

lene, not called, was present looking steadfastly upon the bishop, whom he beholding to become agayne, was more ashamed then he was before (and iustly) saying he could no longer abide the sight of her, & commaunded that she should be driven away with battes and shottinges; but the being airayde neither with their noyle, neither of any thing els, would not away, untill that with the strokes of the sticks, which were throwne at her, she fell downe dead before the all. This I learned of a faythfull friend, who at the same time came to Rome, the which thing I scarcely crediting for the rarenes of the matter, he affirmed by his othe, that it was most certayn & true; adding moreover that all there present were much offended, & did greatly deride that Councell called for such a purpose, and by little and litle the Councell was dissolved, nothing done ther as he saith. Although it hath not bene alwayse leene that such spirituall Doves haue bene present with Popes and their Councils, & gouerned the yet their euill doctrine declarerh no lesse. I had gentle reader the booke of Cleinangis, and thou shalt not thinke thy labor euill bestowed. For he hath both learnedly, truly, freely, and godly, bewayped the filthines of Antichrist, and his ministers, their wickednes, impiety and cruelty, and the miserable state and face of the Church, &c. And thus much for Pope John.

The Councell of Constance.

Here by the way is to be noted and vnderstand, that during all this time of Pope John, there were 7 Popes reigning together, neither was yet the schisme ceased, which so long time had continued, the space (as I sayde) of 29. yeares. By the reason wherof a generall Council was ordeined & holden at Constance in the same yeare. an. 1414. being called by Sigismund the Emperour, and Pope John the 23. for the pacifying of the forelaid schisme, which was then betwene thre Popes, striving for the Popedome. The first wherof was John, whom the Italians set vp. The second was Gregory, whom the Frenchmen set vp. The third was Benedict, whom the Spaniards placed. In this schismaticall ambitious conflict, euery one defended his Pope, to the great disturbans of christian nations. This councell endured foure yeares long, wherein all their matters were decided most by foure nations, to saye the English, Germane, French, & Italian nation. Out of which foure nations were apoynted & chosen foure Presidents to iudge and determine the matters of the Councell. The names of which Presidents were these, John the Patriarke of Antioche for France, Anthony Archbishop of Argen for Italy, Nicholas Archbishoppe of Bénédictinis for Germany, and Nicholas Bishop of Bath for England by whom many great and profitable things to the glory of God, and publicke profit, might haue bene concluded, if the rotten flesh of the churchmen could haue bidden the salt of the Gospell, and if they had loued the truth: but as Gregorius Nazienzenus writeth, there lightly come few generall Councils, but they end more with disturbance, then tranquillity. So it happened in this councell, for whereas John the 13. in the first Session exhorteth them by these wordes taken out of the s. of Zachary. Veritatem diligite, that is to say: Love the truth, further monishing them, and specially the Douines euery man to do his endeavour for the vniuers of the Church, and to speake their minde freely: but howe soon this his exhortation was forgottē, it appeared shortly after by the depising of the Popes heres, and persecuting of Christ in his members, as by the grace of Christ shall appeare hereafter in the proesse of this story. First this John did resigne his Papacy, the Emperour geuing him thanks killed his feet.

Afterward the sayd John repenting him that he had so done, sought meanes to flee, wherunto Fredericke Duke of Austria did assist him, for he chaunging his garments, fled by night with a small cōpany. And when he was now come vnto Schaffehouse to goe into Italy, the Emperour pursuing, tookē him, and proclaymed Fredericke traytour, & for that cause took away certayne Cittyes from him. At the last the matter was appeased vnder this condition, that Fredericke should require grace of the Emperour, and resigne all his possessions vnto him, wherupon the Emperour receiued him againe into fauor, & restored him to his dukedome. This pope being thus depose, was committed vnto the County Pallatine, and by him caried to the Castle of Hanheime, where he was kept prisoner by the space of 3. yeares. Afterward he was agayne by Pope Martine, admitted to the number of Cardinals.

This Pope John was depose by the decreet of the councell, more then 400. most geuous and haynous crimes being objected and proued agaynst him: as that he had hyped

Marcus Bormensis a phisition, to payson Alexander his predecessour. Further, that he was an heretick, a simoniac, a lyer, an hypocrite, a murderer, an uicchaunter, a diceplayer, an adulterer, and a sodomite, & finally what crime is it, that he was not infected withall?

And now to returne vnto the councell, first we will declare the order of their Sessions, with things therein concluded, in generall: then we will (Christ willing) adioyne the speciall tractation of such matters, as perueyne to the story of the Bohemians, and John Hus, and Hierome of Prague, who in the same vngodlye councell were condemned and burned.

This councell therefore of Constance, which was summoned by the Emperour Sigismund, and Pope John 23. about the nativity of our Lord Jesus, an. 1414. began the same yeare to be assembled about the latter end of the yeare, which first beginning as the manner is, with a Masse of the holy Ghost, as they were singing according to their custome the Hymne, Veni sancte spiritus, there was at the same time a certayne Will set in the Church by some well disposed man, as it seemed, wherein was conteyned these wordes following: Alijs rebus occupati nunc adesse vobis nō possumus. That is to say. We are otherwyle occupied at this tyme, we can not intend to come to you. Here is also to be remembred the worthye saying of the Emperour Sigismund, when talke was ministred as touching the reformation of the spiritualltye, and some sayde quod oporteat in ciperē a minoritis, that is, that reformation ought first to beguine at the Minorites. The Emperour answering againe: Non a minoritis, sed a maioritis, that is, not with the Minorites sayth he, but with the Maiorites. Meaning the reformation ought first to begin with the Pope, Cardinals, & Bishops and other superior states of the church, and so to descend after to the inferioris. This much by the way, & now to the purpose and order of the Sessions as we promised. The which councell continued as is aforesayd by the space of iij. yeares, and had in it 45. Sessions, wherein many things were concluded, the which altogether were to long to be recited in this place: as the deposition of thre secular Popes, whiche were before spoken of, the hearing of certayne Legates. Yet I minde to make some briefe recapitulation of the most principall matters there done in the sessions orderly ensuing.

In the first Session chiefly was concluded, first that this Councell was lawfully congregate.

2. Item, that the going away of the pope should be no let or stay, but the Councell might proceed.

Wherein note (gentle reader) that the authority of the generall Councell is aboue the Pope, contrary to their owne doctrine.

3. Item, this Councell should not be dissolved before the Church were reformed, as well in the superiours, as inferioris.

In the 4. Session amongst other thinges, this was first concluded: That a Synode congregate in the holy Ghost, making a generall councell, representing the whole Catholicke Church here militant, hath power of Christ immediately, to the which power euery person, of what state or dignity so euer he be: yea being the pope himselfe, ought to be obedient in all such things as concerne the generall reformation of the Church, aswell in the heades, as in the subiectes.

Item, the sayd Pope should not translate the Court of Rome, and the officers of the same from the City of Constance. And that all his censures, doings and workings after the time of his departure, whatsoever he should enterpise to do to the preiudice of this Councell, should be of no effect.

In the 5. Session the same Articles were repeated and concluded agayne.

In the 6. Session proccuration and citation was sent out agaynst the Pope.

Item, commissioners were appointed out of the four nations for the hearing of John Hus, which shall be hereafter mentioned in his story following.

Item, the memozy of John Wickliffe was condemned and the sentence geuen in the Councell holden at Rome vpon the condemnation and burning of Wickliffes bookes, was there confirmed.

Item, in the same Session, Citation was sent out agaynst Hierome of Prague. The tenor wherof followeth after in the story of the sayd Hierome.

Item, in this Session, was decreed agaynst libelles of infamy.

In the 7. Session nothing was handled, but that the tenor of the citation agaynst Pope John was recited.

In the 8. Session, the sentence and condemnation of John Hus.

A writing set vp how the holy Ghost had no pleasure to come to the councell of Constance.

The worthy answer of the Emperour touching the order of reformation.

Note by this example, the authority of councels preferred before the Pope.

The councell of Constance.

Three popes together striving for the Popedome.

The prelates assembled in this councell were numbered together with their deputies. 1940. Philip and Cheyney, &c. Gregorius in Epistola qua. hinc.

Duke Fredericke of Austria proclaimed traytour.

Pope John taken and call in prison

Marke the good qualities of pope John.

Commissioners appointed to heare Hus.

Citation graunted agaynst Hierome of Prague.

Anno. 1415.

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