

The questions of Austen, with the answers of Gregory.

is that some be corrected by losse of goodes, some by stripes, some other more sharply, and some more easly: yea, & whē sharpee correction is to be executed, yet that must be done with charity, and with no fury: for in punishing offenders this is the cause and ende wherefore they are punished, because they should be laued & not perished in hell fire. And so ought discipline to proceede in correcting the faithfull, as doe good fathers in punishing their children, whom both they chasten for their euill; and yet being chastened, they looke to haue them their bettes, and thinke to leaue them as they haue, not withstanding they correct them sometimes in anger. Therefore this charitie must be kept in mind, and in the correction there is a measure to be had, so that the mind neuer do any thing without the rule of reason. Ye adde moreover what recompence of measure those things ought to be required againe which be stolen out of Churches. But God forbid that the Church should euer require againe with increase; that which is lost in outward things, and to seeke her gaine by endamaging other.

The fift interrogation.

Item, whether two brethren may marry two sisters, beyng far

The answer.

This in no part of scripture is forbidden, but it may well and lawfully be done.

The sixt interrogation.

Item, to what degree of kyndred may the matrimony of the faithfull extend with their kindred, whether they may marry with the stepmother and her kinfolkes?

The answer.

A certaine terrene law amongst the old Romaines doth permit, that either brother or sister, or the sonne & daughter of two brethren may marry together. But by experience we learne, that the issue of such marriage doth neuer thryue, nor come forwarde. Also y^e holpe law of God, forbiddeth to reueale the turpitude of thy blande or kindred.

Wherefore necessary it is, that in the third or fourth degree the faithfull may lawfully marry, for in the seconde as being unlawfull, they must needes restraime. To be coupled with the stepmother is utterly abhominable, for it is written in the law. Thou shalt not reueale the turpitude of thy father. For so much then as it is to be written in y^e law, and they shall be two in one flesh: the sonne then that descendeth to reueale then the turpitude of his stepmother, which is one flesh with his father, what doth he then but reueale the turpitude of his owne father. Likewise it is forbidden and unlawful to marry with thy kindred, which by her first marriage was made one flesh with the brother. For the which cause John y^e Baptist also lost his head, and was crowned a Martyr. To be though be dyed not for the confession of Christ: yet for so much as Christ sayth: I am the truth, whosoever shall take my word, shall not be layne for the truth, it may be said that bloud was shed

The seventh interrogation.

Item, whether such as be so coupled together in filthy and unlawfull matrimony ought to be separated, and denied the partaking of the holy Communion.

The answer.

Because there be many of the nation of England men which being yet in their infidelitie, were so ioyned & coupled in such execrable marriage: the same comming not to faith, are to be aduised hereafter to abstaine from the like, & that they know the same to be greivous sinne. And that they dread the dreadfull iudgement of God, least for their carnall delectation, they incur the tormentes of eternal punishment. And yet notwithstanding they are not to be secluded therefore from the participation of Christs body & bloud, lest we should seeme to censure those things in them which they before their baptism, through ignorance did commit. For in this time the holy Church doth correct some faultes more feruently, some faultes she suffereth againe through mansuete and meekenes, some wittingly and willingly she doth wink at, and dissemble: that many times the euill which she doth detest, through bearing and dissembling she may stop & baffle. All they therefore which are come to the faith, must be admonished that they commit no such offence. Which thing if they doe, they are to be deprived of the Communion of the Lords body & bloud. For like as in them that fall through ignorance, their default in this case is to be tolerated: so in them againe it is absolutely to be censured, which knowing they do nought, yet feare not to commit.

The eight interrogation.

Item, in this I desire to be satisfied, after what maner I should deale or do with the Bishops of Fraunce, and of Brittaines.

The answer.

As touching the Bishops in Fraunce, I gene you no anhoite or power over them. For the Bishop of Artois, or of Aquitaine hath by the olde tyme of our predecessors receiued the Pallie, whome now we ought not to deprive of hys authoritie. Therefore when your brotherhoode shall goe vnto the Bourne of Fraunce, what soeuer ye shall haue there to doe with the Bishop of Aquitaine, to do, that he loose nothing of that which he hath found and obtained by the iurisdiction of our forefathers. But as concerning the Bishops of Brittain, we commit them to your gouernement, that y^e ignorant may be taught, the infirme by perswasion may be confirmed, the wilful by authoritie may be corrected.

The ninth interrogation.

Whether a woeman being great with childe, ought to be baptized, or after she hath children, after how long time she ought to enter into the Church. Or els that which she hath brought forth, least it should be preuented with death, after howe many dayes it ought to receaue Baptisme. Or after howe long tyme after her childbirth is it lawfull for her husband to resort to her? Or els if she be in her month, whether she may enter into the Church, and receaue the Sacrament of the holy Communion? Or els her husband after the lying with hys wife, before he be washed with water, whether it is lawfull for him to enter the Church, and to draw vnto the mystery of the holy Communion? All which things must be declared and opened to the rude multitude of Englishmen.

The answer.

The childing or bearing woman, why may she not be baptized, seeing that the frailties of the flesh is no fault before the eyes of almighty God; for our first parentes in Paradise, after they had transgressed: lost their immortallitie by the iust iudgement of God which they had take before. Then, because almighty God would not mankinde utterly to perish because of hys fall (although he lost some by immortalitie for hys trespass) yet of hys deuigne pietie, let notwithstanding to hym the fruit and generation of illue, wherefore the illue and generation of mans nature, which is conquered by the gift of almighty God, how can it be debarred from the grace of holy Baptisme?

As concerning the churching of women after they haue trauided, where ye demaund after howe many dayes they ought to goe to the Church, they you haue learned in y^e old law, that for a man child, 30. dayes, after a womans child, 66. dayes be appointed her to keepe in. Albeit this you must take to be understood in a reborn, for if she should y^e houre after her trauiding enter into the Church to give thanks, she committed therein no sinne, for why the lust and pleasure of the flesh, and not the trauiding and payne of the flesh is sinne. For the corruption of the flesh is pleasure, but in the trauiding and bringing forth of the child is paine.

As vnto the mother of all it is said: In sorrow thou shalt labour to enter the church, the what doe we els but count y^e same the punishment geuen vnto her, for sinne? Therefore for the woman after her labour to be baptized, either that which she hath trauided forth (if present necessitie of death doth require) yet in the selfe same houre, either shee that hath brought forth, either that which is borne in the same houre when it is borne, to be baptized we doe not forbid.

As touching for the man to company with his wife, that he must not, before the child that is borne be waiped. But now there is a lewd and naughty custome risen in the countie of marye folk, that mothers do continue to nurse their owne children, which they haue borne, but let them to other women out of nurse: which seemeth directly to come of the cause of incontinencie. For while they will not company themselves, therefore they put from them their children to nurse, &c.

As concerning the woman in her menstruous course whether she ought to enter the Church? To this I answer: she ought not to be forbid. For the superfluitie of nature in her ought not to be imputed for any fault, neither is it iust that she should be deprived of her access to the Church, for that which she suffereth against her wil. And if the woeman did well, precluding in touching the Lords coate in the tyme of her bloody line: why then may not that be granted vnto all woemen injured by the fault of nature, which is commended in fine person done in her infirmitie? Therefore to reueale the mystery of the holy communion, it is not forbidden them. Albeit if she were not so faste presume in her great infirmitie, she is to be prayed; but if she do receaue, she is not to be iudged. For it is a point of a good minde in some maner to knowledg hys finnes there, where is no sinne: because many times that

Interrogation.

The answer.

Interrogation.

The answer. In what degree of kindred a man may marry.

By this rule the marriage of King Henry with Queene Katherine Dowager, was unlawfull.

Interrogation.

The answer.

A discrete saying of Gregory so benoted.

Interrogation.

The answer.

Interrogation.

The answer.

The Churching of women.

He speaketh here after the custome of the tyme.

Mothers that nurse not their owne Children reprehended.

25. 9. 2. cap. 11. Galliarum.