

chosen to repress these disorders. If it be answered me that they cannot see such open boldnes & factions, disorders: I must say that they have no eyes to see, & if they heare not of suche contemptuous talke and speeche, I may say that they have no eares. I would have those men iudge what will come of these unbridled speeches in the end, if reformations be not had thereof. What cometh of factions & seditions we have bene taught of late years what the fruites be, which I beseech God long to defend vs from. If such disorders be not redressed by law, then must force & violence reforme. Which when they take place may fortune fall alsoone on the that seeme to have least consideration in this matter. If force and violence prevaile, then ye know that law is put to silence, and cannot be executed, which should onely mainteine good order. If it be replied agaynst me, that to the suppressing of these open talkes there is no law, which by speciall letter can charge any man offender, I must say, that whatsoever the letter of the law be, the meaning of the law was and is cleane contrary to the liberty of these doings. If it be sayd, that no man can be charged by the law except it can be proued agaynst him, that his speeche and deedes be done maliciously: what ye call malice I can not tel. But if the bringing in of these sedicious bookes make mens mindes to be at variance one with one another, destruction of mindes maketh sedicious, seditions bring in tumults, tumults worke insurrections and rebellion. Insurrections make depopulations and desolations, and bringeth in utter ruine & destruction of mens bodies, goodes & landes. And if any sow the roote wherof these men come, & yet can be sayd that he hath no mallice, or that he doth not maliciously labour to destroye both publicke & private wealth, I can not tell what act may be thought to be done maliciously. And further if it be sayd to me that the man which should be charged with offence must be proued to haue done his acte aduisedly: To that I answer. If any bring in those hookes, distribute them to others, commend & defend them, & yet can not be charged to haue done aduisedly, I haue no skill of their aduisednesse. If it be sayde that the law intreateth of such actes as be directly derogatory and of none other, what is direct overthrowing the Law, when the contrary thereof is plainly treated, holden and defended, and the truth by argumentes condemned. It may be sayd agayne that the worlde doth not now like extremitye in lawes penal, and calleth them bloody lawes. As for extreme and bloody lawes I haue neuer liked of them. But where the execution of such lawes touching halfe a dosen offenders, and the not execution may bring in daunger halfe a hundred. I thinke this law nor the execution thereof may iustly be called extreme and bloody. In such like comparison I may utter my meaning as to make a difference between whipping & hanging. In deed though whipping may be thought extreme, yet if by whipping a man may escape hanging, in this respect, not whipping bringeth in this bloodynesse and extremity and not the execution of the law. And better it were, a man to be twice whipped, then once hanged. The paynes do differre, but wise men will soone consider the diuersity. The truth is to suffer disobedient subiectes to take boldnes agaynst the lawes of God & their prince, to wincke at the obstinate minds of such as be unbridled in their affections: to mainteine a forraigne power of the Byshop of Rome, directly agaynst the Princes prerogative established by lawes, is not this to hatch dissention, to chearish sedition? To extoll the writings of such, who by all their wittes denise to supplant the princes lawfull authority: If these doings be not meanes to the disturbance & utter ruine of the Realme, I know not what is good gouernance. If these be not the sparkes of Rebellion: What be they. Thus much hauing spoken to your wisdomes, I doubt not of your assenting with me, the rather also because I utter them unto you as from the Queenes Maiesty by commandement, who doth require of vs all a more diligence in execution of lawes, then is spied commonly abroad: wherby we shall do our duties to almighty God the better, & declare our allegiance to our Soueraigne regard the maiesty of the lawes, like a quiet of our country, and procure the safety of our selues.

God saue the Queene.

And here I trust, we are now come to an end of al our English Martyrs which heretofore haue bene burnt, for the veritic of the gospel, if we adde besides to the same, a godly countryman moze of ours, one named Richard Atkins an Hartfordshyre man, who of late about two yeares past in the reigne of this our gracious Quene, an. 1581. most miserably was tormented at Babylon, that is in the cite of Rome. The cause and manner of whole suffering and martyrdom here ensueth, taken out of a certayne late printed story, and testified by such as were present witnes and beholders of the same most tragical execution. The purpose of whiche story in wordes, as is put downe by the said reporter, here vnder followeth.

* A true report of the horrible, and merciles martyrdom of one Richard Atkins, an English man, with extreeme tormentes, and most cruell rage of furious tyrantes persecutors, put to death at Rome.

About the month of July, an. 1581. one Richard Atkins borne in Hartfordshyre an English man came to Rome and hauing found the English Colledge, knocked at the doze. To whome diuers of the students there came out, to welcome him, vnderstanding that he was an English man. Among other talk had with him, they willed him to goe to the hospitall, and there to receiue his meate and lodging, according as the order was appoynted, wherunto he answered, I come not (my countrymen) to any suche intent, as you iudge; but I come iourning to rebuke the great misorder of your times, whiche I greene to heare, and pity to beholde, I come likewise to let your proude Antichrist vnderstand, that hee doth offend the heauenly maiestie, robbe Gods of his honour, and popponeth the whole world with his abhominable blasphemies: making them homage stockes, and stones, and that filthy sacrament which is nothing els but a fowlish Idol. when they heard these wordes one Hugh Griffin, a welche man, and a student in the Colledge caused him to be put in the Inquisition, where how they examined him, and how he answered them, I know not, but after certayn dayes he was set at libertie agayne. And one day going in the streete, he met a priest carrying the sacrament, whiche offending bys conscience, to see the people so crouche and bowe downe to it, he caught at it to haue throwne it downe, but missing of his purpose, and being iudged by the people, that hee dyd catch at the holinesse, that (they say) cometh from the sacrament, vpon mere deuotion, hee was let passe, and nothing sayd to him: few dayes after, hee came to S. Peters Church, where diuers gentlemen, and other were hearing Masse, and the priest at the elevation the bling no reverence, stepped among the people to the aultar, & there downe the Chalice with the wine, drinking likewise he haue pulled the cake out of the priestes handes, for whiche diuers rose up, and beate hym with theyr fistes, and one betwe his rapier, and would haue slayne him: so that in briefe he was carryed to prison where hee was examined, wheretoze he had committed such a famous offence: wherunto he answered, that he came purposely for that intent to rebuke the popes wickednes, and theyr Idolatry. vpon this he was condemned to be burned: whiche sentence, he sayd, hee was right willing to suffer, and the rather because the summe of his offence, betrayed to the glorye of God. During the time he remained in prison sundry English men, came vnto him, willing him to be loy, for that he hadde done, and to recant from his damnable opinion, but all the meanes they vsed were in vayne, hee consulted them dealinges by diuers places of scripture, and willed them to be loy, for theyr wickednesse. while God did permit the tyme, els they were in daunger of enerlasting damnation: these wordes made the English men departe, for they could not abide to heare them. Within a while after, he was let vps an Ass, without any saddle, he being from the middle vppward naked, hauing some english priestes with him to talke with him, but he regarded them not, but spake to the people in so good a language as he could, and told them they were in a wrong way, and theretoze willed them, for Chrystes sake, to haue regard to the saving of theyr soules. All the way as he went, there were foure did nothing els but thrust at his body with burning torches, wherewith he neuer moued, nor thronke one iock, but with a cheerefull countenance, laboured to perswade the people often bending his body to meet the torches, as they were thrust at him, and would take them in his owne hand, and hold them burning still vpon his body, wherewith the people nor a litle wondered. Thus he continued almost the space of halfe a mile, till he came before S. Peters, wher the place of execution was. when he was come to the place of execution, there they had made a deuise, not to make the