

Also permission of conscience is a great and sure band and benefit to the king and state, as may likewise be seen in the same Princess Elizabeth; who, if she had not been permitted, but had suffered death, as the bloody bishops earnestly desired, then had not the kingdom been so surely, nor yet so purely, kept and preserved for his majesty and his royal issue, as now it is. The Lord be praised therefore.

Rev. xii. 6,
14, xiii. 1, 7;
2 Cor. xi. 13.

Further, I beseech his right excellent majesty and parliament to observe, that persecution was the occasion that the apostolic church was at first scattered and driven into the wilderness, that is, desert places of the world; whither she fled to save herself from the rage and tyranny of antichrist, and his apostles and ministers, the first authors of persecution under the gospel. Therefore his majesty and parliament may please to consider, that so long as persecution continue, so long will the apostolic church continue scattered and persecuted into the secret places of this world. And no marvel, for her faith and discipline is as offensive, as odious, and as unwelcome unto antichrist and his bishops and ministers now, as it was then; as their burning, banishing, hanging, and imprisoning do witness even unto this day.

And it is to be noted, that as the apostolic faith and discipline—in the apostles' days, when through them true signs and wonders were wrought by the extraordinary gift and power of the Holy Ghost—did let and hinder the mystery of iniquity, wrought by antichrist, his apostles and

States of Holland, granting liberty of conscience to all in their dominions. Such an edict was published in Antwerp in 1579, after a noble declaration from him, that "nothing could, in his opinion, be more unreasonable

than to force conscience, and to refuse that liberty to others which even we ourselves desire to enjoy."—Brandt's Hist. of Reformation in the Low Countries, i. 359. Lond. edit. 1720.]

ministers, by whom the lying signs and wonders were done, through the extraordinary spirit of Satan; so now the catholic or antichristian faith and discipline, having gotten the upper hand by her lying signs and wonders, and by persecution, do by the same let and hinder the mystery of godliness, wrought by Christ, his apostles and ministers, by whom the true signs and wonders were done without persecution.

And it is well worthy to be observed, both of king, prince, and people, that the bishops [and] ministers of antichrist cannot abide nor endure the faith and discipline of the apostolic church; because it will be the overthrow of their blasphemous and spiritual lordships, and of their antichristian and bloody kingdom; and therefore are they so fiery hot and zealous for the catholic, or antichristian faith and discipline. For by their faith they show plainly, that they are succeeded and descended from antichrist, who confessed not that the Messiah came in flesh. And by their discipline or government they plainly show, [that] they are antichrist's bishops and ministers, who persecute with fire and sword all degrees, both king, prince, and people, that will not confess their faith and obey their discipline. And it is very plain and easy, both for king, prince, and people—if they will not take up religion on credit, and content them with the religion they were born and brought up in, as do the papists—to discern who they be that teach the apostolic faith and discipline; and who they be that teach the antichrist's faith and discipline.

For the holy apostle sheweth it to all men that will give heed thereto; for he saith, *Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; for many false prophets are gone out into the world, which confess not that Jesus Messiah came in flesh. Hereby shall you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus*

2 Thess. ii.
6, 7, 9; 1
Tim. iv. 1, 2,
3; 2 Tim.
iii. 1, 4, 5;
2 Peter ii. 1,
3; 1 John
iv. 1; 2 John
7; Jude 4,
11, 16, 18.

Note well,

1 John iv. 3.

[1 John iv.
1, 2, 3.

Messiah came in flesh⁹ is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Messiah came in flesh is not of God: but this is the spirit of antichrist, [of] whom ye have heard how that he should come; and now already is he in the world.

¹ John ii.
22, 23.

The same is the antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father. The apostle meaneth, such as deny Jesus to be

John xvii. 3,
5, 8; 1 Cor.
xv. 47; John
vi. 38, 42, 62,
vii. 26, 27.

Messiah, the Lord that came down from heaven, as Christ and the apostles have taught, such have not the Father, but do deny him also as they have taught him. And therefore Christ saith, The times shall come, that whosoever killeth

John xvi. 2,
3, 27, 31.

you will think that he doth God good service; but these things they will do unto you, because they have not known the Father nor me. The Father loveth such as believe that I came out from God. Thus saith Christ. But antichrist and his ministers believe not this doctrine, neither do they thus teach Christ Jesus the Messiah.

And you may please to understand, that of this antichrist, or rather as the Syriac, of this false Christ,¹ came the church of Rome, whose bishops and ministers teach not this doctrine; and as the mother, so the daughter also, teacheth not this doctrine, but will likewise persecute both prince and people, that shall confess that *Jesus Messiah came*

¹ John iv. 2.

in flesh, as John teacheth; or that the Son of man ascended up where he was before; or that he was glorified with his Father

John vi. 62,
iii. 13, xvii.
5.

before the world was, as himself saith; or that he was the second man, the Lord from heaven; or that he had, and hath

¹ Cor. xv. 47,
49.

a heavenly body, as Paul teacheth. For these and such like doctrines, do the church of Rome and her daughters persecute with fire and sword, being endued with the spirit

⁹ The Syriac saith, *came in flesh*.
[“Christus venit in carnem.”—Tremellius ex vers. Syriac. edit. Lond. 1585.]

¹ [“Hic est pseudochristus.”—Tremellius ex vers. Syriac. “Hic est antichristus.”—Beza. edit. Lond. 1585.]

of antichrist. By which antichrist, his apostles and minis- 1 John iv. 3.
 ters, the apostolic church was scattered and driven into the 2 Cor. xi. 13.
 wilderness, that is, desert and secret places of this world, 15; Rev.
 even by their bloody persecution. The which still they xii. 6, 14.
 continue and raise against the members and witnesses
 thereof, who were and are the martyrs which in all ages
 have and do suffer death, imprisonment, and banishment,
 since the first persecution; and we never read, nor ever
 shall read, that the apostolic church, or such as have
 derived their faith and discipline of her, did ever per-
 secute.

Therefore I humbly desire his majesty and parliament,
 with all godly carefulness, to consider that it is not possible
 that the church of Rome, called catholic, or those that are
 descended of her, and have received their ministry and
 ordination from her, ever was, or could be, the apostolic
 church, called primitive church; or she that is descended
 from her. Seeing the scripture saith, that the apostolic
 church, called in scripture the woman, hath a place prepared Rev. xii. 6,
 of God in the wilderness, a thousand two hundred and sixty 13, 14.
 days from the presence of such as did persecute her. How,
 then, I beseech you consider, may it be possible that the
 church of Rome—called in scripture, a *mystery, great* [Rev. xvii. 3
Babylon, the mother of whoredoms and abominations of the —6.]
earth. The woman that sitteth upon a scarlet coloured beast,
full of names of blasphemy. The woman arrayed in purple
and scarlet, and gilded with gold and precious stones and pearls,
having a cup of gold in her hand, full of abominations and
filthiness of her fornication. The woman that is drunken
with the blood of saints, and with the blood of the martyrs, or
witnesses of Jesus by her beastly persecution—was, or
could be, ever the apostolic church, or those that are de-
scended from her; seeing the scripture saith, she hath a Rev. xii. 6,
place in the wilderness prepared of God, where she should be 13, 14.

fed a thousand two hundred and sixty days from the presence of her persecutors.

Note.

If so be, you will have the church of Rome, and those that are descended from her, to be the true apostolic church,² then it will follow, that the church, called the woman, and did fly into the wilderness from her persecutors, was and is the false antichristian church; and also it will follow, that those which we account to be the martyrs and witnesses of Jesus, were not of the true apostolic church, but were obstinate persons and heretics, even as their adversaries in Rome, Spain, England, and elsewhere, did persecute, adjudge, and execute them for.

But if you will have the prophecies of the apostles to be true, and will believe their holy writings, and also will have the martyrs that have been burned, banished, hanged, imprisoned, to be of the true apostolic church; then it will follow, and that justly, according and agreeable to the scriptures, that the church of Rome, and those that did and do persecute, are descended from the false, antichristian church, called a *mystery, great Babylon, the mother of whoredoms and abominations of the earth, &c.*, which was and is drunken with *the blood of saints and martyrs of Jesus*. Seeing they have her antichristian faith and lordly discipline,

2 Thess. ii.
3, 6, 8; 1
Tim. iv. 1—
3.

Rev. xii. 6,
11, 14, xvii.
2, [5,] 6, 17;
2 Tim. iii. 1,
5, iv. 3—5;
2 Peter ii. 1,
3; 1 John ii.
18, 19, iv. 1;
2 John 7;
Jude 4, 11,
16.

² [Thus King James: "I acknowledge the Roman church to be our mother church, although defiled with some infirmities and corruptions, as the Jews were when they crucified Christ." — Speech, 1603; Works, p. 491. Hooker before him had said, that the church of Rome was "to be held and reputed a part of the house of God, a limb of the visible church of Christ."—Book v. §. 68, vol. ii. p. 307, Hanbury's edition. The contrariety of this view of Rome to the

opinion of the reformers is well seen in the Christian letter, quoted vol. i. p. 202. King James was more than suspected of approximating to Rome in some other points of no little importance. He was willing to recognize the episcopal supremacy of the bishop of Rome, as the patriarch of the west; the observance of festivals; the honour due to saints; and a reverence for the Virgin Mary.—Tierney's Dodd. Ch. Hist. note, vol. iv. p. 36.]

and for the defence and maintenance thereof, will also burn, banish, hang, and imprison; so hot and fiery zealous, that thereby they show plainly that they walk so just and even in the steps and paths of the *mystical woman, great Babylon* their bloody parent and mother. So even, I say, as if they studied her lying and hypocritical doctrine; her deep and devilish divinity; her blasphemous, princely, and dangerous dignity; and her beastly, bloody, and deadly discipline.

Like mother
like daughter.

[Rev. xvii.
5.]

1 Tim. iv. 2;
Rev. ii. 24.

Through the continuance whereof, not only the apostolic church is continued still in the wilderness and desert of this world; but also the Jews and others, both in Great Britain and all over the world, are kept back from the knowledge of God's holy word, the only order and ordinance Christ hath appointed for the gathering of his church together, out of all places of the world. And so long as persecutions continue, you cannot try the spirits of the *many false prophets that are gone out into the world*, as the holy apostle doth lovingly advise and admonish you. But like the papists, [you] must be tied only to the spirits of your lordly bishops and their ministers, who will have all, both king, prince, and people, to receive their spirits, and therefore will not have any others to preach and print within the land, lest their lying doctrine and lordly discipline be discovered and disclaimed.³ And instead of disputing and writing by the word and Spirit of Christ against their

1 John iv. 1.

³ ["A Christian king must take direction not from the pope's person or pleasure, but from the laws and commandments of Christ, to whom alone he oweth subjection. And as for the bishops and pastors of his realm, those he should and must consult, in respect they be God's messengers sent to him and his people, but with great care to try them and

free liberty to refuse them, if they be found not faithful. And when the prince, learning by their instruction what is acceptable to God in doctrine and discipline, shall receive and publish the same, the bishops themselves are bound to obey."]—True Difference between Christian Subjection and Unchristian Rebellion, by Thos. Bilson, p. 358, edit. 1585.]

adversaries, they will cruelly persecute and fight against them by fire and sword,⁴ and spirit of antichrist, from whom Mystically. they are descended and succeeded, both lineally and of great antiquity.

Wherefore I humbly beseech the king and parliament, that you will betimes listen unto the Holy Spirit in the mouth of the prophet, which saith, *Be wise now therefore, ye kings; be learned, or instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice in trembling. Kiss the Son, of God, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, of persecution, when his wrath shall suddenly burn.*⁵ Let not, therefore, the kings of the earth band themselves with the bishops and ministers of antichrist, nor princes assemble themselves together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, that is, against Christ and his church. Seeing both he and she break your bands, and cast your cords from them; yea, her seed *overcometh you by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, for they love not their lives unto death.*

Beware then in time, lest you offend any more of these little ones that believe in Christ, seeing Christ saith, *it were better to have a millstone hanged about the neck, and drowned in the depth of the sea, than so to do.* He meaneth, that it were better for you to lose your lives, than any way to consent to the offence of such little ones that believe in Christ. See then, I pray, that they be not despised, burned, banished, hanged, and imprisoned; for *their angels always behold the face of Christ's Father in heaven.* And remember he saith, *the tree is known by his fruit;* but persecuting of Christians is an evil fruit. And, that *a good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things;* but persecuting of Christians is no good thing. And,

⁴ Fire and sword no equal weapons to the Spirit and word.

⁵ ["Etenim ira ejus brevi exar-

descet,"—Dathe in Bibl. Cabinet, vol. 32, p. 392.]

Ps. ii. 10,
[11, 12.]

Ps. ii. 2, 3;
1 John ii.
18; Rev.
xvii. 14.

Rev. xii. 11.

Matt. xviii.
6, 10.

Matt. x. 38,
39.

Matt. xii. 33,
35, 36.

that for every idle word [that] men shall speak, they shall give account at the last day of judgment. How much more for every wicked and cruel deed of persecution, as burning, banishing, hanging, and imprisoning of those that *confess with the mouth and believe with the heart the Lord Jesus*, and *that God raised him from the dead*; whose laws and ordinances they are careful to keep and obey! Christ saith that such shall be saved; and yet you fear not to burn, banish, hang, and imprison such. But if you believe that *God will avenge his elect*, beware of persecuting his servants ^{Rom. x. 9.} that call on his name, especially such as witness his truth against the abominations of antichrist. ^{Luke xviii. 7.}

Suffer not your bishops to destroy those men and women that strive to serve God, according to his will in his word. Be not your bishops' executioners in burning, banishing, hanging, and imprisoning of harmless and peaceable Christians; but let them enjoy freedom of the gospel and liberty of conscience: that so the apostolic church, which is scattered and driven into the wilderness and desert of this world, may be again gathered together, both Jews and Gentiles, into visible and established congregations. And that the catholic and universal church of antichrist may be consumed and abolished, by his word and Spirit, as the holy ^{2 Thess. ii. 8.} apostle hath foretold; even the uttermost of his arrival, which is the imperial and triple crown, through the triple sea of Rome.⁶

And again, I humbly entreat the king and parliament to vouchsafe to hear me with patience yet a little further. If freedom of the gospel and permission of conscience might be granted, then would not papists, nor any others, dissemble their religion, to the dishonour of God, the destruction of their souls, and to the great danger both of king and

⁶ I pray the Lord to give such grace,
The sea [see] of Rome may ebb apace.

state, seeing they are forced to church against their consciences. And may not popish priests and Jesuits, unawares to the bishops, become the bishops' ministers, seeing the change of their religion and religious habit differ so little;⁷ and so by degrees infect the people with more popish doctrine, as occasion shall be? And such men will readily embrace the bishops' orders, and so they shall readily have the bishops' favours.⁸ By which means they may more easily and speedily have access unto the court, and presence of the king and prince, which indeed is very dangerous, howsoever not regarded. Therefore I do, according to my duty, humbly advise his majesty not to beautify his court and presence with any popish stones, not with one, though it be of alabaster.

But permission of conscience, and freedom and liberty of the gospel, will no way be dangerous to the king or state, if such like rules as these be observed:—

1. That no people tainted with treason do bear any office.
2. That all sorts of people tainted with treason do, at all times from home, wear a black hat with two white signs, the one before, the other behind, in open sight.

⁷ [The use of papal arguments by the bishops in their conflict with the puritans, led the latter to suspect that their opponents availed themselves of the assistance of Jesuits, and other partisans of the papacy. In a curious dialogue, written about 1580, a bishop is represented as saying, that if he had not had a papist for an assistant, he "could never have looked to have prevailed. Because our dignities and government cometh wholly and every part thereof from the pope, and is ruled and defended by the same canons, whereby his popedom is supported. So that if I had wanted their

helps, I had had none authority, either from God and man, no help either by reason or learning, whereby I could have been furthered." And the dialogue closes with the papist recommending a variety of measures for the repression of the puritans, which, if executed, would open the way for the return of the catholics to place and power.—*A Parte of a Register, &c.*, pp. 342, 354. Udal, an eminent puritan, is supposed to be the author of this dialogue.—*Brook's Lives of the Puritans*, ii. 23.]

⁸ From popes' submission
There is great suspicion.

3. That no people tainted with treason approach within 1 Kings ii. 36, 41, 42. ten miles of the court without licence.

4. That no people tainted with treason do inhabit the Rom. xiii. 1 —5. city of London, nor yet within ten miles thereof.

5. That none tainted with treason do make any assembly or congregation.

6. That no person or persons, in whatsoever difference by reasoning or disputing, do draw any weapon, nor give any blow, stroke, or push, in pain and penalty, as his majesty and parliament think meet.

7. That for the more peace and quietness, and for the satisfying of the weak and simple, among so many persons differing in religion, it be lawful for every person or persons, yea, Jews and papists, to write, dispute, confer and reason, print and publish any matter touching religion, either for or against whomsoever; always provided they allege no fathers for proof of any point of religion, but only the holy scriptures.

Neither yet to reproach or slander one another, nor any other person or persons, but with all love, gentleness, and peaceableness, inform one another, to the glory of God, 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25; Jas. iii. 17. honour of the king and state, and to their own good and credit.

By which means, both few errors and few books will be written and printed, seeing all false ministers, and most people, have little or nothing else, besides the fathers, to build their religion and doctrine upon. Or if it be once established by law, that none shall confirm their religion and doctrine by the fathers, and by prisons, burning, and banishing, &c., but by the holy scriptures; then error will not be written nor disputed, except by obstinate persons and seared consciences, seeing the word of God will be no shelter for any error.

Yea, I know by experience among the people called

Note.
A true sign
of false bi-
shops and
ministers.

Brownists, that a man shall not draw them to write, though they be desired; for one of their preachers, called Master Rob[inson], hath had a writing of mine in his hands above six months,⁹ and as yet I can get no answer. It seems he knoweth not how better to hide his errors, than by silence. And this will be the case of all false bishops and ministers, who had rather be mute and dumb, than to be drawn into the light with their errors.

John iii. 10.
20.

Therefore permission of conscience, and liberty of the gospel, in our land of Great Britain, will mightily further the advancement of the apostolic faith, and chiefly their books, whereout sufficient matter will be drawn for the convincing of every particular religion which is against the religion established by Christ and his apostles: who by all means lawful, sought the conversion and salvation both of Jews and Gentiles. And they are inconstant and faithless men, or at least very ignorant, that think error will overcome and prevail against the truth.

1 Cor. ix. 20.
21 : Acts
xvi. 3.

For the abolishing of such thoughts, I desire such men to consider the mighty victory and prevailing⁷ of the truth, in the time of Christ and his apostles; which, notwithstanding resisted and disputed against by the most part of the priests and learned men, both of Jews and Gentiles, yet overcame and prevailed against all the errors of the high priests and great learned men, both of the Jews and Gentiles. And the apostle saith, *We cannot do any thing against the truth, but for the truth.* And seeing it is the same truth which all good men would embrace, why should we not hope the same victory by it? Did not king Darius and all the people, both Jews and Gentiles, cry out and say, that truth is great and strongest? Why, then, should those that have the truth, and those that would have the truth,

2 Cor. xiii. 8.

1 Esdras iv.
38, 41.

⁹ Now above twelve months.

be afraid of error? Seeing truth discovereth dark and dangerous ways of error, though abroad in open books, even as light discovereth dark and dangerous places, though abroad in open highways. And as the more dark and dangerous the ways be, the more necessary and needful will light be found of all that travel; so the more dark and dangerous the errors be, the more needful and profitable will truth be found of all that would travel to heaven.

But some may object and say, 'Let all this be granted, yet it is no wisdom, we think, to bring dangerous errors into the light, that so many men may stumble at them; which being not brought to light, would not be so much as known to some.'

I answer, no more than a rock that lieth hid under water, Answer. which, for want of bringing into the light, many men may make shipwreck thereon, and so stumble or fall, nevertheless, though it be not so much as known to them before. Therefore, as a rock in the seas, though not so much as known to some, yet, for want of being made known, many men stumble and fall thereon, and so perish, both men and goods: so an error, though not so much as known to some, yet, for want of being made known, many men may stumble and fall thereon, and so perish, both bodies and souls, the which is more lamentable. And as rocks in the seas, the more they manifest themselves, so errors in the world, the more they manifest themselves, the more furtherance in the way to heaven. And you shall understand, that errors being brought to the light of the word of God, will vanish as darkness before the light of a torch. Even as the chaff before the wind cannot stand, so error before truth cannot abide. Therefore it is no hindrance, but a great furtherance, to have all erroneous rocks in the haven to heaven, made known and published.

And a great and sure argument it is, that those bishops

Another
true sign of
false minis-
ters.

and ministers have not the truth, that publicly dare not dispute or write against error; as may be seen in the bishops and ministers in Queen Mary's days, which could not abide to have books written and printed of that which they called error and heresy;¹ but caused, that if any such were written, both them and the authors to be burned, if they could come by them.

The word of
God the only
defender of
the faith of
Christ.

Therefore, if permission of conscience and liberty of the gospel be not granted, and burning laws repealed, then the bishops and ministers now, may persuade and cause to be burned, both the books and the authors that have the truth, instead of heresy and heretics, even as their predecessors have done already; and so shed more innocent blood, and also provoke the Lord to further wrath against the king and state. It is not the gallows, nor the prisons, nor burning, nor banishing, that can defend the apostolic faith. Indeed, the king and state may defend religion's peace by their sword and civil power, but not the faith, otherwise than by the word and Spirit of God. The Dutch princes and peers say, "that force, sword, and gallows, in matter of religion, is a good means to spill blood and make an uproar in the land; but not to bring any man from one faith to another."² The pagans will not persecute one another for religion, though, as I read, there be above three thousand sorts among them.³ And you know, both King

¹ [In the convocation of 1554, it was proposed, That all books, both Latin and English, concerning any heretical, erroneous, or slanderous doctrines, might be destroyed and burnt, throughout the realm." And also that all statutes "against heresy, Lollards, and false preachers," might be enforced.—Strype's *Cranmer*, p. 500; Oxford edit. These cruel laws were still in force and executed in the

reign of King James, as in the instances of Legate and Wightman.]

² [Brandt, *Hist. of Ref. in Low Countries*, i. 149, 150; edit. Lond. 1720.]

³ ["Among the ancient heathens, all whose deities were local and tutelary, diversity of sentiment concerning the object or rites of religious worship, seems to have been no source of animosity, because the acknowledging

Henry and Queen Mary, thought themselves defenders of the faith: and thought they burned heretics and heresy when they burned men and their books. But now you see, and must acknowledge, that they were persecutors of the faith, instead of defenders thereof; and also that they, through the instigation of their bloody bishops, burned the word of God, and those that professed and wrought it, instead of heresy and heretics.

Idol bishops
and false
ministers,
authors of
persecution.

And thus it will be now, if the bishops and their ministers may have their will; and therein they, as their predecessors, fulfil the word of God, in *gathering kings of the earth to the battle of the great day of God Almighty*. For they persuade kings to force their subjects to receive the faith, and to be of the church. Whereas the word of God teacheth otherwise, saying, *Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God*, and not by the king's sword. And Christ saith, *Teach all nations*, and not, force all nations. And this teaching is to be understood, by the word and writings of the prophets and apostles of our Lord and Saviour Christ, which is the word of God. For they that will be of the true faith and church, must be called thereunto out of the world, by the word of God, in every nation; and not forced and constrained in every nation, as the bishop of Rome, and all other false bishops and ministers, have and do persuade kings, emperors, and magistrates.⁴

Rev. xvi. 14.

Rom. x. 14,
17.

[Matt.
xxviii. 19.]

eneration to be due to any one god, did not imply denial of the existence or the power of any other god: nor were the modes and rites of worship established in one country, incompatible with those which other nations approved and observed. Thus the errors in their system of theology, were of such a nature as to be productive

of concord; and notwithstanding the amazing number of their deities, as well as the infinite variety of their ceremonies, a sociable and tolerating spirit subsisted almost universally in the pagan world." — Robertson's Charles the 5th, iv. 129, tenth edition. Gibbon, Decline and Fall, chap. 2.]

⁴ [By the canon law, "the bishop

Mark xvi.
16 ; 1 Thess.
v. 19.

2 Tim. ii. 24,
25.

2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Rev. xi. 2.

Note.

Acts ii. 41,
47.

A true
church will
not persecute.

And his majesty and parliament may please to understand, that so to do, is to quench the Spirit of God in Christ's bishops and ministers ; and also to frustrate the precept of Christ which saith, *Preach the gospel to every creature*. Besides it maketh their one office and function void. They ought to preach and *instruct with all meekness them that are contrary-minded ; proving if God at any time will give them repentance, that they may know the truth : for the ministers of the Lord must not strive, but be apt to teach, gentle towards all men, suffering evil men patiently ; telling kings and princes, that the weapons of Christ's bishops and ministers, are not carnal, as the weapons of all false and antichristian bishops and ministers are, but spiritual, and mighty through God to cast down holds ; casting down every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

Also, if all within the land be forced to be of the church, as the bishops and their ministers would still have it, then there would be no world in the land, but all the land would be the church, which is absurd and contrary to the scriptures. And great ignorance do the bishops and their ministers show, when they think the whole nation of people is the church of Christ : for then it cannot be said, out of Great Britain, *the Lord added to the church, from day to day, such as should be saved ;* seeing, within the land there would be none without to be added.

Also, within that land there would be no persecution, seeing the church of Christ doth not persecute at all, much less itself. But the ministers and members of that church do persecute one another ; and therefore it cannot be the

of Rome may compel, by an oath, all rulers and other people to observe and caused to be observed, whatever the see of Rome shall ordain concerning

heresy, and the factors thereof ; and who will not obey, he may deprive them of their dignities."—Cranmer's Works, by Jenkins, ii. 8.]

spiritual kingdom and church of Christ, but of antichrist, seeing it is divided against itself, and persecuteth one another; and will, with her mother, great Babylon, be consumed and condemned, seeing, as she, they burn, banish, hang, and imprison one another. Which is no Christian, but antichristian, monstrous, cruel, wolfish, and tyrannous part and practice; for Christ sent his ministers as lambs among wolves, and not as wolves among lambs.

Matt. xii. 25.

Rev. xviii.
2, 8.1 Cor. viii.
11, 12; Luke
x. 3.

Again, I humbly, and with all reverence, do beseech his right excellent majesty to give me leave to put him in mind of those things that do concern the glory of God, the assurance of his own salvation, the establishment of his throne, and the benefit both of the church of Christ and the commonwealth of all his dominions. And though, as Josiah, he find, by reading in the book of the New Testament, a great alteration of the apostolic faith, and change of the laws and ordinances of Christ, within his dominions; yet not to be dismayed, as Henry le Grand,⁵ but be encouraged, as Josiah, to labour and endeavour the redress thereof, according to the mind of Christ, in his New Testament. And I doubt not, but as Jacob the patriarch prevailed with God and men, so shall Jacob the king prevail both with God and men, especially being his chief steward, by his New Testament.

Gen. xxxii.
28; Rom.
xiii. 4.

Through the zealous reading whereof, it will be found

⁵ [Henry the 4th, king of France, "sacrificed the dictates of conscience to the suggestions of policy; and, imagining that his government could have no stable nor solid foundation as long as he persisted in disowning the authority and jurisdiction of Rome, he renounced the reformed religion and made a solemn and public profession of popery. Perceiving, however, that

it was not possible either to extirpate or suppress entirely the protestant religion, he granted to its professors, by the famous edict drawn up at Nantes, in the year 1598, the liberty of serving God according to their consciences, and a full security for the enjoyment of their civil rights and privileges."—Mosheim, Eccles. Hist., Cent. xvi. pt. 2, c. 2, sect. 15.]

that antichrist, the king of the catholic faith and discipline, called the mystery of iniquity, *doth sit in the temple of God*, even as the scripture hath foretold. But it is to be noted, that the scripture hath also foretold the consummation and abolition of this antichrist, the man of sin, and his mystery of iniquity, with the utmost of his arrival, or highest top of dignity he is come unto. And this shall be done by the Spirit of the Lord in the mouth of his servants. For when the words of God be fulfilled, then shall the servants of the Lord prevail, by his word and Spirit, with ten kings that shall hate and make the whore desolate, which sitteth in the hearts and consciences of peoples,⁶ multitudes, and nations. And this whore is the woman called the great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth, meaning the church of Rome, by her false faith and discipline; which is so fast settled in the hearts and consciences of the kings of the earth, that they think they do God good service, in killing and burning his servants that do speak against her faith and discipline, and that will not buy any of her wares—that is, her antichristian doctrines and ordinances.

But as she hath had her exaltation, and arrival to the height and dignity of the *sea* empire of Rome, by the love of kings, who have given their power and authority unto her, and have fought for her against the saints and servants of Jesus: so she shall have her consummation and abolition from that height and dignity, by the hatred of kings, who again shall take their power and authority from her, and therewith defend the peace and persons of the saints and servants of Jesus; and now for religion's peace, will use their power and authority against the bloody persecution of antichrist and all his bloody bishops and ministers, and so become nursing fathers unto the church of Christ.

⁶ Called the temple of God, 2 Thess. ii. 4.

2 Tim. iii.
[1—5]; 1
Tim. iv. [1
—3]; Rev.
xvii. 15, 16,
17; 2 Thess.
ii. 8.

Rev. xvii. 1.
13, 14, 15,
18.

John xvi. 2.

And as it hath pleased God to give his majesty peace round about, as he did unto king Cyrus, in whose days the material temple began to be repaired—which was a figure of the spiritual temple—so, I pray, it may please him also, in the peaceable days of king James, to begin to repair the spiritual temple, the apostolic church, scattered and driven abroad into the wilderness of this world; whose calling and gathering together, must be by the preaching of the word of God, both to Jews and Gentiles, and not by the sword of the kings of the earth, as antichrist and his ministers have now a long time persuaded and prevailed. Whereby not only the Jews and infidels, but also papists and other false Christians, are hindered and deprived from the knowledge of the apostolic faith. And it is to be noted, that David might not build God's temple, because he had spilt much blood; which sheweth no blood ought to be spilt for the building of the spiritual temple. *Ergo*, peace in religion is a good means to make a unity of religion among so many Christian sects.

Isaiah ii. 4 ;
Ezra iv. 7 ;
Hag. ii. 4, 9.

1 Chron.
xxviii. 3.

And it is well worthy consideration, that as in the time of the Old Testament, the Lord would not have his offerings by constraint, but of every man whose heart gave it freely; so now in the time of the gospel, he will not have the people constrained, but as many as receive the word gladly, they are to be added to the church by baptism. And therefore Christ commanded his disciples to *teach all nations, and baptize them*; that is, to preach the word of salvation to every creature of all sorts of nations, that are worthy and willing to receive it. And such as shall willingly and gladly receive it, he hath commanded to be baptized in the water; that is, dipped for dead in the water. And therefore the apostle saith, *Else what shall they do, who are baptized for dead, if the dead be not raised, why are they baptized for dead?* And therefore he saith, *We are*

Exod. xxv.
2, xxxv. 5.

Acts ii. 41 ;
Matt. xxviii.
[19] ; Mark
xvi. 16 ;
Matt. x. 11,
14.

1 Cor. xv. 19

Rom. vi. 4.

Col. ii. 12. *buried then with him by baptism, &c.* And it is to be well observed, that when Christ would have preached the word of salvation to the Gadarenes, he did not compel them when they refused; but finding them unwilling to receive him and his word, he turned from them without hurting them. Also, when James and John saw that some of the Samaritans refused Christ, they would have commanded fire from heaven to consume them, as Elias did; but Christ rebuked them and said, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are, for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.*

Luke ix. 54,
55.

By all which it may please his majesty and parliament to take knowledge, that Christ will have none consumed with fire and sword, for not hearing and not receiving his word. And that, howsoever it hath been the mind of antichrist to destroy men's lives for religion, and therein hath not spared either prince or people; yet it is not the mind of Christ that princes should destroy their subjects, nor yet that subjects should destroy their princes, for difference in religion.

And, therefore, why should bishops persuade princes and people, and why should king, prince, and people be persuaded by their bishops and ministers, to be contrary-minded to Christ? Verily it is a notorious and plain token of a false faith and discipline, that is defended by fire and sword, the power and authority of princes. And they cannot be Christ's bishops and preachers^s that persuade princes and people to such antichristian tyranny and cruelty; and it is very evident that those bishops and ministers which give over men and women to the magistrate to be persuaded by persecution, do show clearly that their doctrine is not good, and that they want the word and

^s Christ's bishops will not be lords over the conscience.

Spirit of God, and therefore flee to the magistrate's sword for the forcing of them to their faith and discipline. And as the wine is not good which we are forced to drink, so those doctrines are not good which we are forced to believe.

But it may be by this time, [that] all those bishops who unfeignedly fear God and truly love the king, will haste and make speed to come unto his majesty for pardon; acknowledging the truth of this book; confessing their ignorance and arrogance in the knowledge of God's word; and in compelling the people to hear the word preached; and for imprisoning, burning, banishing, and hanging for religion, contrary to the mind of Christ; and also for stopping the mouths of men, and burning their books, that preach and write contrary to their minds and wills.

Yea, it may be, they will also confess and say, 'Oh! most gracious king! We beseech your majesty to show us mercy, and to forgive us our spiritual pride and ambition, in that we have thus long usurped the blasphemous titles of spiritual lords and lord graces; the which titles we now, to the glory of God and honour of the king, do with unfeigned hearts confess to be due and belong only to Christ himself. And that the name and title of spiritual lord cannot belong to any earthly creature; no, not to the king or emperor, because it is an heavenly name and title.⁹ How much less can it belong or be due unto us, your majesty's unworthy subjects and scholars.

'And for so much as we now understand, the Lord be praised therefore, that the holy and heavenly name and divine title of spiritual Lord, is as much, yea, as high and great as the name and title of a spiritual God; and also, that it is a name above every name, which God the Father ^{Phil. ii. 9,} hath given unto Christ only, to the end that every knee ^{10, 11.}

⁹ The bishops do know in their consciences that this is true. Job. xxxii. 22.

Col i. 18.

The bishops
in titles
equal to the
Son of God.

‘ should bow unto that only and heavenly name, and that
 ‘ every tongue should confess that Jesus is the Messiah, the
 ‘ Lord, unto the glory of God the Father, that in all things
 ‘ Christ might have the pre-eminence. For he alone is the
 ‘ head of the church, which is his body; the which cannot
 ‘ be, so long as we, or any other bishops, do hold and retain
 ‘ that divine, high, and super-excellent name and title of
 ‘ spiritual lord. Because then it cannot be said that God
 ‘ hath so highly exalted him, as to give him a name above
 ‘ every name, seeing our names and titles are also spiritual,
 ‘ and [we] are called spiritual lords, as well as the Son of
 ‘ God, Jesus the Messiah. The remembrance hereof, most
 ‘ gracious sovereign, doth make us to tremble before God
 ‘ and the king; and therefore we most earnestly desire
 ‘ your sacred majesty and the whole parliament, to discharge
 ‘ and release us of these fearful names and titles, that do
 ‘ only belong to the Son of God, Jesus, the only spiritual
 ‘ Lord that God hath given unto his church.

‘ Moreover, we do, according to the truth, acknowledge
 ‘ that if we should any longer retain these divine and high
 ‘ names of spiritual lords and lord graces, we should therein
 ‘ be entitled, not only with a name equal to our Lord Jesus,
 ‘ the only begotten Son of God, but also we should be
 ‘ entitled with a name and title above your right excellent
 ‘ majesty; yea, above all emperors, kings, and princes of
 ‘ the earth. The which alone we do acknowledge to be a
 ‘ sufficient cause to put us down, and to deprive us of these
 ‘ usurped names and blasphemous titles.¹

‘ Also we do confess, that our pomp and state wherein
 ‘ we now live, is more like the bishops of the catholic
 ‘ church of antichrist, than any way like the bishops of the

¹ Note. God's blessings ill expected, unless these idols be rejected, who are exalted above all earthly gods.

‘ apostolic church of Christ; unto whom we acknowledge
 ‘ we ought to be made like, and also to be qualified with
 ‘ the like gifts and graces of the Spirit; or else in no case
 ‘ can we be meet bishops for the church of Christ, as the
 ‘ apostle plainly teacheth both to Timothy and Titus, &c.

1 Tim. iii.
 [1-7];
 Tit. i. 6-9.

‘ And we must further acknowledge and confess, that our
 ‘ houses, households, and revenues, are more fit and meet
 ‘ for princes, dukes, and earls, than for the bishops of Christ.
 ‘ Wherefore, being moved and stirred up hereto by the fear
 ‘ of God, we earnestly beseech your majesty and parliament
 ‘ also to disburden us of this great pomp and state, and of
 ‘ our great and prince-like houses, households, and revenues,
 ‘ that so we may be made equal and conformable to the
 ‘ ministers of Christ; and then we shall have both hope and
 ‘ comfort of the world to come, although but little in this,
 ‘ except your majesty and parliament do grant free liberty
 ‘ of conscience.

‘ The which we now do also, with the poor distressed
 ‘ Christians, most humbly intreat and desire; and that for
 ‘ these four reasons:—First, because thereby the gospel of
 ‘ Christ will be set free and at liberty, whereby all people,
 ‘ both Jews and Gentiles, will be gathered to the apostolic
 ‘ faith, church, and discipline.

‘ Secondly, because many of your majesty’s subjects, both
 ‘ men and women, who now are forced to dissemble their
 ‘ religion, for fear of our persecution, will be released and
 ‘ set free from their spiritual bondage and slavery, wherein
 ‘ we now do hold them, against their consciences; and so
 ‘ they will become more faithful Christians to God, and
 ‘ more loyal subjects to your majesty, than ever they were
 ‘ before, to the salvation of their souls and the safety of the
 ‘ crown and state.

‘ Thirdly, because the poor distressed Christians now
 ‘ banished and dispersed out of their fatherland over the

‘ face of the earth, will be redeemed from great misery and
‘ bondage, wherein now, no doubt, they live and abide,
‘ because they will not be in bondage to any other spiritual
‘ lord or head, than the Lord Jesus Messiah alone; whose
‘ faith and discipline they desire only to learn and obey.

‘ Fourthly, because thereby great benefit and commodity,
‘ will redound both to your majesty and to all your subjects,
‘ within your highness’s dominions, by the great commerce,
‘ in trade and traffic, both of Jews and all people: which
‘ now, for want of liberty of conscience, are forced and
‘ driven elsewhere.

‘ And also from the revenues and livings which we and
‘ our clergy do possess, and from the courts and offices we
‘ hold and keep, great profit and commodity will redound
‘ both to your highness and to all your kingdom. We say,
‘ more profit and commodity than we or any man is able to
‘ express.

‘ And therefore, we also desire all his majesty’s subjects
‘ both great and small, in all love and fear of God, not to
‘ be offended, or any way moved or grieved, when they
‘ shall see such a reformation of us as that famous king,
‘ Henry the Eighth, did make of our lordly brethren, the
‘ abbots and their clergy. For, indeed, such a reformation
‘ ought to come among us and our clergy; seeing we are
‘ no way agreeable to the New Testament of the only
‘ spiritual Lord Jesus Messiah,² but are limbs and fellow-
‘ members of that antichristian and Romish church, which
‘ in the scripture is prophesied to be abolished and destroyed.
‘ Now therefore, we pray you all, let not king David say
‘ the sons of Zeruiah are too strong for him, for that will
‘ be unprofitable for you all.

‘ And for conclusion, we intreat his majesty and parlia-

² Too great are the odds, to use the sword against God’s word.

‘ment, to enact that as our adversaries come against us
 ‘only with the word of God, so we go against them only
 ‘with the word of God; and not as we have done, by civil
 ‘authority, for so ourselves may be forced to dissemble.’

Thus it may be, the Lord will persuade and work in the hearts of some of the bishops, who will willingly resign their antichristian titles and popish pomp and state, with their prince-like houses and livings, into the hands of the king, without any compulsion or constraint. But if they do not, yet if it please God to open the king’s heart to see their antichristian and idol estate, and the danger and damage they cause, both to the king, prince, and people, they will be compelled thereto, even as their lordly brethren, the abbots, in king Henry’s days, were. And howsoever it be not regarded, or perhaps not discerned, yet in the sight of God and his people, they are greater idols than their lordly brethren the abbots; yea, greater idols than the images of wood and stone, which that famous and godly king Edward did pull down and destroy.³ For they did not imprison, nor burn, nor hang, nor yet cause to be banished, any of the king’s subjects that would not worship them, as these idol-bishops do. And out of doubt, these bishops are greater idols than the golden calf Aaron made, and offered unto; for the calf did not persecute, nor vex

The bishops
 greater idols
 than the ab-
 bots’ images,
 or golden
 calf.

³ [“Images in churches had been so grossly abused, and such idolatry and superstition committed by means of them, that it was in the King’s Injunctions commanded to the visitors to remove them every where, where-soever they had been abused by pilgrimages, censings, and offerings.”—Strype, Memor. II. i. 124. “Consider then howe godlye an acte is this to take away so manye ymages, not made by Goddes commandementes,

wherunto contrary to Goddes commandementes and his honor wer so manye idolatries committed. For vnto Christen princes office and cure appertayneth the defence of Goddes true word and Christen religion, and to take away all those thinges, which hynder or let true godlynes and religion, or make trouble and contention, within their realmes.” Cranmer’s Catechism set forth in 1548, p. 29. Oxford. edit. 1839.]

such as did not acknowledge it for their lord, as the bishops do: neither did the calf reign and rule by force over the consciences of the people, as these idol-bishops do.

Exod. xxxii.
1, 7.

Besides, the calf was set up instead of Moses, who brought the people out of Egypt, and showed them the will of God. But these bishops are set up instead of Christ, who hath brought us out of the bondage of hell, and who showeth us his Father's will in his New Testament. The which these idol-bishops will not suffer us to obey; but instead thereof, will force us to fall down, worship, and obey their father antichrist's will and old testament,⁴ which stinks in the nostrils of all reformed strangers that hear thereof, as well as in ours that have taken our flight from it. Therefore these spiritual lords and idol-bishops, ought to be pulled down and suppressed like the abbots, their lordly brethren; though not sacrificed unto the Lord in Smithfield, as the godly king Josiah sacrificed the idol-priests of the high places on the altars thereof.

2 Kings
xxiii 20.

1 Sam v. 3.

And I do verily believe, that if free liberty of conscience be granted, that the spiritual kingdom of these idol-bishops, will in time fall to the ground of itself as the idol Dagon fell before the ark. For through the knowledge of God's word, all godly people will withdraw themselves, in all peaceable and godly wise, from the spiritual obedience of these spiritual lords and idol-bishops, and quietly betake themselves unto the obedience of the only spiritual Lord, Jesus Messiah. But howsoever it be, I shall be contented therewith, and so I wish all others; for we all ought to be content if we obtain liberty of conscience: and therefore to give God praise continually, that hath wrought so blessed a work in the hearts of the king and parliament. For

⁴ What greater idolatry, than to obey other spiritual lords than the Lord Jesus?

whom, as the scripture teacheth, we ought to *make supplications, prayers, and intercessions*, that they may come to the knowledge of the truth, and *that we may lead a peaceable and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty*. And unto whom we ought to give, by the laws of God, all earthly honour, fear, and reverence; and willingly to pay tribute and custom, tax and toll, so much and so often as it shall please his majesty and parliament to appoint and gather, by any officer or officers whatsoever. For whom also, and for the whole commonwealth of all his kingdoms, we ought to be diligent, and ready to hazard and lay down not only our goods, but also our lives, at all times and occasions.

1 Tim. ii. 1,
2.
Rom. xiii.
1-7.

For Christ hath only set us free from all ecclesiastical laws and ordinances, which himself hath not commanded in his last will and testament. Yea, from the ecclesiastical laws and commandments of the Old Testament. How much more hath he set us free from the ecclesiastical laws and ordinances of antichrist? But he hath not set us free from the moral and judicial law of God; for that the king is bound to execute, and we are bound to obey: and for want of the execution thereof, there are in our land many whores and whore-keepers, and many children murdered; besides the death and undoing of many persons about whores. Wherefore, I humbly desire, that the moral and judicial law of God, may be practised and executed on all degrees, both high and low, without respect of persons, according to the mind of Christ. For the Lord will have that every man shall love him above all, and his neighbour as himself. And Christ saith, *As ye would that men should do to you, so do ye to them likewise*.⁵

Col. ii. 14;
Heb. viii. 13.

Deut. xvii.
18, 20.

Luke vi. 31.

⁵ [The profligacy and debauchery of the court of James the First descended and defiled every grade of society. Foreigners were astonished

at the gross manners of the court, and of both sexes of the higher classes. And although the taverns were "dens of filth, roaring songs, and roysters,"

Therefore as the king would not have his subjects to take away his life, because he is contrary to them in religion; so let not the king take away his subjects' lives, because they are contrary to the king in religion. And as you would not that men should force you to a religion against your consciences, so do not you force men to a religion against their consciences. And as it is the duty of subjects to seek the conversion of their king and state by the word of God, and not his and their destruction by fire and sword; so it is the duty of the king and state to seek the conversion of their subjects by the word of God, and not their destruction by fire and sword, as the pope and his prelates do teach; whose vassals therein, both emperors and kings, as well as people, have been a long time, both to the destruction of themselves and their subjects.

Note.

For who knoweth not that prelates and priests, have persuaded subjects to destroy their kings and princes, as well as kings and princes to destroy their subjects. But I pray them both to take notice that the scripture saith, *He that destroyeth the temple of God, him will God destroy.* Let not therefore kings, princes, nor subjects, be any longer persuaded to destroy one another, through the subtlety of bishops and their ministers, who most of them seek only the security of their own pomp and glory, and the esta-

1 Cor. iii. 17,
vi. 19, 20.

yet women of rank allowed themselves to be entertained in such places. The number of the poor daily increased. They were turned forth from the towns "to beg, filch, and steal for their maintenance." A police order, issued a few years later, prohibits all persons from harbouring rogues in their barns, and authorizes constables to demand of persons wandering about with women and children, where they were married, and where their chil-

dren were christened. "For these people live like savages, neither marry, nor bury, nor christen; which licentious liberty makes so many delight to be rogues and wanderers." Harris's *Life of James I.* pp. 65—78. *Pict. Hist. of England*, iii. 633. 660. The dark picture of national vice presented by our author in a future page, is a too true description of the facts, as corroborated by historical documents.]

blishment of their spiritual thrones therein. For so long as they may confirm that, they pass⁶ not who perish, whether king, prince, or people.

Again, therefore, I humbly pray his majesty and parliament, to repeal and make void all popish laws and canons, and to see the moral and judicial law of God both firmly enacted and carefully practised, after the mind of Christ. And then shall Christ's spiritual throne, be established in the hearts and consciences both of king, prince, and people, so as the church, Christ's spiritual kingdom, shall increase in the knowledge of faith, and obedience thereof, with all love, peace, and charity one towards another;⁷ and the commonwealth of his majesty's kingdoms will flourish and prosper, and also his throne be constantly established, both to him and his heirs, throughout all his dominions, in a sure land⁸ of peace and love the one with and towards another, to the glory of God, and the comfort of his majesty and of all his subjects; and also to a famous and excellent glorious pattern of government to all kingdoms, nations, and countries round about, as in the days of Solomon, king of Israel.

For if the holy laws of God's word be practised and executed after Christ's will, then shall neither king, prince, nor people be destroyed for difference in religion. Then

⁶ [*Pass*, to heed.

"As for these silken-coated slaves, I
pass not;
It is to you good people that I speak."
Shakspeare.]

⁷ Frederic and John Palsgrave said, that under pretext of the Holy Ghost's office of correction, little else was sought than to reign over the consciences of the magistrate and subjects, like as in the accursed popedom is come to pass, &c. [Brandt, Hist.

of Reform. i. 330. Lond. 1720. Frederic the Third, the Elector Palatine, was a prince of eminent virtue, and since his death has been honoured with the epithet godly. He was much engaged in supporting the affairs of the protestants, employing his sons, Christopher and John Casimir, the Palsgrave, to whom the above was addressed in his last will. Strype, Annals, II. ii. 161.]

⁸ [Dan. iv. 26. Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee.]

treason and rebellion, as well as burning, banishing, hanging, or imprisoning, for difference in religion, will cease and be laid down. Then shall not men, women, and youth be hanged for theft. Then shall not the poor, lame, sick, and weak ones, be stocked and whipped; neither shall the poor, stranger, fatherless, and widows, be driven to beg from place to place; neither shall the lame, sick, and weak persons, suffer such misery and be forsaken of their kindred, as now they be. Then shall not murder, whoredom, and adultery, be bought out for money. Then shall not the great defraud and wrong the small; neither the rich oppress the poor by usury and little wages. Then shall not men bring up and inherit other's children, instead of their own: neither shall an honest man be forced to live with a whore instead of an honest wife: nor yet an honest woman be forced to live with a whorekeeper instead of an honest husband. Then shall not servants be forced from marriage by bonds, nor yet be bound to servitude longer than six years: neither shall they be brought up contrary to covenant, nor posted from one quarter or one year to another, for their freedom, and in the end be forced to buy it of their masters, or else to go without it too.

Note well.

Then shall neither prince nor people be disinherited, for not being of the church: neither shall they be held lawless persons, though excommunicated: neither shall any man dare kill them, as now they may, and be quit by law: neither shall any man fear to have his mouth stopped, for preaching the truth. Then shall no man need to flee out of his native country and fatherland, for persecution's sake. Then shall all men live in peace under their own vine, lauding and praising God, honouring and obeying the king. Then also will no blood be eaten among Christians, whereby the Jews should have just cause to stumble or be offended; neither should any relics of the ceremonial law,

as tithes and offerings, &c., be any longer in use, whereby the Jews should be hardened in their unbelief, and kept from the faith of the Messiah. Then shall the Jews inhabit and dwell under his majesty's dominion, to the great profit of his realms, and to their furtherance in the faith; the which we are bound to seek in all love and peace, so well as others, to our utmost endeavour: for Christ hath commanded, to *teach all nations*, &c., and they are the first.⁹

Jews kept
back from
the faith by
persecution.

Lastly, then shall not so many men and women be deceived by false ministers, neither by their sermons, nor yet by their books, which are full freighted with false doctrines, and confirmed and countenanced, not only by the king's authority and power,¹ but also by wresting and

⁹ [Previous to the reign of Edward I. Jews in considerable numbers resided in England, and flourished, though often plundered and slain. At length the fanaticism of this monarch got the better of his avarice, and by the parliament of 1290, they were finally and for ever banished the realm. Upwards of 16,000 are said to have left the kingdom. On their voyage many were robbed by the seamen, their throats cut, and the bodies cast into the sea. From this time no Jews were to be found resident in England until, by the tolerant spirit of Cromwell, they were again permitted to exercise their various callings; though *he* failed, through the persecuting spirit of the presbyterian divines and others, to obtain for them a full and impartial liberty. Under various disabilities they have continued until the present day. At a subsequent period to the plea made by Bushier above, we find the Baptists honourably distinguished for their li-

berality to this oppressed people; and while themselves labouring under the weight of persecution, extending to them the hand of sympathy. Mr. Thos. Collier dedicated to the Protector the following work, "A Brief Answer to some of the Objections and Demurs made against the coming in and inhabiting of the Jews in this Commonwealth. With a plea on their behalf, or, Some arguments to prove it not only lawful, but the duty of those whom it concerns, to give them their liberty and protection (they living peaceably) in this nation."—4to. Lond. 1656.]

¹ ["The king, having given the reins of the church into the hands of the prelates and their dependants, these in return became zealous champions for the prerogative, both in the pulpit and from the press. Two books were published this year (1607), which maintained the most extravagant maxims of arbitrary power, one written by Cowell, LL.D., the other by

Rev. xi. 3.
& xix. 10.

false interpreting of the scriptures, and by alleging of popish fathers, which, through the great ignorance of the people, do greatly prevail: but then shall be abolished, through the word and Spirit of God, his two witnesses, in the mouth of his servants, who by word and writing shall breed such knowledge that none of wisdom's children shall be deceived.

2 Pet. ii. 2.

Another reason, why so many good people are now deceived, is, because we that have most truth, are most persecuted; and therefore most poor. Whereby, we are unable to write and print, as we would, against the adversaries of the truth. It is hard to get our daily food with the labours of our weak bodies and feeble hands. How then should we have to defray other charges, and to write and print? I have, through the help of God out of his word, made a scourge of small cords, wherewith anti-christ and his ministers might be driven out of the temple of God. Also a declaration of certain false translations in the New Testament. But I want wherewith to print and publish it. Therefore it must rest till the Lord seeth good to supply it.

Exod. iii. 6.

In the mean while, I humbly intreat his majesty² and parliament to give me leave to prove the bishops with one question, by which you may perceive the ignorance of your bishops. It is this, how will they be able to prove a resurrection from these words, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*. Only from these words will they prove the resurrection, if they be the

Luke xx. 17. bishops of Christ; for he proved the resurrection from

Dr. Blackwood, a clergyman, who maintained that the English were all slaves from the Norman conquest. The parliament would have brought the authors to justice, but the king

protected them by proroguing the houses in displeasure." Neal, Hist. of Puritans, i. 441. edit. 1837.]

² "It is the king's honour to search out a thing." Prov. xxv. [2.]

hence. The question is hard, I grant, but if their lordships be not able to interpret it according to the meaning of Christ, as I am sure they are not, then it will be another cause, very sufficient, for their deprivation from their lordly and idol offices, and princely livings.

But because most men do wrest and misinterpret the scriptures, some of wickedness, and some of ignorance, for the utterance of their doctrines, and so deceive both prince and people, I will show how you shall perceive it, lest thereby you be still deceived.

Every scripture, therefore, misinterpreted, doth make a contradiction. As for example, Mr. Johnson, one of the preachers called Brownists, to prove Rome a true church, allegeth 2 Thess. ii. 4,³ where the apostle showeth, that

³ ["God hath his people in the Romish Babylon; and when he calleth them out from thence, doth not enjoin them to leave whatsoever is there had, but requireth of them that they have no communion with her sins.....Now baptism is not of her idolatries, but of Christ's ordinances; it is not a threshold or post which she hath brought into the *temple of God*, but was set therein of old by the Lord himself, 2 Thess. ii. 2—8." A Brief Treatise against two errors of the Anabaptists, by F. Johnson. London. 1645, p. 12, 13; first printed about 1608. In a subsequent publication he appears to refer to these remarks of Busher, and replies as follows: "How can we soundly defend and retain the visible baptism received in the church of Rome, if we do not accordingly acknowledge the church of Rome to be a visible church and the people of God? A visible church, I say, though miserably corrupted, adulterate, and apostate; having antichrist set there-

BUSHER.]

in, &c.....Where, for further manifestation of the point, note, and remember still, to put difference between 'the man that sitteth,' and 'the temple of God, wherein he sitteth.' Which not being observed aright—besides many unsound speeches and assertions that have passed such as are otherwise good writers—much error hath arisen hereabout, and great confusion of things that differ." "My words were these, speaking of the apostle's speech, where he saith antichrist should sit in the temple of God, 2 Thess. ii. 4, that here, by the temple of God, understanding the church of God, it will follow that antichrist should sit in the church of God; and is there to be sought and found, and not among the Jews, Turks, Pagans, &c. Where first mark that I spake not of the temple only, but of the temple of God, as the apostle also doth. Secondly, I do indeed here derive the reason from this exposition thereof; that by the

the man of sin, and son of perdition, sitteth in the temple of God. Which words, *temple of God*, he interpreteth to be the church of God; whereby he doth greatly err. For then such interpretation will contradict this scripture, 1 Tim. iii. 15. which saith, *The church of God is the pillar and ground of truth*. But if the man of sin sitteth there, then it is a Rev. xviii. 2. *hold of foul spirits, a cage of every unclean and hateful bird*, as the scripture speaketh; yea, *the pillar and ground of falsehood, and not of truth*. Neither would the Lord call Rev. xviii. 4. his people out of her, as he doth, if it were the true church. Also, if the temple of God in that place be interpreted the church of God, this foul absurdity and contradiction will follow, viz., that the church, called the woman, to whom was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness from her persecutors, for a time, times, and half a time, was not persecuted; neither yet did fly into the wilderness so long a time. Neither yet was the church, (called both woman Rev. xii. 13, 14. and whore, also *great Babylon, the mother of whoredoms and abominations of the earth,*) drunken with the blood of the saints and of the martyrs of Jesus, as the scripture testifieth. Rev. xvii. 1, 5, [6.]

Again, if that be the church of God where the man of sin sitteth, then the winepress was not trodden without, but within the church. And so it also crosseth this scripture, which saith, *The winepress was trodden without the city*, so that *blood came out unto the horses' bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs*. Ergo, a false interpretation. Rev. xiv. 20.

Moreover, we are not to understand the word temple at all times to mean the church; for when Christ said, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again*, [John ii. 19.]

temple of God is understood the church of God." Johnson's Christian Plea, ed. 1617. pp. 123, 125, 146.

See also Hanbury's Memorials, vol. i. p. 311.]

[he] did not mean the church, nor yet the material temple wherein he was, but meant his body. Yet the Jews understood the word temple otherwise. Even as Mr. Johnson, &c., do here understand the word temple otherwise, than the bodies of peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues, which they ought not to do.⁴

Likewise Paul, when he said, *If any man destroy the temple of God, him will God destroy*, [he] did not mean the church, but the members of the church. So when he said, *The man of sin sitteth in the temple of God*, he did not mean so much as the members of the church, much less the church.

Therefore it must be understood, that all those in whom the man of sin sitteth, are called *the temple of God*, only in respect that the *Lord hath bought them*, for the Lord hath bought all men, even the *false teachers* that deny him. Therefore no man is his own in that respect, but the Lord's.

Also the bishops themselves, to prove brothers' and sisters' children may marry, allege Lev. xviii. [6.] But that scripture doth not prove such marriages, but the full contrary. For it saith, *none shall come near to any of his kindred, to uncover shame*. But brothers' and sisters' chil-

⁴ Rev. xvii. 15. [These views of our author are identical with those of the martyr Penry. "Antichrist, I grant, should sit as God in the temple of God, but it was never the temple of God since he planted his pestilent chair therein. Popery indeed hath invaded the seats and possessions of true religion, and began first where the truth was professed. For the mystery of iniquity first appeared within the church, and not elsewhere; where true religion flourished, and not

among the heathen; neither could he be that adversary, whose beginning should be in paganism. But although popery took root in the soil where the true church was planted, yet it so grew there, that it still continued to be the synagogue of Satan, and could never as yet be the church of God: however it hath overgrown the possession thereof." A Godly Treatise by Robert Some, D.D. p. 164. London. 1533.]

[1 Cor. iii. 17.]

2 Pet. ii. 1;
1 John ii. 2;
1 Cor. vi. 19,
20, vii. 23.

Lev. xviii.
17.

dren are kinsfolks, therefore they may not come near to uncover shame, for that were wickedness. This they must confess, or else prove that brothers' and sisters' children are not kinsfolks, which they cannot, seeing, then, brothers' and sisters' children cannot call cousin. And so all cousinship is blotted out, by their doctrine, for uncles and aunts call their brothers' and sisters' child, nephew and niece.

Col. ii. 8.

1 Tim. vi. 20,
21.

Thus many bishops and preachers do deceive kings, princes, and peoples, by wresting and misinterpreting the scripture. Therefore I earnestly desire your majesty and parliament, to *beware, lest there be any man that spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, through the traditions of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.* And to *avoid profane and vain babblings, and antitheses, or oppositions, falsely called learning, which, while some profess, they have erred concerning the faith.*

2 Cor. v. 10;
Matt. v. 21,
22, 45; Lu.
xviii. 7, 8;
2 Thess. i. 4,
8; Jas. i. 5,
6; Matt. xii.
36.]

And now, O king, prince, and parliament, open your eyes, and listen⁵ your ears, unto compassion and mercy. Fear God and be like unto him, for he causeth his sun to shine, both on just and unjust. Think at last you must give an account of your works: many at the day of judgment will be ever burned, for killing and burning innocent Christians; but no man shall be damned for saving their lives. Lean then, I humbly beseech you, on the right side of mercy, rather than yield unto such as persuade [you] to persecute innocent Christians. For they cannot help you, when you must give account thereof unto Christ, who adviseth you otherwise, although they be such

⁵ *Listen your ears*, let your ears be attentive.

"Listeneth, lordinges, in good intent,
And I will tell you verament
Of mirthe and of solas."

Chaucer's Rime of Sir Thopas.

as err, how much more such as do but seem to err, and for difference in religion ought you to save their lives?

And I do in all humility affirm, that those who advise you to pluck up and burn the tares, which Christ commands to be let alone till the end, do advise you to pluck up and burn the commandment of Christ, unto whom assuredly, except [there is] amendment, you shall give account at the day appointed. Therefore believe not such as counsel you to shed blood for [differences of] judgment in religion; for if themselves should suffer the pain, they would verily give you other counsel. Be not then their executioners any longer, for *all that will live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution*, though you do your best to hinder it. Matt. xiii. 29, 30, 39; Acts xvii. 31. 2 Tim. iii. 12.

And I pray [you] to remember, that to preach the gospel, after the mind of Christ, is to bring glad tidings unto the people. But to burn, banish, hang, and imprison for religion, is not to bring glad, but woful, tidings unto the people. Let it not therefore be any longer preached in your majesty's dominions, I meekly intreat. *Though Paul plant, and Apollos water, yet it is God that giveth the increase.* But your bishops and ministers will have an increase whether God will or not, or else they will burn, banish, hang, and imprison. Kings and magistrates are God's ministers, and not the bishops'. Therefore, I humbly beseech you to withstand the bloody minds of your bishops, that there be no more innocent Christians persecuted to death for religion. Luke ii. 10; Rom. i. 16. 1 Cor. iii. 6. A crying sin.

I read that in the Netherlands above a hundred thousand persons have been put to death for religion.⁶ But

⁶ [Under the government of the notorious Duke of Alva, countless numbers were destroyed, for their attachment to liberty and pure religion, by

the direction of the no less cruel Philip, king of Spain. On Alva's departure from the Netherlands, "he lodged one night on the borders of

now, praised be God, we have no such woful tidings preached among us. The Lord work as much in our land, I beseech him! that so you may no longer burn and banish the servants of Christ. For he saith, *They that do these things have not known the Father nor me.*

Yet, I confess, you have the zeal of God, for you think you do God good service in burning Christians that differ from your religion. But I also confess [that] your zeal is not according to knowledge. For your bishops and ministers being endued with university and high school learning, divinity, and doctrine, but being ignorant of the lowly learning, heavenly divinity, and doctrine of Christ, have and do still go about to establish their own, and have not yet submitted themselves to the lowly learning, divinity, and doctrine of Christ. And therefore, like their predecessors, will persuade you to burn, banish, &c., such Christians as they hold to be in error about doctrines and questions of faith and religion; right⁷ as if they had the power to rule, govern, and dispose the hearts and spirits of kings, princes, and people, even as they list; and also to make them good and righteous when they will, and to cause them to understand and believe the gospel, even by a day and hour appointed; which to do, belongeth to God

Germany with Count Lewis Von Köningstein, to whom he boasted, as a noble achievement, 'That he had caused above eighteen thousand heretics and rebels to pass through the hands of the executioner, without counting any of those whose blood had been shed in the war.' This he did in the space of less than six years. Some write that in fifteen years there were 100,000 souls massacred, only on account of religion,

within the bounds of the Low Countries. Koornhert tells us that he heard from the mouth of a great person, that he had procured an account from two provinces, and from some other registers, in the year 1566, before the troubles were at their height, the names of more than 36,000 persons that were put to death for religion. Brandt, i. 306, and Annot. p. 20.]

⁷ [Right, truly. Chaucer.]

alone. And therefore Christ saith, *No man can come to* John vi. 44.
me, except the Father draw him.

And Christ will have his ministers to preach to such as are worthy and willing, and not as your ministers, who come to them whom they hold unworthy, and find unwilling, and say, "Will ye not come to church and hear, and will ye not believe our doctrine? but we will make you, or else we will burn you for heretics." Thus will they taunt meek and holy Christians, who are torn like sheep among the wolves. But Christ's ministers will *with* Matt. x. 11, 14.
meekness instruct such as are contrary minded, tolerating the evil men patiently; proving if God will at any time give them repentance, that they may know the truth. Whereby they show plainly that they are Christ's disciples, and have that true faith which worketh by love, even as the apostle saith. The which I pray you to consider, that so you may both know and obey the will of Christ. Now, 2 Tim. ii. 25; Joh. xiii. 25.
saith he, abideth faith, hope, and love; but the chiefest of these is love. For where love is, there is no disdain; it seeketh not her own things; it is not provoked to anger; it suffereth all things: it hopeth all things: it endureth all things. Yea, the love of Christ so loveth, that it will not vex, nor persecute any that call on his name.

Therefore, I humbly pray you to *remember them that are* Heb. xiii. 3.
in bonds, as though ye were bound with them; and them that are in affliction, as if ye were also afflicted in the body. And to show them mercy, for *mercy rejoiceth against judgment,* Jas. ii. 13.
but judgment merciless shall be to them that show no mercy. If ye be friendly to your brethren only, what singular Lu. vi. 32-37.
thing do you? Do not the sinners the same? Be not like unto them, but unto your heavenly Father. Whose wisdom, love, and mercy, I beseech him to grant you, that so you may come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved: and that we, your majesty's faithful subjects, may

1 Tim. ii. *lead a quiet and peaceable life, even in our own nation, in*
 [2.] *all godliness and honesty. Amen.*

Now, them that are persecuted, I exhort with the words
 of the apostle Peter, *Dearly beloved, think it not strange*
 1 Pet. iv. *concerning the fiery trial that is among you to prove you, as*
 12-16. *though some strange thing were come unto you: but rejoice,*
inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that
when his glory shall appear, ye may be glad and rejoice. If
ye be railed upon for the name of Christ, blessed are ye; for
the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: which on
their parts is evil spoken of, but on your part is glorified.
But let no man suffer as an evildoer, or as a murderer, or as
a busy body in others' matters. But if one suffer as a Chris-
tian, let him not be ashamed: but let him glorify God in that
behalf. For all the martyrs of the apostolic church have
 Acts xxiv. *suffered as evildoers and as heretics. For the time is, that*
 14. *judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first*
 [1 Pet. iv. *begin at us, saith the apostle, what shall the end be of them*
 17-19.] *that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous*
scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and [the] sinner
appear? Wherefore let them that suffer according to the
will of God, commit their souls unto him in welldoing, as unto
a faithful Creator.

Read Isaiah ii. 2, 4, 11, [12,] 16. *He shall judge among*
 Antichrist 3 *the nations, and rebuke many people: they shall break their*
 and his *swords into mattocks, and their spears into scythes: nations*
 persecution *shall not lift up a sword against nations, neither shall they*
 shall be *learn to fight any more. The high looks of man shall be*
 made low. *humbled, and the loftiness of man shall be abased, and the*
 2 Thess. ii. 4, *Lord only shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the*
 8. *Lord of hosts is upon all the proud and haughty, and upon*
all that is exalted, and it shall be made low.

Little David overcame great Goliath, yet not brought
 up in war. Unlearned Peter confuted the learned priests,

yet by calling a fisherman. Attend and help, and you shall see the wonderful works of God. For *the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.* And God hath chosen the foolish things ^{Gal. vi. 6; 1 Cor. ix. 7.} of the world to confound the wise; and things that are despised hath God chosen, to bring to nought things that are. ^{Cor. i. 25, 28.}

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FINIS.

