

Experiēce of Gods blessing where the pope hath cursed. Obicition.

Aunswere.

who hath now these many yeares cursed and excommunicated vs, & yet notwithstanding, God and his gracious blessing hath bene our helpe. But peradventure ye wil say, that though we see that bishops and priests be cuill & wicked, yet we cannot lacke them: for who should baptise our children, who should heare confessions, & minister the holy sacraments? and then also we should be wim the excommunication of the pope & of his bishops, welbeloued, ye nede to take no care for these matters. The excommunicating of the Pope hurteth you nothing. Feare ye the excommunicating of God, and the Lord wil prouide for those things wel enough. If ye would banish euil bishops and priests, ye should haue good priests which should baptise your children, heare confessions, and minister the holy mysteries, because when y^e deuill is banished, then place is made for the holy ghost: So when yll bishops and priests shall be banished, then place shall be made for good priests & bishops. Also, your bishops and priests say, that we are miscreants and hereticks, & that we beleue not on purgatory, vpon the virgin Mary, nor vpon the sayntes: wherein they say ill for we will proue by the holy scripture, that we know better by Gods grace how we ought to beleue vpon Purgatory, & vpon Mary the mother of our Lord, & vpon hys welbeloued sayntes, the they can tell vs. Also they say, y^e we wil not be obedient vnto the P. Truly when he shall come holy and iust, then we know well that we ought to be obedient to him in al things and not before. They say also that we destroy Gods holy seruice, in that we destroy monasteries, banishing thence the wicked Monkes and Nunnes. Truly we byd it, thinking once that they were holy, that they did the reuerend seruice of god, but after that we well perceived and considered their lyfe & works, then we perceived that they were false lowly hypocrites, and wicked buidbers on high, and sellers of pardons and masses for the dead, and such as deuoured in themselves the sinnes of the people. And where as they sayd that they rise at midnight when other men sleepe, and pray for the liues of the people: forasmuch as their telling of their praiers and masses for y^e dead for gifts, is no better then hypocresie and heresie: therefore if we do speake agaynst them and destroy their monasteries, we do not therein destroy the seruice of God, but rather the seruice of the deuill, and the schooles of hereticks. And if ye knew them as we know them, ye would as diligently destroy them as we do. For Christ our Lord did not ordayne any such order, & therefore it must needs come to pas that shortly it shall be destroyed as our lord saith in the Gospell of S. Mathew the 15. chapter. Euery plant which my father hath not planted, shall be rooted vp. We desire you also that ye would diligently consider the articles here written, wherein your bishops and priests are guilty.

The 1. article is, that when your bishops will ordaine priests, they do it not, except he y^e is to be made priest haue sufficient liuing, eyther inheritance left him of hys parents or of benefices: whereas notwithstanding, Christ would that priests should be poore, forasmuch as it is enough for the scholar to be as his maister is, and for the seruaunt to be as his Lord is: and the bishops wil that they should be rich vpon earth, which is vniust before the Lord.

The 2. article is, that bishops take mony of such as are to be ordained, but S. Peter did therefore sharply rebuke Simon Magus, when he would haue geuen him mony, as it is written in the 8. of the actes.

The 3. article is, that they that come to be priests enter into priesthoode, not for gods seruice sake, because they mean to preach and encrease it among the Christian people, so as the people may be edified and made better: but rather for an idle life, and that they may eate well and drinke wel and that they may be honoured and reuerenced vpon earth. For euery one wayteth vpon hys priest as a theefe and a robber, as John writeth in his 1. chap.

The 4. article is of excommunication, which the Pope and all his priests take to themselves, and therewith fetter & bind all Christian people as they will, and they thinke y^e whosoever they excommunicate or curse, hee is accursed and excommunicate before God: And we wil proue by the holy Scripture, that they themselves are excommunicate & accursed before God, because they kepe not the commaundment of the loue of God, wherof the Apostle writeth in y^e 1. to the Cor. the 16. chap. If any man loueth not our Lord Iesus Christ, he is excommunicate in the day of the commaunding of the Lord. For they cannot excommunicate you, who are already bound and excommunicate before God & hys sayntes: and therefore why feare ye their excommunication?

The 5. Article is, that they take gifts for to pray for the dead, and to say masse for theyr soules. This is a wickednes and heresie before the Lord, & all they that contribute

to them to this end, do wickedly, for that hereby priests be come merchantes of prayers and of masses: and herewith is all the church of Rome popponed and defiled. For if they would pray for the dead and say masse for their soules, yet no man ought to hire the thereto, forasmuch as they ought to take no giftes, neither litle nor great. And euery one that taketh rewarde to this end, to redeeme soules out of purgatory, do therewithal cast their own soules down into hel. And they y^e geue any thing to that end, doe altogether lose y^e which they geue. And with such deuillish subtlety y^e Pope with all his priests hath deceiued, spoiled, and diherited kinges, princes, Lordes and knights, & good houholders and many other, of their lawfull inheritances, because their ancestors & progenitours gaue it to Colledges, monasteries & churches, y^e they might make memoriales of the & to sing or lay prayers or masses for their soules, that they might be redeemed out of Purgatory. And with such goodes, Bishops, Canons, and Monasteries haue made themselves to riche, that now they fall at variance with cities, & princes: & whereas they should procure peace betwixt cities and rulers, there they are the first that begin warre: and as long as they haue such goodes, they wil neuer cease to be at strife with Lordes and cities, neither wil they begin to teach you the true foundation of y^e truth: for they do as a dogge, which as long as he holdeth a bone in his mouth and knoweth it: so long he holdeth his peace & cannot bark. Euen so, as long as they haue this bone of pleasaunt riches, it wyl neuer be well in the world. Wherefore all kinges, princes and imperiall Cities should doe a great worke of godlines and mercy, if by them they were compelled to do this, as the dog is when the boane is take from hym.

And therefore ye noble men, Kinges, princes, Lordes, imperiall Cities, and all the comunaltie, both riche and poore, if ye haue bene a sleepe yet now awake and open your eyes and behold the subtiltie of the deuill, how he hath blinded the Church of Rome, and take agayne that is yours, and not theirs. And if you wil make a good memoriale for your soules, then do as the wise man saith, Eccl. 19. Lay vp almes, &c.

The 6. article is, that they are full of pride and of high mynde, which is manifestly knowne by their long, costlye and superfluous garmentes, wherein they walke very vnlike to Christ our Lord, who had a garment without a seam and to the welbeloued John Baptist, who had a garment of Camels heare, and they wyl be honoured and worshipped, and they preach and say that Priesthood ought to be honoured, and so it ought in deede to be, but there is none y^e do so much slander and abase it, as they themselves, with their euil works, gay apparell, and with their euil words wherein they passe all other men. Paul sayth the 1. to Tim. the 3. chapter. Let the Elders that gouerne wel, be honoured with double honour, chiefly they that labour in y^e word and doctrine of the Lord. Consider, that he sayth they that gouerne well.

The 7. article is, that they are couetous from y^e highest to the lowest, and for couetousnes they preach many foolish dedes & manifest lies, & sell the holy sacramentes, which is a great heresie: for God commaunded that they should geue freely. Paul writeth in the first to Timothy: Couetousnesse is the roote of all mischief, wherunto many haue ben geuen, and therefore they are separated from the sayth and haue denyed the truth.

The viij. article is, that they commonly are called notorious whozemongers. This is manifestly seene in theyr concubines and children, which walke openly in all incens sight, and make many mens wiues whoozes, or corrupte their daughters being virgins, and make the priests harlots and cyhauldes.

The ix. Article is, that they are full of deuillish enny, and especially in al Monasteries they haue great enny and hatred amongst themselves, because when any thing is geuen or disposed to one Monastery or Colledge, then there are others, that hate it, and enny at it, and would more gladly haue it themselves: Like as among dogs when any thing is geuen to the one and not to the other, which the other seeing, ennyeth hys fellow, & the other likewise wil rather denour all himselfe then geue any part to his fellowe. Wherefore it were well that they were brought from that great sin of enny in geuing nothing vnto the: And it were better that their possessions were take from them, and that they should do that which the Lord spake to hys disciples saying: So ye and preach the Gospell to all men.

The x. article is, that they are idle, and chiefly the Bishops, Chanons, and other Prelates, which wil not labor diligently in the holy Scripture, wherewith they might cure the miseries of Christendome, wherto they haue bound themselves

The popes church payfoned with buying and selling their praying and fingring, and all their doing for mony.

Fear of purgatory hath robbed almost all the whole world.

So long as priests be rich, they will neuer be true teachers.

The subtiltie of the deuill in making the church rich, Eccl. 19.

Popishe priests with their long & sumtuons gownes more like to the Pharises then Christ. 1. Tim. 3.

Honor in well gouerning.

The popes church payfoned with couetousnes. Tim. 1.

The popes church payfoned much with whore dome.

The Popes church and monasteries commonly payfoned with deuelishe enny.

The popes false accusation answered.

Math. 15.

The abuse of popishe religion in making priests Cardia. 1s&c.

Actes. 8.

The abuse of popishe religion, in taking orders.

Popishe excommunication abused.

1. Cor. 16.