

2.

METHODISTS IMPOSTORS:

OR,

*Wickliffe, Whitefield, Wesley,
Stonehouse, Seagrave and Seward,*
Detected and Exposed.

B E I N G

An Impartial and Brief Relation of the Turbulent LIFE, DEATH, and NOTORIOUS HERESIES of JOHN WICKLIFFE, exhibited in Forty Articles.

One of which was

That, GOD ought to Obey the DEVIL.

These Blasphemies were advanced by him in the Year 1365, and the Motives of his *Pretended* Reformation, were *Revenge, Sacrilege, and Ambition*, by which he brought about his Rebellions both in CHURCH and STATE.

Extracted from the best AUTHORITIES.

*Whitefield compar'd with Wickliffe, set aside,
Wickliffe had Learning; Whitefield only Pride.*

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for E. CURLL, at *Pope's-Head* in *Rose-Street, Covent-Garden.* 1740. Price 1 s.

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(3)

A

RELATION

OF THE

LIFE and HERESIES

OF

John Wickliffe.



WE are now told in Defence of Mr *Whitefield's* HERESIES, that nothing is more certain than this, “ that “ by the established Decrees and “ Appointment of Heaven, *the Peo- ple of God*, must through much Tribulation “ enter into his Kingdom ; and *they* that will live “ Godly in *Christ Jesus*, must suffer *Persecu- tion.*”

This has been the Cant of all the Apostates that ever infested the Christian Church in general ; and has been particularly revised by *Wickliffe* and his Bare-footed Gang of *Lollards*, by *Muggletonians*, *Quakers*, *French-Prophets* and *Methodists*, the present Spawn of his Diabolical Heresy.

The same Fanatical Euthusiast of *New-Eng-land* * likewise tells us, and in which I agree with

* See the *Daily Advertiser* of June 30, 1740.

him, “ that there is a vast Resemblance between
 “ *Wickliffe* and *Whitefield*; both were born *and*
 “ *beloved alike*, in the same Country; both edu-
 “ cated *and respected alike* in the same University;
 “ (i. e. *held in the utmost Contempt*) both Apof-
 “ tates from the same *Church of England*; both
 “ Champions in the same *Diabolical Heresy*; even
 “ that *Heresy* that was at first broached by him:
 “ The one a most erroneous Deformer of the
 “ Doctrines of the Church; the other a most per-
 “ nicious Rectorer of Calvinistical Fanaticism;
 “ the one labouring to reduce the Church to his
 “ vile Tenets, the other attempting, with his
 “ Agents (*Wesley, Stonehouse, Seward, Seagrave,*
 “ &c.) to inflave the present Race of Mankind;
 “ and such as the Apostle assures us formerly at-
 “ tempted to *deceive the very Elect.*”

Thus runs the exact Parallel between these two Impostures; of the former of whom take the following faithfull Narration, *viz.*

John Wickliffe was Educated at *Merton-College*, in *Oxford*, and was President of another, but most deservedly turned out of that Honourable Post, which might be one Reason of his future Resentment.

His first Motive to *reform*, was Revenge for the loss of the Bishoprick of *Winchester*; Like the Heretick *Valentinus*, as *Tertullian* has judiciously observed, *Ut solent animi pro Prioratu accendi*: Ambition generally being the Parent of novel Opinions. The Man's Disappointment made him rail against Prelacy it self, because he could not arrive at the Honour.

The Duke of *Lancaster* was his chief Patron; whom all Historians agree to have been a secret Rebel, and would have paved the Way to the
 Throne

Throne at the Expence of the natural Right of the Heir Apparent his Nephew. His Disposition was plainly shewn in his appearing before the Bishop of *London* in Behalf of *Wickliffe*, awing the poor Bishop with Menaces, threatening to bring down the Pride of all the Prelacy of *England*, and to pluck the venerable Bishop by the Ears out of the Church.

Whatever were the Motives of *Wickliffe's* Sham-Reformation, he went on through all his Conduct with evident Signs of being a wicked Man: He ought rather to have Died than suffered a venerable *Prelate*, his Superiour, to be treated in that Opprobrious manner by a *Lay-man*.

It was really a Weakness in King *Edward III*, to let such a Poisonous Weed as *Wickliffe* grow. It is true he nourished the Clergy; but it proved a severe Revenge.

Perhaps some will say that *Wickliffe* is wronged; he is not the Person he is reported to be: But to clear this beyond all Dispute, I shall prove from uncontested Facts that *Wickliffe's* Notions were wicked and abominable.

His Religion was chiefly supported by two main Pillars, *viz.* Sacrilege and Rebellion: In relation to the first he taught, That Endowing Churches was Paganism, and that Temporal Lords might substract whatever was given to such superstitious Purposes.

The Account *Walsingham* gives of *Wickliffe* and his Doctrines I shall briefly lay down in such a Manner, that every Article may be referred to, and compared with what other Historians are pleased to say concerning him.

I. He assumed the Shew of Humility, and taught his Followers to go without Shoes.

Comites atq; socios unius seclæ in simul Oxoniis & alibi commorantes ; talaribus indutos vestibus de Rasseto, in signum professionis amplioris incrementes nudis pedibus qui suos errores, in populo ventilerent, & palam ac publice in suis sermonibus prædicarent.
Walsingh. Hist. Angl. p. 188.

II. That the Pope of Rome had no more Power of the Keys than a common Priest.

Item quod Papa Romanus non habet majorem potestatem in clavis Ecclesiæ, quam quisvisq; alius in ordine sacerdotis constitutus. Ibid.

III. If there is a God, Temporal Lords may lawfully take away the Temporals from an offending Church.

Si Deus est, Domini Temporales possunt legitime ac meritorie auferre bona fortune ab Ecclesia delinquente. Ibid.

IV. If a Temporal Lord knows that the Church does offend, he is obliged under Pain of Damnation to take away her Temporals.

Item si Dominus Temporalis noverit Ecclesiam delinquentem, tenetur sub pœna damnatione ejus ab ea temporalia auferre. Ibid.

V. That the Gospel alone is sufficient for Piety ; and that all Monastick Rules and Religious Discipline add no more to the Perfection of Christian Piety, than Whiting adds to the Substance of a Wall.

Item quod Evangelium sufficit ad regulandum in vita ista quemlibet Christianum, & quod omnes aliæ regulæ sanctorum sub quarum observantiis degunt diversi religiosi non plus perfectionis addunt Evangelio quam addit albedo parieti. Ibid.

VI. That the Pope, and no other Prelate, ought to have Prisons for the Punishment of Offenders : But that they ought to have free Liberty to do what they please.

Item,

Item, quod nec Papa nec alius Prelatus Ecclesie deberet habere Carceres aut puniendum delinquentes, sed quilibet delinquens posset libere quocunq; vellet transire & facere quæ sibi placeret. Ibid.

VII That God cannot transfer perpetual Dominion to one Man, and to his Heirs.

Deus non potest dare homini pro se & hæredibus suis imperpetuum Civile Domini m. Ibid. p. 205.

VIII. Whether the Church in an offending State is left in the Beak of the Temporal Lord; and he is bound to act in Pursuance of his own Determinations

Nunquid Ecclesia est in tali statu vel non, non est meum discutere sed Dominorum Temporalium examinare & posito casu confidenter agere, & sub pœna damnationis æternæ ejus temporalia auferre. Ibid.

IX. A Man cannot be Excommunicated unless he is first Excommunicated by himself.

Non est possibile hominem excommunicari nisi prius & principaliter excommunicatur à seipso. Ibid.

X. No Power is given by Christ to Excommunicate Persons, especially not for the Subtraction of Temporal Dues; but rather on the contrary.

Non est exemplificata potestas à Christo vel suis discipulis excommunicandi subditos, precipue propter negationem temporalium; sed è contra. Ibid.

XI. 'Tis impossible even in the Nature of God to grant that the Pope, or any other Person, who pretend to bind or loose, should by that very Act bind or loose.

Non est possibile de potentia Dei absoluta, quod si Papa vel alius pretendat se quovismodo solvere vel ligare, eo ipso solvit vel ligat. Ibid.

XII. We ought to believe that he only binds and looses while he conforms himself to the Law of Christ.

Credere debemus quod solum tunc solvit vel legat quando se conformat legi Christi. Ibid.

XIII. A meer Clergy-Man cannot, without mortal Sin, aspire after Civil Dominion.

Non stat pure Clericum absq; mortali peccato Civiliter Dominarium. Ibid. p. 209.

XIV. All Civil Government, properly speaking, is a State of Sin.

Dominium Civile formaliter dictum sapit inseparabiliter peccatum. Ibid.

XV. God cannot exercise Civil Government; so neither could Man in a State of Innocence; nor can a Clergy-Man without Guilt do the same.

Sicut Deus non potest exercere actus civiles nec homo in statu innocentiae, sic illicitum est alicui pure Clerico actus civiles exercere. Ibid.

XVI. It is a mortal Sin for a Body of Clergy-Men to acquire the Goods of Fortune.

Quodcumq; Collegium Clericorum quod acquirit bona fortunæ. Redditus vel proventus, ac eis civiliter dominetur peccat mortaliter. Ibid.

XVII. 'Tis absolutely impossible in the Nature of God, that Christ should exercise Civil Dominion.

Est impossibile de Dei potentia absolute Christum regnasse civiliter. Ibid.

XVIII. If the Laws of *England* were to take Place, the greatest Part of the Riches and Endowments in the Hands of the Religious would be taken away.

Major pars accumulationis bonorum fortunæ in manibus religiosorum esset dissoluta, si jura Regni Angliæ essent debite Executa. Ibid.

XIX. God ought to obey the Devil.

Deus obedire debet Diabolo. Ibid. p. 303.

XX. There

XX. There can be no Lord, nor no Bishop, while they continue in a mortal Sin.

Nullus est Dominus, simul nullus Episcopus, nullus est Prelatus, dum est in peccato mortali. Ibid.

XXI. Subjects ought not to obey Human Laws not founded on Scripture.

Ubi leges humanæ non fundantur in Scriptura sacra subditi non tenentur obedire. Ibid.

XXII. No Person ought to be excommunicated but with a Prospect of his Amendment.

Nullus debet aliquem excommunicare nisi ex charitate & pro salute animæ suæ. Ibid.

XXIII. If a Prelate excommunicates a Person appealing to the State, he is a Traitor.

Prælati excommunicans clericum qui appellat ad Regem & Consilium Regni, eo ipso traditor Dei est & Regis Regni. Ibid.

XXIV. It is against the old and new Law, that Clergy-Men should have temporal Possessions.

Contra antiquam legem est, & contra novam, quod viri Ecclesiastici habeant possessiones temporales. Ibid.

XXV. There will never be Happiness or Peace in a Kingdom till those Temporals are taken away from Ecclesiasticks.

Nunquam erit bona pax & plenaria in Regno isto quousque ista temporalia auferantur à viris Ecclesiasticis. Ibid.

XXVI. If the Parishioners know their Curate to be a wicked or an immoral Man, they are obliged to subtract his Dues; otherwise they are Partners in his Guilt.

Quod si Parochiani scriverint Curatum eorum continentem esse & malum debent subtrahere ab eo decimas, & alias sunt fautores criminis & consentientes ejus malis operibus. Ibid. p. 304.

XXVII. That Tythes are mere Alms; and if the Curates are wicked, they may be subſtracted.

Quod decimæ ſunt puræ eleemoſinæ, & in caſu quo Curati fuerunt mali, poſſunt licite eas aliis conferre. Ibid.

XXVIII. The Baptiſm of an Infant is invalid, if the Prieſt or Godfathers or Godmothers are in a mortal Sin.

Si aliquis Capellanus, vel Compatres vel Commatres Infantium puerorum temporibus, quibus huiusmodi pueros ſive Infantes baptizaverunt & levaverunt de ſacra fonte, fuerunt in aliquo mortali peccato detenti, Infans huiusmodi ſive puer, non eſt baptizatus, nec recepit tempore huiusmodi ſacramentum Baptiſmi. Ibid.

XXIX. If a Biſhop confers the ſacred Orders of the Prieſthood, he that is perſonal ordained is no Prieſt, unleſs he be alſo ordained by God.

Quicumque Episcopos conferens alicui ſacros ordines Presbyteratus, huiusmodi perſonaliter ordinatus, non eſt Presbyter ratione collationis huiusmodi ſibi facta, niſi ſit elatus à Deo. Ibid.

XXX. If a Man is truly contrite, all manner of Confefſion is unneceſſary and impertinent.

Quod ſi homo fuerit debite contritus omnis confefſio exterior eſt ſibi ſuperflua & inutilis. Ibid. p. 305.

XXXI. The Sacrament of Confirmation is not reſerved to Biſhops.

Collatio Sacramenti Confefſionis non eſt Episcopis ſervata. Article imp. à Joh. Woodfordo, Art. 5. apud Orth. Gratium.

XXXII. In the Apoſtles Times there were but two Orders in the Church, Prieſts and Deacons.

Quod tempore Pauli ſufficiebant duo ordines Clericorum, Sacerdos & Diaconus. Ibid. Art. 6.

XXXIII. Archbiſhops, Biſhops, Archdeacons, &c. are the Pimps of Antichriſt.

Quod

Quod isti duodecim sint procuratores Antichristi, Papa, Cardinales, Patriarchæ, Archiepiscopi, Præsules, Episcopi, Archidiaconi, Officiales, & Decani, &c. Ibid.

XXXIV. All Matrimonial Contracts are void which are enter'd into upon the Consideration of Comfort, mutual Assistance, or Convenience of Life, by Persons who had no Hopes of Children.

Quod antiqui qui ex cupiditate rerum temporalium, ex spe mutuarum iuvaminum aut ex causa excusandæ libinis, licet de prole desperent copulantur invicem, non vere matrimonialiter copulantur. Art. 7.

XXXV. Divorce by Reason of Consanguinity is an human Ordinance.

Causæ Divortis ratione Consanguinitatis vel Affinitatis sunt infundabiliter humanitatis ordinatæ. Art. 8.

XXXVI. Whoever is Meek and Humble, he is the Greatest in the Church, and the Vicar of Christ.

Quicumque est humilior servivilius in amore Christi, quod suam Ecclesiam, ambilior ille tam in Ecclesia, major & proximis est Christi Vicarius. Art. 15.

XXXVII. All Things which happen come to pass by unavoidable Necessity.

Quod omnia quæ evenient absolute necessario evenient. Art. 17.

XXXVIII. For temporal Dominion, the Justice of the Person who governs is so requisite, that no Person who is guilty of a mortal Sin can claim any Property in the Goods of Life.

Quod ad verum Dominum seculare requiritur justitia Dominantis sic quod nullus in peccato mortali est Dominus alicujus rei. Art. 16.

XXXIX. People may at their Pleasure punish their offending Governors.

Populares possunt ad suum arbitrium Dominos delinquentes corrigere. Art. Con. à Con. Const. Art. 17.

XL. Universities, Colleges, &c. are Heathenish, and do as much Hurt to the Church as the Devil.

Universitates, Studia, Collegia, Graduationes, & Magisteria in eisdem, &c. Art. 29.

These are the most material Articles against John Wickliffe, in which we find a plain levelling Scheme both in Church and State.

He was (says Walsingham) summon'd to answer to such Articles as were alledged against him: And he gave in the following equivocating Defence, which I shall here exhibit to the Reader, as I find it in the above-mentioned Author. Hist. Angl. p. 206.

I. That as to what he said concerning *Perpetual Dominion*, he meant, That the Church could not establish any perpetual Political Dominion for ever; nor that the Laity could establish a perpetual Civil Power; nor could God himself be the Author of any such Power, because he had promised a Dissolution of the Empire of this World, and another more heavenly one to commence in its stead.

By the first Solution, John Wickliffe seem'd to have in his Eye, That the Pope's Lease to the Patrimony of St Peter might expire in Time, and an Opportunity might be taken to refuse renewing the same. But this was the least of his Faults: I shall proceed to the next.

II. Whereas he said, *If there is a God, Temporal Lords may lawfully take away the Temporals from an offending Church*, the Proposition meant no more than, That God might command those
Temporal

Temporal Lords to punish the Church with a Forfeiture of her Temporals.

It would be very difficult to reconcile the Explanation with the Grammatical Construction of the Words; and the Reader may evidently see his shuffling, and winding, and wresting his own Sense. However, this Article was evidently contrived to encourage Sacrilege; a Bait which could not fail to take with the Duke of Lancaster.

III. That it is not possible for *any Man to be Excommunicated, unless he first Excommunicate himself*, he meant no more than, That Excommunication could not take Effect *clave errante*; but there must be some previous Crime in the Offender, which must draw down that Sentence upon him.

IV. He did not deny absolutely the Lawfulness of Excommunication for Civil Rights: But he denied that they ought purely to be the Motive of sending People to Hell; but the Cause of God must in some Measure be affected before such a Sentence ought to be passed upon him.

V. As to that Article, *We ought to believe he only binds and looses while he comforts himself to the Law of Christ*; he only meant, That he ought in his Censure to have the Rules of the Gospel, and of Christianity in his Eye.

VI. That Kings may take away Temporals from those Clergy who abused them, he meant no more than that the Civil Power might punish Ecclesiastical Persons.

The Reader may easily perceive, that *Wickliffe* only shuffled off a Prosecution in this Answer. But his Propositions, nakedly examined in themselves, are abominably wicked.

The *first Article* is the grossest Prevarication that ever was known: He takes away all Church-Government, and tells you he meant the State: He then takes away the Civil Power, and brings in the Church triumphant to explain his Meaning.

The *Second* is not much better: *If there is a God, Temporal Lords may substract the Temporalities of the Church.* I grant that the Temporal Lords may take away the Goods of the Church; and they may likewise take away the private Property of the Laity: But they cannot do the first without Sacrilege, nor the last without manifest Injustice. The Laws of God are superior to the Laws of Men: Nor can the Civil Power alienate what is directly made the Property of God, unless they first make God subject to the Civil Power; which is Blasphemy to assert. Accordingly we find in * *Gratian*, That a King, nor no other Person, shall transfer a Monastery to any other than Ecclesiastical Property; nor shall he exchange but with another Monastery; nor shall he expose the same to Sale.

I conclude, *Wickliffe* maintained a most gross sacrilegious Notion, *That the Temporalities might be taken from an offending Church*; which will justify all the Sacrilege of *Henry VIII's* Reign, and give a fair Pretence to have the same put in Execution this Day.

* Nemini regum aut cuiquam hominum in proprium jus liceat monasterium tradere, nisi ad aliud monasterium, vel commutare nisi cum alio monasterio, quocunque commercio vendere, *Dec. p. 2. Caus. 16, 17. c. 40.*

His Salvo, *Provided God commands*, will do no Service, because this supposes divine Revelation to concur; which can be no standing Rule to serve these Exigencies, because it has long since ceased, and in all Probability will not be re-assumed in this World.

But however, he gives a fair Opportunity to Pretenders to Inspiration to rob the Church, granting even his own Explanation to signify any thing.

The *Third Article* is ambiguous, and contrived to bear two Senses to serve either Turn, which *Wickliffe* should please to favour: It may without any Violation of the Sense, support the extravagant Notion, *That every Person has the Power of the Keys, and cannot be excommunicated without his own Consent.*

The *Fourth Article* is calculated to encourage robbing the Church of her Revenues: For if she is not supported by the State, and cannot inflict spiritual Censures upon the Obstinate, she is left in a very naked and defenceless Condition.

The *Fifth Article* founds all spiritual Dominion upon Grace; and consequently invalidates all the Ministerial Offices performed by Priests in a mortal Sin.

His Evasion is but a poor Shift, not supported by the grammatical Construction of the Words, nor favoured with the least Shadow of Probability that it was his Meaning: He could not have such an awkward Way of expressing himself, as to speak contrary to common Sense, and the Notions he would deliver to the World.

The *Sixth Article* wanted a more particular Dilation, because he did not state, whether the Goods should be completely taken away, or converted to some other Ecclesiastical Use. The latter would
have

have done but little Service to *Wickliffe's* Patrons at that Time, who had other Views, than to do either God, or their Sovereign, Justice.

To conclude, if the Reader turns over these Articles with an impartial Eye, he will easily perceive the Spirit of those pretended Reformers: The levelling Schemé was closely pursued: Moreover, a Vein of Policy and Cunning run through the Whole. The Bait was laid to bring Princes into the Story, and hallow them upon the Church; which they were likely to pursue when they were offered her Vitals for their Prey, and a Reward of their Chase.

Walsingham, much to our Purpose observes, That *Wickliffe*, when he was called to an Account, softened his Propositions: But when he preached before the Laity, he gave them their full Latitude*.

To prove the Articles upon *Wickliffe* will be no difficult Task, if we consider,

John Woodford had *Wickliffe's* Book by him: He extracted his Articles from the said Writings. The only Question remains, Whether he performed the Work faithfully or no?

I would ask, Whether any Man will suppose *Woodford* only raised Phantasms in his own Brain, and took such Pains only to answer his own Chimeras? *Woodford* must be egregiously guilty of false Quotations; which Cheats would prevail but a very short Time, when *Wickliffe's* Books were easy to be recurred to, and would blast the pretended Answer for ever. But not only *Woodford*, but even the Council of *Constance*, harmoniously agreed in the same Accusations. Here was no

* *Walsingham*, Hist. Angl. p. 290.

Room for Malice or false Representations : The very Words are quoted ; brought upon the publick Stage of the World ; exposed to the common Censure. Such an Appeal would have made only the Council ridiculous, if their Assertions would have been so easily convicted of Falsehood.

The Council of *Constance* declares, That they commanded *Wickliffe's* Books to be carefully examined by the Doctors and Masters of the University of *Oxford*, who made Report of Forty five Articles, which in their Opinion were directly Heretical. And these Articles were accordingly condemned by the Council, as the Reader may see, *Sess. 8.*

The same Articles are recited in Pope *Martin* the Fifth's Bull, at the End of the Council; and whatever was by the Council done in that Case, he solemnly ratified.

The very same Articles in Number Forty five, were acknowledged ever after as *Wickliffe's*, and publickly maintained by *Huss* and *Jerom*, as I proved in the Letter to the Bishop of *Ely*. So that we have the Testimony of both Papists and Protestants in this Case.

Moreover, to return to *John Woodford*, He, as * *Labbee* observes, was commanded by the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, to oppugn eighteen Errors of *John Wickliffe's*, taken out of his *Trialogue*, and which were condemned by a Synod at *London*, in the Year 1397. The Substance of them I need not here recite, because they have been insisted upon before, and are contained in the

C Body

* *Labbee*, Con. Tom. 11. par. 2. p. 2080.

Body of the Articles exhibited against him, except one, which struck at Infant-Baptism.

Surely no Man can pretend to say, that all these are Forgeries of the Papists, because *Wickliffe's* Books were candidly appealed to, both by the Council of *Constance*, and by *John Woodford*.

We have the corroborating Testimony of a * Synod at *Cologne*, Anno 1423, which approves of the Censure of the Council of *Constance*, as just and righteous.

If the Papists were never so partial, they could not possibly impose such Falshoods upon *Wickliffe*, when his Books were publickly to be seen in the World; and *Wickliffe's* Friends have nothing to alledge on their Side but positive Assertions, without the least Shadow of Proof.

I look upon the Testimony of such a Council as that of *Constance*, to be equivalent to fifty Authors: And these are not wanting on our Side.

What shall we say to *Thomas Waldensis*, who does not only recite the Errors above-mentioned, but gravely refutes them.

Harpfield agrees entirely with him, nor does so much as pretend to dispute his Authority; from whom he extracts the chief Heads of *Wickliffe's* Errors.

A Council

* Hæreses, Hereticorumque Johannis Wickliff, Johannis Hufs, & Hieronymi de Praga, Doctrinas erroneas, Anathematizamus, Reprobamus, & Cotaliter Condemnamus; afferentes cum Consilio Generali Constantiensi quod omnes hujusmodi Articuli aut sunt piarum Aurium offensivi, aut Seditiosi, aut Scandalosi, vel manifesta fide Devii seu expressam Hæresim in continentes, prout in sententia lata contra Dietos hæreticos & ipsorum perversa Dogmata plenius continetur. *Syn. Colon. Ann. 1423, apud Labbee Con. Tom. 12. p. 363, 364.*

A Council held at * *London, Anno 1382*, some Years before that in which *William Woodford* was employed, recites his Errors about Excommunication, Dominion of Grace, &c. Some of *Wickliffe's* Followers, viz. *Nicolas Hereford, Philip Rapyndon* and *John Aysbeton*, were summoned to the Council, and renounced the Errors charged upon them by the Council in a great Measure. However, to some particular Articles they did not answer with that Candor and Freedom as was requisite: Upon which a Day was prefixed, in which they were to appear, and be admonished to return a positive Answer, under Pain of being otherwise deemed Hereticks.

Some of the Articles to which they refused to give a clear and satisfactory Answer were these:

To the Article, † *That God ought to obey the Devil*, they said, *God did in some Measure owe the Obedience of Charity to the Devil*: Which was as much as to say, God was obliged to love the Devil.

They were also required to give an express Answer to the Question, *Whether a Prelate could excommunicate a godly Man?* By which we may perceive they founded all Church Censures, as well as Civil Penalties, upon Grace.

To the Question, *Whether a Religious was obliged to get his Bread with the Labour of Hands*; they refused to give any Answer.

We must observe in all this Process the Criminals did not pretend to deny the Errors charged

C 2

upon

* See Mr *Earbery's* Pretended Reformers, p. 32, 33.

† Interrogati an Deus, debeat aliquem modum obedientiæ Diabolo dixerunt quod sic. Scilicet obedientiam charitatis quia diligit eum & punit eum ut debet. *Conc. Lond. ap. Labbee Conc. Tom. 11. par. 2. p. 2058.*

upon them : But some they recanted, and others they pertinaciously insisted upon and maintained ; which, in my Opinion, is as strong Evidence that *Wickliffe* maintained those Notions, as can be produced.

Moreover, *Harfsfield* gives us an Account from the * *Registrum Herefordense*, of one *John Tresvauntius*, Bishop of *Hereford*, who prosecuted a Priest, and a Lay-Man, even to a Recantation for scattering some of *Wickliffe's* Notions : Amongst the rest two were remarkable, *viz. That none could be a Priest in a mortal Sin ; and, that it was unlawful upon any Account to wage War.*

He also gives another Relation of *Courtney*, Archbishop of *Canterbury*, who reduced a Lady back to a Nunnery, who had been seduced from thence by the Poison of *Wickliffe's* Notions. From whence I conclude, the same Spirit of Lust, and Contempt of the most sacred Vows, animated *Wickliffe*, as afterwards inspired the Sisters of the *German Reformation*, rather to turn Whores than keep their Vow of Chastity.

But in such Cases as these, Weakness of Argument is made up with the Strength and Prevalence of Nature ; and *Luther* found a great Harvest of such Converts.

The same learned and diligent Ecclesiastical Historian has obliged the World with another Recantation of the Lord *Clifford's* : The Substance of which was, *That the seven Sacraments are only dead Signs, and work no real Effect : That Marriage was an indispensable Duty both in the Laicks and Religious ;*

* *Harfsfield's* Hist. Wickliffiani, c. 16.

ligious; whoever neglects being married when he can get a Wife is worse than a Murderer, destroys the Seed, and does his best to thin not only the Kingdom of Heaven, but the Regions of eternal Darkness: That Children are the worse for being baptized by a Priest.

He likewise, from the *Arundel Register*, tells us of one *John Becket*, a zealous *Wickliffite*, who maintained, That neither King nor Bishop were to be obeyed if involved in a mortal Sin: That Marriage ought not to prevent an amicable Sociation between a Man and a Woman, if they like one another: That *Wickliffe's Doctrine* was the most pure of any taught in a Christian Church.

He says, moreover, That one *Renigald Pecock*, Bishop of *Chichester*, gave in to the Impieties of *Wickliffe*. But to make his Reformation more perfect, he lopped off four supernumerary Articles in the Apostles Creed. Yet God gave him Grace to recant; and he ended his Days in Retirement and Repentance, being deprived of his Bishoprick.

These are Instances produced by *Harfsfield*, taken out of the publick Registers and ecclesiastical Records, an Historian, who deserved not the invidious Reflexions cast upon him by *Nicholson*, in his *Historical Library*. I am pretty positive his Lordship never read that Historian; yet he takes a great deal of Pains to make us believe he had run him over with a Critick's Eye. He is represented in the worst Colours; and yet the Bishop is forced to confess, that Archbishop *Parker* took him into his particular Care, and gave him all the Assistance he could wish for in compiling his History. He also subjoins the Testimony of the Author of the *Antiq. Oxon.* which commends him for a learned and industrious Historian; and yet the Bishop cannot

cannot help snarling at a Character he is resolved never to arrive at himself.

Another corroborating Circumstance to confirm us in the Opinion *Wickliffe* was not wronged, is the Propositions *Wickliffe* laid before the Parliament; which are to be seen in Mr *Earbery's Pretended Reformers*, Page 29, 30.

He also tells us, That *Wickliffe*, in the Council of *London* above-mentioned, in the Year 1382, recanted; and that his Recantation was suppressed by Sir *Henry Spelman*; as was also a Decree of the University of *Oxford*, repeating the Decisions of the Council of *London*, which may be evinced from *Wingeon*, an Author who lived at that Time, and who is above all Exceptions in this Matter; for that he set down in his Journal whatever happened in *England*, as it came to his Knowledge.

I leave to the candid Reader, whether all this Evidence summoned together, is not as strong as can be desired; or whether all *Wickliffe's* Friends put together can ever clear him of the Errors charged upon him.

I leave what I have said to every serious Man's Reflexion. *Wickliffe* could not be the Glory of our Isle, unless we glory in Impiety and Enthusiasm, in obviating all the Laws of God and Man, and destroying the Peace of Society.

Can a worse Notion be entertained in the World, than that both Priests and Kings cease to be, and lose all their Power in a mortal Sin? Could ever any Notion be more effectually contrived to expose the Church to Enthusiasts, and the State to Rebellion? How many Thrones would it vacate in *Europe*? And how many religious Sacrifices would it extinguish? What Comfort could we take in partaking

taking the pure Ordinances of Christianity? Or what Peace would our Monarchs find when they live under the continual Apprehensions of being dethroned by the Saints; and what is worse, we have no particular Criteria to know the Saint by? But his own Pretensions are the only Authority he can shew to the World, by which he is capacitated to turn his Monarch out of Doors. If the Saint is guilty of complicated Wickednesses, if he is a Murderer, an Extortioner, an Oppressor of the Poor, if he tells you that he is a chosen Vessel, and has the Seeds of Grace still latent in him, his Monarch must humbly resign his Sceptre into his Hands, receive his Sentence from his Mouth, be bound in Chains of Iron, or have his Head chopped off upon a Scaffold, at the Pleasure of the predominant and insulting Saint.

O unhappy Country! What Confusion, what Miseries and Distractions wait upon you? These are the Notions at which Men now drive hard. The Seeds of Prophaneness and Blasphemy, which for some Years have been swelling in the Ground, are now springing into the Light, and expanding their little Foliages over the Surface of the Earth.

Our Soil, tho' for some Hundred of Years cleared from *Wickliffism*, expressly signified by that Name, yet has been fermented by the same Leaven, and now works under its Spawn of *Whitefieldism*, alias *Methodism*.

Wickliffe died at his Parish of *Lutterworth*, in *Leicestershire*, in 1398, where he was interred; and in 1428, Forty-one Years afterwards, his Body was taken up, and burnt in a just Abhorrence of his infamous Memory. Therefore Mr *Whitefield* reaps no Reputation in being compared
with

with *Wickliffe* ; nor has he, or his enthusiastick deluded Followers done themselves any Honour by the Pains they have taken to discredit the *Whole Duty of Man*, and the Writings of Archbishop *Tillotson*, which like the Characters of their Authors will gain Strength by Time ; and will be in the Hands and Esteem of all Men, when the Scribbles and unjust Centures of these Wretches will not be *remembered*, or not regarded.

Let Mr *Whitefield* enjoy Dr *Edwards*, and his Calvinistical Notions ; and form what Chimeras he pleases in relation to his own crude Conceits ; he, or his Favourers, are desired to answer in a rational, not enthusiastick Manner, the learned Dr *Burnet's* Arguments, proving from the Attributes of divine Mercy, that *Hell Torments* are not *eternal*.

