

they be either laye men , or men of euill conuersation, or pro- ued many fell enemies, or incensed with anye hatred, their accu- sations against any Byshops ought not to stande. Wyth other such matters moe, concerning the disposition of iudiciall court. Which matter, if Pope Gregory the seuenth, had written to Hen- rye the third Emperour, or if Pope Alexander the third, had writ- ten to the Emperour Fredericus the first: it might haue stand with some reason and opportunity of time. But nowe for Marcellus to write these decrees in such persecution of the Church, to Maxentius the Heathen and most cruell Emperour: howe vnylike it is to bee true, and howe it serued then to purpose, the Reader may some discerne. And yet these be the epistles and constitutions decretall, whereby (vnder the pretended title of the fathers) al churches of late time, & al ecclesiasticall causes haue bene, & yet are in this realme of england to this day gouerned, directed, and disposed.

The like duction & examination I might also make of the other epistles that followe of Eusebius and Miltiades, which al tende to the same scope, that no Idolatre or bishop ought to come to his answere (or ad litem cōtestatam, as the words of their writing do terme it) before they be orderly & fully restored again to their possessiōs, who mozeouer in y said their epistles stil harpe vpon this key of y scripture: Tu es Petrus, & super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam, Declaring mozeouer that this pynledge of indoging al mē and to be iudge of no man, but onely to be left to y iudge- ment of the Lord: was giuen to this foresayd holy sea of Rome, from tyme of the Apostles, & chiefly lēt in yeter the holpe key keeper: so that although the election of the Apostles was equall, yet this was chiefey graunted to Saint Peter, to haue preheniencye about the rest. Con- cluding in the ende hereby, Quod semper maiores causa, si- cut sunt episcoporum, & potiorum cura negotiorum, ad vnam beati principis Apostolorum Petri sedem confluerent: That is: that alwaies all greater causes, as be the matters of By- shoppes, and such other cares of weighty importance, should be brought to the sea of S. Peter, the blessed pynce of the Apostles, &c. These be the wordes of Miltiades and Eusebius, whereby it may partly be smelled of him that hath any note, what was the meaning of the which forged these writings and letters, vpon these auncient holy martirs.

This I cannot but marvel at, in the thirde Epistle of Eusebius the bishop of Rome, that where as Marcellus his late predecessor before, in his owne time and remembrance did fall so horribly, and was condemned for the same iustly to be expelled the Citie by the counsell of 300. Byshops: yet notwithstanding the foresaid Eusebius in his thirde epistle alledging y place of Tu es Petrus, bringeth in for a profe of the same and faith: Quia in sede Apostolica extra maculam semper est Catholica seruata religio. &c. That is, for in the A- postolical sea, alwaies the Catholike Religion hath bene preserved without any spot or blemish.

But howeouer the forgers of these decretall Epistles haue forgotte themselves, most certeine it is that these ho- ly byshops, vpon whom they were and are ascribed: lined perfect god men, and died blessed martirs. Of whom this Miltiades was the last among all the Byshoppes of Rome here in the west Church of Europe, that euer was in dan- ger of persecution to be martyred, yet to this present day.

And thus haue ye heard the stories and names of such blessed Santes, which suffered in the time of persecution, from the xix. yeare of Dioclesian, to the vij. and last yeare of Maxentius with the deaths also & plagues described vpon these tormentors, and cruel tyrants, which were the cap- taines of the same persecutiō. And here commeth in (blessed be Christ) the ende of these persecutions here in these west Churches of Europe, so far as the dominion of bless- ed Constantinus did chiefly extend.

Yet notwithstanding in Asia al persecution as yet ceas- ed not for the space of foure yeres, as aboue is mention- ed by the meanes of wicked Licinius. Under whome diuers there were holy and constant martirs, that suffered grie- uous torment: as Hermylus a Deacon, and Stratonicus a keeper of the prison, which both, after their punishmentes inflained, were strangled in the bond Sister. Metaph. Also Theodorus y Captaine, who being sent for of Licinius, be- cause he would not come, and because he brake his Gods in peeces, and gaue them to the pore, therefore was fastned to the crosse, and after being pearced with sharpe irons or bodkins, in the secret parts of his body, was at last bea- ded. Adde to this also Milles, who first being a Souldiour, afterward was made bishop of a certaine Citie in Persia, where he being himselfe could do no good to conuert them, after many tribulations and great afflictions among the, cursed the Citie and departed. which Citie shortly after by Sapores king of Persia was destroyed.

In the same countrey of Persia, about this time suffe-

red vnder Sapores the king (as recordeth Symeon Metallhe- nes) diuers valiant & constant martirs, as Acindymus, Pe- gafius, Anempodistus, Epidephorus, also Symeon Archbisshop of Seleucia, with Cresiphon another bisshop in Persia, with other ministers & religious men of that region, to y num- ber of 128. Of this Symeon and Cresiphon thus writeth So- zomenus lib. 2. That the idolatrous Magicians in Persia, taking counsaile together against y Christians, accused Symeon & Cresiphō, to Sapores y king, for y they were graueill & accepted vnto y Romane Emperour & be traied to him, such things as were done in y land of Persia, whereupon Sapores being moued, the great displeaure against y Chris- tians, oppelling them with taxes & tributes vnto the ier- tter impouerishyng, killing also their wiewettes with the sword: After that saileth for Symeon the Archbisshop, who there before the king declared himselfe a worthy & a vali- ant captaine, of Christs church. For when Sapores had co- manded him to be led to suffer tormentes, he neither shrok for any feare, nor shewed any great humble sute of supplic- sion for any pardon: wherat the king partly marveling, partly offended, asked why he did not knele downe, as he was wont before to do, Symeon to this answered, for that saith he, before this time I was not brought vnto you in bondes to betray the true God, as I am nowe, so long I refused not to accomplye that which the order & custome of the Realme of me required: but now it is not lawfull for me so to do, for now I come to stand in defence of our Re- ligion and true doctrine, when Symeon thus had answere- red, the king perishing in his purpose, offereth vnto him y choise, either to worship with him after his maner (pro- mitting to him many great gifts, if he would so doe) or if he would not, the earnest to him and to al the other christians within his land, destruction. But Symeon neither allured with his promises, nor terrified with his threatenings, co- ntinued constant in his doctrine professed, so that neyther he could be induced to Idolatrous worship, nor yet to be- tray the truth of his religion, for the which cause he was committed into bands, and there commanded to be kept to the kings pleasure further knowe.

It befel in the way as he was going to y prison, there was sitting at the kings gate a certaine Eunuche, an olde y tutor, or schoolmaister of y kings, named Vthazares, who had bene once a christian, and afterward falling from bys profession, fell with the Heathen multitude to their Idola- trie. This Vthazares sitting at the doore of the kings pal- lace, and seeing Symeon passing by led to the prison, rose vp and reuerenced the Bisshop. Symeon againe with sharpe wordes (as the tunc would suffer) rebuked him & in great anger cried out against him: which being once a christan, would be cowardly reuolt from his profession, & returne againe to the Heathenish Idolatry. At the hearing of these wordes the Eunuch forth with hyaling out in teares, lay- ing away his courtly apparell, which was sumptuous & costly & putting vpon him a blacke and mourning weede, strecth before the court-gates weeping and bewailing, thus saying with himselfe: two is me, wyth what hope, wyth what face, shall I loke hereafter for my God, which haue denied my god: whē as this Symeon my familiar acquan- tance, thus passing by me, so much disdaineth me, that he refuseth with one gentle word to salate me?

These things being brought to the eares of the King (as such talo-carriers neuer lacke in yinces courtes) pro- cured against him no litle indignation, wherupon Sapores the king sending for him, first with gentle words & court- ly promises began to speake him faire, asking him what cause he had so to mourne, & whether there was any thing in his house, which was denied him, or which he had not at his owne will and asking: wherewith Vthazares an- swering againe saide: That there was nothing in that earthly house, which was to him lacking, or whereto his desire stode. Yea would god (said he) w king any other grief or calamitie in al the world, whatsoever it were, had hap- pened vnto me, rather the this for y which I do most iustly mourne and sorrow. For this losse to wch that I am this day aliue, who should rather haue died long since: & that I see this sōne, which against my hart and mynde, for your pleasure displeasingly I appeared to worship, for which cause doublewile I am worthy of death. First for y I haue denied Christ. Secondly, because I did discōmbie with you. And incontinent vpon these wordes, swearing by him that made both heauen & earth, affirmed most cer- tainly, that although he had played y role before, he would neuer be so mad againe, as in freede of the creator and ma- ker of all thinges, to worship the creatures which he had made and created. Sapores the king being astonied at the so sōdaue alteration of this man, and doubting with him selfe, whether to be angry with those inchaunters, or with him:

I. I.

The church of England gouerned by the popes Canō law without sufficient antiquitie. The Epistles decretall of Eusebius and Miltiades.

Ex Epist. Decretal. Miltiades.

A place of the third Epistle decretall of Eusebius found vnto true.

Miltiades the last Byshop of Rome being in danger of persecution.

The end of these persecutions in all the West Churches.

The persecutiō vnder Licinius.

Hermylus, Stratonicus Martirs, Theodorus Captayne, Martyr. Milles, mar- tyr. The kinges of Persia were commonly called by the name of Sapores.

Persecutiō in Persia. Acindymus, Pegafius, Anem- podistus, Epide- phorus, Symeon Archbisshop, Cresiphon, Bisshop, Mar- tyrs. 128. Martirs in Persia. The story of Symeon Archb. of Seleucia. Ex Sozomen. lib. 2. cap. 8. p. 104

The worthy an- swere of Symeon vnto the king.

The constantie of Symeon.

The fall of Vthazares

The fruite of Ecclesiasticall discipline and chastiment.

The repentance of Vthazares

The answere of Vthazares to the king.