ever the understanding of mankind can be so completely debased as to admit this portentous doctrine, the dominion of the priest must be absolute : he is thus invested with a creative power ; after the admission of such a dogma, no other can be found of very hard digestion ; and he who exercises so much influence over a future world, must not be left without an ample share of what belongs to this. A persecution was again excited against the reformer ; and the duke of Lancaster, who had hitherto befriended him, and who was well aware of the secular corruptions of the clergy, was not however prepared to support him in his attack on what was considered as a fundamental doctrine of the church. Courtenay, who had now become archbishop of Canterbury, was endowed with the spirit of an inquisitor, and appears to have wanted no inclination to confer upon Wycliffe the honour of martyrdom. This venerable man was summoned before a convocation held at Oxford ; but although he made no recantation of his supposed errors, they did not venture to treat him as an obstinate heretic. A letter was however procured from the king, command­ing him to banish himself from the university. About the same period, he was cited to appear before the pope ; but, in return, he gave his holiness some salutary advice, and informed him that he neither felt strength nor inclination for so long a journey. His constitution was indeed ex­hausted by his multifarious exertions, and he had already been affected with a paralysis, which at length proved fatal. But after his final retirement to Lutterworth, he still continued to labour in the same great cause. He died on the last day of December 1384, when, according to the computation of his biographers, he had attained the age of sixty.

The grain of mustard-seed which was now sown became a great tree. The doctrines which Wycliffe propagated with so much zeal and ability, could not again be sup­pressed : the scat of Antichrist was gradually shaken from its old foundation ; and the impulse which he gave to reli­gious enquiry is apparently destined to reach the distant ages of futurity. His theological opinions cannot be de­tailed in this brief and imperfect notice. It may however be remarked, that he clearly anticipated the most distin­guishing doctrines of the protestants, and that his opinions on certain points present an obvious coincidence with those of Calvin. Of the simplicity of primitive times, he was too devoted an admirer to secure the unqualified approbation of modern churchmen ; and one biographer is not a little scandalized, because it seems perfectly clear that he did not consider the episcopal order as at all essential to the legitimate constitution of a Christian church. We find Wycliffe “ zealously inculcating the lessons of inspiration on the fall of man, and the consequent depravity of human nature ; on the excellence and perpetual obligation of the moral law ; on the exclusive dependence of every child of Adam, for the remission of his sins, on the atonement of Christ ; and for victory over temptation, and the possession of holiness, on the aids of divine grace.” We have already had occasion to state, that the influence of his opinions ex­tended to persons of various ranks and denominations. Lord Cobham, the most illustrious of his followers, sealed his tes­timony with his blood, and many individuals of inferior con­dition were likewise brought to the stake. The religion of the people was to be purified by fire and fagot ; and Henry the Fifth, endeavouring to atone for the follies of his youth by the bigotry of his manhood, rendered himself a willing instrument of persecution in the hands of an unholy and unrelenting priesthood.

The influence of Wycliffe’s doctrines soon extended from England to the continent, and their connexion with the subsequent progress of the reformation may very easily be traced. The next conspicuous stage was the kingdom of Bohemia. The king of Bohemia’s sister was the consort of Richard the Second, and she came to England in the year 1382. She was a religious princess, and constantly studied the four gospels in English, explained by the ex­positions of the doctors. The Bohemians who had fre­quented her court, returned to their own country, and carried along with them some of the works of the great reformer, which, being written in Latin, were intelligible to the learned of all the European nations. Jerom of Prague, who had studied in the university of Oxford, is said to have translated many of his works into the Bohe­mian language ; but, according to another and a more pro­bable account, be only copied some of them in England, and carried the transcripts to Bohemia.@@1 By this eminent person, and by his pious leader John Huss, the writings and character of Wycliffe were held in the highest venera­tion ; and they endeavoured to follow his footsteps, by con­tributing to remove the corruptions of the church. Their earthly career was however terminated in a more tragical manner. The council of Constance, which condemned them both to the flames, added gross perfidy to inhuman cruelty, by violating the safeconduct which Huss had ob­tained from the emperor Sigismund, and which that prince had not the honour or the resolution to enforce.@@2 The same council, a miserable assemblage of those who acted as the representatives of the Christian community, pro­nounced sentence of condemnation on the whole of Wy­cliffe’s writings ; and having decided that he had died an obstinate heretic, and that his memory should be held as infamous, they further decreed that his bones, which had now reposed in the dust for the space of thirty years, should be removed from consecrated ground, and scattered on the dunghill. But the cardinals, archbishops, bishops, abbots, and doctors, who were permitted to play such fantastic tricks before high Heaven, are themselves mingled with the vilest earth, while the name and memory of John Wycliffe con­tinue to be held in unimpaired veneration. (x.)

WYCOMBE, Chipping or High, a market-town of the county of Bucks and hundred of Desborough, twenty-nine miles from London. It is a well-built town, pleasantly situ­ated on a brook which joins the Thames at Marlow, but near Wycombe turns the wheels of several paper-mills, and of others for grinding corn. It is incorporated under a mayor, four aldermen, and eleven councillors. A good market is held on Friday. The population amounted in 1821 to 5599, and in 1831 to 6299.

WYE, a town of the county of Kent, in the lathe of Scray and hundred of the same name, fifty-five miles from Lon­don. It stands on the river Stour, and had a market, which has of late years been discontinued. The population amounted in 1821 to 1508, and in 1831 to 1639.

Wye, a river of South Wales, which, issuing out of Plin- lymmon Hill, very near the source of the Severn, crosses the north-east corner of Radnorshire, giving name to the town of Rhyadergowy (Fall of the Wye), where it is preci­pitated in a cataract ; then flowing between this county and Brecknockshire, it crosses Herefordshire, and dividing the counties of Gloucester and Monmouth, falls into the mouth

@@@, Lenfant, Hist, du Concile de Constance, tom. i. p. 110. Gilpin, who i« not very critical in bis enquiries, has stated that “ he translated many of them into bis native language, having with great pains made himself master of the English.” (Lives of John Wickliff, and of the most eminent of his Disciples, Lord Cobbam, John lluss, Jerome of Prague, and Zisca. Lond. 1765, 8vo.)

@@@, If the reader has any inclination to see how perfidy and cruelty can be justified by a true Jesuit, we beg leave to refer him to the elaborate publication of Heribertus Rosweydus, “ De Fille Hæreticis servanda ex decreto Concilii Constantiensis Dissertatio cum Daniele Plancio, Scbolœ Delρbensis Moderatore; in qua, quæ de Husso Historia est excutitur.” Antverpiœ, 1610, 8vo.