

country hauing so litle need, if this mā, blessing almost vnder the burchers axe, might not enioy so great an offer of so lucky deliuerance?

Wherby hitherto I trust, the cause of the Lord Cobham, standeth firme and strong agaynst all daunger of iust reprehension. who being (as ye haue heard) so saythfull and obedient to God: so humble to his king: so loud in hys doctrine: so constant in his cause: so afflicted for the cryche ready & prepared to death: as we haue sufficiently declared nor out of uncertayne & doubtful chronicles, but out of the true originals & instruments remaining in auncient records: what lacketh now, or what should let to the contrary, but that he declaring himself such a martyr, that is a witnes to the verity (for the which also at last he suffered by fire) may therefore worthily be crowned with y^e title of a martyr, which is in Greck as much as a witnes bearer?

But here nowe steppeth in Dame *η δρασθη*, with her cold Aletho. Sec. who neither learning to hold her toung nor yet to speake low, must needs find here a knot in a ruffe and beginning now to quarrell inferreth thus: But after (sayth he) that the Lord Cobham was cleaped out of the tower, his felowes and confederates conuerted themselves together, seditiously agaynst y^e king & agaynst their cōuntry: A great crime no doubt *η* Cope, if it be true, so if it be not true, the greater blame returned vnto your self, so to enter this action of such slander, vnles the ground wherupon ye stand, be sure. First what felowes of y^e L. Cobham were these you meane of? Sir Roger Acton ye say, maister Brown & John Beuerley with 36. other hanged and burned in the sayd field of S. Giles. A macuellous matter, y^e such a great multitude of 20000. specified in story, shoulde rise agaynst y^e king, & yet but 3. persons only known and named. The to proceed further, I would aske of maister Cope what was the end of this conspiracy, to rebel agaynst the king, to destroy their country, and to subuert the Christian sayth, for so purpozeth the story. As like true the one as the other. For euen as it is like, that they being Turkes went about to destroy the sayth of Christ wherin they died, and to subuert their country wherin they were bred: euen so like it is that they went about to destroy the king, whom God and their conscience taught to obey.

Yet further proceedeth this fimsilly promoter in his accusation, & sayth moreouer: that these fozeclayd felowes and adherentes of the Lord Cobham, were in the field assbled and there incamped in a great number agaynst the king & how is this proued? by Robert Fabian which appeareth to be as true, as that which in the sayde Robert Fabian followeth, in the same place where he affirmeth that Jo. Cleidon, and Richard Turmin, were burnt in the same yere, being 1413. when in deede by the true Registers, they were not burnt before the yere of our lord, 1415. But what wil maister Cope say, if the original copy of the inditement of these pretended conspirators doe testify, that they were not there assembled or present in the field as your accusation pretendeth? But they purposed (will you say) and intended to come. The purposse and intent of a mans mind is hard for you and me to iudge, where as no fact appereth. But geue their inter was sote come. Yet might they not come to those thickets neare to the felde of Saint Giles, hauing Beuerley they? Preacher with them (as ye say, your self) as well to pray & to preach in that woody place, as wel as to fight? Is this such a strange thing in y^e church of Christ, in time of persecution, for christians to resort into desolate woods, and secrete thickets, from the sight of enemies, when they would assemble in praying and hearing the word of God? In Queene Maryes tyme was not the same colour of treason objected agaynst George Egle and other moe, for frequenting and vising into backides and fields, and suffering for that, whereof he was innocent & guiltlesse? Did not Adam Damilpe dye in like case of treason, for hauing a French crowne geuen him, at his departure out of Rome, by Cardinal Iscole: what can not cankered calumnia inuēt, when she is disposed to caull? It was not the Cardinals crowne that made him a traytour, but it was the hatred of his preaching, that spyrred by the accuser.

In Fraunce what assemblies haue there bene in late yeres of good and innocent christians, congregating together in backfeldes & conuertes in great routes to heare the preaching of Gods holy word, & to pray: yea and not with out their weapon also, for their owne safegard, & yet neuer intended nor minded any rebellio agaynst their king. wherefore, in cases of Religion it may & doth happē many times that such congregations may meete without intent of any treason intent. But how soeuer the intent and purpose was of these foze said confederates of the Lord Cobham, whether to come, or what to do (seeing this is playne by recordes, as is afoze said, that they were not yet come vnto y^e place) how

will M. Cope now iustify his wordes, so confidently affirming, that they were there assembled seditiously together in the field of S. Giles agaynst the king? And marke here I besech thee (gentle Reader) how vnlikely and vnto the poyns of this tale are tide and hang together (I will not say without all substance or truth, but without all fashion of a cleanly lye) wherin these accusers in this matter seeme to me, to lacke some part of Simonis Acte, in conuicting their narration so vnartificiallye. First (say they) the king was come first with his garrison, vnto the field of S. Giles. And then after the king was there incamped, comely the fellows of the Lord Cobham (the Caprayne being away) came & were assembled in the said field where the king was, agaynst the king: & yet not knowing of the king, to the number of xx. thousand: and yet neuer a stroak in that field geuen. And furthermore of all this xx. thousand afozeclayd, neuer a mans name knowne, but onely thre, to witte, sir Roger Acton, sir John Browne, and John Beuerley, a preacher. How this gear is claundered together let the reader iudge, and beleue as he seeth cause.

But geue all this to be true, although by no demonstration it can be proued, yet by the Idopes dispensation (which in this earth is almost omnipotent) be it granted: that after the king had take S. Giles field before, the companions of the Lord Cobham afterward coming and assembling in the thickets neare to the sayd field, to fight seditiously agaynst the king, agaynst their country, & agaynst the sayth of Christ, to the nūber of xx. thousand, where no stroak being geuen, so many were take, that al y^e prisons of London were full, and yet neuer a mans name knowen of all thys multitude, but onely thre: All this I say, being imagined to be true, the foloweth to be demaunded of M. Cope, whether the Lord Cobham was here present with this company in the field, or not? For, in perlon (sayth Cope) but with his mind and with his counsell he was present, and addeth this reason, saying: And therefore he being brought agayn, after his escape, was conuict both of treason and heresye, & therefore suffering a double punishment was both hanged and burnt for the same. &c. And how is al this proued? By Robert Fabian, he sayth, wherunto byiesly I answer, that Rob. Fabian in that place maketh no such mention of the Lord Cobham assiding or consenting to them either in mind or in counsell. His wordes be these: That certaine adherentes of Sir John Oldcastle assembled in the felde neare to S. Giles, in great number: of whom was sir Roger Acton, sir John Browne, and John Beuerley. The which with 36. mo. in number were after conuict of heresye and treason and for the same were hanged and burnt, in the sayd field of S. Giles, &c. Thus much in Fabian touching the commotion & condemnation of these men: but that the Lord Cobham, was there present with the many parte, either of content or counsell, as Alanus Copus Anglus pretendeth, that is not found in Fabian, but is added of his libercall cornu copiaz, wherof he is so copious and plentifull, that he may keep an open shop of such vnwittē vntruthes, whiche he maye alsoe berpe good cheape I thinke, being such a plentifull artificer.

But here will bee objected agaynst mee the wordes of the statute made the seconde yere of king Henry the fift wherupon this aduercary triumphing with no litle gloze *απερ το δαυμπίδα ανελομενος*, thinketh himselfe to haue double vantage agaynst me: first in prouinge these fozeclayd baunges & adherents of the Lord Cobham, to haue made insurrection agaynst the king, and so to be traytors. Secondly, in conuicting that to be vntrue, where as in my former booke of Actes and Monuments I doe report: how that after the death of sir Roger Acton of Browne, & Beuerley, a Parliament was holden at Leicester, where a statute was made to this effect: that all and singular, suche as wer of wickliffes learning, if they would not geue othe (as in case of felony and other trespasses, toling all theyr goodes to the king) shoulde suffer death in two manner of kinds, that is, they shoulde first be hanged for treason agaynst the king, and then be burned for heresye agaynst God, &c. wherupon, remaineth now in examining this obiectio and answering to the same, that I purge both them of treason, and my selfe of vntruth, so farre as truth and fidelity in Gods cause shal assist me herin. Albeit in beginning first my history of Ecclesiastical matters, wherin I hauing nothing to do with abatement of causes iudiciall, but onely folowing the simple narration of things done and executed: neuer suspected that euer any would be so captious with me, or so nise nosed, as to presse me with such narrow points of the law, in trying and discussing euery cause and matter so exactly, & straining (as ye would say) the bowels of the statute lawe so rigorously agaynst me. Yet for so much as I am thereunto constrained now by this aduercary,

Al other vntruth in Alanus Copus.

An unlikely tale.

The L. Cobham no traytor.

Alanus Copus pag. 833. lin. 11.

Alanus Copus taken with an other vntruth,

Ex statuto. Reg. Hen 5. an. 1. cap. 7.

The former edition of Acts and Mon. pag. 175.

The L. Cobham worthy the name of a Martyr. The name of a martyr what it significeth.

Calumnias.

Sir Roger Acton knight M. John Brown Esquire. John Beuerley preacher.

Rob. Fabian proued with an vntruth.

An vntruth in Alanus Copus.

Praying and preaching in backe corners a common thing in time of persecution.

Ill will taketh all things to worit meaning.