Tithes duly paid, an Earnest of a great Blessing.

we bring it seasoned with this cogitation, “Thou Lord art
“worthy of all honour.”

[9.] With the Church of Christ touching these matters it
standeth as it did with the whole world before Moses. Where-
upon for many years men being desirous to honour God in
the same manner as other virtuous and holy personages before
had done, both during the time of their life and if farther
ability did serve by such device as might cause their works of
piety to remain always, it came by these means to pass that
the Church from time to time had treasure proportionable unto
the poorer or wealthier estate of Christian men. And as soon
as the state of the Church could admit thereof, they easily
condescended to think it most natural and most fit that God
should receive as before of all men his ancient accustomed
revenues of tithes.

[10.] Thus therefore both God and nature have taught to
convert things temporal to eternal uses, and to provide for the
perpetuity of religion even by that which is most transitory.
For to the end that in worth and value there might be no
abatement of any thing once assigned to such purposes, the
law requirith precisely the best of that we possess, and to pre-
vent all damages by way of commutation, where instead of
natural commodities or other rights the price of them might
be taken, the Law of Moses determined their rates, and the
payments to be always made by the shekel1 of the sanctuary2
wherein there was great advantage of weight above the ordi-
ary current shekel1. The truest and surest way for God to have
always his own is by making him payment in kind out of the
very selfsame riches which through his gracious benediction
the earth doth continually yield. This where it may be with-
out inconvenience is for every man’s conscience safe. That
which cometh from God to us by the natural course of his
providence which we know to be innocent and pure is perhaps
best accepted, because least spotted with the stain of unlawful
or indirect procurement. Besides whereas prices daily change,
nature which commonly is one must needs be the most indif-
ferent and permanent standard between God and man.

[11.] But the main foundation of all, whereupon the security of
these things dependeth, as far as any thing may be ascen-

1 “sicle,” Bodl. MS. and early edd.] 2 Levit. xxvii. 25.
Church Property is God's own, and inalienable.

[12.] Albeit therefore we be now free from the Law of Moyses and consequently not thereby bound to the payment of tithes, yet because nature hath taught men to honour God with their substance, and Scripture hath left us an example of that particular proportion which for moral considerations hath been thought fittest by whom wisdom could best judge, furthermore seeing that the Church of Christ hath long silience entered into like obligation, it seemeth in these days a question altogether vain and superfluous whether tithes be a matter of divine right; because howsoever at the first it might have been thought doubtful, our case is clearly the same now with theirs unto whom St. Peter sometime spake saying, “While it was whole it was whole thine. When our tithes might have probably seemed our own, we had colour of liberty to use them as we ourselves saw good. But having made them his whose they are, let us be warned by other men’s example what it is νοονθείανεθα, to wash or clip that coin which hath on it the mark of God.

1 L. xi. de Reg. Jur. [“Id quod in nostrum est, sine facto nostro ad alium transferri non potest.”] Dig. lib. L. tit. xvii. l. 11. p. 788.
2 “Cujus per errorem dati repetitio est, ejus consulto dato donatio est.” L. l. D. de cond. indeb. Dig. lib. L. tit. xvii. 53. “De solutione indebiti.” The title “de conditione indebiti” is lib. xii. tit. vi. and the first law is in substance the same. This is the ground of Consideration in alienations from man to man.
3 “Nemo potest mutare consilia...um sumum in alterius praedictionem (injuriam).” L. lxxv. de Reg. Jur. [Dig. lib. L. tit. xvii. l. 75. p. 791.]
4 [Eccl. Disc. fol. 95. “Sciendum est, quod sub lege de decimis sacerdoto et Levitis permittendis praeceptum est, non ut praecise nos ad decimas persolvendas adigeret. Hac enim politica lex Judaeorum fuit, quae nos tantum generali quidam ratione devisavit, ut nos quoque iis qui in opere Domini laborant consula...”]
5 Acts v. 4.

1 Exod. xxii. 29, 30. 2 Matt. xxi. 13. 3 Mal. iii. 8. 4 “Non videntur rem amittere quibus propris non fuist.” L. lxxxiiii. de Reg. Jur. [Dig. L. tit. 83. p. 797.]
5 Ezek. xiv. 1, 4. 6 Mag. Char. c. 1. [Imprimis, Concessimus Domo, et haec presenti charta nostra confirmavimus, pro nobis et hereditibus nostris in perpetuum, quod Ecclesia Anglica cana libera sit, et habeat omniam jura sua integra, et libertates suas illesas.”]
6 Matt. xii. 21. 7 Mal. iii. 8. 8 Mal. iii. 13. 9 Prov. xvi. 11. 10 Rom. xvi. 12. 11 Eph. v. 3. 12 Tit. ii. 9.
nance and then by quiet speech did thus calmly disclose it-
self 1: "You that profess the Christian religion make great
complaint of the wonderful cruelty we shew towards you.
Neither peradventure altogether without cause. But for
myself, I am far from any such bloody purpose. Ye are
not so willing to live, as I unwilling that out of these lips
should proceed any capital sentence against you. Your
bishops are said to have rich vessels of gold and silver,
which they use in the exercise of their religion, besides the
fame is that numbers sell away their lands and livings, the
huge prices whereof are brought to your church-coffers, by
which means the devotion that maketh them and their
whole posterity poor must needs mightily enrich you,
whose God we know was no coiner of money, but left be-
hind him many wholesome and good precepts, as namely
that Caesar should have of you the things that are fit for
and due to Caesar. His wars are costly and chargeable
unto him. That which you suffer to rust in corners the
affairs of the commonwealth do need. Your profession is
not to make account of things transitory. And yet if ye

Laurent. 57. seqq.
"Si dogma vestrum est, audito:
"Sum qui desquitis reddito:
"Ex Caesar agogeticum
"Nomimis nunnimis iudicium.
"Quod Caesaris scis, Caesar
"De: penne jutum postulo:
"Nn fallor, hoc uliam tuos
"Signat Deus pecuniam.
"* * *
"Inimple dictorum fidem
"Quae vos per omnem venditis:
"Nummos liberenter reddite
"Estote divites'
"Nil asperum Laurentius
"Refrat ad sita, aut tribulum,
"Sed, ut paratus obsequi,
"Onemperanter annunti..." &c.

Sarav. de Hon. Prasul. &c. c. 11.
Nota est Laurentii Deconii Ro-
mane Ecclesiae historia, penes
quem thesauros adservar Eccle-
siae tyranni suspicabantur: quae
suspicio partim visus est, nam
thesaeuros habebat Ecclesias, par-
tim falsa, nam adversandi thesa-
uros mos non erat, sed distri-
endij."

for the Church Treasures.
BOOK V. "can be contented but to forego that which ye care not for,
and liberty of using your conscience, a thing more acceptable
"to you than wealth." Which fair parley the happy Martyr quietly hearing, and perceiving it necessary to make some
shift for the safe concealment of that which being now desired
was not unlikely to be more narrowly afterwards sought, he
cried respite for three days to gather the riches of the Church together, in which space against the time the governor
should come to the doors of the temple big with hope to receive
his prey, a miserable rank of poor, lame, and impotent
persons was provided, their names delivered him up in writing
as a true inventory of the Church's goods, and some few
words used to signify how proud the Church was of these
treasures.

[15.] If men did not naturally abhor sacrilege, to resist or
defeat so impious attempts would deserve small praise. But
such is the general detestation of rapine in this kind, that
whereas nothing doth either in peace or war more uphold
men's reputation than prosperous success, because in common
construction unless notorious improbity be joined with pro-
sperity it seemeth to argue favour with God, they which once
have stained their hands with these odious spoils do thereby
fasten unto all their actions an eternal prejudice, in respect
whereof, for that it passeth through the world as an undoubted
rule and principle that sacrilege is open defiance to God,
whosoever they afterwards undertake if they prosper in it
men reckon it but Dionysius his navigation; and if any
thing befall them otherwise it is not, as commonly, so in them
ascribed to the great uncertainty of casual events, wherein
the providence of God doth control the purposes of men often-
times much more for their good than if all things did answer
fully their heart's desire, but the censure of the world is ever
directly against them both bitter and peremptory.

"runt," sic in Ed. Par. 1640.
"alienerantur vet dirijeyerunt. Epi-
"scopisque et Sacerdotibus, atque
"quod majus est, Ecclesiis eorum
"abuluerunt, et pugnantibus dede-
runt. Quapropter nec fortes in
"bello nec in fide stabiles fuerunt,
"nec victores existerunt, sed terga
"multa vulnerati et plures interfici
"verterunt, regnaque et regiones
"et quod peius est regna coelestia
"perderunt, atque propriis here-
"ditatibus caruerunt et hacensus
"carent." Verba Carol. Magn. in
c. 142, ed. Baluz. from the Capitulare
of Worms, 803.)
1 "Tumo tempus erit, magno cum
"optaverit emptum
"Intactum Pallanta, et cum spolia
"ista diecumque
"Odorit." Virg. Aen. lib. x. 503.
1 H totis praesentibus augeb王国
"utnam postea de Spiritu sancto.
Demosth. [Olynth. i. ad fin.] "Per-
"nam non dicere quis sanguine
"perrumpunt, sed siquis turpitudin-
"nibus aequiessimae est non vi-
"dent." Caec. Offic. lib. iii. [c. 8.]
"Impunita tu credis esse quae in-
"visa sunt? aut ullum supplicium
"gravius existimas publico odio.
Sen. de Benef. lib. iii. c. 17.
2 "Sardoniis inter tot sacrilegia
" Dionysii risus fuit: tot masculi-
"orum conscius meli vacare non
"potuit." Sarav. de Sacrilegii,
c. 9. Then reciting the story of
Damocles, he adds, "Satine vide-
"tur declarasse Dionysius, sacrile-
"gos in perpetuo versari metu?"

1 [So 1616, 1662. But Bodl. MS.
"videtisnem ait, quam bona na-
"vigation ab ipsis Dis immortalibus
"sacris legit tribuatut."
2 [Valer. Max. lib. i. c. 2. "Sy-
"rarius Dionysius gentium... fano
"3 Neivimus multa regna et
"prospere, spoliat specularis, reges
"cum per altum secundo venio qua Ecclesiis paliaververunt, resque
"classe veh threat ridens, amicis,
"earum vastaverunt," ["abstule-
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moved to beware how they answer and requite the mercies of
God with injuries whether openly or indirectly offered.

I will not absolutely say concerning the goods of the
Church that they may in no case be seized on by men, or
that no obligation, commerce and bargain made between man
and man can ever be of force to alienate the property which
God hath in them. Certain cases I grant there wherein
it is not so dark what God himself doth warrant, but that we
may safely presume him as willing to forego for our benefit,
as always to use and convert to our benefit whatsoever our
religion hath honoured him withal. But surely under the
name of that which may be, many things that should not be
are often done. By means whereof the Church most com-
monly for gold hath flannel, and whereas the usual saw of
old was “Glaucus his change,” the proverb is now, “A
church bargain.”

[17.] And for fear lest covetousness alone should linger out
the time too much and not be able to make havoc of the
house of God, with that expedition which the mortal enemy
thereof did vehemently wish, he hath by certain strong en-
chantments so deeply bewitched religion itself as to make it
in the end an earnest solicitor and an eloquent persuader of
sacrilege, urging confidently, that the very best service which
men of power can do to Christ is without any more cere-
mony to sweep all and to leave the Church as bare as in the
day it was first born, that fulness of bread having made the
children of the household wanton, it is without any scruple
to be taken away from them and thrown to dogs; that they
which laid the prices of their lands as offerings at the
Apostles’ feet did but sow the seeds of superstition; that
they which endowed churches with lands poisoned religion;
that tithes and oblations are now in the sight of God as the
sacrificed blood of goats; that if we give him our hearts and
affections our goods are better bestowed otherwise; that
Irenæus Polycarp’s disciple should not have said, “We offer
unto God our goods as tokens of thankfulness for that we
receive!” neither Origen, “He which worshippeth God
must by gifts and oblations acknowledge him the Lord of

1 Iren. lib. iv. c. 34. [“Offerimus agentes Dominationi ejus, et sancto
ei non quasi indigenti, sed gratias sanc-
tificantes creaturam.”]