

Q But to say of the church byneth men to chastitie against their wil, because they take not a priest but if he first professed chastitie, is as far against reaso, as if ye wold say of they bind men to chastitie against theyr will, because they wil make no monkes but such as will promise to liue chaste. Whiche promise euery man wel woteth they make of their owne mindes, though of church will nether make monkes nor priestes but such as so wil. And as touchinge whether the order of the church therein be better than the contrary, good menne and wyse men bothe had the prooffe of bothe before the lawe made, & it wel allowed thowow chrisendome longe tyme synce. Whiche ere I wold assent to change, I wold see a better authoz therof, than suche an heretike as Luther, and Tyndale, and a better saumple than the ledycous and scpsmatyke priestes of Sarony. Surely quod he ye haue wel declared the church touchynge that lawe. But whatsoeuer the cause bee, by my trouthe noughte they bee, and as farre woozle than we, as they be bounden to be better, and yet bee we the woozle for them. There be of I manye ryght good among them, and els were it wzonge with vs. And manye be ther badde also, and some the woozle for vs. But whether part is the better or the woozle, wil I not dispute. But this will I saye: that it were beste that they thought themself the woze, and we our self, and euery manne hymselfe woze. I wold that we wer all in case with our owne faultes, as my father sayth that we bee with oure wyues. For whan he heareth folke blame wyues, & say that there bee so manye of them theywes: he sayeth that they dysfame them falslye. For he sayth plainly of there is but one theywde wyfe in the woze: but he sayth in dede that eueri mā wenech he hath her, & that that one is his owne. So wold I sayne that euery man wold wene ther were but one mā naught in al of hole woze, & that that one wer hymselfe. And that he wold therupon goe about to mend the one, and thus wold al ware well: which thing we should thozstly doe, if we wold once tourne oure wallette that I tolde pou of, and the bagge with other folkes faultes cast at oure backe, and caste the bagge that bereth our owne faultes, cast it once before vs at our bress: it wold be a goodly brooche for vs to looke on our owne faultes another whyle. And I dare holdly say, both they and we should

There is but one theywde wyfe in all the woze.

much the better attend if we wer so ready by eche to pray for other, as we be ready to seke eche others reproche and rebuke. In sayth quod he I trouwe that bee true, and pray god we so may.

The 14. Chapter.

The authoz aunswereth the doubt moued before in the xi. Chapter, concerning of constitucion prouincial, and that the clergie is therein farre fro the faute of is imputed to the in of poynite, shewing also that the clergie hath not for bouden the byble to bee made and readde in englyshe.

In now to the mater we wer in hand with: ye said ye wold make aunswer for the lawe, wherby the cleargye of thys realme hath for bouden all the people to haue any scripture translated into oure tong: which is as I said, in my mind an euil made lawe. Mary of I that is soone answered. Lay the charge to them that made it. Mary of he so I dooe. For who made of constitucion but they? Surely of I no body els, nor they nether. So of he what, euery man knoweth it. Merely of I many men talke of it, but no mā knoweth it. For there is none suche in dede. Ther is of trouthe a constitucion of speketh of such matter, but nothing of such falschion. For ye shal vnderstande that the great arche heretike wickliffe, whereas of hole byble was log before his dayes by vertuous & wel lerned men translated into of englysh tong, & by good & godly people to deuocion & sobrenes wel and reuerently red, toke up hym of a malicious purpose to translate it of new. In which traslacio he purposely corrupted of holpe text, maliciously planting therein suche wordes, as might in of reders eres serue to of profe of such heresies as he went about to sow, which he not only set furth with his own traslacio of the byble, but also to certain prologes & glosis whiche he made therupon. And these thinges he so hadled (which was no great maistry) to reasons pbable & likely to ley peple & vnlearned, of he corrupted in his tyme many folke in this realme. And by other ill booke which he made in latin, being after born into Boheme & there taught by John Hulle & other, he was of occasio of the utter subuerfion of of whole realme, both in sayth & good liuing, with of loss also of many a thousand liues. And as he began agayn the olde heresies of those

Wickliffe's translation of the byble.

An ancient heretikes, whō & whose errors
 y church of Christ had condēned & sub-
 dued many diuers ages befoze: so doeth
 Luther again begin to set by his. For al
 y he hath in effect he hath of him. Saui-
 that lest he should seme to saye nothing
 of his own, he added soe thinges of him-
 self, of such maner sort, as ther was ne-
 uer heretike befoze his dayes, neither so
 wicked y he would for sinne, nor so foo-
 lish that he durst so: shame write, say, or
 I trowe thinke the lyke. I long w he to
 heare some of thē, for y man is taken for
 wffer thā to mene so madly as men bere
 him in hand. Wel w I, that shall we see
 sone whan we come therto. But for our
 p̄sēt purpose, after that it was percei-
 ued what harme y peple toke by y trans-
 lacion, p̄ologes & gloses of Wickliffe, &
 also of some other, that after hym holpe
 to set furth his secte, than for that cause
 and for as much as it is daungerous to
 translate the text of scripture out of one
 tong into another, as holy S. Hierome
 selfieth, for as much as in translation
 it is hard alway to kepe the same sentēce
 whole: it was I say for these causes at a
 counsaill holden at Drenford, p̄ouided
 vpon great payn y no man should from
 thencefurth translate into the englishe
 tong, or any other language of his own
 authoritie, by way of boke, lybel, or trea-
 tice: nor no man openly or secretly anye
 such boke, lybel, or treatice reade new-
 ly made in y time of the sayd John wic-
 liffe or since: or that should be made any
 time after, till the same translation wer
 by the dyocesane, or if neede shoulde re-
 quire, by a prouinciall counsaill appo-
 ued. And thys is a lawe that so many so
 long haue spoken of, and so few haue in
 all this whyle roughte to seeke whither
 they say trouth or no. For I trowe y in
 this lawe ye see nothng vnreasonable.
 For it neither forbiddeth y translations
 to be read y wer already wel done of old
 befoze Wickliffes dayes, nor dāneth his
 because it was new, but because it was
 nought: nor prohibiteth new to be made
 but p̄ouideth that they shal not be read
 if they be misse made, til they be by good
 examination amended, excepte they bee
 such translations as Wickliffe made and
 Tyndall, that the malicious minde of y
 translatour had in such wise handled it
 as it wer labor lost to goe about to mēde
 them. I long by my trouth quod he, and
 euen spt on thoznes, tyll I see that con-
 ditucion. For not my self onely, but eve-
 ry man els hath euer takē it farre other-

It is a dam-
 gerous thing
 to translate
 scripture.

wise, that euer I haue heard spokē ther-
 of tyll now. But surely I will see it my
 self ere I slepe. We shalbe sower eased w
 I. For I cannot suffer to see you write so
 log on thoznes. And therfoze ye shall see
 it by & by. And therwith I set him furth
 the constitucious prouincial with Lin-
 wood therupō, & turned him to the place
 in the tytle *De magistris*: Whiche whan
 hymselfe had read: he said he meruayled
 much how it happened, that in so playn
 a matter men bee so farre abused, to re-
 port it so farre wrong. This groweth w
 I partly by malice, partly by slouth and
 negligence, in that folke bee moze glad
 to beleue and tel furth a thing that may
 soun to the disprayse of the cleargie, thā
 to searche and be sure whether they say
 true or no.

The. 15. chapter.

The messenger moueth against the
 cleargie, y though they haue made no
 lawe therof: yet they will in dede sus-
 fer none englishe byble in no mannes
 hand, but vse to burne thē where they
 find them, and sometime to burne the
 man too. And for ensauple he layeth
 one Richard Hūne, thewyng that the
 chaunceler of London murdered him
 in prision & after hāged him, sayning
 that he hanged himself, and after con-
 demned him of heresie, because he had
 an englishe bible, & so burned the byble
 and him together, whereunto the au-
 tho: aunswereth.



Suppose quod he that this op-
 inion is rather growe ano-
 ther way, that is to wit by the
 reaso that the clergie, though
 the law serue thē not therfoze
 doe yet in dede take al translations out
 of euery ley mans hand. And sometyne
 with those that be burned or coucted of
 heresie, they burne the englishe byble
 out respect, be y translation old or new,
 bad or good. Forsoth w I, if thys were
 so, than were it in my mynde not well
 done. But I belieue ye mystake it. How
 bett, what ye haue seene I can not saye.
 but my self haue seen and can shew you
 bybles saye and old wryten in englishe,
 whiche haue been knowen & seen by the
 bythop of the dyoces, & left in leye mens
 handes & womens to suche as he knewe
 for good and catholike folke, that used it
 with deuocion & sobrenes. But of truth
 al such as are founde in y handes of he-
 retikes, they vse to take away. But they
 doe

A doe cause notte to be burned as farre as euer I coude wit, but onely suche as he founden faultie. Wherof many be sette forth with euill prologes or gloses maliciouslye made by Wickliffe and other heretikes. For no god manne would (I wene) be so mad to burne vp the byble, wherin they founde no faulte, nor anye lawe that letted it to be looked on & read. Marve quod he, but I haue heard e good men say, that euen here in London not many yeres agoe in the dayes of the bishoppe that last dyed, they burned vp as fayre bybles in englishe as any mā hath lightly seene, and therto as faulties for ought that any man could fynd, as any byble is in latine. And yet besydes thys they burned vp the dead bodye of the mā himselfe, whom themself had hanged in the byshoppes prison before, making as though the man had hanged himself. And of the burning of his body had they no colour, but onely because they found englishe bybles in his house, wherin they neuer founde other faulte, but because they wer in englishe. Who told you thys tale quod I? Forsooth diuers honest mē quod he, that sawe it, and speciallye one that sawe the man hangyng in the byshoppes prison ere he was cutte down. And he tolde me that it was wel & clerelye proued, that the chaunceler and hys keepers had kylled the man first, & than haged him after. And that they had laid hereby to hym, onely for hatersd that he sued a premunyre agaynst dyuers persons, for a suite taken aboute a mortuary in the audience of the archebishop of Canterbury. And than they proued the hereby by nothing elles, but by the possession of a good englishe byble. And vpo hereby so proued agaynst hym who they had hanged, lest he shoulde say for hymselfe, they burned vp the holvy scripture of god, and the body of a good man therewith. For I haue heard him called a very honest person & of a good substance. Forsooth quod I, of good substance he was I think wel worth a thousand markes. And of his worldlye conuersacion among h people I haue herd none harme. But surely as touchig his faith toward christ, me thinketh I may be bold to say that he was not honest. And as touchig trouth in wordes, he that hath tolde you thys tale, was not so honest in dede as me thinketh ye take hym for. Why q he doe ye know the matter well? Forsooth quod I so wel I knowe it from toppe to toe, that I suppose there be not very ma-

ny manne that knoweth it much better. For I haue not only been diuers tymes present my self at certain examinations therof, but haue also dyuers and manye times sunderlye talked with almost all such, excepte the dead man hymselfe, as most knew of the matter: which matter was many times in sondry places examined. But speciallye at Baynardes castle one day was it examined at greate length and by a lōg time euery man being sent for before, and readye there all that could be found that any thing could tel, or that had said they could any thing tell in the matter. And thys examinacion was had before dyuers great lordes spiritual and temporal, and other of the kynges honozable counsayl, sent thither by his highnes for h nones of his blessed zeale & princelye desyre bozne to the searching of h trueth. Wherunto his gracious mynd was much eclined, & had ben by a ryght honozable man enformed, h ther was one had shewed a frend of hys that he coude goe take him by the sene that kylled Hunne, for Richard Hunne was his name who ye speake of. I was also my self present at the iudgemēt geuen in Poules, wherupō his boke and his bodye were burned. And by all these thinges I very wel know, h he of whom ye haue heard this mater, hath told you tales farre from the trueth. In good sayth quod your frende, he tolde me one thing that ye speake of nowe: that there was one that sayde he coude goe take hym by the sene that kylled Richard Hunne, and that he did so in dede before the Lordes, and came euen there to the chaunceler and sayde: my lordes thys is he. But whē he was asked how he knew it: he confelld that it was by such an vnlawfull cracte as was not taken for a profe. For it was (they say) by necromancy. And the bishops that wer there wold haue haue had that man burned too for witthcraft. And told me also that there was another which had seene many mē that had hanged themselfe: a man that had been long in office vnder dyuers of the kynges almayners, to whome the goodes of such men as kyll themselfe be appointed by the lawe, and hys office, as dead andes to be geue in almes. This man as I haue heard saye, shewed vnto the lordes by suche experiance as he had good and playn tokens, by whiche they percepued well that Hunne dyd neuer hang hymselfe. I haue heard also that a spirituall man, and one that loued well

Richard Hunne

The kynges almayners haue they goodes that kyll them selfe.

A the chaunceler, and was a labourer for that parte, yet could not denye befoze al the Lordes, but that he had tolde a temporall manne and a frende of hys, that Hunne hadde neuer been accused of heresye if he hadde neuer sued the premynure. And by saynte Marpe that was a shrewde woorde. Howe be it in dede it went not so nere the matter as the other two thynges dydde. Wes in good saythe quod I, al thre like nere whan thei wer all hearde. But of trouthe manye other thynges were there layde, that vpon the hearing semed muche moze suspicious than these. Whiche yet whan thei wer answered, alway lost moze than halfe theyr strengthe. But as for these thre matters I promise you proued very tryffles, and such, as if ye had hearde them, ye woulde haue laughed at them seuen pere after. I beseeche you quod he let me heare howe they proued. I am lothe for I to let you, and leese your time in suche tryffles. Howe beit, sith you long so soze therfore, rather than ye should lese your chyldre for them, ye shall haue them all thre as shortly as I can. If ye must vnderstande, that because the cumming together of the Lordes fro Grenewiche to Wapnarde castell for the trying out of the matter shoulde not bee straitrate, there was suche diligence done befoze, that euery manne that aught had sayde therein, was ready there agaynst theyr cummyng. Where they beganne with the fyrste poynte that ye spake of, as the speciall mocion whereupon the kynges highnes hadde sent them thither. Wherfore after the rehearfall made of hys cause of theyr cummyng: the greatest temporall Lorde there presente, sayde vnto a certayne seruaunte of hys owne standyng there beside. Syr ye tolde me that one shewed you that he coulde goe take hym by the seeue that kyled Hunne.

Hauē ye broughte hym hether? Syr quod he, if it lyke your Lordeshyp thys manne it was that tolde me so: poynting to one y he had caused to come thether. Than my Lorde asked that man, howe saye ye syr, can ye dooe as ye sayde ye coulde? Forsoothe my Lorde quod he, and it lyke poure Lordeshyppe I sayde not so muche, thys gentleman did sumwhat mylltake me. But in dede I told hym that I hadde a neighbour that told me that he coulde doe it. Where is that neighbour quod my Lorde? Thys man syr quod he byngeth furth one whiche had also been warned to be there. Than

was he asked whether he had sayde that he coulde doe it. Pape forsoothe quod he my Lorde, I sayde not that I coulde doe it my selfe: but I sayde that one told me that he coulde doe it. Well quod my lord who tolde you so? Forsoth my lord quod he my neyghbour here. Than was that man asked. Sir know you one that can tell who kyled Richard Hunne? Forsoothe quod he and it lyke your Lordeshyppe, I sayd not that I knewe one surely that could tell who hadde kyled hym: but I sayde in dede that I knowe one whiche I thought verely could tel who kyled him. Well quod the Lordes at the last, yet with muche woze we come to somwhat. But wherby thinke you that he can tell? Pape forsoothe my Lorde quod he it is a womanne, I woulde she were here with poure Lordeshyppe nowe. Well quod my Lorde, woman or man all is one, she shall haue wheresoeuer she be. By my fayth my Lordes quod he and she were with you, she woulde tell you wonders. For by God I haue wytt her to tell manye meruaylous thynges ere nowe. Why quod the Lordes, what haue you hearde her tolde? Forsoothe my Lordes quod he, if a thyng hadde been stolen, she woulde haue tolde who hadde it. And therefore I thinke she could as wel tel who kyled Hunne, as who stole an horse. Surely sayde the Lordes so thinke all we too I trowe. But howe coulde she tell it, by the deuill? Pape by my trouthe I trowe quod he, for I could neuer see her vse anye worse waye than lookinge in ones hande. Therewith the Lordes laughed and asked, what is she? Forsoothe my Lordes quod he, an Egypcian, and she was lodged here at Lambeth, but she is gone ouer sea nowe. Howbeit I trowe she be not in her own countrey yet: for they saye it is a great way hence, and she went ouer litle moze than a moneth agoe. How forsooth quod your frend, thys processe came to a wise purpose, here was a gret poss wel thwyrted to a pudding prike. But I pray you to what poynte came the seconde matter of hym that hadde been in office vnder so manye of the kynges almaygners that he knewe by his owne experyence, and proued that Richard Hunne hadde not hanged hymselfe. Forsoothe quod I, he was called in next. And than was he asked wherby he knewe it. But would God ye had sene his countenance. The man had of likelyhod said somewhat to farre, and was much amased, and looked as though

As though his eyes would have fallen out of his head into the Lordes lappes. But to the question he answered and sayde, that he sawe that very well, for he sawe hym bothe ere he was taken downe and after. What than quod the lordes, so didde there many moe, whiche yet vpon the sight could not tell that. So my lordes quod he, but I haue another insighte in suchethinges than other men haue. What insighte quod they? For sothe quod he it is not vnknewen that I haue occupped a greate whyle vnder diuers of the kinges almayners, and haue scene and considered manye that haue hanged themselves, and therby if I see one hange, I can tell anone whether he hanged himself or not. By what token can you tell quod the Lordes? For sothe quod he I can not tell the tokens but I perceiue it well ynough by mine owne sighte. But whan they heard him speke of his owne sighte, & thertwith sawe what sight he had, loking as though his eyes would have fallen in their lappes, there couldoe fewe forbear laughinge, & sayde: we see well surely that ye haue a sight by your selfe. And than sayd one Lord merily, peradventure as some man is so cunning by experience of ieweltes that he canne perceue by his owne eyes whether a stone bee righte or counterfeit though he canne not wel make another man to perceue the tokens: so this good felowe, though he can not tell vs his markes, yet he hath such an experience in hanging, that himselfe perceineth vpon the sighte, whether the manne hanged hymselfe or no. Yea for sothe my Lord quod he enē as your lordship sayth. For I knowe it well ynough my selfe, I haue scene so many by reason of mine office. Why quod another Lord merily, your office hath no more experience in hanging, than hath an hangman: And yet he canot tell. Nay sayd he, & it like your lordship, he medleth not wth them y^e hang themselves as I doe. Well quod one of his lordes, howe manye of them haue ye medled wth in your daies? With many my lord quod he. For I haue been officer vnder .ii. almayners, & therfore I haue seen manye. How many quod one of his lordes? I can not tell quod he, howe manye: but I wot wel I haue scene many. Haue ye scene quod one, an hundred? Nay quod he not an hundred. Haue ye scene fowze scoze & ten: therat a litle he studied as one standynge in a doubte, and that were loth to lye, and at last he sayde: that he thoughte nay, not full ye

fowze scoze and tenne. Then was he asked whether he hath scene twentie. And thereto withoute anye stricking, he answered, naye not twentie. Therat the Lordes laughed well, to see that he was so sure that he hadde not scene twentie, and was in doute whether he hadde scene fowze scoze and ten. Than was he asked whether he hadde scene fyftene. And therto he sayde shortly nay. And in likewise of tenne. At the last they came to fyue, and fro fyue to fowze. And there he beganne to study agayn. Than came they to thre, and than for shame he was fayne to say that he hadde scene so manie and moe too. But whan he was asked, whan, whom, and in what place, necessite drave hym at last vnto the trouthe, wherby it appeared that he neuer hadde scene but one in all his lyfe. And that was an yfth felow called croke shake, whome he hadde scene hangynge in an olde barne. And whan all his cunning was come to thys, he was bidde walke lyke himselfe. And one sayde vnto hym that because he was not yet cunninge ynough in the craft of hanging: it was pittie that he hadde no more experience thereof by one moe. For sothe quod your frende, this was a madde felowe. Came the thyrde tale to as wise a poynt: Ye shall heare quod I. The temporall manne that hadde reported it vpon the mouthe of the spirituall manne, was a good worshipfull manne, and for his trouthe and worshippe was in greate credite. And surely the spirituall manne was a manne of worship also, and well known bothe for cunning and vertuous. And therfore the Lordes muche meruayled, knowing the both for suche as they were, that they shoulde bee like to fynde eyther the one or the other, eyther make an vntreue reporte, or vntreuly denye the trouthe. And first the temporall manne before the Lordes in the hearing of the spirituall persone standynge by, sayde. My Lordes all, as helpe me God and halidome maister doctour here sayd vnto me his own mouth, that if Hunne had not sued the premunye, he shoulde neuer haue been accused of heresye. Howe say you maister doctour quod the Lordes, was that true, or elles why sayde you so? Surely my lordes quod he, I sayd not all thing so, but marre thys I sayde in dede, that if Hunne had not been accused of heresye, he wold neuer haue sued the premunye. Doe my Lordes quod the other, I am gladd ye

A fynde me a true manne. Will ye commaunde me any moze seruice? Saye by my trowth quod one of the lordes, not in this matter by my will, ye may goe whā ye wil. For I haue espyed good mā, so y woordes be al one it maketh no mater to you which way they stand: but al is one to you a horse mill & a mill horse, drinke ere ye goe, & goe ere ye drinke. Saye my lordes q̄ he, I wil not drinke God yelde you. And therewith he made cartellie and went his way, leauing some of y lordes laughing to see y good playn old honest man, how that as contrary as their two tales wer: yet whan he heard them both agayn, he marked no differēce betwene thē, but toke them both for one, because the woordes were one. **W**y my trowth q̄ your friend, these thre thinges came merely to passe, & I woulde not for a good thing but I had herd thē. For here may a man see, y misse vnderstanding maketh misse reportyng. And a tale y fleeth thorow manye mouthes, catcheth manye newe fethers: which, whan they be pulled away agayn, leaue him as pilled as a coote, & sometyme as bare as a byrdes arle. But I think verely for al this, ther was gret euidence geue agaynst y chaunceler, for he was at lēgth indited of Hūnes death, & was a gret while in p̄son, & in cōclusion, neuer durst abide y t̄pal of .xii. men for hys acquittayle: but was saine by friendship to geat a pardon. **B**ut I beseeche you for my mindes sake, shew me what thought your selfe therein. Of trowth q̄ I there wer diuers suspicious thinges laid agaynst him, & al those well and substancially aunswered agayn for him. Howbeit, vpon y telling of a tale oftentime happeth, that whā all is herd that can be said therein: yet shall the hearers some thinke one waye and some another. And therefore though I can not thinke but that the Jewery which were right honest men, founde the verdict as themselfe thought in their owne conscience to be trowth: yet in mine own mind for ought that euer I herd thereof in my life, as help me god I could neuer think it. If he had not been gyltie quod youre frēd, he would neuer haue sued his pardon. Yes quod I, right wise men haue I heard saye ere this, that they will neuer refuse neither gods pardō nor y kinges. It wer no wisdom in a matter of many suspicious tales, be they neuer so false, to stand on .xii. mennes mouthes where one may find a surer way. But I think verely, y if he had been gyltie, he should

Will Under-
standing.

neuer haue gotten his pardon. For albe- **E**
it that there was neuer I trow brought **King Henry**
in this worlde a p̄ince of moze benigne **the 6th.**
nature, nor of moze mercifull mind, thā
is our souerain lord that nowe reigneth
and long mought raiḡn vpon vs, where
by neuer king coulde finde in his heart
moze frely to forgeue and forgeatte of-
fences doone and committed vnto him-
selfe: yet hath hys highnes such a seruet
affection to ryghte and iustice in other
mennes causes, and suche a tender re-
le to the conseruacion of hys subiectes (of
whose liues his high wisdom confide-
reth many to stande in p̄rell by the ge-
uing of pardon to a few wilfull murder-
ers) that neuer was there kynge, I be-
lieue that euer ware the crowne in this **I**
realme, whiche hath in so many yeres
geuen vnto such folke so few. And ther-
fore I make my selfe sure that in such a
wilfull purposed haynous cruell dede
as thys hadde been if it had been true, al
the frendes that could haue been founde
for the chaunceler in thys worlde:
could neuer haue gotten his pardone to
passe in suche wyse, had it not be that v-
pon the report of all the circumstances,
the kinges high p̄udence whiche with-
out flattery, perceth as depe into the bo-
tome of a doutful matter as euer I saw
man in my life, had well perceiued hys
innocency. And sith I verely belieue, **S**
that if he had been gyltie, he neuer could
haue gotten in suche an haynous mur-
der, any pardon of the kinges highnes,
I dare make my selfe much moze bold of
his innocencie now. For ye shal vnder-
stand that he neuer sued pardō therfore.
But after long examinatiō of the mat-
ter, as well the chaunceler as the other,
beyng indited of the dede, and arrayned
vpon the inditement in the kinges bench,
pleaded that they were not gyltie. And
thereupon the kinges grace being well
and sufficiently enfourmed of y trowth,
and of hys blessed disposicion not wil-
linge that there should in hys name any
falle matter bee mayntayned, gaue in
commaundemente to hys attourney to
confesse theyr p̄ces to be true withoute
any further trouble. Which thing in so
saythfull a p̄ince, is a cleare declaraci-
on that the matter layde to the chaunceler
was vntue. And as for my selfe, in
good sayth as I told you befoze, I neuer
heard in my life (and yet haue I herd all
I wene that well coulde be sayde) therein
any thynge that moued me after bothe
the parties hearde, to thinke that he
should

A shoulde be gyltye. And besydes all thys, consideryng that Hunne was (as they that well know him say he was in dede) though he wer a fayre dealer amog his neighbours, yet a man highe mynded, & sette on the glorie of a victoꝛye, whiche he hoped to haue in hys premyarye, wherof he muche boasted as they sayd, amog his familiar frendes, that he trusted to bee spoken of long after hys dayes, and haue his mater in the peres and termes called Hunnes case. Which when he perceiued would goe agaynst his purpote, and that in the tempoꝛal lawe he shoulde not winne his spures, and ouer that in the spirytual lawe perceiued so much of his secreete soꝛes vntoꝛrapped and opꝛouered, that he beganne to fal in feare of woꝛldly shame. It is to me much more likelpe, that for wertenesse of hys lyfe, he ride hymselfe out therof (which maner of affection, we see not seldom happen, speciallve sꝛy the deuyl myght peraduenture idyne therewith a mercaploꝛs hope, of the whiche after happed that the suspition of his deathe myght be layd to the charge and parcel of the chaunceler.) This is I say, much more likely to me, than the thyngs wherof I neuer heard the lyke befoꝛe, that the byshops chaunceloure shoulde kille in the Lollardes towꝛe a manne so soꝛe suspecte and conuict of heresy, wherby he myght bring hymselfe in busynesse, whereas if he hated the manne. For kyll hym he would not ye wot wel if he loued hym he might easelye brynge hym to shame, and peraduenture to shamefull deathe also. In good faith quod your frende, with I that it were trewe, that he was an heretyke in dede, and in peryll to bee so proued, I woulde well thinke, that in malice and dyspayre he hanged hymselfe. God quod I knoweth of all thyng the tꝛouth. But what I haue heard therein, that shall I shew you. My self was pꝛeset in Woules whan the byshop, in the presence of the Mayꝛe and the aldermen of the cite, condemned hym foꝛ an heretyke after hys deathe. And than were there read openly the deposicions, by which it was wel proued that he was conuict as well of dyuers other heresies, as of misbeliefe towarde the holy sacrament of the aulter. And thereupon was the iudgement geuen, that his body shoulde be burned, and so was it. Nowe thys is quod I to me a full pꝛofe. For I assure you the byshop was a very wyse man, a vertuous, and a cunnyng. By saynt Mary quod

he, the pꝛofe is the better by so muche. I shall tell you quod I another thyng, whiche whan ye heare, ye shall peraduenture belieue it yet the better. That would I gladly knowe quod he. For as farre as I can heare, neuer ma had hym suspecte of anye suche thyng befoꝛe. For sothe quod I that can I not tell. But so it happed, that as I remember, sꝛe or seuen yere after that Hunne was thus hanged, and hys bodye burned foꝛ an heretyke, ther was one in Essex a carpenter, that vsed to make pꝛyꝛes, whiche hadde entended with other suche as he was hymselfe to doe great robbery, and therupon was he bꝛought vnto h court. Wher, by the commaundement of the kinges grace, a greate honozable estate of thys reaime, and my selfe hadde hym in examinacon. Wher in among other thynges he confessed that he hadde longe holden dyuers heresies, whiche he sayd hys brother being a clerke of a church had taughte bothe hys father and hym. And I promise you those heresies were of a high tꝛyght. Than he shewed vs what other cunnyng maisters of that schole he had heard rede, & speciallve in a place whiche he named vs in London, wher he sayde that suche heretykes wer wont to resoꝛte to theyꝛ readings, in a chamber at midnight. And whan he asked him the names of them that were wont to haunte those midnyght lectures, he rehearsed vs dyuers. And among other he named Richard Hunne. Wherof we somewhat mercaploꝛed in oure myndes, but nothyng sayde we thereto, but lette him rehearse on, all such as he could cal to mynde. And whan he stopped & could remember no moꝛe, than asked we of the that he had named, what they were, and where they dwelled. And he tolde vs of some of them that were conuict, and some that wer fledde, and some that wer yet at that tyme dwellinge still in the towne. And in the waye whan we asked hym, what man was that Hunne that he spake of? he tolde vs hys persone and his house. And where is he nowe sayde we? Mary quod he I went to Turney, & whan I came thence agayn, than heard I say that he was haged in the lollardes towꝛe, and his body burned foꝛ an heretyke. And thus there learned we log after, that Hunne had haunted heretykes lectures by nighte long befoꝛe, whiche we declared vnto the kynges hyghnesse as he had confessed. And hys hyghnesse thoughte he was soꝛye that any manne

q. iij. shoulde

Hunne was
conuict of
heresie.

R should be so leude, yet hyghely dyd re-
 force that the goodnes of God broughte
 suche hidde mischiese moze and moze to
 lyght. So after hadde we (by the kinges
 commaundement) that maimes brother
 in examinacion, which dyd in dede con-
 fesse nothing, neither of the felonies noz
 of the heresies. But yet hys brother dyd
 abide by them, and auowed them in his
 face, with suche markes and tokens, as
 it might wel appere that he sayd trueth.
W And surely meruayle wer it if he would
 falsely haue sayned such haprous thyn-
 ges agaynst his own brother, his own
 father, & himselfe being thereto nothing
 compelled, noz putte eyther in payne or
 feare. Powe was the father dead, and
 other could we not come by, whome we
 mighte further examine of that nyghte
 scole, saying that he, whiche as I tolde
 you confessed this matter: shewed vs also
 at the fyrst tyme of one man in Lon-
 don taken for good and honest, whiche
 was as he said, a scholer also of his bro-
 thers in those heresies: whiche man for
 hys honestie we forbare to medie woth,
 tyll we should haue the other brother:
 Whome as sone as we had in handes,
 and that he was committed to the Spar-
 thalpe, thys other man, whiche was as
 I tolde you, deteced vnto vs for an here-
 tike and a scholer of hys, came to me to
 labour and sue for him, pretending he
 did it for charitie. And for as muche as
 we thought we could not sayle of hym
 whan we would haue hym: we forbare
 therfore to examine hym, till we should
 haue examyned the other whome he la-
 boured for. But than were we not ware
 in what wyse we should be disappoynted
 of him. For so mishapped it in dede,
 that after hys beeyng at me to labour
 for him, whose scholer in heresie he was
 detecte to be, he was in hys owne house
 sodeynlye killeken and slayne. And that
 wretched ende had he. What conscience
 he dyed with, God knoweth, for I can
 tell you no further. By saynte John of
 your frende, but vpon the whole tale it
 semeth to me very clere that Hune was
 himselfe not clere of the matter. Surely
 quod I so semed it as farre as I could
 witte, vnto as many as euer hearde it, &
 would yet I wene haue semed so moze
 clerely, if they had been present at the ex-
 aminacions, and sene vnder what ma-
 ner the man came forth therewith. But
 yet quod your frend, as for this englysh
 byble, though Hune were himselfe an
 heretike, yet myght the booke be good y-

nough. And no good reason is there why
 a good booke should be burned with an
 sull man. Pe cal me well home of I, and
 put me well in minde. For that was the
 thing whereby ye take occasion to talke
 of Hune: of whom we talked so long,
 that at last I had forgotten wherefore, &
 wherupon we entred into that commu-
 nicacion. And yet make those booke not
 a litle to the matter that we had in hand,
 I meane towarde the perceuyng what
 opinton that Hune was of. For surely
 at such time as he was denouced for an
 heretike, there laye his englyshe byble o-
 pen, and some other englyshe bookes of
 hys, that euery man might see the places
 noted with his own hand, such wordes,
 and in suche wyse, that there would be no
 wise man that god wer, haue any great
 doute after he sight therof, what nau-
 ghety mindes the men had, bothe he that so
 noted them, and he that so made them.
 I remember not now the specialties of
 the matter, noz the formall wordes as
 they wer wytted. But thys I remember
 well, that besides other thinges framed
 for the sauour of diuers other heresies,
 there were in the prologe of that byble,
 such wordes touching the blessed sacra-
 ment, as good christen men did much ab-
 horre to heare, and which gaue the rea-
 ders vndoubted occasion to thynke that
 the booke was wyttten after Wickliffes
 coppe, and by hym translated into oure
 tongus. And yet whether the booke be
 burned or secretly kept, I can not sure-
 ly say. But truely were the cleargie of
 my mind, it should be somewhere refer-
 red for the perpetual profe of the mater,
 there hath gone so much suspicious ru-
 mour therof. Which as I beleue wer al-
 well answered, and the mind fully sa-
 tisfied of anye man that wyse were, and
 good therewith, that once had ouerloo-
 ked, reade, and aduisedlye considered
 that booke.

The .16. Chapter.

The messager rehearseth some cau-
 ses which he hath herd laid by some of
 the cleargie: wherfore he scripture should
 not be suffred in englyshe. And the au-
 thor sheweth his mind, that it wer co-
 uenient to haue the byble in englyshe:
 And therewith endeth the thyrde booke.

Wher quod your frende, yet for
 all this, ca I see no cause why
 the cleargie should kepe the
 byble out of lay mennes han-
 des, that can no moze but they: mocher
 tong