

BOOK VII. and the council of Carthage condemn even such superiority  
Ch. xvi. 9. also of bishops themselves over pastors their inferiors, as the words of Ignatius imply, in terming the bishop "a prince of "priests." Bishops to be termed arch-priests, in regard of their superiority over priests, is in the writings of the ancient Fathers a thing so usual and familiar, as almost no one thing more. At the council of Nice, saith Theodoret, three hundred and eighteen arch-priests were present<sup>1</sup>. Were it the meaning of the council of Carthage, that the title of chief priests and such like ought not in any sort at all to be given unto any Christian Bishop, what excuse should we make for so many ancient both Fathers<sup>2</sup>, and synods<sup>3</sup> of Fathers, as have generally applied the title of arch-priest unto every bishop's office?

[9.] High time I think it is, to give over the obstinate defence of this most miserable forsaken cause; in the favour whereof neither God, nor amongst so many wise and virtuous men as antiquity hath brought forth, any one can be found to have hitherto directly spoken. Irsome confusion must of

"priests," although the title be excessive and big, condemned by "Cyprian and the council of Carthage, yet he meaneth no more "the prince of all in the diocese as "we take it, or of the province, than "he meaneth the prince of all the "priests in the world: but he meaneth those fellow ministers and "elders that had the rule and government of that particular church "and congregation whereof he was "bishop."

<sup>1</sup> Theod. Hist. Eccles. lib. i. cap. 7. Ἀρχιερεῖς. [Ἀφίκετο καὶ αὐτὸς εἰς τὴν Νικαίαν, ἰδεῖν τὴν τῶν ἀρχιερέων πλῆθὺν ἐφιέμενος . . . ὀκτωκαίδεκα δὲ καὶ τριακῶσι συνήλθον ἀρχιερεῖς.]

<sup>2</sup> Hieronymus contra Luciferian. "Salutem ecclesiae pendere," dicit, "a summi sacerdotis dignitate," id est, episcopi. [c. ix. t. ii. 182. ed. Vallarsii.] Idem est in Hieronymo summus sacerdos quod ἄκρος ἱερεὺς in Carthaginensi Concilio.

<sup>3</sup> Vide C. omnes. 38 dist. [Decret. Gratian. pars i. d. 38, p. 184. Lugd. 1572. "Ex septima synodo." . . . "Substantia summi sacerdotii nostri

"sunt eloquia divinitus tradita, i. e. "vera divinarum scripturarum disciplina: quemadmodum magnus "perhibet Dionysius." Comp. 2 Concil. Nicæn. A. D. 787. can. ii. οὐσία τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς ἱεραρχίας ἐστὶ τὰ θεοπαράδοτα λόγια, εἶπον ἡ τῶν θείων γραφῶν ἀληθινὴ ἐπιστήμη, κάθως ὁ μέγας ἀπεφώνητο Διονύσιος. t. iv. 48. ed. Hard. comp. Dionys. de Eccl. Hierarch. c. v. § 7.] Item c. Pontifices, [Decr. Grat. pars ii. causa] xii. qu. 3. [p. 1001. "Pontifices quibus in summo sacerdotio "constitutis ab extraneis aliquid . . . "donatur . . . inter facultates ecclesiae "computabunt." In Consilio Agathensi [can. 6. A. D. 506. t. ii. 908. Hard.] Item c. De his. [Decr. Grat. pars iii.] De Consecr. dist. 5. [p. 1991, from a supposed decretal epistle of Melchiades. "Utrum manus sit sacramentum manus impositionis episcoporum aut baptismi: "scitote utrumque magnum esse "sacramentum: et sicut unum majoribus, i. e. summis Pontificibus, "est accommodatum . . . ita et majori veneratione venerandum." Comp. Conc. i. 245.]

necessity be the end whereunto all such vain and ungrounded confidence doth bring, as hath nothing to bear it out but only an excessive measure of bold and peremptory words, holpen by the start of a little time, before they came to be examined. In the writings of the ancient Fathers, there is not any thing with more serious asseveration inculcated, than that it is God which maketh bishops, that their authority hath divine allowance, that the bishop is the priest of God, that he is judge in Christ's stead, that according to God's own law the whole Christian fraternity standeth bound to obey him. Of this there was not in the Christian world of old any doubt or controversy made, it was a thing universally every where agreed upon. What should move men to judge that now so unlawful and naught, which then was so reverently esteemed? Surely no other cause but this, men were in those times meek, lowly, tractable, willing to live in dutiful awe and subjection unto the pastor of their souls: now we imagine ourselves so able every man to teach and direct all others, that none of us can brook it to have superiors; and for a mask to hide our pride, we pretend falsely the law of Christ, as if we did seek the execution of his will, when in truth we labour for the mere satisfaction of our own against his.

XVII. The chiefest cause of disdain and murmur against bishops in the Church of England is that evil-affected eye wherewith the world looked upon them, since the time that irreligious profaneness, beholding the due and just advancements of God's clergy, hath under pretence of enmity unto ambition and pride proceeded so far, that the contumely of old offered unto Aaron in the like quarrel may seem very moderate and quiet dealing, if we compare it with the fury of our own times. The ground and original of both their proceedings one and the same; in declaration of their grievances they differ not; the complaints as well of the one as the other are<sup>1</sup>, "Wherefore lift ye up yourselves" thus far "above the "congregation of the Lord? It is too much which you "take upon you;" too much power, and too much honour. Wherefore as we have shewed that there is not in their power any thing unjust or unlawful, so it resteth that in their honour also the like be done. The labour we take

BOOK VII.  
Ch. xvii. 1.

The second malicious thing wherein the state of Bishops suffereth obloquy is their honour.

<sup>1</sup> Numb. xvi. 3.

unto this purpose is by so much the harder, in that we are forced to wrestle with the stream of obstinate affection, mightily carried by a wilful prejudice, the dominion whereof is so powerful over them in whom it reigneth, that it giveth them no leave, no not so much as patiently to hearken unto any speech which doth not profess to feed them in this their bitter humour. Notwithstanding, forasmuch as I am persuaded that against God they will not strive, if they perceive once that in truth it is he against whom they open their mouths, my hope is their own confession will be at the length, "Behold, we have done exceeding foolishly; it was the Lord, and we knew it not; him in his ministers we have despised, we have in their honour impugned his." But the alteration of men's hearts must be his good and gracious work, whose most omnipotent power framed them.

[2.] Wherefore to come to our present purpose, honour is no where due, saving only unto such as have in them that whereby they are found, or at the least presumed, voluntarily beneficial<sup>1</sup> unto them of whom they are honoured. Wheresoever nature seeth the countenance of a man, it still presumeth that there is in him a mind willing to do good, if need require, inasmuch as by nature so it should be; for which cause men unto men do honour, even for very humanity's sake: and unto whom we deny all honour, we seem plainly to take from them all opinion of human dignity, to make no account or reckoning of them, to think them so utterly without virtue, as if no good thing in the world could be looked for at their hands. Seeing therefore it seemeth hard that we should so hardly think of any man, the precept of St. Peter is<sup>2</sup>, "Honour all men."

Which duty of every man towards all doth vary according to the several degrees whereby they are more or less beneficial, whom we do honour. "Honour the physician<sup>3</sup>," saith the wise man: the reason why, because for necessities' sake God created him. Again<sup>4</sup>, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the person of the aged:" the reason why, because the younger sort have great benefit by their gravity, experience, and wisdom; for which cause,

<sup>1</sup> [Τιμὴ . . . σημεῖον ἐνεργητικῆς δόξης. Arist. Rhet. i. 5.]

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Ecclus. xxxviii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Levit. xix. 32.

these things the wise man<sup>1</sup> termeth the crown or diadem of the aged. Honour due to parents: the reason why, because we have our beginning from them<sup>2</sup>; "Obey the father that hath begotten thee, the mother that bare thee despise thou not." Honour due unto kings and governors: the reason why, because God hath set them<sup>3</sup> "for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well." Thus we see by every of these particulars, that there is always some kind of virtue beneficial, wherein they excel who receive honour; and that degrees of honour are distinguished according to the value of those effects which the same beneficial virtue doth produce.

[3.] Nor is honour only an inward estimation, whereby they are revered and well thought of in the minds of men; but honour whereof we now speak, is defined to be an external sign, by which we give a sensible testification that we acknowledge the beneficial virtue of others. Sarah honoured her husband Abraham; this appeareth by the title she gave him. The brethren of Joseph did him honour in the land of Egypt; their lowly and humble gesture sheweth it. Parents will hardly persuade themselves that this intentional honour, which reacheth no farther than to the inward conception only, is the honour which their children owe them. Touching that honour which mystically agreeing unto Christ, was yielded literally and really unto Solomon, the words of the Psalmist concerning it are<sup>4</sup>, "Unto him they shall give of the gold of Sheba, they shall pray for him continually, and daily bless him."

[4.] Weigh these things in themselves, titles, gestures, presents, other the like external signs wherein honour doth consist, and they are matters of no great moment. Howbeit, take them away, let them cease to be required, and they are not things of small importance, which that surcease were likely to draw after it. Let the lord mayor of London, or any other unto whose office honour belongeth, be deprived but of that title which in itself is a matter of nothing; and suppose we that it would be a small maim unto the credit, force, and countenance of his office? It hath not without the

<sup>1</sup> Ecclus. xxv. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxiii. 22.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Psalm lxxii. 15.

singular wisdom of God been provided, that the ordinary outward tokens of honour should for the most part be in themselves things of mean account; for to the end they might easily follow as faithful testimonies of that beneficial virtue whereunto they are due, it behoved them to be of such nature, that to himself no man might over-eagerly challenge them, without blushing; nor any man where they are due withhold them, but with manifest appearance of too great malice or pride.

[5.] Now forasmuch as according to the ancient orders and customs of this land, as of the kingdom of Israel, and of all Christian kingdoms through the world, the next in degree of honour unto the chief sovereign are the chief prelates of God's Church; what the reason hereof may be, it resteth next to be inquired.

What good doth publicly grow from the Prelacy.

XVIII. Other reason there is not any, wherefore such honour hath been judged due, saving only that public good which the prelates of God's clergy are authors of. For I would know which of these things it is whereof we make any question, either that the favour of God is the chiefest pillar to bear up kingdoms and states; or that true religion publicly exercised is the principal mean to retain the favour of God; or that the prelates of the Church are they without whom the exercise of true religion cannot well and long continue. If these three be granted, then cannot the public benefit of prelacy be dissembled<sup>1</sup>.

[2.] And of the first or second of these I look not for any professed denial; the world at this will blush, not to grant at the leastwise in word as much as heathens themselves have of old with most earnest asseveration acknowledged<sup>2</sup>, concerning the force of divine grace in upholding kingdoms. Again, though his mercy doth so far strive with men's ingratitude, that all kind of public iniquities deserving his indignation, their safety is through his gracious providence many times nevertheless continued to the end that amendment might

<sup>1</sup> [Compare b. v. c. lxxvi. § 2.]

<sup>2</sup> "Quis est tam vecors, qui aut cum suspexerit in cœlum, Deos esse non sentiat, et ea, quæ tanta mente fiunt ut vix quisquam arte ulla ordinem rerum ac necessitu-

"dinem persequi possit, casu fieri putet; aut, cum Deos esse intellexerit, non intelligat eorum numine hoc tantum imperium esse natum et auctum et retentum." Cic. Orat. de Harusp. Resp. [c. 9.]

if it were possible avert their envy; so that as well common-weals as particular persons both may and do endure much longer, when they are careful, as they should be, to use the most effectual means of procuring his favour on whom their continuance principally dependeth: yet this point no man will stand to argue, no man will openly arm himself to enter into set disputation against the emperors Theodosius and Valentinian, for making unto their laws concerning religion this preface<sup>1</sup>, "Decere arbitramur nostrum imperium, subditos nostros de religione commonefacere. Ita enim et pleniorum acquiri Dei ac Salvatoris nostri Jesu Christi benignitatem possibile esse existimamus, si quando et nos pro viribus ipsi placere studuerimus, et nostros subditos ad eam rem instituerimus:" or against the emperor Justinian, for that he also maketh the like profession<sup>2</sup>: "Per sanctissimas ecclesias et nostrum imperium sustineri, et communes res clementissimi Dei gratia muniri credimus." And in another place<sup>3</sup>, "Certissime credimus, quia Sacerdotum puritas et decus, et ad Dominum Deum ac salvatorem nostrum Jesum Christum fervor, et ab ipsis missæ perpetuæ preces, multum favorem nostræ reipublicæ et incrementum præbent."

[3.] Wherefore only the last point is that which men will boldly require us to prove; for no man feareth now to make it a question, "whether the prelacy of the Church be any thing available or no to effect the good and long continuance of true religion?" Amongst the principal blessings wherewith God enriched Israel, the prophet in the Psalm<sup>4</sup> acknowledgeth especially this for one, "Thou didst lead thy people like sheep by the hands of Moses and Aaron." That which sheep are if pastors be wanting, the same are the people of God if so be they want governors: and that which the principal civil governors are in comparison of regents under them, the same are the prelates of the Church being compared with the rest of God's clergy. Wherefore inasmuch as amongst the Jews the benefit of civil government grew principally from Moses, he being their principal civil

<sup>1</sup> Tit. 1. l. iii. C. [lib. i.] de summa Trinit.

<sup>2</sup> L. 43 C. [Cod. lib. i. tit. iii.] de Episc. et Cler. [lex 43.]

<sup>3</sup> L. 34 C. de Episcopali Audientia. [Ibid. i. iv. 34.]

<sup>4</sup> Psalm lxxvii. 20.

governor; even so the benefit of spiritual regiment grew from Aaron principally, he being in the other kind their principal rector, although even herein subject to the sovereign dominion of Moses. For which cause, these two alone are named as the heads and well-springs of all. As for the good which others did in service either of the commonwealth or of the sanctuary, the chiefest glory thereof did belong to the chiefest governors of the one sort and of the other, whose vigilant care and oversight kept them in their due order. Bishops are now as high priests were then, in regard of power over other priests: and in respect of subjection unto high priests<sup>1</sup>, what priests were then, the same now presbyters are by way of their place under bishops. The one's authority therefore being so profitable, how should the other's be thought unnecessary? Is there any man professing Christian religion which holdeth it not as a maxim, that the Church of Jesus Christ did reap a singular benefit by apostolical regiment, not only for other respects, but even in regard of that prelacy whereby they had and exercised power of jurisdiction over lower guides of the Church? Prelates are herein the Apostles' successors, as hath been proved.

[4.] Thus we see that prelacy must needs be acknowledged exceedingly beneficial in the Church; and yet for more perspicuity's sake, it shall not be pains superfluously taken, if the manner how be also declared at large. For this one thing not understood by the vulgar sort, causeth all contempt to be offered unto higher powers, not only ecclesiastical, but civil: whom when proud men have disgraced, and are therefore reproved by such as carry some dutiful affection of mind, the usual apologies which they make for themselves are these: "What more virtue in these great ones than in others? We see no such eminent good which they do above other men."

We grant indeed, that the good which higher governors do is not so immediate and near unto every of us, as many times the meaner labours of others under them, and this doth make it to be less esteemed. But we must note, that it is

<sup>1</sup> "Qui sacerdotes in Veteri Testamento vocabantur, hi sunt qui tunc presbyteri appellantur: et qui tunc princeps sacerdotum, nunc "episcopus vocatur." Raban. Maur. de Instit. Cler. lib. i. cap. 6. [Opp. t. vi. 5. ed. Colon. 1526.]

in this case as in a ship; he that sitteth at the stern is quiet, he moveth not, he seemeth in a manner to do little or nothing in comparison of them that sweat about other toil, yet that which he doth is in value and force more than all the labours of the residue laid together. The influence of the heavens above worketh infinitely more to our good, and yet appeareth not half so sensible as the force doth of things below. We consider not what it is which we reap by the authority of our chiefest spiritual governors, nor are likely to enter into any consideration thereof, till we want them; and that is the cause why they are at our hands so unthankfully rewarded.

[5.] Authority is a constraining power, which power were needless if we were all such as we should be, willing to do the things we ought to do without constraint. But because generally we are otherwise, therefore we all reap singular benefit by that authority which permitteth no men, though they would, to slack their duty. It doth not suffice, that the lord of an household appoint labourers what they should do, unless he set over them some chief workmen to see they do it. Constitutions and canons made for the ordering of church affairs are dead taskmasters. The due execution of laws spiritual dependeth most upon the vigilant care of the chiefest spiritual governors, whose charge is to see that such laws be kept by the clergy and people under them: with those duties which the law of God and the ecclesiastical canons require in the clergy, lay governors are neither for the most part so well acquainted, nor so deeply and nearly touched. Requisite therefore it is, that ecclesiastical persons have authority in such things; which kind of authority maketh them that have it prelates. If then it be a thing confessed, as by all good men it needs must be, to have prayers read in all churches, to have the sacraments of God administered, to have the mysteries of salvation painfully taught, to have God every where devoutly worshipped, and all this perpetually, and with quietness, bringeth unto the whole Church, and unto every member thereof, inestimable good; how can that authority which hath been proved the ordinance of God for preservation of these duties in the Church, how can it choose but deserve to be held a thing publicly most beneficial?

BOOK VII. [6.] It were to be wished, and is to be laboured for, as  
 Ch. xviii. 6, 7. much as can be, that they who are set in such rooms may  
 be furnished with honourable qualities and graces, every way  
 fit for their calling : but be they otherwise, howsoever, so long  
 as they are in authority, all men reap some good by them,  
 albeit not so much good as if they were abler men. There is  
 not any amongst us all, but is a great deal more apt to exact  
 another man's duty, than the best of us is to discharge  
 exactly his own ; and therefore prelates, although neglecting  
 many ways their duty unto God and men, do notwithstanding  
 by their authority great good, in that they keep others at the  
 leastwise in some awe under them. It is our duty therefore  
 in this consideration, to honour them that rule as prelates ;  
 which office if they discharge well, the Apostle's own verdict  
 is<sup>1</sup>, that the honour they have they be worthy of, yea  
 though it were double. And if their government be other-  
 wise, the judgment of sage men hath ever been this, that  
 albeit the dealings of governors be culpable, yet honourable  
 they must be, in respect of that Authority by which they  
 govern. Great caution must be used that we neither be  
 emboldened to follow them in evil, whom for authority's sake  
 we honour ; nor induced in authority to dishonour them,  
 whom as examples we may not follow. In a word, not to  
 dislike sin, though it should be in the highest, were un-  
 righteous meekness ; and proud righteousness it is to con-  
 temn or dishonour highness, though it should be in the  
 sinfullest men that live.

[7.] But so hard it is to obtain at our hands, especially  
 as now things stand, the yielding of honour<sup>2</sup> to whom  
 honour in this case belongeth, that by a brief declaration  
 only what the duties of men are towards the principal guides  
 and pastors of their souls, we cannot greatly hope to prevail,  
 partly for the malice of their open adversaries, and partly for  
 the cunning of such as in a sacrilegious intent work their  
 dishonour under covert, by more mystical and secret means.  
 Wherefore requisite and in a manner necessary it is, that  
 by particular instances we make it even palpably manifest  
 what singular benefit and use public the nature of prelates  
 is apt to yield.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. v. 17.<sup>2</sup> Rom. xiii. 7.

First, no man doubteth but that unto the happy condition  
 of commonweals it is a principal help and furtherance, when  
 in the eye of foreign states their estimation and credit is  
 great. In which respect, the Lord himself commending his  
 own laws unto his people, mentioneth this as a thing not  
 meanly to be accounted of, that their careful obedience yielded  
 thereunto should purchase them a great good opinion abroad<sup>1</sup>,  
 and make them every where famous for wisdom. Fame and  
 reputation groweth especially by the virtue, not of common  
 ordinary persons, but of them which are in each estate most  
 eminent by occasion of their higher place and calling. The  
 mean man's actions, be they good or evil, they reach not far,  
 they are not greatly inquired into, except perhaps by such as  
 dwell at the next door : whereas men of more ample dignity  
 are as cities on the tops of hills<sup>2</sup>, their lives are viewed afar  
 off ; so that the more there are which observe aloof what  
 they do, the greater glory by their well-doing they purchase,  
 both unto God whom they serve, and to the state wherein  
 they live. Wherefore if the clergy be a beautifying unto the  
 body of this commonweal in the eyes of foreign beholders,  
 and if in the clergy the prelacy be most exposed unto the  
 world's eye, what public benefit doth grow from that order, in  
 regard of reputation thereby gotten to the land from abroad,  
 we may soon conjecture. Amongst the Jews (their kings  
 excepted) who so renowned throughout the world as their  
 high priest? Who so much or so often spoken of as their  
 prelates?

[8.] (2.) Which order is not for the present only the most  
 in sight, but for that very cause also the most commended  
 unto posterity. For if we search those records wherein there  
 hath descended from age to age whatsoever notice and intelli-  
 gence we have of those things which were before us, is there  
 any thing almost else, surely not any thing so much, kept in  
 memory, as the successions, doings, sufferings, and affairs of  
 prelates. So that either there is not any public use of that  
 light which the Church doth receive from antiquity ; or if this  
 be absurd to think, then must we necessarily acknowledge  
 ourselves beholding more unto prelates than unto others their

<sup>1</sup> Deut. iv. 6.<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 14.