

men beggers. For they wold not so instantly require those almes except they had neede of them: neither ought we to be ashamed thereof, or to be proud beggers: for so much as Christ touching his humanitie became a begger for vs, because hee declared his need vnto his Father saying, &c.

Item, when any Kyng, Prince, Knight, Citizen, or anye other man doth geue vnto the clergy, or to anye priest for his stipend, he geueth the same vnto the Church of God, and to the priuate party, as a perpetuall almes, that he should attend to his vocation, preaching, praying and studying. But this kinde of geuing doth not suffice to ground any secular dominion amongst the clergy: it followeth that the bare vse remaineth in them, or the secular vse without any secular power.

The maior appeareth hereby, forso much as otherwise almes should not be a worke of mercy. Whereby it may also appeare, that tenths are pure alms geuen to the church, to the vse of the poore.

And hereupon the holy men doe say that tenthes are the tributes of the needy soules. Whereupon S. Augustine in a sermon made vpon the reitoring of tithes sayth. The geuing of Tithes most deare brethren are the tributes of the poore soules therefore pay your tribute vnto the poore. And by and by after, he sayth, therefore who desireth eyther to get any rewarde, or to haue anye remission of sinnes, by geuing of his tenthes, let him study to geue almes euen of the ninth part: so that what soeuer shall remaine more then a competent liuing, and decent clothing: that it be not referred for riot, but that it be layd vp in the heavenly treasure, by geuing it in almes to the poore. For what so euer God doth geue vnto vs more then we haue neede of: he doth not geue it vs specially for our selues: but doth send it vs to be bestowed vpon others by our handes, if wee doe not geue it, we inuade an other mans possessions.

Thus much wyreth S. Augustine, and is repeted in the xvi. question 1. Decime.

Also S. Ierome in an Epistle, and it is put in the 16. question, and 2. chap Quicquid. What soeuer the clergy hath it is the goods of the poore.

Also S. Augustine in his 33. Epistle vnto Boniface, and it is alleged in the 1. question and 12.

Also in the 23. question 7. If we doe possesse any thinge priuately, the which doth suffice vs, they are not oures, but the goods of the poore, whose stewards we are, except we doe challenge to our selues a property by some damnable vsurpation. The glose vpon that part of the 23. question 7. sayth. The Prelates are but onely the stewards of the church goodes, and not Lordes thereof.

S. Ambrose also vpon this saying of the Gospell. Luke the 16. Geue account of your bailihip, or stewardship: Hereby then doe we learne, that they are not Lordes, but rather stewards and bailies of other mens substance.

And S. Ierome, writing to Nepotianus saith, howe can they be of the clergy, which are commaunded to contemne and dispipe their owne substance, and to take away from a friend, it is theft, to deceiue the Church it is sacrilege, and to take away that, which should be geuen vnto the poore.

The clergy beggers.

Tithes are to be giuen of the ninth parte of goods.

And S. Bernard in his sermon, vpon these wordes (Symon Peter sayd vnto Iesus, chap. 17.) sayd. Truly the goodes of the Church, are the patrimony of the poore: And whatsoeuer thyng the ministers and stewards of the same, not Lordes or possessours do take vnto themselues more then sufficient, for a competent liuing, the same is taken away from the poore, by a sacrilegious crueltie.

And Eusebius in his treatise vpon the pilgrimage of S. Ierom writeth thus, if thou doest possesse a garment, or anye other thing more then extreme necessitie doth require: and dost not help the needy, thou art a thief & a robber. Wherefore dearly beloued children, let vs be stewards of our temporalities, and not possessors.

And Isidore in his treatise De summo Bono chap. 42. sayth. Let the byshop know that he is the seruaunt of the people, and not Lord ouer them.

Also in the 5. booke of decretals, extra de donationibus, sub autoritate Alexandri tertij. Episcopi parisiensis. He sayth, we beleue that it is not vnknowne vnto your brotherhoode, that a Byshop, and euery other Prelate is but a steward of the Church goodes, and not Lord thereof. By these sayings of these holy men it is evidently declared, that not only tithes, but also all other substance which the clergy hath by gift of worke of mercy, are pure almes, which after the necessitie of the clergy once satisfied, ought to be transported vnto the poore.

Secondly it is declared how that the Clergye are not Lordes and possessours of those goods, but ministers & stewards thereof.

Thirdly it is shewed, that if the Clergye doe abuse the same, they are theeves, robbers, and sacrilegious persons, and except they doe repent, by the iust iudgement of God they are to be condemned.

And thus hethereto I may peraduenture seeme to haue made sufficient long refusal out of Iohn Hus, but so notwithstanding that the commoditie of those thinges, maye abundantly recompence the proilitie thereof. wherfore if I shall seeme vnto any man in the rehearfall of this disputation to haue passed very farre the boundes of the history: let him thinke thus of me, that at what tyme I tooke in hand to wyrite of these Ecclesiasticall matters, I could not omit these thinges which were so straightly ioynd with the cause of the Church.

Neither that I did make more account of the historye which I had taken in hand then of the common vtilitie, wherunto I had chiefe respect. There were besides these certayne other articles, wherupon the sayde Iohn Hus had very wisely and learnedly disputed, but these shal suffice vs for this present. And for the residue we will passe them ouer, to the intent we may the more speedely recourne whereas our story list, declaring what cruelty they vsed not onely against the booke and articles of Iohn Wickliffe, but also in burning his body and bones, commaunding them to be taken by 41. yeares after he was buyed, as appeareth by the decree of the sayde Synode, the forme wherof, we thought heereunto to annex as followeth.

The cleric are stewards of the church goods, and not Lordes thereof.

Isidorus de summo bono,

The order and maner of taking up the body of Iohn Wickliffe and burning his bones 41 yeares after his death.

