

752 *Answer of the ordinaries to the supplication of the Commons.*

to all emperors, kings, princes, and potestates, and all other; we have conceived such opinion, and have such estimation of your majesty's goodness and virtue, that whatsoever any person, not so well learned as your grace is, would pretend unto the same, whereby we your most humble subjects may be brought in your grace's displeasure and indignation, furnishing that we should by usurpation and presumption extend our laws to your most noble person, preroga-

tive, and realm; yet the same your highness, being so highly learned, will of your own most bounteous goodness facilly discharge, and deliver us from that envy, when it shall appear that [the said laws are made by us, or our predecesors conformable and maintainable by the Scripture of God, and determination of the church, against which no laws can stand or take effect.]

Papae Rom.
CLEMENT. VII. 9.

Archiep. Cant.
GUILIEL. WARHAM 29.

Anno Christi
1532.

Reg. Angliae
HENRIC. VIII. 24.

Bishop Gardiner's Letter of excuse in relation to this reply.

Ex regist. convoc.

MY duty remembered to your majesty with all lowly humility and reverend honour; forasmuch as letted by disease of body I cannot personally repair to your highness's presence, having heard of your grace's almoner, to my great discomfort, what opinion your highness hath conceived of me, I am compelled by these letters to represent unto the same, lamenting and wailing my chance and fortune to have lost, besides my debts, as much reputation in your grace's heart, as your highness without my merits hath conferred unto me in estimation of the world. And if I comforted not my self with remembrance of your grace's goodnes, with whom "Veritas semper vincit; et fortis taederet et vitae." I know in myself, and can never forget your grace's benefis, and your highness's notable affection towards me. I know my duty and bond to your highness. How much I desire to declare in outward deeds mine inward knowledge, God knoweth, and I trust your highness shall know; but in the mean time for want thereof thus I suffer, and know no remedy but your highness's goodness to expend what I have done, what I should have done, and what I may do, and not be discontent, though in correcting the answer I believed so great a number of learned men affirming it so precisely to be true, that was in the answer alleged concerning God's law; especially considering your highness's book against Luther, in mine understanding most plainly approveth it. The book written in your grace's cause, and translated into English seemeth to allow it; and the council of "Constance" condemning the articles of

Wyclese manifestly decreeth it. The contrary whereof, if your grace can now prove, yet I not learned in divinity, ne knowing any part of your grace's proofs, am, I trust, without cause of blame in that behalf. When I know that I knew not, I shall then speak hereafter. It were pity we lived, if so little expressing our love to God in our deeds, we should abuse his name and authority to your highness's displeasure, of whom we have received so many benefits. On the other part, if it be God's authority to us allotted, though we cannot use it condignly, yet we cannot give it away; and it is no less danger to the receiver than to the giver, as your highness of your high wisdom can consider. I am, for my part, as I am bound, most desirous not only to do what may be done to your highness's contentation, but also appliable to learn the truth what ought to be done; trusting your majesty will finally take in good part, that I think that truth, for which I have so good grounds and authorities, untill I have stronger grounds and reasons to the contrary. I shall most gladly confer with any of your grace's council in this matter, and in the mean time I daily pray to God for the knowledge of his truth, and preservation of your majesty in much felicity, alway most ready and desirous to do as becometh

Your most humble subject,
most bounden chaplain,
and daily beadsman.

STE. WINT.

A reply made by the clergy to the supplication of the commons.

Ex MS. Cott. Cleop. F. i. fol. 98.

FIRST, as concerning such constitutions and ordinances provincial, as be to be made hereafter by us, your most humble subjects; we having our especial trust and confidence in your most high and excellent wisdom, your princely goodness, and fervent zeal to the promotion of God's honour, and christian religion, and especially your incomparable learning far exceeding in our judgment the learning of all

other kings and princes, that we have read of, and doubting nothing but that the same shall still continue and daily increase in your majesty, do offer and promise hereunto the same, that from henceforth during your highness's, natural life, which we most heartily beseech almighty God long to preserve, we shall forbear to enact, promulge, or put in execution any such constitution or ordinance, so by us to be made