

# Richard Lawrence Showing the Protestant Persecutions of the Anabaptists

There are four main historical writings that came from the First London Confession of Faith brethren.

- 1) Richard Lawrence, brother of President Henry Lawrence who also wrote several works against the Seekers, Quakers and Open Communion type of Baptists, who wrote several works. The following is from one of Richard's works. In the near future we hope to have all of Richard's works in MS Word and up on our site. Elder John O'Brien does this for us.
- 2) Richard Deane wrote an earlier works covering the history of the Particular Baptists who later issued the First London Confession of Faith. His work was published near the close of the 1600s, but it was written much earlier and sent out as an unpublished MS.

A C O P Y of a

Brief Treatise

O F

The Proper Subject and Administration of

Baptism.

Some Years since sent by the  
Author to *Thomas* late Lord  
Bishop of *Lincoln*.

With a Prefatory Epistle thereunto,  
And the Scriptures cited at large.

Capt. Richard Deane

---

L O N D O N

Printed for the Author; And are to  
Be sold by *Thomas Fabian*, at the Bible  
In *Cheapside* near *Breadstreet*, 1693.

- 3) William Kiffin's work called The Kiffin Manuscript also contains many important historical writings about the Particular Baptists and some of their origins during the 1640-41 era known as the Richard Blount efforts. I discuss all this in my work Studies on the Kiffin Ms. This old work was preserved as an official part of the Church that William Kiffin gathered in 1638. This old church at one time was a part of the Church John Spilsbury

- gathered in 1633. They separated because they grew too large and by such large meetings they would bring persecution upon themselves.
- 4) Henry' Danvers' historical writings are full of tracing the succession of the Baptized Churches of Jesus Christ in England and Wales mostly. There are several volumes in the writings of D'Anvers because the Pedobaptists in England hated him and his works, and had him banished into Holland in the late 1670s where he died. Some Pedobaptist leaders in London claimed that D'Anvers falsified historical evidences and wanted the Baptists to disown him. The Baptist brethren, all of them Particular Baptists, met together for a public view of all these charges and completely vindicated D'Anvers. The Particular Baptists did not work with the General Baptists at that time. Since D'Anvers had become a Particular Baptist, the Particular Baptists tried him and validated him and his works. We have this trial also in our holdings and up on our site. D'Anvers' historical works give us a very good and accurate account of Particular Baptist succession through the Predestination Anabaptists and Mennonites. He shows that many of them were true and proper Trinitarians (anti-Nicenist Trinitarians as they would be called later). Brother John O'Brien placed all these works in MS Word and they are up on our site.

As we study the original writers and their writings of the First London Confession era we find their continual position that they were the descendents of the old Anabaptists. They did not turn away from claiming their true succession through the old Waldenses and Albigenses. See our works The French Connection and D'Anvers on The French Connection. Please remember that the 1646 edition of the First London Confession contained the signing of a "French Church of the same faith". They rejected the so-called Mad Men of Muster but they did not reject the Anabaptists as a whole.

## **No Whitsittism**

None of the brethren in the 1640s and 50s had any idea that Immersion had been lost in England and no one practiced it to professed believers until 1641. During the life and times of the older brethren, they understood that the true church of Christ Jesus had always, since the beginning of the apostasy with the introduction of infant baptism and the union of church and state, been persecuted by the forces of antichrist. They identified the forces of Antichrist to be those of the State Churches, or national Churches built upon the Old Covenant and Infant Baptism in the place of circumcision. Richard Lawrence is plain and clear on this.

Special word of thanks to Brother Chris for supplying this old work in the place of my older and burned one. This old work as we now have it is one of the copyrighted works from Old English Books on Line and we cannot share it fully. I merely quote from it in review now and hope to all it and several others before too much longer from The Wing Collection that are not under copyright.

THE  
WOLF STRIP<sup>LO</sup>  
of his  
SHEEPS CLOTHING  
OR

The Antichristian Clergy-man  
turn'd right side outwards.

Wherein is briefly discovered and  
layd open their subtile and wicked wayes and  
practises to deceive and destroy not only  
private people, or particular Societies,  
but whole Nation and Kingdoms, and  
all under the plausible vizzard of Refor-  
mation, Church-Government, pu-  
nishing of Hereticks and  
Sectaries.

---

By R. LAVRANCE Marshal General.

---

JEREMIAH 23. 16.  
*Thus saith the Lord of hostes, hearken not unto the words of the Pro-  
phets that prophesy unto you: They make you vain, they speak a  
vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord.*

---

May 10<sup>th</sup> LONDON,  
Printed in the year 1647.



TO  
The cruel, wicked, Antichristian,  
blood-thirsty Clergy, by what name  
or title soever dignified or  
distinguished.

SIRS,



*S* ye are men, or as ye are learned men,  
I have no prejudice against you; but  
if that were the worst fault ye had, I  
could both love and honour you, the  
one bearing the image of God, and  
the other being the chief natural ex-  
cellency of that image, but as you do  
exalt your humane natural excellen-  
cies, and set them up above and a-  
gainst the divine and spiritual excellencies of Jesus Christ:  
And have brought in all your humane learning and wisdom  
so varnished and coloured over into the Church of God, that  
the world hath taken it for spiritual; and thereby have  
deceived and deluded millions of poor souls for this many  
ages: Who thought, when they had attained to read and  
say their Catechisms, Creed, and the Lords-prayer by heart,  
they had been Christians good enough, because it was all  
their Parsons were able to teach them: so that all they  
have learned from you hath been only the history of Christ:  
and

## The Epistle.

and both you and they have been altogether ignorant of the mystery of Christ; which hath been hid from ages and generations; which the wisdom and learning of this world, in you, have alwayes been at enmity against; So with that faith which gives life they lived and dyed ignorant of, and so perishe in their sins; whose blood will be required at your hands, which led them on in their ignorance, and told them they were Christians, and had faith, when there was no such matter.

And as you have thus been and still are the profest enemies of Jesus Christ in his people, the great dark black cloud which hath shadowed those glorious spiritual shinnings of that sun of righteousness in the Gospel upon the world; which have not only been at enmity against it in your selves, but have indeavoured with all your Antichristian power to suppress it, wheresoever you have found the least glimmerings of it in others, under the name of Heresie and Schism: So that Christ himself hath pronounced a woe against you, Math. 23. 13. But woe unto you Scribes, and Pharisees, Hypocrites, for you shut up the Kingdom of heaven against men, for ye neither go in your selves, neither suffer you them that are entering to go in.

So thus considering of you as the great subtil wicked cruel adversary to the glorious spiritual power of Jesus Christ in his people; therein I must declare to you I am your profest enemy: and shal say unto you, as the Prophet said in the same case, Shal I not hate them which hate the Lord; and am I not grieved with them that rise up against thee? yes, I hate them with a perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies, Psalm 139. 22.

And let me tell you what all your trade is, almost at the best; your work is almost at an end: you may continue some years, but not many ages: For if Antichrist be once down in the world, whose destruction draweth nigh, you wil not be up: If once Antichrist be thrown out of the Church with all his humane traditions; I am sure you must not be in it. And truly

## The Epistle.

*truly his time is very short; he is breathing his last gasp: the stormy night of afflictions is almost past with the Church; the flowers begin to appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land: Though you, like bloody wretches, are telling the powers of the world, that these turtles are birds of prey; to the end they might set you a work to shoot at them and destroy them: but let me tell you, the hairs of their head are all numbered, they are of more value then many sparrows: You may shoot your bolts at them but ye shall not hurt one of them further then their heavenly Father shall see it good for them. Ye may do, as your bloody predecessors did, in the Marian days, overcome and destroy the bodies of some thousands of them: for the devil, having but a short time, will have great wrath: but they have an eternal spirit in them, you shall never overcome: they have learned not to fear them which can but kill the body, and then can do no more: nay, you shall destroy your selves instead of destroying them: The little stone cut out of the mountain without hand, cannot be broken in peeces with your hands: Christ, in his people, shall only be a stone of stumbling to you, and a rock of offence; till you have filled up the measure of your iniquity; and then the stone, which you Builders have refused, shall become the head of the corner: Then shall you see and be ashamed of all the ungodly deeds which you have ungodlily committed against the poor Saints of God. And let me tell you they can suffer with more rejoicing then you can persecute: and this shall be the increase of your present torment, to see that all you can do against them will be but like pitch thrown on the fire; it will make them shine the brighter, and your selves the more odious.*

*Many a precious spirit, which sits silent in the dark corners of this Kingdom, when once stirred up by your journey-men-persecutors which begin already in many parts of this Kingdom to dance after your pipes, will then hold forth the glory of God by witnessing a good confession, They will then tell*

## The Epistle.

of the loving kindness of the Lord in the land of the living; that the dead may hear the voice of the sonne of God and live. *They will then come to know what it was that made Paul and Silas sing in prison: that made Stephen when he was a stoning say, he saw the heaven open and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God: That made Paul say he was not only ready to be bound but to dye at Jerusalem: that the sufferings of this life is not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed: that he desired to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. These breathings have been but slow and cold in the Saines of God for many years, especially these five or six last years, since their persecutors have had no leasure to look after them.*

*Persecutors are as usefull to the Saines as the rod is for the child: but as there is a time for the father to correct the child; so there is a time when he will burn the rod too: I say no more, but as ye are men, whom Christ hath shed his blood for, and thereby hath opened a way for mercy for all that come to God by him; but that the Lord would be pleased to open your eyes and let you see the evill of your doings: that ye may no longer go on to deceive and destroy those whom Christ hath payd so great a price for: that they may be no more so hateful in your eye, which are so precions in the sight of God: that ye may not hereafter be so cruel to those whom God is as tender over as the apple of his own eye: that ye may not be so forward to destroy and spill the blood of those whom the Lord Iesus Christ was so forward to give his own blood to save: and that the Lord would give you hearts to confesse to the world how they have been deceived and deluded by you: tell them you are not the men they have so long taken you for: that you are, and ever were, as subiect to erre as other men: and that the more of your humane learning you have had or made use of, the more you have been subiect to erre and be misled: If they will not beleve you, wish them to consider what is become of the consultations and resules of all your learned Counsell and holy Synods that ever sat to the beginning*

## The Epistle.

*beginning of this Parliament: and Whether the most purest  
of them all were not determined Antichristian by the most  
pious and learned Assembly that ever sat? And tell them  
again that these are but men subiect to the same infirmities  
the former were, and when counsel them to have their thoughts  
pitched upon something above Councils and Synods for their  
spiritual teachings and building up in the faith of the Gospel.  
And thus doing ye shall do but your duty: So de-  
siring your acceptance, I rest, as much your  
professed enemy as you are Iesus Christ's,  
and no more.*

R, L,



been made perfect through sufferings, Heb. 2. 10. Whereby he hath given all that are his, sufficient testimony, that if they will follow their Lord Christ, they must take up his crosse, Luk. 19. 23. and All that will live godly in Jesus Christ shall suffer persecution, 2 Tim. 3. 12. that In the world they shall have tribulation, but in him they shall have peace. For (saith Christ) the disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord; it is enough for the disciple to be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord. If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub; how much more shall they call them of his household? Matth. 10. 24. 25. I say, since this chaste spouse of Jesus Christ the spiritual Church of God hath been left in the world, as the Ark of God was among the Philistines, as Daniel in the lions den, or as Jonas in the whales belly, void of all hope and help in the world, as far as sense and reason, or any thing below faith was able to apprehend, the flesh, the world, and the Devil hath ever since proclaimed open war against Christ in his people, though the gates of hell could never yet, nor ever shall prevail against them, Matth. 16. 18. For no sooner had they done crucifying Christ, but presently they began to persecute the Apostles and Saints at Jerusalem: And they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the Apostles, Acts 8. 1. and they which were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word: and the Apostles did not go about to stir up Jerusalem to petition the Magistrate against them then: but what was then the duty and practice of the Saints, is now punishable by our learned Presbyters for Schism and Heresie; and because they have neither precept nor practice, neither Scripture nor good reason to convince their differing Brethren, therefore are they procuring lawes and ordinances, that then they may cry out to the Magistrate as the Jewes did to Pilate, *We have a law, and by our law he ought to die.*

Those who are the drivers of this designe, let us pray that the Lord would not lay this sin to their charge; but that hee would open their eyes, and let them see the evill of their doings, that they may put it far from them; and take this into  
their

(4)

their consideration, that England hath too much innocent blood upon its score already, which hath cost it very dear lately. God hath given our Nation blood to drink in great measure, as if he would tell us every drop of the blood of his saints which this Kingdome for many yeers hath been destroying and banishing, should cost us a fountain; and hath so disperst and scattered all our former persecutors, as if hee were minded to let them see how good persecution and banishment were; or to make them as forward to fetch those home again whom they have formerly banisht and forc'd out of the Kingdom, as he did the Egyptians, to thrust the Israelites out, whom they did formerly force to stay in their Kingdom. I shall here onely use Davids words in the very same case, *In the multitude of my thoughts, within me thy comforts delight my soul. Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with iust, which frameth mischief by a law? They gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood. But the Lord is my defence, and my God is the rock of my refuge: And he shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickednesse; yea, the Lord our God shall cut them off, Psal:94.19,20,&c.*

It hath been the sad condition of the Church of God for above a thousand yeers last past, ever since the falling away spoken of *2 Thess. 2.3.* to suffer by her enemies as an evill doer; *truth* hath ever since been persecuted for *error*, *light* for *darknesse*, *Christ* for *Belial*; and therefore this last hath been the most cunning and cruellest way of persecuting that ever the adversary attained to; therefore saith Christ, prophesying of this last and greatest adversary to the Church, *Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheeps clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. So, Behold, I send you forth as sheep among wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmlesse as doves.* As much as if he should say, ye have a subtle and cruell adversary to deal withall, therefore arm your selves with wisdom and innocency. Or thus, Ye have been formerly persecuted by open enemies, such as have not been ashamed to appear against you in their own likenesse; but now your  
enemy

(6)

enemy shall be your pretended friend, such as shall be in your own likeness: they will be *wolves* still, but they will be in *sheeps clothing*, Matth 7.15. They will still *kill you*, but they will pretend to do God good service by it, John 16.2. Christ further prophesieth of the Saints sufferings under the Gospel by this wicked cruel devoting adversary, Mark 13.19. For in those days shall be afflictions, such as were not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be: And then if any man shall say, Lo he is Christ, or lo there is Christ, beleeve him not: for false Christs and false prophets shall arise, and shall shew signes and wonders, to deceive, if it were possible, even the very elect. And if ye will beleeve the Scripture, those false Christs and great deceivers spoken of so much, are not such kinde of creatures as wee are, crying out against poor illiterate mechanick fellows, as we call them; for such were Christ and the Apostles esteemed of by the world; Is not this the Carpenters son? Matth. 13.55. Mar. 6.5. So in Acts 4. when the Apostles Peter and John were brought before the high priest and his kindred to be examined: When they saw the boldnesse of Peter and John, and perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled, and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. These priests had more goodnesse in them then many of our priests; for they will not take notice of any whom they call unlearned and ignorant men, to have been with Jesus, if they have any Christian boldnesse in them; but call it audaciousnesse, and out facing Authority, meaning their own Antichristian power: as if there were no coming to Jesus but by Rome, the same way by which themselves come. But those false Christs and false Apostles spoken of in Scripture are not unlearned mechanick fellows; but such as have in them all the humane learning and wisdom the world can afford: not such men as are forc'd to run up and down the Country, sculking here and there in private places to broach their opinions to some poor despised people; for there is no possibility that these men, if deceivers, should be persecuters too. But these deceivers have in their hands all the power the earth can afford,

ford, to stir up Nation against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom, to bring before and deliver up to Counsels, to bear you in their Synagogues, to hale you before Kings and Rulers, Matth. 10. 17, 18. Mark 13. 8, 9. These deceivers are of that man of sin, that son of perdition spoken of 2 Thess. 2. 3. Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God, ver. 4. These deceivers are they whose coming is like the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivablenesse of unrighteousnesse.

Now those deceivers which the Church of God hath been troubled withall for these many ages are such kinde of deceivers as these are, men of great places and high esteem in the world, having had all the power of the world to back them, which never were able to carry on their businesse with any strength of argument, the Scripture hath been so point-blank against them, and therefore they have made use of the power and strength of Emperors and Kings; and where the Magisteriall power hath faild them, they have made use of the Military, and have stirred up Emperors and Kings to war one with another, and by this means these bloody deceivers have been the cause of thousands of millions of Christians lives to be lost, and their blood to be spilt to maintain their Antichristian power and domination over the whole Christian world. And all this hath been done under the pious pretences of Reformation, Church order, punishing of Hereticks, &c. pretending zeale to Gods glory and the Churches good in the most bloody enterprizes that ever they undertook.

They have alwayes pretended to reform the Church of its Heresie and Schisme, &c. and on the contrary, have deformed it into formality, superstition, and idolatry: And when their wicked practices and false worships have begun to appear so visible to the eye of the world, that the very light of nature hath been ashamed of their abominations; then for fear that the mystery of iniquity should fully discover it self to their utter ruine, they have again transformed themselves into

into some other likeness or shape, thereby to deceive the world, and make them believe they were a reforming themselves and the Church, out of their zeal to Gods glory, when they alwayes staid in their old Idols Temple, while it were ready to fall on their heads, and then built themselves another of the same materials, only painted over with some other colours: And this ye shall finde to be the center of all Synodical Reformatiōns to this very day; never countenancing nor suffering more of the power of godlines in any, where they could suppress it, then what would serve them for a stalking horse, to destroy their dissenting Brethren by. And as they have sought the exaltation of their own glory, the establishment of their own power, and the manifestation of their own humane wisdom and learning in all their undertakings, and have despised, the wisdom, power, and glory of God in his people, because *God hath hid that treasure in earthen vessels, 2 Cor. 4. 7. because it is the good pleasure of the Father to hide those things from the wise, and prudent, and reveal them unto babes, Matth. 11. 25. because not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, 1 Cor. 1. 27.* Therefore hath God likewise refused them, and hath given them up to the pride, and deceit of their own heart: Therefore hath God pronounced a wo against them, *Isaiab 30. 1. Wo to the rebellious children, that take counsel, but not of me, that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit: So in the 29. of Isaiab 13. Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw neer me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Is not the sin and punishment of the Prince of Tyre met in our days? Eze- kiel 28. Is it not visibly discovered to us, that our learned Wise men, such as have endeavoured to confine all the true knowledge of God, and the mysteries of his Kingdom to their*

their learned capacities have ever been our deceivers, and seducers: Such as have been our leaders into all manner of Superstition and Idolatry; may we not well say with the Apostle, *Where is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the dispenser of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?* 1 Cor. 1. 20. Doth it not appear, *That Christ is made by God alone unto us wisdom?* 1 Cor. 1. 30. Have not those which have called themselves the Reverend Clergy, the Learned Tribe of *Levi*, the Bishops, Pastors, and Ministers of Christs Church, been for above a thousand yeers, to the beginning of this Parliament, the great deceivers, the grand Sectaries, the chief fowers of Sedition, the very Throne and Body of Antichrist, and the proudest enemies to the Church of God?

Let us leave *England* a little, and observe the greatest part of the *World*, called *Christendom*, as *Italy, Spain, France, Germany, &c.* and do they not at this very day, generally live in the very darkness of Popery, making it their very Religion to maintain the Popes supremacy, the authority of the Church, and a few idolatrous Superstitious Ceremonies; and are other-ways altogether as ignorant of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as the very Heathens? And who are the Leaders of these people in their ignorant superstition, and idolatry? Is it not the Clergy, the Learned, the University men? Is it not they which are their Popes, Cardinals, Jesuites, Fryers, Monks, &c? Is it not they which hath broacht, and imposed all those damnable Heresies, and Errors, now in the Church of *Rome*? And have they not to fill up the measure of their iniquities, caused to be presented, and put to death many thousands of Christians, for not beleiving, and receiving their damnable Superstitious Errors? Nay further, hath it not been they which throughout all *Christendom* for these many ages, have been the chief and onely contrivers, and plotters of all the bloody barbarous plots, wicked insurrections, and traiterous rebellions, against Kings and Kingdoms? Hath it not been their constant practice to stir up Nations against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom, under pretence

tence of Holy War, to the destroying and ruinating many thousands of good Christians: the whole Histories of Christendom being but a brief story of the bloody wicked barbarous practices of these blood-thirsty Clergy-men; there would be no end if I should come to particulars, whole Volumns not containing them. But thou mayest object and say, We know the Romish-Clergy are bloody deceivers, cruel persecuters of good Christians: We have heard often of the Spanish Inquisition, and the bloody massacre in *France, &c.* But what is this to us? we have had a Learned, Pious Clergy in *England* for many yeers. Let me intreat thee to consider a little, what pious men they have been; where shall we begin? in *Henry* the eighths time, or in *Queen Marias* dayes? For till those dayes they were all as Romish as the other are now. Let me intreat thee to peruse well the *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, *Master Fox* his Books of the Acts and Monuments of the Church, his *History of Martyrs*; and when thou hast done, then tell me, whether the Clergy of *England* hath not been more wicked, bloody, and cruel, then all the Clergy of Christendom besides: How many thousands of precious Christians have had their blood spilt, and been put to cruel torments, such as ye hardly read of in any other story by our cruel bloody English Clergy-men? And this is chiefly observable in them, wherein they have exceeded all others, That they have not onely been as Popish, superstitious, and cruel, as others in other Kingdoms, when the stream hath ran that way; but that they were never true to their own principles, wherein they have been alwayes a shame to their cloth; for as their Popish Superstition and Idolatry, hath declared them to be not Christians, but Antichristians: so their turning like the weather-cock, with all windes, hath declared them unworthy cowardly people, as they are meet natural men. Thus ye shall finde them in *Henry* the eighths dayes, when the Kingdom was under the height of Popery, they were all cruel Papists; when the King denied the Popes supremacy, and went about to demolish the Abbeyes, and Monasteries, which they all knew was not out of any pious  
 zeal

zeal he had for Reformation, but out of wrath, pride, and covetousness; yet how did they all side with him, except the Cardinal, and the poor Fryers, and Monks, that were all undone, and beggered by it? Then in the days of *Edward* the sixth, by reason of the Kings pious disposition, though young, they feared a turn, and presently a great part of them fell a Preaching against some particular points of Popery; and such as defended them, did as if they had not greatly cared what Religion they were on: but in the meantime, the Lord Protector, with several others, were resolved to reform the Church; and presently abolished the Mass with most of the Popish Service, and caused the Common-Prayer Book to be read in English to the people; and presently all the Clergy were zealous Protestants, great Common-Prayer Book men, except some four or five of their chief Bishops, as *Gardiner, Bonner, Toustal, and Day*; and about three or four yeers after, at the most, when *Queen Mary* was made *Queen of England*, they presently all turned about again, except such another number, as *Cranmer, Rogers, Hooper, Ferrer, Ridley, and Latimer*, and grew more cruel throughout the whole Kingdom against the poor Saints then ever they were; *Bonner* being then Bishop of *London*, did drive the very same trade *Master Edwards* is about now; for if ye observe it, the first officer Antichrist entertains when he is beginning a new designe, is a good Scout-master General, to keep a correspondency with all the rest of the wicked Clergy spread abroad over the Kingdom, as ye may see by those many wicked Letters, and accusations, which daily he received from all parts of the Kingdom, against one poor man or other; so that friends durst not talk together for fear some words should slip, and *Bonner* should come to hear of it, which was the bloodiest minded man that is upon record, for persecuting the poor Saints, and inventing punishment for them, or I hope we ever shall hear of, if God keep but *Master Edwards* and his ungrateful bloody faction out of authority: And in this rage did those wolves continue devouring the poor sheep of Christ all the days of *Queen Mary*; and how many thousands of good Christians were destroyed and banished by them, would make



a Jew's heart bleed to consider off; and all those suffered by them as evil doers, as Heretikes and Schismatikes; and themselves then, as they do now, assumed the name of Christs Ministers, and Ambassadors: Then after *Queen Mary* was dead, and *Queen Elizabeth* swayed the Scepter, in six moneths the whole tribe of them, except some few of their Bishops which had gotten money enough to live upon any where, and so did not care much for their trade, turned quite about again, and all turned Protestants: in which shape, and under which visage, they have continued to the beginning of this Parliament; who then presently discovered to the whole Kingdom, that they had been as deceitful, and as cruel in this shape, as ever they had been in the former; that they had onely got on sheeps clothing, but were all inwardly ravening wolves: they had got a trick to call all their Antichristian practises, and Popish ceremonies, the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of *England*; and all their Antichristian proud Prelates, with the rest of their superstitious dumb Priests, must be called the Bishops Stewards, and Ministers of *Jesus Christ*; and all the true worshippers of God in the Kingdom, they were all scattered abroad, silenced, and persecuted under the name of Heretikes, and Schismatikes, &c. Every day growing worse then other, bringing in some new invented Popish ceremony or other, to the end they might have further advantage against such as could not submit to them: sure it will be needless for me to give you any particulars of their insolent proud wicked carriage in our times; it must needs be fresh in your memory; their incroachments upon the Civil power; their oppressions by their wicked Courts in all parts of this Kingdom; their superstition and idolatry, which they were every day inventing and bringing into the Church; their insolency and pride in setting themselves up with, if not above the Nobility of the Kingdom; their wicked and damnable plots, tending to the ruine of both Church and State; doth not all the blood, both of *England*, and *Ireland* stand upon the stone of these bloody men? have not they been the great fomenters of this bloody war  
amongst

amongst us, by stirring up the spirits of wicked cruel men, against the poor Saints of God, in the three Kingdoms; and was there ever any wicked plot discovered, either against Church or State, but these men have had a great hand in it, if not the chief contrivers of it? If a Deputy of *Ireland* be in fault, ye may be sure of an Archbishop of *Canterbury*: How did they flock to the Kings party at the beginning of this war, that in some Garrisons, as *Oxford, Newark, York*, and several others, there were whole Troops and Companies of black-coats? and where ever the greatest flocks of these learned Deceivers were resident, there were the people most affected to the Parliament; as witness the Universities and Cathedrals, which appeared to be the very nests and cages of unclean birds: If the Parliament should have forborne to have given them the tenth of the Kingdom, till such time as the tenth of the Clergy had been of their sides, the Ordinance for Tithes might yet have been unpass. If I should go on to particulars, of their Malignant speeches and actions, which they have spoken, and done against the Parliament, and their proceedings since this war begun, you would not have the patience to read them; of their villifying the Parliament and all that adhered to them, under the names of Rebels and Traytors; frequently charging them of sacrilege and robbing the Church of her ancient Rites and Ceremonies; extolling the Book of Common-prayer, calling it the Divine Service of God, thereby to render the Parliament odious for taking away such holy things; with abundance more of this nature; so that all these things well considered and laid together, I wonder who will appear the great Sectaries, the grand Heretikes, the factious Fellows, the sowers of Sedition, and destroyers of Religion in the Kingdom? whether the Laity or the Clergy? and who we have now most cause to stand in fear of? whether those which are now discovering the superstitious blindness, and wicked practises of the Clergy, or the Clergy themselves? which are driving on their old designs in a new shape, that are building a new *Babel* out of the old rubbish, that are giving that great skarlet whore, a

new dress, thereby to make the world once more wonder after her, that they may once more hear that voice, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*; but let me persuade thee not to fear them, neither it is enough for their servants, their vassals, such as stand and fall with them, to live in fear of them: *But if thou be'st one of those which follow the Lamb, wheresoever he goeth, Rev. 14. 4.* that art willing to carry the cross of Christ, as well as wear his Crown, that art willing to suff'r with him, as well as raige in the day of their great calamity, *When they shall drink the wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his Indignation, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and of the Lamb, Revel. 14. 10.* Then shalt thou stand with the Lamb upon mount Sion, verſe the first. Then shalt thou sing a new song before the throne, Verſe 7. Then shall you sing *Aleluia, salvation, honor, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgements, for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand, Revel. 19. 1, 2.* Therefore be not now at all troubled, when thou ſeeſt the day begin to grow dark; it is but a cloud that is ariſing, it will be no more night with the Church; if they have a dark hour, the sun will ſhine through the cloud; *For lo, the winter is paſt, the rain is over-gone, the flowers begin to appear on the earth, Cant. 2. 11.* It is now ſpring-time with the Church, and though there may be many a cold blaſt, and ſtormy ſhowre, yet they are rather to be deſired then feared. *They will cauſe the fig-tree to put forth her green-figs, and the vine with the tender grape to give a good ſmell, Cant. 2. 13.* What though Truth be yet called Error, and Light darkneſs, the Saints and faithful ſervants of God, Schiſmatikes, and Heretikes? &c. let not this trouble thee; it is no new thing that hath befallen thee, they never were called by other names yet by this generation of men, called Clergy; and *Paul* was not aſhamed to confeſs to *Felix*, that after the way they call Hereſie, he worſhipped the God of his Fathers; and if thou be'ſt aſhamed to confeſs that now, thou mayeſt come to be aſhamed of *Chriſt*,  
and

and Truth, and ſo deny both; Therefore do not thou minde ſo much what men cry up for truth, and tread down for error; for all is not error that is voted ſo: It hath been the lot of truth in moſt counſels, if not in all, to have the feweſt voices; and thou mayeſt be ſure, they themſelves that put truth upon vote, are not themſelves ſatiſfied what truth is, till they have done voting: But if they were the ſons of truth, or had any love to, or high eſteem of truth; if they had ever taſted of that *Word of truth and rightouſneſs*; if they had ever received *the truth in the love of it*, it would be more precious to them, then to be ventured at one ſtake:

(8)

into some other likeness or shape, thereby to deceive the world, and make them believe they were a reforming themselves and the Church, out of their zeal to Gods glory, when they always staid in their old Idols Temple, while it were ready to fall on their heads, and then built themselves another of the same materials, only painted over with some other colours: And this ye shall finde to be the center of all Synodical Reformatiōns to this very day; never countenancing nor suffering more of the power of godlines in any, where they could suppress it, then what would serve them for a stalking horse, to destroy their dissenting Brethren by. And as they have sought the exaltation of their own glory, the establishment of their own power, and the manifestation of their own humane wisdom and learning in all their undertakings, and have despised, the wisdom, power, and glory of God in his people, because God hath bid that treasure in earthen vessels, 2 Cor. 4. 7. because it is the good pleasure of the Father to hide those things from the wise, and prudent, and reveal them unto babes, *Matth. 11. 25.* because not many wise, nor many mighty, nor many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, 1 Cor. 1. 27. Therefore hath God likewise refused them, and hath given them up to the pride, and deceit of their own heart: Therefore hath God pronounced a wo against them, *Isaiab 30. 1.* Wo to the rebellious children, that take counsel, but not of me, that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit: So in the 29. of *Isaiab 13.* Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear towards me is taught by the precepts of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Is not the sin and punishment of the Prince of Tyre met in our days? *Ezekiel 28.* Is it not visibly discovered to us, that our learned Wise men, such as have endeavoured to confine all the true knowledge of God, and the mysteries of his Kingdom to their

(9)

their learned capacities have ever been our deceivers, and seducers: Such as have been our leaders into all manner of Superstition and Idolatry; may we not well say with the Apostle, *Where is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the dispenser of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 1 Cor. 1. 20.* Doth it not appear, That Christ is made by God alone unto us wisdom? 1 Cor. 1. 30. Have not those which have called themselves the Reverend Clergy, the Learned Tribe of Levi, the Bishops, Pastors, and Ministers of Christs Church, been for above a thousand yeers, to the beginning of this Parliament, the great deceivers, the grand Sectaries, the chief fowers of Sedition, the very Throne and Body of Antichrist, and the proudest enemies to the Church of God?

Let us leave England a little, and observe the greatest part of the World, called Christendom, as Italy, Spain, France, Germany, &c. and do they not at this very day, generally live in the very darkness of Popery, making it their very Religion to maintain the Popes supremacy, the authority of the Church, and a few idolatrous Superstitious Ceremonies; and are other-ways altogether as ignorant of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, as the very Heathens? And who are the Leaders of these people in their ignorant superstition, and idolatry? Is it not the Clergy, the Learned, the University men? Is it not they which are their Popes, Cardinals, Jesuits, Fryers, Monks, &c? Is it not they which hath broacht, and imposed all those damnable Heresies, and Errors, now in the Church of Rome? And have they not to fill up the measure of their iniquities, caused to be presented, and put to death many thousands of Christians, for not believing, and receiving their damnable Superstitious Errors? Nay further, hath it not been they which throughout all Christendom for these many ages, have been the chief and onely contrivers, and plotters of all the bloody barbarous plots, wicked insurrections, and traiterous rebellions, against Kings and Kingdoms? Hath it not been their constant practice to stir up Nations against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom, under pre-

(10)

tence of Holy War, to the destroying and ruining many thousands of good Christians: the whole Histories of Christendom being but a brief story of the bloody wicked barbarous practices of these blood-thirsty Clergy-men; there would be no end if I should come to particulars, whole Volumes not containing them. But thou mayst object and say, We know the Romish-Clergy are bloody deceivers, cruel persecuters of good Christians: We have heard often of the Spanish Inquisition, and the bloody massacre in France, &c. But what is this to us? we have had a Learned, Pious Clergy in England for many yeers. Let me intreat thee to consider a little, what pious men they have been; where shall we begin? in Henry the eightes time, or in Queen Marias dayes? For till those dayes they were all as Romish as the other are now. Let me intreat thee to peruse well the Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland, Master Fox his Books of the Acts and Monuments of the Church, his History of Martyrs; and when thou hast done, then tell me, whether the Clergy of England hath not been more wicked, bloody, and cruel, then all the Clergy of Christendom besides: How many thousands of precious Christians have had their blood spilt, and been put to cruel torments, such as ye hardly read of in any other story by our cruel bloody English Clergy-men? And this is chiefly observable in them, wherein they have exceeded all others, That they have not onely been as Popish, superstitious, and cruel, as others in other Kingdoms, when the stream hath ran that way; but that they were never true to their own principles, wherein they have been alwayes a shame to their cloth; for as their Popish Superstition and Idolatry, hath declared them to be not Christians, but Antichristians: so their turning like the weather-cock, with all windes, hath declared them unworthy cowardly people, as they are meet natural men. Thus ye shall finde them in Henry the eightes dayes, when the Kingdom was under the height of Popery, they were all cruel Papists; when the King denied the Popes supremacy, and went about to demolish the Abbeyes, and Monasteries, which they all knew was not out of any pious

(11)

zeal he had for Reformation, but out of wrath, pride, and covetousness; yet how did they all side with him, except the Cardinal, and the poor Fryers, and Monks, that were all undone, and beggered by it? Then in the dayes of Edward the sixth, by reason of the Kings pious disposition, though young, they feared a turn, and presently a great part of them fell a Preaching against some particular points of Popery; and such as defended them, did as if they had not greatly cared what Religion they were on: but in the mean time, the Lord Protector, with several others, were resolved to reform the Church; and presently abolished the Mass with most of the Popish Service, and caused the Common-Prayer Book to be read in English to the people; and presently all the Clergy were zealous Protestants, great Common-Prayer Book men, except some four or five of their chief Bishops, as Gardiner, Bonner, Toustal, and Day; and about three or four yeers after, at the most, when Queen Mary was made Queen of England, they presently all turned about again, except such another number, as Cranmer, Rogers, Hooper, Ferrer, Ridley, and Latimer, and grew more cruel throughout the whole Kingdom against the poor Saints then ever they were; Bonner being then Bishop of London, did drive the very same trade Master Edwards is about now; for if ye observe it, the first officer Antichrist entertains when he is beginning a new designe, is a good Scout-master General, to keep a correspondency with all the rest of the wicked Clergy spread abroad over the Kingdom, as ye may see by those many wicked Letters, and accusations, which daily he received from all parts of the Kingdom, against one poor man or other; so that friends durst not talk together for fear some words should slip, and Bonner should come to hear of it, which was the bloodiest minded man that is upon record, for persecuting the poor Saints, and inventing punishment for them, or I hope we ever shall hear of, if God keep but Master Edwards and his ungrateful bloody faction out of authority: And in this rage did those wolves continue devouring the poor sheep of Christ all the dayes of Queen Mary; and how many thousands of good Christians were destroyed and banished by them, would make

C 2

a Jewe

a Jew's heart bleed to consider off; and all those suffered by them as evil doers, as Heretikes and Schismatikes; and themselves then, as they do now, assumed the name of Christs Ministers, and Ambassadors: Then after Queen Mary was dead, and Queen Elizabeth swayed the Scepter, in six moneths the whole tribe of them, except some few of their Bishops which had gotten money enough to live upon any where, and so did not care much for their trade, turned quite about again, and all turned Protestants: in which shape, and under which visage, they have continued to the beginning of this Parliament; who then presently discovered to the whole Kingdom, that they had been as deceitful, and as cruel in this shape, as ever they had been in the former; that they had onely got on sheeps clothing, but were all inwardly ravening wolves: they had got a trick to call all their Antichristian practises, and Popish ceremonies, the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England; and all their Antichristian proud Prelates, with the rest of their superstitious dumb Priests, must be called the Bishops Stewards, and Ministers of Jesus Christ; and all the true worshippers of God in the Kingdom, they were all scattered abroad, silenced, and persecuted under the name of Heretikes, and Schismatikes, &c. Every day growing worse then other, bringing in some new invented Popish ceremony or other, to the end they might have further advantage against such as could not submit to them: sure it will be needless for me to give you any particulars of their insolent proud wicked carriage in our times; it must needs be fresh in your memory; their incroachments upon the Civil power; their oppressions by their wicked Courts in all parts of this Kingdom; their superstition and idolatry, which they were every day inventing and bringing into the Church; their insolency and pride in setting themselves up with, if not above the Nobility of the Kingdom; their wicked and damnable plots, tending to the ruine of both Church and State; doth not all the blood, both of England, and Ireland stand upon the stone of these bloody men? have not they been the great fomenters of this bloody war  
amongst

amongst us, by stirring up the spirits of wicked cruel men, against the poor Saints of God, in the three Kingdoms; and was there ever any wicked plot discovered, either against Church or State, but these men have had a great hand in it, if not the chief contrivers of it? If a Deputy of Ireland be in fault, ye may be sure of an Archbishop of Canterbury: How did they flock to the Kings party at the beginning of this war, that in some Garrisons, as Oxford, Newark, York, and several others, there were whole Troops and Companies of black-coats? and where ever the greatest flocks of these learned Deceivers were resident, there were the people most distressed to the Parliament; as witness the Universities and Cathedrals, which appeared to be the very nests and cages of unclean birds: If the Parliament should have forborne to have given them the tenth of the Kingdom, till such time as the tenth of the Clergy had been of their sides, the Ordinance for Tithes might yet have been unpass. If I should go on to particulars, of their Malignant speeches and actions, which they have spoken, and done against the Parliament, and their proceedings since this war begun, you would not have the patience to read them; of their villifying the Parliament and all that adhered to them, under the names of Rebels and Traytors; frequently charging them of sacrilege and robbing the Church of her ancient Rites and Ceremonies; extolling the Book of Common-prayer, calling it the Divine Service of God, thereby to render the Parliament odious for taking away such holy things; with abundance more of this nature; so that all these things well considered and laid together, I wonder who will appear the great Sectaries, the grand Heretikes, the factious Fellows, the fowers of Sedition, and destroyers of Religion in the Kingdom? whether the Laity or the Clergy? and who we have now most cause to stand in fear of? whether those which are now discovering the superstitious blindness, and wicked practises of the Clergy, or the Clergy themselves? which are driving on their old designs in a new shape, that are building a new Babel out of the old rubbish, that are giving that great skarlet whore, a  
C 3 new

(14)

new dress, thereby to make the world once more wonder after her, that they may once more hear that voice, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*; but let me persuade thee not to fear them, neither it is enough for their servants, their vassals, such as stand and fall with them, to live in fear of them: But if thou be'st one of those which follow the Lamb, wheresoever he goeth, *Rev. 14. 4.* that art willing to carry the cross of Christ, as well as wear his Crown, that art willing to suffer with him, as well as reign in the day of their great calamity. *When they shall drink the wine of the Wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his Indignation, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and of the Lamb, Revel. 14. 10.* Then shalt thou stand with the Lamb upon mount Sion, verie first. Then shalt thou sing a new song before the throne, *Verle 7.* Then shalt thou sing *Aleluia*, salvation, honor, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgements, for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand, *Revel. 19. 1, 2.* Therefore be not now at all troubled, when thou seest the day begin to grow dark; it is but a cloud that is arising, it will be no more night with the Church; if they have a dark hour, the sun will shine through the cloud; *For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over-gone, the flowers begin to appear on the earth, Cant. 2. 11.* It is now spring-time with the Church, and though there may be many a cold blast, and stormy showre, yet they are rather to be desired then feared. *They will cause the fig-tree to put forth her green-figs, and the vine with the tender grape to give a good smell, Cant. 2. 12.* What though Truth be yet called Error, and Light darkness, the Saints and faithful servants of God, Schismatikes, and Heretikes? &c. let not this trouble thee; it is no new thing that hath befallen thee, they never were called by other names yet by this generation of men, called Clergy; and *Paul* was not ashamed to confess to *Felix*, that after the way they call Heresie, he worshippeth the God of his Fathers; and if thou be'st ashamed to confess that now, thou mayest come to be ashamed of Christ, and

(15)

and Truth, and so deny both; Therefore do not thou minde so much what men cry up for truth, and tread down for error; for all is not error that is voted so: It hath been the lot of truth in most counsels, if not in all, to have the fewest voices; and thou mayest be sure, they themselves that put truth upon vote, are not themselves satisfied what truth is, till they have done voting: But if they were the sons of truth, or had any love to, or high esteem of truth; if they had ever tasted of that word of truth and righteousness; if they had ever received the truth in the love of it, it would be more precious to them, then to be ventured at one stake:

But this doth fully declare to us they hold the truth in unrighteousness, *Romans 1. 18.* These are such as *Isaiab* speaketh of, *Isaiab 48. 1.* Which are called by the name of *Israel*, and are come forth out of the waters of *Judab*, which swear by the name of the Lord, and make mention of the God of *Israel*, but not in truth nor in righteousness. These men never followed Christ for the love of Truth; it is the loaves more then the miracles that they minde. These *Simon Magus's* which have purchased their Apostleships by their money, love their wages better then they do their work: The first thing they minde, is how to get a Gospel-maintenance, and then they never fear a Gospel-Ministry; they know by experience, the former begets the latter. These are not of the race of that true Shepherd, for his work was to save mens lives, *Luke 9. 56.* But the business of these hath been to destroy mens lives: He came to lay down his life for the sheep, *John 10. 15.* These come to take away the lives of the sheep, *John 10. 10.* His work was to feed the flock, *John 10. 9.* These take the fleece, and starve the flock, *Ezekiel 34. 2.* His disposition and expression to the flock, are full of love and tender bowels, *He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the Lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young, Isaiab 40. 11.* But these like those wicked cruel shepherds, are on the contrary nature. *The diseased have you not strengthened, neither have you healed those which were sick, neither have you bound up that which was broken,*

broken, neither have you brought again that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost, but with force and with cruelty have you ruled them, Ezk. 34. 4. These are of those thieves Christ speaks of, John 10. 10. that come not but for to steal, to kill and destroy: but I am come that ye might have life, saith Christ, and that you might have it more abundantly. These are not onely of those hirldings, whose own the sheep are not, which onely flee when the wolf comes, and leaves the sheep to the wolf, John 10. 12. but these are rather those wolves which Christ forewarned the Church of, Matt. 7. 15. These are of that sort Paul prophesieth of, Acts 20. 29. For I know that after my departure, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: These may be fitly compared to Jerusalem's false prophets and wicked priests, Ezk. 22. 25, 26. There is a conspiracy of her Prophets in the midst thereof like a roaring lion, ravening the prey: they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof: Her Priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her Princes in the midst thereof are like Wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord, when the Lord hath not spoken. If there were but such a noble spirit in thee, as those Bereans had, Acts 17. 11. to search the Scriptures daily, whether those things be true or no that men hold forth to thee, how soon would the vanity and simpleness of these learned deceivers be discovered to thee? If thou wouldst but take the Apostles for an example, not to have regard to the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, 1 Cor. 2. 13. If thou wouldst not believe every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God or no, because many false prophets are gone out into the

the world, 1 John 4. 1. How would light break forth to thee, and darkness flee away? but we have been more fearful to scruple or question the testimony of men, and their subtle intricate interpretations of the Scripture, then we have been to question the testimony of God himself, and the plain sayings of the spirit in the Scripture; and the Laws and Ordinances which these men have procured, and caused to be established against Heresie and false Doctrine, did never run in the defence of the Scripture, as it stands per'ed by the Spirit of God, but as it were interpreted by them (not thus) If any man shall declare or hold forth any doctrine or opinion contrary to the Scripture, or contrary to the form of sound words delivered by Christ and his Apostles: (but thus) by the Papists, If any man shall hold forth any doctrine or opinion contrary to the holy Catholike Church, or shall deny the supremacy or infallibility of our holy Father the Pope, &c. And among the Protestants thus, If any man shall hold forth any doctrine or opinion contrary to the present government established, or contrary to the doctrine or articles of Faith, received by the Church, &c. he shall be proceeded against as an Heretike, &c. and accordingly, If any have been accused of Heresie or Schism, &c. why they have been proved Heretikes, &c? by those Laws and Ordinances, and not by the Scripture, nor by Christs precepts and practice, as they stand upon record from his mouth; neither will it avail the accused to plead in his defence any testimony from Scripture, to maintain the lawfulness of his practice; but his adversaries will cry out, we have a law, & by our law he ought to die; and thus hath these men, like those wicked Pharisees Christ proves, Matt. 23. 6. made the Scripture, and Law of God of none effect by their own traditions; they have been alwayes striving, and contending with Kings and Parliaments for Laws and Ordinances, pretending them against Heresie and Schism, and hath ever turned the edge of them against the very power of godliness: this being their very way and

broken, neither have you brought again that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost, but with force and with cruelty have you ruled them, Ezk. 34. 4. These are of those thieves Christ speaks of, John 10. 10. that come not but for to steal, to kill and destroy: but I am come that ye might have life, saith Christ, and that you might have it more abundantly. These are not onely of those hirlings, whose own the sheep are not, which onely flee when the wolf comes, and leaves the sheep to the wolf, John 10. 12. but these are rather those wolves which Christ forewarned the Church of, Matt. 7. 15. These are of that sort Paul prophesieth of, Acts 20. 29. For I know that after my departure, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock: These may be fitly compared to Jerusalem's false prophets and wicked priests, Ezk. 22. 25, 26. There is a conspiracy of her Prophets in the midst thereof like a roaring lion, ravening the prey: they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof: Her Priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. Her Princes in the midst thereof are like Wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and destroy souls, to get dishonest gain. And her prophets have daubed them with untempered mortar, seeing vanity, and divining lies unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord, when the Lord hath not spoken. If there were but such a noble spirit in thee, as those Bereans had, Acts 17. 11. to search the Scriptures daily, whether those things be true or no that men hold forth to thee, how soon would the vanity and simpleness of these learned deceivers be discovered to thee? If thou wouldst but take the Apostles for an example, not to have regard to the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, 1 Cor. 2. 13. If thou wouldst not believe every spirit, but try the spirit whether they be of God or no, because many false prophets are gone out into the

the world, 1 John 4. 1. How would light break forth to thee, and darkness flee away? but we have been more fearful to scruple or question the testimony of men, and their subtle intricate interpretations of the Scripture, then we have been to question the testimony of God himself, and the plain sayings of the spirit in the Scripture; and the Laws and Ordinances which these men have procured, and caused to be established against Heresie and false Doctrine, did never run in the defence of the Scripture, as it stands per'ed by the Spirit of God, but as it were interpreted by them (not thus) If any man shall declare or hold forth any doctrine or opinion contrary to the Scripture, or contrary to the form of sound words delivered by Christ and his Apostles: (but thus) by the Papists, If any man shall hold forth any doctrine or opinion contrary to the holy Catholike Church, or shall deny the supremacy or infallibility of our holy Father the Pope, &c. And among the Protestants thus, If any man shall hold forth any doctrine or opinion contrary to the present government established, or contrary to the doctrine or articles of Faith, received by the Church, &c. he shall be proceeded against as an Heretike, &c. and accordingly, If any have been accused of Heresie or Schism, &c. why they have been proved Heretikes, &c? by those Laws and Ordinances, and not by the Scripture, nor by Christs precepts and practice, as they stand upon record from his mouth; neither will it avail the accused to plead in his defence any testimony from Scripture, to maintain the lawfulness of his practice; but his adversaries will cry out, we have a law, & by our law he ought to die; and thus hath these men, like those wicked Pharisees Christ proves, Matt. 23. 6. made the Scripture, and Law of God of none effect by their own traditions; they have been always striving, and contending with Kings and Parliaments for Laws and Ordinances, pretending them against Heresie and Schism, and hath ever turned the edge of them against the very power of godliness: this being their very way and



means, whereby they have destroyed so many good Christians; as you see they have done in all ages; so that they have not been satisfied to persecute and destroy good people themselves, but have hereby imbrued the hands of Emperors, Kings, and Parliaments, in the blood of many millions of Gods people, to the ruining of themselves and their Kingdoms; besides the loud cry of blood to God for vengeance against them, which he will surely require at their hands; and when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? Revel. 9. 10. And I heard the angel of the waters, say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged us; for they have shed the blood of Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy, Revel. 16. 5, 6. When the Lord shall once come to make inquisition for blood, it is not a pretence of building up *Sion*, and establishing the peace of *Jerusalem* that shall satisfy his justice; no, he will avenge it on all hands. Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of *Jacob*, and princes of the house of *Israel*, that abhor judgements and pervert all equity. They build up *Sion* with blood, and *Jerusalem* with iniquity. The heads thereof judge for reward, and the Priests thereof teach for hire, and the Prophets thereof devise for money; yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us. Therefore shall *Sion* for your sake be plowed as a field, and *Jerusalem* shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house, as the high places of the forest, *Micah* 3. 10, 11, 12. And do but compare the practice of these men, to the practice of Christ and his Apostles, and see what little agreement there is betwixt them, and then chuse whether thou wilt serve God or Mammon; for no man can serve both, *Matth.* 6. 24. Ye shall finde Christ himself, which was not onely the great Prophet and Teacher of his Church,

AB

*Acts* 3. 23, 24. but likewise their great King and Law-giver, *Isaiah* 33. 22. one that hath all the power of heaven and earth committed to him, and yet did he never use any arbitrary power over, or in the Church; but saith he, All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you, *John* 15. 15. It was his Fathers business, not his own, that he came to do, *Luke* 2. 49. *John* 4. 37. & 19. 4. His Fathers will, not his own, that he came to fulfil, *John* 5. 30. *Mark* 14. 36. And in his Fathers name, not his own, did he do all that he did, *John* 5. 43. & 17. 6, 26. And so the Apostles which were chosen and ordained by Christ himself, to the work of the Ministry, which had in them an infallible spirit to guide them, and yet you never finde them speaking or doing any thing in their own name, or in the name, or authority of any other, but Christ himself, producing his precepts and practices for all their words and actions, That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, 1 *John* 1. 3. so *Acts* 4. 20. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard (they do not say the things which we have considered and agreed upon.) So ye read in the first of the *Acts* and verie the second, That Christ by the holy Ghost had given commandments to the Apostles, whom he had chosen; and in obedience to those commands of Christ, did they act, and do all which they did. This was the doctrine Peter preached, *Acts* 10. 42. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it was he which was ordained of God, to be judge of quick and dead; and when Peter and John were commanded to preach no more in this name, *Acts* 4. 19. Peter and John answered, and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you, more then unto God, judge ye. And as they did not decline the preaching in the name, never the more for being commanded to the contrary; so would they not have preached it ever the less or more, for being commanded to do it by any but Christ, who had alone power to inable them to obey his commands; therefore saith David, I will run the way of thy

D 2

thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart; *Psal.* 119. 32. If men could enlarge hearts, as well as give commands, there might be some hopes of their forcing to beleve in Christ, and to walk in the way of his commandments. But in vain do ye worship me, saith Christ, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men, *Matth.* 15. 9. Though the commandments of men, those Pharisees take for doctrine, were commandments of men, to worship the true God, and that after the most strictest manner, according to the Law of *Moses*, as they judged, *Acts* 26. 5. and yet this was then vain worship, how comes it now to be orthodox? and so you find