2.3: The Examination of Anne Askew

The first examination of Mistres Anne Askew, before the inquisitours. 1545.

TO satisfy your expectation: good people (sayth she) this was my first examination in the yeare of our Lorde. 1545. and in the in the month of March.

First Christoph. Dare examined me at Sadlers Hall, being one of the Quest, and asked if I did not beleue that the sacrament, hanging ouer the altar, was the very bodye of Christ really. Then I demaunded this question of hym: wherfore S. Stephen was stoned to death, and he sayd, he could not tell. Then I answered, that no more woulde I assoyle his vayne question.

Secondly, he sayd that there was a woman, which did testifie that I should read, howe God was not in Temples made with handes. Then I shewed him the 7. and 17 chap. of the actes of the Apostles, what Stephen and paule had said therein. Wherupon he asked me how I took those sentences? I answered, I would not throw pearles amōg swine, for Acornes were good enough.

Thirdly, he asked me wherefore I sayde that I had rather to read fiue lines in the Bible, then to heare 5. Masses in the
temple? I confessed, that I sayd no lesse: not for the disprayse of either þe epistle or the Gospel, but because þe one.

K. Henry. 8. The first examination of Anne Askew Martyr, before the Bishop.

. . . did greatly edify me, and the other nothing at all. As S. Paul doth witnes in the 14. chap. of his first epistle to the Cor. where as he sayth. If the trumpet geueth an vncertayne sound, who will prepare himselfe to the battell?

Fourthly: he layd vnto my charge that I should say: if an ill priest ministred, it was the deuill and not God.

My answere was, that I neuer spake any such thyng. But this was my saying: that whosoeuer he were that ministred vnto me, his il cōditiōs could not hurt my faith, but in spirit I receiued neuethertheles, þe body & bloud of Christ

He asked me what I said concerning confession? I answered him my meaning, which was as S. Iames sayth, that euery man ought to knowledge his faultes to other, and the one to pray for the other.

Sixtly, he asked me what I sayd to the kinges booke? And I aunswered him, that I coulde say nothing to it, because I neuer saw it.

Seuēthly, he asked me if I had the spirit of God in me? I answered, if I had not, I was but a reprobate or cast away. Then he sayd he had sent for a priest to examine me, which was here at hand.

The priest asked me what I sayd to the Sacrament of the aulter, & required much to know therein my meaning. But I desired him againe, to hold me excused concerning that matter. None other answere would I make him, because I perceiued him to be a papist

Eightly he asked me, if I did not thinke that priuate masses did helpe soules departed? I sayd, it was great idolatry to beleue more in thē, then in the death which Christ dyed for vs.

Then they had me thence vnto my L. Maior, and he examined me, as they had before, and I answered him directly in all thinges as I aunswered the Quest before. Besides this my L. Maior layd one thing to my charge, whiche was neuer spokē of me, but of them: & that was, whether a mouse eating the host, receiued God or no? This question did I neuer ask, but in deede they asked it of me, whereunto I made them no aunswere but smiled

Then the Bishops Chauncellor rebuked me and sayd, þ I was much to blame for vttring the scriptures. For S. Paul (he sayd) forbode women to speake, or to talke of the word of God. I answered him that I knew Paules meaning as well as he, which is in the 1. Corin. 14. that a woman ought not to speak in the congregation by the way of teaching. And thē I asked him, how many women he had seene go into the Pulpit and preach? He sayd he neuer saw none. Then I sayd, he ought to finde no fault in poore women, except they had offended the law

Then the L. Maior commaunded me to warde, I asked him if sureties woulde not serue me, and he made me short answere, that he would take none. Then was I had to the Counter, and there remayned xi. dayes, no frend admitted to speak with me. But in the mean time there was a priest sent to me, which sayd that he was commaunded of the Bishop to examine me, and to geue me good counsell, which he did not. But first he asked me for what cause I was put in the Counter, and I told him, I could not tell. Then he sayd it was great pity that I should be there wōut cause, and concluded
that he was very sorry for me.

Secondly he said, it was told him, that I should deny the Sacrament of the altar. And I answered again that, that I haue said, I haue said.

Thirdly he asked me if I were shrowen, I tolde him, so that I might haue one of these three, that is to say, Doctor Crome, Syr Gillam, or Huntington. I was contented because I knew them to be men of wisedome, as for you or any other I will not dispraise, because I knowe you not. Then he sayd, I would not haue you thinke, but that I, or an other þ shall be brought you, shall be as honest as they, for if we were not, you may be sure the king would not suffer vs to preach. Then I answered by the saying of Salomon. By communning with the wise, I may learne wisdome, But by talking with a foole, I shall take scathe. pro.

Fourthly he asked, if the host should fall, and a Beaste did eate it, whether the beast did receiue God or no? I answered, seing you haue taken the paynes to aske þe questiō I desire you also to assoyle it your selfe: for I will not doe it, because I perceiue you come to tempt me. And he said, it was agaynst the order of scholes, þ he which asked the question, should answere it, I told him, I was but a woman, and knew not the course of scholes.

Fiftly, he asked me, if I entended to receiue the Sacrament at Easter, or no? I answered, that els I were no Christen woman, and thereat I did reioyce, that the time was so neare at hand, and then he departed thence wyth many fayre wordes.

The xxij. day of March, my coosin Britaine came into the Counter vnto me, and asked me whether I might beeput to bayle, or no? Thē went he immediately vnpto my L. Mayor, desiring of him to be so good vnpto me. That I might be bayled. My Lord aunswered him, and sayd that he would be glad to doe the best that in him lay. How be it he could not bayle me, without the consent of a spiritual officer: requiring him to go & speak with the Chauncellor of London. For he sayde, like as he could not committe me to prison without the consent of a spirituall Officer, no more could he bayle me without the consent of the same.

So vpon that, he went to the Chaūcellor, requiring of him as he did before of my Lord Maior. He answered him the that matter was so haynous, that he durst not of him selfe do it, without my Lord of London were made priuy thereunto. But he sayd he would speake vnpto my Lord in it, & badde him repayre vnpto him the nexte morow, and he should wel know my Lords pleasure: And vpon the morrow after, he came thither, and spake both with the Chaūcellor, & with the Bishop of Londō. The Bishop declared vnto him, that he was very well contented that I should come forth to a communication, & appoynted me to appere before him the next day after, at 3, of the clock at afternoone. Moreouer, he sayd vnpto him, that he would, there shold be at the examination such learned men as I was affectioned to, that they might see, & also make report that I was hādled with no rigor. He answered him that he knew no man that I had more affection to, then to the other. Then sayd the Byshop: yes as I vnderstand, she is affectioned to Doct. Crome, Syr Guillam, Whitehead, & Huntingtō that they might heare the matter: for she did know thē to be learned & of a godly iudgemēt. Also he required my cosin Britayn, that he should earnestly perswade me to vtter euē the very bottome of my hart: and he sware by his fidelitye, that no man should take any aduantage of my words: neyther yet would he lay ought to my charge for any thing þ I should there speake: but if I sayde any maner of thing amisses, he with other more would be glad to reforme me therin, with most godly counsell.

On the morow after, the Bishop of Londō sent for me, at one of the clocke, his houre being appoynted at three, & as I
came before him, he said he was very sorry of my trouble, & desired to know my opinion in such matters as were laid against me. He required me in any wise boldly to utter the secrets of my heart, bidding me not to fear in any point, for whatsoever I did say in his house, no man should hurt me for it. I answered: forsooth as your lordship appointed three of the clocke, & my friends shall not come till that hour, I desire you to pardon me of giving answer till they come. Then said he, that he thought it meet to send for those 4 men which were afore named & appointed. Then I desired him not to put them to the paine, for it should not need, because the two gentlemen which were my friends were able enough to testify that I should say. Anone after he went into his gallary with M. Spilman, & willed him in any wise that he should exhort me to utter all that I thought. In the meanwhile he commanded his Archdeacon to come with me, who said unto me: Mistress wherfore are you accused & thus troubled here before the Bishop? To whom I answered again and said: Sir, ask me pray you my accusers, for I know not as yet. Then took he my booke out of my hand, and said: such booke as this, have brought you to the trouble you are in. Beware (sayth he) beware, for he that made this booke and was the author thereof, was an hereticke I warrant you, & burnt in smithfield. Then I asked him, if he were certain and sure, that it was true that he had spoken. And he said he knew well the booke was of I. Frithes making. Then I asked him if he were not ashamed for to judge of the booke before he saw it within, or yet knew the truth thereof. I said also, that such unadvised and hasty judgement is a token apparent of a very slender wit. Then I opened the booke & shewed it him. He said he thought it had bene an other, for he could finde no fault therein. Then I desired him no more to be so unadvisedly rash & swift in judgement, till he throughly knew the truth, and so he departed from me immediately after came my cousin Britaine in with dyuers other, as M. Hall of Grayes Inne, & such other like. Then my Lord of London perswaded my cousin Britaine as he had done oft before, which was that I should utter the bottom of my heart in any wise. My Lord said after this vnto me, that he would I should credit the counsel of such as were my friends and well willers in this behalf, which was, that I should utter all things that burdened my conscience: for he ensured me that I should not need to stand in doubt to say any thing. For like as he promised them (he said) he promised me & would performe it: which was that neither he nor any man for him, should take me at aduantage of any word I should speake: and therefore he bad me say my minde without feare. I answered him that I had . . .

K. Henr. 8. The first examination of Anne Askew martyr. The Bish. misreporte of Anne Askewes confessiō.

. . . nought to say: for my conscience (I thanked God) was burdened with nothing.

Then brought he forth this nonsauiery similitude: that if a man had a wound, no wise Surgeon would minister helpe vnto it before he had seene it vncouered. In like case saith he, can I give you no good counsaille, vnles I know wherewith your conscience is burdened. I answered, that my conscience was cleare in all things: & for to lay a plaister vnto the whole skin, it might appeare much folly.

Then you drive me (saith he) to lay to your charge your own report, which is this: you did say, he that doth receue the Sacrament by the hands of an ill priest, or a sinner, receiueth the deuil and not God. To that I answered, that I neuer spake such words. But as I said afore, both to the Quest and to my Lord Mayor, so say I now agayne, that the wickednes of the priest should not hurt me, but in spirit and fayth, I receiued no lesse then the body and bloude of Christ. Then sayd the Bishop vnto me, what saying is this in spirite? I will not take you at the aduauntage. Then I answered: my Lord without fayth and spirite, I cannot receive him worthily.
Then he layd vnto me, that I should say that the Sacrament remayning in the pixe, was but bread. I answered that I neuer said so, but in deede the Quest asked me such a question, whereunto I would not answer (I sayd) till such tyme as they had assoiled me this questiō of mine, wherfore Stephen was stoned to death? They sayd they knew not. Then sayd I againe, no more would I tell thē, what it was.

Then said my Lord vnto me, that I had alledged a certain text of the scripture. I answered that I alledged none other but S. Paules owne saieng to the Athenians in the xvij. chap. in the Apostles acts, that God dwelleth not in Temples made with hands. Then asked he me what my fayth and beliefe was in that matter? I aunswered him, I beleue as the Scripture doth teach me.

Then inquired he of me, what if the Scripture doe say that it is the body of Christ? I beleue sayd I, as the scripture doth teach me. Then asked he agayne, what if the scripture do say that it is not the body of Christ? My aunswer was still, I beleue as the scripture informeth me. And vpon this argument he taried a great while, to haue driuen me to make him an aunswere to his mynde. Howbeit I would not: but concluded this with him, that I beleuee therin and in all other things as Christ and his holy apostles did leaue them.

Then he asked me why I had so few wordes? And I answered, God hath geuen me the gift of knowledge, but not of utterance. And Salomon saith: That a woman of few wordes is a gift of God. Prou. xix.

Fiftly, my Lord laid vnto my charge, that I should saye that the Masse was superstitious, wicked, & no better then idolatry. I aunswered him no: I said not so. Howbeit I say the quest did aske me whether priuate masse did relieue soules departed or no? Vnto whom then I answered: O Lord what idolatry is this, that we should rather beleue in priuate masses, then in the healthsome death of the dere sonne of God? Then said my Lord againe; what an aunswer is that? though it be but meane (sayd I) yet it is good enough for the question

Then I told my Lord that there was a priest, which did heare what I said there before my L. Mayor & them. With that the Chancellor answered, which was the same Priest. So she spake it in very deede (sayth he) before my L. Maior and me.

Then were there certayne Priests, as D. Standish and other, which tempted me much to know my mind. And I ansuered them alwayes thus: that I sayd to my Lorde of London, I haue said. Then D. Standish desired my Lord to bid me say my mynd concernyng the same text of Saint Paules learning, that I being a woman, should interpret the Scriptures, specially, where so many wise learned men were

Then my L. of London sayd he was informed, that one should aske of me if I would receiue the sacrament at Easter, and I made a mocke of it. Then I desired that myne accuser might come foorth, which my L. would not. But he said agayne vnto me, I sent one to geue you good counsell, and at the first worde you called him Papist. That I denied not, for I perceiued he was no lesse: yet made I hym none answer vnto it.

Then he rebuked me, and sayd that I should reporte, that there were bent against me threescore priests at Lincolne. In deed (quoth I) I sayd so. For my friends tolde me, if I did come to Lincolne, the priests would assault me and put me to great trouble, as therof they had made their boast: and when I heard it, I went thither in deede, not being afraid, because I knew my matter to be good. Moreouer, I remained there ix. dayes to see what would be said vnto me. And as I was in the Minster reading vpon the Bible, they resorted vnto me by ij. and by ij. by v. and by vj. minding to haue spoken vnto me, yet went they theyr wavyes agayne without wordes speaking.
Then my L. asked, if there were not one that did speak vnto me. I told him yes, that there was one of them at the last, which did speake to me in deed. And my L. then asked me what he sayd? And I told him his words were of smal effect, so that I did dot now remember them: Then sayde my L. there are many that read and know the scripture, & yet follow it not, nor liue therafter. I said againe, my L. I would wish that all men knew my conuersation and liuyng in all points, for I am sure of my selfe this houre b\(^1\) there are none able to proue any dishonesty by me. If you know any that can do it, I pray you bring them forth

Then my L. went away, and said he would entitle some what of my meaning, and so he wrote a great circumstāce. But what it was, I haue not all in memory, for he would not suffer me to haue the copy therof. Onely do I remember this small portion of it.

Be it knowen (saith he) of all men, that I Anne Askew do confesse this to be my faith and beliefe, notwithstanding my reportes made afore to the contrary. I beleue that they which are houseled at the hands of a Priest, whether hys conuersation be good or not, do receiue the body and bloud of Christ in substance really. Also I do beleuee, that after the consecration, whether it be receiued or reserued, it is no lesse then the very body and bloud of Christ in substance. Finally I do beleuee in this and in all other Sacraments of holy Church, in all pointes according to the old Catholike faith of the same. In witnes wherof I the sayde Anne haue subscribed my name.

There was somewhat more in it, which because I had not the copy, I cannot now remember. Then he read it to me and asked me if I did agree to it. And I sayd againe, I beleue so much therof, as the holy scripture doth agree vnto: wherefore I desire you, that ye will adde that therunto. Then he answered, that I should not teach hym what he should write. With that, he went foorth into his great chamber, and read the same Bil before the audience, which enueigled and willed me to set to my hād, saieng also, that I had fauour shewed me. Then sayd the B. I might thāke other, and not my selfe, of the fauour that I found at hys hand: for he considered (he sayd) that I had good frendes, and also that I was come of a worshipfull stocke.

Then answered one Christopher, a servaunt to M. Dennie: Rather ought you (my L.) to haue done it in such case for Gods sake then for mans. Then my L. sate down, and tooke me the writing to set therto my hand, and I writ after this maner: I Anne Askew do beleue all maner of things conteined in the faith of the catholike church

And for as much as mention here is made of the writyng of Boner, which this godly woman sayd before she had not in memory, therefore I thought in this place to inder the same, both with the whole circumstance of Boner, and with the title thereunto prefixed by the Register, and also with her owne subscription: to the intent the Reader seyng the same subscription, neyther to agree with the tyme of the title aboue prefixed, nor with the subscription after the writing annexed, might the better vnderstand thereby what credite is to be geuen hereafter to suche Byshops, and to such Registers. The tenour of Boners writyng proceedeth thus.

The true copy of the confession and beliefe of Anne Askew, otherwise called Anne Kime, made before the B. of London, the xx. day of March, in the yere of our lord God after the computation of the Church of England, 1545. and subscribed with her owne hand, in the presence of the sayd B. and other, whose names hereafter are recited, set foorth and published at this present, to the entent the world may see what credence is now to be geuen vnto the same woman, who in so short a tyme hath most damnably altered and changed her opinion and beliefe, & therfore rightfully in open court arrained and condemned, Ex Regist.
BE it known to all faythfull people, that as touching the blessed sacrament of the aultar, I do firmely & vndoubtedly beleue, that after the wordes of consecration be spoken by the Priest, according to the common vsage of thys Church of England, there is present really the bodye and bloud of our Sauiour Iesu Christ, whether the minister which doth consecrate, be a good man, or a bad man, & that also whensoeuer the sayd Sacrament is receiued, whether the receiuer be a good man or a bad man, he doth receiue it really & corporally. And moreouer, I do beleue, that whether the said Sacrament then receiued of the Minister, or . . .

King. Henry. 8. The first and second examination of Anne Askew Martyr.

. . . els reserued to be put into the pixe, or to be brought to any person that is impotent or sicke, yet there is the very bodie and bloud of our sayd sauiour: so that whether the Minister or the receiuer be good or bad, yea whether the Sacrament be receiued or reserued, alwayes there is the blessed body of Christ really.

And this thing with all other things touching the Sacrament & other sacraments of the Church, and all things els touching the christian believe, which are taught and declared in the kings Maiesties booke lately set forth for the erudition of the christiā people, I Anne Askew, otherwise called Anne Kyme, do truely and perfectly beleue, and so here presently confesse and knowledge. And here I do promise that henceforth I shall neuer say or doe any thyng agaynst the premisses, or against any of them. In witnes whereof, I the sayd Anne haue subscribed my name vnto these presents. Written the xx. day of March, in the yere of our Lord God. 1545. Ex Regist.

By me Anne Askew, otherwise called Anne Kyme.

Edmund Bish. of London.

Iohn Bish of Bathe.

Owen Oglethorpe Doct. of Diuinitie.

Rich. Smith Doct. of Diuinitie.

Ioh. Rudde Bachelor of Diuinitie.

Wil Pie Bachelor of Diuinitie.

Iohn Wymsley Archdeacon of London.

Iohn Cooke. Edward Hall.


Frances Spilman. Edmund Buts.

With diuers other mo beyng then present.

Here mayest thou note gentle Reader in this confession, both in the B. and his register: a double sleight of false
conueiaunce. For although the confession porporteth the words of the bishops writing, whereunto she did set her hand, yet by the title prefixed before, mayest thou see that both she was arraigned & condemned before this was registred, and also that she is falsly reported to haue put to her hand, which in deed by this her owne booke appeareth not so to be, but after this maner and condition: I Anne Askew doe beleue all maner thinges conteyned in the fayth of the Catholike Church, and not otherwise. It followeth more in the story

Then because I did adde vnto it the catholike church he flang into his chamber in a great fury. With that my cosin Britaine followed him, desiring him for Gods sake to bee good L. vnto me. He answered that I was a woman, and that he was nothing deceiued in me. Then my cosine Britayne desired him to take me as a woman, and not to set my weake womans wit to his lordships great wisdome.

Then went in vnto him Doct. Westen, and sayd, that the cause why I did write there the catholike church, was that I vnderstooode not the Church written afores. So with much adoe, they perswaded my Lord to come out agayne, and to take my name with þe names of my sureties, which were my cosin Britaine, and Maister Spilman of Graies Inne.

This beyng done, we thought that I should haue bene put to bayle immediatly according to the order of the law. Howbeit, he would not suffer it, but committed me from thence to prison agayne, vntill the next morrow, and then he willed me to appeare in the Guild hall, & so I did. Notwithstanding, they would not put me to bayle there neyther, but red the B. writing vnto me, as before, and so commanded me againe to prison.

Then were my sureties appointed to come before thē on the next morrow in Paules Church: which dyd so in deede. Notwithstanding they would once agayne haue brokē of with them because they would not be bound also for another woman at their plesure, whom they knew not nor yet what matter was laid vnto her charge. Notwithstanding at the last, after much ado and reasoning to & fro, they toke a bond of them of recognisance for my forth comming. And thus I was at the last deliuered

Written by me Anne Askew.

The latter apprehension and examination, of the worthy Martyr of God, Mistres Anne Askew. Anno. 1546.

I Do perceiue (deare friend in the Lord) that thou art not yet perswaded throughly in the truth, concernyng the Lords supper, because Christ said vnto his Apostles: Take, eate, this is my body, which is geuen for you.

In geuing forth the bread as an outward signe or token to be receiued with the mouth, he mynded them in perfectbeliefe, to receiue that body of his, which should dye for the people, and to thinke the death therof to be the only health and saluatiō of their soules. The bread and the wine were left vs for a sacramentall communion, or a mutuall participation of the inestimable benefites of his most precious death and bloudshedding, and that we should in the ende therof be thankfull together for that most necessarie grace of our redemption. For in þe closing vp therof, he said thus: This do ye in remembrance of me. Yea, so oft as ye shall eat it, or drinke it. Luke xi. and i. Cor. xi.Els should we haue bene forgetfull of that we ought to haue in daily remembraunce, & also bene altogether vnthankful for it, therfore it is meece that in our prayers we call vnto God to graft in our foreheds, the true meaning of the holy Ghost concerning this Communion. For S. Paul sayth: The letter slayeth: the spirit is it onely that geueth lyfe. ij. Cor. ii. Marke well the sixt
chap. of John, where all is applied unto faith, note also p 4. chap. of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corin. and in the end therof ye shall find that the things which are seen, are temporal, but they that are not seen, are everlastynge. Yea looke in the 3. chap. to the Hebrues, and ye shall finde that Christ as a sonne (and no servant) ruleth ouer his house, whose house are we (and not the dead temple) If we holde fast the confidence and reioysing of that hope to the end. Wherfore, as sayd the holy Ghost: To day if ye shall heare his voice harden not your harts, &c. Psalm. 99.

The summe of my examination, before the Kings Councell at Greenewich.

Your request, as concerning my prison fellowes, I am not able to satisfie, because I heard not their examinations: but the effect of myne was this. I beyng before the Councell, was asked of M. Kyme. I aunswered that my Lord Chauncellor knew already my mynd in that matter. They with that aunswer were not contented, but sayde it was the kings pleasure that I should open the matter to them. I answered them plainly I would not so doe. But if it were the Kings pleasure to heare me, I would shew hym the truth. Then they sayde, it was not meete for the Kyng to be troubled with me. I answered that Salomon was reckoned the wysest kyng that euer lyued: yet misliked he not to heare two poore common womē, much more his grace a simple woman, and his faithfull subiect. So in Conclusion I made them none other aunswer in that matter.

Then my Lord Chancellour asked me of my opinion in the sacrament. My aunswer was this: I beleue that so oft as I in a christian congregacion, do receiue the breade in remembrance of Christes death, and with thankes geuyng, according to his holy institution. I receiue therwith the fruits also of his most glorious passion. The bishop of Winchester bad me make a direct answer. I said I would not sing a new song of the Lord in a strange lande. Then the B. said, I spake in parables. I aunswered, it was best for him, for if I shew the open truth (quoth I) ye will not accept it. Then he sayde, I was a Parret. I told hym agayne: I was readie to suffer all thyngs at hys handes, not onely his rebukes, but all that should follow besides, yea, and all that gladly.

Then had I diuers rebukes of the counsayle, because I woulde not expresse my mynde in all thynges as they would haue me. But they were not in the meane time vnanswered for all that, which now to reherse were to much, for I was with them there about fiue houres. Then the Clearke of the Counsaile conueyed me from thence to my Lady Garnish.

The next day I was brought againe before the Councell. Then would they needes know of me, what I sayd to the sacrament. I answered, that I already had said that I could say. Then after diuers words, they bad me goe by. Then came my L. Lisle, my L. of Essex, and the B. of Winchester, requiring me earnestly that I should confesse the sacrament to be flesh, bloud and bone. Then sayd I to my L. Parre, and my L. Lisle, that it was great shame for thē to counsayle contrary to their knowledge. Whereunto in few words they did say, that they would gladly all things were well.

Then the B. sayd he would speake with me familiarlye. I sayde, so did ludas when he vnfriendlye betrayed Christ. Then desired the Bishop to speake with me alone. But that I refused. He asked me why? I sayde that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, euerye matter shoulde stand, after Christes and Paules doctrine. Mathew. xvij. ii. Cor. xiii.

Then my L. Chancellour began to examine me again of the sacrament. Then I asked hym how long he woulde halt on both sides?

Then would he needes knowe where . . .
Then the B. sayd I should be burnt. I answered that I had searched all the scriptures, yet coulde I neuer finde, that either Christ or his Apostles, put any creature to death. Well, well, sayd I, God will laugh your threatenings to scorne. Psalm. ij. Then was I commanded to stand aside. Then came to me D. Coxe, and D. Robinson. In conclusion, we could not agree.

Then they made me a bill of the Sacrament, willyng me to set my hand thereunto: but I would not. Then on the sonday I was sore sicke, thinking no lesse then to dye. Therfore I desired to speake with Maister Latimer: but it would not be. Then was I sent to Newgate in my extremitie of sickenes: for in all my life afore was I neuer in such payne. Thus the Lord strengthen vs in the truth. Pray, pray, pray

The confession of me Anne Askew, for the tyme I was in Newgate, concerning my beleiefe.

Finde in the Scriptures (sayd she) that Christ tooke the bread and gaue it to his disciples, saying: Take, eate, this is my body which shall be broken for you, meaning in substāce, his owne very body, the bread being thereof an only signe or Sacrament. For after lyke maner of speaking, he sayde, he would breake down the temple, and in three days build it vp agayne, signifieng his owne body by the temple, as S. Iohn declareth it, lohn. 2. and not the stony temple it selfe. So that the bread is but a remembrance of his death, or a Sacrament of thanks geuing for it, whereby we are knit vtnto him by a communio of christian loue. Although there be manie that cannot perceiue the true meaning therof, for the veile that Moises put ouer his face before þ e children of Israel, that they should not see the clearense thereof, Exod. 24. and 2. Cor. 3. I perceyue the same veyle remayneth to this day. But when God shall take it away, then shall these blynd men see. For it is plainly expressed in the history of Bell in the Bible, that God dwelleth in no thyng materiall. O kyng (sayth Daniel) be not deceiued, for God will be in nothing that is made with hands of men. Daniel, 14. Oh, what stifnecked people are these, that will alwayes resist the holy Ghost? But as their fathers haue done, so do they, because they haue stony hartes.

Written by me Anne Askew, that neyther wisheth death, nor yet feareth his might, and as mery as one that is bound towards heauen. Truth is layd in prison, Luke. 21. The law is turned to Wormewood, Amos. 6. And there can no right iudgement go forth, Esay. 59. Oh forgive vs all our sinnes, and receiue vs graciously. As for the workes of our hands, we will no more call vppon them. For it is thou Lord that art our God. Thou shewest euery mercye vnto the fatherlesse. Oh, if they would do this (sayth the Lord) I shoulde heale their sores, yea with all my hart would I loue them. O Ephraim, what haue I to do with Idols any more? who so is wyse, shall vnderstand this. And he that is rightly instructed, will regard it, for the wayes of the Lord are righteous. Such as are godly, will walke in them, and as for the wicked, they will stumble at them. Ose. 14.

Salomon (sayth S. Steuen) builded an house for the God of Iacob. Howbeit, the highest of all dwelleth not in Temples
made with hands as sayth the Prophet: Heauen is my seat, & the earth is my footstoole. What house will ye build for me, saith the Lord? or what place is it that I shall rest in? Hath not my handes made all things? Act. 7.

Woman beleeeue me (sayth Christ to the Samaritane) the tyme is at hand, that ye shall neyther in this mountayne, nor yet at Ierusalem worship the father. Ye worshippe ye wotte not what, but we knowe what we worshippe. For saluation commeth of the Iewes. But the houre commeth, and is nowe when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirite and veritie. Iohn. 3.

Labour not (sayth Christ) for the meate that perisheth, but for that that endureth into the lyfe euerlasting, which the sonne of man shall geue you: For hym GOD the Father hath sealed, Iohn. 6.

The summe of the condemnation of me Anne Askew at the Guildhall.

They sayd to me there, that I was an heretike, and condemned by the law. If I would stand in mine opiniō. I answered, that I was no herctike, neither yet deserued I any death by the law of God. But as concerning þe faith which I vttered and wrote to the counsell. I would not(I sayd) deny it, because I knew it true. Then would they needes know, if I would deny the Sacrament to be Christes body and bloud. I said yea. For the same sonne of God that was borne of the virgine Mary, is now glorious in heauen, and will come againe from thence at the latter day like as he went vp. Act. 1. And as for that ye call your god, it is a peece of bread. For a more proofe thereof (marke it when ye list) let it lye in the boxe but iij. monethes, and it will be mouldy, & so turne to nothing that is good. Wherupon I am perswaded, that it cannot be God.

After that they willed me to haue a Priest: and then I smiled. Then they asked me, if it were not good? I sayd, I would confess my faults vnto God. For I was sure that he would heare me with fauour. And so we were condemned with a Quest

My beliefe which I wrote to the Counsaile was this: that the sacramental bread Was left to vs to be receiued with thankes geuyng, in remembraunce of Christes death, the onely remedy of our soules recovery: and that thereby we also receiue the whole benefits and fruits of his most glorious Passion. Then would they needes know whether the bread in the boxe were God or no? I sayd,God is a spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and truth, Iohn. 4. Thē they demanded: will you plainly deny Christ to be in the Sacrament? I answered that I beleeeue faithfully the eternall sonne of God not to dwell there. In witnesse whereof, I recited agayne the history of Bell, and the 19. chap. of Daniell, the 7. and 17. of the Acts, and the 24. of Mathew, cōcluding thus: I neither wish death, nor yet fear his might God haue the prayse thereof with thanks.

My letter sent to the L. Chauncellor.

The Lord God, by whom all creatures haue their being, blesse you with the light of his knowledge, Amen.

My duety to your Lordship remembred, &c. It might please you to accept this my bold sute, as the sute of one, which vppon due considerations is moued to the same, and hopeth to obtaine. My request to your Lordship is onely: that it may
please the same to be a meane for me to the kings majesty, that his grace may be certified of these few lines which I haue written concerning my beliefe. Which when it shall be truely conferred with the harde judgement geuen me for the same, I thinke his grace shal wel perceiue me to be wayed in an vneuen paire of balance. But I remit my matter and cause to almighty God, which rightly iudgeth all secrets. And thus I commend your Lordship to the gouernaunce of him, and fellowship of all saints. Amen.

By your handmayd Anne Askew

My faith briefly written to the kings grace.

I Anne Askew, of good memory, although God hath geuen me the bread of aduersitie, and the water of trouble, yet not so much as my sinnes haue deserued, desire this to be knownen vnto your grace, that forasmuch as I am by the law condemned for an euill doer: Here I take heauen and earth to record, that I shal die in my innocencie. And according to that I haue sayd first, & will say last, I vtterly abhorre and detest all heresies. And as concernyng the supper of the Lord, I beleue so much as Christ hath said therein, which he confirmed with hys most blessed bloud. I beleue also so much as he willed me to follow and beleue so much as the catholike church of hym doth teach. For I will not forsake the commandement of his holy lips. But looke what God hath charged me with his mouth, that haue I shut vp in my hart: and thus briefly I ende for lacke of learnyng.

Anne Askew.

The effect of my examination and handling since my departure from Newgate.

ON Tuesday I was sent from Newgate to the sign of the crowne, where as M. Rich and the B. of London with all their power and flattering words, went about to persuade me from God: but I did not esteme their glosing pretences.

Then came there to me Nich. Shaxton, and counselled me to recant as he had done. I sayd to hym, that it had bene good for him, neuer to haue bene borne, with many other like wordes. Then M. Rich sent me to the Tower, where I remayned till three a clocke.

Then came Rich and one of the Counsell, charging me vpon my obedience, to shew vnto them if I knew any mā or woman of my secte. My aunswere was, that I knewe none. Then they asked me of my Lady Suffolke, my Lady of Sussex, my Lady of Hertford, my Lady Denny, and my Lady Fitzwilliams. I said, if I should pronounce any thing against them, that I were not able to proue it. Then sayd they vnto me, that the kyng was informed, that I . . .

K. Henry. 8. The racking of Anne Askew, her answere to Lacels letter, her confession.

. . . could name if I would, a great number of my sect. I aunswered, that the kyng was as well deceiued in that behalf, as dissembled with in other matters.

Then commanded they me to shew how I was maintayned in the Counter, and who willed me to sticke to my opinion, I sayd that there was no creature that therin did strengthen me. And as for the help that I had in the counter, it was by the means of my mayde. For as she went abroad in the streetes, she made mone to the prentises, and they by her did send me money: but who they were I neuer knew.
Then they sayde, that there were diuers Gentlewomen that gaue me money, but I knew not their names. Then they sayd that there were diuers Ladies that had sent me money. I aunswered, that there was a man in a blew coate, which deliuered me x. shillings, and sayd that my Lady of Hertford sent yt me. And an other in a violet coat gaue me viij. shillings, and sayd my lady Denny sent it me. Whether it were true or no, I cannot tell. For I am not sure who sent it me, but as the mayd did say. Thē they sayd, there were of the Counsell that did maintayne me. And I sayd no.

Then they did put me on the racke, because I confessed no Ladies or Gentlewomen to be of my opinion, and thereon they kept me a long tyme. And because I lay still and did not cry, my Lord Chancellour and M. Rich, tooke paynes to racke me with theyr owne handes, tyll I was nigh dead.

Then the Lieftenaunt caused me to be loosed from the racke. Incontinently I swounded, and then they recouered me agayne. After that I sate two long houres reasoning with my Lord Chauncellour vppon the bare floore, whereas he with many flattering wordes, perswaded me to leaue my opinion. But my Lord God (I thanke his euerlasting goodnes) gaue me grace to perseuer, and wil do (I hope) to the very end.

Then was I brought to an house, and layd in a bedde, with as weary and paynefull bones, as euer had pacient Iob, I thanke my Lord God therefore. Then my Lorde Chauncellour sent me worde if I would leaue my opinion, I should want nothing: If I would not, I shoulde forth to Newgate, and so be burned. I sent him agayne word, that I would rather die, then to breake my fayth.

Thus the Lord open the eyes of their blinde hartes, that the truth may take place. Farewell deare friend, and pray, pray, pray . . .

Touching the order of her racking in the Tower

, thus it was. First, she was led downe into a dungeon, where Syr Anthony Kneuet the Liuetenant commaunded hys Gaoler to pinche her with the racke. Which beyng done so much as he thought sufficient, went about to take her downe, supposing he had done enough. But Wrisley the Chauncellour not contented that she was loosed so soone confessing nothing, commaunded the Lieftenant to streine her on the racke agayne. Which because he denyed to doe, tenderyng the weakenes of the woman, he was threatened therefore grieuously of the sayd Wrisley, saying, that hee would signifie hys disobedience, vnto the kyng: and so cōsequently vpon the same, he and M. Riche throwyng of their gownes, would needes play the tormenters themselues: first asking her if she were with child. To whome she aunswering agayne, sayd: ye shall not neede to spare for that, but do you willes vpon me: and so quietly and patiently prayeng vnto the Lord: she aboade their tiranny, till her bones and ioints almost were pluckt a sunder, in such sort, as she was caried away in a chaire. When the racking was past, Wrisley and his fellow tooke theyr horse toward the Court.

In the meane tyme, while they were making their way by land, the good Lieftenant eftsoones taking boate, spedde hym in all hast to the Court, to speake with the kyng before the other, and so dyd. Who there makynge his humble sute to the Kyng, desired his pardon, and shewed hym the whole matter as it stoode, and of the rackynge of Mistresse Askew, and how he was threatened by the Lord Chauncellour, because at his commaundement, not knowyng his highnesse pleasure, he refused to racke her: whiche he for compassion could not finde in his hart to do, and therefore hūbly craued his highnes pardō. Which when the K. had vnderstand, seemed not very well to like of their so extreme handlyng of the woman, and also graunted to the Lieftenant his pardon, willing him to returne and see to hys charge.

Great expectation was in the meane season among the Warders and other officers of the Tower, waiting for his returne.
Whom when they saw come so cheerfully, declaring vnto them how he had sped with the king, they were not a little joyous, and gaue thanks to God therfore.

Anne Askews aunswer vnto Iohn Lacels letter.

OH friend most dearely beloued in God, I meruaile not a little what should mooue you to iudge in me so slender a fayth as to feare death, which is the ende of all misery. In the Lord I desire you not to beleue of me such wickednes. For I doubt it not, but God will performe his worke in me, like as he hath begun. I vnderstand the counsaile is not a little displeased, that it should be reported abroad, that I was racked in the tower

. They say now, that they did there, was but to feare me: whereby I perceyue, they are ashamed of their vncomely doyngs, and feare much, least the kings Maiestie should haue information thereof. Wherefore, they would no man to noyse it. Well, their crueltye God forgeue them.

Your hart in Christ Iesu. Farewel, and pray.

The purgation or aunswer of Anne Askew against the false surmises of her recantation.

I Haue read the processe whiche is reported of them that knowe not the truth, to be my recantation. But as the Lord liueth, I never ment thing lesse then to recant. Notwithstanding this I confesse, that in my first troubles, I was examined of the Bishop of London about the Sacrament. Yet had they no graunt yf my mouth, but this, that I beleued therein as the word of God did bynd me to beleue, more had they neuer of me. Then he made a Copie whiche is nowe in print, and required me to set thereunto my hand. But I refused it. Then my ij. sureties did wyll me in no wise to sticke thereat, for it was no great matter, they sayd. Then with much ado, at the last I wrote thus: I Anne Askew do beleue this, if Gods word do agree to the same, and the true catholike church. Then the B. beyng in great displeasure with me, because I made doubtes in my writing, commaunded me to prison: where I was a whyle, but afterwards by the meanes of frendes, I came out againe. Here is the truth of that matter. And as concerning the thing that ye couet most to know, resort to the sxt of Iohn, and be ruled alwayes thereby. Thus fare ye well.

Anne Askew.

The confession of the faith which Anne Askew made in Newgate before she suffered.

I Anne Askew of good memory, although my merciful father hath geuen me the bread of aduersitie, and the water of trouble: yet not so muche as my sinnes haue deserued: confesse my selfe here a sinner before the throne of hys heauenly maiestie, desiring his forgeuenes and mercye. And for so much as I am by the law vnrighteously condemned for an euill doer concerning opinions, I take þe same most mercifull God of myne, which hath made both heauen and earth, to record, that I hold no opinions contrary to hys most holy word. And I trust in my mercifull Lord, which is the geuer of all grace, that he will graciously assist me agaynst all euill opinions, which are contrary to his blessed veritie. For I take him to witnes, that I haue done & wil do vnto my lyues end, utterly abhorre them to the vtermost of my power.

But this is the heresie which they report me to holde that after the Priest hath spoken the wordes of consecration, there remaineth bread still. They both say, & also teach it for a necessary article of fayth, that after those wordes be once spoken, there remayneth no bread, but euen the selfesame body that hoong vpon the crosse on good Friday, both fleshe, bloud, and bone. To this belief of theirs, say I nay: For then were our common Crede false, which saith, that he
sitteth on the right hand of God the father almighty, & from thence shall come to judge the quicke and dead

Loe, this is the heresie that I holde, and for it must suffer the death. But as touthing the holy and blessed supper of the Lord, I beleue it to be a most necessary remembraunce of his glorious suffrings and death. Moreouer, I beleue as much therein, as my eternall and onely redeemer Iesus Christ would I should beleue.

Finally, I beleue al those scriptures to be true, which he hath confirmed with his most precious bloud. Yea, & as s. Paul saith, those scriptures are sufficient for our lerning & salutatiō, that Christ hath left here with vs: so that I beleue, we nede no vnwritten verities to rule his church wth. Therfore looke what he hath sayd vnto me with his owne mouth in his holy Gospell, that haue I with Gods grace closed vp in my hart, and my full trust is (as Dauid saith) that it shalbe a lanterne to my footsteps. Psal. xxviii.

There be some do say that I deny the Eucharist or sacrament of thankes geuyng: but those people do vntruly report of me. For I both say and beleue it, that if it wer or-

K. Henr. 8. The cruell burning of Mistres Anne Askew, John Lacels, Iohn Adams, & Nicholas Belinian.

dered lyke as Christ instituted it and left it, a most singular comfort it were vnto vs all. But as cōcerning your masse as it is now vsed in our daies, Marginalia do say and beleue it to be the most abominable Idoll that is in the world: For my God will not be eaten with teeth, neyther yet dieth he agayne. And vpon these wordes that I haue now spoken, wyll I suffer death.

O Lord, I haue mo enemies now, then there be haires on my head. Yet Lord, let them neuer overcome me with vaine words, but fight thou Lord in my stead, for on thee cast I my care. Withall the spite they can imagine, they fall vpon me, which am thy poore creature. Yet sweete Lord, let me not set by them which are against me: for in thee is my whole delight. And Lord I hartily desire of thee, that thou wilt of thy most mercifull goodnes forgeue them that violence which they do and haue done vnto me. Open also thou their bylynd hartes, that they may hereafter doe that thing in thy sight, which is only acceptable before thee, and to set forth thy veritie aright, without all vaine fantasies of sinnefull men. So be it. O Lord, so be it.

By me Anne Askew.
The order and manner of the burning of Anne Askew, Iohn Lacels, Iohn Adams, Nicholas Belenian, with certayne of the Councell sitting in Smithfield.

HEveryto we haue entreated of this good woman. Now it remayneth that we touch somewhat as concernyng her ende and Martyrdome. After that she, beyng borne of such stocke and kynred, that she might haue liued in great wealth and prosperitie, if she would rather haue followed the world, then Christ, now had bene so tormented, that she could neyther lyue long in so great distresse, neyther yet by her adversaries be suffered to die in secret: the daye of her execution beyng appoynted, she was brought into Smithfield in a chayre, because she could not goe on her feete, by meanes of her great tormentes. When she was brought vnto the stake, she was tyed by the middle with a chayne, that held vp her body. When all things were thus prepared to the fire, D. Shaxton who was then appoynted to preach, began his Sermon. Anne Askew hearyng, and answering agayne vnto him, where he sayd wel, confirmed the same: where he sayd amisse, there sayde he he misseth, and speaketh without the booke.

The Sermon beyng finished, the Martyrs standyng there tyed at three severall Stakes ready to theyr Martirdome, beganne theyr prayers. The multitude and concourse of the people was exceedyng, the place where they stooode beyng rayled about to keepe out the prease. Vpon the Benche vnder Saint Bartelmewes Church, sate Wrisley Chauncellour of England, the old Duke of Norfolke, the olde Earle of Bedford, the Lord Mayor wyth dyuers other moe. Before the fire should be set vnto them, one of the Benche hearyng that they had gunnpouder about them, and beyng aфayde least the fagots by strength of the gunnpouder would come flieng about their eares,began to be afraid, but the Erle of Bedford declaring vnto him how þ gunpowder was not laid vnder the fagots, but onely about theyr bodies to rydde them out of their paine, which hauyng vente, there was no daunger to them of the fagottes, so diminished that feare.

Then Wrisley Lord Chauncellour, sent to Anne Askew letters, offring to her the kyngs pardon, if she would recant. Who refusing once to looke vpon them, made this answer agayne: that she came not thethere to deny her lord and Maister. Then were the letters likewise offered vnto the other, who in lyke manner following the constancie of the woman, denied not onely to receyue them, but also to looke vpon them. Whereupon the Lord Mayor commaundyng fire to be put vnto them, cryed wyth a lowde voyce, Fiat iustitia.

And thus the good Anne Askew with these blessed Martyrs, beyng troubled so many maner of ways, and hauing passed through so many tormentes, hauyng now ended the long course of her agonies, beyng cõpassed in with flames of fire, as a blessed sacrifice vnto God, she slept in the lord, an. 1546. leauyng behynd her a singular example of christian constancy for all men to follow.