

gien and holines, consisted in a manner in the obseruing of dayes, meates, and garments, and such like ceremoniall circumstances, as of place, time, person, &c. Wherof sprang to many sorts & fashions of vestures and garments: so many differences of colours & meates: with so many pilgrimages to severall places, as though S. James at Compostella could do that, which Christ could not do at Canterbury: Whels that God were not of like power & strength in every place, or could not be found, but being sought for by running & gadding hether and thither. Thus the holines of the whole yere was transported and put off unto the Lent season. No countrey or land was counted holy, but onely Palestina, where Christ had walked himselfe with his corporall secte. Such was the blindness of y<sup>e</sup> time; men did strue and fight for the crosse at Hierusalem, as it had bene for the chief and onely force and strength of our faith. It is a wonder to reade the monuments of the former times, to see and understand what great troubles & calamities this crosse hath caused almost in every Christian common wealth. For the Romish champions neuer ceased, by wytyng, admonishing, and counselling, yea and by quarrelling, to moue & stirre up Princes mindes to warre & battail; euen as though the faith & beleeve of the gospell, were of small force or little effect, about that wooden crosse. This was y<sup>e</sup> cause of y<sup>e</sup> expedition of the most noble prince Rich. into Hierusalem. who being taken in the same iourney, and deliuered vnto the Emperour: could scarcely be rauilomed home againe, for xxx. dayes. pag. 248. In the same enterpryse or iourney, Fredericus the Emperour of Rome a man of most excellent vertue, was muche endamaged in the same iourney. an. 1179. And also Philip the king of Fraunce, scarcely returned home againe in safety nor without great losses: so much did they esteeme the recovery of the holy cite and crosse.

Vpon this alone, all mens eyes, minds, & deuotions, were so set and bent: as though either there were no other crosse but that, or that the crosse of Christ were in no other place but onely at Hierusalem. Such was the blindness and superstition of those daies, which understood or knew nothing but such as were outwardly sene: whereas y<sup>e</sup> profession of our religion standeth in much other higher matters and greater mysteries. What was the cause why that Urbanus did so bere and torment himselfe? Because that Antioche with the holy crosse, was lost out of the hands of the Christians. For so we doe finde it in the Chronicles, at what time as Hierusalem with king Guido, and the crosse of our Lord was taken, and vnder the power of Sultan Urbanus toke the mater so greuously, that for very sorrow he died. In whose place succeeded Lambertus which was called Gregory the 8. by whose motion it was decreed by the Cardinals, that (setting apart all riches and voluptuousnes) they should preach the crosse of Christ, and by their pouerty and humility first of all shuld take the crosse vpon them, & go before others into the land of Hierusalem. These are the words of the history; whereby it is euident vnto the vigilant reader, vnto what grossenes the true knowledge of the spiritual doctrine of the gospell was degenerate and grown vnto, in those daies: How great blindness & darknes was in those dayes, euen in the first primacy, & supremacy of the bishop of Rome: as though the outward succession of Peter and the Apostles, had ben of greater force and effect to that matter. What doeth it force in what place Peter did rule or not rule? It is much more to be regarded that euery man should labor and study with all their endeuor to followe the life & confession of Peter: And that man seemeth vnto me to be the true successor of Peter, against whom the gates of hel shall not preuaile. For if that Peter in the gospell do beare the type & figure of the christian church (as all men in a manner doe affirme) what more foolish or vaine thynge can there be: than thorough private usurpation, to restraine and to binde that vnto one man, which by the appointment of the Lord, is of it selfe free and open to so many?

Thus in these so great and troublous times and horrible darkenes of ignorance, what time there seemed in a manner to be no one so little sparke of pure doctrine left or remaining: This foresayd Wickliffe by Gods prouidence sprang and rose vp: thorough whom, the Lord would first waken and raise by agayne the world, which was ouermuch drowned and whelmed in the depe streames of humaine traditions. Thus you haue heere the time of Wickliffes originall.

Which Wickliffe after he had now by a long time professed deuinity in the vniuersity of Oxford, and perceiuing the true doctrine of Christes Gospell to be adulterate and defiled, with so many filthy inuentions of Bishops, sectes of monkes, and darke errors: And that he after long de-

bating and deliberating with himselfe (with many secrette sighes and bewailing in his mind the generall ignorance of the whole world) could no longer suffer or abide the same, but that he at the last, determined with himselfe to healepe and to reuince such things as he saw to be wide and out of the way. But for so much as he saw that this dangerous meddling, could not be attempted or stirred without great trouble; neyther that these things which had bene so long time with vs and custome torred and grafted in mennes mindes, could be not be sodenly plucked vp or taken away, he thought vnto himselfe that this matter should be done by litle & litle. wherfore he taking his originall at small occasions, thereby opened himselfe a way or meane to greater matters. And first he assailed his aduersaries in logicall & metaphysicall questions, disputing w<sup>th</sup> them of the first forme & fashion of things, of the increase of time, and of the intelligible substance of a creature, w<sup>th</sup> other such like sophemes of no great effect: but yet notwithstanding did not a litle helpe and furnish him, which minded to dispute of greater matters. So in these matters, first began Begginge (a Carmelite) to dispute and argue against Iohn Wickliffe.

By these originals, the way was made vnto greater points, so that at the length he came to touch the matters of the sacraments, and other abuses of the Church. Touching whych things this holy man toke great paynes, protesting (as they saide) openly in the scholes, that it was his chief and principall purpose and intent: to reuoke and call backe the Church from her Idolatry to some better amendment, especially in the matter of the Sacrament of the body and bloud of Christ. But this bile or soze could not be touched without the great grife and paine of the whole world. For first of all, the whole glutte of Monkes and begging Fraters were set on a rage or madness, which (euen as Hornets with their sharpe stings) did assaile this good man on euery side: fighting (as is sayd) for their altars, paunches and bellies. After them the priests, and then after them the Archb. toke the matter in hand being then S. Sudbury, who for the same cause deprived him of his benefice, which then he had in Oxford. For why standing he being somewhat friended & supported by the king, as appeareth, continued and bare out the malice of the Frriers, and of the Archb. all this while of his first beginning, till about the yere of our Lord. 1377. After whych time now to prosecute likewise of his troubles & conflict, first I must fetch about a little compasse, as requisite is, to utter some mention of Iohn of Gaunt Duke of Lancaster the kings sonne, and Lord Henry Percy, whych were his speciall maintainers.

As yeares and time grew on, king Edward the third, which had reigned now about 51. yeares, after the decease of prince Edward his sonne, who departed the yere before: was broken in great age, & in such feblenes withall, that he was vntwely through lacke of strength to gouerne the affairs of the realm. wherfore, a parliament being called the yere before his death, it was there put vp by the knights & other the burgesses of the Parliament (because of the misgouernment of the realm by certain greedy persons about the king, taking all to themselves, without seeing any iustice done) that 12. sage and discrete Lordes and Freres, such as were free from nor of all auarice, shuld be placed as tutors about the King, to haue the doing and disposing vnder him (& at one time, and in their absence & at an other) of matters pertinent to the publike regiment. Here by the way I omit to speake of Alice Perris the wicked harlot, which (as the story goeth) had bewitched the kings hart, & gouerned all and late vpon causes her selfe through the diuillish help of a frier Dominick: who by the duke of Lancaster was caused to be take, and was conuicted, & should haue suffered for the same, had not the Archb. of Cant. and the Frriers (more regarding the liberty of their Church, than the punishing of vice) reclaimed hym for their own prisoner. This Alice Perris, notwithstanding she was banished by this Parliament from the king, yet afterward she came againe, & left him not: till at his death shee toke all his rings vpon his fingers and other Jewels frō him, and so fled away like an harlot. But thys of her by the way.

These 12. gouernours by the parliament aforesayd being appointed to haue the tuition of the king, & to attend to the publike affaires of y<sup>e</sup> realme: remained for a certaine space about him, till afterward it so fell out, that they being againe remoued, all the regiment of the realme next vnder the King, was committed to the Duke of Lancaster the kings sonne. For as yet Richard the sonne of prince Edward lately departed, was very young and vnder age.

This Duke of Lancaster had in his heart of long time conceiued a certaine displeasure against the popish clergy: Do. iii. whether

Palestina deemed holy for Chasties walking there.

Richard K. of England.

Fredericke the Emperour of Rome

Philip kyng of Fraunce,

Pope Urbanus.

Lambert Pope,

The knowledge of the Gospell grossely expounded by the Romanites.

The rising vp of Wickliffe in a troublous tyme.

Wickliffe a Deuine in Oxford.

Wickliffe deprived of his benefice at Oxford by S. Sudbery. Ex Chron. D. Albani.

Duke of Lancaster, & Lord Henry Percy, great maintainers of L. Wickliffe.

Alice Perris, the kings concubine. The K. bewitched by a woman through the helpe of a Fryer.

The propertie of an whore.

12. Gouernours assigned about the kyng.