Edict Arranging for the Expulsion
from England of Negroes and Blackamoors

July 18, 1596

An open warrant to the Lord Mayor of London and to all vice-admirals, mayors, and other public officers whatsoever to whom it may appertain. Whereas Casper van Senden, a merchant of Lubeck, did by his labor and travel procure eighty-nine of her majesty’s subjects that were detained prisoners in Spain and Portugal to be released, and brought them hither into this realm as his own cost and charges, for the which his expenses and declaration of his honest mind toward those prisoners he only desireth to have license to take up so much blackamoors here in this realm and to transport them into Spain and Portugal. Her majesty in regard of the charitable affection the suppliant hath showed, being a stranger [foreigner], to work the delivery of our countrymen that were there in great misery and thralldom and to bring them home to their native country, and that the same could not be done without great expense, and also considering the reasonableness of his request to transport so many blackamoors from hence, doth think it a very good exchange, and that those kind of people may be well spared in this realm, being so populous and number of able persons, the subjects of the land and Christian people, that perish for want of service, whereby through their labor they might be maintained. They are therefore in their lordships’ names required to aid and assist him to take up such blackamoors as he shall find within this realm with the consent of their masters, who we doubt now, considering her majesty’s good pleasure to have those kind of people sent out of the land and the good deserving of the stranger toward her majesty’s subjects, and that they shall do charitably and like Christians rather to served by their own countrymen than with those kind of people, will yield those in their possession to him.