

er Thomas Audeley Esquier & attorney of the Duchie of Lancaster, and the same day was the parliamēt adiourned to Westminster. On the sixt day of the same moneth the king came in to the parliament chambre and all the Lordes in there robes, and ther the commons of the nether house presented there speker, whiche there made an eloquent Oracion which cōsisted in two poyntes, the first poynt was that he muche prayسد the kyng for his equitie and Iustice, mixed with mercy and pitie, so that none offence was forgotten and left vnponished nor in the punishment the extremitie nor the rigor of the lawe not cruelly extended, which shuld be a cause to bridel all men from doing like offences, and also a comforte to offenders to confesse there crime and offence, and an occasion of amendment and reconciliation.

Thomas
Audelei
chosen
speaker.

An oracion.

The second point was, that he disabled him selfe, both for lacke of wit, learning and discreciō to so high an office, beseching the kyng to cause his commons to resort eftsones to ther common house, and there to chose an other speaker for that parliament.

To this the kyng (by the mouth of the Lord Chauncelor) answered that where he disabled hym selfe in wit and learning, his awne ornate oracion there made testified the contrary, and as touching his discreciō and other qualities, the kyng him selfe had well knowē him and his doynge, sith he was in his seruice, to be both wise and discrete, and so for an hable man he accepted him, and for the speaker he him admitted.

When the commons were assembled in the nether house, thei began to common of their grefes wherwith the spiritualltie had before tyme greuously oppressed them, both cōtrarie to the lawe of the realme, & cōtrarie to all righte, and in especial thei were sore moued with sixe greate causes.

The first for the excesse fynes, which the ordinaries toke for probat of Testamentes, insomuche that Sir henry Guilford knight of the gartir and comptrollor of the kinges house, declared in the open Parliament on his fidelitie that he and other beyng executors to Sir William Compton knight paid for the probate of his wil to the Cardinal & the Archbishop of Cauntorburie a thousand Marke sterlyng: after this declaracion were shewed so many extorcions done by ordinaries for probates of willes, that it were to muche to rehearse.

The second cause was the great polling and extreme exaccion, which the spirituall men vsed in takyng of corps presentes or mortuaries, for the children of the defunct should al dye for hunger and go a beggyng rather then thei would of charitie geue to them the sely know which the dead man ought if he had but only one, such was the charitie then.

The third cause was, that priestes beyng surueiors, stuardes and officers to Bishoppes, Abbotes, and other spirituall heddes, had and occupied Fermes, Graunges, & grasing in euery contrey, so that the poore husbandmen coulde haue nothyng but of them, and yet for that they should pay derely.

The fourth cause was that Abbotes Priors and spiritual men kept Tanne houses, & bought and soulede woll, clothe and all maner of marchaundise as other temporall marchauntes did.

The fift cause, was because that spiritual persones promoted to great benefices, & hauyng there liuyng of ther flocke, were liyng in the courte in lordes houses, & toke al of the parishoners, & nothing spent on thē at al, so that for lack of residēce both the poore of the parish lacked refreshyng, & vniuersally all the parishoners lacked preaching, & true instruction of Gods worde, to the greate perell of there soules.

The sixt cause was to se one priest beyng litle learned to haue tenne or twelue benefices and to be resident on none, and to know many well learned scholers in the vniuersitie which wer able to preche & teache, to haue nether benefice nor exhibicion.

These thinges before this time might in nowise be towched nor yet talked of by no man except he would be made an heritike, or lese al that he had, for the bishopes were chauncelors, and had all the rule about the kyng, so that no man durst once presume to attempt any thing contrary to their profit, or commoditie.

But now when God had illumined the eies of the kyng, and that ther subtell doinges was

once espied: then men began charitably to desyre a reformation, and so at this Parliamēt men begā to shew ther grudges.

Where vpon the Burgesses of the Parliament, appoincted suche as were learned in the law being of the common house, to drawe one bill of the probates of Testamentes, another for Mortuaries, and the thirde for none residēce, pluralities, and takyng of Fermes by spiritual men.

The learned men toke muche payne, and firste set furthe the bill of Mortuaries, whiche passed the common house, and was sent vp to the Lordes.

To this bill, the spirituall Lordes made a fayre face, sayng that surely priestes and curates toke more then they should, and therefore it were well done to take some reasonable ordre, thus thei spake because it touched them litle.

But with in two daies after was sēt vp the bill concerning probates of Testamentes, at the which the Archbishop of Cauntorburie in especiall, and all other bishoppes in generall both frowned and grunted, for that touched ther proffite, insomuch as Doctor Ihon Fisher bishop of Rochester, saied openlie in the Parliament chambre these woordes: my Lordes, you se daily what billes come hither from the commō house and all is to the destruction of the church, for Godes sake se what a Realme the kyngdome of Boheme was, and when the Church went donne, then fell the glory of the kyngdome, now with the Commons is nothing but doune with the Church, and all this me semeth is for lacke of faith only.

The sayng
of I. Fisher
B. of Ro-
chester.

When these wordes were reported to the Commons of the nether house, that the bishop should say that all ther doynge were for lacke of faith, thei toke the matter greuously, for thei Imagined that the bishop esteemed them as Heretikes, and so by his slaundersous woordes would haue perswaded the temporall Lordes to haue restrained there consent from the saied two billes, whiche they before had passed, as you haue hard before.

Wherefore the Commons after long debate, determined to send the speaker of the Parliament to the kinges highnes, with a greuous complaynt, agaynst the bishop of Rochester, and so on a day when the kyng was at layser, Thomas Audeley the speaker for the commons and thirte of the chief of the common house, came to the kynges presence in his palace at Westminster, whiche before was called yorke place and there very eloquently declared what a dishonour to the kyng and the realme it was to say that they which were elected for the wysesst men of all the Sheres, Cities, and boroughes within the realme of Englād should be declared in so noble and open presence to lacke faith, whiche was equiuallent to say, that thei were Infidelles and no Christians, as ill as Turkes or Sarasins, so that what payne or studie so euer thei toke for the common wealth, or what actes or lawes so euer thei made or stablished, shulde be taken as lawes made by Panymis and hethen people, & not worthy to be kept by christian men: wherfore he most humbly besought the kinges highnes, to call the saied bishop before him & to cause him to speake more discretly of such a nombre as was in the cōmō house.

A com-
playnt made
to the kyng.

The kyng was not well contented with the sayng of the bishop, yet he gently answered the speaker, that he would send for the bishop and send them worde what answere he made, and so they departed agayne. After this the kyng sent for the archebishope of Cauntorburie and sixe other bishopes, and for the bishop of Rochester also, and there declared to him the grudge of the commons, to the which the bishop answered that he ment the doynge of the Bohemians was for lacke of faith, and not the doynge of them that were in the common house, which sayng was confirmed by the bishopes being present, which had him in greate reputaciō, and so by that only sayng the kyng accepted his excuse and therefore sent woord to the comons by sir William Fitz william knight treasurer of his house-houlde, which blind excuse pleased the commons nothyng at all.

The bishops
excuse.

After this diuers assemblies wer kept betwene certein of the lordes & certayne of the commons, for the billes of probates of Testamentes, and the mortuaries: the temporalitie laied to the spiritualtie ther awne lawes and constitucions, and the spiritualtie sore defended them by prescripion and vsage, to whome an answere was made by a gentleman of Greyes

Inne: the vsage hath euer ben of theues to robbe on shoters hill, ergo is it lawfull: with answere the spirituall men were sore offended, because there doynge were called robberies, but the temporall men stode still by there saynges, in so muche the saied gentle man saied to the Archebishop of Cauntorburie, that both the exaccion of probates of Testamentes, and the takyng of Mortuaries, as they were vsed were open robbery and theft: after long disputacion, the temporall lordes began to leane to the cōmons, but for all that, the billes remainned vnconcluded a while.

In the meane season, there was a bill assented by the Lordes, and sent doune to the commons, the effect wherof was, that the whole realme by the saied acte, did release to the kyng all suche somes of money as he had borrowed of them at the loane, in the fiftene yere of his raigne (as you haue hard before) this bill was sore argued in the common house but the most parte of the commons were the kynges seruantes, and the other were so labored to by other, that the bill was assented to.

The loane released.

When this realease of the loane was knowen to the commons of the Realme, Lorde so they grudged, and spake ill of the hole Parliament, for almoste eury man counted it his dette, and reconed suerly of the payment of the same, and therefore some made there willes of thesame, and some other did set it ouer to other for debt, and so many men had losse by it, which caused them sore to murmur, but ther was no remedy. The kyng like a good and a discrete prince, seing that his commons in the Parliament house had released the loane, entending somewhat to requite the same, graunted to them a generall Pardon, of all offences, certayn great offences and debtes only except: also he aided them for the redresse of there greues against the spirituaie, and caused two newe billes to be made indifferēty, both for the probate of Testamentes and mortuaries, which billes were so resonable that the spiritnall lordes assented to them all though they were sore against there myndes, and in especiall the probate of Testamentes sore displeased the bishopes, and the mortuaries sore displeased the persones and vicars.

After these Actes thus agreed, the Commons, made a nother acte for pluralities, of benefices, none residence, buyng and seiling and takyng of fermes by spirituall persones, which acte so displeased the spirituaie that the priestes railed on the commons of the common house, and called them heretikes, and scismatikes, for the which diuerse priestes were punished.

This acte was sore debated aboue in the parliament chambre, and the Lordes spirituall woulde in nowise consent. Wherefore the kyng perceiuing the grudge of his commons, caused eight lordes and eight of his commons to mete in the starre chambre at an after none, and thier was sore debatung of the cause, insomuche that the temporall Lordes of the vpper house, which were there, toke parte with the Commons, agaynst the spirituall lordes and by force of reason caused them to assent to the bil with a litle qualifyng, whiche bill the nexte day was wholly agreed to in the lordes house, to the great reioisung of the lay people, and to the greate displeasor of the spirituall persones.

Duryng this Parliament was brought doune to the commons, the boke of articles whiche the Lordes had put to the kyng agaynst the Cardiaall, the chief articles were these.

First that he without the kynges assent had procured to be a Legate, by reason whereof he toke away the right of all bishopes and spiritual persones.

Item, in all writynges which he wrot to Rome or any other forayn Prince, he wrot *Ego et Rex meus*, I and my kyng, as who woulde say that the kyng were his seruant.

Item that he hath sclaudered the church of England in the courte of Rome, for his suggestion to be legate was to reforme the churche of Englande, which as he wrote was *Facta in reprobum censum*.

Item, he without the kynges assent, caried the kynges great Seale, with hym into Flaunders when he was sent ambassad to the Emperoure.

Item, he without the kynges assent, sent a commission to Sir Gregory de Cassado, knyghte,