

*The decree of the Synode of Constance touching the taking vp of the body and bones of Iohn Wickliffe to be burned 41. yeares after he was buried in his owne parish at Lutterworth.

For so much as by the authoritie of the sentence & decree of the Council of Rome, and by the commaundment of the Church and the Apostolical see after due delays being geuen, they proceeded vnto the condemnatio of the said I. Wickliffe, and his incinoy: hauing first made proclamation, & geuen commaundment to cal forth whosoener would defend the said Wickliffe, or his memory (if there were any such) but there did none appaare, which would either defend him or his memory. And inozeouer witnesles being examined by Commissioners appoynted by Pope Iohn & thys Council, vpon the impenitencie and finall obstinacie and Subburnes of y^e said Iohn Wickliffe (referring that which is to be referred, as in such busines, the order of the lawe requireth) and his impenitencie and obstinacie euen vnto his end, being sufficiently proued by euident signes and tokens, and also by lawfull witnesles of credite, was lawfully geuen thereunto. wherefore at the instance of y^e steward of the treasury, proclamation being made to heare & vnderstand the sentence agaynst this day: the sacred Synode declareth, determineth and geueth sentence, that the said Iohn Wickliffe was a notorious obstinate hereticke, and that he died in his heresie, cursing and condemning both him and his memory.

This Synode also decreeth and ordeineth, that the body & bones of the said Iohn Wickliffe, if it might be decreed and knowne from the bodies of other faithfull people to be taken out of the ground, & throught away farre from the buriall of any church, according vnto the canon lawes & decrees, which determination and sentece definitiue being red & pronounced, the lord president, & the foresaid presidents of the 4. nations, being demaunded & asked whether it did please them or no: They all answered (and first the president of the president, and after him the other presidents of the nations) that it pleased them very well, and so they allowed and confirmed all the premises, &c.

What Heracitus would not laugh, or what Democritus would not weep, to see these so sage & reuerend Latros, to occupy their heads to take vp a poore mans body, so long dead and buried before, by y^e space of 41. yeares: & yet peradventure were not able to finde his right bones, but took vp some other body, & so of a catholick made an hereticke. Albeit, herein Wickliffe had some cause to geue them thanks that they would at least spare him so long till he was dead, and also to geue him so long respit after hys death 41. yeares to rest in his sepulchre before they vngraued him, and turned him from carth to ashes: which ashes also, they took & threw into the riuer. And so was he resolved into 4. elements, earth, fire, and water, thinking thereby vterly to extinct and abolish both the name and doctrine of Wickliffe for euer. Not much vnlike to the example of y^e old Ishariteis & sepulchre knights, which when they had brought the Lord vnto y^e graue, thought to make him sure neuer to rise againe. But these and all other must knowe, that as there is no counsaile against the Lord: so there is no keeping down of veritie, but it wil flyng and come out of dust and ashes, as appeared right well in this man. For though they digged vp his body, burnt his bones, & drew out his ashes, yet y^e word of God and truth of his doctrine with the fruit & successe therof they could not burne: which yet to this day for the most part of his articles do remaine. Notwithstanding, the transitory body and bones of y^e man was thus consumed and dispersed, as by this picture here aboue set forth to thine eyes (gentle reader may appaare.

These things thus finished and accomplished, whiche pertayne to the story and time of Wickliffe: let vs now (by the supposition of the Lord) proceede to entreate & write of the rest, which either in his time or after his time, springing out of the same vniuersitie, and rayled vp (as ye wold say) out of his ashes were perpetrators of the same perfection. Of whom speaketh Thomas walden in his book, De sacramentis & sacramentalibus, cap. 53. where he saith, that after Wickliffe many suffered most cruell death, and many mo did forsake the realme.

In the number of whome was William Swinderby, Walter Butte: Iohn Dourney: Richard white: William Thorpe: Reynold Isecock W. of S. Allaph, and afterward of Chichester.

To this Catalogue also pertayneth (mentioned in ancient writers) Laurence Redman maister of Arte, Dauid Sautre deuine, Iohn Achwarby vicar as they call him of

S. Mary Church at Oxford, William James an excellent young man well learned, Thomas Wightwell, & William Paulan a ciuilian, Raale Grenhurst, Job. Scur and Iphillip Rojice: which being excommunicated by P. Eugene the 4. in the yeare of our Lord, 1446. appaared vnto a generall or oecumenical Council.

Iheremy Dayne, who flying from Oxford into Boheme, did stoutly contend agaynst the Sophisters, as touchyng both kindes of the sacrament of the last supper. Who afterward among the rest of the Diuines was one of the 14. that was sent into the Council at Basill: whereas by the space of 7. daies, he disputed vpon the 4. article, which was as touching the ciuill deminion of the clergy, an. 1428. Also to the Loyde Cobham, &c. with many others besides whose names are mentioned in the kinges writte sent to the Sheriffe of Northampton which writ of the king, followeth in this Tenor. Rex vicecomiti Northamptonie salutem. &c. For so much as Iohn Atypate of Chepyngwarden: Iohn warryner. M. B. Woodde &c. be Heretiques & fauourers of hereticke and especially of one Iohn Woodward priestt publicly offamed and condemn'd of heresy will not be iustified by the censures of the Church as the reuerend father J. Bish. of Lincoln hath certified vs. We therefore willing to withstand all defenders and fauourers of such heresies doe will and commaunde alwell the forenamed as namely the foresaid Iohn Woodward to be apprehended straightly charging the same to be empriused by theyr bodies or otherwoise punished as shall seme good to the Iustices, until they and euery of them shall submit them selues to the obedience of the foresaid Bishop in this behalfe, accordingly. whereof sayle you not vnder payne of C. li. witnesse our selues, yeauen at our Mannor of Langley the viij. day of Marche, the 12. yeare of our Reigne.

To these aboue rehearsed and other fauourers of Wickliffe within this our countrey of Englande we may adde also the Bohemians: for so much as the propagation of the said doctrine of Wickliffe, in that Countrey also take roote, comming from England to Boheme, by thys occasion as in story here followeth.

There chaunced at that time a certayne student of the colledge of Bohemia to be at Oxford, one of a welthy house and also of a noble stocke. who returning home from the vniuersitie of Oxford, to the vniuersitie of Prague: carryed with him certayne bookes of Wickliffe, De realibus vniuersalibus, De ciuili iure, & Diuino: De ecclesia, De questionibus varijs contra clerum &c. It chaunced the same time, a certayne noble man in the Citie of Prague, had founded and builded a great Church of Mathias and Mathus, which Church was called Beshlem: geuing to it great landes, & finding in it two preachers euery day, to preach both holy day and working day to the people. Of the whiche two preachers, this Iohn Hus was one, a man of great knowledge, of a pregnant wit, and excellently fauoured for his worthy life amongst them. This Iohn Hus hauing familiaritie with this young man, in reading and perusing these bookes of Wickliffe, tooke such pleasure and fruit in reading therof, that not onely he began to defend this author openly in the schooles, but also in his sermons: commending him for a good man, an holy man and heauenly man, wishing himselfe when he should dye, to be there placed: where as the soule of Wickliffe should be. And thus for the spreading of Wickliffes doctrine enough.

And thus much briefly concerning the fauourers & adherentes of Iohn Wickliffe, in generall. Now particularly & in order let vs (by Chyldes grace) prosecute the voyces and persecutions of the said parties aforesaid, as the course of their times shall require, first beginning with the valiant champions wil. Swinderby and Walter Butte.

* The history of William Swinderby.

In the yeare 1389. William Swinderby priestt within the dioces of Lincoln being accused and detrected vpon certayn opinions, was presented before Iohn bishop of Lincoln, and examined vpon certayn articles in the Church of Lincoln, after the forme and order of the popes law, according to theyr vsual rite obserued, his denouncers were these: Fryer fruy by obseruant, Fryer Dinckly Augustine: & Tho. Blaxton Dominican. The articles wherewith they charged him, although in forme of wordes as they put the vp, might seme something straunge here to be recited: yet to the entent that all men may see the spirifull malice of these spider Fryers, in sucking at things to poison, and in forgyng that is not true, as in proccesse (Christ willing) here after shall better appaare by his aunsweres, I thought good here to notifie the same.

W. James, Th. Wightwell, William Paulan, Raale Grenhurst, John Scur, Philip Rojice, Peter Pain, Lorde Cobham,

The occasion how the doctrine of Wickliffe came to Boheme.

Willelmus Sir bonus, (antiquus calodignus). The great affection of I. Hus to L. Wickliffe.

The decree of the council for the burning of Wickliffes dead bones.

Ex Abis comitibus Constant.

Ex Th. Walden. lib. de sacrament.

Laurence Redman, Dauid Sawtre, Iohn Achwerbe,

{ Anno 1389. Ex Registre Episcopi Hierfordiensi. W. Swinderby first examined. Denouncers of W. Swinderby. Fryers, Frisby, Hinkby, Blaxton.