

EVANGELICAL
BIOGRAPHY;
OR,
AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF THE
LIVES & DEATHS
OF
THE MOST EMINENT AND EVANGELICAL
AUTHORS OR PREACHERS,
BOTH BRITISH AND FOREIGN,
IN THE SEVERAL
DENOMINATIONS OF PROTESTANTS,
FROM THE
BEGINNING OF THE REFORMATION TO THE PRESENT TIME.

WHEREIN

Are collected, from authentic Historians, their most remarkable Actions, Sufferings, and Writings; exhibiting the Unity of their Faith and Experience in their several Ages, Countries, and Professions; and illustrating the Power of Divine Grace in their holy Living and Dying.

BY THE

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The FAITHFUL are chosen in Christ, EPH. i. 4.—called by grace, GAL. i. 15.—justified freely by grace, ROM. iii. 24.—holy and beloved, COL. iii. 12.—they live by faith, GAL. iii. 11.—obtain a good report through faith, HEB. xi. 39.—die blessed in the Lord, REV. xiv. 13.—shall appear with him in glory, COL.—iii. 4.

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JOHN HUSS D.D.

THE BOHEMIAN REFORMER.

JOHN HUSS, or Hus, whose name in the Bohemian language signifies Goose, was born at Hussenitz, a village in Bohemia. His parents were not blest with affluence; but they gave him a liberal education, which he improved by his strong mental abilities, and close application to his studies, in the university of Prague, where he commenced bachelor of arts, in 1393, master of arts in 1395, and bachelor of divinity in 1408. Huss was a man (says Wharton in his appendix to Cave's *Historia Literaria*) even by the confession of his enemies, illustrious and remarkable both for doctrine and piety. It was in this year that Sbynko, or Subinsko Lepus of that city, issued two orders to suppress the doctrine of the Wickliffites, which had been introduced into that kingdom, and was countenanced by the greatest part of the masters and scholars of the university of Prague, who, by a providence we shall mention presently, had got the books of Wickliffe into their hands.

Queen Anne, the wife of king Richard II. of England, was daughter to the emperor Charles IV, and sister to Wenceslaus king of Bohemia, and Sigismund emperor of Germany. She was a princess of great piety, virtue, and knowledge; nor could she endure the implicit and unreasonable service and devotion of the Romish church. Her death happened in 1394, and her funeral was attended by all the nobility of England. She had patronized Wickliffe, who speaks of her in his book "Of the three-fold bond of Love," in these words; "it is possible that the noble queen of England, the sister of Cæsar, may have the gospel written "in three languages, Bohemian, German, and Latin. But to hereticate her, on this account, would be Luciferian folly." After her death, several of Wickliffe's books were carried by her attendants into Bohemia, and were the means of promoting the reformation there.

The books of Wickliffe were carried into Bohemia by Peter Payne, an Englishman, one of his disciples. But the archbishop of Prague Ordered the members of that university to bring him the books of Wickliffe, that those in which any errors were found might be burnt. The tracts of Wickliffe had been so carefully preserved, that we are assured a certain bishop wrote out of England, that he had got two very large volumes of them, which seemed as large as St Austin's works. Archbishop Sbynko burnt two hundred volumes of them, very finely written, and adorned with costly covers and gold bosses; for which reason, they are supposed to belong to the nobility and gentry of Bohemia. Peter Payne was principal of Edmund-hall, in the university of Oxford, where he was distinguished for his excellent parts, and his opposition to the friars. He was a good disputant, and confuted Walden, the Carmelite, about the beggary of Christ, pilgrimages, the eucha-

rist, images, and relics; for which he was obliged to quit the university, and fly into Bohemia, where he contracted an acquaintance with Procopius, the Bohemian General; and published some books written by Wickliffe, which were greatly esteemed by Huss, Jerom, and the greatest part of the university of Prague. The students belonging to this learned seminary were offended with their archbishop for suppressing the books of Wickliffe, and ordering the Bohemian clergy to teach the people; that, after the pronounciation of the words of the holy sacrament, there remained nothing but the body of Jesus Christ under the species of bread, and the body of Jesus Christ in the cup.

There was also, according to Fox, another cause of the dispersion of Wickliffe's books in Bohemia. A young man, of an opulent, and noble family of that country, came over to Oxford, about the year 1389, for the prosecution of his studies, and, upon his return, carried with him several tracts of Wickliffe, amongst which were his books, *De realibus universalibus; De civili jure & divino; De ecclesia De quaestronibus variis contra clerum, &c.* With this gentleman Huss was well acquainted, and obtained from him the loan of these books, which were the means of bringing light into his mind, and so much impressed him with the conviction of their truth, that he embraced and maintained the doctrines they contained ever afterwards. He used to call Wickliffe an angel sent from heaven to enlighten mankind; and would mention among his friends his meeting with that great author's writings, as the most happy circumstance of his life; adding, that it would be his joy in heaven to live for ever with that excellent man. Huss had distinguished himself in the university, where he taught grammar and philosophy. He had applied himself to the study of the holy scriptures, and the Latin fathers. He became an excellent preacher, and was made chaplain in the church of the Holy Innocents, called Bethlehem, at Prague. He was held in great estimation for his exemplary life and conversation as a divine, and for having been one of the principal persons who had obtained a great favour to the university. It should be observed, that this university was founded by the emperor Charles IV. who composed it of persons from the four different states of Bohemia, Bavaria, Saxony, and Poland. The three latter were almost all Germans, and had three voices against one, which made them masters of the professor's chair, governors of the university affairs, and disposers of the best benefices in the city. While the poor Bohemians, whose prosperity depended entirely on those advantages, found themselves utterly excluded. This was the state of that seminary, when doctor Huss, assisted by others, represented the cause of the complaining Bohemians to their king Wenceslaus V. Huss was successful; he obtained a revocation of the privileges granted to those foreigners, and the Bohemians were restored to the principal places in the university; which so greatly offended the foreigners, that they retired to Misnia, and carried with them upwards of two thousand scholars. This increased the reputation of doctor Huss, and made him of great consideration in the university, when the archbishop published two orders against Wickliffitism.

Huss arduously embraced the doctrine of Wickliffe, and easily persuaded many members of the university¹, that the first of these orders, made by the archbishop, was an infringement of the privileges and liberties of the university, whose members had a right to read all sorts of books, without any molestation. He also observed, that the second order contained a most intolerable error, in seeming to affirm that there was nothing but the body and blood of Christ under the species of bread, and in the cup.

Upon this foundation, they appealed from those orders' to Gregory XII. at Rimini, who was then acknowledged pope in Germany, in opposition to John XXIII. at Rome, and Benedict XIII. at Avignon. Their appeal was received, and the pope cited the archbishop to Rome. But that prelate informed the pope, that the doctrine of Wickliffe began to take root in Bohemia: upon which the archbishop obtained a bull, whereby the pope gave him commission to prevent the publishing of those errors in his province.

This archbishop, we are told, was a most illiterate man. He was so illiterate, that he was called, in ridicule, Alphabetarius, the A B C doctor. Indeed, the clergy of those times were remarkably ignorant, insomuch that many of the prelates could not write, but directed their chaplains to subscribe their very names for them to ecclesiastical deeds and papers.

The archbishop, by virtue of this bull, definitely condemned the writings of Wickliffe, proceeded against four doctors, who had not delivered up the copies of that divine; and prohibited them, notwithstanding their privileges, to preach in any congregation. Doctor Huss, with some other members of the university, and the patron of the chapel of Bethlehem, made their protestations against these proceedings; and, on the twenty-fifth of June, A.D. 1410, entered a new appeal from the sentences of the archbishop. This affair was carried before pope John XXIII. who granted a commission to cardinal Colonna to cite John Huss to appear personally at the court of Rome, to answer the accusations laid against him of preaching both errors and heresies. Doctor Huss desired to be excused a personal appearance, and was so greatly favoured in Bohemia, that king Wenceslaus, the queen, the nobility, and the university, desired the pope to dispense with such an appearance; as also, that he would not suffer the kingdom of Bohemia to lie under the defamation of being accused of heresy, but permit them to preach the gospel with freedom in their places of worship; and that he would send legates to Prague to correct any pretended abuses, the expense of which should be defrayed by the Bohemians.

Three proctors appeared for doctor Huss, before cardinal Colonna, who was elected pope, in 1417, and assumed the name of Martin V. The proctors alleged excuses for the absence of Huss, and declared they were ready to answer in his

¹ For Dr Huss's public defence of Wickliffe's opinions before the university of Prague, in the year 1412, see Fox's Acts, &c. vol. 1. *temp.*

behalf. But the cardinal declared Huss contumacious, and excommunicated him accordingly.

The proctors appealed to the pope, who appointed the cardinals of Aquileia, Brancas, Venice, and Zabarella, to draw up the process of this whole affair. These commissioners not only confirmed the judgment given by cardinal Colonna, but carried the matter much farther; for they extended the excommunication, which had passed against Huss, to all his disciples, and also to his friends. He was declared a promoter of heresy, and an interdict was pronounced against him. From these proceedings he appealed to a future council; and, notwithstanding the decision of the four commissioners, and his being expelled from the church of Bethlehem, he retired to Hussenitz, the place of his nativity, where he boldly continued to promulgate his doctrine, both from the pulpit, and with the pen.

The letters which he wrote about this time, are very numerous; and he compiled a treatise wherein he maintained that the reading of the books of heretics cannot be absolutely forbidden. He justified Wickliffe's book on the Trinity, and defended the character of that Reformer against a charge brought by one Stokes, an Englishman, and others, who accused him of disobedience.

It is truth, and not opinion, which can travel through the world without a passport. The glorious cause of truth had been freely espoused by Huss, who undauntedly declaimed against the clergy, the cardinals, and even against the pope himself. He wrote a discourse to prove, that the faults and vices of churchmen ought to be reproved from the pulpit. Regarding the blood of Jesus Christ, which many pretended to have as a relic, he observed, that Christ, being glorified, took up with him all his own blood, and that there is no remain of it on earth; as also that the greatest part of the miracles, which are reported about the apparition of his blood, are the frauds and impostures of avaricious and designing men. He maintained, that Jesus Christ might be called bread but he departed not from the doctrine of the church about the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. But it is of small importance with the church of Rome, in what particular points the judgments of men coincide with its doctrines, if the whole of the corrupt leaven be not implicitly swallowed. And perhaps no points are held more sacred by that heretical communion, than those which yield the most abundant profit to the holy see, falsely so called. To attack the virtue of papal indulgences, is striking at the most fundamental pillar of the popedom; and to deny the stock of merit, laid up in the church for public sale, is a damnable denial of the privileges of the clergy, to whom both heaven and earth belong, under the disposal of their pontiff, Christ's pretended vicar here below. These monstrous abuses, some very few of that church have attempted, as far as they dared, to censure.—And with respect to Rome itself; a journey thither would probably effect more to prevent a perversion from protestantism to popery, than a thousand wordy arguments. The wickedness and vices of the clergy, in that city, speak aloud for their principles. The review of these caused Hildebert, archbishop of Tours, so

long ago as the twelfth century, to characterize that famous mart of souls in the following words:

Urbs foelix, si vel dominis urbs careret,
Veldominis esset turpe carere fide.

That is,

‘Happy city, if it had no masters; or if it were scandalous for those masters to be unfaithful.’

Luther used to say, that for 1000 florins he would not but have been at Rome, where he saw so thoroughly into that sink of sin and spiritual abomination, that he abhorred the place and its profession all his life afterwards. He had been sent thither, in the early part of his life, in behalf of his convent. But to proceed:

About the time when Huss wrote the above discourses, Peter of Dresden was obliged to fly from Saxony, and seek a refuge at Prague, where he encouraged Jacobelle of Misnia, a priest of the chapel of St Michael, to preach up the establishment of the communion under the species of wine. This opinion was embraced by doctor Huss and his followers, who began to preach, that the use of the cup was necessary to the laity, and that the sacrament should be administered under both kinds. Archbishops Sbynko was incensed at these proceedings, and applied to king Wenceslaus for assistance, which that monarch refused. The prelate then had recourse to Sigismund, king of Hungary, who promised to come into Bohemia, and settle the affairs of the church in that kingdom. But Sbynko died in Hungary, before Sigismund began his journey into Bohemia. Albicus succeeded to the archiepiscopal see of Prague, who permitted the Hussites to continue their sermons; and their doctrine became almost general.

Doctor Huss left this retirement, and returned to Prague, in 1412, at the time that pope John XXIII. published the bulls against Laodislaus, king of Naples, whereby he ordered a crusade against him, and granted indulgencies to all those who undertook this war. These bulls were confuted by doctor Huss, who declaimed against crusades and indulgences. The populace became animated by his oratory and declared that pope John was antichrist. The magistrates caused some of them to be apprehended, and the rest took up arms to set them at liberty; but they were pacified by the magistrates, who gave them solemn assurances that no injury should be done to the prisoners. However, they were privately beheaded in the judgment hall. The blood which ran out from the place of execution discovered the massacre of these men to the common people, who took arms again, forcibly carried off the bodies of those that were executed, honourably interred them in the church of Bethlehem, and revered them as martyrs. ‘Huss (says Mr Gilpin) discovered, on this occasion, a true Christian spirit. The late riot had given him great concern; and he had now so much weight with the people, as to restrain them from attempting any farther violence—whereas, at the sound of a bell, he could have been surrounded with thousands, who might have laughed at the police of the city.’

The magistrates of Prague found it necessary to publish their reasons for these rigorous proceedings against the Hussites. They assembled many doctors of divinity in their city, who drew up a censure of forty-five of Wickliffe's propositions; and in their preface to it, they asserted the authority of the pope, the cardinals, and the church of Rome; after which, they accused the Hussites of sedition. Doctor Huss wrote many books, and other discourses, against the censure of these doctors, whom he called Prætorians. He maintained some of the articles which they condemned; particularly those concerning the liberty of preaching, the power of secular princes over the revenues of ecclesiastics, the voluntary payment of tithes, and the forfeiture that spiritual and temporal lords make of their power, when they live in mortal sin.

Doctor Huss wrote a long treatise about the church, to confute the preface of that censure, in which he maintains, that the church consists of those only who are predestinate; that the head and foundation of it is Jesus Christ; that the pope and cardinals are only members of it, and the other bishops are successors to the apostles as well as they; that no one is obliged to obey them, if their commands are not agreeable to the law of God; and that an excommunication, which is groundless, hath no effect. He particularly answered the writings of Stephen Paletz, Stanislaus Zucima, and eight other doctors. He also caused a writing to be fixed upon the church of Bethlehem, charging the clergy with these six errors:

First, Of believing that the priest, by saying mass, becomes the creator of his Creator. Second, Of saying that we ought to believe in the virgin, in a pope, and in the saints. Third, That the priests can remit the pain and guilt of sin. Fourth, That every one must obey his superiors, whether their commands be just or unjust. Fifth, That every excommunication, just or unjust, binds the excommunicate. The sixth relates to simony.

He also wrote three large volumes against the clergy; the first entitled, "The Anatomy of the Members of Antichrist." The second, "Of the Kingdom of the People, and the Life and Manners of Antichrist." The third, "Of the Abomination of Priests, and carnal Monks, in the Church of Jesus Christ." Besides these, he wrote several other tracts on Traditions, the Unity of the Church, Evangelical Perfection, the Mystery of Iniquity, and the Discovery of Antichrist. With what surprising spirit, strength of argument, and powerful judgment, he wrote on these subjects, may be well conceived by the amazing influence that his doctrines obtained.

Wickliffe had advanced, 'That if a bishop or priest should give holy orders, or consecrate the sacrament of the altar, or minister baptism, while he is in mortal syn; it were nothing avaylable.' This was vindicated by Doctor Huss, who observes, that the article consists of three parts: First, That a civil or temporal lord is no lord, while he is in mortal sin: Secondly, That a prelate is no prelate, while he is in mortal sin: Thirdly, That a bishop is no bishop, while he is in mortal sin. Both these divines taught subjection and obedience to princes, but Wickliffe as-

served, that 'If temporal lords do wrongs and extortions to the people, they be traitors to God and his people, and tyrants of antichrist.' And Huss corroborated this opinion, by showing that it was held by St Austin.

Though John Huss, and Jerom of Prague, so far agreed with Wickliffe, that they opposed the tyranny and corruptions of the pope and his clergy, yet they were not of the same opinion with relation to the eucharist, for neither of them ever opposed the real presence, and transubstantiation as Wickliffe had done.

The great and noble Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, had spoken boldly in several parliaments against the corruptions of the Christian faith and worship, and had frequently represented to the kings Richard II. Henry IV. and Henry V. the insufferable abuses committed by the clergy. This nobleman, at the desire of doctor Huss, caused all the works of Wickliffe to be wrote out, and dispersed in Bohemia, France, Spain, Portugal, and other parts of Europe. But that good man, who had wrote several discourses concerning a reformation of discipline and manners in the church, was abandoned by Henry V. and fell a sacrifice to the fury of the priests. He was condemned, in 1413, by the archbishop of Canterbury as a heretic, and sent to the tower by the king, who had an affection for him. He escaped from his confinement, and avoided the execution of his sentence till 1418, when he was taken, and burnt hanging. His behaviour, at the time of his death, was great and intrepid. He exhorted the people to follow the instructions, which God had given them in the Scriptures; and admonished them to disclaim those false teachers, whose lives and conversations were so contrary to Christ, and repugnant to his religion. England was filled with scenes of persecution, which extended to Germany and Bohemia, where doctor Huss, and Jerom of Prague, were marked out to share the fate of Sir John Oldcastle.

The council of Constance was assembled on the sixteenth of November 1414, to determine the dispute between three persons who contended for the papacy. There were, as attendants and members of this council (says Mr Fox,) 'archbishops and bishops, 346; abbots and doctors, 564; princes, dukes, earls, knights, and squires, 16,000; common women, 450; barbers, 600; musicians, cooks, 4 and jesters, 320.' Bartholomew Cosa took the name of John XXIII: Angeli de Coraro called himself Gregory XII. And Pedro de Luna was styled Benedict XIII. But it was John, who summoned doctor Huss to appear at Constance. The emperor Sigismund, brother and successor to Wenceslaus, encouraged Huss to obey the summons, that he might clear the Bohemian nation from the imputation of heresy. And, as an inducement to his compliance, he sent him a passport, with assurance of safe conduct, whereby he gave him permission to come freely to the council, and return from it again.

Doctor Huss caused some placards to be fixed upon the gates of the churches in Prague, wherein he declared, that he went to the council to answer all the accusations that were made against him; and that he was ready to appear before the archbishop, to hear his adversaries, and justify his innocence. He demanded of the

bishop of Nazareth, the inquisitor, whether he had any thing to propose against him; from whom he received a favourable testimony. But when he presented himself at the court of the archbishop, who had called an assembly against him, he was denied admission. When he departed from Prague to repair to Constance, he was accompanied by Wences, lord of Dunbar, and John, lord of Chlum. Huss made public declarations, in all the cities through which he passed, that he was going to vindicate himself at Constance, and invited all his adversaries to be present. He arrived at Constance on the third of November; and after Stephen Paletz came there as his adversary, who was joined by Michael of Causis. They declared themselves his accusers, and drew up a memorial against him, which they presented to the pope, and prelates of the council.

Doctor Huss, twenty-six days after his arrival, was ordered to appear before the pope and cardinals. It has been observed, that his appearing there was by the emperor's own request. But, notwithstanding the safe conduct, he was no sooner come within the pope's jurisdiction, than he was arrested, and committed prisoner to a chamber in the palace. This violation of common law and justice was taken notice of by a gentleman, who urged the imperial safe conduct. But the pope observed, that he never granted any safe conduct, nor was he bound by that of the emperor. This infamous synod acted up to the spirit of their own favourite maxim, THAT NO FAITH IS TO BE KEPT WITH HERETICS. The emperor arrived at Constance on the twenty-third of December, and pope John fled from thence; as the council had resolved, that he and his two rivals, Gregory and Benedict, should divest themselves of all authority, that their competition might be fairly decided, schism extirpated, and a universal Reformation of faith and manners enacted, with respect both to the head and members of the church. The fourth session was held on the twenty-sixth of March 1415, in which the powers of the council, independent of the pope, were re-acknowledged and ratified. The eighth session was held May the fifth, when the doctrines of Wickliffe were condemned as heretical in forty-five articles. And in the twelfth session, held the twenty-ninth of May pope John XXIII. was deposed.

The fathers of the council were ranged under five nations; Italy, France, Germany, England, and Spain. All matters, proposed in the council, were to be determined by the plurality of voices in each nation, but the cardinals, and their college, had their votes. And it was agreed, that after the business had passed through the different committees, the full state of the whole should be made to the council, and that their decree should be formed upon the plurality of the votes of the nations. Robert Halam, bishop of Salisbury, the bishop of Lichfield, and the abbot of St Mary's, in York, were members of this council for the English nation.

The spirit with which the council of Constance acted against the popes; their declaring themselves as a council, and all councils to be above popes; the rigour with which they executed their decrees, and the awful form of their proceedings, are commendable. But to what did it all tend? To no generous principle of love to

God, or benevolence to man. It only translated the seat of wicked power. The people were as much slaves to ignorance; they were as much tied down to superstition; and they had as little the exercise of any one rational sentiment, as ever. This council acted the part of inquisitors. They ordered the remains of doctor Wickliffe to be dug up and burnt, 'with this charitable caution, if they might be discerned from the bodies of other faithful people. His ashes (says Fuller) were cast into the Swift; that brook conveyed them into the Avon; Avon into the Severn; Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean. Thus the ashes of Wickliffe are the emblems of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all over the world.'

Doctor Huss was allowed to be a man of consequence, and reputation, in Bohemia. He was a great and good man, and a noble martyr to Christianity. His accusers presented a petition to the pope, containing the heads of the accusation which they had to propose against him, and requested that commissioners might be named to draw up his process. The patriarch of Constantinople, and two bishops, were the persons commissioned, who heard many witnesses against doctor Huss, and ordered his books to be examined. While this process was drawing up, pope John escaped from the emperor Sigismund, who delivered Huss into the hands of the bishop of Constance, by whose order he was confined in a castle beyond the Rhine, near to Constance.

The council appointed the cardinals of Cambray, and St Mark; the bishop of Dol, and the abbot of the Cistercians, to finish the process against doctor Huss, and renew the condemnations against the doctrine of Wickliffe. Soon after, they joined to these commissioners a bishop for each nation, and granted a commission to cite Jerom of Prague, the companion and friend of doctor Huss, who was one of the principal preachers of this new doctrine. The nobility of Bohemia and Poland presented a petition to the emperor and council, wherein they desired that doctor Huss might be set at liberty, as he had been seized and imprisoned contrary to the safe conduct of his imperial majesty. The Bohemians presented a writing to the council, wherein they maintained, that the propositions, which the enemies of Huss had drawn out of his books, were mutilated, and falsified, on purpose to put him to death. They prayed the council to set him at liberty, that he might be heard for himself, and offered to give bond for his appearance. The patriarch of Antioch answered, in the name of the council, that they could not set Huss at liberty; but would send for him, and give him a favourable hearing. The lords of Bohemia then addressed the emperor, who had sent him there to defend that kingdom from a charge of heresy, and was now one of his persecutors.

The fourteenth session was held on the fifth of June, when it was resolved, that, before they sent for doctor Huss, the articles drawn out of his books should be examined, and condemned, even without hearing his vindication. This was so strongly opposed by the nobles of Bohemia, that the emperor told the council, they must hear Huss, before they condemned him; upon which they sent for him,

ordered him to acknowledge his books, and read the first articles of his accusation. These were about thirty², drawn from the writings of Wickliffe, and some of them he freely admitted; such as, that there was one, only, universal church, which is a collection of all the elect. That the apostle Paul was never a member of the devil, which he proved from the testimony of St Augustin. That a predestinate person always continues a member of the church; because although he may sometimes fall from that grace which is adventitious to him, yet never from the grace of predestination. That no member of the true church apostatizes from it, because the grace of God, which establishes him, never fails. That St Peter never was, nor is, the head of the catholic church, because this is the peculiar prerogative of Christ. That the condemnation of the forty-five articles of Wickliffe was irrational and unjust. That there was no colour of reason, that there should be a spiritual head always visibly conversant in the church, and governing it.’

Mr Toplady, in his very able performance, entitled, *Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the church of England*, states the following articles, for which, among others, this excellent man was put to death. “There is but one holy, universal, or catholic church, which is the universal company of ALL the PREDESTINATE. I do confess,” said Huss, “that this proposition is mine; and [it] is confirmed by St Augustin upon St John.”

“St Paul was NEVER any member of the devil, albeit that he committed and did certain acts like unto the acts of the malignant church” [i.e. St Paul prior to his conversion; acted like a reprobate, though he was secretly, and in reality, one of God’s elect.] “And likewise St Peter, who fell into an horrible sin of perjury, and denial of his Master; it was by the PERMISSION of God, that he might the more firmly and steadfastly rise again and be confirmed.” To this charge, Huss replied, “I answer, according to St Austin, that it is expedient that the elect and predestinate should sin and offend³.”

“No part or member of the church doth depart; or fall away, at any time, from the body, forasmuch as the charity of PREDESTINATION in which is the bond and chain of the same, doth never fall.” Huss answers; “This proposition is thus placed in my book: As the reprobate of the church proceed out of the same, and yet are not as parts or members of the same: forasmuch as no part or member of the same

² The reader, who is desirous more particularly to examine the acts and proceedings against this good man, together with force of his letters to friends, may find them at large in the first volume of Fox’s *Acts and Monuments*. And for a more minute account, he may peruse an excellent history of Huss, Jerom, Zisca, &c. written in a very masterly manner by the Rev. Mr Gilpin.

³ Let not the reader imagine (says Mr Toplady) that I approve of the unguarded manner, in which Mr Huss here express himself. I only give his answer, faithfully, as I find it. His meaning I doubt not, was this: That, by the incomprehensible alchymy of God’s infinite wisdom, even moral evil itself shall be finally over-ruled to good.”

doth FINALLY fall away, because that the charity of PREDESTINATION, which is the bond and chain of the same, doth never fall away. This is proved by 1 Cor. xiii. and Rom. viii. All things turn to good, to them that love God. Also, I am certain that neither death nor life can separate us from the charity and love of God, as it is more at large in the book.”

Another article objected against him, was, his being of opinion that “The PREDESTINATE, although he be not in the state of grace according to the present justice, yet is ALWAYS a member of the universal church.” He answers: “Thus it is in the book about the beginning of the fifth chapter, where it is declared, that there be divers manners or sorts of being in the church. For there are some in the church, according to the mis-shapen faith; and other some according to PREDESTINATION: as Christians predestinate, now in sin, SHALL RETURN AGAIN unto grace.” The good man added: “Predestination doth make a man a member of the universal church; the which [i.e. Predestination] is a preparation “of GRACE for the present, and of GLORY to come: And not any degree of “[outward] dignity, neither election of man” [or, one man’s designation of another to some office or station], neither any sensible sign,” [i.e. Predestination does not barely extend to the outward signs, or means of grace, but includes something more and higher.] For the traitor Judas Iscariot, notwithstanding Christ’s election [or appointment of him to the apostleship;] and the temporal graces which, were given him for his office of apostleship, and that he was reputed and counted of men a true apostle of Jesus Christ; yet was he no true disciple, but a wolf covered in a sheep’s skin, as St Augustin saith.”

“A REPROBATE man is never a member of the holy church,—I answer, It is in my book, with sufficient long probation out of the xxvith Psalm, and out of the vth. chapter to the Ephesians. And also by St Bernard’s saying, The church of Jesus Christ is MORE plainly and evidently HIS BODY, than the body which he delivered for us to death. I have also written, in the fifth chapter of my book, that the holy church,” [i.e. the outward, visible church of professing Christians, here on earth] is the barn of the Lord, in which are both good and evil, predestinate and reprobate. The good being as the good corn, or grain; and the evil, as the chaff. And thereunto is added the exposition of St Austin.”

“Judas was NEVER a true disciple of Jesus Christ.—I answer, and I do confess the same.—They came out from amongst us, but they were none of us.—He knew, from the beginning, who they were that believed not, and should betray him. And therefore, I say unto you, that none COMETH unto me, except it be GIVEN him of my Father.”

Such were some of the allegations brought against this holy man by the council of Constance; and such were his answers, when he stood on his public trial, as a lily among thorns, or a sheep in the midst of wolves. How easy is it for a man to write in defence of those inestimable truths, which (through the goodness of divine providence) have now, in our happy land, the sanction of national establish-

ment! But with what invincible strength of grace was this adamant saint endued, who bore his explicit, unshaken testimony to the faith, in the presence and hearing of its worst foes, armed with all the terrible powers of this world!

These are doctrines which, even in the purest ages of the church, have received countenance, and Huss boldly acknowledged them. But one circumstance bore more hard against him, which was, wishing his soul to be with the happy spirit of Wickliffe. Doctor Huss had too generous, too open a nature, to deny what he thought; nor did he imagine that life was worthy prevarication. He freely confessed, he was so charmed with Wickliffe's books, that he wished his spirit might enjoy the same fate with his hereafter. A great many other false and frivolous objections were raised against him, which he refuted with a manly eloquence, and recommending himself, and his cause to God, he was carried off.

He was no sooner gone, than the emperor, whose subject he was, and who showed a peculiar zeal in his fate, rose, and told the assembly, 'That, in his opinion, every tenet he had then held, deserved death. That if he did not abjure, he ought to be burnt. And that all his followers, especially Jerom of Prague, should be exemplarily punished.' But we are told, that the emperor and the cardinal of Chambre, exhorted doctor Huss to submit to the decision of the council. The next day, he was brought again before the assembly, where eighty-nine articles were read to him, which were said to be drawn out of his books, and he was advised to abjure them all: But he replied, that there were many of those propositions which he had never maintained, and he was ready to explain his opinion regarding the others. After many disputes, he was sent back to prison; and a resolution was then taken to burn him as a heretic, if he would not retract.

The emperor, on the tenth of June, sent four bishops, and two lords, to the prison, to prevail on Huss to make a recantation. But that pious divine, with truly Christian simplicity, called the great God to witness, with tears in his eyes, that he was not conscious of having preached, or written any thing against the truth of God, or the faith of his orthodox church. The deputies then represented the great wisdom and authority of the council. "Let them, said Huss, send the meanest person that can convince me, by arguments, from the word of God, and I will submit my judgment to him." This Christian and pious answer had no effect; because he would not take the authority and learning of the council upon trust, without the least shadow of an argument offered; and the deputies parted in high admiration of his obstinacy!

While this good confessor was in bonds, he wrote letters to incite his countrymen to persevere in the doctrines he had taught; and expressed his own firm resolution of never departing from them while he had life.

Doctor Huss on the seventh of July, was conducted to the place where the fifteenth session of the council was held. He was required to abjure, which he refused. And the bishop of Londi, in a bloody, persecuting sermon, about the destruction of heretics, pronounced the prologue of his fate, by exhorting the emper-

or, who seemed ready enough of himself, to exterminate the growing heresy, that (as he was pleased to pervert the scripture) the body of sin might be destroyed, told Sigismund, 'that he ought to destroy all errors and heresies, and especially the obstinate heretic Huss before him, since by his wickedness and mischief, many places of the world were infected with most pestilent and heretical poison, and, by his means and occasion, almost utterly subverted and destroyed. And that then the emperor's praises would be celebrated for evermore, for having overthrown such, and so great enemies of the faith.' A most honourable testimony for Dr Huss from the traducing mouth of a virulent adversary! In fine, the proctor of the council demanded that the process against Huss should be finished; the condemned articles of Wickliffe were read, and the thirty articles alleged against Huss, who explained some, and defended others. Many other articles of accusation were also read, which were proved by witnesses against him. His fate was determined, his vindication disregarded, and judgment was pronounced. His books were thereby condemned, and he was declared a manifest heretic, convicted of having taught many heresies and pernicious errors; of having despised the keys of the church, and ecclesiastical censures; of having seduced and given scandal to the faithful by his obstinacy; and of having rashly appealed to the tribunal of Christ. The council, therefore, censured him for being obstinate and incorrigible; and ordained, "That he should be degraded from the priesthood, his books publicly burnt, and himself delivered to the secular power."

Doctor Huss heard this sentence without the least emotion. He knelt down, with his eyes lifted towards heaven, and said, with all the spirit of primitive martyrdom, "May thy infinite mercy, O my God, pardon this injustice of my enemies. Thou knowest the injustice of their accusations. How deformed with crimes I have been represented; how I have been oppressed by worthless witnesses, and an unjust condemnation, yet, O my God, let that mercy of thine, which no tongue can express, prevail with thee not to avenge my wrongs." These excellent sentences were so many expressions of treason against the trade of priestcraft, and considered as such by the narrow-minded assistants. The bishops appointed by the council stripped him of his priestly garments, degraded him from his priestly function and university degrees, and put a mitre of paper on his head on which devils were painted, with this inscription, in great letters, 'A RING-LEADER OF HERETICS.' Our heroic martyr received this mock-mitre, smiling, and said, "It was less painful than a crown of thorns." A serenity, a joy, a composure, appeared in his looks, which indicated that his soul had cut off many stages of tedious journey in her way to the point of eternal joy and everlasting peace.

The bishops delivered Huss to the emperor, who put him into the hands of the duke of Bavaria. His books were burnt at the gate of the church, and he was led to the suburbs to be burnt alive. Prior to his execution, Mr Huss made his solemn appeal to God, from the judgment of the pope and council. In this appeal (the whole of which would well repay the reader's perusal, he again repeats his as-

sured faith in the doctrine of election, where he celebrates the willingness with which Christ vouchsafed, “By the most bitter and ignominious death, to REDEEM “the CHILDREN OF GOD, CHOSEN BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, from everlasting damnation.” When he came to the place of execution, he fell on his knees, sang portions of psalms, looked steadfastly towards heaven, and repeated these words: “Into thy hands, O Lord, do I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O most good and faithful God. Lord Jesus Christ, assist and help me, that with a firm and patient mind, by thy most powerful grace, I may undergo this most cruel and ignominious death, to which I am condemned for preaching the truth of thy most holy gospel.” When the chain was put about him at the stake, he said, with a smiling countenance, “My Lord Jesus Christ was bound with a harder chain than this for my sake; and why should I be ashamed of this old rusty one?” When the faggots were piled up to his very neck, the duke of Bavaria was officious enough to desire him to abjure. “No, says Huss, I never preached any doctrine of an evil tendency; and what I taught with my lips, I now seal with my blood.” He said to the executioner, “Are you going to burn a goose? In one century, you will have a swan you can neither roast nor boil.” If he was prophetic, he must have meant Luther, who had a swan for his arms. The flames were then applied to the faggots, when the martyr sang a hymn with so loud and cheerful a voice, that he was heard through all the cracklings of the combustibles, and the noise of the multitude. At last his voice was cut short, after he had uttered, “Jesus Christ, thou Son of the living GOD, have mercy upon me;” and he was consumed in a most miserable manner. The duke of Bavaria ordered the executioner to throw all the martyr’s clothes into the flames. After which his ashes were carefully collected, and cast into the Rhine.

While doctor Huss was in prison, he wrote some treatises about the commands of God, of the Lord’s prayer, of mortal sin, of marriage, of the knowledge and love of God, of the three enemies of man, and the seven mortal sins, of repentance, and of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. He also drew up a little piece about the communion in both kinds. He wrote an answer to the propositions drawn out of his books, which had been communicated to him. And he prepared three discourses; one about the sufficiency of the law of Jesus Christ; another to explain his faith about the last articles of the creed; and the third about peace. All these treatises were printed in one volume at Nuremburg in 1558. As also a second volume, containing a harmony of the four evangelists, with moral notes; many sermons; a commentary upon the first seven chapters of the first epistle to the Corinthians; commentaries upon the seven canonical epistles, the sixth psalm, and those following to the sixty: and several other pieces, which, if they were not altogether correct, must be imputed to the reigning darkness of the times, and to his incessant conflicts with the sons of Rome.

This great martyr, as well as his friend Jerom, may be considered, in some measure, as dying for the principles of Wickliffe, or rather the principles of the

gospel, transmitted to them from England. To preserve the memory of this excellent man, the seventh of July was, for many years, held sacred among the Bohemians. In some places large fires were lighted in the evening of that day upon the mountains, to preserve the memory of his sufferings, round which the country-people would assemble, and sing hymns.

As a specimen of the composed spirit of this excellent martyr, in the midst of this virulent persecution, we will subjoin one of his letters, which he wrote from the prison, to his friends in Bohemia.

“My dear friends, let me take this last opportunity of exhorting you to trust in nothing here; but to give yourselves up entirely to the service of GOD. Well am I authorized to warn you not to trust in princes, nor in any child of man, for there is no help in them. GOD only remaineth steadfast. What HE promiseth, he will undoubtedly perform. As to myself, on his gracious promise I rest. Having endeavoured to be his faithful servant, I fear not being deserted by him. Where I am, says the gracious Promiser, there shall my servants be.—May the GOD of heaven preserve you.—This is probably the last letter I shall be enabled to write. I have reason to believe, I shall be called upon to-morrow to answer with my life.— Sigismund hath, in all things, acted deceitfully. I pray, GOD forgive him! You have heard in what severe language he hath spoken of me.”

There are several other letters in Fox’s acts and monuments, in old English; to which we must refer our readers. They all breathe the same spirit of piety, firmness, and inward consolation.