

the price of those possessions was laid, which men thought good to bestow on Christ. St. Paul commending the churches which were in Macedonia for their exceeding liberality this way, saith of them that he himself would bear record, they had declared their forward minds according to their power, yea, beyond their power, and had so much exceeded his expectation of them, that "they seemed as it were even to give away themselves first to the Lord," saith the Apostle¹, "and then by the will of God unto us:" to him, as the owner of such gifts; to us, as his appointed receivers and dispensers. The gift of the Church of Antioch, bestowed unto the use of distressed brethren which were in Judea, Paul and Barnabas did deliver unto the presbyters of Jerusalem²; and the head of those presbyters was James³, he therefore the chiefest disposer thereof. Amongst those canons which are entitled Apostolical, one is this, "We appoint that the Bishop have care of those things which belong to the Church⁴;" the meaning is, of church goods, as the reason following sheweth: "For if the precious souls of men must be committed unto him of trust, much more it behoveth the charge of money to be given him, that by his authority the presbyters and deacons may administer all things to them that stand in need." So that he which hath done them the honour to be, as it were, his treasurers, hath left them also authority and power to use these treasures, both otherwise, and for the maintenance even of their own estate: the lower sort of the clergy according unto a meaner, the higher after a larger proportion.

[2.] The use of spiritual goods and possessions hath been a matter much disputed of; grievous complaints there are usually made against the evil and unlawful usage of them, but

¹ 2 Cor. viii. 5.

² Acts xi. 30.

³ Acts xxi. 18. xii. 17.

⁴ Ἐπίσκοπον ἔχειν τῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας πραγμάτων ἐξουσίαν, ὥστε διοικεῖν εἰς πάντας δεομένους μετὰ πάσης εὐλαβείας καὶ φόβου Θεοῦ. Can. 40. [Προστάττομεν ἐπίσκοπον ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν τῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας πραγμάτων· εἰ γὰρ τὰς τιμίας τῶν ἀνθρώπων ψυχὰς αὐτῷ πιστευτέον, πολλῶ ἂν μᾶλλον δεοί ἐπὶ τῶν χρη-

μάτων ἐντέλλεσθαι, ὥστε κατὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ ἐξουσίαν πάντα διακείσθαι, καὶ τοῖς δεομένοις διὰ πρεσβυτέρων καὶ διακόνων ἐπιχορηγείσθαι, μετὰ φόβου τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πάσης εὐλαβείας· μεταλαμβάνειν δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν τῶν δεόντων (εἶγε δεοίτο) εἰς τὰς ἀναγκαίας αὐτοῦ χρείας, καὶ τῶν ἐπιξενουμένων ἀδελφῶν, ὡς κατὰ μηδένα τρόπον αὐτοῦς ὑστερεῖσθαι. t. i. 20. ed. Hard.] et Conc. Antioch. [can. 25. ibid. p. 604, 5. A.D. 341.]

with no certain determination hitherto, on what things and persons, with what proportion and measure they being bestowed, do retain their lawful use. Some men condemn it as idle, superfluous, and altogether vain, that any part of the treasure of God should be spent upon costly ornaments appertaining unto his service: who being best worshipped, when he is served in spirit and truth¹, hath not for want of pomp and magnificence rejected at any time those who with faithful hearts have adored him. Whereupon the heretics², termed *Henriciani* and *Petrobrusiani*, threw down temples and houses of prayer erected with marvellous great charge, as being in that respect not fit for Christ by us to be honoured in.

[3.] We deny not, but that they who sometime wandered as pilgrims on earth, and had no temples, but made caves and dens to pray in³, did God such honour as was most acceptable in his sight: God did not reject them for their poverty and nakedness' sake; their sacraments were not abhorred for want of vessels of gold.

Howbeit, let them who thus delight to plead, answer me: when Moses first, and afterwards David, exhorted the people of Israel unto matter of charge about the service of God; suppose we it had been allowable in them to have thus pleaded: "Our fathers in Egypt served God devoutly, God was with them in all their afflictions, he heard their prayers, pitied their case, and delivered them from the tyranny of their oppressors; what house, tabernacle, or temple had they?" Such argumentations are childish and fond; God doth not refuse to be honoured at all where there lacketh wealth; but where abundance and store is, he there requireth the flower thereof, being bestowed on him, to be employed even unto the ornament of his service. In Egypt the state of his people was servitude, and therefore his service was accordingly. In the desert they had no sooner aught of their own, but a tabernacle is required; and in the land of Canaan a temple⁴. In the eyes of David it seemed a thing not fit, a thing not decent, that himself should be more richly seated than God.

[4.] But concerning the use of ecclesiastical goods bestowed

¹ John iv. 24.

² [Vid. supr. c. xiii. § 4.]

³ Heb. xi. 38.

⁴ [Comp. b. v. c. xv.]

this way, there is not so much contention amongst us, as what measure of allowance is fit for ecclesiastical persons to be maintained with. A better rule in this case to judge things by we cannot possibly have than the wisdom of God himself: by considering what he thought meet for each degree of the clergy to enjoy in time of the Law, what for Levites, what for priests, and what for high priests, somewhat we shall be the more able to discern rightly what may be fit, convenient, and right for the Christian clergy likewise. Priests for their maintenance had those first fruits¹ of cattle², corn, wine, oil, and other³ commodities of the earth, which the Jews were accustomed yearly to present God with. They had the price⁴ which was appointed for men to pay in lieu of the first-born of their children, and the price of the first-born also amongst cattle which were unclean: they had the vowed gifts⁵ of the people, or the prices, if they were redeemable by the donors after vow, as some things were: they had the free⁶ and unvowed oblations of men: they had the remainder of⁷ things sacrificed: with tithes the Levites⁸ were maintained; and with the tithe of their tithes⁹ the high-priest. In a word, if the quality of that which God did assign to his clergy be considered, and their manner of receiving it without labour, expense, or charge, it will appear that the tribe of Levi, being but the twelfth part of Israel, had in effect as good as four twelfth parts of all such goods as the holy land did yield: so that their worldly estate was four times as good as any other tribe's in Israel besides. But the high-priests' condition, how ample! to whom belonged the tenth of all the tithe of this land, especially the law providing also, that as the people did bring the best of all things unto the priests and Levites, so the Levites should deliver the choice and flower of all their commodities to the high-priest, and so his tenth part by that mean be made the very best part amongst ten: by which proportion, if the Levites were ordinarily in all not above thirty thousand men, (whereas when David numbered them¹⁰, he found almost thirty-eight thousand above the age of thirty years,) the high-priest, after this

¹ Num. xviii. 15.² Ver. 12. ³ Ver. 13. ⁴ Ver. 15.⁵ Ver. 8; Leviticus xxvii. 11, 14;

Num. xviii. 8.

⁶ Ver. 8.⁷ Ver. 21.⁸ Ver. 28.⁹ Ver. 28.¹⁰ 1 Chron. xxiii. 3.⁷ Ver. 9.⁸ Ver. 21.⁹ Ver. 28.

very reckoning, had as much as three or four thousand others of the clergy to live upon.

Over and besides all this, lest the priests of Egypt, holding lands¹, should seem in that respect better provided for than the priests of the true God, it pleased him further to appoint unto them² forty and eight whole cities with territories of land adjoining, to hold as their own free inheritance for ever. For to the end they might have all kind of encouragement, not only to do what they ought, but to take pleasure in that they did; albeit they were expressly forbidden³ to have any part of the land of Canaan laid out whole to themselves, by themselves, in such sort as the rest of the tribes had; forasmuch as the will of God was rather that they should throughout all tribes be dispersed, for the easier access of the people unto knowledge; yet were they not barred altogether to hold a land [hold land?]¹, nor yet otherwise the worse provided for, in respect of that former restraint⁴; for God by way of special preeminence undertook to feed them at his own table, and out of his own proper treasury to maintain them, that want and penury they might never feel, except God himself did first receive injury.

[5.] A thing most worthy our consideration is the wisdom of God herein; for the common sort being prone unto envy and murmur, little considereth of what necessity, use and importance the sacred duties of the clergy are, and for that cause hardly yieldeth them any such honour without repining and grudging thereat; they cannot brook it, that when they have laboured and come to reap, there should so great a portion go out of the fruit of their labours, and be yielded up unto such as sweat not for it. But when the Lord doth challenge this as his own due, and require it to be done by way of homage unto him, whose mere liberality and goodness had raised them from a poor and servile estate, to place them where they had all those ample and rich possessions; they must be worse than brute beasts if they would storm at any thing which he did receive at their hands. And for him to bestow his own on his own servants (which liberty is not denied unto the meanest of men), what man liveth that can think it other than most

¹ [So corrected, ed. 1676, 1682.]¹ Gen. xlvii. 22.² Num. xxxv. 7.³ Josh. xiv. 4.⁴ Deut. xviii. 8; Lev. xxv. 33, 34.

reasonable? Wherefore no cause there was, why that which the clergy had should in any man's eye seem too much, unless God himself were thought to be of an over-having disposition. ¹This is the mark whereat all those speeches drive, "Levi hath no part nor inheritance with his brethren, the Lord is his inheritance;" again, ²To the tribe of Levi he gave no inheritance, the sacrifices of the Lord God of Israel an inheritance of Levi;" again, ³The tithes of the which they shall offer as an offering unto the Lord, I have given the Levites for an inheritance;" and again, ⁴All the heave offerings of the holy things which the children of Israel shall offer unto the Lord, I have given thee, and thy sons and thy daughters with thee, to be a duty for ever; it is a perpetual covenant of salt before the Lord."

[6.] Now that if such provision be possible to be made, the Christian clergy ought not herein to be inferior unto the Jewish, what sounder proof than the Apostle's own kind of argument? ⁵Do ye not know that they which minister about the holy things eat of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? so, even so, hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." Upon which words I thus conclude, that if the people of God do abound, and abounding can so far forth find in their hearts to shew themselves towards Christ their Saviour thankful as to honour him with their riches (which no law of God or nature forbiddeth) no less than the ancient Jewish people did honour God; the plain ordinance of Christ appointeth as large and as ample proportion out of his own treasure unto them that serve him in the gospel as ever the priests of the law did enjoy. What further proof can we desire? It is the blessed Apostle's testimony, That "even so the Lord hath ordained." Yea, I know not whether it be sound to interpret the Apostle otherwise than that, whereas he judgeth⁶ the presbyters "which rule well in the Church of Christ to be worthy of double honour," he means double unto that which the priests of the law received; ⁷For

¹ Deut. x. 9.² Josh. xiii. 14.³ Num. xviii. 24.⁴ Ver. 19.⁵ 1 Cor. ix. 13.⁶ 1 Tim. v. 17.⁷ 2 Cor. iii. 7, 8. Vide [Tho. Aquin.] 2^o. 2. [i. e. secundæ Summ.

"if that ministry which was of the letter were so glorious, how shall not the ministry of the spirit be more glorious?" If the teachers of the Law of Moses, which God delivered written with letters in tables of stone, were thought worthy of so great honour, how shall not the teachers of the gospel of Christ be in his sight most worthy, the Holy Ghost being sent from heaven to engrave the gospel on their hearts who first taught it, and whose successors they that teach it at this day are? So that according to the ordinance of God himself, their estate for worldly maintenance ought to be no worse than is granted unto other sorts of men, each according to that degree they were placed in.

[7.] Neither are we so to judge of their worldly condition, as if they were servants of men, and at men's hands did receive those earthly benefits by way of stipend in lieu of pains whereunto they are hired; nay, that which is paid unto them is homage and tribute due unto the Lord Christ. His servants they are, and from him they receive such goods by way of stipend. Not so from men: for at the hands of men, he himself being honoured with such things, hath appointed his servants therewith according to their several degrees and places to be maintained. And for their greater encouragement who are his labourers he hath to their comfort assured them for ever, that they are in his estimation¹ "worthy the hire" which he alloweth them; and therefore if men should withdraw from him the store which those his servants that labour in his work are maintained with, yet he in his word shall be found everlastingly true, their labour in the Lord shall not be forgotten; the hire he accounteth them worthy of, they shall surely have either one way or other answered.

[8.] In the prime of the Christian world, that which was

Theol. pars ii.] qu. 77. [87.] art. 1. "lus veteris testamenti exhibebat: ["Utrum homines teneantur dare "cum tamen populus novæ legis ad "decimas ex necessitate præcepti." "majora obligetur, secundum illud ... Respons. ad 1. ["Determinatio "Matth. v. 'Nisi abundaverit,' &c. : "decimæ partis solvendæ est autho- "et cum ministri novi testamenti "ritate ecclesiæ tempore novæ legis "sint majoris dignitatis quam mi- "institutæ, secundum quandam hu- "nistri veteris testamenti, ut probat "manitatem, ut scil. non minus "Apostolus 2 ad Corinth. iii." fol. "populus novæ legis ministris novi 205, ed. Venet. 1593.]
¹ 1 Tim. v. 18.

BOOK VII. brought and laid down at the Apostles' feet¹, they disposed
Ch. xxiii. 9. of by distribution according to the exigence of each man's
need. Neither can we think that they who out of Christ's
treasury made provision for all others, were careless to furnish
the clergy with all things fit and convenient for their estate :
and as themselves were chiefest in place of authority and
calling, so no man doubteth but that proportionably they had
power to use the same for their own decent maintenance.
The Apostles with the rest of the clergy in Jerusalem lived at
that time according to the manner of a fellowship or collegiate
society, maintaining themselves and the poor of the Church
with a common purse, the rest of the faithful keeping that
purse continually stored. And in that sense it is that the
sacred history saith², "All which believed were in one place,
"and had all things common." In the histories of the Church,
and in the writings of the ancient Fathers for some hundreds
of years after, we find no other way for the maintenance of
the clergy but only this, the treasury of Jesus Christ fur-
nished through men's devotion, bestowing sometimes goods,
sometimes lands that way, and out of his treasury the charge
of the service of God was defrayed, the bishop and the clergy
under him maintained, the poor in their necessity ministered
unto. For which purpose, every bishop had some one of the
presbyters under him to be ³treasurer of the church, to re-
ceive, keep, and deliver all; which office in churches cathedral
remaineth even till this day, albeit the use thereof be not
altogether so large now as heretofore.

[9.] The disposition of these goods was by the appoint-
ment of the bishop. Wherefore Prosper ⁴speaking of the
bishop's care herein saith, "It was necessary for one to be
"troubled therewith, to the end that the rest under him

¹ Acts iv. 35.

² Acts ii. 44.

³ Dispens. ["Dispensator;," so called by Prosper: [?] Julianus Pomerius †493.] de Vita Contempl. l. ii. c. 12. [in Bibl. Patr. Colon. t. v. part. iii. p. 64.] ["Econ."] ["Economus"] L. 14. C. de sacr. Eccles. [Cod. Justin. lib. i. tit. 2. lex 14.] et Novel. vii. in princip. [μήτε ἀρχιεπίσκοπον . . . μήτε οἰκονομον, πηράσκειν . . . ἢ ἄλλως ἐκποιεῖν πρᾶγμα ἀκίνητον.]

⁴ Prosp. de Vita Contempl. l. ii. c. 16. [p. 65. "Ut uno sollicitudines omnium in sua societate viventium sustinente, omnes, qui sub eo sunt, fructuosa vacatione potiantur spiritualiter et quiete Etiam in hoc Deo serviunt, quia si Dei sunt ea quæ conferuntur ecclesie, Dei opus agit, qui res Deo consecratas non alicujus cupiditatis, sed fidelissimæ dispensationis intentione non deserit."]

"might be the freer to attend quietly their spiritual busi-
nesses." And lest any man should imagine that bishops
by this means were hindered themselves from attending the
service of God, "Even herein," saith he, "they do God ser-
vice; for if those things which are bestowed on the Church
be God's, he doth the work of God, who not of a covetous
mind, but with purpose of most faithful administration,
"taketh care of things consecrated unto God."

And forasmuch as the presbyters of every church could not
all live with the bishop, partly for that their number was
great, and partly because the people being once divided into
parishes, such presbyters as had severally charge of them
were by that mean more conveniently to live in the midst
each of his own particular flock, therefore a competent num-
ber being fed at the same table with the bishop, the rest had
their whole allowance apart¹, which several allowances were
called *sportulæ*, and they who received them, *sportulantes
fratres*.

Touching the bishop, as his place and estate was higher, so
likewise the proportion of his charges about himself being for
that cause in all equity and reason greater, yet forasmuch as
his stint herein was no other than it pleased himself to set,
the rest (as the manner of inferiors is to think that they which
are over them always have too much) grudged many times at
the measure of the bishop's private expense, perhaps not with-
out cause. Howsoever, by this occasion there grew amongst
them great heart-burning, quarrel and strife: where the bishops
were found culpable, as eating too much beyond their tether,
and drawing more to their own private maintenance than the
proportion of Christ's patrimony being not greatly abundant
could bear, sundry constitutions hereupon were made to
moderate the same, according to the Church's condition in

¹ Cypr. l. iv. ep. 5. [34. p. 48. Baluz.] "Presbyterii honorem designasse nos illis jam sciatis, ut et sportulis iisdem cum presbyteris honorentur, et divisiones mensurnas æquatis quantitibus partiantur, sessuri nobiscum provectis et corroboratis annis suis." Which words of Cyprian do shew, that every presbyter had his stand-

ing allowance out of the church-treasury; that besides the same allowance called *sportula*, some also had their portion in that dividend which was the remainder of every month's expense; thirdly, that out of the presbyters under him, the bishop as then had [a] certain number of the gravest, who lived and commoned always with him.

those times. Some before they were made bishops having been owners of ample possessions, sold them and gave them away to the poor: thus did Paulinus¹, Hilary², Cyprian³, and sundry others. Hereupon they who entering into the same spiritual and high function held their secular possessions still were hardly thought of: and even when the case was fully resolved, that so to do was not unlawful, yet it grew a question, "whether they lawfully might then take any thing "out of the public treasury of Christ:" a question, "whether "bishops, holding by civil title sufficient to live of their own, "were bound in conscience to leave the goods of the Church "altogether to the use of others." Of contentions about these matters there was no end, neither appeared there any possible way for quietness, otherwise than by making partition of church-revenues, according to the several ends and uses for which they did serve, that so the bishop's part might be certain. Such partition being made⁴, the bishop enjoyed

¹ Prosp. [v. note 4, p. 296.] de Vita Contempl. l. ii. c. 9. ["Expedit facultates ecclesie possideri, et amore perfectionis proprias contemni. Non enim propriae sunt, sed communes ecclesie facultates, et ideo quisquis omnibus quae habuit dimissis aut venditis fit rei suae contemptor, cum praepositus fuerit sanctae ecclesiae, omnium quae habuit ecclesia efficitur dispensator. Deinde Sanctus Paulinus, ut ipsi melius nostis, ingentia praedia, quae fuerunt sua, vendita pauperibus erogavit; sed cum postea factus esset episcopus, non contempsit ecclesiae facultates, sed fidelissime dispensavit. Quo facto satis ostendit, et propria debere propter perfectionem contemni, et sine impedimento perfectionis posse quae sunt communia ecclesiae possideri."]

² [Ibid. "Quid S. Hilarius? nonne et ipse omnia bona sua aut parentibus reliquit, aut vendita pauperibus erogavit? Is tamen cum merito perfectionis suae fieret ecclesiae Arelatensis episcopus, quod illa tunc habebat ecclesia non solum possedit, sed etiam acceptis fidelium numerosis hereditatibus ampliavit. Isti ergo tam sancti tam perfecti pontifices

"factis evidentibus clamant, posse "et debere fieri quod fecerunt. Qui "utique homines tam saecularium "quam divinarum literarum sine "ambiguitate doctissimi, si scirent "res ecclesiae debere contemni, nunquam ea debuerant, qui omnia "sua reliquerant, retinere. Unde "datur intelligi, quod tales ac tanti "viri, (qui volentes esse Christi "discipuli renuntiaverunt omnibus "quae habebant) non ut possessores "sed ut procuratores facultates ecclesiae possidebant."]

³ Pont. Diacon. in vita Cypr. ["Statim rapuit quod invenit promerendo Deo profuturum. Distractis rebus suis ad indigentiam pauperum sustentandam, tota praedia pretio dispensans, duo bona simul junxit, ut et ambitionem saeculi sperneret, qua perniciosius, nihil est; et misericordiam, quam Deus etiam sacrificiis suis praetulit, quam nec ille qui legis omnia mandata servasse se dixerat, fecit, impleret." col. cxxxvi. ed. Baluz.]

⁴ [Capitul. Hincmar. Archiepisc. Remens. A. D. 852. series ii. cap. xvi. Concil. Hard. t. v. 396. "Ut ex decimis 4 portiones fiant juxta institutionem canonicam . . . et ut de duabus portionibus, ecclesie et

his portion several to himself; the rest of the clergy likewise theirs; a third part was severed to the furnishing and upholding of the church; a fourth to the erection and maintenance of houses wherein the poor might have relief. After which separation made, lands and livings began every day to be dedicated unto each use severally, by means whereof every of them became in short time much greater than they had been for worldly maintenance, the fervent devotion of men being glad that this new opportunity was given of shewing zeal to the house of God in more certain order.

[10.] By these things it plainly appeareth what proportion of maintenance hath been ever thought reasonable for a bishop; sith in that very partition agreed on to bring him into his certain stint, as much is allowed unto him alone as unto all the clergy under him, namely, a fourth part of the whole yearly rents and revenues of the church. Nor is it likely, that before those temporalities which now are such eyesores were added unto the honour of bishops, their state was so mean as some imagine: for if we had no other evidence than the covetous and ambitious humour of heretics, whose¹ impotent desires of aspiring thereunto, and extreme discontentment as oft as they were defeated, even this doth shew that the state of bishops was not a few degrees advanced above the rest. Wherefore of grand apostates which were in the very prime of the primitive Church, thus Lactantius above thirteen hundred years sithence testified², "Men of a slippery faith

"episcopi, ratio reddatur per singulos annos, quid inde profecerit in ecclesia." Conc. Namnet. temp. incert. can. x. "Instruendi sunt presbyteri pariterque admonendi quatenus noverint decimas et oblationes, quas a fidelibus accipiunt, pauperum et hospitum et peregrinorum esse stipendia, et non quasi suis sed quasi commendatis ut . . . Qualiter vero dispensari debeant canones sancti instituunt; sc. ut 4 partes inde fiant; una ad fabricam ecclesiae relevandam, altera pauperibus distribuenda, tertia presbytero cum suis clericis habenda, quarta episcopo reservanda, ut quidquid exinde jusserit prudenti consilio fiat." t. vi. pars i.

459. The "Excerptiones" of Egbert, archbishop of York, A. D. 747. (t. iii. 1962.), the Canons of Charlemagne, cap. vii. (t. iv. 958.) those of Ælfric, can. xxiv. (vi. pars i. 982.); and those of a bishop of Basle, (can. xv. ib. 1243.) recognise a threefold division, considering the bishop's portion and that of his clergy as one. The latter refers to 9 Conc. Tolet. can. vi. A. D. 655: which speaks of the bishop's third as a received institution. (t. iii. 974.)

¹ [So the word stands in E. (Gauden's edd.) It should be "their," or some equivalent word.]

² Lact. de Vera Sap. lib. iv. c. 30. ["Ii, quorum fides fuit lubrica, cum Deum nosse se et colere si-