

set forth: albeit, through they wyll and subtle sophistica- tions, they haue induced you (as it happened to manye o- ther worthy princes besides you) to condescend and assent vnto the: as the rulers perswaded Darius beynge other- wise a wise and a iust prince, to cast Daniel vnto y^e Lyons.

It was neuer vniuersally for a good prince to correct & reforme cruell and rigorous lawes (as it is commonly said) to haue a second viewe and oversight of things befoze pat- ted and decreed.

The wise Athenians made a Decree when the Citrye of Mytilene was recovered, which befoze had forsaken the that all the Citizens there should be slayn, and the citry vt- terly destroyed. Whereupon there was a ship sent forth with the same commaundement to the armye. On the nexte mo- row the matter was brought agayne befoze the same iud- ges, and after better aduise taken, there was a contrary de- cree made, that the whole multitude should not be put to y^e sword, but a fewe of the chief authors of theyr rebellion, should be punished and the Citry saved. There was there- fore another ship sent forth to a counteraund in all haste to ouertake and preuent theyr former ship, as also it hap- pened. Neither was that noble citry which then ruled and reigned farre and wide, ashamed to alter and reforme their former Decree. Manye such examples there be, the most part wherof, I am sure are wel knowne vnto you. But in the Church especially, Princes haue many times altered & reformed their Decrees, and Nabuchodonosor & Darius. There was a Decree set forth in the name of Aluercus, co- cerning the killing of the Jewes. That Decree was alter- warded called in again. So did Adrianus and Antoninus also correct and reforme their Decrees.

Therefore, although there be a decree set forth in Eng- land, which threatneth strange punishments and penal- ties, disagreeing from the custome of the true Church, and swatning from the rules & Canons thereof: yet I thought it not vniuersally for vs to become penitenciers vnto you, for the mitigation of this your sharpe and severe proceedings. The which when I consider, it greueneth my minde, not onely for the perill and danger of them which professe the same doctrine that we doe, but also I doe lament for your cause, that they should make you an instrument and ami- nister of their bloudye tyrannic and impietie. And partly also I lament, to see the courte of Christian doctrine per- uerted, superstitious rites confirmed, whoredome and le- cherous lutes maintained.

Besides all this, I here of diuers good men, excelling both in doctrine and vertue, to be there detained in prisonne, as Latimer, Cromer, Shaxton and others, to whom I with strength, patience, & consolation in the Lord. Vnto whom albeith there can nothyng happè more iuckely or more glo- riously, then to geue their liues in the confession of the ma- nifest truth and veritie: yet would I with that you should not distaine your handes with the bloud of such menne: neyther woulde I with suchy Lanternes of lyght in your Church, to be extinguished: neither these spycfull & mali- cious Pharisees, the enemies of Christ, to haue their wills so much fulfilled. Neither againe woulde I with that you should lo to muche serue the will and desire of that Romish Antichrist, which laugheth in his sleene to see you nowe to take part with him, against vs hoping well by the helpe of his bishops, to reconer againe his former possessiõ, whych of late by your vertuous and godly meanes be lost. He se- cheth your Bishops, for the tyme, loyall vnto you, and obse- quious to obey your will: but in heart he seeth them linked vnto him in a perpetual bond of fidelitie and obedience. In all these feates and practises, the Romish Bishops are not to seeke. They see what great slozmes and blastes hereto- fore they haue passed by bearing & suffering. They see that great things be brought to passe in tyme. Neither doe they forget the olde verie of the Poete.

Multa, dies variisque labor mutabilis aui
Reculit in melius.

Manye good and learned men in Germanie concerned of you great hope, that by your authoritic and example o- ther Princes also woulde be prouoked to increase likewise from their vniuersal crueltye, and better to aduise them selues for the reformation of erroneous crept into the Church: tru- sting that you woulde be as a guide and Capitaine of that godly purpose and enterpryse. But nowe seeing these your contrary proceedings, we are vniuersally discouraged: the in- dignation of other Princes is confirmed: the stubburnesse of the wicked is augmented: and olde and great errors are thereby stablished.

But heere your Bishops will say agayne (no doubt) that they defende no erroneous, but the verye truehe of Gods holy woorde. And although they be not ignorant that they sturue in verye dede, both against the true word of God, and the Apostolike Church, yet like craftie Sophisters, they

can finde out faire gloses, pretending a godly shewe out- wardly, to colour their errors and abuses.

And this sophistification not onely now in England is had in great admiration, and esteemed for great wisdom, neither in Rome only raigneth, where Cardinal Luter- tenus, Saboler, and Cardinal Dole, goe about to payrate out abuses wyth newe colours and godly gloses: but also in Germany diuers noble men are like vnto corrupted and seduced to the like sophistification. And therefore I wotting maruell that so manye there wyth you be deceived wyth these craftie iugglings. And although you for your parte, lacke neyther learning nor iudgement, yet some times you see it to happen, that wise men also be carried away by faire and colourable perswasions, from the veritie. The saying of Simonides is praiseworthy: Opinion (sayeth hee) manye times peruerteth veritie. And many times false opinion hath outwardly a faire shewe, then simple truche. And special- ly it so happeneth in cases of religion, where y^e deuil trans- formeth himselfe into an Angel of light, letting forth with all colourable & godly shewes, false opinions. Howe faire seemeth the glose of Samolatenus, vpon the Gospell of S. Iohn: In the beginning was the word, &c. and yet is it full of impietie, but I omitte forreine examples.

In these articles of yours, how manye things are cra- fty & deceitfully deuised? Concession sayth the article, is ne- cessary, & ought to be retayned. And why say they not plain- ly, that the rehearsing & numbering vp of sinnes is necessa- ry by Gods word: This the bishops knewe wel to be verye false, & therefore in the article they placed their wordes ge- nerally, to blear y^e eyes of the simple people, that whè they heare confession to be necessary, they should thereby thinke the enumeration of sinnes to be necessary by Gods worde.

The like legerdemaine also they vse in the article of pri- uate Masses, albeit the beginning the sayd article concey- neth a manifest vntruth, where they say that it is necessary to retayne priuate Masses. What man in all the primitive Church, more then 4. hundred yeres after the Apostles tyme, did euer so say or thinke, at what tyme there were no suchy priuate Masses vied? But afterwarde in the processe of the Article, folowe other blinde sophistifications, to make the people beleue that they should receive by them, diuine consolations and benefites. And why doe they not plain- ly declare what consolations and benefites those be? The Bishops here do name no application and merite, for they knowe that they can not be defended. Yet they daily wyth glosing wordes, wherby they may winde out and escape, if any should improue their application. And yet notwith- standing they would haue this their application to be vnder- standed and beleued of the people. They woulde haue this Idolatrous perswasion confirmed to witte, that they sacrifice doth merite vnto others, remission A pena & cul- pa: release of all calamities, and also gaine & luter in com- mon trafficke, and to conclude, what soeuer els the carefull heart of man doth desire.

The lyke Sophistification they vse also, where they say that Priests marriage is against the law of God. They are not ignorant what S. Iuaile sayth: A Bishop oughte to be the husband of one wife: and therefore they knowe right well that Marriage is permitted to Priests by the law of God. But because nowe, they say, they haue made a bowe, they goe craftely to worke, and doe not say that priests for their bowes sake can not marrie, but plainly geue out the Ar- ticle after this sorte: that Marriage of Priests is vtrlye a- gainst the lawe of God. Againe, what impudencie and ty- ranny do they shewe mozeouer, when they compell maria- ges to be dissolved, and command those to be put to death, whych will not put away their wyues, and renounce theyr matrimony: wher as the law of Priests, if it had any force at all should extend no further but onely to put them from the ministerie if they would marry. And this (no doubt) is the true meaning of the Councils and Canons.

O cursed Bishops. O impudent and wicked Winche- ster, who vnder these colourable fetches, thincketh to de- ceue the eyes of Christ, and the iudgements of all the god- ly in the whole worlde. These things haue I wyrtten that you may vnderstand the crafty sleights, and so iudge of the purpose and policie of these Bishops. For if they woulde simply and hartely search for the truth, they would not vse these craftie collusions and deceitfull iugglings.

This Sophistification, as it is in all other affaires per- nitious and odious, so aboute all things, most specially it is to be auoyded in matters of Religion: wherein it is a hey- nous impiety to corrupt or peruert the pure word of God. And heereof the Deuill which is called Diabolus, specially taketh his name, because he wraetheth the word of God out of mennes hearts by such false iuggling and sophistical ca- uillations. And why do not these Bishops as well plain- ly vtter and confesse that they will abraue no reformation of

The Bishops maintain errors agaynst their knowledge.

Falschood often times beareth a fayrer shewe the truth.

Iohn. 1.

Confession.

Priuate Masses.

By application of masses is ment when the passio and merites of Christ is applied to any by the vertue of the Masse.

Priestes mar- iage. 1. Tim. 3.

Winchester cur- ning in the art of iuggling, called deceptiue vilus.

The worde of God ought simply to be handled without all sophistie.

Dan. 3.

Example of the Athenians reuo- king their decree.

Ester 8.

Mitigation of the 6. ar- ticles desired.

Latimer, Cromer, Shaxton, & others im- prisoned for the 6. arti- cles.

The Bishops pretend out- ward obedi- ence to the king, but their hartes be with the Pope.