of the beast, and making it speak, it is supposed that the beast was at the point of death, and lay speechless. In the same way, the city of Rome began to lose and change its name; for a while it was called Odacria, from Odoacer king of the Herulians, who by dint of sword surprised the Romans. And yet, notwithstanding, by means of its prelates, the city of Rome, which was then ready to give up the ghost, recovered its majesty and strength again. It is even hard to say whether Rome ever ruffled and raged in tyranny, more tragically in the time of Nero, Domitian, Diocletian, and other emperors, than it has under the pope; or whether Rome had all kings, queens, princes, dukes, lords, and all subjects more under obedience and subjection when the emperors reigned, than now in the reign of the pope. And therefore it is said by the Holy Spirit, not without cause, that it is given to him to give life and speech to the image of the beast, causing all those to be slain which will not worship the image of the beast, etc. For example, who does not see what multitudes of Christian men, women, and children in all countries have been put to fire and sword? The histories of all times will declare what havoc has been made of Christian blood about the pre-eminence and majority of the See of Rome; what churches and countries, both Greeks and Latins, have been excommunicated; what kings have been deposed, and emperors stripped from their imperial seat, all because they would not stoop and bend to the image of the beast, that is, to the majesty and title of Rome. It has advanced so highly now by its bishop, that it was never higher in the reign of Nero or Diocletian. Therefore, taking the first beast to signify the empire of Rome, which cannot be denied, it is plain that the second beast must be applied to the pope and not to the Turk, as the Turk seeks nothing so little as the advancement of that empire, but rather strives against it to pluck it down.

The sixth and last argument is grounded upon the number of the name of the beast, expressed by the Holy Spirit in the same prophecy, by the letters χ-ξ-ς. In these letters lies great darkness and difficulty of understanding. Yet certain ancient fathers who were disciples and hearers of those who heard St. John himself, such as Ireneus and others, expound the letters conjecturally, to contain the name of the beast, and to be the name of a man under this word λαγαῖνος (*lagainos*).¹⁴⁴ Whereas no other name lightly of any person, either in Greek or Latin, will agree to it, except the foresaid name λαγαῖνος. There are some other solutions to these numbers, but of all names properly signifying any man, none comes so near to the number of this mystery (if it goes by order of letters) as the word λαγαῖνος.

Let us come to the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, in which the holy Scripture seems to plainly and directly denote the Turks. The words of the prophecy are these:

“And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.” (Rev 20.1-3)

And it follows after,

“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints, and the beloved city,” etc. (Rev 20.7-9).

For the perfect understanding of this prophecy, three things are necessary to be known. First, what is meant by the binding up, and loosing out of Satan as the old dragon. Secondly, at what time and year he was first chained up and sealed for a thousand years. Thirdly, at what year and time these thousand years ended when he should be loosed out again for a little season. These three points being well examined and marked, the prophecy may easily be understood to directly mean the Turk.

First, by the binding and loosing of Satan seems to be meant the ceasing and staying of the cruel and horrible persecution of the heathen emperors of Rome against the true Christians, as seen in Book I, ‘The Ten first Persecutions in the Primitive Church.’ In those most bloody persecutions, Satan raged without all measure, till the time it pleased Almighty God to stop this old serpent, and to tie him shorter. And thus you have to understand what is meant by the binding up of Satan for a thousand years — by which is signified that the persecution against the Christians stirred up by the beast (that is, in the empire of Rome, through the instigation of Satan) will not always continue, but it will break up after a certain time, and will cease for a thousand years, etc.

Now, at what time and year this persecution would cease, is when the fury and rage of Satan was declared in the Revelation. In its eleventh and thirteenth chapters we read that the beast mentioned before would have power to work his malice and mischief for 42 months, and no more; and then Satan would be locked up for a thousand years. The computation of these months, being counted by Sabbaths of years (following the example of the 69 weeks of Daniel, chapter 11) it brings us to the year and time when that terrible persecution in the primitive church would end, and so it did. For, if we allow to every month a Sabbath of

¹⁴⁴ The number of these letters in Greek, makes the full number of 666.

years, that is, if we reckon every month as seven years, that makes 294 years. This includes the period between the eighteenth year of Tiberius (under whom Christ suffered), and the death of Maxentius the last persecutor of the primitive church in Europe, who was subdued by Constantine. This may appear by calculating the years, months, and days between the year of the reign of Tiberius, and the death of Maxentius. And so you have the account of the period when Satan was first bound up, after he had raged in the primitive church for 42 months. These months, as said, being counted by Sabbaths of years in the usual manner of Scripture, amount to 294 years. And that was the full time between the passion of our Lord, which was in the eighteenth year of Tiberius, to the last year of Maxentius. ¹⁴⁵

Here by the way comes a note to be observed, that just as 42 months is specified in the Revelations, the empire of Rome must necessarily be confessed to be the first beast. And therefore it must by like necessity follow that the bishop of Rome is the second beast, with the two horns of the lamb, because he only has and causes the empire of Rome to revive and be magnified, which the Turk does not, but rather labors to the contrary. Therefore let every Christian man be wise, and beware in time how he takes the mark of the beast, lest perhaps it follows upon him, that he will drink from that terrible cup of wrath mentioned in Rev 14.

Thirdly, it remains to be discussed touching the third point in this prophecy, that as we have found out (through the help of Christ) the year and time of Satan's binding, so we likewise search out the time and season of his loosing. By the testimony of Scripture, this was proved to be a thousand years after his binding up; and rightly according to the time appointed, it came to pass. For if we number accurately by the scripture, the year of his binding up was 294 years from the passion of our Lord.

[393] A.D. 1506.

Add a thousand years to it, it mounts to 1294, which was about the time when Ottoman, the first Turk, began his conquests. This was the first spring and wellhead of all these woeful calamities that the church of Christ has felt both in Asia, Africa, and Europe, for almost 300 years. For so we find in histories, that the kingdom of the Turks being first divided into four families, at length the family of Ottoman prevailed. And from there came those we now call Turks, which was about the same time as when Pope Boniface VIII was bishop of Rome.

In this long digression, in which the grievous and wearisome persecution of the Saracens and Turks against the Christians has been sufficiently described, you have to understand, good reader, and to behold the image of a terrible antichrist evidently appearing both by his own doings, and also as prophesied and declared to us by the Scriptures. Now in comparing the Turk with the pope, if it is asked which of them is the truer or greater antichrist, it would be easy to see and judge that the Turk is the more open and manifest enemy against Christ and his church. But if it is asked which of the two has been a bloodier and more pernicious adversary to Christ and his members, or which of them has consumed and spilled more Christian blood — the one with the sword, or this one with fire and sword together — it is not a light matter to discern, nor is it my role to discuss it here. I only write the history and acts of them both. Therefore, with the history of the Turks thus finished, we will now return to where we left off, in describing the domestic troubles and persecutions here at home under the bishop of Rome, after the burning of Babram in Norfolk (p. 369).

¹⁴⁵ See note p. 68. [Ed.]

Martyrs under King Henry VII.

In the days of King Henry VII (A.D. 1506), in the diocese of Lincoln, in Buckinghamshire, one William Tylsworth was burned in Amersham, in a close, called Stanley, about sixty years ago. At which time one Joan Clerk, a married woman, who was the only daughter of William Tylsworth, and a faithful woman, was compelled with her own hands to set fire to her dear father; and at the same time her husband John Clerk did penance at her father's burning, and bore a fagot, as did also twenty-three other persons; and who afterwards were compelled to wear certain badges, and went abroad to certain towns to do penance, such as to Buckingham, Aylesbury, and other towns. And also several of these men were afterwards burned on the cheek, such as William Page, who is alive at this present day, and likewise carried a fagot with the others. Agnes Wetherly, who is still alive, testifies that at the burning of William Tylsworth, there were over sixty others who were obliged to carry fagots for their penance, of whom some were enjoined to bear and wear fagots at Lincoln for seven years, some at one time, some at another, etc. In this number also was one Robert Bartlet, a rich man, who for his professions' sake was put out of his farm and goods, and was condemned to be kept in the monastery of Ashryge, where he wore on his right sleeve a square piece of cloth, for seven years.

About the same time of the burning of William Tylsworth, one Father Roberts was burned at Buckingham. He was a miller, and dwelt at Missenden. At his burning there were about twenty persons who were compelled to carry fagots, and to do such penance as the wicked Pharisees compelled them to. After that, for two or three years, there were burned at Amersham, Thomas Bernard, a husbandman, and James Mordon, a laborer; they were both burned at one fire; and there was William Littlepage (who is still alive) compelled to be burned on the right cheek; and Father Rogers, and Father Reive, who afterwards were burned. This Father Rogers was in the bishop's prison for fourteen weeks, night and day, where he was so cruelly handled with cold, hunger, and irons, that after coming out of the prison, he was so lame in his back, that he could never go upright as long as he lived, as several honest men who are now living can testify. Also there were thirty more burned on the right cheek, and obliged to carry fagots at the same time. The cause was that they would talk against superstition and idolatry, and were desirous to hear and read the holy Scriptures. The manner of their burning on the cheek was this: their necks were tied fast to a post, and their hands held fast so that they might not stir; the iron being hot, it was put to their cheeks, and thus they bore about them the prints and marks of the Lord Jesus.

The cruel handling of Thomas Chase of Amersham, who was wickedly strangled and martyred in the Bishops' Prison at Woburn.

Among those who were so cruelly persecuted for the gospel and word of Christ, was one Thomas Chase of Amersham. By the report of those who knew him, he was a man of godly, sober, and honest behavior (whose virtuous doings still remain in memory) and could not abide idolatry and superstition, but many times would speak against it. Therefore the ungodly and wicked hated and despised him all the more, and took him and brought him before the blind bishop, who was at that time at Woburn in the county of Buckingham. As it is written in the Acts, that wicked Herod vexed certain of the church, and killed James, the brother of John, with the sword, and because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further, so this bishop had Thomas Chase before him. He asked him many questions regarding the Romish religion, with many taunts, checks, and rebukes, but what answer this godly man, Thomas Chase, made to them is unknown. However it is to be supposed that his answer was most zealous and godly in professing Christ's true religion and gospel, and to

the extirpation of idolatry, and superstition, and hypocrisy. For he was commanded to be put in the prison, in the bishop's house at Woburn, which would not have been done to him, if his answers had not been sound and upright. There Thomas Chase lay bound most painfully with chains, manacles, and irons, often pining with hunger, where the bishop's alms were daily brought to him by his chaplains. These alms were nothing but checks, taunts, rebukes, threatenings and mockings. All of this cruelty the godly martyr took most quietly and patiently, remembering and having respect to Christ's promises: "Blessed are those which suffer for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," Mat 5.10. And as follows: "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you," etc. Mat 5.11. When the bishop, with his band of shavelings, perceived that they could not prevail against him by their daily practices of cruelty, but rather that he was even more fervent and earnest in professing Christ's true religion, and that he bore most patiently all their wickedness and cruelty to him, they imagined how and in which way they might put him to death, lest there should be a tumult or an uproar among the people. As Richard Hunne shortly after was hanged or strangled in Lollards' Tower, about A.D. 1514, even so these blood-suckers most cruelly strangled and put to death this Thomas Chase in prison, who most heartily called upon God to receive his spirit, as a certain woman witnesses who tended to him in prison.

After these vipers of the wicked brood of antichrist had thus most cruelly and impiously murdered this faithful Christian, they were at their wits' end, and could not tell what shift to make, to cloak their shameful murder. At last, to blind the ignorant silly people, these bloody butchers most slanderously caused it to be rumored abroad by their dependents, that Thomas Chase had hanged himself in prison, which was a most shameful and abominable lie, for the prison was such that a man could not stand upright, nor lie at ease. And besides, this man had so many manacles and irons upon him, that he could not well move either hand or foot, as the woman declares who saw him dead. And yet these holy catholics had not made an end of their wicked act in both killing and slandering this godly martyr; but to put out the remembrance of him, they caused him to be buried in the wood called Norland-wood, on the highway between Woburn and little Marlow. That was to the intent that he would not be dug up again to be seen. And this is how innocent men are commonly laid up by these unworthy clergymen.

[394]

But He that is true has promised at one time or another, to clear his true servants, not with lies and fables, but by his own true word. No secret, he says, is so close that it will not be opened; nor is anything so hidden that it will not be known clearly at the last. Such a sweet Lord is God always to those who are his true servants. Blessed be his holy name for ever and ever. Amen.

Thomas Harding was one of this company. He was thus molested and troubled in the town of Amersham, for the truth of the gospel. After his abjuration and penance he was again sought, and brought to the fire in the days of King Henry VII.

After the martyrdom of these two, I also read of one Thomas Noris, who for the same cause — that is, for the profession of Christ's gospel — was condemned by the bishop, and burnt at Norwich the last day of March (A.D. 1507).

The next year, which was A.D. 1508, in the consistory of London, Elizabeth Sampson of the parish of Aldermanbury, was up on certain articles, especially for speaking against pilgrimage and adoration of images — specifically the images of our lady at Wilsdon, at Stanings, at Crome, at Walsingham — and against the sacrament of the altar. For these and

certain other articles, she was compelled to abjure before Master William Horsey, chancellor, the day and year above written.

It is lamentable to remember, and almost impossible to comprehend the names, times, and persons of all who have been slain by the pope's clergy, for the true maintaining of Christ's cause and His sacraments. Their memory being registered in the Book of Life, although it does not need our commemoration, yet for the further confirmation of the church, I thought it not unprofitable to relate the suffering and martyrdom of those who have innocently given their blood to be shed in Christ's cause.

Laurence Ghest.

In the catalogue of those martyrs, next in order comes the memorial of Laurence Ghest, who was burned in Salisbury for the matter of the sacrament, in the days of King Henry VII. He was of a handsome and tall personage, and otherwise not unfriended, for which the bishop and the clergy were more loath to burn him, but instead kept him in prison for two years. This Laurence had a wife and seven children. Therefore, thinking to influence and persuade his mind, by awakening his fatherly affection toward his children, when the time came which they appointed for his burning, as he was at the stake, they brought before him his wife and seven children. At the sight of them, though nature commonly works differently in other men, yet in him religion overcame his nature, made his constancy remain immovable. So that when his wife exhorted and desired him to save himself, he again began to desire her to be content, and not be a stumbling-block in his way. For he was in a good course, running toward the mark of his salvation. And so, fire being put to him, he finished his life, renouncing not only wife and children, but also himself to follow Christ. As he was burning, one of the bishop's men threw a firebrand at his face. At this the brother of Laurence, who was standing by, ran at him with his dagger, and would have slain him, had he not been otherwise prevented.

The Woman of Chipping Sodbury.

But among all the examples of God, of whom so many have suffered from time to time for Christ and his truth, I cannot tell if ever there were any martyrdom more notable and admirable, or in which the plain demonstration of God's mighty power and judgment has at any time been more evident against the persecutors of his flock, than at the burning of a certain godly woman put to death in Chipping Sodbury, about the same time and under the reign of King Henry VII.

The constancy of this blessed woman, as it is glorious for all true godly Christians to behold, so the example of the bishop's chancellor, who cruelly condemned the innocent, may offer a terrible spectacle to the eyes of all papistical persecutors, to consider and take an example, which the living God grant they may. Amen. The name of the town where she was martyred, was, again, Chipping Sodbury. The chancellor who condemned her, was Doctor Whittington. The time of her burning was in the reign of Henry VII.

After this godly woman, and manly martyr of Christ, was condemned by the wretched chancellor, for the faithful profession of the truth, which the papists then called heresy, and the time had come when she would be brought to the place and pains of her martyrdom, a great concourse of all the multitude, both in the town and country about was gathered to behold her end. Among them was Doctor Whittington, the chancellor, who was present to witness the execution. Thus this faithful woman, and true servant of God, constantly persisted in the testimony of the truth, committing her cause to the Lord. She gave up her life to the fire, refusing no pains or torments in order to keep her conscience clear and

unreproveable in the day of the Lord. The sacrifice being ended, the people began to return homeward, coming from the burning of this blessed martyr. It happened in the meantime, that as the popish executioners were busy slaying this Lamb at the town's side, a certain butcher was just as busy within the town, slaying a bull. He had fast bound it in ropes ready to knock him on the head. But the butcher (not as skillful in his art of killing beasts, as the papists are in murdering Christians), as he was lifting his axe to strike the bull, failed in his stroke, and struck a little too low, or else how he struck it, I do not know. This is certain, that the bull, although somewhat grieved by the stroke, but not struck down, put his strength to the ropes, and broke loose from the butcher into the street, at the very time when the people were coming in a great crowd from the burning. Seeing the bull coming towards them, and supposing him to be wild, they gave way for the beast, every man shifting for himself as well as he might. Thus the people standing back, and making a lane for the bull, he passed through the throng of them, touching neither man nor child, till it came to where the chancellor was. The bull, with a sudden vehemency, ran at him full out with his horns, and gored the chancellor through and through, and so killed him immediately, to the great wonder of all who saw it.

Although the carnal sense of man is blind in considering the works of the Lord, imputing many times to blind chance the things which properly pertain to God's only praise and providence — yet in this so strange and so evident an example, what man can be so dull or ignorant as not to see a plain interposition of God's mighty power and judgment, both in the punishing of this wretched chancellor, and also in admonishing all other persecutors by his example, to fear the Lord and to abstain from the like cruelty?

And thus much concerning the state of the church. In this it is to be understood what storms and persecutions have been raised up in all quarters against the flock and congregation of Christ, not only by the Turks, but also at home within ourselves, by the bishop of Rome and his retinue. It is also to be noted in the days and reign of King Henry VII, how mightily the working of God's gospel has multiplied and increased, and what great numbers of men and women have suffered for the gospel with us in England.

The State of the Commonwealth.

Now these things being declared relating to the church, it remains to likewise treat the commonwealth, which commonly follows the state of the church. Where the church is quietly and modestly governed, and the flock of Christ defended by godly princes in peace and safety, from devouring and violence of bloody wolves; the success of the civil estate, there and then for the most part, flourishes, and the princes long continue through God's preservation, in prosperity and tranquility. Contrariwise, where either the church of Christ through the negligence of princes, or through their instigation, the poor members of Christ are persecuted and devoured; shortly after comes some just recompence of the Lord upon those princes, that either their lives do not long continue, or else they find not that quiet in the commonwealth which they look for.

[395] A.D. 1509.

Examples of this, as they are abundant in all other ages, so in this present time they are not lacking, whether we consider the state and condition of other countries far off, or of our own country near at home.

Not that I here affirm or define, as a general rule, that worldly success and prosperity of life always follow the godly, whom we often see given over rather to the wicked. Yet speaking of

the duty of princes, I observe by the examples in histories, that those princes who have most defended the church of Christ committed to their government, from injury and violence by the bishop of Rome, have not lacked great blessing and felicity at God's hand. Whereas, contrariwise, those who either have been persecutors of Christ's members themselves, or have not shielded them by their protection from foreign tyranny and injuries, have lacked at God's hand that protection which the other had. This may appear by King Edward II, Richard III, King Henry IV, King Henry V, King Henry VI, etc. Because they have either negligently *allowed*, or cruelly *caused* such persecuting laws to be made, and devoured so much Christian blood injuriously, they have therefore been less prospered by the Lord. So that either they were deposed, or if they flourished for a while, they did not long continue, reigning almost half the time of the other kings named before.

And therefore, as the state of the commonwealth commonly follows the state of the church, so it is to be wished that King Henry VII, being otherwise a prudent and temperate prince, had not permitted the intemperate rage of the pope's clergy to have their wills over the poor flock of Christ so much as they had. Although he reigned nearly twenty-four years, yet notwithstanding, here comes the same thing to be noted which I spoke of before: that when the church of Christ begins to be injured with violence, and to go to wreck through disorder and negligence, the state of the commonwealth cannot long endure without some alteration and strokes of God's correction. But however this mark is to be taken, thus lies the history: that after the burning and vexing of these poor servants of Christ recited above, when the persecution began to be hot in the church, God called away the king the same year, which was 1509. If he had joined a little more compassionate respect, in protecting Christ's poor members from the fire of the pope's tyranny, then to his other great virtues of singular wisdom, excellent temperance, and moderate frugality, he would have been as comparable with the best of those princes, as he had been inferior to but a few. But what was lacking in him, was supplied most luckily (blessed be the Lord) by his posterity succeeding after him.

Persecutions at Coventry and Lichfield.

Among many other things incident in the reign of this King Henry VII, I have passed over the history of certain godly persons persecuted in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield, as we find them recorded in the registers of the diocese, here following.

The year of our Lord 1485, March 9th, among other good men in Coventry, these nine here under-named, were examined before John, bishop of Coventry and Litchfield in Saint Michael's church, upon the following articles: —

John Blomston was openly and publicly accused, reported and impeached, that he was a heretic because he had preached, taught, held, and affirmed,

- That the power attributed to St. Peter in the church of God, by our Savior Jesus Christ directly, did not flit or pass from him, to remain with his successors.
- That there was as much virtue in an herb, as in the image of the Virgin Mary.
- That prayer and alms do not avail the dead; for immediately after death, he goes either to heaven or hell, upon which he concludes that there is no purgatory.
- That it was foolishness to go on pilgrimage to the image of our lady of Doncaster, Walsingham, or the tower of the city of Coventry; for a man might as well worship the blessed Virgin by fire-side in the kitchen as in the aforesaid places, and a man might as well worship the blessed Virgin when he sees his mother and sister, as in visiting the images, because they are no more than dead stocks and stones.

Richard Hegham of the same city was accused, etc., to be a very heretic, because he held

- That a Christian man being at the point of death, should renounce all his own works, good and bad, and submit himself to the mercy of God.
- That it was foolishness to worship the images of our lady of Tower in the city, or of other saints, for they are but stocks and stones.
- That if the image of our lady of Tower was put into the fire, it would make a good fire.
- That it was better to give money to poor folks, than to offer to the images of Christ and other saints, which are but dead stocks and stones.

Robert Crowther of the same city, was accused that he was a heretic, because he held,

- That whoever receives the sacrament of the altar in deadly sin, or out of charity, receives nothing but bread and wine.
- That neither bishop, nor priests, nor curates of churches, have power in the market of penance to bind or loose.
- That pilgrimage to our lady of Tower is foolishness; for it is but a stock or a stone.

John Smith was accused to be a very heretic, because he held

- That every man is bound to know the Lord's prayer, and the creed *in English*.
- That whoever believed as the churchmen believed, believes badly.
- That a man needs to frequent the schools a good while, before he can attain to the knowledge of the true and right faith.
- That no priest has power to absolve a man in the market of penance from his sins.

Roger Brown of the same city, was also accused to be a heretic, because he held,

- That no man ought to worship the image of our lady of Walsingham, nor the blood of Christ at Halies, but rather God Almighty, who would give him whatever he would ask.
- That he did not hold up his hand, nor look up, at the elevation of the Eucharist.
- That he promised to show someone certain books of heresy, if he would swear that he would not utter them, and if he would credit them.
- That he ate flesh during Lent, and was taken in the act.
- That if any man were not confessed and absolved his whole life, and at the point of death would be confessed, and could not, having no more than contrition alone, he would pass on to joy without purgatory.
- That if he were confessed of any sin, and enjoined only to say one paternoster for penance, and if he thought he would have any punishment in purgatory for that sin, then he would never be confessed for any sin.
- That all is lost that is given to priests.
- That there was no purgatory that would pardon all sins, without confession and satisfaction.

Thomas Butler of the same city was likewise openly accused as a heretic, because he held,

- That are but two ways, either to heaven or to hell.
- That no faithful man should suffer any pain after the death of Christ, for any sin, because Christ died for our sins.
- That there was no purgatory; for every man immediately after death passes either to heaven or to hell.
- That whoever departs in the faith of Christ and the Church, however he has lived, shall be saved.
- That prayers and pilgrimages are worth nothing, and to not avail to purchase heaven.

John Falks was accused as a heretic, because he affirmed,

- That it was a foolish thing to offer to the image of our lady, saying what is it but a block? If it could speak to me, I would give it a halfpenny-worth of ale.
- That when the priest carries to the sick, the *body* of Christ, why does he not also carry the *blood* of Christ?
- That he ate cow-milk on the first Sunday of Lent.
- That concerning the sacrament of penance and absolution, no priest has power to absolve any man from his sins, inasmuch as he cannot make one hair of his head.
- That the image of our lady was but a stone or a block.

[396]

Richard Hilmin was accused that he was a heretic, because he said and maintained,

- That it was better to part with money to the poor, than to give tithes to priests, or to offer to the images of our lady; and that it was better to offer to images made by God, than to images of God painted by man.
- That he had the Lord's prayer, and the salutation of the angel, and the creed *in English*, and another book he saw and had, which contained the epistles and gospels *in English*, and according to them he would live, and thereby he believed that he would be saved.
- That no priest speaks better in the pulpit than that book.
- That the sacrament of the altar is but bread, and that the priests make it to blind the people.
- That a priest while he is at mass, is a priest; and after one mass is done, till the beginning of another mass, he is no more than a layman, and has no more power than a mere layman.

After they were forced to recant, they were absolved, and obliged to do penance.

Margery Coyt, wife of James Coyt of Ashburn, was brought before the foresaid John, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, the third of April A.D. 1488. She was there accused of saying the following:

- That what the priests lifted over their heads at mass, was not the true and very body of Christ; for if it was so, the priests could not break it so lightly into four parts, and swallow it as they do; for the Lord's body has flesh and bones, and what the priests receive does not.
- That priests buying forty cakes for a halfpenny, and showing them to the people, and saying that they make of every one of them, the body of Christ, do nothing but deceive the people and enrich themselves.
- Seeing that God in the beginning created and made man, how can it be that man should be able to make God?

This woman also was constrained to recant, and so was she absolved and did penance.

Thus much I thought it good to insert here, regarding these believers at Coventry, especially for this purpose: because our cavilling adversaries are in the habit of objecting against us the newness of Christ's old and ancient religion. And therefore, to the intent that they may see this doctrine is not so new as they report, I wish they would consider both the time and articles here objected against these persons.

I would also, in the same reign of King Henry VII, insert the story of **Johannes Picus**, Earl of Mirandula, whose name was mentioned in the Preface (p. 4). Picus, being but a young man, was so excellently witted, and so singularly learned in all sciences and in all tongues, both Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic, that coming to Rome booted and spurred (highly motivated), he set up ninety conclusions, to dispute with anyone in all Christendom, whoever would come against him. Several of these conclusions were on the matter of the sacrament, etc. And when none was found in all Rome, nor in Europe, who

Bk. VI. The last 300 years from the loosing of Satan (1422-1516)

would openly dispute with him, then privately and in corners certain of the pope's clergy, prelates, lawyers, and friars, appointed by the pope, consulted together to inquire upon his conclusions. Whereupon they pronounced against him for suspicion of heresy. And thus the unlearned clergy of Rome privately circumvented and entangled this learned earl in their snares of heresy, a man against whom they never dared to openly dispute. He died at the age of thirty-two. He was of such wit and boldness, that it is hard to say whether Italy ever bred a better man. During the earl's sickness, Charles VIII, then French king, moved by the fame of this man's learning, came to visit him.

The names of the Archbishops of Canterbury contained in this Sixth Book.

62. John Stratford,
63. John Kempe.
64. Thomas Bouchier.
65. John Morton.
66. Thomas Langhtoc.
67. Henry Dene.
68. William Warham.

THE END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

The Proud Primacy of Popes Described.

*In order of their rising up little by little, from faithful bishops and martyrs,
to become lords and governors over kings and kingdoms,
exalting themselves in the temple of God,
above all that is called God, etc.*

— *2Thessalonians 2.4.*

In the description of the primitive church, the reader has had set forth and exhibited before his eyes, the grievous afflictions and torment which, through God's secret sufferance, fell upon the true saints and members of Christ's church in that time, especially upon the good bishops, ministers, and teachers of the flock. Some of them were scourged, some beheaded, some crucified, some burned, some had their eyes put out, some were miserably consumed one way, some another. Those days of woeful calamity continued for nearly three hundred years. During that time the spouse and elect church of God, being sharply assaulted on every side, had no rest, nor joy, nor outward safety in this world, but passed all their days in much bitterness of heart, in continual tears and mourning under the cross, being spoiled, imprisoned, despised, reviled, famished, tormented, and martyred everywhere. They dared not tarry at home for fear and dread of their enemies, much less dare to go abroad except at night, when they sometimes assembled to sing psalms and hymns together.

But notwithstanding all their dreadful dangers and sorrowful afflictions, the goodness of the Lord did not leave them desolate. But the more their outward tribulations increased, the more their inward consolations abounded. And the further off they seemed from the joys of this life, the more present was the Lord with them, with grace and fortitude to confirm and rejoice their souls. And though their possessions and riches in this world were lost and spoiled, yet were they enriched with heavenly gifts more than a hundred-fold. Then true religion was really felt in heart. Then Christianity was not merely shown in outward appearance, but was received in inward affection, and in the true image of the church — not in pretended outward show, but in her effectual perfect state. Then the name and fear of God was engrafted in the heart, and not merely dwelling on the lips. Then faith was fervent, and zeal ardent; prayer was not merely on the lips, but groaned out to God from the bottom of the spirit. Then there was no pride in the church, nor leisure to seek riches, nor time to keep them. Contention for trifles was then so far from Christians, that they were happy when they could meet to pray together against the devil, the author of all dissension. Briefly, the whole church of Christ Jesus, with all its members, the further it was from the type and shape of this world, the nearer it was to God's favor and support.

The first rising of the Bishops of Rome.

After this long time of trouble it pleased the Lord, at length, to mercifully look upon the saints and servants of his Son, to release their captivity, to relieve their misery, and to bind up the old dragon the devil, who so long vexed them. And thereby the church began to aspire to some more liberty; and the bishops who had been utterly contemned by emperors as castaways, through the providence of God (who disposes all things in his time, according to His own will) now began to be esteemed by emperors, and held in honor. And further, as emperors grew more in their devotion, so the bishops were more and more exalted, not only in favor, but also preferred in honor. So that in a short space of time they became, not quartermasters (stewards), but rather half-emperors with the emperors.

After this, as riches and worldly wealth crept into the clergy, and the devil had poured his venom into the church, so true humility began to decay, and pride to step in, till at last they played as the ivy does with the oak-tree. It begins with a goodly show of green, embraces it so long that at length it overgrows it, and so it sucks all the moisture from the oak, setting its root fast in its bark, till at last it both stifles the stock, and kills the branches. And so it comes to be a nest for owls and all unclean birds. Not untruly, therefore, it was said by Augustine, “Religion begat riches, and the daughter has devoured the mother.” The truth of this may appear in the history of the church of Rome and her bishops. For after the church of Rome was endowed with lands, donations, possessions, and patrimonies, through the favor of emperors, so that the bishops began to increase in pomp and pride, feeling the pleasure of wealth, ease, and prosperity. The more they flourished in this world, the more God’s Holy Spirit forsook them, till at last the bishops, who at first were poor, creeping upon the ground and persecuted, every man treading upon them in this world, now — instead of being persecuted people — they began to be the persecutors of others, and to tread upon the necks even of emperors, and to bring the heads of kings and princes under their girdle. And not only that, but through pride and riches, they were so far gone from all true religion, that in the end they became the great adversary of God (they became what we call *antichrist*) prophesied of so long before by the Spirit of God, sitting in the temple of God, etc. We thus read of him in the epistle of St. Paul, where he says,

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together to him, that you not be soon shaken in mind, or troubled, either by spirit, or by word, or by letter as if from us, because the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means. For that day shall not come, unless there comes a falling away first, and that man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he sits as God, in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” (2The 2.1-4)

By these words of St. Paul, we have several things to note: *First*, that the day of the Lord’s coming was not then near at hand. *Secondly*, the apostle giving us a token beforehand, to know when that day will approach, bids us to look for an adversary first to be revealed. *Thirdly*, to show what kind of adversary this will be, he does not describe him as a common adversary such as were then in his time.

[398]

Herod, Annas, and Caiaphas, the high priests and Pharisees, Tertullus, Alexander the coppersmith, Elymas and Simon Magus, and Nero the emperor, in St. Paul’s time, were great adversaries. Yet here Paul means another besides these, greater than all the rest, not such a one as would likely be a priest, king, or emperor, but such as far exceeds the state of all kings, priests, and emperors — one who would be the prince of priests, who would make kings stoop, and who would tread upon the neck of emperors and make them kiss his feet. Moreover, where the apostle says that he will sit in the temple of God, thereby is meant, not merely the personal sitting of the pope in the city of Rome, but the authority and jurisdiction of his see exalted in the whole universal church, equal with God himself. For let men give to the pope that which he requires in his pontifical laws and decrees, and what difference is there between God and the pope? If God sets laws and ordinances, so does the pope. If God has his creatures, so does he. If God requires obedience, so does he. If the breach of God’s commandments are punished, much more are his. God has his religion, the pope also has his. Indeed, for God’s one religion, he has a hundred. God has set up an advocate; he has a hundred. God has instituted only a few holy-days, for God’s one, the pope has instituted forty. Christ is the head of the church, so is the pope. Christ gives influence to

his body, so does the pope. Christ forgives sin, the pope does no less. Christ expels evil spirits by his power, so the pope pretends to do by his holy water. Furthermore, where Christ went barefoot upon the bare ground, the pope with his golden shoes is carried upon men's shoulders. Christ never used any but the spiritual sword; the pope claims both spiritual and temporal swords. Christ bought the church, he both buys and sells the church. And if it is necessary to believe Christ is the Savior of the world, so it is necessary to believe the pope is the head of the church. Christ paid tribute to Caesar; the pope makes Caesar pay tribute to him. Finally, the crown of Christ was made of sharp thorns; the pope has three crowns of gold upon his head, so far exceeding Christ the Son of God in glory of this world, as Christ exceeds him in the glory of heaven. His intolerable pride and exaltation, according to St. Paul's description of him in his epistle, we have set forth here, not only in these tables, and noted by his own facts, but also declared in his own words and registers. Clementines, extravagantes, and pontificals, will follow in order (the Lord willing).¹⁴⁶

The exaltation of Popes above Kings and Emperors - Recap.

First, after Italy and the city of Rome were overrun by the Goths and Vandals, the seat of the empire was removed to Constantinople. Then John, patriarch of Constantinople, began to put himself forth, and would be called *the universal bishop of the world*. But the bishop of Rome would in no case suffer that, and stopped it. After this the emperor's deputy and the exarch of Ravenna came to rule Italy; but the bishop of Rome, through the aid of the king of the Lombards, soon mastered him.

Not long after (A.D. 600), Phocas the murderer came, who slew the emperor of Constantinople, his master Mauricius, and his children. It was by emperor Phocas that the bishops of old Rome first aspired to their pre-eminence, to be counted the head bishops over the whole church. So together with the Lombards, they began to rule the city of Rome. Afterwards, when the Lombards would not yield to pope Zachary in accomplishing his ambitious desire, but would require from the bishop, the city of Rome, he stirred up Pepin. But first he deposed Childeric III, king of the Franks (A.D. 751). Thrusting him into an abbey, he set up in his place Pepin and his son Charlemagne, to put down the king of the Lombards, called Astulphus. And so he transferred the empire from Constantinople to France, dividing the spoil between himself and them. Thus the kings of France had all the possessions and lands which before belonged to the empire. He received from them the quiet possession of the city of Rome, with those donations and lordships that they now claim under the name *St. Peter's patrimony*, and which they falsely ascribe to a donation by Constantine the Great.

It then follows in process of time, after the days of Pepin, Charlemagne, and Louis (who had endowed these bishops of Rome, now called *popes*, with large possessions), that the kings of France were not so pliable to their beckoning, to aid and maintain the bishops against the princes of Italy, who then began to pinch the bishops for their wrongfully usurped goods. The pope therefore engaged with the Germans to convey the empire to Otto, the first of that name, duke of Spain, referring the election to seven princes, electors of Germany (A.D. 938). Notwithstanding, he still reserved in his hands the negative voice (*veto*), thinking thereby to enjoy what they had in quietness and security, and so he did for a good space of time.

¹⁴⁶ *Extravagantes* —This word designates some papal decretals not contained in certain canonical collections which possess a special authority, *i.e.* they are not found in the Decree of Gratian or the three official collections of the "Corpus Juris" (the Decretals of Gregory IX, the Sixth Book of the Decretals, and the Clementines). The term was first applied to those papal documents which Gratian had not inserted in his "Decree" (about 1140), but which were obligatory upon the whole Church, and also to other later decretals, possessed of the same authority.

At length, when some of these German emperors after Otto, also began to spurn a little the bishops and popes of Rome, some of them the bishops cursed, some they subdued and brought to kissing their feet, some they deposed and gave others their possessions.

Henry IV was so accursed by these bishops, that he was forced with his wife and child to wait upon the pope's pleasure for three days and three nights in winter, at the gates of Canosa (A.D. 1077). Besides all this, the pope raised up Rudolph of Swabia against him; but he was slain in war. Pope Gregory VII then stirred up his own son, Henry V, to fight against his own father and to depose him. Henry V was afterwards accursed himself and excommunicated, and the Saxons were at last set up by the bishops to fight against him.

After this, the emperors began to be somewhat calmed and quieter, allowing the bishops to reign as they liked, till Frederick I (called Barbarossa) came and began to stir contention against them. However, they hampered both him and his son Henry in such a way, that they obliged Frederick to submit to be trod upon in the church of Venice (A.D. 1177); and afterwards these bishops, crowning his son Henry VI in the church of St. Peter, set his crown on his head with their feet, and with their feet they took it off again, to make him know that the popes of Rome had power both to crown emperors and to depose them again, (A.D. 1190).

Then followed Philip (A.D. 1198), brother to Henry, whom the popes also cursed. They set up in opposition to him, Otto duke of Saxony. Upon the death of Philip (A.D. 1209), the pope conferred the imperial crown upon Otto IV. But this emperor, like his predecessors, was unwilling to submit to the pontiff's nod, and began to dispossess the bishops of their cities and lands which they had gathered into their hands. This they could not bear, and immediately excommunicated him and put him aside; so that he was only allowed to reign for four years (till A.D. 1212).

At this time Frederick II, son of Henry VI, was but young. The bishops of Rome supposing to find him more malleable and tamed to their hand, advanced him to be emperor. But that fell out much contrary to their expectation. For perceiving the immoderate pomp and pride of the Roman bishops, which he could in no way abide, he so nettled them and cut their combs, and grew so stout against them, intending to extirpate their tyranny and reduce their pompous riches to the state and condition of the primitive church again, that he put some of them to flight, and imprisoned some of their cardinals. So that by three popes, one after another, he was accursed, circumvented by treason, deposed, and then poisoned. In the end, he was forsaken and died (A.D. 1250).

After Frederick, his son Conrad followed him, whom the bishops soon dispatched for his disobedience. They excited against him, in mortal war, the landgrave of Turin, by whom he was at length driven into his kingdom of Naples, and there died.

Conrad had a son called Conradine, duke and prince of Swabia. When Conradine, after the decease of his father, came to enjoy his kingdom of Naples, these bishops stirred up Charles against him, the French King's brother.

[399]

So that, through crafty conveyance, both Conradine, who descended from the blood of so many emperors, and also Frederick duke of Austria, were both taken. After much wretched handling in their miserable endurance, and unseemly to their state, at length they were both brought under the axe by the pope's procurement, and so both were beheaded. Thus ended the imperial stock of Frederick I, surnamed Barbarossa.

The same thing that happened to Frederick the emperor, almost fell upon Philip IV also, the French king, by Pope Boniface VIII. Because he could not have his commodities and revenues out of France according to his will, Boniface sent out his bulls and letters patent to displace King Philip, and to place Albert king of the Romans in his place.

And thus up to here in foreign histories. Now regarding our own country princes here in England, to say something similar about them: did not Pope Alexander III presumptuously take upon himself things he had nothing to do with, and to intermeddle with the king's subjects? For the death of Becket the rebel, although the king sufficiently cleared himself of it, yet notwithstanding, did he not wrongfully bring King Henry II to such penance as it pleased him to enjoin, and also violently constrain him to swear obedience to the See of Rome? The same was also shown earlier in this history, to have happened to King John his son. For when the king, like a valiant prince, held out against the tyranny of those bishops for seven years, were not all the churches in England barred up, and his inheritance with all his dominions given away by Pope Innocent III to Louis the French king? And afterwards he was compelled to submit himself, and to make his whole realm feudatory to the bishops of Rome. Moreover, the king himself was also driven to surrender his crown to Pandulph the pope's legate. And so he continued as a private person for five days, standing at the pope's courtesy, whether to receive it back again from his hands or not? And when the nobles of the realm afterwards rose against the king for that, was he not then glad to seek and sue to the pope for succor?

Yet notwithstanding all this, King John so yielded to the pope, that he was both pursued by the nobles, and also in the end was poisoned by a subject of the pope's own religion, a monk of Swinsted. Besides King Henry II and King John his son, see what kings have reigned here in England since their time, until the reign of King Henry VIII. Although there were prudent princes, and they did what they could in providing against the proud domination of these bishops, yet they were forced at length, sorely against their wills and out of fear, to subject themselves, together with their subjects, under usurped authority, such that King Henry III was glad to stoop and kiss the legate's knee.

*The Image of AntiChrist exalting himself in the Temple of God, above all that is named God, out of his own decrees, decretals, extravagantes, pontificals, etc., word for word, as alleged and quoted out of these books.*¹⁴⁷

(1) Forasmuch as it stands, upon necessity of salvation, for every human creature to be subject to me the pope of Rome, it shall therefore be requisite and necessary for all men who will be saved, to learn and know the dignity of my see and the excellency of my domination, as it is here set forth according to the truth and very words of my own laws, in style as follows: (2) First, my institution began in the Old Testament, and was consummated and finished in the New, in that my priesthood was prefigured by Aaron; and other bishops under me were prefigured by the sons of Aaron, who were under him. (3) Nor is it to be thought that my church of Rome has been preferred by any general council, but obtained the primacy only by the voice of the gospel, and the mouth of the Savior. (4) And has in it

¹⁴⁷ The parenthetical numbers (1), (2), etc. refer to sources found in the footnotes which follow each section. Foxe speaks here with the voice of a composite pope, reading what is recorded in the decrees of various popes, about themselves and the obeisance due them. It is a shocking portrait of unbounded pride and self-idolatry, as if the pope were Christ incarnate in this world, rather than a humble ambassador of Christ.

neither spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing. (5) Wherefore as other seats are all inferior to me, and as they cannot absolve me; so they have no power to bind me or to stand against me, no more than the axe has power to stand or presume above him that hews with it, or the saw to presume above him that rules it. (6) This is the holy and apostolic mother church of all other churches of Christ; (7) from whose rules it is not fitting that any person or persons should decline: but just as the Son of God came to do the will of his Father, so must you do the will of your mother, the church, the head of which is the church of Rome, (8) And if any other person or persons shall err from the said church, either let them be admonished, or else their names taken, to be known who they are that swerve from the customs of Rome. (9) Thus then, as the holy church of Rome, of which I am governor, is set up to the whole world as a mirror or example, reason would have it that whatever the church determines, or ordains, should be received by all men as a general and a perpetual rule forever. ¹⁴⁸

(10) Whereupon we see it now verified in this church, what was prophesied by Jeremiah, saying, "Behold, I have set you up over nations and kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to build and to plant," etc. (11) Whoever does not understand the prerogative of my priesthood, let him look up to the firmament, where he may see two great lights, the sun and the moon, one ruling over the day, the other over the night; so too in the firmament of the universal church, (12) God has set two great dignities, the authority of the pope, and of the emperor. Of these two, our dignity is so much weightier, as we have the greater charge to give account to God for kings of the earth, and the laws of men. (13) Therefore, be it known to you emperors, who also know it right well, that you depend upon our judgment; we must not be brought and reduced to your will. (14) For, as I said, see what difference there is between the sun and the moon, so great is the power of the pope ruling over the day (that is, over the spirituality), above emperors and kings ruling over the night (that is, over the laity). (15) Now then, seeing that the earth is seven times bigger than the moon, and the sun eight times greater than the earth, it follows that the pope's dignity fifty-six times surmounts the estate of the emperors. (16) Upon consideration of this, I say and pronounce that Constantine the emperor, acted naughtily in setting the patriarch of Constantinople at his feet, on his left hand. (17) And although the emperor wrote to me, alleging the word of St. Peter, commanding us to submit ourselves to every human creature, such as to kings, dukes, and others for the cause of God, etc. 1Pet 2. Yet in answering again my decretal, I expounded the mind and the words of St. Peter to pertain to his subjects, and not to his successors, commanding the emperor to consider the person of the speaker, and to whom it was spoken. For if the mind of Peter had been there to debase the order of priesthood, and to make us underlings to every human creature, then every aspirant might have dominion over prelates, which goes against the example of Christ, setting up the order of priesthood to bear dominion over kings, according to the saying of Jeremiah: "Behold, I have set you up over kings and nations," etc. (18) And as I did not fear then to write this boldly to Constantine, so now I say to all other emperors, that receiving their approbation, unction, consecration, and crown imperial from me, they must not disdain to submit their heads under me, and swear

¹⁴⁸ (1) Pope Boniface VIII. Extravag. de majorit. & obed. cap. *Unam*.

(2) Distinct. 12. cap. *Decretis*.

(3) Pope Pelasius, Distinct. 21, cap. *Quamvis*.

(4) Pelasius. *ibid*.

(5) Pope Nicolas. Distinct. 21. cap. *Inferior*,

(6) Pope Lucius, 24, q. 1. cap. ii. *Recta*.

(7) Pope Calixtus, Dist. 12. cap. *Non decet*.

(8) Pope Innocentius. II. cap. *Quis*.

(9) Pope Stephanus Distinct. 19. cap. *Enim vero*.

their allegiance to me. (19) For so you read in the decree of Pope John, how before now princes have been in the habit of bowing and submitting their heads to bishops, and not to proceed in judgment against the heads of bishops.

[400]

(20) If this reverence and submission was usually given to bishops, how much more should they submit their heads to me, being superior not only to kings, but to emperors? And that is for two causes: first, for my title of succession that I, pope of Rome, have to the empire, the place standing vacant; also for the fulness of power that Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, has given to me, though unworthy, in the person of Peter; ¹⁴⁹

(21) Because of this, seeing that my power is not from man but from God, who by his celestial Providence has set me over his whole universal church as master and governor, it therefore belongs to my office to look upon every mortal sin of every Christian man: (22) whereby all criminal offenses, of kings as well as all others, be subject to my censure, (23) in such a way that in all manner of pleading, if any manner of person at any time, either before the sentence is given, or after, shall appeal to me, it shall be lawful for him so to do. (24) Neither must kings and princes think it much to submit themselves to my judgment, for so did Valentinian, the worthy emperor; so did Theodosius, and also Charles. (25) Thus you see all must be judged by me, and I am judged by no man. Yes, and even if I, pope of Rome, by my negligence or evil demeanor, am found unprofitable, or hurtful, either to myself or to others; yes, if I should draw with me innumerable souls by heaps to hell, yet no mortal man may be so hardy, so bold, or so presumptuous as to reprove me, (26) or to say to me. Sir, why do you so? (27) For although you read that Balaam was rebuked by his ass, by which ass our subjects are signified, and by Balaam, we prelates are signified; yet that ought to be no example to our subjects to rebuke us. (28) And though we read in the Scripture that Peter, who received power of the kingdom, and being chief of the apostles might by virtue of his office control all others, was content to come and answer before his inferiors, objecting to his going to the Gentiles; yet other inferiors must not learn by this example to be checkmate with their prelates, because Peter so took it at their hands, showing thereby a dispensation of humility, rather than the power of his office, by which power he might have said back to them in this way: it does become sheep, nor does it belong to their office, to accuse their shepherd; (29) for why else was Dioscorus, patriarch of Alexandria, condemned and excommunicated at Chalcedon? Not for any cause of his faith, but only because he dared stand against Pope Leo, and dared excommunicate the bishop of Rome; for who is he that has authority to accuse the seat of St. Peter? (30) Although I am not ignorant of what St. Jerome writes, that St. Paul would not have reprehended St. Peter, unless he had thought himself equal to him. (31) Yet St. Jerome must thus be expounded by my interpretation, that this equality between St. Peter and St. Paul does not consist in like office of dignity, but in

¹⁴⁹ (10) Pope Boniface VIII. Extravag. cap. *Unam sanciam*. Item. Pope Joannes XXII. Extravag. cap. *Super gentes*.

(11) Pope Innocent III. art. de major. & obed. cap. *Solitiae*.

(12) Pope Gelasius, Dist. 96. cup. Dm.

(13) Ibidem.

(14) Innocentius de major. & obed. cap. *Solitae*.

(15) Glossa. Ibidem.

(16) Ibidem.

(17) Innocentius. Ibid.

(18) Pope Clement V. Clement de jure jurando. cap. *Romani*.

(19) Pope Joannes, Dist. 96. cap. *Nunquam*.

(20) Pope Clement V. Clement (le Sentent. & de rejudi pastoralis.

pureness of conversation. (32) For who gave St. Paul his license to preach but St. Peter? and that was by the authority of God, saying, “Separate to me Paul and Barnabas,” etc. (33) Therefore be it known to all men, that my church of Rome is prince and head of all nations, (34) the mother of the faith, (35) the cardinal foundation upon which all churches depend as the door depends on the hinges, (36) the first of all other seats, without any spot or blemish. (37) Lady, mistress, and instructor of all churches, (38) a mirror and a spectacle to all men, to be followed in whatever she observes. (39) Which was never yet found to slide or decline from the path of apostolic tradition, or to be entangled with any newness of heresy; (40) against which church of Rome, whoever speaks any evil is forthwith a heretic, (41) yes, a very pagan, a witch, and an idolater or infidel, (42) having fulness of power in her own hands alone in ruling, (43) deciding, absolving, condemning, casting out, or receiving in. (44) Although I do not deny that other churches are partakers with her in laboring and carrying. (45) To which church of Rome, it is lawful to appeal for remedy from all other churches. Although it was otherwise concluded in the general Council of Milevitane, that no man should appeal over the sea under pain of excommunication, yet my gloss comes in here with an exception: “Unless the appeal is to the See of Rome,” etc. ¹⁵⁰

(46) By the authority of which church of Rome, all synods and decrees of councils stand confirmed. (47) And she always has full authority in her hands to make new laws and decrements, and to alter statutes, privileges, rights, or documents of churches; to separate things joined, and to join things separated upon right consideration, either in whole or in part, either personally or generally. (48) I am head of this church of Rome, as a king is over his judges, (49) the vicar of St. Peter, (50) yes, not the vicar of *St. Peter* properly, but the vicar of *Christ* properly, and successor of Peter, (51) vicar of Jesus Christ, (52) rector of the universal church, director of the Lord’s flock, (53) chief magistrate of the whole world, (54) the head and chief of the apostolic church, (55) universal pope, and diocesan in all places exempt, as well as every bishop is in places not exempt, (56) most mighty priest, (57) a living law on the earth, (58) judged to have all laws in the chest of my breast, (59) bearing

¹⁵⁰ (21) Pope Innocent III De judiciis, cup. *Novit*.

(22) *Ibidem*.

(23) Pope Marcellus, caus. 2. q. 6. cap. ad *Romanam*.

(24) Innocent. Novteille.

(25) Bonifacius Martyr. diet. 40. cap. *Si Papa*.

(26) Glossa Extr. de sede vacant, ad Apostolatus.

(27) Pope Leo, caus. 2. q. 7. cap. *Nos*.

(28) Greg. 2. q. 7. cap. *Petrus*.

(29) Pope Nicol. ius, Hist. cap. 21. *In cantum*.

(30) Jer. caita. 2. q. 7. cap. *Paulas*.

(31) Glossa Gratiani. *Ib*.

(32) Glossa in Diss. 11. cap. *Quis*.

(33) Caus. 2. q. 7. cap. *Beati*.

(34) Pope Nicolaus, Dist. 22. *Omnnes*.

(35) Pope Anaclet, Dist. 22. cap. *Sacrosancta*.

(36) Pope Pelagius, Dist. 21. cap. *Quamvis*.

(37) Pope Nicolaus, Dist. 21. cap. *Denique*.

(38) Pope Steplien, Di. 29. *Enim vero*.

(39) Pope Lucius, 24. q. 1. *Arect*.

(40) Pope Nicolaus, Dist. 22. cap. *Omnnes*.

(41) Pope Gregory, Dist. 81. cap. *Si qui*.

(42) Pope Leo, caus. 3. q. 62. cap. *Multum*.

(43) Dist. 20. cap. *Decretalis*.

(44) Pope Julius, caus. 2. q. 6. *qui se*.

(45) Causa. 3. q. 6. Arguta. Item. cap. *Ad Romanam*. caus. 2. q. a. cap. *Placuit*. Glossa. Gratiani. Nisi.

the place of no pure man, (60) being neither God nor man, but the admiration of the world, and a middle thing between both. (61) Having both swords in my power, both of the Spiritual and Temporal jurisdiction, (62) so far surmounting the authority of the emperor, that of my own power alone, without a council, I have authority to depose him, or to transfer his kingdom, and to give a new election, as I did to Frederick and diverse others. (63) What power then or potentate in all the world is comparable to me, who have authority to bind and loose both in heaven and in earth? (64) That is, who have power both of heavenly things, and also of temporal things. (65) To whom emperors and kings are more inferior as lead is inferior to gold. (66) For do you not see the necks of great kings and princes bend under our knees, yes and think themselves happy and well defended, if they may kiss our hands? ¹⁵¹

[401]

(67) Therefore the sauciness of Honorius the emperor is to be reprehended, and his constitution abolished, who with his laity would take it upon himself to intermeddle, not only with the temporal order, but also with matters ecclesiastical, and the election of the pope. (68) But here perhaps some will object, the examples and words of Christ, saying, “That his kingdom is not of this world,” and where being required to decide between two brethren their heritage, he refused it. But that ought to be no prejudice to my power. (69) For if Peter, and I in Peter — if we, I say, have power to bind and loose in heaven, how much more then is it to be thought that we have power on earth to loose and to take away empires, kingdoms, dukedoms, and whatever else mortal men may have, and to give them where we will? (70) And if we have authority over angels, which are the governors of princes, what then may we do upon their inferiors and servants? (71) And that you may not marvel when I say angels are subject to us, you shall hear what my blessed cleric Antoninus writes of the matter, saying that, “Our power is greater than the angels in four things: — 1. In jurisdiction, 2. In administration of sacraments, 3. In knowledge, 4. In reward,” etc. (72) And again in Bulla Clementis, do I not there command in my bull the angels of paradise, to absolve the soul of man out of purgatory, and to bring it into the glory of paradise? (73) And now besides my heavenly power, to speak of my earthly jurisdiction, who first transferred the

¹⁵¹ (46) Pope Gelasi. 25. q. 1. cap. *Confidimus*.

(47) Pope Urbanus, 25. q. 1. cap. *Sunt*. P. Pelagius, 25. q. 2. cap. *Posteaquam*.

(48) Bulla Donationis, Dist. 96. cap. *Constant*.

(49) Pope Paschalis, Dist. 63. cap. *Ego*.

(50) Pope Clement V. Clement, cap. *Romani Glossa*.

(51) Pope Boniface VIII. Sext. Decret. cap. *Ubi*.

(52) *Ibidem*.

(53) Pope Boniface, prohem. Sext. Decret. 1. *Sacrosancta*.

(54) Anacletus, D. 22. cap. *Sacrosancta*.

(55) Pope Boniface IV. Sext. Decret. de poenit. et remis. cap. 5. *Glossa*. Item Alexander IV. Sext. decret. cap. 4. in *Glossa*

(56) Pope Hilarius, 25. q. 1. *Nulli*.

(57) Sext. Decret. cap. *Ab Arbitris*, *Glossa*.

(58) Pope Boniface Sext. decret. de const, cap. *Licet*.

(59) Pope Innocent III, de trans, cap. *Quanto*.

(60) Prohem. Clement. Gloss. Papa Stupor mundi, etc. *Nec Deus es nec homo, quasi neuter es inter utrumque*.

(61) Pope Boniface Extravag. de Majorit et obed. cap. *Unam*. Item Dist. 22. cap. *Omnes*.⁴

(62) Sext. Deer, de Scentent. et re. ca. ad. Apostoli. Item in *Glossa*, *Ibidem*.

(63) Pope Nicolaus, Dist. 22, cap. *Omnes*.

(64) *Gloss. Ibidem*.

(65) Pope Gelasius, Dist. 96. cap. *Duo*.

(66) Pope Gelasius, *Ibidem*.

empire from the Greeks to the Germans, but I? (74) And not only am I emperor in the empire, the place being empty, but in all ecclesiastical benefices have full right and power to give, to translate, and to dispose according to my arbitrement. (75) Did not I, Zacharias, put down Childeric, the old king of the Franks, and set up Pepin? (76) Did not I, Gregory VII, set up Robert Wysard, and make him king of Sicily, and duke of Capua? etc. (77) Did not I the same Gregory also set up Rudolph I against Henry IV emperor? (78) And though this Henry was an emperor of most stout courage, who stood sixty-two times in open field against his enemies, (79) yet did not I, Gregory, bring him before us, and make him stand at my gate three days and three nights bare-footed and barelegged, with his wife and child, in the depth of winter, in both frost and snow, entreating for his absolution, and excommunicated him again afterwards, so that he was twice excommunicated in my days? (80) Again, did not I, Paschal II, after Gregory, set up the son of Henry against his father in war, to possess the empire, and to put down his father, and so he did? (81) Did not I, Pope Alexander III, bring under Henry II king of England, for the death of Thomas Becket, and cause him to go barefoot to his tomb at Canterbury with bleeding feet? (82) Did not I, Innocent III, cause King John to kneel down at the feet of Pandulph my legate, and offer up his crown with his own hands; also to kiss the feet of Stephen Langton, a bishop of Canterbury: and besides that, fine him a thousand marks per year? (83) Did not I, Urban II, put down Hugo, earl in Italy, discharging his subjects from their oath and obedience to him? (84) Did not I, Pascal II, also excommunicate his son Henry V, and get out of his bands all his right and title of elections and donations of spiritual promotions? Did not I, Gelasius II, bring the captain of Cintius under, even to kissing my feet? And after Gelasius, did not I, Calixtus II, quail the Emperor, Henry V, and also bring in subjection Gregory, whom the emperor had set up against me as pope, bringing him into Rome on a camel, his face to the hairy tail, making him hold the horse-tail in his hand instead of a bridle? ¹⁵²

(85) Further, did not I, Innocent II, set up and make Lothaire to be emperor for driving Pope Anacletus out of Rome? (86) Did not I, the said Innocent, take the dukedom of Sicily from the empire, and make Roger II king of it, whereby afterward the kingdom became the patrimony of St. Peter? (87) Did not I, Alexander III, suspend all the realm and churches of England for the king's marriage (A.D. 1159)? (88) But what do I speak of kings? Did not Alexander bring the valiant emperor, Frederick I, to Venice, by reason of his son Otto taken prisoner there, and there in St. Mark's church made him fall down flat upon the ground

¹⁵² (67) Di. 96. cap. *Illud*.

(68) Ex citatione Hiero. Marii.

(69) Pope Hildebrandus, alius Gregorius 7. Ex. Platina, in vita Gregorii.

(70) Hildebrandus, Ibidem.

(71) Antonius in tertia parte Summae majoris.

(72) Bulla Clementis.

(78) Pope Innocent, de electione. cap. *Venerabilem*.

(74) Extrav. de praebend. & dig. cap. *Execrabilis*.

(75) Pope Zacharias, Gaus. 15. q. 6. cap. *Alius*.

(76) Pope Hildebrand, alias Gregor. 7. Clement, cap. *Pastoralis*.

(77) Ex. Gestis Hildebrandi.

(78) Baptista Egnatius.

(79) Platina, Benno Nauclerus.

(80) Platina, Egnatius Benno.

(81) Polydore Virgil. Historia ornalensis de rebus. Anglorum.

(82) Chronica vernacula.

(83) Pope Urbanus, Caus. 15. q. 6. cap. *Juratos*.

(84) Pope Paschalis Cursulanus. Platina, Vincentius, Stella, Anmnus, Mattheus Parisiensis, Pope. Gelasius 2. Pope.

while I set my foot upon his neck, saying the verse of the Psalm, “You shall tread on the adder and the serpent,” etc. (89) Did not I, Adrian IV, pope, born an Englishman, excommunicate the king of Sicily, and refuse the peace which he offered? And had not he overcome me in plainfield, I would have shaken him out of his kingdom of Sicily, and dukedom of Apulia. (90) Also, did not I, Adrian, control and correct the foresaid Frederic, emperor, for holding the left stirrup of my horse, when he should have held the right? (91) And afterward did I not excommunicate and curse him, for he was so saucy to set his own name in writing before mine? (92) And although a poor fly afterward overcame and strangled me, yet I made kings and emperors to stoop. (93) Did not I, Innocent III, cast down Philip, brother to Frederic, from the imperial crown, being elected without my leave, and afterwards set him up again? And also set up Otto of Brunswick, and afterwards excommunicated and also deposed the same after four years, setting up the French king to war against him? (94) Then Frederic II was set up by me, and reigned thirty-seven years; and yet five years before he died, he was deposed. (95) Did not I, Honorius III, interdict him, for not restoring certain ones to their possessions at my request? (96) Whom also Gregory IX excommunicated twice, and raised up the Venetians against him. (97) And at length Innocent IV spoiled him of his empire; after that he caused him to be poisoned, and at length to be strangled by one Manfred, and excommunicated his son Conrad after him, not only depriving him of his right inheritance, but also caused him, with Frederic, duke of Austria, to be beheaded. (98) Thus then, did not I excommunicate and depose all these emperors in order? Henry IV, Henry V, Frederic I, Philip, Otto IV, Frederic II, and Conrad his son? (99) Did not I interdict King Henry VIII? (100) And all his kingdom of England? (101) And had not his prudence and power prevented my practice, I would have displaced him from his kingdom also. Briefly, who is able to comprehend the greatness of my power and of my seat? (102) For by me alone general councils take their force and confirmation, (103) and the interpretation of the councils, and of all other hard and doubtful causes, ought to be referred and stand to my determination. ¹⁵³

[402]

(104) By me the works of all writers, whatever they may be, are either reproved or allowed. (105) Then how much more should my writings and decrees be preferred before all others? (106) So that my letters and epistles decretal are equivalent to the general councils. (107)

¹⁵³ (85) Pope Innocentius 2.

(86) Nauclerus.

(87) Pope Alexanders, de sponsal. & matr. cap. *Non est*.

(88) Nauclerus acta Rom. pontificum.

(89) Pope Adrian, vit. Rom. pontificum.

(90) Ex Aventino.

(91) Bulla Adriani contra Caesarem.

(92) Acta Rom. Pont.

(93) Pope Innocentius 3. Ex Vitis & Actis Rom. pontificum. Ex ab Ursperg.

(94) Ex eodem.

(95) Pope Honor. 3. Ex. Mario.

(96) Pope Greg. 9. Ex eodem.

(97) Pope Innocent 4. Hieronymus Marius. Petros de Veneis.

(98) Ex Chronic. Carionis.

(99) Hist. Anglor.

(100) Ibidem.

(101) Ibidem.

(102) Pope Marcellus, Dist. 17. cap. *Synodum*.

(103) Dist. 20. Decretales.

And, whereas, God has ordained all causes of men to be judged by men, he has only reserved me, that is, the pope of Rome, without any question by men, unto his own judgment. (108) And therefore, where all other creatures are under their judge, only I, who on earth am the judge of all, can be judged by none, either by emperor, nor the whole clergy, nor by kings, nor by the people. (109) For who has power to judge his judge? (110) This judge am I, and that alone, without any other resistance of any council joined to me. For I have power upon councils; councils have no power upon me. But if the council determines amiss, it is in my authority alone to infringe it, or to condemn whom I wish without any council. (111) And all for the pre-eminence of my predecessor blessed St. Peter, which, by the voice of the Lord, he received, and ever shall retain. (112) Furthermore, and whereas all other sentences and judgments, both of councils, person or persons, may and ought to be examined, (113) for they may be corrupted four ways: by fear, by gifts, by hatred, or by favor; only my sentence and judgment must stand, (114) as given out of heaven by the mouth of Peter himself, which no man must (115) break or retract, (116) no man must dispute or doubt. (117) Yes, if my judgment, statute, or yoke seems scarcely tolerable, yet for remembrance of St. Peter it must be humbly obeyed. (118) Yes, and moreover, obedience is to be given, not only to those decrees set forth by me in the time of my popedom, but also to those which I foresee and commit to writing before I am pope. (119) And although it is thought by some writers, to be given to all men to err, and to be deceived, (120) yet neither am I a pure man. (121) And again, the sentence of my apostolic seat is always conceived with such moderation, is concocted and digested with such patience and ripeness, and delivered out with such gravity and deliberation, that nothing in it is thought necessary to be altered or detracted. (122) Therefore, it is manifest, and testified by the voice of holy bishops, that the dignity of this my seat is to be revered through the whole world, in that all the faithful submit themselves to it as to the head of the whole body; ¹⁵⁴ (123) of which it is spoken to me by the prophet, speaking of the ark; if this is humbled, where shall you run for succor, and where shall your glory come from? Seeing then that this is so, that so holy bishops and Scriptures witness with me, what shall we say then to those who will take it upon themselves to judge my doings, to reprehend my proceedings, or to require homage and tribute from me, to whom all others are subject?

¹⁵⁴ (104) Pope Nicolaus, Dist. 19. cap. *Si Romanorum*.
 (105) Ibidem.
 (106) Dist. 20. Decretales.
 (107) Symmachus Pope, 9. q. 3. cap. *Aliorum*.
 (108) Pope Innocentium 6. q. 3. cap. *Nemo*.
 (109) Ibidem.
 (110) Pope Gelasius, 9. q. 3. cap. *Cuncta*.
 (111) Ibidem.
 (112) Anastasius Patriarch. Dist. q. 3. cap. *Antiquis*.
 (113) Pope Greg. a. q. 3. cap. *Quat*.
 (114) Pope Agatho, Dist. 19. cap. *Sic omnes*.
 (115) Pope Nicholas, 9. q. 3. Patet.
 (116) Pope Innocent. 2. Art. 17. q. 4. cap. *Si quis*.
 (117) Dist. 19. cap. In *memoriam*.
 (118) Sext. Decret. T. 7. De renunc. Quoniam Glossa.
 (119) Offic. lib. 1.
 (120) Glossa Extra. De verb. signif. cap. *Ad*.
 (121) Pope Greg;. Caus. 35. q. 9. cap. *Apostolicae*.
 (122) Pope Symmachus. Caus. 9. q. 3. cap. *Aliorum*.

(124) Against the first sort, the Scripture says, “You shall not put a sickle to your neighbor’s standing corn.” ^{Deu 23.25} To attempt this thing against me, what is it but plain sacrilege? (125) According to my canonists, who thus define sacrilege to consist in three things — either when a man judges his prince’s judgment; or when the holy-day is profaned; or when reverence is not given to laws and canons. (126) Against the second sort, the place in the book of Kings speaks, where we read the ark of God was brought from Gaza to Jerusalem, and on the way, the ark inclined because of the unruly oxen, Uzzah the Levite put out his hand to help, and therefore he was stricken of the Lord. By this ark is signified the prelates; and by the inclination of it, the fall of prelates, (127) who also are signified by the angels that Jacob saw going up and coming down the ladder: (128) also, by the prophet where he says, “He bowed down the heavens and came down,” etc. ^{2Sam 22.10} By Uzzah and by the unruly oxen are meant our subjects, (129) Then, just as Uzzah was stricken for putting his hand to the inclining ark, no more must subjects rebuke their prelates going awry. (130) Although here it may be answered again, that all are not prelates who are so called; for it is not the name that makes a bishop, but his life. (131) Against the third sort of those who would bring us under the tribute and exactions of secular men, the New Testament speaks, where Peter was bid to give the groat in the fish’s mouth, but not the head or body of the fish; ^{Mat 17.24-27} no more is the head or body of the church subdued to kings, but only that which is in the mouth, that is, the external things of the church. And yet not those either. (132) For so we read in the book of Genesis, that Pharaoh, in a time of dearth, subdued all the land of the Egyptians; yet he ministered to the priests, so that he took neither their possessions from them, nor their liberty. ^{Gen 47.22,26} If then prelates of the church must neither be judged, nor reprehended, nor exacted, how much more should I be free from the same, (133) who am the bishop of bishops, and head of prelates? (134) For it is not to be thought that the case between me and other prelates; between my see and other churches, is alike, (135) although the whole catholic and apostolic church makes one bride-chamber of Christ; yet the catholic and apostolic church of Rome had the preeminence given over all others by the mouth of the Lord himself, saying to Peter, “You are Peter,” etc. (136) Thus a distinction and difference must be had in the church as it was between Aaron and his children; ¹⁵⁵ (137) between the seventy-two disciples, and the twelve apostles; between the other apostles and Peter. (138) Therefore it is to be concluded, that there must be an order and difference of degrees in the church between superior and inferior power; without which order the universality of the whole cannot consist.

(139) For, as among the angelical creatures above in heaven, there is a set difference and inequality of powers and orders: some are angels, some archangels, some cherubims, and seraphims; (140) so too in the ecclesiastical hierarchy of the church militant on earth, priests must not be equal with bishops, bishops must not be like in order with archbishops,

¹⁵⁵ (123) Ibidem.

(124) Pope Greg. 6. p. 3. cap. *Scriptum est*.

(125) Caus. 17. q. 4. Sacrileg;. Glossa.

(126) 2. q. 7. cap. *Plaurumque*. Glossema Gratiaci. Item.

(127) Ibidem.

(128) Ibidem.

(129) Ibidem.

(130) Ibidem. His ita.

(131) Pope Urbanus 23. q. cap. *Tributum*.

(132) Ibidem. Quamvis.

(133) Pope Benedict. Extr. De aut. & usupallii. cap. Sanct. 4

(134) Pope Stephanus. Dist. 19. Enimvero.

(135) Pope Pelagus, Dist. 21. cap. *Quamcis*.

(136) Dist. 2 1, cap. *Decretis*.

with patriarchs or primates, (141) who contain under them three archbishops, as a king contains three dukes under him. In this number of patriarchs comes in the state of (142) cardinals or principals, so called, because as the door turns by its hinges, so the universal church ought to be ruled by them. (143) The next and highest order above these is mine, who am pope, differing in power and majority, and honor reverential, from these and all other degrees of men.

[403]

(144) For the better declaration of this, my canonists make three kinds of power in earth; immediate, which is mine immediately from God; derived, which belongs to other inferior prelates from me; (145) ministerial, belonging to emperors and princes to minister for me. For this cause, the anointing of princes, and my consecration differ; for they are anointed only in the arms or shoulders, and I in the head, to signify the difference of power between princes and me. (146) This order, therefore, of priests, bishops, archbishops, patriarchs, and others, as a most convenient thing, my church of Rome has set and instituted through all churches — following in this, not only the example of the angelical army in heaven, but also of the apostles. (147) For among them also there was not an uniform equality or institution of one degree, (148) but a diversity or distinction of authority and power. Although they were all apostles together, yet it was granted, notwithstanding, to Peter (also agreeing to this themselves) that he should bear dominion and superiority over all the other apostles. (149) And therefore he had his name *Cephas* given to him, that is, the head or beginning of the apostleship. (150) Whereupon the order of priesthood in the New Testament first began in Peter, to whom it was said, You are Peter, and upon you I will build my church. (151) And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and you being converted, confirm your brethren. ¹⁵⁶

(152) I have prayed for you that your faith shall not fail. Therefore seeing such power is given to Peter, (153) and to me in Peter, being his successor; (154) who is he then in all the world that should not be subject to my decrees, I who have such power in heaven, in hell, on earth, with the quick and also the dead? (155) Commanding and granting in my bull sent to Vienna, to all those who died in their pilgrimage to Rome, that the pain of hell should not touch them; and also that all those who took the holy cross upon them should every one at his request, not only be delivered himself, but also deliver three or four souls, whoever he would, out of purgatory. (156) Again, having such promise and assurance that my faith shall not fail, who then will not believe my doctrine? For did not Christ himself first pray for Peter that his faith should not fail? (157) Also do I not have a sure promise from Paul's own mouth, writing to my church in these words, "God is my witness whom I serve with my

¹⁵⁶ (137) Pope Anaclet. Dist. 22. caft. *In novo*.

(138) Pope Bonifacius et Greg. Dist. 89. cap. *Ad hoc*. (139) *Ibidem*.

(140) Dist. 89. cap. *Siagula*.

(141) Ex citatione Buldecree. 5. ser. 3.

(142) De officio. Archipresbyt. in Glossa.

(143) [missing in the original]

(144) Ex. 3. parte Summae majoris b. Antonini.

(145) Pope Innocent 3. De sacra unctione, Qui venisset.

(146) Pope Nicholas, Dist. 22. cap. *Omnex*.

(147) Pope Clement, Dist. 80. cap. *In illis*.

(148) Pope Anacletus, Dist. 22. cap. *Sacrosancta*.

(149) *Ibidem*. Quasi vero Petrus non a Petra sed κεφαλας απο της κεφαλης ducatur.

(150) Dist. 21. cap. *In novo*.

(151) *Ibidem*.

spirit, in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers?” Rom 1.9. (158) Therefore, just as I worthily condemn all who will not obey my decrees, to be dispossessed of all their honor without restitution, (159) so all those who do not believe my doctrine, or stand against the privilege of the church, especially the church of Rome, I pronounce them heretics. (160) And as the other before is to be called unjust, so this man is to be called a heretic. (161) Why? he goes against the faith who goes against her who is the mother of faith. (162) But here perhaps a doubt or scruple may arise, that if my faith and knowledge stand so sure by the promise of Christ, and by the continual prayer of Saint Paul, whether it is true, or is to be granted, that any other should excel me in knowledge, or interpretation of holy Scripture? (163) For see whose knowledge is most grounded on reason, his words might seem to be of more authority.¹⁵⁷ (164) To which I answer and grant that there are many who have been more abundantly endowed with fuller grace of the Holy Spirit and greater excellency of knowledge; and therefore the writings of Augustine, Jerome, and others ought to be preferred before the constitutions of some popes; yet I say in determination of causes, because they do not have the virtue and height of that authority which is given to me, therefore in expounding Scriptures they are to be preferred, but in deciding matters, they stand inferior to my authority. By virtue of this authority, (165) they themselves are accepted as doctors, and their works approved, but all other matters are ruled through the power of the keys which were given to me directly by Christ. Although I do not deny that the same keys are also committed to other prelates, as they were to other apostles besides Peter. (166) Yet it is one thing to *have* the keys, and another thing to have the *use* of the keys. (167) Therefore here is to be noted a distinction of keys, according to the mind of my school doctors; one key, which is called the key of order, having authority to bind and loose, but not over the persons whom they bind and loose; and this authority they do not take immediately from Christ, but mediately by me, the vicar of Christ. The other key is called the key of jurisdiction, which I, the vicar of Christ, take immediately from him, having not only authority to bind and loose, but also dominion over those on whom this key is exercised. By the jurisdiction of this key, the fulness of my power is so great that whereas all others are subjects — (168) yes and emperors themselves ought to submit their executions to me — I alone am subject to no creature, (169) no not even to myself unless I wish, *in foro poenitentiae* (in the forum of repentance), submitting *myself* as a sinner to my spiritual father, but not submitting myself as *pope*. So that my papal majesty ever remains unpunished. Superior to all men, (170) whom all persons ought to obey, (171) and follow, (172) whom no man may judge nor accuse of any crime, either of murder, adultery, simony, or such like. (170) No man may depose, but I myself; (174) No man can excommunicate me, yes, even if I communicate with the excommunicate, for no canon binds me. Whom no man must lie to, (175) for he that lies to me is a church robber, (176) and who does not obey me is a heretic, and an excommunicated person. (177) For as all the Jews were commanded to obey the high priest of the Levitical order, of whatever state and condition they are, so all

¹⁵⁷ (152) Dict. 21. cap. *Decretis*.

(153) Pope Leo, dist. 19. cap. *Ita Dominus*.

(154) Pope Nicholas in tantum, dist. 22.

(155) Pope Clemens in Bulla Viennae in sriiniis privilegiorum.

(156) Dist. 21. cap. *Decretis*.

(157) Pope Anacletus, dist. 22. cap. *Sacrosancto*. Scripture well applied, and like a clerk.

(158) Pope Damasus, 25. q. cap. *Omnia*. Item Pope Greg. Dist. 19. cap. *Null*.

(159) Pope Nicholas Dist 22. cap. *Omnnes*,

(160) *Ibidem*.

(161) *Ibidem*.

(162) Dist. 20 cap. *Decretales*.

(163) *Ibidem*.

Christian men are more and less bound to obey me, Christ's lieutenant on earth. Concerning the obedience or disobedience of whom, you have in Deut. 17. (178) There the common gloss says that he who denies obedience to the high priest, lies as much under sentence and condemnation, as he who denies to God his omnipotence. Thus it appears then, that the greatness of my priesthood (179) began in Melchizedek, was solemnized in Aaron, continued in the children of Aaron, was perfected in Christ, represented in Peter, exalted in the universal jurisdiction, and manifested in Silvester, etc. So that through this pre-eminence of my priesthood, having all things subject to me, (180) it may seem well verified in me, what was spoken of Christ, Psa 8. "You have put all things under his feet; all sheep and oxen, yes, and the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea," etc. ¹⁵⁸

[404]

(181) There it is to be noted that by oxen, Jews and heretics are signified, and by beasts of the field, pagans are signified. For although as yet they are outside of the *use* of my keys of binding and loosing, yet they are not outside of the *jurisdiction* of my keys; but if they return I may absolve them. (182) By sheep and all cattle are meant all Christian men both great and less, whether they are emperors, princes, prelates, or others. By fowls of the air you may understand the angels and potentates of heaven, who will all be subject to me, in that I am greater than the angels; and that is in four things, as declared before; and in having power to bind and loose in heaven, (183) and to give heaven to those that fight in my wars. (184) Lastly, by the fishes of the sea, are signified the souls departed in pain or in purgatory, as Gregory by his prayer delivered the soul of Trajan out of hell; and I have power to deliver out of purgatory whom I please. (185) Lastly, by the fishes of the sea are signified those who are in purgatory; so that they stand in need of other men's help, and yet are on their journey. Passengers belonging to the court of the pope, may therefore be relieved (supplied) out of the storehouse of the church, by the participation of indulgence. And forasmuch as some object that my pardons cannot extend to those who are departed, for it was said to Peter, "Whatever you shall loose *upon earth*;" and therefore seeing they are not upon earth, they cannot be loosed by me. Here I answer again by my doctors, that this word, "Upon the earth," may be explained in two ways; first, to him that is the looser, so that he who looses will be upon the earth; and so I grant that the pope being dead, can loose no man. Also it may be referred to him that is loosed, so that whoever is loosed must be upon the earth, or about the earth; and so the souls in purgatory may be loosed; although they are not upon the earth, yet they are about the earth, at least they are not in heaven. And because oftentimes one question may rise upon another, and the heads of men now-a-days are

¹⁵⁸ (164) Ibidem.

(165) Dist. 19. cap. *Si Romanoram*.

(166) Gabriel Biel, lib. 4. Dist. 19.

(167) Petrus de Palude.

(168) Dist. 95. cap. *Imperator*.

(169) Gabriel, lib. 4. Dist. 19.

(170) Pope Nicholas, Dist. cap. *Romanorum* in Glossa.

(171) Item 24. q. 1. Haec est.

(172) Dist. 40. cap. *Si Papae*.

(173) 2 q. 7. Nos si in Glossa.

(174) Extravag. de elect. Innotuit.

(175) De Poenitentia, Dist. 1. cap. *Serpens*, in Glossa.

(176) Dist. 19. cad. *Nuili*.

(177) August de Ancho.

(178) Glossa Ordinar.

(179) Antoninus.

(180) Antoninus, Summa majoris, 3. part. Dist. 32.

curious, a man hearing now that I can deliver out of purgatory, will ask a question here, whether I am also able to empty all purgatory at once, or not? To him my canonist answers by a triple distinction: Touching my absolute jurisdiction, he says I am able to rid all out of purgatory together, for as many as are under my jurisdiction, as all are, except unbaptized infants, in limbo, and men departed only with the baptism of the Spirit, and those who have no friends to do for them that for which my pardons are given; these only are excepted. For all others besides these, the pope, he says, has power to release all purgatory at once, as regards his absolute jurisdiction. Although Thomas Aquinas (part 4), denies that, for Christ himself, he says, when he came down, did not utterly all at once release purgatory. As regards my ordinary execution, they hold that I may if I will, but I should not do it. Thirdly, as concerning the divine acceptation, that is, how God would accept it if I did it, they say that is unknown to them, and to every creature, yes, and to the pope himself.

And to the intent that I would have all men see and understand that I do not lack more witnesses (evidences) besides these. If I wish to bring them out, you will hear the whole choir of my divine clergy brought out, with a full voice testifying in my behalf in their books, transactions, distinctions, titles, glosses, and summaries, as follows here by their own words. The pope, they say, being the vicar of Jesus Christ throughout the world, is in the place of the living God. He has that dominion and lordship which Christ here in earth would not have, although he had it in habit, but gave it to Peter in act, that is, the universal jurisdiction both of spiritual things and also of temporal, which double jurisdiction was signified by the two swords in the gospel, and also by the offering of the wise men, who offered not only incense, but also gold, to signify not only the spiritual dominion, but also the temporal, to belong to Christ and to his vicar. For as we read, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof;" as Christ says, "All power is given to him both in heaven and on earth:" so it is to be affirmed inclusive, that the vicar of Christ has power of things celestial, terrestrial, and infernal. Which he took immediately by Christ; all others take it immediately by Peter and the pope. Therefore. Those who say that the pope has dominion only in spiritual things in the world, and not of temporal, may be likened to the councillors of the kings of Syria (1Kng 20.23), which said, "That the gods of the mountains are their gods, and therefore they have overcome us; but let us fight against them in the low meadows, and in valleys where they have no power, and so we shall prevail over them."

So evil councillors now-a-days, through their pestiferous flattery, deceive kings and princes of the earth, saying popes and prelates are gods of mountains, that is, of spiritual things only; but they are not gods of valleys, that is, they have no dominion over temporal things, and therefore let us fight with them in the valleys, that is, in the power of the temporal possessions, and so we shall prevail over them. But what does the word of God say to them, let us hear. Because, he says, "the Syrians say that the god of mountains is their god, and not the god of valleys, therefore I will give all this multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord." ^{1Kng 20.28} What can be more effectually spoken to set forth the majesty of my jurisdiction, which I received immediately from the Lord; from the Lord, I say, and from no man. For whereas Constantine the emperor gave to Silvester this possession and patrimony; that is to be so expounded and taken not so much for a donation, as to be counted as a restitution made of that which was tyrannously taken from him before. And again, whereas I have given at sundry times to Louis the other emperors, of my temporal lands and possessions, yet that was done not so much for any recognizing of homage to them, as for keeping peace with them. For I owe to emperors no due obedience that they can claim, but they owe to me as to their superior. And therefore for a diversity between their degree and mine, in their consecration they take the unction on their arm, and I on the

head. And just as I am superior to them, so I am superior to all laws, and free from all constitutions. I am able of myself, and by my interpretation, to prefer equity not being written before the law is written; having all laws within the chest of my breast, as aforesaid. And whatever this my see shall enact, approve, or disapprove, all men ought to approve or reprove the same, without either judging, disputing, doubting, or retracting. Such is the privilege given by Christ, in behalf of Peter, to the church of Rome, (186) that whatever country, kingdom or province, choosing for themselves bishops and ministers, although they agree with all other Christ's faithful people in the name of Jesus, that is, in faith and charity, believing in the same God, and in Christ his true Son, and in the Holy Spirit, having also the same creed; the same evangelists and Scriptures of the apostles. Yet unless their bishops and ministers take their origin and ordination from this apostolic seat, they are not to be counted of the church. So that succession by faith alone is not sufficient to make a church, unless their ministers take their ordination by those who have their succession from the apostles. So their faith, supremacy, the chair of Peter, keys of heaven, power to bind and loose, all these are inseparable from the church of Rome. So that it is to be presumed, that God always providing, and St. Peter helping the bishopric and diocese of Rome, it shall never fall from the faith. And likewise it is to be presumed and presupposed that the bishop of that church is good and always holy. Yes, and even if he is not always good, or destitute of his own merits, yet the merits of St. Peter, predecessor of that place, are sufficient for him, who has bequeathed and left a perpetual dowry of merits, with an inheritance of innocency, to his posterity. ¹⁵⁹

[405]

(187) Yes, even if he falls into homicide or adultery, he may sin, yet he cannot be accused, but rather is excused by the murders of Samson, the thefts of the Hebrews, the adultery of Jacob. (188) Furthermore, the pope, they say, has all the dignities and power of all patriarchs. In his primacy, he is Abel; in government, the ark of Noah; in patriarchdom, Abraham; in order, Melchizedek; in dignity, Aaron; in authority, Moses; in judicial seat, Samuel; in zeal, Elias; in meekness, David; in power, Peter; in unction, Christ. My power, they say, is greater than all the saints. For whomever I confirm, no man may infirm. I may favor and spare whom I please, (189) to take from one and to give to another. And if I am an enemy to any man, all men ought to eschew that person immediately, and not tarry and look while I bid them to do so. All the earth is my diocese, and I the ordinary (judge) of all men, having the authority of the king of all kings upon all subjects. I am all in all, and above all, (190) so that both God himself, and I the vicar of God, have one consistory, (191) and I am able to do almost all that God can do. (192) It is said of me, that I have a heavenly arbitrator, and therefore I am able to change the nature of things, and to make things to be of nothing, and of a sentence that is nothing to make it stand in effect; in all things that I wish, my will is to stand for reason. For I am able by the law to dispense above the law, and of wrong to make justice, in correcting laws and changing them. You have heard sufficiently up to here out of my doctors. Now you shall hear greater things out of my own decrees. (193) Read there *Dist. 96. Satis.* (194) Also 12 *Caus. 11. q. 1. cap. Sacerdotibus.* (195) Also 12. q. I. cap. *Futuram.* Do you not find there expressed how Constantine the emperor sitting in the

¹⁵⁹ (181) Antoninus, Summa majoris 3. part. Dist. 22.

(182) Ibidem.

(183) 23. q. cap. *Omnium.*

(184) Idem, Antoninus, *ibid.*

(185) Ibidem.

(186) Joan Driedo. De dogmatibus variis, 1. 4.

general Council of Nice, called us prelates of the church, all gods? (196) Again, read my canon. Decretal. *De transl. Episc. cap. Quanta*. Do you not see there manifestly expressed, how not man, but God alone separates that which the bishop of Rome dissolves and separates? Therefore, if those things that I do are said to be done not by man, but by God; what can you make me but God? Again, if prelates of the church are called and counted by Constantine for gods, I then, being above all prelates, seem by this reason to be above all gods. Therefore no marvel, if it is in my power to change time and times, to alter and abrogate laws, to dispense with all things, yes, with the precepts of Christ. For where Christ bids St. Peter put up his sword, admonishing his disciples not to use any outward force in revenging themselves; (197) do not I, Pope Nicolas, writing to the bishops of France, exhort them to draw out their material swords in pursuing their enemies, and recovering their possessions? Where Christ was present himself at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, (198) do not I, Pope Martin, in my distinction inhibit the spiritual clergy to be present at marriage feasts, and also to marry themselves? Where matrimony by Christ cannot be loosed except for adultery, (199) do not I, Pope Gregory, writing to Boniface, permit the same to be broken for infirmity of body? (200) Against the express caution of the gospel, does not Innocent IV permit to repel force by force? ¹⁶⁰ (201)

Likewise against the Old Testament, I dispense in not giving tithes. (202) Against the New Testament in swearing; (203) in which two kinds of oaths are to be noted: some promissory, some are assertions, etc.; (204) in vows, *ex toto voto* (entirely of a vow); and whereas other prelates cannot dispense *ex toto a voto* (entirely of a wish), I can deliver *ex toto a voto*, like God himself. (205) In perjury, if I absolve, my absolution stands. (206) Where also note that in all swearing, the authority of the superior is always excepted. (207) Moreover, where Christ bids us to lend without hope of gain, do not I, Pope Martin, give dispensation for the same? And notwithstanding that the Council of Turin enacted the contrary, yet with two bulls I disannulled that decree. (208) What should I say of murder, making it no murder or homicide to slay those who are excommunicated. (209) Likewise against the law of nature. (210) Against the apostle. (211) Also, against the canons of the apostles, I can and do dispense. For where in their canon they command a priest to be deposed for fornication, I through the authority of Silvester do alter the rigor of that constitution, (212) considering that the minds and also the bodies of men now, are weaker than they were then. (213) Briefly, against the universal state of the church I have dispensation. And for marriage in the second degree of consanguinity and affinity between the brother's children, so that the uncle may not marry his niece, unless it is for an urgent and weighty cause. As for all such contracts between party and party, where matrimony is not yet consummated, it is but a small matter for me to dispense with all. In short, if you wish briefly to hear the whole

¹⁶⁰ (187) Hugo, in glossa, dist. 40 cap *Nan Not*.

(188) Gloss. in caus. 12. q. 3. cap. *Absis*.

(189) Gloss, in cap. q. 3. cap *Si inimicus*.

(190) Hostiensis in cap *Quanto de transl. praeb*.

(191) Ex summa casuum fratris Baptistae.

(192) Ex Citatione Henr Bulling, de fine Seculi, Orat. Prima.

(193) Pope Nicolaus, Dist.96. cap. *Satis*.

(194) 11 q. 14. cap. *Sacerdotibus*.

(195) 12 q. 1. cap. *Futuram*.

(196) Decretal. De transl. Episc. cap. *Quanto*.

(197) Pope Nicolaus, Causa 15. q. 6. cap. *Authoritatem*.

(198) Pope Martin, Dist. 14. cap. *Lector*.

(199) Pope Greg. Junior, 32. q. 7. cap. *Quod proposuisti*.

(200) Pope Innocent 4. Sext. Decret. de sententia excom. cap. *Dilecto*.

number of all those cases that properly pertain to my papal dispensation, which come to fifty-one points, that no man may meddle with except myself alone, I will recite them in English, as they be set forth in my canonical doctors.¹⁶¹

Papal cases, numbering fifty-one, in which only the Pope has power to dispense, and no one else besides, except by special license from him.

1. Determination of doubts and questions belonging to faith.
 2. Translation of a bishop, elected or confirmed; likewise of abbots exempted.
 3. Deposition of bishops.
 4. Taking the resignation of bishops.
 5. Exemptions of bishops, not to be under archbishops.
 6. Restitution of those who are deposed from their order.
 7. The judicial definition or interpretation of his own privileges.
 8. Changing of bishoprics, or dismissal of convents, etc.
 9. New correction of bishops' seats, or institution of new religions.
 10. Subjection or division of one bishopric under another.
 11. Dispensation for vowing to go to the Holy Land.
 12. Dispensation for the vow of chastity, or of religion, or of holy orders.
 13. Dispensation against a lawful oath, or vow made.
 14. Dispensation against diverse irregularities, as in crimes greater than adultery, and in those which are suspended for simony.
 15. Dispensation in receiving into orders one who has had two wives.
 16. Dispensing with those who, being within orders, do what is above their order, such as if a deacon were to say mass, not yet being a priest.
 17. To receive into order those who are blemished or maimed in body.
 18. Dispensation with murder, or those who willingly cut off any member of man's body.
- [406]
19. Dispensation to give orders to those who have been under the sentence of the greater curse or excommunication.
 20. Dispensation with those who, being suspended with the greater curse, minister in any holy order.
 21. Dispensation with those who are unlawfully born, to receive orders or benefices.
 22. Dispensation for pluralities of benefices.
 23. Dispensation to make a man bishop before he is thirty years old.
 24. Dispensation to give orders under age.

¹⁶¹ (201) Pope Alexander 3. De decimis, cap *Ex parte*.

(202) Pope Nicolaus, 15. q. 6. cap. *Autoritatem*.

(203) De elect. & elect. potestate. Significasti, in Glossa.

(204) Baptista de Salia in Summa casuum ex Panormitano.

(205) Pope Innocent 4. De elect Venerabilem.

(206) Ext De Jurejurando cap. *Venientes*, Item Dist. de Elect, Significasti in Glossa.

(207) Pope Martinus 5. Extra, cap. *Regimini Universalis Ecclesiae*.

(208) Pope Urhanus 2 Cans. 2S. q. 3. cap. *Excommunicatorum*,

(209) Pope Nicolaus, caus. 15. q. 6. cap. *Autoritatem*.

(210) Ibidem.

(211) Dist. 82. I. cap. *Presbyter*.

(212) Pope Pelagius Dist. 34 cap. *Fraternitatis*.

(213) Baptista de Salis, fol. 114 Ibidem.

25. The pope alone has power to make and call a general council.
26. The pope alone has power to deprive an ecclesiastical person, and give away his benefice that is not vacant.
27. The pope alone is able to absolve him who is excommunicated by name.
28. The pope alone is able to absolve him whom his legate excommunicates.
29. The pope both judges in the causes of those who appeal to him; and where he judges, none may appeal from him.
30. He alone has authority to make deacon and priest, whom he made subdeacon, either on Sundays, or on other feasts.
31. Only the pope, and no one else, at all times, and in all places, wears the pall.
32. The pope alone dispenses with a man, either being not within orders, or being unworthy to be made bishop.
33. He alone either confirms or deposes the emperor when he is chosen.
34. A man being excommunicated, and his absolution referred to the pope, none may absolve that man but the pope alone.
35. The pope has authority in any election, before it is made, to pronounce it as one when it is made.
36. He canonizes saints, and no one else but him.
37. Dispensation to have many dignities and personages in one church, and without charge and cure of soul, belongs only to the pope.
38. To make that effectual which is of no effect, and contrariwise, belongs only to the pope.
39. To pluck a monk out of his cloister, both against his own will and the abbot's, pertains only to the pope.
40. His sentence makes a law.
41. The same day in which the pope is consecrated, he may give orders.
42. He dispenses in degrees in consanguinity and affinity.
43. He is able to abolish laws, *quoad utrumque forum* (in both forums), that is, both civil and canon, where there is danger of the soul.
44. It is in his dispensation to give general indulgences to certain places or persons.
45. To legitimate whatever persons he pleases, regarding spiritualities in all places, and regarding temporalities, such as honors, inheritance, etc.
46. To erect new religions, to approve or reprove rules or ordinances, and ceremonies in the church.
47. He is able to dispense with all the precepts and statutes of the church.
48. To dispense and to discharge any subject from the bond of allegiance, or oath made to any manner of person.
49. No man may accuse him of any crime, except of heresy and not even that, unless he is incorrigible.
50. The pope is free from all laws, so that he cannot incur any sentence of excommunication, suspension, irregularity, or the penalty of any crime; but in the note of crime he may well.
51. Finally, by his dispensation he may grant, even to a simple priest, to minister the sacrament of confirmation to infants, also to give lower orders, and to hallow churches and virgins, etc.

These are the cases in which I alone have power to dispense, and no other man — not bishop, nor metropolitan, nor legate — without a license from me.

Now that I have sufficiently declared my power on earth, in heaven, and in purgatory, how great it is, and what is the fulness of it in binding, loosing, commanding, permitting, electing, confirming, deposing, dispensing, doing and undoing, etc., I will now treat a little about my riches likewise, and great possessions, so that every man may see by my wealth and abundance of all things — rents, tithes, tributes, my silks, my purple miters, crowns, gold, silver, pearls and gems, lands and lordships — how God here prospers and magnifies his vicar on the earth. For to me pertains first the imperial city of Rome, the palace of Lateran, the kingdom of Sicily is proper to me, Apulia and Capua are mine. Also the kingdom of England and Ireland. Are they not, or should they not be tributaries to me?

(214) To these I also adjoin, besides other provinces and countries, both in the west and the east, from the north to the south, these dominions by name: (215) such as Ravenna, Corsica, Naples, etc. with diverse others more, (216) which Constantine the emperor gave to me, not that they were not mine before he gave them. (217) For in taking them from him, I took them not as a gift, but as a restitution. And I rendered them again to Otto. I did not do it out of any duty to him, but only for peace' sake. What should I say here about my daily revenues of my first fruits, annats, palls, indulgences, bulls, confessionals, indults and rescripts, testaments, dispensations, privileges, elections, prebends, religious houses, and such like, which come to no small mass of money? Insomuch that for one pall to the archbishop of Mentz, which was usually given for 10,000 (218) florins, now it has grown to 27,000 florins, which I received from James, the archbishop, not long before Basel council; besides the fruits of other bishoprics in Germany, numbering fifty, whereby what advantage comes into my coffers, may partly be conjectured. But what should I say of Germany, (219) when the whole world is my diocese, as my canonists say, and all men are bound to believe, (220) unless they imagine (as the Manichaeans do) two beginnings, which is false and heretical? For Moses says, "In the *beginning* God made heaven and earth," and not in the *beginnings*. (221) Therefore as I began, so I conclude, commanding, declaring, and pronouncing, to stand upon necessity of salvation, for every human creature to be subject to me. ¹⁶²

¹⁶² (214) Dist. 90 Constantinus.

(215) Ex Commentariis Theoderici Niemi, quem citat Illyricus in Catalogo testium, fol. 228.

(216) Dist. 96 Constantinus.

(217) Autoninus. In Summa majore, 3 part.

(218) Ex lib. Gra nomium nationis Germanicae. — Above fifty bishoprics in Germany. Eneas Sylvius.

(219) Sent. Decret. De denis, cap. *Felicis*, in Glossa. Item de privilegiis, cap *Autori atem*, in Glossa.

(220) Pope Bonifacius 8 Extr. de Majo. & obed. cap *Unam sanit*.

(221) Ibidem.