

unning, or els for confusion, of thy conscience: thou fall into the sentence that anon followeth: Binde his handes and his feete, and cast him in to the vtter warde of darknes, there shall be weeping and grening of teethe. Therefore I rede thee, that thou aduise thee how thou shalt answer to this question. How hast thou entred? whether by sleeping, or by thine owne procuring: for that thou wouldest trauaile in Gods gospell, other for thou wouldest be richly arrayed? Answer now to thy owne conscience as thou shalt answer to God, thou that hast take now the order of prieste, whether thou be curate or none: who stirred thee to take vpon thee so high an estate: Whether for thou wouldest liue as a priest ought to do, studying of Gods law to preach, and most hartely to pray for the people: or for to liue a delicious life, vpon other mens trauaile, and thy selfe trauaile nought. Why also setten men theyr sonnes either their cousins to schole? Where to, but for to get them great aduancements, or to make them the better to knowe howe they shoulden serue God? This men may see openly, by the sciences that they set them to. Why I pray you, put men their sonnes to the law ciuill, or to the kings court to write letters & writs: rather thā to Philosophy or Diuinity, but for the hope that these occupations shoulde be euer means, to make them great in the world. I hope that ther wil no man say, that they ne shoulde better learne the rule of good liuing in the booke of Gods law, than in any booke of mans worldly wisdome? But certes now it is sothe, that Iohn Christofofom saith. Mothers be louing to the bodies of their children, but the soule they despise, they desire them to wel fare in this world, but they take none hede what they shall suffer in the tother: Some ordeinen fees for their children, but none ordeine them to godward: The lust of their bodies they wol deere by, but the health of their soule the reke nought of. If they see them poore or sicke, they sorrow and sigheth, but though they see them sinne, they forrowe not. And in this they shew that they brought forth the bodies but not the soules. And if we take heede truly, what abominations be scattered and spread abroad in holy church now adayes among priestes: we shal wel wit, that they come not all to the folde of Christ by Christes clepping for to profite: but by other wayes to get them worldly welth, and this is the cause of lesing of soules, that Christ bought so deare, and of many errors among the people: and therefore, it is iwrit in the booke of mourning, where the prophet speaketh thus to God, Tre 1. The enemy hath put his hand to all things desyrable to him: for he hath let lawles folke enter into the sanctuary, of the which thou hadst commaunded, that they should not enter into the church: This enemy is Sathanas, as his name sowneth, that hath put his hande to all that him liketh. What sinne I pray you will the fiend haue sown on men, that nis now yved? In what plentie is now pride, enuy, wrath and couetise? When were they so great as they be now, and so of all other sinnes. And why trowest thou? But for there be a lawles people entred into thy sanctuary, that neither keepe in themselfe the law of God, ne konne teachen other: And to euery such, saith God by the prophet, Ose 4. For that thou hast put away cunning: I shall put thee away that thou shalt vse no priesthoode to me. Lo that God expressly heere in holy writte, forbiddeth men to take the state of priesthoode on them, but they haue cunning, that needen them. Thou than that canst neither rule thy selfe ne other, after the lawe of God, beware how thou wilt answer to God, at his dreadfull dome, when he shall say to thee, that which I tooke to my theame.

Yeld the reckening of thy bayly, how thou hast entred.

The second question, that euery curate and prelate of holye Church shall aunswer to, is this. How hast thou ruled? That is to say, the soules of thy suggets, and the goods of poore men: Geue now thine acounte. First, how thou hast gouerned gods folke that were take thee to keepe: Whether art thou an herde or an hired man? that doost all for loue of bodelich hire? As a father, or as a Wolfe, that eaten his sheepe and keepeth them nought? Say whome thou hast turned from his cursed liuing, by thy deuout preaching, Whome hast thou taught the law of God that was easit vncunning: Ther shal ben heard a greuous accusing of fatherles children, and a hard aledging, that priestes haue liued by their wages, and not done away their sins. Yelde also reckoning how thou hast ruled and spende the goodes of poore men. Harke what S. Bernard saith. Dreade clarkes, dreade the ministers of the Church, the which ben in the place of saintes, that they do so wickedly, nought holding them apayd with such wages that were sufficient to them: That ouerplus that needy men shuld be sustained by, they be not ashamed to wast in the house of their pride and leachery, and withholden to themselfe wickedly and cursedly that which should be the lifeloode of poore men. With double wickednes truly they sinne. First, for they reueen other mens goods, and saith they misfule holy things in their vanities and in their filthes. Euery such Bayly therefore beware, for anone, to the last farthing he shall reckon with Christ. Trowest thou not then, that thou ne shalt be disallowed of God of that thou hast mispende in in feeding offat Palfreys, of hounds, of Haukes, and if it so be that is worst of all, on lecherous women? Heare what is sayd of suche. They had led their dayes in wealths. And in a poynt they

bene gone down into hell: Think therefore I rede thee, that thou shalt yelde reckening of thy bayly.

The third question that this bayly shal aunswer to, is this: How hast thou lyued? What light of holynes hast thou shewed in thy liuing to the people, or what mirrouer hast thou ben of holynes to them? Geue now thy reconing, how thou hast liued, as a priest, or as a leude man, as a man or as a beast. That is to wonder truelye how the life of priestes is chaunged. They be clothed as knights, they speaken as vnonestly as carels, other of wyynnyng as Marchaunts: They ride as princes, and al that is thus spende, is of the goodes of poore men, and of Christi heretage. Therefore saith an holy doctour: The clay of Egypt was tough and stinking, and medled with blood. The flares were harde to bee vndoe, for they were baked with fire of couetise, and with the light of lust. In this trauaileth riche men, in this they wake, a wayting poore men. In these trauaileth prelates, that ben to much blent with to much shining of riches, that make them houes lyke churches in greatnes, that with diuers pointries, coloren their chambers, that with diuers clothinges of colours, make images gay: but the poore mā for default of clothes beggeth, and with an empty wombe cryeth at the doore: And if I shall the soth say, saith this doctour, oft tyme poore men be robbed for to clothe the trees and stones. Of such speaketh the Prophet. How art thou here: or as who art thou? Here thou art occupying the place of Peter and of Poule, or of Thomas or of Martine: But how, as Iudas among the Apostles, as Symon Magus among the disciples, as a candle newe quite that stincketh all the house in steede of a light lanterne, as a smoke that blindeth mens eyen, in place of cleane fire. If thou contrarye thus the forme of liuing that Christ and his disciples left to priestes: Lo what saith the prophet Ieremye. They haue entred, and they haue had and nought ben obedient. They hauen with false title or with their false and corrupt intention, had poore mens goodes to their misfusing, and they haue not bee obedient to the laue of God in their owen liuing. Therefore it is writt, that the hardest dome shall fall on such. An hard dome, for they haue misfented. An harder dome, for they haue misfuled. And the hardest dome, for they haue so cursedly liued. Thinke therefore I rede, how thou wilt giue reckening of thy bayly.

The second Bayliff, that accounteth at this dome for himselfe and also for other, is he: that keeping hath of any communitie, as kings, princes, Maiers, and Shireues, and iustices. And these shall also answer to the same three questions. The first question, how hast thou hentred, that is to say, into thine office: Other for help of the people to destroy falsched and forthren treuth? other for desire of winning or worldly worship? If thou take such an office, more for thine owne worldly profite, than for helpe of the comunitie, thou art a tyrant as the pholosopher seith. For it is to feare least there bene too many that desire suche states, that they may the rather oppresse thilke that they hateth, and take giftes to spare to punish thilke, that hauen trespassed, and so maketh them parteners of their sinnes. And many such, when they ben so high, they reck nought that they beeth poore mens brethern: but they wenē to passe them in kind, as they passeth in worldly worship, that is but winde: of which God saith by the prophet, they hauen raigne, but nought of me, they haue bene princes but I knowe nought. So we reade of Roboam, that was the son of king Salomon, what time he was first king, the people of Israell comen to him, and sayd: Thy father in his lust dayes, put on vs great charge. We pray thee some deale make it lighter, and we willen serue thee. And the king tooke counsayle of the olde wise men, and they counsailden to answer them faire, and that should be for the best. But he left these olde wise menns counsayle, and did after the counsayle of children that were his playseren, and sayd to the people, when they came agayne: My left finger, is greater than my fathers riege. My father greued you somewhat, but I will echen more thereto. And the people heard this, and rebelen to him, and tooke them another king: and sicke, the kingdome came neuer whole againe. And therefore it is good, that euery ruler of cominalties, that they be not lad by follies, ne by none other eare rowner, that he ne haue an eygh of loue to the comontie that he hath to rule. For wete ye well, be he neuer so high, that he shall come afore his higher, to yelde reconing of his bayly.

The second question is: How hast thou ruled the people, and the office that thou haddest to gouerne? Thou that hast bene a ludge in causes of poore men, how hast thou kept this heft of God? Thou shalt not take heede to the person of a poore man, to bee to him the harder for his pouertie, ne thou shalt not behold a rich mans semblance, to spare or to fauour him in his wrong for his riches. O Lorde, what abusio is there among officers of both lawes, now adayes: If a great man pleadeth with a poore man, to haue ought that he holdeth, euery officer shall be readie to hye all that he may, that the rich man might haue such an end as he desired. But if a poore man pleade with a rich man, than there shall be so many delayes, that though the poore mans right be open to all the Countrey, for pure faute of spending, he shall be glad to cease. Shriues and Bayliffes willen retourne poore

Questio.

Solutio.

Questio.

Solutio.

Iohannes Christi-
sofomus Home-
lia. 27.

Note.

The rashe ma-
king of mini-
sters.

Ose 4.

Bernardus.

Es 22
quis tam hie
aut quasi
quid hie.

Iere 23.

Sap. 6.

Kinges, Prin-
ces and ma-
gistrates ad-
monished.
How thou
hast entred.

Ose 8.
2. Para. 10.

How hast
thou ruled.

Deut. 9.