



# **Fox's Book of Martyrs: A History of the Lives, Sufferings, and Triumphant Deaths of the Primitive Protestant Martyrs**

*John Foxe*

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Fox's Book of Martyrs. A History of the Lives, Sufferings, and Triumphant Deaths of the Primitive Protestant Martyrs. by John Foxe. This work is strictly what its title page imports, a compilation. Fox's "Book of Martyrs" has been made the basis of this volume. Liberty, however, has been taken to abridge wherever it was thought necessary;—to alter the antiquated form of the phraseology; to introduce additional information; and to correct any inaccuracy respecting matters of fact, which had escaped the author of the original work, or which has been found erroneous by the investigation of modern research. The object of this work, is to give a brief history of persecution since the first introduction of christianity, till the present time. In doing this, we have commenced with the martyrdom of Stephen, and following the course of events, have brought the History of persecution down to the year 1830. In all ages, we find that a disposition to persecute for opinion's sake, has been manifested by wicked men, whatever may have been their opinions or sentiments on religious subjects. The intolerant jew, and the bigoted pagan, have exhibited no more of a persecuting spirit, than the nominal professor of christianity, and the infidel and the avowed atheist. Indeed, it seems to be an "inherent vice," in unsanctified nature to endeavour by the pressure of physical force, to restrain obnoxious sentiments, and to propagate favourite opinions. It is only when the heart has been renewed and sanctified by divine grace, that men have rightly understood and practised the true principles of toleration. We do not say that none but real christians have adopted correct views respecting civil and religious liberty;—but we affirm that these views owe their origin entirely to christianity and its genuine disciples. The Actes and Monuments, popularly known as Foxe's Book of Martyrs, is a work of Christian history and martyrology by John Foxe, first published in English in 1563 by John Day. It includes a polemical account of the sufferings of Protestants under the Catholic Church, with particular emphasis on England and Scotland. The book was highly influential in those countries, and helped shape lasting popular notions of Catholicism there. The book went through four editions in Foxe's lifetime and a number of later editions and abridgements, including some that specifically reduced the text to a Book of Martyrs.

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