

William Cowper's View Of Popery (As it appeared in his 'Expostulation' 1782)

William Cowper | Added: Jul 14, 2009 | Category: Poems

Hast thou admitted with a blind fond trust,
The liethat burned thy fathers' bones to dust;
That first adjudged them heretics, then sent
Their souls to heaven, and cursed them as they went:
The liethat Scripture strips of its disguise,
And execrates above all other lies;
The liethat claps a lock on mercy's plan,
And gives the key to yon infirm old man,
Who, once ensconced in Apostolic chair,
Is deified, and sits omniscient there;
The liethat knows no kindred, owns no friend,
But him that makes its progress his chief end;
That having spilt much blood, makes that a boast,
And canonizes him that sheds the most ?
Away with charity that soothes a lie,
And thrusts the truth with scorn and anger by !
Shame on the candour, and the gracious smile,
Bestowed on them that light the martyr's pile;
While insolent disdain, in frowns expressed,

Attends the tenets that endured that test!
Grant them the rights of men, and, while they cease
To vex the peace of others, grant them peace;
But trusting bigots, whose false zeal has made
Treachery their duty, thou art self-betrayed.

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