

whose advancement hath been principally their unworthiness to be advanced. But neither could this be done altogether without the inexcusable fault of some preferred before, and so oft we cannot imagine it to have been done, that either only or chiefly from thence this decay of their estimation may be thought to grow. Somewhat it is that the malice of their cunning adversaries, but much more which themselves have effected against themselves.

[15.] A bishop's estimation doth grow from the excellency of virtues suitable unto his place. Unto the place of a bishop those high divine virtues are judged suitable, which virtues being not easily found in other sorts of great men, do make him appear so much the greater in whom they are found. Devotion and the feeling sense of religion are not usual in the noblest, wisest, and chiefest personages of state, by reason their wits are so much employed another way, and their minds so seldom conversant in heavenly things. If therefore wherein themselves are defective they see that bishops do blessedly excel, it frameth secretly their hearts to a stooping kind of disposition, clean opposite to contempt. The very countenance of Moses was glorious after that God had conferred with him. And where bishops are, the powers and faculties of whose souls God hath possessed, those very actions, the kind whereof is common unto them with other men, have notwithstanding in them a more high and heavenly form, which draweth correspondent estimation unto it, by virtue of that celestial impression, which deep meditation of holy things, and as it were conversation with God doth leave in their minds. So that bishops which will be esteemed of as they ought, must frame themselves to that very pattern from whence those Asian bishops unto whom St. John writeth were denominated, even so far forth as this our frailty will permit; shine they must as angels of God in the midst of perverse men. They are not to look that the world should always carry the affection of Constantine¹, to bury that

¹ [See Theodoret. E. H. i. 11. καὶ τῷ δακτυλίῳ σημηνάμενος, φυλαπεχθήμονες ἄνδρες ἐγράψαντο τῶν ἐπισκόπων τῶν τῶν βασιλεί τὰς ἐγγράφους κατηγορίας ἐπέδοσαν ὁ δὲ πρὸ τῆς γεγενημένης ὁμονοίας ταύτας δεξάμενος, εἶτα δεσμὸν ἐπιθεῖς λαχθῆναι προσέταξεν ἔπειτα τὴν σύμβασιν ἐργασάμενος, ταύτας κομίσας παρόντων αὐτῶν κατέκαυσε, ὁμωμῶς ἢ μὴν μὴδὲν τῶν ἐγγεγραμμένων ἀνεγνωκέναι· οὐ γὰρ ἔφη χρῆναι τῶν

which might derogate from them, and to cover their imbecilities. More than high time it is that they bethink themselves of the Apostle's admonition, *Attende tibi*¹, "Have a vigilant eye to thyself." They err if they do not persuade themselves that wheresoever they walk or sit, be it in their churches or in their consistories, abroad and at home, at their tables or in their closets, they are in the midst of snares laid for them. Wherefore as they are with the prophet every one of them to make it their hourly prayer unto God, "Lead me "O Lord in thy righteousness, because of enemies²;" so it is not safe for them, no not for a moment, to slacken their industry in seeking every way that estimation which may further their labours unto the Church's good. Absurdity, though but in words, must needs be this way a maim, where nothing but wisdom, gravity and judgment is looked for. That which the son of Sirach hath concerning the writings of the old sages, "Wise sentences are found in them³," should be the proper mark and character of bishops' speeches, whose lips, as doors, are not to be opened, but for egress of instruction and sound knowledge. If base servility and dejection of mind be ever espied in them, how should men esteem them as worthy the rooms of the great ambassadors of God? A wretched desire to gain by bad and unseemly means standeth not with a mean man's credit, much less with that reputation which Fathers of the Church should be in. But if besides all this there be also coldness in works of piety and charity, utter contempt even of learning itself, no care to further it by any such helps as they easily might and ought to afford, no not as much as that due respect unto their very families about them, which all men that are of account do order as near as they can in such sort that no grievous offensive deformity be therein noted; if there still continue in that most reverend order such as, by so many engines, work day and night to pull down the whole frame of their own

ιερέων τὰ πλημμελήματα δῆλα γίνεσθαι τοῖς πολλοῖς, ἵνα μὴ σκανδάλου πρόσθεν ἐντεύθεν λάβοντες, ἀδεῶς ἀμαρτάνωσι· φασὶ δὲ αὐτὸν καὶ τότε προσθεῖναι, ὡς εἰ αὐτοπτηγῆς ἐπισκόπου γάμον ἀλλότριον διορύττοντος γίνοιτο, συγκάλυψαι ἂν τῷ πορφυρίῳ τὸ παρανόμως γινόμενον, ὡς ἂν μὴ βλάβῃ τοὺς θεωμένους τῶν δρωμένων ἢ ὄψις.]
¹ [1 Tim. iv. 16.]
² [Psalm v. 8.]
³ [c. xlv. 4. σοφοὶ λόγοι ἐν παιδείᾳ αὐτῶν.]

estimation amongst men, some of the rest secretly also permitting others their industrious opposites every day more and more to seduce the multitude; how should the Church of God hope for great good at their hands?

[16.] What we have spoken concerning these things, let not malicious accusers think themselves therewith justified, no more than Shimei was by his sovereign's most humble and meek acknowledgment even of that very crime which so impudent a caitiff's tongue upbraided him withal; the one in the virulent rancour of a cankered affection, took that delight for the present, which in the end did turn to his own more tormenting woe; the other in the contrite patience even of deserved malediction had yet this comfort¹, "It may be the Lord will look on mine affliction, and do me good for his cursing this day." As for us over whom Christ hath placed them to be the chiefest guides and pastors of our souls, our common fault is, that we look for much more in our governors than a tolerable sufficiency can yield, and bear much less than humanity and reason do require we should. Too much perfection over rigorously exacted in them, cannot but breed in us perpetual discontentment, and on both parts cause all things to be unpleasant. It is exceedingly worth the noting, which Plato hath about the means whereby men fall into an utter dislike of all men with whom they converse²: "This sourness of mind which maketh every man's dealings unsavoury in our taste, entereth by an unskilful overweening, which at the first we have of one, and so of another, in whom we afterwards find ourselves to have been deceived, they declaring themselves in the end to be frail men, whom we judged demigods. When we have oftentimes been thus beguiled, and that far besides expectation, we grow at the length to this plain conclusion, that there is

¹ 2 Sam. xvi. 12.

² Plat. in Phæd. [Μισανθρωπία ἐνδύεται ἐκ τοῦ σφόδρα τινὶ πιστεῦσαι ἄνευ τέχνης, καὶ ἠγήσασθαι παντάπασί γε ἀληθῆ εἶναι καὶ ὑγιῆ καὶ πιστὸν τὸν ἄνθρωπον, ἔπειτα ὀλιγον ὑστερον εὐρεῖν τοῦτον πύνην τε καὶ ἄπιστον, καὶ αὐθις ἕτερον¹ καὶ ὅταν τοῦτο πολλὰκις πάθῃ τις, καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦτον μάλιστα οὐκ ἂν ἠγήσατο οἰκειοτάτους τε καὶ ἐταιροτάτους, τελευ-

τῶν δὲ θαμὰ προσκρούων, μισεῖ τε πάντας, καὶ ἠγείται οὐδένοσ οὐδὲν ὑγιές εἶναι τοπαράπαν . . . καὶ δῆλον ὅτι ἄνευ τέχνης τῆς περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπων ὁ τοιοῦτος χρῆσθαι ἐπιχειρεῖ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις²· εἰ γὰρ που μετὰ τέχνης ἐχρήτο, ὥσπερ ἔχει, οὕτως ἂν ἠγήσατο, τοὺς μὲν χρηστοὺς καὶ πονηροὺς σφόδρα ὀλίγους εἶναι ἐκατέρους, τοὺς δὲ μεταξὺ, πλείστους. t. i. 89. c. ed. Serran.]

"nothing at all sound in any man. Which bitter conceit is unseemly, and plain to have risen from lack of mature judgment in human affairs; which if so be we did handle with art, we would not enter into dealings with men, other-wise than being beforehand grounded in this persuasion, that the number of persons notably good or bad is but very small; that the most part of good have some evil, and of evil men some good in them." So true our experience doth find those aphorisms of Mercurius Trismegistus¹, Ἀδύνατον τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐνθάδε καθαρεύει τῆς κακίας, "to purge goodness quite and clean from all mixture of evil here is a thing impossible." Again, Τὸ μὴ λίαν κακὸν ἐνθάδε τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐστι, "when in this world we term a thing good, we cannot by exact construction have any other true meaning, than that the said thing so termed is not noted to be a thing exceedingly evil." And again, Μόνου, ὦ Ἀσκληπίε, τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἐν ἀνθρώποις, τὸ δὲ ἔργον οὐδαμοῦ, "Amongst men, O Æsculapius, the name of that which is good we find, but no where the very true thing itself." When we censure the deeds and dealings of our superiors, to bring with us a fore-conceit thus qualified, shall be as well on our part as theirs a thing available unto quietness.

[17.] But howsoever the case doth stand with men's either good or bad quality, the verdict which our Lord and Saviour hath given, should continue for ever sure; "Quæ Dei sunt, Deo;" let men bear the burden of their own iniquity; as for those things which are God's, let not God be deprived of them. For if only to withhold that which should be given be no better than² to rob God, if to withdraw any mite of that which is but in propose [purpose?]^k only bequeathed, though as yet undelivered into the sacred treasure of God, be a sin for which Ananias³ and Sapphira felt so heavily the dreadful hand of divine revenge; quite and clean to take that away which we never gave, and that after God hath for so many ages therewith been possessed, and that without any other shew of cause, saving only that it seemeth in their eyes who seek it to be too much for them which have it in their

^k So corrected ed. 1676.

¹ Merc. Trism. in Pimandro, dial. vi. [§ 3. ed. Patricii, Lond. 1611, fol. 14.]

² Mal. iii. 8.

³ Acts v. 2.

hands, can we term it or think it less than most impious injustice, most heinous sacrilege? Such was the religious affection of Joseph¹, that it suffered him not to take that advantage, no not against the very idolatrous priests of Egypt, which he took for the purchasing of other men's lands to the king; but he considered, that albeit their idolatry deserved hatred, yet for the honour's sake due unto priesthood, better it was the king himself should yield them relief in public extremity, than permit that the same necessity should constrain also them to do as the rest of the people did.

[18.] But it may be men have now found out, that God hath proposed the Christian clergy as a prey for all men freely to seize upon; that God hath left them as the fishes of the sea, which every man that listeth to gather into his net may; or that there is no God in heaven to pity them, and to regard the injuries which man doth lay upon them: yet the public good of this church and commonwealth doth, I hope, weigh somewhat in the hearts of all honestly disposed men. Unto the public good no one thing is more directly available, than that such as are in place, whether it be of civil or of ecclesiastical authority, be so much the more largely furnished even with external helps and ornaments of this life, [by?] how much the more highly they are in power and calling advanced above others. For nature is not contented with bare sufficiency unto the sustenance of man, but doth evermore covet a decency proportionable unto the place which man hath in the body or society of others. For according unto the greatness of men's calling, the measure of all their actions doth grow in every man's secret expectation, so that great men do always know that great things are at their hands expected. In a bishop great liberality, great hospitality, actions in every kind great are looked for: and for actions which must be great, mean instruments will not serve. Men are but men, what room soever amongst men they hold. If therefore the measure of their worldly abilities be beneath that proportion which their calling doth make to be looked for at their hands, a stronger inducement it is than perhaps men are aware of unto evil and corrupt dealings for supply of that defect. For which cause we must needs think it a thing necessary unto the

¹ Gen. xlvii. 22.

common good of the Church, that great jurisdiction being granted unto bishops over others, a state of wealth proportionable should likewise be provided for them. Where wealth is had in so great admiration, as generally in this golden age it is, that without it angelical perfections are not able to deliver from extreme contempt, surely to make bishops poorer than they are, were to make them of less account and estimation than they should be. Wherefore if detriment and dishonour do grow to religion, to God, to his Church, when the public account which is made of the chief of the clergy decayeth, how should it be but in this respect for the good of religion, of God, of his Church, that the wealth of bishops be carefully preserved from further diminution?

The travels and crosses wherewith prelacy is never unaccompanied, they which feel them know how heavy and how great they are. Unless such difficulties therefore annexed unto that estate be tempered by co-annexing thereunto things esteemed of in this world, how should we hope that the minds of men, shunning naturally the burdens of each function, will be drawn to undertake the burden of episcopal care and labour in the Church of Christ? Wherefore if long we desire to enjoy the peace, quietness, order and stability of religion, which prelacy (as hath been declared) causeth, then must we necessarily, even in favour of the public good, uphold those things, the hope whereof being taken away, it is not the mere goodness of the charge, and the divine acceptation thereof, that will be able to invite many thereunto.

[19.] What shall become of that commonwealth or church in the end, which hath not the eye of learning to beautify, guide and direct it? At the length what shall become of that learning, which hath not wherewith any more to encourage her industrious followers? And finally, what shall become of that courage to follow learning, which hath already so much failed through the only diminution of her chiefest rewards, bishoprics? Surely wheresoever this wicked intendment of overthrowing cathedral churches, or of taking away those livings, lands and possessions which bishops hitherto have enjoyed, shall once prevail, the handmaids attending thereupon will be paganism and extreme barbarity.

[20.] In the Law of Moses, how careful provision is made

that goods of this kind might remain to the Church for ever¹: "Ye shall not make common the holy things of the children of Israel, lest ye die, saith the Lord." Touching the fields annexed unto Levitical cities, the law was plain, they might not be sold; and the reason of the law, this², "for it was their possession for ever:" He which was Lord and owner of it, his will and pleasure was, that from the Levites it should never pass to be enjoyed by any other. The Lord's own portion, without his own commission and grant, how should any man justly hold? They which hold it by his appointment had it plainly with this condition³, "They shall not sell of it, neither change it, nor alienate the first-fruits of the land; for it is holy unto the Lord." It falleth sometimes out, as the prophet Habakkuk noteth, that the very⁴ "prey of savage beasts becometh dreadful unto themselves." It did so in Judas, Achan, Nebuchadnezzar; their evil-purchased goods were their snare, and their prey their own terror; a thing no where so likely to follow, as in those goods and possessions, which being laid where they should not rest, have by the Lord's own testimony his most bitter curse⁵ their undividable companion.

[21.] These persuasions we use for other men's cause, not for theirs with whom God and religion are parts of the abrogated law of ceremonies. Wherefore not to continue longer in the cure of a sore desperate, there was a time when the clergy had almost as little as these good people wish. But the kings of this realm and others whom God had blest, considered devoutly with themselves, as David in like case sometimes had done, "Is it meet that we at the hands of God should enjoy all kinds of abundance, and God's clergy suffer want?" They considered that of Solomon, "⁶Honour God with thy substance, and the chiefest of all thy revenue; so shall thy barns be filled with corn, and thy vessels shall run over with new wine." They considered how the care which Jehosaphat had⁷, in providing that the Levites might have encouragement to do the work of the Lord cheerfully, was left of God as a fit pattern to be followed in the Church for

¹ Numb. xviii. 32.² Lev. xxv. 34.³ Ezek. xlvi. 14.⁴ Habak. ii. 17.⁵ Mal. iii. 9.⁶ Prov. iii. 9.⁷ 2 Chron. xix.

ever. They considered what promise our Lord and Saviour had made unto them, at whose hands his prophets should receive but the least part of the meanest kind of friendliness, though it were but a draught of water; which promise seemeth¹ not [now?] to be taken, as if Christ had made them of any higher courtesy uncapable, and had promised reward not unto such as give them but that, but unto such as leave them but that. They considered how earnest the Apostle is, that if the ministers of the law were so amply provided for, less care then ought not to be had of them, who under the gospel of Jesus Christ possess correspondent rooms in the Church. They considered how needful it is that they who provoke all others unto works of mercy and charity should especially have wherewith to be examples of such things, and by such means to win them, with whom other means without those do commonly take very small effect. In these and the like considerations, the Church revenues were in ancient times augmented, our Lord thereby performing manifestly the promise made to his servants, that they which did "leave either father, or mother, or lands, or goods, for his sake, should receive even in this world an hundred fold." For some hundreds of years together, they which joined themselves to the Church were fain to relinquish all worldly emoluments and to endure the hardness of an afflicted estate. Afterward the Lord gave rest to his Church, kings and princes became as fathers thereunto, the hearts of all men inclined towards it, and by his providence there grew unto it every day earthly possessions in more and more abundance, till the greatness thereof bred envy, which no diminutions are able to satisfy.

[22.] For as those ancient nursing Fathers thought they did never bestow enough; even so in the eye of this present age, as long as any thing remaineth, it seemeth to be too much. Our fathers we imitate *in perversum*, as Tertullian¹ speaketh; like them we are, by being in equal degree the contrary unto that which they were. Unto those earthly blessings which God as then did with so great abundance pour down upon the ecclesiastical state, we may in regard of most near resemblance

¹ So all Gauden's edd.¹ [De Præscript. Hæret. c. xxx. "rum, qua Apostolos in perversum Agnosco maximam virtutem eo- "æmulantur."]

BOOK VII. apply the selfsame words which the prophet hath¹, "God
Ch. xxiv. 22. "blessed them exceedingly, and by this very mean turned the
"hearts of their own brethren to hate them, and to deal poli-
"tically with his servants." Computations are made², and
there are huge sums set down, for princes to see how much
they may amplify and enlarge their own treasure; how many
public burdens they may ease; what present means they may
have to reward their servants about them, if they please but
to grant their assent, and to accept of the spoil of bishops, by
whom church goods are but abused unto pomp and vanity.
Thus albeit they deal with one whose princely virtue giveth
them small hope to prevail in impious and sacrilegious motions,
yet shame they not to move her royal majesty even with a
suit not much unlike unto that wherewith the Jewish high
priest [priests?] tried Judas, whom they solicited unto treason
against his Master, and proposed unto him a number of silver
pence in lieu of so virtuous and honest a service. But her
sacred majesty disposed to be always³ like herself, her heart so
far estranged from willingness to gain by pillage of that estate,
the only awe whereof under God she hath been unto this pre-
sent hour, as of all other parts of this noble commonwealth,
whereof she hath vowed herself a protector till the end of her
days on earth, which if nature could permit, we wish, as good
cause we have, endless: this her gracious inclination is more
than a seven times sealed warrant, upon the same assurance
whereof, touching^m any action so dishonourable as this, we are
on her part most secure, not doubting but that unto all pos-
terity it shall for ever appear, that from the first to the very
last of her sovereign proceedings there hath not been one
authorized deed other than consonant with that Symmachus
saith⁴, "Fiscus bonorum principum, non sacerdotum damnis,
"sed hostium spoliis augeatur:" consonant with that imperial
law⁵, "Ea quæ ad beatissimæ ecclesiæ jura pertinent, tanquam
"ipsam sacrosanctam et religiosam ecclesiam, intacta convenit

^m time and; all Gauden's edd.

¹ Psal. cv. 24, 25.

² [See in Penry's "Humble Mo-
"tion," p. 94, &c. a detailed plan
for the redistribution of church
property.]

³ [Cf. Elizabeth's motto, *Semper*

eadem.]

⁴ Lib. x. Ep. 54. DDD. Valent.
Theodos. et Arcad. [p. 289. Paris.
1604.]

⁵ Cod. Just. I. 2. de Sacros. Ec-
cles. l. 14.

"venerabiliter custodiri; ut sicut ipsa religionis et fidei mater BOOK VII.
"perpetua est, ita ejus patrimonium jugiter servetur illæsum." Ch. xxiv. 23,
24.

[23.] As for the case of public burdens, let any politician
living make it appear, that by confiscation of bishops' livings,
and their utter dissolution at once, the commonwealth shall
ever have half that relief and ease which it receiveth by their
continuance as now they are, and it shall give us some cause
to think, that albeit we see they are impiously and irreligiously
minded, yet we may esteem them at least to be tolerable com-
monwealth's-men. But the case is too clear and manifest, the
world doth but too plainly see it that no one order of subjects
whatsoever within this land doth bear the seventh part of that
proportion which the clergy beareth in the burdens of the
commonwealth. No revenue of the crown like unto it, either
for certainty or for greatness. Let the good which this way
hath grown to the commonwealth by the dissolution of religious
houses, teach men what ease unto public burdens there is like
to grow by the overthrow of the clergy. My meaning is not
hereby to make the state of bishoprick¹ and of those dissolved
companies alike, the one no less unlawful to be removed
than the other. For those religious persons were men which
followed only a special kind of contemplative life in the com-
monwealth, they were properly no portion of God's clergy
(only such amongst them excepted as were also priests), their
goods (that excepted which they unjustly held through the
popes' usurped power of appropriating ecclesiastical livings
unto them) may in part seem to be of the nature of civil pos-
sessions, held by other kinds of corporations, such as the city
of London hath divers. Wherefore as their institution was
human, and their end for the most part superstitious, they had
not therein merely that holy and divine interest which belong-
eth unto bishops, who being employed by Christ in the prin-
cipal service of his Church, are receivers and disposers of his
patrimony, as hath been shewed, which whosoever shall with-
hold or withdraw at any time from them, he undoubtedly
robbeth God himself.

[24.] If they abuse the goods of the Church unto pomp and
vanity, such faults we do not excuse in them. Only we wish
it to be considered whether such faults be verily in them, or

¹ [So 1662: bishopricks, 1676, '82.]

else but objected against them by such as gape after spoil, and therefore are no competent judges what is moderate and what excessive in them, whom under this pretence they would spoil. But the accusation may be just. In plenty and fulness it may be we are of God more forgetful than were requisite. Notwithstanding men should remember how not to the clergy alone it was said by Moses in Deuteronomy¹, "Ne cum manducaveris et biberis et domos optimas ædificaveris." If the remedy prescribed for this disease be good, let it unpartially be applied. "Interest reipub. ut re sua quisque bene utatur²." Let all states be put to their moderate pensions, let their livings and lands be taken away from them whosoever they be, in whom such ample possessions are found to have been matters of grievous abuse: were this just? would noble families think this reasonable? The title which bishops have to their livings is as good as the title of any sort of men unto whatsoever we account to be most justly held by them; yea in this one thing the claim of bishops hath preeminence above all secular titles of right, in that God's own interest is the tenure whereby they hold, even as also it was to the priests of the law an assurance of their spiritual goods and possessions, whereupon, though they many times abused greatly the goods of the Church, yet was not God's patrimony therefore taken away from them, and made saleable unto other tribes. To rob God, to ransack the Church, to overthrow the whole order of Christian bishops, and to turn them out of land and living, out of house and home, what man of common honesty can think it for any manner of abuse to be a remedy lawful or just? We must confess that God is righteous in taking away that which men abuse: but doth that excuse the violence of thieves and robbers?

[25.] Complain we will not with St. Jerome³, "That the hands of men are so straitly tied, and their liberal minds so much bridled and held back from doing good by augmentation of the Church patrimony." For we confess that herein

¹ [c. viii. 12.]

² [Justinian. Instit. lib. i. tit. viii. § 2. "Expedit enim reip. ne sua re quis male utatur."]

³ "Pudet dicere, sacerdotes idolorum, aurigæ, mimi et scorta hæreditates capiunt, solis clericis

"et monachis id lege prohibetur, et prohibetur non a persecutoribus sed principibus Christianis. Nec de lege conqueror, sed doleo quod meruerimus hanc legem." Ad Nepot. 2. [§ 6. t. i. 258. ed. Vallars.]

mediocrity may be and hath been sometime exceeded. There did want heretofore a Moses to temper men's liberality, to say unto them who enriched the Church, *Sufficit*¹, Stay your hands, lest fervour of zeal do cause you to empty yourselves too far. It may be the largeness of men's hearts being then more moderate, had been after more durable; and one state by too much overgrowing the rest, had not given occasion unto the rest to undermine it. That evil is now sufficiently cured: the Church treasury, if then it were over full, hath since been reasonable [reasonably?] well emptied. That which Moses spake unto givers, we must now inculcate unto takers away from the Church, Let there be some stay, some stint in spoiling. If "grape-gatherers came unto them," saith the prophet, "would they not leave some remnant behind²?" But it hath fared with the wealth of the Church as with a tower, which being built at the first with the highest, overthroweth itself after by its own greatness; neither doth the ruin thereof cease with the only fall of that which hath exceeded mediocrity, but one part beareth down another, till the whole be laid prostrate. For although the state ecclesiastical, both others and even bishops themselves, be now fallen to so low an ebb, as all the world at this day doth see; yet because there remaineth still somewhat which unsatiable minds can thirst for, therefore we seem not to have been hitherto sufficiently wronged. Touching that which hath been taken from the Church in appropriations known to amount to the value of one hundred twenty-six thousand pounds yearly, we rest contentedly and quietly without it, till it shall please God to touch the hearts of men, of their own voluntary accord, to restore it to him again; judging thereof no otherwise than some others did of those goods which were by Sylla taken away from the citizens of Rome³, that albeit they were in truth *male capta*, unconscionably taken away from the right owners at the first, nevertheless, seeing that such as were after possessed of them held them not without some title, which law did after a sort made good, *repetitio eorum proculdubio labefactabat compositionem civitatem*. What hath been taken away as dedicated unto uses superstitious, and consequently not given unto God,

¹ [Exod. xxxvi. 5-7.]

² Obad. ver. 5.

³ Flor. lib. iii. c. 13. [23.]

or at the leastwise not so rightly given, we repine not thereat. That which hath gone by means secret and indirect, through corrupt compositions or compacts, we cannot help. What the hardness of men's hearts doth make them loth to have exacted, though being due by law, even thereof the want we do also bear. Out of that which after all these deductions cometh clearly unto our hands, I hope it will not be said that towards the public charge we disburse nothing. And doth the residue seem yet excessive? The ways whereby temporal men provide for themselves and their families are fore-closed unto us. All that we have to sustain our miserable life with, is but a remnant of God's own treasure, so far already diminished and clipped, that if there were any sense of common humanity left in this hard-hearted world, the impoverished estate of the clergy of God would at the length even of very commiseration be spared. The mean gentleman that hath but an hundred pound land to live on, would not be hasty to change his worldly estate and condition with many of these so over abounding prelates; a common artisan or tradesman of the city, with ordinary pastors of the Church.

[26.] It is our hard and heavy lot, that no other sort of men being grudged at, how little benefit soever the public weal reap by them, no state complained of for holding that which hath grown unto them by lawful means; only the governors of our souls, they that study night and day so to guide us, that both in this world we may have comfort and in the world to come endless felicity and joy (for even such is the very scope of all their endeavours, this they wish, for this they labour, how hardly soever we use to construe of their intents): hard, that only they should be thus continually lifted at for possessing but that whereunto they have by law both of God and man most just title. If there should be no other remedy but that the violence of men in the end must needs bereave them of all succour, further than the inclination of others shall vouchsafe to cast upon them, as it were by way of alms for their relief but from hour to hour; better they are not than their fathers, which have been contented with as hard a portion at the world's hands: let the light of the sun and moon, the common benefit of heaven and earth be taken from bishops, if the question were whether God should lose his glory, and the safety of his

Church be hazarded, or they relinquish the right and interest which they have in the things of this world. But sith the question in truth is whether Levi shall be deprived of the portion of God or no, to the end that Simeon or Reuben may devour it as their spoil, the comfort of the one in sustaining the injuries which the other would offer, must be that prayer poured out by Moses the prince of prophets, in most tender affection to Levi, "Bless, O Lord, his substance, accept thou the work of his hands; smite through the loins of them that rise up against him, and of them which hate him, that they rise no more¹."

¹ Deut. xxxiii. 11.