

honour's sake, are rather in particular discretion to be ordered, than to be argued of by disputes.

[5.] As for the vain imagination of some<sup>1</sup>, who teach the original hereof to have been a preposterous imagination of Maximinus the emperor, who being addicted unto idolatry, chose of the choicest magistrates to be priests, and to the end they might be in great estimation, gave unto each of them a train of followers ; and that Christian emperors, thinking the same would promote Christianity which promoted superstition, endeavoured to make their bishops encounter and match with those idolatrous priests : such frivolous conceits, having no other ground than conceit, we weigh not so much as to frame any answer unto them ; our declaration of the true original of ancient attendancy on bishops being sufficient. } Now if that which the light of sound reason doth teach to be fit, have upon like inducements reasonable, allowable, and good, approved itself in such wise as to be accepted, not only of us, but of pagans and infidels also ; doth conformity with them that are evil in that which is good, make that thing which is good evil ? / We have not herein followed the heathens, nor the heathens us, but both we and they one and [the selfsame divine rule, the light of a true and sound understanding,]

<sup>1</sup> T. C. l. i. p. 126. [al. 98 : ap. Whitg. Def. 451. "Another reason of this pomp and stateliness of the bishops was that which almost brought in all poison and popish corruption into the church, and that is a foolish emulation of the manners and fashions of the idolatrous nations. . . . Galerius Maximinus the emperor to the end that he might promote the idolatry and superstition whereunto he was addicted, chose of the choicest magistrates to be priests, and that they might be in great estimation gave each of them a train of men to follow them : and now the Christians and Christian emperors thinking that that would promote the Christian religion that promoted superstition, . . . . endeavoured to make their bishops encounter and match with those idolatrous priests, and cause that

"they should not be inferior to them in wealth and outward pomp. "Eusebius, lib. viii. cap. 15." 14. ed. Reading. p. 399. 'Ιερέας τε ειδώλων κατὰ πάντα τόπον καὶ πόλιν' καὶ ἐπὶ τούτων ἐκάστης ἐπαρχίας ἀρχιερέα τῶν ἐν πολιτείαις ἐνά γε τινα, μάλιστα τὸν ἐμφανῶς διὰ πάσης ἐμπρέψαντα λειτουργίας, μετὰ στρατιωτικοῦ στίφους καὶ δορυφορίας ἐκτάσσω. ἀνάιδην τε πᾶσι γόσιν, ὡς ἂν εὐσεβέσι καὶ θεῶν προσφιλέσι, ἡγεμονίας καὶ τὰς μεγίστας προνομίας δωρούμενος. Whitgift : "There is not one word, that any Christian prince took any example of him to do the like in Christianity. It rather appeareth that Maximinus did in this point imitate the Christians, who had their metropolitans, and one chief bishop in every province long before this time." The conduct of Julian afterwards seems to warrant this conjecture.]

which sheweth what honour is fit for prelates, and what attendancy convenient to be a part of their honour.

Touching privileges granted for honour's sake, partly in general unto the clergy, and partly unto prelates the chiefest persons ecclesiastical in particular ; of such quality and number they are<sup>1</sup>, that to make but rehearsal of them we scarce think it safe, lest the very entrails of some of our godly brethren, as they term themselves, should thereat haply burst in sunder.

XXI. And yet of all these things rehearsed, it may be there never would have grown any question, had bishops been honoured only thus far forth. But the honouring of the clergy with wealth, this is in the eyes of them which pretend to seek nothing but mere reformation of abuses, a sin that can never be remitted.

How soon, O how soon might the Church be perfect, even without any spot or wrinkle, if public authority would at the length say Amen unto the holy and devout requests of those godly brethren, who as yet with outstretched necks groan in the pangs of their zeal to see the houses of bishops rifled, and their so long desired livings gloriously divided amongst the righteous ! But there is an impediment, a let, which somewhat hindereth those good men's prayers from taking effect : they in whose hands the sovereignty of power and dominion over this Church doth rest, are persuaded there is a God ; for undoubtedly either the name of Godhead is but a feigned thing, or if in heaven there be a God, the sacrilegious inten-

<sup>1</sup> L. 12. C. de sacros. Eccles. [This is a law of Valentinian the Third and Marcian, A.D. 454, confirming all former church privileges, annulling encroachments, and especially enjoining the payment of allowances.] L. 5. ibid. [A law of Honorius and Theodosius ii. A.D. 412. "Placet . . . præscribere, a quibus specialiter necessitatibus singularum urbium ecclesiæ habentur immunes. Prima quippe illius usurpationis contumelia depellenda est : ne prædia usibus cælestium secretorum dedicata, sordidorum munerum fœce ventur.] L. 2. C. de Episc. et

Cler. [A law of Constantius (A.D. 357.) reenacting former immunities, and extending them to the wives and families of clergymen.] L. 10. ibid. [Arcadius and Honorius, A. D. 398, enjoin on provincial officers immediate regard to all cases of sacrilege, and add, "Nec expectet (provinciae moderator), ut episcopus injuriæ propriæ ultionem deprecatur, cui sanctitas ignoscendi gloriam dereliquit. Sitque cunctis laudabile, factas atroces sacerdotibus aut ministris injurias veluti crimen publicum persequi, ac de talibus reis ultionem mereri."]

tion of Church robbers, which lurketh under this plausible name of Reformation, is in his sight a thousand times more hateful than the plain professed malice of those very miscreants, who threw their vomit in the open face of our blessed Saviour.

[2.] They are not words of persuasion by which true men can hold their own, when they are over beset with thieves. And therefore to speak in this cause at all were but labour lost, saving only in respect of them, who being as yet unjoined unto this conspiracy, may be haply somewhat stayed, when they shall know betimes what it is to see thieves and to run on with them, as the Prophet in the Psalm speaketh<sup>1</sup>; "When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers."

For the better information therefore of men which carry true, honest and indifferent minds, these things we will endeavour to make most clearly manifest: First, That in goods and livings of the Church none hath propriety but God himself. Secondly, That the honour which the clergy therein hath, is to be, as it were, God's Receivers; the honour of prelates, to be his chief and principal Receivers. Thirdly, That from him they have right, not only to receive, but also to use such goods, the lower sort in smaller, and the higher in larger measure. Fourthly, That in case they be thought, yea, or found to abuse the same, yet may not such honour be therefore lawfully taken from them, and be given away unto persons of other calling.

XXII. Possessions, lands and livings spiritual, the wealth of the clergy, the goods of the Church, are in such sort the Lord's own, that man can challenge no propriety in them. His they are, and not ours; all things are his, in that from him they have their being<sup>2</sup>. "My corn, and my wine, and mine oil," saith the Lord. All things his, in that he hath absolute power to dispose of them at his pleasure. "Mine" (saith he<sup>3</sup>) are the sheep and oxen of a thousand hills." All things his, in that when we have them, we may say with Job<sup>4</sup>, "God hath given;" and when we are deprived of them, "The Lord," whose they are, hath likewise "taken

<sup>1</sup> Psal. l. 18.<sup>2</sup> Hos. ii. 8.<sup>3</sup> Psal. l. 10.<sup>4</sup> Job i. 21.

"them away" again. But these sacred possessions are his by another tenure; his, because those men who first received them from him have unto him returned them again by way of religious gift or oblation: and in this respect it is, that the Lord doth term those houses<sup>1</sup> wherein such gifts and oblations were laid, "his treasuries."

[2.] The ground whereupon men have resigned their own interests in things temporal, and given over the same unto God, is that precept which Solomon borroweth from the law of nature<sup>2</sup>, "Honour the Lord out of thy substance, and of the chiefest of all thy revenue: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and with new wine the fat of thy press shall overflow." For although it be by one most fitly spoken against those superstitious persons that only are scrupulous in external rites<sup>3</sup>; "Wilt thou win the favour of God? be virtuous: they best worship him that are his followers:" it is not the bowing of your knees, but of your hearts; it is not the number of your oblations, but the integrity of your lives; not your incense, but your obedience, which God is delighted to be honoured by: nevertheless, we must beware, lest simply understanding this, which comparatively is meant; that is to say, whereas the meaning is, that God doth chiefly respect the inward disposition of the heart; we must take heed we do not hereupon so worship him in spirit, that outwardly we take all worship, reverence and honour from him.

[3.] Our God will be glorified both of us himself, and for us by others: to others because our hearts are [not?] known, and yet our example is required for their good, therefore it is not sufficient to carry religion in our hearts, as fire is carried in flint-stones, but we are outwardly, visibly, apparently, to serve and honour the living God; yea to employ that way, as not only our souls but our bodies, so not only our bodies but our goods, yea, the choice, the flower, the chiefest of all thy revenue, saith Solomon. If thou hast any thing in all thy possessions of more value and price than other, to what use shouldest thou convert it, rather than this? Samuel was dear unto Hannah his mother: the child that

<sup>1</sup> Mal. iii. 10.<sup>2</sup> Prov. iii. 9.<sup>3</sup> Seneca. [Epist. 95. p. 604. ed.

Lipsii, Antwerp 1615. "Vis Deos propitiare? bonus esto. Satis istos coluit, quisquis imitatus est."]

BOOK VII. Hannah did so much esteem, she could not but greatly wish  
Ch. xxii. 4. to advance ; and her religious conceit was, that the honouring  
of God with it was the advancing of it unto honour. The  
chiefest of the offspring of men are the males which be first  
born : and for this cause, in the ancient world they all were  
by right of their birth priests to the Most High. By these  
and the like precedents, it plainly enough appeareth, that in  
what heart soever doth dwell unfeigned religion, in the same  
there resteth also a willingness to bestow upon God that  
soonest which is most dear. Amongst us the law is, that sith  
gold is the chiefest of metals, if it be any where found in the  
bowels of the earth, it belongeth in right of honour, as all  
men know, to the King : whence hath this custom grown but  
only from a natural persuasion, whereby men judge it decent  
for the highest persons always to be honoured with the  
choicest things? "If ye offer unto God the blind," saith the  
Prophet Malachi<sup>1</sup>, "it is not evil ; if the lame and sick, it  
"is good enough. Present it unto thy prince, and see if he  
"will content himself, or accept thy person, saith the Lord  
"of hosts." When Abel presented God with an offering, it  
was the fattest of all the lambs in his whole flock ; he honoured  
God not only out of his substance, but out of the very chiefest  
therein ; whereby we may somewhat judge how religiously  
they stand affected towards God, who grudge that any thing  
worth the having should be his.

[4.] Long it were to reckon up particularly what God was  
owner of under the Law<sup>2</sup>: for of this sort was all which they  
spent in legal sacrifices ; of this sort their usual oblations and  
offerings ; of this sort tithes and firstfruits ; of this sort that  
which by extraordinary occasions they vowed unto God ; of  
this sort all that they gave to the building of the tabernacle ;  
of this sort all that which was gathered amongst them for the  
erecting of the temple, and the adorning of it erected<sup>3</sup> ; of  
this sort whatsoever their Corban contained, wherein that  
blessed widow's deodate was laid up. Now either this kind  
of honour was prefiguratively altogether ceremonial, and then

<sup>1</sup> Mal. i. 8. [Comp. b. v. c. xxxiv. "a delight in the house of my God,  
§ 3 ; b. viii. c. i. § 5.] "therefore I have given thereunto  
<sup>2</sup> [Compare b. v. c. lxxviii.] "of mine own both gold and silver  
<sup>3</sup> "Because," saith David, "I have "to adorn it with." 1 Chron. xxix. 3.

our Saviour accepteth it not ; or if we find that to him also it  
hath been done, and that with divine approbation given for  
encouragement of the world, to shew by such kind of service  
their dutiful hearts towards Christ, there will be no place left  
for men to make any question at all whether herein they do  
well or no.

[5.] Wherefore to descend from the synagogue unto the  
Church of Christ : albeit sacrifices, wherewith sometimes God  
was highly honoured, be not accepted<sup>1</sup> as heretofore at the  
hands of men ; yet forasmuch as "Honour God with thy  
"riches" is an edict of the unseparable law of nature, so far  
forth as men are therein required by such kind of homage to  
testify their thankful minds, this sacrifice<sup>2</sup> God doth accept  
still. Wherefore as it was said of Christ, that<sup>3</sup> "all kings  
"should worship him, and all nations do him service ;" so  
this very kind of worship or service was likewise mentioned,  
lest we should think that our Lord and Saviour would allow  
of no such thing<sup>4</sup>. "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles  
"shall bring presents ; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall  
"bring gifts." And as it maketh not a little to the praise of  
those sages mentioned in the Gospel, that the first amongst  
men which did solemnly honour our Saviour on earth were  
they ; so it soundeth no less to the dignity of this particular  
kind, that the rest by it were prevented ; "They fell down  
"and worshipped him, and opened their treasures<sup>5</sup>, and  
"presented unto him gifts ; gold, and incense, and myrrh."  
Of all those things which were done to the honour of Christ  
in his lifetime there is not one whereof he spake in such sort,  
as when Mary to testify the largeness of her affection, seemed  
to waste away a gift upon him, the price of which gift might,  
as they thought who saw it, much better have been spent in  
works of mercy towards the poor : "Verily<sup>6</sup> I say unto you,  
"Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout all  
"the world, there shall also this that she hath done be spoken  
"of for memorial of her."

[6.] Of service to God, the best works are they which con-  
tinue longest<sup>7</sup> : and for permanency what like Donation,  
whereby things are unto him for ever dedicated? That the

<sup>1</sup> Psal. l. 13, 14. <sup>2</sup> Phil. iv. 18. <sup>3</sup> Psal. lxxii. 11. <sup>4</sup> Ver. 10.  
<sup>5</sup> Matt. ii. 11. <sup>6</sup> Matt. xxvi. 13. <sup>7</sup> John xv. 16.

ancient lands and livings of the Church were all in such sort given into the hands of God by the just lords and owners of them, that unto him they passed over their whole interest and right therein, the form of sundry the said donations<sup>1</sup> as yet extant most plainly sheweth. And where time hath left no such evidence as now remaining to be seen, yet the same intention is presumed in all donors, unless the contrary be apparent. But to the end it may yet more plainly appear unto all men under what title the several kinds of ecclesiastical possessions are held, "Our Lord himself," saith St. Augustine<sup>2</sup>, "had coffers to keep those things which the faithful offered unto him. Then was the form of the church treasury first instituted, to the end that withal we might understand that in forbidding to be careful for to-morrow, his purpose was not to bar his saints from keeping money, but to withdraw them from doing God service for wealth's sake, and from forsaking righteousness through fear of losing their wealth." The first gifts consecrated unto Christ after his departure out of the world were sums of money, in process of time other moveables were added, and at length goods unmoveable, churches and oratories hallowed to the honour of his glorious name, houses and lands for perpetuity conveyed unto him, inheritance given to remain his as long as the world should endure. "The Apostles," saith Melchiades<sup>3</sup>, "they foresaw that God would have his Church amongst the Gentiles, and for that cause in Judea they took no lands but price of lands sold."

<sup>1</sup> [See E. P. b. v. c. lxxix. 14.]

<sup>2</sup> Aug. c. 15. de Mendac. [t. vi. 437. "Sicut illud, *Nolite cogitare de crastino*: et, *Nolite itaque cogitare quid manducetis, et quid bibatis, et quid induamini*. Cum autem videmus et ipsum Dominum habuisse loculos, quo ea quæ dabantur mittebantur, ut servari possent ad usus pro tempore necessarios; et ipsos Apostolos procurasse multa fratrum indigentia, non solum in crastinum, sed etiam in prolixius tempus impendentis famis, sicut in Actis Apostolorum legimus; satis elucet illa præcepta sic intelligenda, ut nihil operis nostri

"temporalium adipiscendorum amore vel timore egestatis tanquam ea necessitate faciamus."

<sup>3</sup> C. 12. qu. 1. c. 15 et 16. ["Furturam ecclesiam Apostoli in gentibus prævidebant: idcirco prædicia in Judæa minime sunt adepti, sed pretia tantummodo ad fovendos egentes." Decr. Grat. pars ii. causa xii. qu. 1. p. 958. can. "Furturam." This decretal, ascribed to Miltiades, or Melchiades, who was bishop of Rome from A.D. 311 to 320, bears evident marks of having been composed long after Christianity had been established in the empire.]

This he conjectureth to have been the cause why the Apostles did that which the history reporteth of them. The truth is, that so the state of those times did require, as well elsewhere as in Judea. Wherefore when afterwards it did appear much more commodious for the Church to dedicate such inheritances, than the value and price of them being sold; the former custom was changed for this, as for the better. The devotion of Constantine herein all the world even till this very day admireth. They that lived in the prime of the Christian world thought no testament Christianly made, nor any thing therein well bequeathed<sup>1</sup>, unless something were thereby added unto Christ's patrimony.

[7.] Touching which men, what judgment the world doth now give I know not; perhaps we deem them to have been herein but blind and superstitious persons. Nay, we in these cogitations are blind; they contrariwise did with Solomon<sup>2</sup> plainly know and persuade themselves, that thus to diminish their wealth was not to diminish but to augment it, according to that which God doth promise to his own people by the Prophet Malachi<sup>3</sup>, and which they by their own particular experience<sup>4</sup> found true. If Wickliff therefore were of that

<sup>1</sup> [Decret. Grat. pars ii. caus. xiii. qu. 2. § *Siquis irascitur*. "Qui unum filium habet, putet Christum alterum; si duos habet, putet Christum tertium; si decem habet, undecimum Christum faciat; et suscipio." From S. Aug. Serm. i. de Vita Clericorum, § 4: t. v. 1382.]

<sup>2</sup> Prov. iii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Mal. iii. 10.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Chron. xxxi. 10. Tho. Waldensis, tom. i. [Doctrinale Fidei] lib. iv. c. 39. [and 40; quoting inter al. Wickliffe, Trialog. iv. § 18. (of which the title is, "Sæculares propter dotationem sunt puniendi.") "Nos autem dicimus illis, quod nedum possunt auferre temporalia ab ecclesia habitualiter delinquente, nec solum quod illis licet hoc facere, sed quod debent sub pœna damnationis gehennæ, cum debent de sua stultitia pœnitere, et satisfacere pro peccato quo Christi ecclesiam macularunt." fol. 131. ed. 1525. And, § 19. "Facilitatem au-

"tem faciendi hanc eleemosynam et debitum sic potes cognoscere. Constat ex regalibus regis Angliæ, quod decedente episcopo vel abate, aut quocunque notabiliter dotato de Anglia, temporalia sua, ad denotandum regalia regis, cadere debent in manu sua, et non procedetur ad electionem, nisi obtenta regis licentia; nec habebuntur ab electo mortificata regni dominia, nisi rege noviter approbante. Contineat ergo se rex ab innovatione derelicti maximi progenitorum suorum, et in brevitate erit totum regnum purgatum a mortificatione stolidi bonorum temporalium, quæ jam sunt in manu mortua." fol. 132. The passages which Thomas of Walden produces in c. 39, do not occur in the copy of Wickliffe here quoted: but their tenor is exactly that of his whole argument. E. g. c. 18. fol. 129. "Dic, rogo, utrum sæculares sunt propter dotationem hujus-

opinion which his adversaries ascribe unto him (whether truly or of purpose to make him odious I cannot tell, for in his writings I do not find it) namely, "That Constantine and others following his steps did evil, as having no sufficient ground whereby they might gather that such donations are acceptable to Jesus Christ;" it was in Wickliffe a palpable error. I will use but one only argument to stand in the stead of many. Jacob taking his journey unto Haran made in this sort his solemn vow<sup>1</sup>: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this journey which I go, and will give me bread to eat, and clothes to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in safety; then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set up a pillar shall be the house of God, and of all that thou shalt give me will I give the tenth unto thee." May a Christian man desire as great things as Jacob did at the hands of God? may he desire them in as earnest manner? may he promise as great thank-

"modi increpandi?" . . . "Tene firmiter et nullatenus dubites, quin temporales domini in isto graviter peccaverunt. . . Non solum cooperati sunt ad istam dotationem, sed multipliciter consenserunt." . . . fol. 130. "Cito post ascensionem ejus, infra annum cccc ejus ordinationem præcipuam in dotando ecclesiam reversarunt, et per consequens Antichristum in deturpationem sponsæ suæ multipliciter procrearunt. Unde narrat Chronica, quod in dotatione ecclesiæ vox audita est in aere angelica, tunc temporis sic dicentis, Hodie effusum est venenum in ecclesiam sanctam Dei." Compare the following, quoted by Walden from the *Speculum militantis Ecclesiæ*, cap. 9. "Juxta prædicta, erubescerent Antichristus et sui maculare sacerdotes Christi contra ordinationem quam ipse fecit; et domini sæculares et alii fatui qui hic adjuvant Antichristum, erubescerent de sic adjuvando sicut erubescerent in finali judicio; et iste pudor erit major pro dolore hypocrisis, quia dicunt in factis suis quod faciunt ista ob honorem Christi, quia Christus male instituit, et Domini sæculares

"emendant eum, sicut Imperator Romanus quando fecit sacerdotes suos dominos, ipse correxerat statum Apostolorum super ordinationem Christi. Sed totum hoc sapit blasphemiam." Among the errors of Wickliffe condemned at the Council of Constance, one head is, *Contra dotationem Ecclesiæ*; of which the following are specimens: "Domini temporales possunt licite auferre temporalia ab ecclesia delinquente." "Non est major hæreticus vel Antichristus, quam ille qui docet quod licitum sacerdotibus et Levitis gratiæ sit dotari in possessionibus et temporalibus." "Quantum ad chartas et concessionem sæcularium dominionum patet quod clerus erubesceret in niti tam culpabili fundamento: quia in nullo valet humana concessio, nisi præhabita licentia a domino capitali: et cum non possint docere quod domini de hoc habeant licentiam a Christo, patet quod lege tam humana quam divina, est talis donatio stulta sentienda, et ita illicita et Catholicis respuenda." Fasciculus, &c. Grattii: ed. Browne, p. 271.]

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxviii. 20-22.

fulness in acknowledging the goodness of God? may he vow any certain kind of public acknowledgment beforehand; or though he vow it not, perform it after in such sort that men may see he is persuaded how the Lord hath been his God? Are these particular kind of testifying thankfulness to God, the erecting of oratories, the dedicating of lands and goods to maintain them, forbidden any where? Let any mortal man living shew but one reason wherefore in this point to follow Jacob's example should not be a thing both acceptable unto God, and in the eyes of the world for ever most highly commendable. Concerning goods of this nature, goods whereof when we speak we term them τὰ τῷ Θεῷ ἀφιερωθέντα, the goods that are consecrated unto God, and as Tertullian speaketh<sup>1</sup>, *deposita pietatis*, things which piety and devotion hath laid up as it were in the bosom of God; touching such goods, the law civil following mere light of nature defineth them to be no man's<sup>2</sup>, because no mortal man, or community of men, hath right of propriety in them.

XXIII. Persons ecclesiastical are God's stewards, not only for that he hath set them over his family, as the ministers of ghostly food, but even for this very cause also, that they are to receive and dispose his temporal revenues, the gifts and oblations which men bring him. Of the Jews it is plain<sup>3</sup> that their tithes they offered unto the Lord, and those offerings the Lord bestowed upon the Levites. When the Levites gave the tenth of their tithes, this their gift the Law doth term the Lord's heave-offering<sup>3</sup>, and appoint that the high-priest should receive the same. Of spoils taken in war<sup>4</sup>, that part which they were accustomed to separate unto God, they brought it before the priest of the Lord, by whom it was laid up in the tabernacle of the congregation, for a memorial of their thankfulness towards God, and his goodness towards them in fighting for them against their enemies. As therefore the Apostle<sup>5</sup> magnifieth the honour of Melchisedec, in that he being an high-priest, did receive at the hands of Abraham the tithes which Abraham did honour God with; so it argueth in the Apostles themselves great honour, that at their feet<sup>6</sup>

That ecclesiastical persons are receivers of God's rents; and that the honour of Prelates is, to be thereof his chief receivers; not without liberty from him granted, of converting the same unto their own use, even in large manner.

<sup>1</sup> [Apol. c. 39.]

<sup>2</sup> [Justinian. Inst. II. i. 7. "Nullius autem sunt res sacræ et religiosæ, et sanctæ: quod enim divini

"juris est, id nullius in bonis est."]

<sup>3</sup> Num. xviii. 24-28.

<sup>4</sup> Num. xxxi. [48-54.]

<sup>5</sup> Heb. vii. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Acts iv. 34.