

of August, in the raigne of our soueraigne Lord Mauritius most vertuous Emperour, the. xliij. of his Empire.

Austen and hys company cometh to Eng-land.

Ethelbert King of Kent.

What goodnes commeth, to haue a good and godly wife.

The kinges answere to Austen.

The king speaketh vpon olde custome.

The Letany of Austen.

Miracles wrought by God for the conuersion of the land.

Austen made Archbishop.

Thus they emboldened & comforted through the good wordes of Gregory, sped forth their iourney till they came at length to the Ile of Thencelyng vpon the East side of Kent. Neare to the which landing place, was then the Manor or palace of the king, not farre from Sandwiche (Eastward from Caunterbury) which the inhabitants of the Ile, then called Richbourgh: whercof some part of the ruinous walles is yet to be seene. The king then reigning in Kent, was Ethelbert, as aboue appeareth, the sith King of that prouince: who at that time had married to wyfe a french woman beyng Chrystened, named Berda: whom he had receiued of her parents vpon this conditiõ, that he shouide permitte her with her Bishop committed vnto her, called Lebarodus, to enioye the freedome of her sayth and Religion: by the meanes whercof he was more sicribe, and sooner inducod to embrace the preaching and doctrine of Chyist. Thus Austen beyng arriued sent forth certayne messengers and interpreters to the King, signifying that such a one was come from Rome, bynging with hym glad tydings to hym and all his people, of life and saluation eternally to regyne in heauen, with the onely true and lyving God, for euer: if he would so willinglyarken to the same, as he was gladly come to preache and teach it vnto hym.

The King, who had heard of this Religion befoze by meanes of his wife, within a few daies after cometh to the place where Austen was to speake with him: but that shouide be without the house, after the maner of his lawe. Austen against his coming, as boyes affirme, erected vpon a banner of the crucifixe (such was then the grossenes of that tyme) and preached to hym the word of God. The King answering againe saith in effect as follooweth: the wordes he very faire that you preache and promise. Neuertheless, because it is to me vnknown and new, I can not soone parte away from my country lato wherewith I haue bene so long inured and assent to you. Albeit yet notwithstanding for ye are come, as ye saye, so farre for my sake: ye shall not be molested by me, but shall be rightwell increased, hauing at thinges to you ministred necessarye for your supportatiõ. Besydes this, neither doe we debate you, but to haue free leaue to preache to our people and subjects to conuert, who ye may to the faith of your Religion.

When they had receaied this comfort of the king, they went with procession to the Citie of Dorobernia, or Caunterbury, singing Alleluya with the Letanie, which then by Gregory, had bene used at Rome in the time of the great plague reigning the at Rome, mentioned in old histories. The wordes of the Letany were these: Deprecamur te Domine in omni misericordia tua, vt auferatur furor tuus & ira tua a ciuitate ista, & de domo sancta tua: quoniam peccauimus. Alleluya. That is, we beseech thee O Lorde in all thy mercyes, that thy fury and anger maye cease from this Citie, & from thy holy house for we haue sinned. Alleluya. Thus they entering in the Citie of Dorobernia, the head Citie of all that dominion at that time, where the king had gyven them a mansion for there abode: there they continued preaching and baptising such as they had conuerted in the east side of the Citie in the old church of S. Martine (where the Queene was wont to reioyce) vnto the time that the kyng was conuerted himselfe to Chyist. At length when the king had well considered the honest conuersation of their life, and moued with the miracles wrought through gods hand by the, he heard them more gladly, and lastly by their wholesome exhortations, and example of godly life he was by them conuerted and christened in the yeare aboue specified, & 86. and the 36. yeare of his reigne. After the King was thus conuerted, innumerable other daily came in, & were adioyned to the Church of Chyist: whom the King did specially embrace but espelled none: for to he had learned that the faith and seruite of Chyist ought to be voluntary, and not coerced. When he gaue to Austen a place for hys Bishops sea at Chyistes Church in Dorobernia, & builded the Abbey of Saint Peter and Paule, in the East side of the sayde Citie, where after Austen, and all the Kinges of Kent were buried, and that place is now called S. Austen.

In this while Austen sailed into Franunce to the Bishop Arelatenfis, called Ethereus: by him to bee consecrated Archbishop, by the commaundement of Gregory, & so was. Also the said Austen sent to Rome, Laurentius one of his company, to declare to Gregory how they had sped, and what they had done in Englande: sending with all to haue the countaile and aduise of Gregory, concerning it, or r. questions, whercof some are partly touched befoze.

The tenour of his questions or interrogations, with the answers of Gregory to the same: here follow in English byrchie translate.

The questions of Austen Archbyschop of Caunterbury sent to Gregory, with the answer a-gaine of Gregory to the same.

The first interrogation.

My first question (reuerende father) is concerninge Bishops, how they ought to behaue themselues towardes their clerks Or of such oblations as the faithfull offer vpon the altar: what portions or diuidentes ought to be made thereof.

The answer.

How a Bishop ought to behaue himselfe in the Congregation, the holy scripture testifieth which I doubt not but you know right well, especiallye in the Epistles of S. Paule to Timothy: wherewith he laboureth to informe the sayd Timothy, how to behaue his conuercation in y house of the Lord. The maner is of the sea Apostolike, to waite and charge all such as be ordeined Bishops, of all their stipend or that which is giuen, to make foure parts. One to the Bishop for hospitalitie, and receauing commens in. An other to the Clergy, The third to the poze. The fourth to the repairing of Churches. But because your brotherhode instructed with rules of Monastical discipline, cannot liue separated from your clerks about you, therefore in the English Church (which nowe through the prouidence of God is brought to the faith of Chyist) you muste obserue this institution, concerning your conuercation, which was in the first fathers in the beginning of the primitive Church, among whom there was not one which counted any thing to be his owne proper, of all that he did possesse: but all was common among them.

The seconde interrogation.

I desire to know and to be instructed, whether Clerkes that cannot contayne, may marry. And if they do marry whether then they ought to returne to the secular state againe or no?

The answer.

If there be any Clerkes out of holy orders, which cannot contayne, let them haue their wiues, and take their stipends or wages without. For we read it to be written of the foresayd fathers, that they deuised to enery person, according as their worke was. Therefore as concerning the stipend of such, it must be prouided and thought vpon. And they must be also holden vnder ecclesiasticall discipline, to liue a godly conuercation: to employ themselves in singing psalmes, & to restraime their tongue, hart and body (by the grace of God) from all things vnleemely, and vnlawfull. As for the vulgar and common sort, which liue after the common condition of men: to describe what partitions to make, what hospitalitie to keepe, or what worke of mercy to exhibite to such, I haue nothing to saye but to giue (as our maister teacheth) in all our deedes of mercy, of that which aboundeth. Of that (saith he) which aboundeth is ouerplus, giue almes, and beholde all thinges be cleane vnto you.

The thyrde interrogation.

Seeing there is but one faith, how happeneth it then, the ceremonies and customes of Churches to bee so diuers. As in the Church of Rome there is one custome, and maner of Masse: and the French Church hath an other?

The answer.

The custome of the Church of Rome, what it is you know: wherewith ye remember that you haue bene brought vp fro your youth: but rather it pleaseh me better, that whether it be in the church of Rome, or in any french Church: wherewith ye finde any thing that seemeth better to the seruice and pleasing of God: that ye chuse the same: and so insert & bring into the English Church (which is yet new in the faith) the best & pikedst thinges chosen out of many Churches: for thinges are not to be beloued for y place sake, but the place is to be beloued for the thinges that be good: wherfore such thinges as be good, godly, and religions: they chuse out of all Churches, and indute to your people, that they may take roote in the mindes of Englishmen.

The fourth interrogation.

I praye you what punishment iudge you for him, that shall steale or pylfer any thing out of the Church.

The answer.

This your brotherhood may some discernue, by the person of a theefe, how it ought to be corrected. For some there be which hauing sufficient to liue vpon yet doe steale. Whether there be which steale of meere necessity, wherfore considering the qualite & difference of the crime, necessarye it is

Ex decretis Grego-rij primi. li. concil. tom. 2. 1. Interrogation.

The answer.

Distribution of Church goods.

1. Interrogation.

The answer. The glofe vpon the 12. q. 1. Pa- rag. Si quis.

sayth that this nowe holdeth not, and alledgeth the extram- De cler- conuincit to ca. 106. C. 6.

Whereby note how the Popes decrees be repugnante to them- selues. l. 10. l. 11.

3. Interrogation.

The answer.

Note a word thy saying of Gregory.

4. Interrogation.

The answer.