

as be gods priests: which know faithfully how to obserue his precepts and commaundments, & which would willingly teach the people, the right way to heauen. For which aduice, all Christen men and specially all Englishme, ought to exclaime agaynst such wicked lawes.

The order of Priesthood.

As touching the Sacrament of order he sayth: That all godd christians, are predestinate and be ordained of God, & made true Priestes to offer Christ in themselves, and to Christ, themselves: as also to teach and preach the Gospell to their neighbors, as well in word as in example of living. But the worldly shauelings do more magnify the naked & bare signes of priesthood (invented by sinfull men) than the true & perfect priesthood of God, grounded by a true & lively sayth, annexed with good works. Also, if it were needfull to haue such shauelings, God knoweth how, & can make when it pleaseth him, priestes (without mans working & sinfull signes, that is to say, without either sacramentes or characters) to be known & discerned of the people, by their vertuous life and example, and by their true preaching of the law of God. For so made he the first made priestes & elders before the law of Moyse: and so made he Moyse a priest before Aaron, & before the ceremonies of the law, without mans operation at all: And euen so hath God made all such as are predestinate, to be his priestes. But such as be true Christians, receiue none such as Priestes, but vntill they follow Christ and his apostles, neither do they beleue that they make the sacrament of the altair (which they affirme to be Gods body) when it pleaseth the: least happily God be not with them, forasmuch as that they do this thing for conetousnes sake, or els to brag of their owne power. And therefore such as be simple men, will worship that Sacrament in this doubtfullnes, with a silent conditio: that is, if it be made by Gods authority, and to haue their deuotio to the body of Christ in heauen. Also, that as such be elders, if they be Gods priestes, be Bishops, Prelates, and Curats of their Christian brethren, whom they may lead to heauen by the example of their holy conuersatio, and by preaching of the gospell although they make no sacrifice to that Antichrist of Rome for their confirmation: neither be they dedicated to the world by secular diuine things, and by consuming the liuings of the poore: as be those secular bishops, prelates & curats. Also, that although there were no pope, according as the custome of the church is: yet Christ which is the hed of his church, doth ordeyne such a pope as pleaseth him: and that is, whomsoever is most humble & lowly, and best doth the office of a true Priest, although he be known to the world. And although there were no such proud bishop above all the rest, as the church doth vse: yet all the priestes might well gouern the church by common assent: as once they did, before such worldly pride crept in amongst the Bishops, &c. And admit that no such Priestes were according to the accustomed vse now of receiuing of order & tonsure, by such a myrrid Bishopp and his tonsure: yet Christ knoweth both how to make and chuse such as shall well please him, both in conuersation of life, & sincere preaching of the Gospell, in ministering to his people all necessary sacraments. And eueny holy man which is a minister of Christ, although he be not shauen, is a true Priest ordained of God, although no myrrid Bishopp euer lay his character vpon him: So, that the Pope and Prelates, doe make more estimation of their Characters (as tonsures & crownes by them inuented) than of the true and perfect priesthood ordained of God: whereas, all those that are predestinate, are true Priestes made of him.

He meaneth of private preaching to their neighbours.

True ministers may be made without shauing.

Priests here haue a private, not a publique vnderstanding.

What if there were no Pope known, yet the Church could stand.

Tonsure maketh not a Priest.

The Popes censures like the blast of Lucifer.

Popishe priests haue not the keyes of heauen, but rather of hell.

Also, that al maner of religious men, notwithstanding the chapter Religiosi, touching the priuiledges in the Clementines: may lawfully minister all sacraments to that that are worthy the same. Forasmuch as the same is a worke of charity, which onely the will and ordinaunce of the pope and his fauours in this case is to hinder and let. Item, if the Pope shall interdict this our realme: that cannot hurt vs, but much profite vs: Because that thereby he should separate vs from all his wicked lawes, and fro the charges of sustaining of so many thousand shauelings, which with smal deuotio or none at all, patter and charter a new world song secundum vsum Sarum. So that not whatsoever the pope in his generall counsell bindeth in earth, is bound in God in heauen: either for that he bindeth vnrasonably, and contradictorily doth agaynst himself, or els for that he hath forsaken the iudgement of God.

The popes curse hurteth not, but profiteth.

As touching the preaching of the Gospell: whosoever receiuech or taketh vpon him the office of a priest or of a bishop, and dischargech not the same by the example of his good conuersation and saythfull preaching of the Gospell: is a thief, excommunicate of God, and of holy church. And further if the curates preach not the word of God, they shall be damned, and if they know not how to preach, they ought to resigne their benefices: So that those prelates which preach not the Gospell of Christ (although they could excuse themselves from the doing of any other cause) are dead in themselves, are Antichristes, and Satrans traſſigured into angels of light, night theues, manquellers by day light, & betrayers of Christ his people.

Gosspory not sufficient cause to restraine matrimony.

Concerning the sacrament of Matrimony: Forwithstanding any spiritual kinred or gosspory, a man and woman may lawfully marry together by the law of god, with out any dispensatio papistical. And in the same place he sayth, that if our realme do admit one not borne in matrimony or illegitimate to the imperiall crowne, to that he doth well discharge the office of a king: God maketh him a king, and by consequence doth reiect an other king or hope of a king: dome, being borne in matrimony and legitimate: So, for such spiritual kinred there ought no diuorce to be made. Also notwithstanding the Cap. Si inter de sponſalibus: If any man shall make any contract with any woman by the wordes of the future tence, by an oth taken: & afterwards shall with an other woman make the like contract by the wordes of the present tence: that then the second contract standeth. Also, if a man make any contract with a woman by the wordes of the future tence, vpon his oth taken: & maketh afterwards the like contract with another not altering the words and hath carnal copulation vpon the same: the first contract maketh the matrimony good, and not the second. Also, if a man before witness assure himselfe to a woman by a contract made in the present tence, & hath children by the same woman: & afterward the same man marieth another woman, with the like wordes in the present tence, before witness: Although the first witness be dead, or els by bribes corrupt, and the second bring his witnesses before the iudge to proue the second contract: the first contract yet standeth in force, although the hope (allowing the second contract) doth compell them to liue in adultery agaynst the commaundment of God. Also, he condemneth the decretall of the restitution of things stollen Cap. Literas tuas: which telleth, that a man and woman hauing carnal copulation in the degree of consanguinity forbidden, and hath no witness hereof: If the woman will depart from the man she shall be compelled by the censures, to remayne with him, and to yelde her debt. Also, in case where a man hath made contract with two women, with one secretly hauing no witness, and with the other openly hauing witness: Then were it better to acknowledge the insufficiency of the law, and to suffer men to be ruled by their owne consciences, than by the censures to compell them, to committe and liue in adultery.

The first marriage lawfully before witness made, standeth.

Keeping & making vowes.

As touching the keeping and making of vowes: That vow or othe is bestly, and is without al discretion made: which to performe and keep, a man hath no power but by grace geuen him of God. Because that some such there be, whom god doth not accept to perseuere in the state of chastity and perpetuall virginity: and such a one cannot keep his vow, although he make the same. Also that eueny one making a vow of continency or chastity, when making the same he shall not be accepted of God: doth very vnderstandedly, and as one without al reason maketh the same, when he is not able of himself without the gift of God to fulfil his promise: according to that saying of the wise man, cap. 8. No man hath the gift of continency, vnles that God geue it vnto him. For other wise, if god help not such a one to performe the vow or othe which he hath made and taketh: No prelate can compell him, vnles he do contrary to Gods ordinance: **W. H.**