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A BOOK ABOUT THE CLERGY.

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VOL. II.





# A BOOK ABOUT THE CLERGY.

BY

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“A BOOK ABOUT DOCTORS,” “A BOOK ABOUT LAWYERS,”

&c. &c.

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## PART IV.—OLD WAYS AND NEW FASHIONS.

(Continued.)

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE CHANCEL AND THE NAVE—FURNITURE AND DECORATIONS.

THE reader, however, would be guilty of a great error, who should imagine that our feudal ancestors were altogether devoid of the sentiment which in modern England jealously preserves our churches from profanation. The cathedrals and other important churches were usually provided with private chapels, in which masses were continually offered for the souls of departed benefactors. Each of these sacella contained an altar and the sacred adornments usual in places of worship; and whilst pride and affection inspired the founder's descendants to protect it from decay, and to renew from time to time its artistic decorations, the ordinary frequenters of the church to which it was attached cherished for its altar the same reverence which they displayed for the high altar in the church.\* Whatever the stir and uproar in the nave on wakes and minor feasts, there was quiet in these subsidiary chapels which the

\* In allusion to the worldly pride often displayed in the decorations of these private sacella, the satirists of feudal times were wont to remark that Satan always had a chapel hard by the Lord's house. This sentiment became proverbial, and Foxe the Martyrologist preserves it in one of the marginal notes to his fullest edition of the 'Acts and Monuments.' 'God,' he says, 'never builded a church, but the devil bath his chapel by.' Truth so aptly and pungently expressed is not likely to disappear from popular opinion; and Defoe, who is erroneously supposed to have originated the sentiment, reproduced it in the couplet,—

'Wherever God erects a House of Prayer  
The devil always builds a chapel there.'

pious visitor of the temple might enter at any hour of the day for prayer and edifying reflection.

Again, the vigilance with which we guard the entire church and its precincts from violation falls short of the heed which our forefathers took to maintain the sacredness of the chancel. The medieval nave by turns or simultaneously was a public-hall, a theatre, a warehouse, a market, a court of justice, and a place of worship; but the chancel was rigidly reserved for the mysterious and sublime offices of priestly service. It was the holy place set apart for the priests and clerks in sacred orders. At its eastern end, built into the wall, stood the high altar; and for the accommodation of persons qualified to enter this mysterious chamber of the Lord's House, it was provided with furniture costlier in material and richer in art than the furniture of the chief rooms in the castles of the wealthiest nobles. During the celebration of divine rites, the devout laity, standing reverentially and kneeling meekly in the nave, caught the solemn intonations of the officiating priests and the rich melody of the choir, that came to them through the open door beneath the rood-loft; but no layman ventured to pass under the elevated rood and put his foot on the hallowed ground of the inner court, save at the special invitation of officiating clergy, and then only to prostrate himself in adoration at the foot of the altar. And no sooner had the service terminated, than the gates of lattice were closed upon the uninitiated crowd.

Divided from the other parts of the church, by iron or wooden trellises, through which the interior was imperfectly visible, this peculiar court was termed the chancel—a name derived from the *cancelli*, or crossed bars of the fence.

Though from a very early date of our church history, the lay patrons of churches were provided with seats within the trellises of the clerical court, and though in later times lay persons of high importance were sometimes permitted, by the special favour of their clergy, to occupy places in the chancel during service, the general congregation of the laity continued after the Reformation to refrain from intruding themselves into so peculiarly sacred a part of their temple. In short, it was the clerical quarter of the building,—dedicated from the foundation

of the church to the clergy, and set apart for ecclesiastical uses and occupants at the time when the nave was provided for ordinary people. So jealous were the clergy of their peculiar right to this part of the church, that they forbore to tax the people for its maintenance, lest by spending their money on its fabric the laity might in course of time be thought to have acquired proprietary right to enter its boundaries. The ecclesiastical right to the chancel and the clerical obligation to preserve it from material injury are as old as our churches themselves; and our reforming monarchs recognised both the right and the obligation by the successive injunctions which required the clergy to maintain their chancels out of their revenues, whilst the laity were left to provide for the timely repair and restoration of the bodies of the churches.

Concerning the nature of the chancel and the gradual encroachment of the Elizabethan laity upon its hallowed ground, Hooker observes in the 'Ecclesiastical Polity,' 'our churches are places provided that the people might assemble themselves in due and decent manner, according to their several degrees. Which thing being common unto us with Jews, we have in this respect our church divided by certain partitions, although not so many in number as theirs. They had their several for heathen nations, their several for the people of their own nation, their several for men, their several for women, their several for priests: and for the high priest alone their several. There being in ours for local distinction between the clergy and the rest (which yet we do not with any great strictness or curiosity observe neither) but one partition: the cause whereof at the first (as it seemeth) was that as many as were capable of the holy mysteries might there assemble themselves and no other creep in amongst them: this is now made a matter so heinous, as if our religion thereby were become even plain failure, and as though we retained a most holy place, whereinto there might not any but the high priest alone enter, according to the custom of the Jews.'

Between those of the Elizabethan clergy who insisted most strongly on the necessity of maintaining the ancient privileges of the sacerdotal order, and the Puritans who were most resolute in asserting the equality of the laity with their spiritual

ministers, there arose much ill feeling and many disputations respecting the chancel, which the former continued to regard as the holiest part of the sacred edifice, whilst the latter irreverently designated a cage for black-birds. In his 'Survey,' Abp. Baneroff, that fierce opponent and scourge of the Puritans, observes, 'There is in every church for the most part a distinction of places betwixt the clergy and the laity. We term one place the chancel and another the body of the church; which manner of distinction doth greatly offend the tender conscience (for sooth) of the purer part of our reformers, insomuch as Mr. Gilby, a chief man in his time among them, doth term the quire a cage, and reckoneth that separation of the ministers from the congregation one of the hundred points of Popery which, he affirmeth, do yet remain in the Church of England.' On this point, however, as on more important matters of contention, the clergy were at length compelled to yield to lay-opinion which in course of time succeeded in giving ordinary worshippers the same rights in the chancel as they continued to enjoy in the body of the church. In our cathedrals and certain other churches the chancel is still guarded by gates and fences, similar to the ancient *cancelli*, but during celebrations of divine service it is thrown open to the laity of both sexes. In parochial churches, where the ancient partitions between the chancel and the nave survived the continual changes of the Reformation period, and also in those parish churches in which recent ecclesiastical restorers have again set up trellises or other light barriers between the two parts of the sacred building, the principal space of the chancel is ordinarily devoted to the accommodation of the wealthier and more modish members of the congregation, whilst worshippers of inferior quality are provided with seats in the nave.

The most conspicuous of the interior adornments of the people's quarter in the mediæval church was the rood-loft or lifted rood, — a crucifix raised and fixed above the entrance into the chancel from the nave. Figures of the Virgin Mary and John were usually put beside this exalted emblem of the Saviour's supreme agony; the Virgin's statue being placed on the one, and the image of John on the other side of the chief object of adoration. Sometimes, instead of these subordinate figures,



there appeared the four evangelists and rows of saintly effigies. But, whatever the group, it usually exhibited signs of artistic ability and costly labour. Carved in times when the sculptor's art was nothing higher than an artistic industry subordinate to architecture, the older roods and their groups of supporters were of rude and cumbrous workmanship: but, regarded as works of art and considered apart from the sacred history which they illustrated, they were sometimes not devoid of merit, and would under any circumstances have roused the wonder of the simple gazers for whose behoof they were fashioned. This qualified commendation of their art is of course applicable only to the roods of the superior temples: for in the obscure church of a poor and secluded parish the figures of the rood-loft and gallery were, so far as their material and shape are concerned, no better than enormous dolls, clumsily fashioned, execrably painted, and decorated with tawdry vestments.

In the cathedrals and other principal churches, the sculptors and painters employed their best cunning on the foliage and traceries of the gallery on which the rood and its attendant statues were placed. The floor of this gallery was the orchestra of the church, where the instrumental performers and some of the vocalists were stationed to create melody during the celebrations of the sacred services. Hence, when the congregation looked upwards to the chief source of the solemn harmony which filled them with heavenly thoughts, their eyes encountered the mystic calendar, which was intelligible to the most ignorant of the unlettered folk.

Occasionally the enormous figures on the rood-gallery were so ingeniously contrived with joints, and hinges, and concealed appliances, that, at the will of a hidden player on their mechanical fittings, they would open or shut their eyes, nod their heads, or move their limbs. One of the most famous of these scandalous toys was the Rood of Grace, which was long exhibited at Boxley, in Kent, to the surprise and delusion of simple creatures. One of the Lord Cromwell's wise and daring acts was to move this Rood of Grace from the church, where it had for many a day astonished and misled the vulgar, to Henry the Eighth's London, where it was publicly dissected, and lectured upon from the pulpit of Paul's Cross, by Bishop Hilsey, in

whose diocese of Rochester it had achieved its lying tricks no less to the profit of the priests than to the hurt of the people. Of this rood and its destruction, Foxe says, 'What posterity will ever think the church of the pope, pretending such religion, to have been so wicked, so long to abuse the people's eyes with an old rotten stock, called the Rood of Grace, wherein a man should stand enclosed, with a hundred wires within the rood, to make the image goggle with the eyes, to nod with his head, to hang the lip, to move and shake his jaws, according as the value was of the gift which was offered? If it were a small piece of silver, the image would hang a frowning lip; if it were a piece of gold, then should his jaws go merrily. Thus miserably were the people of Christ abused, their souls seduced, their senses beguiled, and their purses spoiled, till this idolatrous forgery at last, by Cromwell's means, was disclosed, and the image, with all his engines, showed openly at Paul's Cross, and there torn in pieces by the people.'

Henry the Eighth's reforming years, and the reign of Edward the Sixth, saw the abolition of the roods from the rood-galleries. Together with the statues of saints, the pictures, and the other calendars for the ignorant—which the great fathers of Anglican reform had tolerated, and even defended, in the fourteenth century—the crucifixes were taken from their ancient lofts, in obedience to successive injunctions; and most of them were mutilated by the axes of Puritan iconoclasts, and then consumed with fire. But in Mary's reign—which witnessed the restoration of Papal images as well as Catholic practices—it was found that many of the removed roods, instead of having been destroyed, had fallen into the custody of superstitious believers, who merely removed them to places of concealment, in anticipation of the time when it would be safe to bring them again into the light of day, and re-establish them on their old galleries. Taken from cellars and closets, these works of Catholic art were once more displayed to the delighted populace, the majority of whom had preserved their attachment to the old faith; and in parishes where the ancient crucifixes had been destroyed on their enforced removal, the ecclesiastical authorities bestirred themselves to buy fair and stately images of the Redeemer's death. But when Mary had expired, to the

relief of her terrified and disgusted subjects, Elizabeth's accession was signalled by bonfires, that illuminated the streets and market-squares of our cities, whilst they reduced to ashes vast piles of roods, statues, and Catholic vestments. In London these wholesale burnings of ecclesiastical furniture and apparel began on August 24, 1559, the first day of Bartholomew's fair, when, on their return from the Clerkenwell wrestlings, the lord mayor and aldermen, attended by a proud array of foreign ambassadors and English nobles, beheld the populace hurl whole cartloads of images, relics, missals, and clerical robes into two stupendous fires, raised near Ironmonger Lane and the Mercers' Chapel.\*

To realise the brightness and ornate appearance of our temples in Catholic times, the reader must remember that the interior surfaces of their walls were profusely and elaborately embellished with paintings, illustrating scriptural story or wholesome moralities. Some of these artistic works were painted on panels or canvas; but more generally the illu-

\* 'The 24th (August),' Strype records gleefully in his 'Life of Grindall,' 'was the first day the burning of Papal relics began. And it was so ordered as to be seen of the lord mayor, the aldermen, foreign ambassadors, besides a multitude of other persons attending them: for, according to an old custom, this being the first day of Bartholomew Fair, the mayor, aldermen, ambassadors, and many others in company with them, afforded their presence at a wrestling at Clerkenwell; and as they came home through Cheapside, against Ironmonger Lane, and against St. Thomas of Acre (*i. e.* Mercers' Chapel), were made two fires in the street, wherein were thrown a great number of goods, with the images of John and Mary, and the resemblances of divers other saints, that had been taken down from the churches; the people looking on with great wonder. The next day, viz. August 25, was burnt at St. Botolph's, without Bishopsgate, the rood, with Mary and John, and the patron of the church, and other church goods. And while these were burning, a person stood within the church wall and made a sermon upon the occasion; and at length, in the midst of his discourse, threw into the fire certain books. At this time was taken down a cross of wood that stood in the churchyard, and was burnt with the rest: which cross had lately been set up by one Warner, a tanner of skins; whether as an enjoined penance or a voluntary work I know not. September 16, the rood, with Mary and John, belonging to St. Magnus Church, was burnt at the corner of Fleet Street, together with other superstitious things pertaining to that church . . . . so that from Bartholomew-tide and so forward, within a month's time, or less, were destroyed all the roods, church images, church goods, with copes, crosses, censers, altar-cloths, rood-cloths, books, banner-staves, waintscot, with much other like gear, in and about London. These were some of the matters that passed in the visitation of the city, whereof, not long after our divine' (*i. e.* Grindall) 'was called to be bishop.'

minators of our sacred edifices worked upon the very material of the walls,—producing the pictures which the Reformers, under Cranmer's primacy, instead of actually scraping them from the plaster and stone on which they had been put, merely obliterated by covering them with thick overcoats of whitewash or paint. Of the pictures thus obliterated by the brushes of house-painters, numerous specimens have been brought to light in these later times by our church-restorers, who have taken commendable pains to relieve these interesting relics of medieval art of the disfiguring materials imposed upon by successive generations of churchwardens. Of these pictorial curiosities some good examples may be found in the church of Wisborough Green, Sussex, the vicar of which parish recently published a very entertaining and scholarly treatise on their characteristics and purpose. These remains of mural adornment, lately discovered in a country church, are perhaps more valuable, as historic evidence, than the relics of greater and higher work in more important temples, since they assist in showing that the churches of even obscure parishes were not overlooked by the medieval limners. Mr. Maze Gregory inclines to the opinion that some of the Wisborough Green relics may have been painted so early as the later part of the eleventh century; but we are disposed to think that the learned vicar assigns too remote a date to the paintings about which he has spoken and written\* so serviceably.

In lieu of the paintings, thus removed or defaced under Cranmer's primacy, the walls of churches were decorated with verses of Scripture which were regarded by the Catholic party with vehement dislike,—as innovations on ancient ways, and controversial affronts to the papal system. That the clergy, who directed the labours of the Protestant illuminators in Edward the Sixth's time, selected for exhibition on the church walls such texts as appeared to justify the proceedings of the Reformers, and to reflect on Catholic abuses, may be inferred from the language of the mandate in which Bonner ordered the

\* *The Sins and Punishment of Our Members. Six Lectures, delivered on the Fridays in Lent, 1867, on the Ancient Paintings recently discovered in the Parish Church.* By the Rev. Maze W. Gregory, M.A., Vicar of Wisborough Green, and Chaplain of Loxwood, Sussex. Rivingtons, 1867.

prompt obliteration of ‘the scriptures and writings painted upon the church walls’ of the diocese of London. ‘Because some children of iniquity,’ the insolent prelate proclaimed, ‘given up to carnal desires and novelties, have by many ways enterprised to banish the ancient manner and order of the church, and to bring in and establish sects and heresies; taking from thence the picture of Christ, and many things besides instituted and observed of ancient time laudably in the same; placing in the room thereof such things, as in such a place it behoved them not to do, and also have procured, as a stay to their heresies (as they thought) certain scriptures wrongly applied to be painted on the church walls, all which persons tend chiefly to this end—that they might uphold the liberty of the flesh, and marriage of priests, and destroy, as much as lay in them, the reverent sacrament of the altar, and might extinguish and enervate holy-days, fasting-days, and other laudable discipline of the Catholic Church; opening a window to all vices, and utterly closing up the way unto virtue; wherefore we, being moved with a Christian zeal, judging that the premises are not to be longer suffered, do, for discharge of our duty, commit unto you jointly and severally, and by the tenor hereof do straitly charge and command you, that at the receipt hereof, with all speed convenient, you do warn, or cause to be warned, first, second, and third time, peremptorily, all and singular church-wardens and parishioners whatsoever, within our diocese of London (wheresoever any such scriptures or paintings have been attempted) that they abolish and extinguish such manner of scriptures, so that by no means they be either read or seen.’

## CHAPTER IV.

## TOMBS, SEATS, FLOWERS, AND CANDLES.

OF tombs and other material devices for perpetuating the memory of deceased persons—the excess of which demonstrations of human pride and vanity tends in modern times more to the disfigurement than the beauty of our temples—the medieval church had comparatively few. Instead of interring their dead within the walls of their towns, our earlier Saxon ancestors devoted to purposes of sepulture pieces of ground lying at a distance from the habitations of the living,—a course to which their descendants of the nineteenth century have resorted after enduring for generations upon generations the inconvenience and evils of intramural interment. Cuthred, king of the West Saxons, (740–754) was the first English ruler to allow the dead to be buried within the walls of towns, during the life of which sovereign Archbishop Cuthbert obtained the Pope's permission that churchyards should be used as burial-grounds. But the practice of interring corpses in churches did not begin till a much later date. Even so late as 1076, Archbishop Lanfranc, in the council of Winchester, forbade that burial should be performed within the temples under his sway; and a considerable period elapsed before this canon was relaxed in favour of private persons.

During the Norman and Plantagenet period, individuals who wished to lie beneath the roofs of sacred buildings could obtain their desire at great cost and through special ecclesiastical favour by erecting chapels contiguous to churches,—care being taken by the authorities of the original edifices, that the architecture of these sacella harmonised with the temples to which they were attached, and that the control and custody, though not the absolute ownership, of the new chapels went

with the parent churches.\* It was thus that many of our churches acquired their aisles (*alæ*), or wings built out from the original edifices, within which no interments might be made. Thus also, through the combined piety and arrogance of the wealthy individuals who erected the side-chapels, or sacella, of which sufficient notice has already been taken, a single church in course of time became, as it were, an accumulation of churches. But long after royal and noble persons, and humbler individuals of extraordinary wealth, could thus obtain intra-ecclesial sepulture for themselves and their families without infringing Lanfranc's ninth canon, persons of considerable, though secondary influence,—persons, to use modern terms, of gentle condition and average social respectability,—continued to be debarred from the costly distinction of interment under the church-roof.

Even so late as Henry the Seventh's time the author of 'The Book of the Festival'—a work throwing much light on the church-life of our ancestors in the fifteenth century—speaks with strong disapprobation of the growing fashion of burying inferior persons in the Lord's House. That patrons and incumbents might be buried in their churches, the author admits; but he insists that to inter persons of inferior quality within church walls was a profane and abominable act. In language which it is difficult to peruse with gravity, he assures us, 'They' (*i.e.* churchyards) 'were appointed by the fathers to bury in, for two causes: one, to be prayed for, as our holy Church useth;

\* So recently as July 7, 1866, one of our Vice-Chancellors recognised, in a judicial decision, a manorial lord's apparent right of private property in a sacellum thus attached by a medieval lord to Icklesham Church. In his judgment, his honour said, 'that in ancient times the founders of churches were very generally lords of manors; and that it was the custom in early times for the lord of a manor, when founding a church, to found with it a private chapel, not annexed to his house, but to the church itself; considering, perhaps, that it derived some additional sanctity from being, as it were, made part of the church, in appearance, and close to the church. And it was a common practice for lords of manors, and other men of note in the country, to obtain leave either from the Pope, or from the Crown, or from the Patron, the ordinary and the incumbent (and the lord of the manor would generally be the patron), to annex a chapel to an existing church; that this was most commonly done in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and in that manner a number of chapels were annexed to churches, such chapels being founded for the purposes of private masses and as places of sepulture for the families of the founders.'—*Vide* 'Law Rep.' *Churton v. Frewen*.

and another, for the body, to lie there at rest. For the fiend hath no manner of power with Christian burials. No burying in the church, except it be the patron, that defends it from bodily enemies; and the parson, vicar, priest, or clerk, that defend the church from ghostly enemies with their prayers. Some have been buried there and cast out again on the morrow, and all the clothes left still in the grave. An angel came on a time to a warden of a church, and bade him go to the bishop to cast out the body he had buried there, or else he should be dead within thirty days. And so he was; for he would not do as he was bidden.'

The custom of burying the dead in churches grew more and more general in the Elizabethan period and throughout the seventeenth century, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition offered by many influential persons to the objectionable usage. When John Evelyn's father-in-law had died, Feb. 12th, 1683, at Sayes Court, he was interred in the churchyard of his parish, in accordance with his particular directions, given in the hope that the example of his interment would tend to put intra-ecclesial burial out of fashion. 'By a special clause in his will,' says his son-in-law, the diarist, 'he ordered that his body should be buried in the churchyard under the south-east window of the chancel, adjoining to the burying-places of his ancestors, since they came out of Essex into Sayes Court, he being much offended at the novel custom of burying everyone within the body of the church and chancel; that being a favour heretofore granted to martyrs and great persons; this excess of making churches charnel-houses being of ill and irreverend example, and prejudicial to the health of the living, besides the continual disturbance of the pavement and seats, and several other indecencies. Dr. Hall, the pious Bishop of Norwich, would also be so interred, as may be read in his testament.' Six years later (April 12th, 1689) John Evelyn co-operated with the Bishop of St. Asaph to urge the Archbishop of Canterbury to forbid needless private administrations of baptism, and to lessen the frequency of intra-ecclesial interments:—'the one proceeding much from the pride of women, bringing that into custom which was only indulged in case of imminent danger, and out of necessity during the Rebellion and persecution of the



clergy in our late civil wars; the other from the avarice of ministers, who, in some opulent parishes, made almost as much of permission to bury in the chancel and the church as of their livings, and were paid with considerable advantage and gifts for baptising in private.' After his death the diarist was interred, apart from vulgar folk, in the mausoleum, or 'dormitory' of the Evelyns at Wotton. Like Bishop Hall, Bishop Compton of London used to say 'The churchyard for the dead, the church for the living;' and when he died, in 1713, he was buried in Fulham churchyard.

The medieval church differed notably from the modern temple in not having permanent seats in the nave for the accommodation of the laity. Though mention is made of pews in the literature of the fifteenth century, it is uncertain what was the article of furniture to which the word 'pew' was applicable. The 'pew closed with iron,' and placed near the high altar of the minster, mentioned in Sir Thomas Malory's translation of the 'Morte d' Arthur,' was probably a priest's confessional. In his 'Instructions for Parish Priests,' Mirk says not a word about pews—silence which of itself demonstrates that private seats for lay worshippers were not common in the earlier half of the fifteenth century; and though Russell's 'Book of Nurture,' a production of the same period, shows that private closets, similar to our modern pews, were occasionally placed in our temples, for those whom Dr. Doran in 'Saints and Sinners' designates 'the finer people,' it may be confidently inferred from the author's language, that the grand folk thus distinguished from ordinary worshippers were exceptionally important personages. Russell says,—

'Prince or prelate if he be, or any other potentate,  
Ere he enter into the church, be it early or late,  
Perceive all things for his pew, that it be made preparate:  
Both cushion, carpet, and curtain, beads, and book forget not that.'

Prelates, of course, sat in the chancel, to which sacred quarter admission was also accorded to princes and other persons mighty enough to be deemed potentates. The chancel of every cathedral or superior church abounded with sumptuous furniture of massive and richly-carved wood. Russell's 'pews,' therefore,

do not affect the assertion that, in Catholic times, the naves of our temples were neither pewed nor benched.

So long as the area of the nave was periodically set out for a fair, a market, or court of law, the presence of fixed pews on its pavement would have been a source of constant inconvenience to the public. Such permanent seats would, moreover, have occasioned continual embarrassment and dissatisfaction to the clergy in times when pompous processions of richly-robed ecclesiastics moving within as well as about the sacred edifice, were conspicuous features of the solemnities on Sundays and other holy days. But when the Reformation had suppressed the ancient ambulatory processions, and prohibited the holding of fairs and social feasts within consecrated buildings, no consideration for clerical observances or public convenience forbade the laity to parcel out the area of their peculiar quarter with wooden compartments. Bishop Kennet states precisely that 'churches were first generally seated' in the times immediately following the Reformation. This change, however, was not effected without opposition from many ecclesiastics and laymen, to whom it appeared that Sir Thomas More was worthy of commendation for having protested against the few pews which were to be found in Henry the Eighth's London churches. Under Elizabeth pews became numerous, though by no means universal, in the London churches; and the High Church clergy of the next two reigns—friends to all ecclesiastical arrangements that tended to orderliness and the material advancement of their class—were seldom loth to assign pews to lay families who were ready to pay handsome fees for the comfort and distinction that attended their possession. But even so late as the reign of Charles the First, the contention\* between the introducers and opponents of pews occasionally gave rise to riots in the churches

\* Taking the part of the opponents of private seats, Bishop Corbet remarked disdainfully, 'Stately pews are now become tabernacles, with rings and curtains to them. There wants nothing but beds, to hear the word of God on. We have easements, locks, keys, and cushions—I had almost said, bolsters and pillows; and for these we love the church! I will not guess what is done in them; who sits, stands, or lies asleep at prayers, communion, &c.: but this I dare say, they are either to hide some vice or to proclaim one; to hide disorder or proclaim pride.' Respecting old pews, my readers will find some entertaining particulars in Dr. Doran's volumes on 'Hassock and Cassock.'

of London and its neighbourhood. And, after pews had become common in the naves of churches, the word 'pew' was so far from being restricted to its present signification, that we find Pepys applying it indifferently to a private closet in a house of worship, and a private box in a theatre.

Having no permanent seats in their quarter of the church, the devout laity of a medieval congregation usually knelt or stood throughout celebrations of Divine Service, if they were in a condition of health that permitted them to hear mass, anthem, chant, and sermon, in attitudes of unrest. The indolent were wont to loll against walls and pillars; the irreverent were accustomed to walk to and fro, making an unseasonable clatter on the pavement as they passed from spot to spot to exchange greetings and whispered gossip with their acquaintance. But aged persons and worshippers of infirm health were from an early date of our Church history permitted to seat themselves on little stools or portable chairs, which they either brought with them from their homes whenever they attended service, or hired of an official of the church. The reader does not need to be reminded how, during Laud's calamitous primacy, Jenny Geddes began a famous riot in the High Church of St. Giles, Edinburgh, by flinging her stool at the Dean's head.\* When this custom of bringing seats into church had become prevalent, the first step had been taken towards the introduction of permanent benches; and, when private families had acquired a customary right to a particular bench on a particular spot of the sacred area, the bench—gradually furnished with a back to lean against, a desk to put books upon, and a bar to keep out intruders,—developed into a primitive pew, that was copied and improved upon by emulous imitators.

Another article of furniture universally conspicuous in the modern church, and almost as universally absent from the medieval temple, was the fixed pulpit. The permanent wooden or

\* Some historians insist that Jenny Geddes's stool was a three-legged seat; but one of the several pictures in the unique frontispiece of Rushworth's 'Historical Collections' represents the riot in St. Giles's Church, and gives Jenny's stool four legs. The people are depicted sitting on four-legged stools, and beneath the picture is the legend.—

'Strange y<sup>t</sup> from stooles, at Scotysch Prelates hurl'd,  
Bellona's dire alarms should rouse the world.'

stone pulpits of the feudal churches were usually placed in the open air, so that the preachers might address larger audiences than could be entertained in the churches. Sermons however were delivered within the walls of our temples before the Reformation,—less frequently, indeed, than at the present time, but often enough to be an important element of ecclesiastical instruction. And these addresses were usually delivered from portable box-desks,\*—just such pulpits as appear in many of the illustrations of Foxe's 'Acts and Monuments.' In the Reformation period pulpit-oratory became more general and serviceable in the churches than it had been for many previous generations. The clergy and the laity alike needed its help to

\* White Kennet, bishop of Peterborough, says of the medieval pulpits, and those by which they were replaced at or after the Reformation, 'Having entered the church' (*i. e.* of Chilton) 'in the eastern wall on the right, facing the west, near the entrance into the chancel, we find a seat, pew, or pulpit, made in the wall: a seat, perhaps, for the Abbot of Noteley or his representative, when here; or a confessional for the parish-priest on particular days and proper seasons; or a pulpit, from whence the legends of the saints were read, and stated sermons or discourses read to the people. For other pulpits heretofore were unfixed, portable, to be placed or removed at pleasure; and the present conveniences that are now fixed in our churches are owing to the times that accompanied the Reformation: for then churches were first generally seated; when ambulatory processions, within and about the church, were laid aside; and a pulpit ordered to be provided and set up in every church by the churchwardens, at the cost of the parish. On the one side of the pulpit, towards the right hand of the preacher, is a handsome frame for an hour-glasse, heretofore an attendant on every pulpit: but at the present time the frames are to be found but in few. However, there was one left at Stokenchurch, Oxon, and another at Turfield, com. Bucks; and I observed in the parish-church of High Wycombe, that there is the like iron fastened just by the pulpit, which in the year 1737 I saw furnished with an hour-glass for sand, but cannot say whether it is still used to its original purpose. Not far from this, at the corner-seats in the great isle, is a poor's box, with a slit in the lid, to receive benefactions dropped by the well-disposed into it. This in the time of Popery was called "truncus," and there were many at several altars and images of the churches; and the customary free-will offerings, dropt into the trunks, made up a good part of the endowment of the vicars, and thereby made their condition better than in later times. "Vicarius habebit oblationes quascunque ad truncos tam in dictâ ecclesiâ, &c. &c., quam alibi infra parochiam ipsius ecclesiæ factas." . . . This way of collecting charity by a chest placed in consecrated places hath been of very ancient standing . . . A.D. 1201, 3 John, Eustace, the abbot, coming as a missionary preacher into England, amongst other institutions directed that a wooden box should be put in every parish-church, under the custody of two or three faithful persons, to receive the alms of the people designed for buying lights for the church, and for the burial of the poor.'—*Vide* Bishop Kennet's 'Parochial Antiquities.'

a degree unknown in the Catholic times,—the former that they might justify the Reformation to the popular mind, and lay clearly before simple folk the doctrines of the Reformed church: the latter that they might definitely ascertain the new views which the spirituality had adopted respecting matters of faith and practice. Hence, from having consisted mainly of rites and ceremonies, varied with occasional written or extempore discourses from the priests, the services of the Church were so re-arranged that civic congregations assembled quite as much to hear sermons as to say prayers. The clergy had new tidings for the people, and the people were eager listeners to the novel doctrines. The church became a lecture-hall, the worshippers became students: and to meet the exigencies of the crisis, the reforming monarchs and their bishops insisted on the erection of permanent pulpits in the parish churches, took jealous precaution that none but clergymen honestly attached to the principles of the Reformation should discharge the functions of the preacher, and provided sound discourses of wholesome doctrine for delivery from the pulpit to congregations, whose ministers either from lack of ability or from disaffection towards Protestantism could not with safety be permitted to preach sermons of their own composition. The pulpits thus built during the Reformation period were usually provided with hour-glasses, put on little brackets of iron and wood, so that the preacher might know when he had preached an hour, which was deemed the full time for a single sermon.

In an inventory of the principal articles of medieval church-furniture mention must be made of the floral adornments which, though of no or only trivial value, were as exactly articles of furniture, as the cocoa-fibre mats, Turkey carpets, and artistic devices with which we now-a-days decorate our private houses. It still remains with us a universal custom to deck the interior of our churches at Christmas-tide with holly, mistletoe, and laurel; and at other seasons of the year—such as Whitsuntide, and Easter—it is the custom of some of our incumbents to embellish their churches with green foliage and bright flowers, in accordance with usage handed down to us from our remote ancestors. By those persons, however, who thus bestir themselves to preserve an innocent and graceful practice from passing

away, it is seldom remembered or known that these floral decorations are relics of the social, rather than of the sacred, use of the Christian temple,\* and that they are memorials of a state of society when the pure and lovely products of nature were made to perform the same services in private dwellings as are now rendered by works of art and manufacture. The same persons who embellished and supplied our medieval churches with flowers, and boughs, and rushes strewn upon the floor, periodically fitted up their homes in the same style: and if we would imitate the spirit rather than the form of these church-decorators of old feudal time, instead of preparing our churches for festival seasons with holly and birch branches, yew boughs and oak leaves, box twigs and rushes, we should fit them up with turkey-carpets, curtains of silk damask, and such articles of taste and luxury as are ordinarily found in well-appointed drawing-rooms. Ancient usage and religious associations have induced many persons to attach certain vague notions of sacredness to these floral embellishments: but it is a matter of historic certainty that, though they cannot be shown to have had a purely secular origin, they are chiefly interesting to the antiquary as relics of the time when the parish church was a common home, as well as a place of worship.

Concerning these floral adornments, a beneficed clergyman of the seventeenth century—Herrick in the ‘*Hesperides*’—sung with delightful sweetness, after witnessing the preparations for Candlemas,—

‘ Down with the Rosemary and Bayes,	The Holly hitherto did sway,
Down with the Mistleto;	Let Box now domineere,
Instead of Holly, now upraise	Until the dancing Easter Day
The greener Box for show.	Or Easter's Eve appeare.

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\* To assert that the use of flowers and leaves for the decoration of our sacred places had a secular origin, would be to say more than what can be proved. The practice, of course, is traceable to the pagan period of our history, when, as in later times, boughs, flowers, and berries, were employed at festive seasons, for religious as well as social ends. Whether the religious use of such natural objects proceeded from, or gave rise to, their use for purposes of domestic embellishment and festal adornment, must remain a matter for conjecture. To raise the question is to enter the still wider field of unanswerable inquiries, whether social life proceeded from, or gave birth to, religious life; how far each is indebted to the other for its forms and modes; and what in pre-historic times were the boundaries between the one and the other province of human life.

The youthful Box, which now hath grace Your houses to renew, Grown old, surrender must his place Unto the crisped Yew.	Green Rushes* then, and sweetest Bents, With cooler Oaken boughs, Come in for comely ornaments To readorn the house.
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When Yew is out, the Birch comes in, And many flowers beside; Both of a fresh and fragrant kinne, To honour Whitsuntide.	Thus times do shift; each thing his turne do's hold: New things succeed, as former things grow old.'
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Though etymologists concur in assigning different derivations to 'holly' and 'holy,' it is at least a matter for discussion whether the former word, instead of having been derived from 'holen,' is not fairly referable to the same Saxon root as the latter epithet. All that is definitely known of the two words inclines me to the opinion that the holly-tree gained its name from the liberality with which it was used for the decoration of churches and private dwellings on the chief of holy days,—or, to adopt the spelling frequent in old books, of holly days. Another ancient name of the tree with prickly leaves and red berries, was *Hulfere*, or *Hulver*, which is explained by Skinner with questionable judgment as a corruption of 'hold fair'—a term applicable to the tree that kept the fairness and beauty of its leaves throughout the year; but not on that ground more applicable to the holly than any other evergreen tree. Another and perhaps preferable explanation of the word, is that it comes

\* Herbert, in his 'Country Parson,' alludes to the now obsolete practice of strewing church-floors with rushes—a custom universal at a time when the galleries of great mansions and the parlours of manor-houses were carpeted in the same primitive manner. 'The country parson,' says Herbert, 'hath a special care of his church, that all things there be decent, and befitting His name by which it is called. Therefore, first he takes order that all things be in good repair, as walls plaistered, windows glazed, floore hard, seats whole, firm, and uniform; especially that the pulpit, communion-table, and font, be as they ought, for those great duties that are performed in them. Secondly, that the church be swept, and kept cleane, without dust or cobwebs, and at great festivalls *strawed*, and stuck with boughs, and perfumed with incense.' The Laudian High Churchmen were over-zealous for the attainment of uniformity in clerical costume, practiees, and rites. This same delight in regularity was the motive to most of those Laudian innovations which provoked the Puritans; and the foregoing passage shows, that even in the country churches of Charles the First's time, pews were general, and of uniform construction. The extract also demonstrates how largely incense was used in our churches long after the Reformation.

from 'hold fear'—a term appropriate to the foliage which, when put up in private dwellings at festal seasons, was supposed in superstitious times to drive off Satanic spirits, and restrain persons from fear of them.

Conspicuous also amongst the internal adornments of our churches in old time, were the candles which, liberally at ordinary times, though most bountifully at festal seasons, were burnt at sacred shrines, and before the images of saints in every part of the temple, as well as before the various altars of the edifice. It was seldom that an important church was altogether without artificial illumination; and on occasions of exceptional pomp and ceremonious splendour, even rural churches were filled with light that must have been alike attractive and exhilarating to spectators in days when candle-light was a costly luxury, and used with severe parsimony even in the houses of the wealthy. By recalling the social use of the medieval Church, and reflecting how largely its abundance of artificial light contributed to its cheerfulness and the satisfaction of its habitual frequenters, we put ourselves in a position to appreciate the reasonableness and practical utility of the penances which enjoined persons guilty of ecclesiastical offences to demonstrate their contrition, and conciliate the clergy, by offerings of tapers, to be consumed in their ordinary places of worship. The penitent thus compelled to supply a pair of large fair tapers for the high altar, or to place a row of cheaper candles before a saint's image, in his parish church, was required to render atonement in the manner most likely to benefit the special community which he had scandalised and injured by his misdemeanour.

So also, to appreciate the incidents of medieval church-life and the influence which every parish church exercised on its habitual attendants, we must contrast the beauty, and brightness, and numerous attractions of the Common Home, against the meanness, and darkness, and sordid discomforts of the private dwellings of ordinary men in feudal England. In an age that delighted in gorgeous pomps and spectacles designed to stimulate the imagination, the populace were entertained in the churches with ambulatory processions of richly-clothed priests and ministrants, compared with which frequent displays of clerical magnificence the occasional parades of civic magis-



trates were paltry and insignificant. In times that had no profane theatres, lecture-rooms, opera-houses—none of those sources of artistic amusement and intellectual diversion which are so abundant in modern society—the medieval citizen went to his church for wholesome relaxation and aesthetic culture, as well as for devotional exercise and spiritual edification. His ordinary dwelling-room was low, dark, narrow, and ill-furnished: the church, a work of noble art, was lofty, luminous, spacious, and richly decorated. His home was usually a foul, stinking place: the church airy, and redolent with the rich perfumes of incense. Away from the churches he never heard any music better than the strains of ballad-singers, and such discordant noises as wandering minstrels produced with fife and bagpipe, drum and fiddle, for the exhilaration of jaded pilgrims: in the churches he was stirred and fascinated by sacred harmonies, to which the most fastidious critics of the melodious art still listen with delight and admiration. Whilst the homes of the wealthiest persons of the land were without the instrumental appliances for the creation of harmony superior to the music of a booth at a village fair, the poorest of our medieval ancestors might satiate their appetite for sweet sounds by listening to the organs and choristers of our cathedrals and minsters.

## CHAPTER V.

## CLERGY AND LAITY IN CHURCH.

THOSE who have watched the demeanour of a full congregation in the Catholic cathedral of a continental city, at a time when a flood of English tourists and other Protestant sight-seers has added to the ordinary confusion and restlessness of the scene, may realise something of the stir and bustle that usually pervaded an assembly of worshippers in an important medieval church during sacred celebrations; but the buzz and clatter of a feudal congregation were far louder and more opposed to Puritanical decorum than the hum and agitation of any similar gathering of the present time.

One bad result of the ancient social use of the Christian temple, was the air of irreverent familiarity that distinguished the medieval church-assemblies during Divine service. On such occasions the public quarter was never without a due complement of frequenters, but their dress and conduct were such, that the spectators whose religious proclivities were in the direction of Lollardy had cause to disapprove the lightness and inquietude of the gossiping throng. The women donned their brightest attire ere they set out for church on sacred days; and on entering the place of worship they often showed that their presence in the house of prayer was quite as much due to love of the world as to delight in holy thoughts. Having duly crossed themselves half-a-score times, knelt on the bare floor for ten minutes, and muttered a few prayers to the rood, they deemed themselves at liberty to look about for their admirers and prattle to their acquaintance. The ladies of superior degree very often had pet sparrow-hawks perched on their wrists, and toy-hounds following close at their heels.

The case was the same with the men, who, having walked to

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church on the look-out for wild birds and four-legged game, brought their hounds and falcons into the sacred edifice,—where the chants of the choir and rolling melodies of the organ were often marred by the barking of dogs, the jangling of hawk-bells, and the screams of children terrified by the noise of savage mastiffs.\* And while this riot was going on in the nave, the priests in the quire or chancel would put their heads together and gossip about the latest scandals of their chapter or of the neighbourhood, make engagements for pleasure-meetings after service, and exchange opinions on the newest affairs of

\* That this is no overdrawn picture, the reader may satisfy himself by a perusal of the ‘*Stultifera Navis, or Ship of Fools,*’ by Alexander Barclay, who died in 1532, and whose pictures of the church-life of his contemporaries may also be fairly taken as illustrative of the church-life of Englishmen in Wycliff’s time. In the section devoted to ‘them that make noises, rehearsinges of tales, and do other things unlawfull and dishonest in the churche of God,’ the satirist says,—

- ‘1. A foole is he, and hath no minde devoute,  
And geveth occasion to men on him to rayle,  
Which goeth in the churche his boundes him about,  
Some running, some fast tyed to his tayle,  
A hawke on his fist: such one withouten fayle,  
Better were to be thence, for by his din and crye  
He troubleth them that would pray devoutly.
2. Yet of mo foules finde I a great number,  
Which think that is no shame no vilany,  
Within the church the service to encumber  
With their lewde barking, rounding, din and cry;  
And wyle good people are praying stedfastly,  
Their heart to good, with meke minde and devoute,  
Such fooles them let with theyr mad noyse and shout.
3. And while the priestes also them exercise,  
In mattens, praying, sermon, or preaching divine,  
Or other due that longe to their service,  
Teaching the people to vertue to incline;  
Then these fooles as it were roing swine  
With their jesting and tales of vicionsnesse,  
Trouble all such service that is saide more and lesse.
4. Into the church then comes another sotte,  
Without devotion, jetting up and downe,  
Or to be scene, or to showe his garded cote.  
Another on his fiste a sparhauke or fawcane,  
Or else a cokow, and so wasting his shone,  
Before the alters he to and fro doth wander,  
With even as much devotion as a gander.

politics. In the 'Ship of Fools,' Alexander Barclay tells how, when a priest sitting on one side of the quire wished to communicate during service a piece of trivial gossip to a brother-

5. In comes another, his houndes at his tayle,  
With lynes and leases and other like baggage;  
His dogges bark, so that without faile  
The whole church is troubled by theyr outrage:  
So innocent youth learneth the same of age,  
And their lewde sounde doth the church fill.  
But in this noyse the good people kepe them still.
6. One time the hawkes bells jangleth hye,  
Another time they flutter with their winges,  
And now the howndes barking strikes the skye,  
Nowe sounde their feate, and now the chaynes ringes.  
They clap with their hands by such manner thinges,  
They make of the church for their hawkes a mewe,  
And canell for their dogges, which they shall after rewe.
7. So with such fooles is neither peace nor rest,  
Unto the holy church they have no reverence,  
But wander about to see who yet may best,  
In ribawde wordes, pride and insolence:  
As mad men they feare not our Saviour's presence,  
Having no honour unto that holy place,  
Wherein is geven to man everlasting grace.
8. There are handled pleadings and causes of the lawe,  
There are mayde bargaynes of divers matter thynges,  
Byings and sellings scant worth a hawe;  
And there are for lucre contrived false leasings,  
And while the priest his mass or mattins sings,  
Those fooles which to the church do repayre  
Are chatting and babbling as if it were a fayre.
9. Some gyle and laugh, and some on maydens stare,  
And some on wives with wanton countenance;  
As for the service they have small force or care,  
But full delite them in their misgovernance.  
Some with their slippers to and fro doth prance,  
Clapping their heels in church and queare,  
So that good people cannot the service heare.
10. What shall I writte of maydens and wives,  
Of their roundings and ungodly communing?  
Now one a slander craftely contrives,  
And in the church thereof has hir talking;  
The other have therto their cares leaning,  
And when they all have heard forth hir tale,  
With great devotion they get them to the ale.

priest on the other side of the chancel, he would beckon to the rector chori, and make him act as a messenger or medium of intelligence between the two sides of 'the queere.'

11. Thus is the church defiled with vilany,  
And in steede of prayer and godly orison  
Are used shamefull bargaines and tales of ribawdry,  
Jestings, and mockings, and great derision,  
There few are or none of perfect devotion;  
And when our Lorde is consecrate in forme of breade,  
Thereby walkes a knave, his bonet on his head.
12. And while those modes of consecration  
Are sayde of the priest in God's own presence,  
Such caytives keepe tales and communication  
Fast by the aulter, thinking it none offence;  
And where as the angels are there with reverence,  
Lauding and worshipping our holy Saviour,  
These unkinde caytives will scantly Him honour.
13. Alas, whereto shall any man complaine  
For this folly and accustomed furor,  
Since none of them their faultes will refrayne,  
But ay proceede in this their lewde error;  
And notwithstanding that Christ our Saviour  
Hath left us example, that none shall mis do  
Within the church, yet encline we not thereto.
14. John the evangelist doth openly expresse  
How Christe our Saviour did drive out and expell  
From the temple suche as used there falsenesse,  
And all other that therein did bye and sell;  
Saying as it after lieth in the gospel,  
But the Jewes rebuke and great repreves,  
That of God's house they made a den of theves.
15. Remember this man, for why thou doest the same,  
Defying God's church with sinne and vanitie,  
Which sothely was ordeyned to halowe God's name,  
And to lawde and worship the holy Trinitie,  
With devout hearte, love, and all benignitie,  
And with all our might our Lorde to magnifie,  
And then after all the heavenly company.
16. For this cause hath God thy holy church ordeyned,  
And not for rybaude wordes and thinges vayne:  
But by no Christen men it is destayned,  
Much worse than ever the Jews did certayne.  
And if our Lorde should nowe come downe againe,  
To drive out of the church such as there do sin,  
Forsooth I thinke right few should bide within.

The women of the congregation of course wore their headkerchiefs or other bonnets; but instead of veiling their faces they made the greatest possible display of their personal charms, so as to catch new suitors or gratify old lovers. The men also had their heads covered, and were not required even by precise censors to remove their caps, unless the host was being exhibited and raised for the adoration of the tumultuous assembly. Alexander Barclay makes it a special and separate charge

17. O man that boasteth thyself in Christe's name,  
 Calling thee Christen, see thou thy sin refuse;  
 Remember well it is both sinne and shame  
 The house of God thus to defyle and abuse.  
 But this one thing causeth men oft to muse,  
 That the false Paynims within their temples be,  
 To their ydols minde more devout than we.  
 \* \* \*
18. I have before touched the great enormitie,  
 The folly and disorder without all reverence,  
 Which in the church dayly we may see,  
 Among lay fooles, which better were be thence;  
 But nowe shall I touche another like offence,  
 And that is of fooles which in the queer habounde,  
 Not saying the service of God as they are bounde.
19. But diverse toyes and japes variable  
 They spread abroad, encombring the service,  
 And namely with their tonge wherewith they bable,  
 Eche one to other, as if they toke advise  
 And counsell together their cartes to devise,  
 Unto our shippes their company to cary,  
 For loth they will be so long fro them to tarry.  
 \* \* \*
20. There be no tidings nor nuelties of warre,  
 Nor other wonders done in any strange lande,  
 Whatsoever they be, and come they never so farre,  
 The priestes in the queere at first have them in hande,  
 While one recomteth the other to understande  
 His fayned fible, harkening to the glose,  
 Full little adverteth howe the service goes.
21. The battayles done perchance in small Britayne,  
 In Fraunce or Flauanders, or to the worldes end,  
 Are told in the queere (of some) in wordes vayne,  
 In midst of matters in stede of the legende,  
 And other gladly to heare the same intende,  
 Much rather then the service for to heare,  
 The *rector chori* is made the messengere.

against the irreverent commonalty of his time that godless knaves often omitted to uncover when ‘the Lorde consecrate in forme of breade’ was revealed to the congregation. And in accordance with ancient usage the men of old England continued to wear their head-attire in church, during religious services, down to and long after the Reformation. Richard Cox, bishop of Ely, died in 1581; and it is remarked by Peck in the ‘*Desiderata Curiosa*,’ that the mourners and congregation, who attended the prelate’s obsequies, and heard his funeral sermon, are repre-

22. He runneth about like a pursevant,  
 With his white staff moving from side to side,  
 Where he is learning tales are not stent,  
 But in one place long doth he not abide:  
 So he and other themselves so lewdely gide  
 Without devocion by their lewde negligence,  
 That nothing can bind their tongues to silence.
23. And in the morning when they come to the queere,  
 The one beginneth a fable or a historie,  
 The other leaneth their eares it to heare,  
 Taking it instede of the Invitorie.  
 Some other maketh respons autern and memory,  
 And all of fables and jests of Robin Hood,  
 And other trifles that scantly are so good.
24. With trifles they begin and so oft time they ende,  
 Recounting nuelties, they wast their time therein.  
 And whereas they ought their service to intende,  
 Of God Almighty, they spend the time in sinne;  
 And other some into the quere doth ren,  
 Rather for lucre and curse covetise  
 Then for the love of the divine service.’

Exclaiming against the customary restlessness of congregations in times prior to the general introduction of pews, which conduced greatly to the quietude of religious church-assemblies, Latimer—in one of the Lenten sermons preached in the banqueting-hall of Westminster Palace (1549)—exclaimed: ‘The people came to here ye word of God; thei hard him with silence. I remember now a saying of Saynete Chrisostome, and peradventure it myghte come here after in better place, but yet I wyll take it whiles it commeth to my mind. The saying is this: “*Et loquentem cum audierunt in silentio, sericm locutionis non interrumpentes.*” They harde them (sayeth he) in silence, not interruptyng the order of his preachinge. He means, they hard him quietly, with out any shouelynge of feete, or walkyng vpon and downe. Suerly it is an yl misorder, that folke shalbe walkyng vpon and downe in the sermon tyme (as I haue sene in this place thys Lente), and there shalbe suche bussyng and bussyng in the preacher’s eare, that makyth him at times to forget hys matter.’

sented in 'an admirable, fair, large old drawing,' as sitting with their bonnets on in the quire of Ely Cathedral during the delivery of the obsequious panegyric. The usage, which makes men uncover on entering a church, seems to have originated in the time of Charles the First, in whose reign Archbishop Laud wrote to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford. 'Sir, I am informed, that the masters, many of them sit bare at St. Marie's, having their hats there, and not their caps; rather choosing to sit bare, then to keepe forme, and then, as soon as they come out of church, they are quite out of form all along the streets. I am likewise told, that divers of the younger sort, and some masters, begin again to leave the wide-sleeved gown apace, and take up that which they call the lawyer's gown. If both or either of these be, you had better look to it before it gather head. And if it be true for the gowns, you must chide the taylors that make them very severely, besides what you do to the scholars. W. Cant. Lambeth, Feb. 26, 1638-9.' In a marginal note the primate added, 'I approve their sitting bare, so long as they go along the street in their caps, and keep form, which the vice-chancellor tells me they do.'

It would be impossible to give in few words a general picture of the Elizabethan congregations and the internal arrangements of English churches during divine service under the Virgin Queen, for the true description of the proceedings in one church would be inapplicable to the proceedings in another. A perusal of canons and injunctions would induce the uninformed reader to imagine that uniformity of public worship was attained throughout the kingdom soon after Elizabeth's accession; but to promulgate orders was far easier than to enforce compliance with them, and one of Cecil's papers demonstrates how little attention was paid by clergy and laity to the rules laid down for their conduct in Church by their ecclesiastical superiors. At the opening of her reign Elizabeth ordered 'that the holy table in every church should be decently made, and set in the place where the altar stood, and there commonly covered as heretofore belongeth, and as shall be appointed by the visitors, and so to stand, saving when the Communion of the Sacrament is to be distributed; at which time the same shall be so placed in good sort within the chancel, as whereby the minister may be more



conveniently heard of the communicants in his prayer and ministration, and the communicants also more conveniently, and in more number, communicate with the said minister. And after the Communion done, from time to time the same holy table to be placed where it stood before.’ But in disregard of this explicit order, in some cases the table was kept permanently in the nave, in other cases it stood always in the chancel near the body of the church, and not seldom it was put ‘altar-wise’ against the eastern-wall, and so maintained alike during the services of communion and at other times. In many churches communicants were allowed to elect for themselves whether to receive the bread and wine, in an attitude of supplication or on their feet or whilst occupying their seats. The implements used for the administration of the elements were no less various,—the vessel for the wine being sometimes a chalice, sometimes a silver cup, sometimes a bowl of earthenware; the paten being made now of silver, now of wood, now of cheap crockery.

With respect to their apparel, the clergy were no less dissimilar and regardless of authoritative directions. Elizabeth’s thirtieth injunction commanded, ‘that all archbishops and bishops, and all other that be called or admitted to preaching or ministry of the sacraments, or that be admitted into vocation ecclesiastical, or into any society of learning in either of the universities or elsewhere, shall use and wear such seemly habits, garments, and such square caps as were most commonly and orderly received in the latter year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth, not thereby meaning to attribute any holiness of special worthiness to the said garments, but as St. Paul writeth “*omnia decenter ac secundum ordinem fiant.*”’ But, though the highest of the high-church clergy, who were secretly hoping for a return of Popery, and the moderate clergy, who whilst sincerely attached to the principles of the Reformation approved of the politic concessions which Protestant authority had made to Catholic sentiment and taste in the new religious settlement, were careful to wear the surplice, the Puritan clergy either persistently refused to adopt, or avoided the use of, the white robe which they abhorred as a relic of superstition. Some of these last-named clergy, who reluctantly consented to wear the surplice, refrained from wearing the square cap,—

which had become, and long continued to be, the badge of orthodoxy; whereas the clergy who wore round caps, or button caps, or ordinary hats were known thereby to be favourers of Puritanism,—or, in current parlance, to be ‘off the square;’\* a term that survived the fierce controversies about ecclesiastical vestments, which distracted our devout ancestors of the Reformation period, and still holds its place in popular slang to designate whatever violates social rule. Similar irregularities were discernible in gowns, coats, and other vestments of the Elizabethan clergy, in their ways of administering baptism and delivering sermons, and in the details of their performances of all other parts of the appointed liturgy. In one church the incumbent would read prayers in the chancel, in another they would be uttered in the nave; here the minister would read them from the pulpit, in the church of the adjoining parish they would be duly delivered from a reading-desk. Whilst the Ritualistic clergy made much show in giving the sign of the cross and in bowing at every utterance of the Redeemer’s name, the Puritan clergy omitted the sign even from administrations of baptism, and uttered the sacred name without an obeisance of the head.

\* ‘Upon the death of Archbishop Grindal, Dr. John Whitgift became Archbishop of Canterbury, and was confirmed Sept. 23, 1583. The queen charged him to restore the discipline of the Church, and the uniformity established by law, ‘which,’ she says, ‘through the connivance of some prelates, the obstinacy of the Puritans, and the power of some noblemen, is *run out of square.*’—*Vide* Benjamin Brook’s ‘Lives of the Puritans.’ Of the diversities of ecclesiastical practice thus pointed at we have a view in Secretary Cecil’s paper, dated Feb. 24, 1564, which acquaints her majesty that some clergymen ‘perform divine service and prayers in the chancel, others in the body of the church; some in a seat made in the church, some in the pulpit with their faces to the people; some keep precisely to the order of the book, some intermix psalms in metre; some say with a surplice, and others without one. The table stands in the body of the church in some places, in others it stands in the chancel; in some places the table stands altar-wise, distant from the wall a yard; in others in the middle of the chancel, north and south; in some places the table is joined, in others it stands upon tressels; in some the table has a carpet, in others none. Some administer the communion with surplice and cap, some with surplice alone, others with none; some with chalice, others with a communion-cup, others with a common cup; some with unleavened bread, and some with leavened. Some receive kneeling, others standing, others sitting; some baptize in a font, some in a basin; some sign with the sign of the cross, others without; some with a square cap, some with a hat, some in scholars’ clothes, some in others.’

To effect an approach to general compliance with the injunctions and canons, and bring about a measure of uniformity of worship in the parochial churches, without giving needless offence to the opinions dominant in special localities, the bishops of the Reformed Church used to confer with the ecclesiastical and civil authorities of the different districts of their respective dioceses, and after consultation with them sanction the adoption of rules for the performance of divine services, which whilst complying with the requirements of Convocation differed in unimportant details. Strype has preserved the rules which Scambler, bishop of Peterborough, thus enjoined on the inhabitants of Northampton. By these ordinances it was decided—that ‘the singing and playing of organs, beforetime accustomed in the quire,’ should cease; that the prayer should be read by the officiating clergy in ‘the body of the church among the people; that a sermon should be preached after morning prayer, on every Sunday and other Holy days, the people singing a psalm before and after the delivery of their preacher’s address;’ that ‘a general communion should be administered once every quarter in every parish church, with a sermon,’ due and repeated notice being given by the ministers on Sundays to their congregations, enjoining them to prepare themselves for the solemnities of the Lord’s table; that one fortnight before the administration of each communion, the churchwardens should make a domiciliary visit to each of the communicants, omitting no house in their respective parishes, and taking care to ascertain the nature of each communicant’s life; that ‘the carrying of the bell before corpses in the streets, and bidding prayers for the dead (which was there used until within these two years)’—*i. e.* until within two years of 1571, in which year these rules were agreed upon by the mayor and brethren of Northampton and justices of the peace of the country and town of Northampton—should cease. The most remarkable of these Northampton provisions is one equally illustrative of the social life of England in the sixteenth century, and repugnant to our notions of Christian fellowship and decency. It was decided that on every day of general communion in each parish church there should be administrations of the Lord’s Supper—one at nine A.M. for the edification of ‘the quality,’ at which

no menial or other servile person should presume to attend, and another at a still earlier hour for the benefit of servants and vulgar persons, at which of course no Christian of superior degree would deign to be present. 'Every communion day,' runs this wonderful rule, 'each parish hath two communions; the one for servants and officers, to begin at five of the clock in the morning, with a sermon of an hour, and to end at eight; the other for masters and dames, &c. to begin at nine the same day, with like sermon, and to end at twelve.'

In spite of the numerous injunctions of orderliness on congregations, and the penalties attached to the offence of brawling in churches during divine service, irreverent commotions were very frequent in our places of worship throughout the Elizabethan period, and still later during the times of Charles the First. The writings of our clerical biographers and ecclesiastical annalists abound with anecdotes of the turbulence of English congregations from the accession of Elizabeth to the execution of Charles,\* in districts where religious parties contended with more than common animosity. At one time the riot is raised by Elizabethan Puritans, followers of Cartwright or Browne, bent on silencing a high-church rector with groans and vituperative clamour: at another time it originates in the extravagances of Anabaptists and Quakers, moved by the Spirit to warn mankind that steeple-houses are mere contrivances of Satan. During the struggle between Charles the First and the Parliament, the interruptions of public worship usually sprang

\* A characteristic church-riot that occurred at Halsted, Essex, is thus noticed in Nalson's 'Impartial Collection' (1682):—'1640. Upon Monday the lord keeper signified to the House of Lords, that his majesty had commanded him to let their lordships know, that he was yesterday at council-table informed of a great disorder and riot committed in the parish-church of Halstead, in the county of Essex, on Simon and Jude's Day last past, by one Jonathan Pool, an excommunicated person, who in the time of divine service took the parish-clerk by the throat, and forced him to go into the vestry and deliver to him the surplice and hood, which he, with others with him, rent in pieces; and likewise one Robert Haward strook the service-book out of the curate's hand, and himself did with others kick it about, saying it was a Popish book: so, upon the complaint of Mr. Etheridge, the minister, a warrant was directed to the constable of that town, and that the said Pool and divers others of that town were attached, but immediately rescued by a multitude of people.' This commotion is a fair sample of the riots provoked by the Laudian innovations.

from the misdirected zeal of enthusiasts who, detecting an officiating minister in the use of the words of the prohibited prayer-book, threatened to knock him down, or blow out his brains with a pistol-bullet, if he continued to wound their spiritual sensibilities. Dr. Plume has recorded how Bishop Hacket, whilst rector of St. Andrew's Holborn, was savagely accosted by a Parliamentary soldier who, entering St. Andrew's church during time of prayer, walked up to the reading desk and pointing a pistol at the officiating incumbent, threatened to shoot him dead, if he persisted in uttering the words of the book of Common Prayer. By his presence of mind and lofty bearing, the rector silenced his assailant without yielding to the menace; but soon afterwards he prudently withdrew from his London living to his country parish, Cheam, where he continued to discharge the functions of a parochial minister, rendering just so much submission to Puritan opinion as barely enabled him to retain his pulpit under the regime of the saints.\*

Whilst prudent fear of authority and respect for the counsels of judicious friends restrained Hacket from a course of action that would have resulted in his ejection from the parsonage of Cheam, the same influences induced Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Sanderson to depart from the forms laid down for the celebration of divine service in the Book of Common Prayer. Ejected, in June 1648, from his office at Oxford by the Parliamentary visitors, Dr. Sanderson retired to his living of Boothby Pagnell, Lincolnshire, where he continued to read the proscribed service to his parishioners until a series of riots in the church convinced him that he could not with impunity persist in defying the laws imposed on the land. 'For the soldiers,' says

\* 'There,' says Hacket's biographer, 'he constantly preached every Sunday morning, expounded the Church Catechism every afternoon, read the Common Prayer all Sundays and holidays, continued his wonted charity to all poor people that resorted to it upon the week-days, in money, besides other relief out of his kitchen, till the Committee of Surrey enjoined him to forbear the use of it by order of the parliament at any time, and his catechising out of it upon Sunday afternoon. Yet after this order he ever still kept up the use of it in most parts, never omitting the Creed, Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments, Confession and Absolution, and many other particular collects; and always, as soon as the Church service was over, absolved the rest at home, with most earnest prayers for the good success of his majesty's armies, of which he was ever in great hope, till the tidings came of the most unfortunate battal at Naseby.'

Isaak Walton, in his memoir of the prelate, ' would appear, and visibly disturb him in the church when he read prayers, pretending to advise him how God was to be served most acceptably : which he not approving, but continuing to observe order and devout behaviour in reading the Church Service, they forced his book from him, or tore it, expecting extemporary prayers. At this time he was advised by a parliament man of power and note, that valued and loved him much, not to be strict in reading all the Common Prayer, but make some little variation, especially if the soldiers came to watch him : for then it might not be in the power of him and his other friends to secure him from taking the covenant, or sequestration, for which reasons he did vary somewhat from the strict rules of the rubric.'

Puritan opinion was not more averse to printed prayers than written sermons ; and in the seventeenth century congregations, not ordinarily disposed to riotousness, would express their dislike of bosom-sermons in ways that would now-a-days be termed abominably indecorous. Whilst officiating during the Interregnum as minister of St. George's near Bristol, George Bull, afterwards bishop of St. David's, was preaching in his church from notes, which his hearers mistook for the manuscript of a sermon, when the papers escaped from his grasp and fell from the pulpit to the ground below. Consisting mainly of seafaring men, the congregation burst into laughter at this mishap, supposing that the young preacher would be overcome with confusion and display his inability to continue his discourse without the aid of his written words. Whilst the sailors were proceeding from their first hoarse laughter to subtler expressions of derision, some of the minister's more sedate hearers gathered up the scattered leaves and restored them to the preacher, who, having thanked his friends for their civility, thrust the recovered papers into the folds of his academical gown and silenced the scoffers by such an outburst of unstudied eloquence as satisfied them that it was no consciousness of oratorical deficiency which induced him to put on paper the heads of his discourse.

But though the tars of Bristol port were on the alert to deride their minister for giving them written essays when they would have preferred extempore addresses, the simple fellows liked their young pastor for his benevolence and complaisant

manners; and when an abusive Quaker had the temerity to denounce him before his flock as a false prophet, the flock turning fiercely on the intruder displayed more of the fierceness of wolves than of the timorousness of sheep. ‘George,’ exclaimed the Foxite friend, ‘come down: thou art a false prophet and a hireling.’ Whereupon such a riot broke out as the little church had never before witnessed. Indignant at hearing the word ‘hireling’ applied to their minister, whose professional income barely covered his house-rent and tailor’s bill, and whose private means were spent with habitual generosity for the good of the poor, the sailors fell upon the Quaker and were handling him so roughly, that Mr. Bull hastily came down from the pulpit, and rushing into the fray rescued the vituperator from his chastisers. Having quieted the tumult and given the brawler some counsel, alike seasonable and gentle, the pastor prepared to return to his place in the pulpit, ‘upon which,’ says Robert Nelson with delight altogether commendable in a layman, ‘the people, being touched with a sense of gratitude to this minister of God for his extraordinary kindness and constant bounty toward them, . . . and seeing the silly enthusiast at a perfect non-plus, and not able to speak a word of sense in his own defence, fell upon him a second time with such violence that had not Mr. Bull hustled very much amongst them, . . . they would have worried him on the spot.’

Mention should here be made of a disturbance which shows that in the seventeenth century the good citizens of York were accustomed to deport themselves in their cathedral during hours of divine service almost as irreverently as the thoughtless frequenters of Christian temples, whom Barclay lashed in the ‘Ship of Fools.’ The principal actor in the fracas, and chief cause of it, was an enthusiastic residentiary of York Cathedral, who with more zeal than discretion resolved to put an end to an unseemly usage, which called loudly for correction. ‘There was,’ says the historian of this extraordinary riot,\* ‘an ill custom at York, of walking in the body of the cathedral during the time

\* *Vide* ‘A Defence of the Profession which the Right Reverend Father in God John, late Lord Bishop of Chichester, made on his Deathbed, concerning Passive Obedience and the New Oaths. Together with an Account of some Passages of his Lordship’s Life.’ 1690.

of divine service, and the common sort of people would oftentime be rude and loud, so as to disturb and almost interrupt the service. His lordship (then a Residentiary of York Cathedral) had, from the beginning, resolved to break this custom; and it happened one Shrove Tuesday, that the noise was more than ordinary, and the numbers greater, insomuch that he could no longer restrain himself, but went down to them from his seat in the quire, and with his own hand, plucked off some of their hats, and spoke to them either to come with him, and join in the worship of God, or to go out of church. They were all daunted and without much disturbance went out; yet the vergers had no sooner shut the doors, than they pressed so hard upon the south door that they broke the iron bar which fastened it, and forced it open; and as is usual with a rabble, they heated and animated one another into rage and madness, and when he came out of church, followed him home in a tumultuous and furious manner, with reviling and threatening language, and had undoubtedly done him some mischief, if his gravity and courage had not overawed them; but then growing still more insolent and outrageous, they plucked up the rails before the deanery, and his house, and beat down the wall in divers places, and had taken off a great deal of tiling, and would in all probability have demolished it and killed him, if in that instant of time, Captain Honeywood, who was then deputy governor, had not come with some soldiers to his rescue.'

A survey of the church assemblies of our ancestors should not omit to notice the 'prophesyings' which contributed so largely to the religious dissensions of the earlier years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, until her majesty with a bold exercise of the powers vested in her suppressed the mischievous exercises, and reduced Archbishop Grindal, their chief promoter and advocate, to submission by sequestering him from his office. The origin of these experimental disputations deserves attentive consideration, as they arose from some of the most remarkable and perplexing difficulties of the reformed church. As we have already remarked, on Elizabeth's accession the Protestants of the country did not in all exceed a third of the entire population of the kingdom: and of the clergy who continued to hold their preferments after Mary's death it is not probable that so many as a



third were sincerely attached to the new settlement of ecclesiastical affairs. The clerical order in the earlier part of Queen Elizabeth's reign consisted of three parties,—the party whose leaders were Catholic at heart, and prayed in private for a speedy restoration of the Pope's power; the party who cordially approved of the recently established ecclesiastical polity; and the party whose moderate members inclined towards the Presbyterians, whilst its more violent members held intercourse with the Wandsworth precisians.\* Of course each of these parties contained many persons whose views softened almost to imperceptibility the lines of demarcation betwixt the three divisions. Whilst not a few of the Catholic party approached so nearly to a minority of the Orthodox churchmen, that it was very difficult to distinguish between the former and the latter, a considerable number of the Puritan clergy were so far satisfied of the general reasonableness and excellence of the Anglican establishment that, notwithstanding their disapproval of some of its provisions and requirements, they came in course of time to think far more highly of Hooker than of Cartwright.

To enlarge the Anglican party of the conforming clergy, by drawing within its lines the moderate and more intelligent members of the two other sections of the clerical order, was a chief object with Elizabeth's prelates; and it appeared to them that no contrivance was more likely to accomplish the desired end than the institution of clerical discussions, at which the more liberal representatives of the different divisions, in their various parts of the country, should openly state their difficulties with respect to questions of theology and Church government, and by frank and dispassionate interchange of opinions should endeavour to come to the conclusions at which the authorities of the Church, with mingled simplicity and egotism, were confident

\* Anglican Nonconformity, engendered by the contentions betwixt the extreme and moderate Reformers of Elizabeth's time, had definite birth on November 20, 1572, at Wandsworth—three hundred years since a mean village on the banks of the Thames, instead of a populous town surrounded by a district of fine residences and trim suburban villas. Its proximity to London, and the facility with which correspondence could be carried on betwixt the Puritan waverers in town and the zealous precisians collected together on the Surrey bank, made what is now a favourite quarter of civic Conservatives the chosen seat of the Elizabethan Church Radicals.

every honest and earnest inquirer must arrive, after a prayerful consideration of all the arguments relating to the matters of dispute. Though we may smile at the simple conduct of prelates, not wanting in worldliness and subtlety, who imagined that such meetings would be more fruitful of harmony and fraternal affection than of dissension and polemical animosity, it, at least, testifies to their honesty and the genuineness of their professions, that they were willing to submit the dogmas and decisions of the Church to the arbitrament of public discussion, under the belief that their views, as the views of truth, would necessarily prevail over all antagonistic opinions.

In these days the pen and the printing-press are the instruments employed by controversialists for the work which the Elizabethan prelates vainly endeavoured to accomplish by the influence of oral discussion; and, if failure attended the efforts of the reforming bishops, it may be conceded, in palliation of their mistake, that the prophesying disputants effected as much for general harmony and universal agreement as the literary disputants of their own and later times.

These prophesyings, or meetings for discussion, were variously carried on in the different dioceses of the kingdom, and even in different parts of the same diocese. In one place each meeting lasted so long as four or five hours; in another, the business of a single prophesying was not allowed to cover more than two hours; but the main features of all these local convocations for Christian argumentation were alike. The clergy of a particular district were summoned to meet at a convenient church in their neighbourhood on a day that was neither a Sunday nor other holy day, and hear disputations on certain questions selected beforehand for discussion. Sometimes the district was that of a deanery; but Fuller tells us, that for this particular purpose the old divisions of rural deaneries were not strictly observed. The same historian speaks of the clergy of a prophesying district as ‘ministers of the same precinct.’

In compliance with the invitation, the clergy having assembled in the church of a central market-town or other convenient place of worship, the proceedings of the meeting opened with solemn prayer, after which the disputation on the proposed question or questions took place, after the model of the scholastic

disputations of the universities. ‘The junior divine,’ says Fuller, ‘went first into the pulpit, and for half-an-hour, more or less (as he could with clearness contract his meditation), treated upon a portion of Scripture, formerly by a joynt-argument assigned unto him. After him four or five more, observing their seniority, successively dilated on the same text. At last a grave divine, appointed on purpose (as Father of the Act), made the closing sermon, somewhat larger than the rest, praising the pain and performance of such who best deserved it; meekly and mildly reproving the mistakes and failings of such of those, if any were found in their sermons. Then all was ended, as it was begun, with solemn prayer; and at a public refection of those ministers together (with many of the gentry repairing unto them), the next time of meeting was appointed, text assigned, preachers deputed, a new moderator elected, or the old one continued, and so all were dissolved.’ If we give half-an-hour to each of the six preachers, an hour to the moderator, and an hour to prayers before and after the preachings, such a prophesying as Fuller describes lasted five hours. But in many quarters of the country the proceedings of a prophesying were contracted within two hours. For instance, the Bishop of Lincoln, laying down rules for the prophetic assemblies in Hertfordshire, ordains, ‘First, it is thought meet your exercises shall be kept every other week, upon the Thursdays, from nine of the clock in the morning until eleven, and not past. So that the first speaker exceed not three-quarters of an hour, nor the two last half-an-hour between them both. The remnant of the time to be left to the moderator.’

Of these meetings Fuller observes that they ‘were founded on the Apostle’s precept,—“For ye may all prophesie one by one that all may learn, and all may be comforted;”’ but unfortunately, whilst they afforded comfort neither to preachers nor to hearers, they were productive of unsound learning and dangerous opinions amongst the laity who flocked to the prophesyings to hear the angry contentions of their official teachers, and, having thus attended an exciting church-exercise on an ordinary day of the week, deemed themselves justified in keeping away from public worship, and looking after their worldly affairs on the following Sunday. ‘The prophesyings,’ says

Fuller, 'being accounted the fairest for spiritual merchandizes, made the weekly markets for the same holy commodities on the Lord's day, to be less respected, and ministers to be neglected in their respective parishes.' But the worst results of the prophesyings were the unseemly railings and rancorous feuds to which they gave rise within the ranks of the clergy; and, in this respect, they were so manifestly prejudicial to religion and social order that Elizabeth did well in suppressing them, to the acute chagrin and humiliation of Grindal, who, believing in their usefulness, defended them with the warmth of a zealous divine, and with the temper of a bad subject.

But, in spite of Elizabeth's prohibition of 'prophesyings,' they were in some parts of the country continued without interruption, or relinquished only for a time, to be renewed by their favourers at the earliest opportunity. That the Puritan clergy of James the First and his son held week-day meetings in parish churches for religious lectures, followed by discussions, arranged and designed after the fashion of the forbidden prophesyings, is shown by Bishop Montague's orders for the suppression of the Puritan lecturers of the Norwich diocese. 'Bishop Montague,' says Neal, in the 'History of the Puritans,' 'who succeeded Wren in the diocese of Norwich, 1638, imitated his successor in his visitation-articles; it being now fashionable for every new bishop to frame separate articles of inquiry for the visitation of his own diocese, Montague pointed his inquiries against the Puritan lectures, of which he observes three sorts. 1. Such as were superinducted into another man's cure; concerning which he enjoined visitors to inquire whether the lecturer's sermons in the afternoons are popular or catechistical? Whether he be admitted with the consent of the incumbent and bishop? Whether he read prayers in his surplice and hood? Of what length his sermons are, and upon what subject? Whether he bids prayer according to the fifty-fifth canon? 2. The second sort of lecturers are those of combination, when the neighbouring ministers agree to preach by turns at the adjoining market-town on market-days; inquire who the combiners are, and whether they conform as above? 3. A third sort are running lecturers, where neighbouring Christians agree upon such a day

to meet at a certain church in some country-town or village; and, after sermon and dinner, to meet at the house of one of their disciples to repeat, censure, and explain the sermon; then to discourse of some points proposed at a foregoing meeting by the moderator of the assembly, derogatory to the doctrine and discipline of the Church; and, in conclusion, to appoint another place for the next meeting. If you have any such lecturers, present them.' The lectures and meetings of this third kind were close copies, with a few alterations, of the Elizabethan prophesyings.'

## CHAPTER VI.

## SHRINES AND RELICS.

THE tourist making a journey through medieval England encountered no brighter or more joyous sight than the spectacle of a company of pilgrims wending their way to a distant temple; and in the spring months, when the weather was propitious to travellers, and the exigencies of agricultural life permitted large numbers of the populace to absent themselves for a while from the scenes of their customary toil, these parties of hilarious excursionists were so numerous that no one, in the season for pilgrimages, could make a day's march through Kent or Norfolk, or any other county which possessed a famous shrine, without coming upon several of them.

The pilgrims, who may be seen on Chaucer's canvas pursuing their course from London to the tomb of Thomas of Kent, are not more noticeable for the mirthfulness of their discourse than for the richness and diversity of their personal adornments. The young squire's dress, embroidered with white and red, resembles a meadow full of fresh flowers. The green of the yeoman's garb is relieved by the gay embellishments of his armlets and buckler. Daintiness and delicacy of texture and pattern qualify the vestments of the nun, whose beads are gauded all with green, and on whose conspicuous brooch of gold is visible a love-motto. Rich in material and hue the monk's costume is sumptuously fitted with fur. The merchant rides in motley; the serjeant-at-law in a coat of mixed colours, girt with a silken sash of barred pattern. Radiant in the liveries of their guilds, the haberdasher, the weaver, the dyer, and the maker of tapestry, wear knives, girdles, and pouches, richly ornamented with fittings of brass and silver. The miller, whose bagpipe enlivens the march when the storytellers flag, is clad in white and blue;

the reve wears blue, the usual colour of a gentle serving-man's livery. Conspicuous amongst the gaudy throng the doctor of physic blazes in taffeta and silk, dyed bright red and sky blue; and by his side may be seen the wife of Bath, wearing a costly head-dress and bright scarlet stockings. Until the miserable canon, who has thrown away his own and his friend's substance on the futile labours of alchemy, has joined the troop in 'clothes blake'\* the colour of mourning is nowhere discernible in the company—the actors in whose merry tales are not more commendable than the tellers of the stories for brightness of raiment. Instead of exhibiting their taste and affluence by covering the walls of their houses with works of art, which were produced chiefly, if not solely, for the internal embellishment of churches, the men of feudal England displayed their opulence and gratified their love of ostentation by covering their bodies with the finest and most pictorial kinds of raiment that the sumptuary laws permitted them to wear.

Of the evils attendant on these riotous and nominally religious journeyings—evils noticed at some length in the first section of this work—no one of the earlier Reformers was a bolder denouncer than the Lollard, William Thorpe, who declared to Archbishop Arundel,—‘I have preached and taught openly, and so I purpose all my lifetime to do, with God's help; saying that such foolish people waste shamefully God's goods in their vain pilgrimages, spending their goods upon vicious hostlers, which are oft unclean women; and at the least, those goods with which they should do works of mercy, after God's bidding, to poor needy men and women. These poor men's goods and their livelihood, these runners about offer to rich priests, who have much more livelihood than they need. And thus those goods they waste wilfully and spend them unjustly,

\* In his tale the Knight points the special use of black:—

‘Tho came this woful Theban Palamon  
With flotery berd, and ruggy asshy heres,  
In clothes blake . . . .

\* \* \*

Thurghout the citee, by the maister strete,  
That sprad was all with black, and wonder he  
Right of the same is all the strete ywrie.’

against God's bidding, upon strangers, with which they should help and relieve according to God's will their poor needy neighbours at home. Yea, and over this folly oftentimes divers men and women, of these runners madly hither and thither into pilgrimage, borrow hereto other men's goods; yea, and sometimes they steal men's goods hereto, and they pay them never again! Also, sir, I know well that when divers men and women will go thus after their own wills and finding out on pilgrimage, they will ordain with them before to have with them both men and women that can well sing wanton songs, and some other pilgrims will have their bagpipes. So that every town that they come through, what with the music of their singing, and with the sound of their piping, and with the jingling of their Canterbury bells, and with the barking out of dogs after them, they make more noise than if the king came there away with all his clarions, and many other minstrels. And if these men and women are a month out in their pilgrimage, many of them shall be half a year after great janglers, tale-tellers, and liars.' To which bold and fervid speech the Primate answered the 'leud losel' hotly,— 'I say to thee, that is right well done, that pilgrims have with them both singers and also pipers; that when one of them that goeth barefoot striketh his toe upon a stone, and hurteth him sore, and maketh him to bleed, it is well done that he or his fellow begin them a song; or else take out of his bosom a bagpipe, to drive away with such mirth the hurt of his fellow. For with such solace the travel and weariness of pilgrims is lightly borne out.'

In a previous page—where mention was made of Archbishop Sudbury's disapproval of pilgrimages—occasion was taken to remark that the fourteenth-century Lollards were supported by some of the dignified ecclesiastics as well as by the Wycliffian priests in their endeavours to throw discredit on the periodic journeyings to national shrines. The agitation against shrine-worship, however, was commenced by the Lollards, though at an early period the movement was stimulated by Churchmen, who, if not narrowly orthodox, would have indignantly repudiated a charge of participation in the Wycliffian heresies. And by nothing is the influence, which the Wycliffian Lollards had on popular opinion with respect to this matter, more forcibly



illustrated than by the way in which their favourite figures of speech and rhetorical strokes against the domestic pilgrimages, and the worship of images, were adopted by the more liberal thinkers, who immediately preceded the revolution which changed Wycliffian heresy into Anglican orthodoxy. A doctrine in high favour with the fourteenth-century reformer was that which insisted on man being God's true image, and the only image which worshippers should treat worshipfully out of love to God. Enunciating this opinion, the author of 'The Ploughman's Complaint' exclaims pathetically, 'Lord God, what herying is it to cloth mawmettes of stocks and of stones in silver and gold, and in other good colours? And Lord, I see thine image gone in colde and hete in clothes all to broken, without shone and hosen, an hungred and a thrust.' By the opinion of the sixteenth century this argument against the iniquity of lavishing on stocks and stones the wealth which ought to have been expended on human sufferers was so generally accepted, that Erasmus put it into the mouth of an enlightened pilgrim, who discusses with him the propriety of lavishing on the shrines and images the money that would be better spent on 'the living temples of Christ.'

But though, with irony so fine as to be scarcely perceptible to his less sensitive listeners, and with satire too delicate for the dull apprehension of ordinary readers, Erasmus could pour searching ridicule on the ignorance and corruption of the clerical class, and though he saw a need for a purification and regeneration of the entire sacerdotal order, a reformation brought about by the multitude and consummated with violence was a remedial process in which he had no faith. As a man of no less enlightenment than learning, he nursed an active disdain for the stupidity, the narrowness, and vindictive arrogance of the clergy; but whilst despising their condition, the ignominy of which was qualified by a faint tincture of letters, he was far more contemptuous to the laity who for the most part appeared to him to be more dull and rancorous, and something less educated, than the ordinary priests. If the case of the clergy were one for despondency, that of the laity was still nearer hopelessness. To increase the knowledge of the clergy, to infuse them with intellectual vigour, and to render them fit leaders of the blind,

he could labour cordially, and even at times, perhaps, make sacrifices of his personal interest: but, though he wished the clergy to be reformed, he would rather have left them as they were than try the experiment of a reformation effected by forces outside their order. Moreover, though he could laugh in his sleeve, or to a few chosen comrades, at ecclesiastical tricks and juggleries, he was by no means sure that such devices were not serviceable to the populace—just as toys are beneficial to children. A chief of those fastidious censors and supercilious critics who always rise to sit in judgment on the ruder and bolder mortals who push the world forwards, the translator of the Gospel was a nice discerner of the differences between the vulgar and the better sorts of people. Had he lived in these days he would have written with graceful insolence about the need for an exoteric as well as an esoteric Christianity,—a theology covered with historic and scientific inaccuracies for farmers and farm-servants, and a theology divested of all those errors for gentlemen with academic degrees and ladies of refinement and culture. Being of the period in which free thought made war on Rome, whilst doing good service for the party of change he forbore to make open war on the party of resistance.

Hence in ‘The Pilgrimage for Religion’s sake,’ whilst holding up the priests and their fables to ridicule, he takes every occasion to demonstrate that the laity are no less ridiculous than their priests, and to suggest that the absurd and mischievous practices, which ought to be abated without violence, were productive of a certain amount of benefit. At Walsingham, when Robert Aldrich incensed the canon by asking for proofs of the genuineness of the Virgin’s milk, Erasmus, laughing secretly at his sceptical companion’s inquisitiveness, soothed the angry priest with the gift of a few pence. In like manner at Canterbury, when Dean Colet disdainfully declined the Priest’s proffered present of one of the pieces of linen on which Thomas à Beckett used to wipe his nose, Erasmus assures us, with more of seriousness than irony, that he ‘was at once agitated with shame and fear,’ by his friend’s indiscreet candour and discourtesy. Had the rag been offered to Erasmus instead of to Colet it would have been accepted with all imaginable politeness and insincerity. So also on their return from Canterbury to London, when Colet

roughly refused to kiss St. Thomas's slipper, which an aged Herboldown hospitaller extended to the dean, Erasmus compassionately solaced the old man with the gift of a small coin; and afterwards, on relating the incident to Menedemus, who declared that 'Gratian was not irritated without reason,' the tolerant man of letters responded, 'I must own that these things had better not be done; but from such matters as cannot be at once corrected I am accustomed to gather whatever good can be found in them.'\*

Whilst the scholarly and sceptical visitors to the holy places openly exhibited contempt for the sacred relics or inspected them with secret derision and a courteous affectation of reverence, the untaught people of all classes and learned pilgrims, whose knowledge had not liberated their minds from the trammels of superstition, behaved far otherwise. At Walsingham they fell on their knees in the Virgin's chapel, kissed the crystal vase that contained the white lump which, they were gravely assured, consisted of coagulated milk from the immaculate mother's breasts, and put pieces of silver and gold into the box—like the little boxes 'presented to the toll-takers on the bridges in Germany'—which the attendant canon extended silently to their hands. At Canterbury they sighed and groaned over St. Thomas's cleft skull, and, on seeing the saint's nose-kerchiefs, which Colet treated so impiously, added to their defilements by pressing them to their lips. Of a throng of pilgrims, many of the more enthusiastic devotees would crawl on their knees to the shrine or image which they had journeyed far and with much cost to worship: and, not content with kissing the carved stones, they would lick them with eager tongues,—after which, lying on the ground in abject prostration of body and soul before the symbols which were declared to elevate all beholders, they would besmear their eyelids and faces with spittle, which was imagined to have derived some mysterious medicinal efficacy from the contact of their tongues with the licked images.

It was thus that a crowd of pilgrims from Devonshire and

\* Readers who wish to derive entertainment from Erasmus's graphic pictures of shrine-worship in England, but have not sufficient knowledge of Latin to peruse the 'Colloquies' in their original tongue, should purchase Mr. John Gough Nichols's translation of 'The Pilgrimage for Religion's Sake.'

Cornwall and less distant counties demeaned themselves at Windsor to the disgust and compassion of Robert Testwood, the musician, whose detestation of idol-worship resulted in his death by fire. 'Then he went further,' Foxe says in his narrative of Robert Testwood's trouble, 'and found another sort licking and kissing a white lady made of alabaster; which image was mortised in a wall behind the high altar, and bordered about with a pretty border, which was made like branches with hanging apples and flowers. And when he saw them so superstitiously use the image as to wipe their hands upon it and then to stroke them over their eyes and faces as though there had been great virtue in touching the picture, he up with his hand, in which he had a key, and smote down a piece of the border about the image, and with the glance of the stroke chanced to break off the image's nose.'

Robert Testwood the musician, in due course, died a martyr's death; but the honest fellow's protests against profane things done in the name of religion were not in vain.

One of King Henry's first acts for the purification of religion was to enjoin his clergy to 'exhort as well their parishioners as other pilgrims, that they do rather apply themselves to the keeping of God's commandments, and the fulfilling of his works of charity; persuading them that they shall please God more by the true exercising of their bodily labour, travail, or occupation, and providing for their families, than if they went about to the said pilgrimages; and it shall profit more their soul's health if they do bestow that on the poor and needy which they would have bestowed upon the said images or relics.'

The Lollards had said the same in the fourteenth century.

Thus the heterodoxy of a former became the orthodoxy of a later time.

## CHAPTER VII.

### PULPITS AND PREACHERS.

**R**ICH though they are in illustrations of the social life of Elizabethan England, Shakespeare's plays contain no brief passage that reminds us of the religious contentions of his period more vividly than those few lines in the third act of 'Julius Cæsar,' which commemorate the political uses of the pulpit in times when the preacher discharged functions which in these later days have devolved on the political journalist. When Cæsar has fallen under the blows of his assassins, the conspirators see that they must lose no time in putting their version of the event before the populace, from the platforms to which the multitude ordinarily thronged at moments of excitement for information on public affairs.

- '*Cinna.* Liberty! Freedom! Tyranny is dead!  
Run hence, proclaim, cry it about the streets.  
*Cassius.* *Some to the common pulpits, and cry out,*  
*Liberty, freedom, and enfranchisement!*  
*Brutus.* People and senators! be not affrighted;  
Fly not; stand still:—ambition's debt is paid.  
*Casca.* *Go to the pulpit, Brutus.'*

The ensuing oratorical duel between Brutus and Marc Antony, in which the former encounters signal defeat, is fought from the pulpit; and though in one of the earlier stage-directions of scene 2, act iii., the dramatist describes Brutus as 'going into the rostrum,' he uses a more familiar word in a subsequent direction, and mentions Marc Antony as 'coming down from the pulpit.'

Though the ordinary pulpits of Catholic England were small, portable, wooden desks, pictures of which may be seen in Foxe's 'Acts and Monuments,' our feudal ancestors had a

few permanent pulpits—most generally built altogether of stone, or of wood and stone, and usually erected in the open air in the immediate vicinities of the chief churches of large towns. In one case the permanent pulpit would be built into a church wall; in another, it would be found at the distance of several yards from the church, so that it could be surrounded by a numerous congregation when it was occupied by an extraordinarily eloquent preacher. From these public stands proclamations were uttered to the commonalty by the secular authorities, and sermons preached by selected ecclesiastics in behalf of the measures thus communicated to the people. And it was of these pulpits and their political use in Elizabethan England, about which he knew much, rather than of the Roman rostra, about which he knew little, that Shakespeare was thinking when he made Cassius exclaim, ‘Some’ [or ‘come’] ‘to the common pulpits.’

Of these pulpits the most famous and important was that of Paul’s Cross, which was used for secular and religious purposes so early as 1259, the date of the first definite mention of its existence, and which stood\* in the middle of the Cathedral yard from that date till its destruction, in 1643, by Sir Robert Harlow; who, in thus doing away with an interesting memorial of our ancestors’ religious life, exceeded the powers with which he was invested

\* There is no need to trouble the reader with the dates at which this cross-surmounted pulpit was rebuilt or repaired. The structure, which stood in Elizabethan times, was a wooden pulpit roofed with lead, and fixed on a stone base, provided at its rear with stone steps for the accommodation of the preacher, who, whilst addressing a congregation of Londoners, stood with his face towards the Cathedral. A picture of this pulpit, occupied by a preacher addressing a numerous assembly, may be found on the title-page and last sheet of that interesting tract, ‘St. Paule’s Church: her Bill for the Parliament . . . Partly in Verse, partly in Prose. Penned and Published for her Good by Henry Farley, Author of her Complaint.’ A description of it occurs in Walton’s ‘Life of Hooker,’ where it is called ‘A pulpit-cross formed of timber, covered with lead, and mounted upon stone steps, which stood in the midst of the churchyard of the Cathedral; in which sermons were preached by eminent divines every Sunday in the forenoon, when the court, the magistrates of the city, and a vast concourse of people, usually attended.’ There is notice of its use so early as 1259, but it was not finished in the form here exhibited until 1449, by Kemp, bishop of London; and it was finally destroyed by order of the parliament in 1643. The corporation of London ordained, that all ministers who came from a distance to preach at this cross were to have lodgings and provisions for five days; and the Bishop of London gave them notice of their place of residence.

by parliament, 'to deface, demolish, and quite take away, all images, altars, or tables turned altar-wise, crucifixes, superstitious pictures, monuments, and relics of idolatry, *out of* all churches and chapels.' Acting up to the spirit, instead of the letter, of his instructions, Sir Robert, with zeal, more to be regretted than commended, swept away the cross in Cheapside, Charing Cross, St. Paul's Cross, and other like adornments, whether standing in churches, churchyards, or public thoroughfares.

At this date, when preachers are generally thought to be guilty of something worse than mere indiscretion if they address their congregations on political questions, that do not directly and materially affect the interests of the Church and the welfare of public religion, it is difficult to realise how—in the days when, if politics and religion were not the same thing, the religious action of the community comprised all the most momentous politics of the period—our forefathers gathered together on Sundays and other holy days to receive political tidings and guidance from their Paul's Cross teachers; how at special crises of public affairs they returned to their homes in dudgeon and anxious concern if the preacher at the Cross, chosen and approved by the sovereign's minister, had said nothing to let them know the intentions of their rulers with respect to matters of state; how, whilst listening to a political preacher who struck out boldly about the unpopular war, the new tax, the latest measures for or against the Pope's power or the Protestant faith, they caught his words greedily, printed them into their memories, and on returning to their homes discussed shrewdly whether the notable utterances boded good or ill to the nation,—meant more or less than they appeared to mean at their first declaration. The Paul's sermon of old time teemed with indications, if not with express statements, of the course which the highest powers of the nation were taking and might probably take; and hearers listened to them with all the avidity and sharp inquisitiveness with which at any critical conjuncture of parties our modern politicians read and sift an article of special character in a journal that is understood to be in the confidence of the cabinet. Before the rise of journalism, ordinary men were led or driven, with greater or less facility, by sermons, just as they are now—adays led or driven by newspaper articles; and the pulpits of

the minor churches, whether in London or the provinces, caught the tone of St. Paul's Cross, just as the journals of the weaker and obscurer sort at the present day echo the voices of the leading organs of the press. Paul's Cross may be said to have led the public discussion of our ancestors.\* When it spoke hopefully, men's hearts were buoyant; when it desponded, the national spirit fell. Its predictions were sometimes falsified, but more frequently they came true. Under ordinary circumstances it was a loyal supporter of the sovereign, court, and ministers; when it had the courage to denounce, or the prudence to grow cold to prince or statesman, citizens looked out for new and startling events.

In the days when the preacher was a political no less than a religious instructor arose the custom (wrongly attributed to the Puritans) which our feudal ancestors, no less than their descendants of the seventeenth century, had of expressing audibly their concurrence with or their dissent from the views of their pulpit orators. If a sermon gratified its auditors they 'hummed,' *i. e.* made a monotonous purring noise, by repeating very rapidly in an undertone the words, 'Hear, hear, hear.' By

\* In the later years of Henry the Eighth and during the reign of Edward the Sixth, the sermons preached at the royal palace of Westminster—from the open-air pulpit in the privy garden when the weather was fine, and from a pulpit placed in the chapel or the banqueting-hall when the weather was unpropitious—were listened to by Londoners even more eagerly than sermons preached at Paul's Cross. In 1534, Latimer preached Lenten sermons before Henry from a pulpit, of which Stowe says, 'The 7 of March, being Wednesday, was a pulpit set vp in the king's priuie garden at Westminster, and therein doctor Latimer preached before the king, where he mought be heard of more than foure times so manie people as could haue stood in the king's chappell; and this was the first sermon preached there.' In 1549, preaching one of his Lenten sermons in the banqueting-chamber of the palace to Edward the Sixth and a crowded congregation, Latimer said, 'O let vs consider the kynges maiestyes goodnes. Thys place was prepared for banketyng of the bodye, and his maiesty hath made it a place for the comforte of the soule, and to haue the worde of God preached in it, shewyng hereby that he would haue all hys subjectes at it, if it myghte be possible. Consider what the kynges maiesty hath done for you: he alloweth you all to heare wyth him. Consider where ye be: fyrste, ye oughte to haue a reuerence to Godds word, and thoughte it be preached by pore men, yet it is the same worde that onre Sauoure spake. Consider also the presence of the kynges maiestie, Gods highe vycare in earth: hauing respect to his personag, ye ought to haue reuerence to it; and consider that he is Goddes hyghe ministre, and yet alloweth you all to be partakers with him of ye helyng of Gods word.'



reiterating this word with great velocity some scores or hundreds of times they produced the church ‘hum,’ out of which subsequently grew the bolder, clearer, and more articulate applause of our Houses of Parliament. When a sermon gave offence, the hearers were ominously silent, till they broke out into inarticulate groans, which were none the less expressive as demonstrations of dissent, and much safer, because of their inarticulateness, in times when words of disapproval might have been construed into treasonable language.

Of the tumult which occurred on an early day of Queen Mary’s reign, when Dr. Bourne preached in behalf of the Papacy at St. Paul’s Cross, Strype says, in his ‘Ecclesiastical Memorials,’ ‘This last-named came up at Paul’s Cross, Aug. 13, where were present the lord mayor and his brethren, and the Lord Courteney and a great auditory. This man did, according to his instructions, fiercely lay about him, in accusing the doings of the former reign, with such reflections upon things that were dear to the people, that it set them all in a hurly-burly. And such an uproar began, such a shouting at the sermon and casting up of caps, as that one, who lived in those times, and kept a journal of matters that then fell out, writ, it was as if the people were mad, and that there might have been great mischief done, had not the people been awed somewhat by the presence of the mayor and the Lord Courteney. In this confusion the young people and the women bore their part; and so did some priests, and, namely, the minister of St. Ethelborough’s within Bishopsgate: who, as we shall hear, smarted severely for it. And which most of all shewed the popular displeasure against the preacher, a dagger was thrown at him, which broke up the assembly, and the divine was conveyed away for fear of his life. The next Sunday, being Aug. 20, preached at St. Paul’s Cross Dr. Watson, one of as much heat as the other, but with more safety; having two hundred of the guard about him, to see no such disturbance happened again. There were present all the crafts of London, in their best liveries, sitting on forms, every craft by themselves; together with the lord mayor and aldermen.’

Bearing in mind the scandalous riot which Dr. Bourne’s imprudence had raised at the opening of her sister’s reign,

Elizabeth, acting on the advice of her cautious consellor, Cecil, took care that on the Sundays following closely on her accession Paul's pulpit should be filled by discreet and moderate orators. The twelfth article of Sir William Cecil's paper of memoranda, respecting steps to be taken to ensure public order on the new queen's elevation, runs: 'XII. to consider the condition of the preacher of Paul's Cross, that no occasion be given by him to stir any dispute touching the governance of the realm.'

Notice has elsewhere in this work been taken of the 'shrouds'—a covered meeting-place hard by the pulpit-cross and adjoining the cathedral, in which the Paul's sermons were delivered when the inclemency of the weather forbade the Londoners to assemble, and sit or stand out the delivery of a long discourse, in the open air. That on cold or rainy days the sermons were thus preached in the temporary shed instead of the cathedral itself, was due to the fact that the body of the church was so far blocked and filled with stalls and other furniture requisite for its permanent bazaar, that its unoccupied spaces would not have afforded standing-room to half the number of an ordinary Paul's Cross congregation.

Though the Reformation stimulated the preachers to an activity unknown amongst the pulpit orators of Catholic England, the number of sermons preached in an ordinary parish church during the Protestant times of the sixteenth, and the first forty years of the seventeenth century, fell far short of the number of discourses delivered in the same building during any period of the same length, in more recent time. In 1538, Henry the Eighth was of opinion that so long as a congregation heard four sermons a-year it had an adequate supply of pulpit instruction. If, in addition to the quarterly sermon enjoined by law, the frequenters of a particular church heard a monthly discourse from a licensed preacher, they received an unusually liberal supply of oral instruction. Edward the Sixth enjoined that at least eight sermons should be delivered yearly in every parish church to its congregation—four of them against the Papal usurpation, and in behalf of the royal supremacy; the other four on some of the scriptural doctrines of the Protestant church. By two of the loosely worded, and in some places scarcely intelligible injunctions of 1559, Elizabeth seems to express her intention that an original sermon by a licensed preacher should be

delivered once a-quarter in every parish church on a Sunday, and that on each of the Sundays when the frequenters of the church were not edified by the original eloquence of a licensed preacher, one of the appointed homilies should be read to them by their pastor. The forty-fifth of 'The Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical,' published in the first year of James the First, enjoins that 'every beneficed man allowed to be a preacher, and residing on his benefice, having no lawful impediment, shall in his own cure, or in some other church or chapel, where he may conveniently, near adjoining, (where no preacher is) preach one sermon every Sunday of the year; wherein he shall soberly and sincerely divide the word of truth to the glory of God, and to the best edification of the people.' The next rule required that an original sermon by a licensed preacher should be preached on one Sunday in every month to every congregation, and that on the Sundays when no such original discourse was delivered to them, they should be edified by hearing one of the appointed homilies read to them by their pastor or his assistant curate.

But the more zealous parish-priests of Elizabethan England, possessing licenses to preach, usually gave their congregations an original sermon on every Sunday of the year, though the canons did not require them to do so. Hooker in each of the country parishes to which he successively ministered used to preach a sermon of his own composition every Sunday. 'His use' says Isaak Walton 'was to preach once every Sunday, and he or his curate to catechise after the second lesson in the Evening Prayer. His sermons were neither long nor earnest, but uttered with a grave zeal and an humble voice; his eyes always fixed on one place, to prevent imagination from wandering; insomuch that he seemed to study as he spake.' In the days of Charles the First, George Herbert was of opinion that the model country parson would not fail to give his parishioners a sermon every Sunday. 'Then' says the pious writer of his parish-priest, 'having read divine service twice fully, and preached in the morning, and catechised in the afternoon, he thinks he hath in some measure, according to the poor and fraile man, discharged the public duties of the congregation.'

With respect to the average length of Elizabethan sermons,

the custom of providing the pulpit with an hour-glass put on a bracket-stand has led some writers into the error of supposing that they were necessarily of an hour's duration. The preachers, however, of that period, often delivered sermons, the utterance of any one of which could not have exceeded twenty minutes or half-an-hour. Some of the homilies, which it was the custom to read in parts, are very long, but others of them may be read aloud in a few minutes. The hour-glass, therefore, was not so much a measure of the amount of eloquence which the conscientious preacher was bound to supply to his hearers, as an instrument for informing him when respect for his auditors' comfort required him to dismiss them to their homes. Until the sand of an hour-glass had run down, the orderly members of an Elizabethan or Caroline congregation, however wearied they might be by their orator's incapacity, made a show of respectful attention; but, if he ventured to detain them longer, they dispersed with hubbub and clatter. 'The parson,' says George Herber<sup>t</sup>, 'exceeds not an hour in preaching, because all ages have thought that a competency, and he that profits not in that time will belike afterwards, the same affections which made him not to profit before making him then weary, and so he grows from not relishing to loathing.\*' It is, however, recorded of Bishop Burnet and other highly popular preachers of his period, that when they had preached out their hour to the

\* Of the parson's oratorical method and style George Herbert says, 'When he preacheth he procures attention by all possible art; both by earnestness of speech, it being naturall to men to think, that where is much earnestness there is somewhat worth hearing; and by a diligent and busy cast of his eye on his auditors, with letting them know that he observes who marks and who not; and with particularizing of his speech, now to the younger sort, then to the elder, now to the poor, and now to the rich. This is for you, and this is for you; for particulars ever touch and awake more than generalls . . . Sometimes he tells them stories and sayings of others, according as his text invites him: for them also men heed, and remember better than exhortations . . . The parson's method in handling of a text consists of two parts: first, a plain and evident declaration of the meaning of the text; and secondly, some choice observations drawn out of the whole text, as it lyes entire and unbroken in the Scripture itself. This he thinks naturall, and sweet, and grave. Whereas the other way of crumbling a text into small parts, as, the person speaking or spoken to, the subject and object, and the like, hath neither in it sweetness, nor gravity, nor variety, since the words apart are not scripture, but a dictionary, and may be considered alike in all the Scripture.'

last grain of its sand, their ‘hummers’ would ‘hum’ them into giving them an additional hour of pulpit exhortation.

Like many other injunctions put upon the Anglican clergy, the canon requiring incumbents to preach or procure the delivery of monthly sermons to their congregations was by no means scrupulously observed by Charles the First’s rural rectors. In ‘The Curates’ Conference,’ in the Harleian tract already mentioned in this work, Master Poorest says, ‘It is a strange world that they’ (*i. e.* the beneficed clergy), ‘should flourish and flow in wealth for doing nothing, and the poor curates, that do all, can get nothing; I will tell you truly, he has not given his parish a sermon these three quarters of a year.’ To which remark Master Needham responds, ‘I wonder how they can answer the canon which enjoins them to preach once a-month.’ But, whilst the zealous High Church clergy of the Laudian period, preached one sermon every Sunday after morning prayer, and many of their world-loving contemporaries forbore to deliver the monthly sermon required by the canons, the Low Church ministers were with difficulty restrained by their diocesans from giving their flocks an afternoon lecture as well as a morning discourse. Against the Sunday-afternoon preachings the prelates, whilst winking at the shortcomings of the licensed rectors who neglected to preach the required monthly sermons, made consistent warfare on the ground that they were innovations adverse to the intention of the forty-fifth and forty-sixth canons, that they wasted the time and energy which clergymen ought to expend on catechistic instruction, that they encouraged the people to indulge in pragmatistical disputations, and that they interfered with the people’s rightful enjoyment of the Sunday revels.

Whilst he was Bishop of London, Laud bestirred himself to silence the afternoon preachers of his diocese; and when he became Primate of Canterbury, he influenced the bishops of his province so that the lectures on the afternoon of the Lord’s Day were suppressed in nearly every parish within his reach. ‘But none,’ says John Withers, in his ‘Vindication of Dissenters,’ ‘declared themselves more violently than Dr. Pierce, bishop of Bath and Wells; he gave God thanks that he had not one lecturer left in all his diocese. He suspended Mr. Devenish, the

minister of Bridgewater, for preaching a funeral sermon on a Lord's Day evening; and convened the minister of Beercookham before him for having two sermons on that parish revel-day; alleging, that it was an hindrance to the revel, and to the utterance of the Church-ale. Mr. Exford was summoned before him as a delinquent for preaching on a revel-day, on Joel's exhortation to fasting, weeping, and mourning; and was told that his very text was scandalous to the revel. And when some ministers enlarged themselves upon the questions and answers in the Church Catechism, for better instruction of their people, they were sharply rebuked by their diocesan, who told them that it was catechising sermon-wise, and as bad as preaching.'

Whilst politics consisted chiefly of religious contentions, and the pulpit was an instrument of political guidance no less than a source of religious instruction, preachers were placed under surveillance and censorship similar in nature and purpose to the control which fetters journalism in despotic countries at the present time. When either of the contending parties rose to power it immediately silenced the mouths of opposing preachers; so soon as either of them lost the ability to tyrannize it lost the privilege of declaring its sentiments from the national pulpits. In Edward's time the Protestants could speak their minds freely and the Catholics were gagged;\* Mary accorded free speech to preachers loyal to the Papacy, and shut the mouths of the Pope's enemies: Elizabeth silenced the Catholics on the one hand and the Puritans on the other, granting preachers' licenses only to those of her clergy who could be trusted to argue before the congregations in favour of her Ecclesiastical Polity. In Edward's time even bishops (with the single exception of the Archbishop of Canterbury), might not preach

\* 'Much harm,' says Strype, 'was also now done in disaffecting the people by seditious and contentious preaching. To prevent the further hurt thereof, the king by a proclamation, April 24. 1548. charged and commanded that no man hereafter should be permitted to preach (however they might read the Homilies) except he were licensed by the King, the Lord Protector, or the Archbishop of Canterbury, under their seals; and the same license to be shewed to the parson or curate, and two honest men of the parish beside. before his preaching, upon pain of imprisonment, both of the preacher and of the curate that suffered him to preach without license. And a charge was given to all parties to look to this diligently.'

unless they were expressly licensed to do so. 'So,' says Strype, in the 'Ecclesiastical Memorials,' 'I have seen licenses to preach granted to the Bishop of Exeter, ann. 1551; and to the Bishops of Lincoln and Chichester, ann. 1552.' Not content with enforcing silence on the Protestants Mary punished several of them with imprisonment or the fiery death for what they had taught from the pulpit in her predecessor's reign; and in 1553, whilst forbidding unlicensed clergymen to preach, she ordered that no interlude should be played until it had received the sanction of the ecclesiastical authorities, and that no one should play in an interlude without express license to do so. This last order indicates how great was the service which the Protestant interludes had rendered to the cause of the Reformers. At the outset of her reign, whilst she was deciding as to the course which it behoved her to take on religious matters, Elizabeth for a short time silenced all the parties of her clergy, and altogether forbade preaching in her churches;\* and throughout her reign she regarded the pulpit with jealousy and antagonism, as a dangerous engine calculated to do much harm and little good. In her altercation with Grindal, which resulted in the suppression of the prophesyings, she declared that the Homilies were all the sermons which her people needed; that the excess of preachers was hurtful to Church and State; and that at most three or four licensed preachers were enough for a single county. And it is computed that, ten years later, not many more than a third of her clergy held licenses to preach.

\* 'Of which last,' says Strype, in the 'Annals of the Reformation,' under date Dec. 28, 1558, 'the queen being aware, forbad all preaching, and especially in London . . . . By virtue of which proclamation, not only all preaching was forbidden for a time, but all hearing and giving audience to any doctrine or preaching. And nothing else was allowed to be heard in the churches but the Epistles and Gospels for the day, and the Ten Commandments in the vulgar tongue; but without any manner of exposition, or addition of the sense and meaning thereof; and no manner of prayer and rite to be used than was already used, and by law received, except the Litany then used in the queen's chapel, and the Lord's Prayer and Creed in English.' With respect to the number of Elizabeth's licensed preachers. Sir Francis Knollys remarked in 1584, in a paper drawn up by himself or at his direction, 'It is sayd, that it is impossible to have so manye preachers as this byll' (against pluralism and non-residence) 'doth require resydent, because there be nine thousand parishes, and but three thousand preachers in the realme.'

That there was need for this stringent censorship and despotic control of the pulpit, in the earlier generations of the Anglican Church, no one is likely to question who, familiar with the controversial literature of the Reform period, bears in mind the unseemly violence and reckless vituperation with which the more ardent and less discreet partisans of the various theological schools of Elizabethan England assailed their opponents. In the earlier generations of the Anglican Church the discourses of the pulpit were often animated by the same bitter enmities and personal hatreds that qualified the writings of English journalists in the infancy of journalism. Whilst a good and honest man like Walter Travers could think it his duty to hold Hooker up to ridicule and odium in the Temple Church, to which they were both officially attached, clergymen of less ability and worth than Travers would, from the pulpits, pour on their clerical adversaries the abuse of the bear-garden. No respect for the dignity of their order restrained the indignant passions of ill-conditioned and defamatory preachers in the days when Drant could declare of Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Overton to a congregation assembled in Winchester Cathedral, 'That Dr. Overton was a very hypocrite—a noble, a glorious, an everlasting hypocrite, and nothing else but a mere satchel of hypocrisy; that he was brimful, topful, too full of hypocrisy; and, though he danced the net of hypocrisy, yet he would discover him and whip him naked. That he was like a vice in a play, representing a grave man's part, and had not gravity; he swelling with the title of a doctor, and had no doctrine. Concerning doctrine and learning he said, that the said doctor did not understand nor feel the deepness of his sermons . . . . Furthermore, that whereas this doltish doctor that had nothing but the bare title of a doctor, and came by a degree by some sinister means.'

A characteristic instance of the discourtesy and arrogance with which the clergy, at a later date, made war upon each other at the instigation of political resentments, may be found in the account which Peter Heylyn's biographer gives us of the manner in which the Bishop of Lincoln, immediately after his liberation from the Tower in 1640, affronted Heylyn in Westminster Abbey, before a full congregation of clergy and fashionable laity. The



bishop had read prayers and Heylyn was preaching when the insult was offered. The Royalist preacher gave the provocation by craftily preaching at Christians who lacked moderation, love, and charity,—the Christians, thus reprovèd in suggestive language, being of course understood to be politicians who differed from the orator. ‘Is it not,’ remarked Dr. Heylyn, ‘that we are so affected with our own opinions, that we condemn whosoever shall opine the contrary: and so far wedded to our own wills, that, when we have espoused a quarrel, neither the love of God nor the God of Love shall divorce us from it? Instead of hearkening to the voice of the Church, every man hearkens to himself, and cares not if the whole miscarry, so that himself may bravely carry out his own devices. Upon which stubborn height of pride, what quarrels have been raised, what schisms in every corner of the Church (to inquire no further), some rather putting all into open tumult, than that they would conform to a lawful government, derived from Christ and His Apostles to these very times.’ Of course this language of the High Church preacher was very unacceptable to many of his hearers; doubtless it was specially intended to irritate the prelate who had taken part in the previous service; but no annoyance could justify the bishop’s manner of showing his disapprobation. ‘At the speaking of which words,’ says the narrator of the affair, ‘the Bishop of Lincoln, sitting in the great pew, knocked aloud with his staff upon the pulpit, saying, ‘No more of that point. No more of that point, Peter.’ To which order, ‘the doctor readily answered, without hesitation or the least sign of being dashed out of countenance, so that,’ adds the biographer who of course gives only one side of an ugly story, ‘at this, and at the other parts of his sermon, the auditory was highly pleased, but the bishop in so great a wrath, that his voice and the noise of his pastoral staff (if I may so call it) had like to have frightened the whole flock or congregation out of the fold.’

## CHAPTER VIII.

## POSTILS, HOMILIES, AND SERMONS.

THE pulpit oratory of the English clergy comprised in former times three distinct kinds of addresses,—the postil, the homily, and the sermon. The signification of each of these terms varied from time to time so much, that at some periods we find each of them used as applicable to any kind of scriptural discourse, uttered by a preacher to a congregation. The Book of Homilies uses the words homily and sermon as synonymous: and in Catholic days ecclesiastical writers often applied the same signification to postil and homily. In strict language, however, the three names designate three very different varieties of lecture.

The postiller was a preacher who explained a considerable passage of Scripture—a chapter, or even more than a chapter—to his auditors: reading a few verses of the part of the sacred writings taken under consideration, and then *post illa* (verba) making comment upon them before he read out another passage, which he explained or postillized in the same way. In fact, the postiller discharged simultaneously the functions of the old Scripture-reader and the modern sermon-preacher,—doing to a numerous assembly nearly what the Scripture-reader of the present day does to a single hearer, or to a group of a few persons in the ordinary performance of his duty. The term ‘homily,’ though there is abundant authority for applying the word to any kind of sermon, was at first the peculiar designation of a moral discourse, uttered in illustration of the nature of any particular department of Christian duty rather than in elucidation of a special passage of Scripture; whereas ‘sermon,’ in its narrowest sense, meant an address, the main object of which was to demon-

strate the teaching of a particular portion of holy writ, called its text.\*

Discourses of each of these three sorts might be either written or extempore; and in Catholic England, as well as in the earlier generations of the Post-Reformation period, written sermons were called bosom-sermons, because the preachers took the paper, on which their sermons were written, from the bosom-folds of their canonical dress after ascending the pulpit. Alike in feudal England and in later times, our forefathers nursed a strong dislike of bosom-sermons, partly from a mistaken notion that a preacher's habitual use of them demonstrated his indolence, but far more from a feeling that the sacred orator should speak at the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and relying on the Spirit's power and unvarying will to furnish him with thoughts and language, should not, before entering the pulpit, pre-arrange his arguments, or even select the particular subject of his eloquence. Whilst the people thus preferred extempore discourses, the orthodox clergy—knowing from experience that the heavenly power did not operate on the preacher's mind and tongue in the manner imagined by the populace, and that sound sermons could not be produced without forethought and preparatory labour—were for the most part bosom-preachers. Dean Colet, whose sympathy with the new-doctrine clergy and the reforming laymen caused him to adopt some of their erroneous views, made for himself many enemies by the warmth with which he denounced bosom-sermons, at a time when the octogenarian Bishop (Fitzjames) of London could not, by reason of his infirmities, preach extempore. 'The third crime,' says Foxe, prince of Grub-street authors, concerning the measures which the dean's adversaries took for his discomfiture, 'wherewith they charged him, was for speaking against such as used

\* Speaking of the pulpit oratory of the first years of the thirteenth century, the compiler of 'Oxoniana' remarks:—'1203. About this time began the custom of preaching from a text, but the sages and seniors of the University would by no means conform to this custom, but followed their old course, according to the manner of the fathers, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Bernard, &c., who preached to the clergy and people by postillizing; that is, expounding any particular chapter, by taking all the texts one after another. After which way (without a text) St. Augustine preached four hundred sermons. Some neither preached by postillizing nor by taking a text, but began their discourses by saying that they meant to preach on such a subject; as, on the fear of God, the love of God, &c.'

to preach only by bosom-sermons, declaring nothing else to the people but what they bring in their papers with them; which, because the Bishop of London used then much to do for his age, he took as spoken against, and therefore bare him this displeasure.'

Now-a-days one hears much of the badness of our pulpit oratory. From time to time the editors of leading journals open their columns to correspondents, who bewail, in pathetic terms, the decadence of the Anglican pulpit, and ask why they should do weekly penance by listening to tedious lecturers who tell them nothing new, and proclaim their stale truths in the worst possible style. That there is an element of justice in these complaints few persons will deny; but I am by no means of opinion that our nineteenth-century preachers are inferior in learning or rhetorical skill to the preachers of the earlier centuries of the Anglican Church. On the contrary, I am satisfied that the average standard of pulpit eloquence is higher now than it was at any period since the Reformation, and that we should hear fewer lamentations about the inferiority of modern sermons if the malcontents were better acquainted with the sermons of past times. The style of the Homilies, greatly superior to the style of the ordinary licensed preachers of the Reformation period, does not dispose the critic to think very highly of the average pulpit eloquence of the age when those essays were deemed models of the preacher's art. If dull and wearisome sermons are common now, they were far more frequent in the age when the gentle George Herbert used to console himself under the afflictions of incapable preachers by imagining that God had taken up the text and was preaching patience. It would, of course, be ridiculous to take the sermons of Cranmer, Latimer, Jewell, Tindal, Hall, as samples of the average preaching of the reform period; or the sermons of Burnet, Baxter, South, as specimens of the pulpit instruction ordinarily afforded to our ancestors of the later half of the seventeenth century; for they were exceptionally endowed teachers, as far superior to the common pulpiteers of their times as the Bishops of Winchester and Peterborough are above the ordinary rectors and curates of to-day. To come nearer to our time, let any critical reader explore the theological discourses of the Oxford and Cambridge

divines of the last century—divines whose writings may, in some instances, be found in costly and almost unreadable collections of pulpit lectures—and he will close them with a reasonable conviction that, so far as pulpit edification is concerned, our ancestors of the Augustan and early Georgian period were not better off than the gentlemen and ladies of to-day, who imagine themselves aggrieved because some of the preachers of their rural churches are neither eloquent nor learned. This further can I say in evidence on this point. When due allowance has been made for the influence of vanity in inducing poor preachers to publish their worthless sermons, it may be fairly assumed that, upon the whole, the published sermons of past times were something better than those which no one ever ventured to put in type. And, having made some patient examination into the quality of the theological discourses published between Queen Anne's death and George the Third's first illness, I do not hesitate to say that in the way of dullness and grotesque ignorance, the British Museum contains no mass of literary rubbish, so large in bulk and altogether worthless for the purposes its writers had in view, as its collection of sermons delivered by the less famous and exalted clergy of that period.

Instead of being inferior, the average preachers of to-day are greatly superior to the average preachers of past time; but they labour under disadvantages unknown to their official precursors. By diminishing the intellectual disparity between the clergy and laity, by rendering the latter more critical and the former less confident of their ability to sway the minds of their hearers, education has lessened the docility of the congregations; and, whilst actually raising the learning of the preachers, it has lowered their relative superiority. The average pastor of to-day preaches far better than the average pastor of a hundred years since; but whereas the latter, in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred, was greatly superior in mental endowments to the most learned of his flock, the former never opens his lips in the pulpit without knowing, or having cause to know, that many of his hearers are masters of his own business. If our learned clergy sometimes fail in the pulpit to do justice to their powers, their failure is less often due to the orator's natural incompetence

for his office than to the embarrassing consciousness that many of his auditors are as well taught as himself, and that within the lines of theological instruction he can tell them nothing which they do not already know. Of course the dull, arrogant, and comparatively unlettered preacher is never troubled by this view of his position; but, just in proportion as the pulpit-orator possesses the delicate nerve, warm sympathy, and fine perceptions, which under other circumstances would ensure his oratorical success, he feels a chilling sense of the incongruity of his appointed function and actual position.

Of course we have amongst us preachers to whom these remarks are only partially applicable,—preachers whose art is such that it can impart a fascinating freshness to trite doctrines; whose words are so fluent and dextrously chosen that the hearer cares as much for the manner as the matter of their best utterances; whose intonations are so melodious that the ear listens to their voices for the sweet sounds' sake. We have also a few preachers of a still higher sort, who, bringing philosophy to the illustration of religion, and addressing themselves to the profoundest and acutest thinkers, assert the pulpit's power to illuminate the learned no less than to instruct the ignorant. But such men must always be rare—their influence must always be exceptional.

But however tolerant men may be of the defects of ordinary pulpit speech, they are far less patient of its shortcomings when they encounter them in print. That really good sermons find an abundance of willing readers may be inferred from the large sale of Robertson's and Kingsley's sermons, and from the high price which the proprietors of a popular serial recently thought it worth their while to pay for the privilege of publishing in its pages the pulpit-lectures of one of our most eloquent preachers. It is, however, generally conceded that hearable sermons often make unreadable books; and the persons are many who regret the comparative fewness of the volumes of published sermons which, whilst promoting the spiritual health of the thoughtful and cultivated reader, afford diversion and refreshment to his intellectual powers.

To the complainants it may be recommended that they should provide themselves with the published discourses of our

most famous Anglican divines from Wycliffe to that most critical and pungent of homilists, Robert South, and peruse them alike for the sake of their religious instruction and for the light which they throw on the social condition of England at the times when they were first delivered.

Pervaded by the earnestness and lucidity natural to teachers who, having in perilous and changeful days painfully succeeded in solving difficult problems, burn with a desire to make others share their fuller light, and for the achievement of this end use every means to render their own thought the property of their hearers,—the sermons of the Anglican Reformers are never perused with inattention, or perused only once, by the religious inquirer who has experienced their peculiar and fascinating influence. Nor are the addresses of these old preachers more congenial to the temper and aspirations of the simple Christian, who has recourse to them for ghostly counsel and encouragement, than delightful to the worldly student who values them chiefly for their illustrations of the temper, nature, usages, and political conditions of our forefathers at one of the grandest and most dramatic epochs of our national story.

In many respects these old homilists differ greatly from the more decorous and graceful preachers of later times; and in nothing is this general dissimilitude more noticeable than the frequency with which the former orators enlivened their hearers with pithy mention of mundane pursuits, with homely metaphors drawn from the customs of the market or the hunting-field, with humorous allusions to trivial, if not profane, pastimes. In these days public sentiment would be shocked by the levity of the preacher who should illustrate the doctrines of the church by reference to the chances and tricks of the whist-table, the science and skill of billiard-players; but the pulpit orators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries deemed themselves at liberty to drive their exhortations home to the hearts of sport-loving and game-loving auditors by allusions to cards and cock-fighting, the pursuits of the huntsman and the angler.

It was from the pulpit of Paul's Cross, in 1540, that Dr. Barnes preached against Stephen Gardiner the sermon in which the prelate of Winchester was likened to a *garden-cock* that lacked good spurs,—a pun on the bishop's name that elicited a

hum of approval from the reformer's sympathizing hearers. 'In the process of which sermon,' says Foxe, 'he proceeding, and calling out Stephen Gardiner by name to answer him, alluding in a pleasant allegory to a cock-fight: terming the said Gardiner to be a fighting-cock, and himself to be another; but the garden-cock (he said) lacketh good spurs.' In no way loth to administer punishment to an opponent whom he disdained, the bishop accepted the heretic's challenge: and says the narrator of this spirited contest, 'In the end of this cock-fight, Winchester thus concludeth this glorious tale, and croweth up the triumph.' That the highest and most decorous clergy of the earlier half of the following century afforded similar sanction to the brutalizing excitements of the cock-pit, evidence is afforded by the way in which the pious Bishop Hall in his 'Occasional Meditations' draws a moral from the spectacle of a contest between game-birds. 'On sight of a cock-fight: . . . How fell these creatures out? Whence grew this so bloody combat? Here was neither old grudge, nor present injury? What, then, is this quarrel? Surely, nothing but that which should rather unite and reconcile them; one common nature: they are both of one feather. I do not see either of them fly upon creatures of different kinds: but, while they have peace with all others, they are at war with themselves: the very sight of each other was sufficient provocation. If this be an offence, why doth not each of them fall out with himself, since he hates and revenges in another, the being of that same which himself is? Since man's sin brought debate into the world, nature is become a great quarreller. The seeds of discord were scattered in every furrow of the creation, and came up, whereof yet none is more odious than those which are betwixt creatures of the same kind.' Admitting the repulsiveness of the conflict, as an exhibition of the contentious spirit everywhere prevalent throughout the world, the bishop says not a word of the sinfulness of deriving diversion from the ferocious instincts of brutes.

In like manner, in his 'Godly Sermons' on 'How to Play with Certain Cards,' using language that, coming from a preacher in the pulpit, would now-a-days be thought revoltingly irreverent, Latimer afforded instruction and amusement to congregations of Cambridge scholars and burgesses by discourses in which he



demonstrated the resemblance of the Christian's life of painful striving after holiness, to the gamester's sport with cards. 'Now,' the preacher observed, in a characteristic portion of one of these singular addresses, 'I trust you wot what your card meaneth, let us see how that we can play with the same. Whensoever it shall happen you to go and make your oblation unto God, ask of yourselves this question, "Who art thou?" The answer as you know is, "I am a Christian man." Then you must again ask unto yourself, what Christ requireth of a Christian man. By-and-bye, cast down your trump, your heart, and look first of one card, then of another. The first card telleth thee thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not be angry, thou shalt not be out of patience. This done, thou shalt look if there be any more cards to take up, and, if thou look well, thou shalt see another card of the same suit, wherein thou shalt know that thou art bound to reconcile thy neighbour. Then cast thy trump upon them both, and gather them all then together, and do according to the virtue of the cards, and surely thou shalt not lose.' The commotion which Master Latimer's sermons and cards occasioned at Cambridge was profound and vehement: and to lessen the hurtful influence of the 'Christen Cards,' Dr. Buckenham, a black friar, put forth his pious instructions of how to play with dice. 'It would,' says Foxe, 'ask a long discourse to declare what a stir there was in Cambridge upon this preaching of Master Latimer. Belike Satan began to feel himself and his kingdom to be touched too near, and therefore thought it time to look about him, and to make out his men at arms. First came out the prior of the Black Friars, called Buckenham, otherwise surnamed 'Domine Labia,' who, thinking to make a great hand against Master Latimer, about the same time of Christmas, when Master Latimer brought forth his Christen cards\* (to deface belike the

\* The preacher's 'cards' were brought out at Christmas time, the festive season when card-playing was more in favour with our ancestors than at any other period of the year. 'And because,' says the preacher, 'I cannot declare Christ's rule unto you at one time, as it ought to be done, I will apply myself according to your custom at this time of Christmas. I will, as I said, declare unto you Christ's rule, but that shall be in Christ's cards. And whereas you are wont to celebrate Christmas in playing at cards, I intend, by God's grace, to deal unto you Christ's cards, wherein you will perceive Christ's rule. The game that we play at shall be called the Trump, which, if it be well played at, he that dealeth

doings of the other) brought out his Christmas dice, casting them to his audience *cinque* and *quatre*; meaning by the *cinque* five places in the New Testament, and the four doctors by the *quatre*; by which his *cinque-quatre* he would prove that it was not expedient for the Scripture to be in English, lest the ignorant and vulgar sort, through the occasion thereof, might haply be brought in danger to leave their vocation.'

The pulpit of this period gave birth to many of the terms and phrases still current in the language of political disputants, and, amongst others which have passed to the other side of the Atlantic, the use of the word 'platform,' so frequently heard on the lips of the stump-orators of the United States. 'If,' says Foxe, 'the platform of Stephen Gardiner had been a thing so necessary for the church, and so grateful unto God, why then did it not prosper with him, nor he with it, but both he and his platform lay in the dust, and not left behind him to build upon it?'

With respect to our ancestors' commercial usages and their ignorance of political science, the sermons of our old preachers abound with information for those who imagine that the morality of trade was purer in feudal than it is in modern England, or who are curious about the growth of certain obsolete legislation that resulted in injury to the trades and industries which it was supposed to foster. 'Furthermore,' says Cranmer, in one of his series of sermons, entitled the 'Catechism,'

shall win; the players shall likewise win; and the standers and lookers upon shall do the same: insomuch that there is no man that is willing to play at this trump with these cards but they shall all be winners, and no losers. Let, therefore, every Christian man and woman play at these cards, that they may have and obtain the trump. You must mark, also, that the trump must apply to fetch home unto him all the other cards, whatsoever suit they be of. Now, then, take ye this first card, which must appear and be showed unto you as followeth: "You have heard what was spoken unto men of the old law, Thou shalt not kill: whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say not unto you of the new law," saith Christ, "that whosoever is angry with his neighbour shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say unto his brother, Raca" (that is to say, brainless, or other like word of rebuking), "shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say unto his neighbour, Fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire." This card was made and spoken by Christ; it appeareth in the fifth chapter of St. Matthew. Now must it be noted, that whosoever shall play with this card must first, before they play with it, know the strength and virtue of the same.'

‘merchantmen, brokers, chapmen, merchants, factors, are thieves when they require unreasonable gains in selling of their merchandise, or when they utter corrupt and naughty ware for good; when they deceive their neighbour with false weight and measure; when, with forged letters and feigned news, they persuade others to be hasty to sell that kind of ware good cheap, which they know will be dear shortly after; or else, by such-like craft, entice men to buy of them great plenty of that kind of merchandise, of the which they know that the price will shortly after decay; or when, with their lies and perjuries, they cause a man to give more money for any stuff than he would have done if he had known that they had lied. Also, when the rich merchantmen and usurers have the heads of the poor handicraftsmen so bound under their girdles, that the poor men are of necessity compelled to bring their ware to them, and when the handicraftsmen do come to them and offer their stuff, then they feign that they have no need of such wares at that time, and by such means compel them to sell their wares better cheap than they may be able to afford them, not regarding what loss their poor neighbour doth suffer thereby. Also, when by forestalling, regrating, agreements in halls to raise the price of things, engrossing of merchandise, when one man or one company gets all in their own hands, so that no man may have gain, but they only—when by these or such-like deceits, they compel the poor to buy at their own price such wares as they must need have, then they are arrant thieves before God: for by such frauds they beguile their poor neighbours, and pillage them of their money against their wills. The handicraftsmen and daily labourers are also thieves, when they do not apply to their work diligently and faithfully, but sell counterfeited and slightly-wrought wares for substantial stuff, or require more for their labour and pains than they have deserved.’

Whilst Cranmer denounced thus frankly and fearlessly the extortionate methods of capitalists, and the thievish tricks of trade, which recent statutes and co-operative associations now-a-days obviate imperfectly or punish inadequately, Latimer denounced the covetousness and selfishness, the inordinate desire of wealth and the unscrupulous practices for its attain-

ment, which were no less deplorably prevalent in the London of the sixteenth than in the London of the nineteenth century. 'Now,' he exclaimed from the pulpit in the Shrouds—the covered meeting-place on the north side of St. Paul's Cathedral—in January 1548-9, 'what shall we say of these rich citizens of London? what shall I say of them? Shall I call them proud men of London, malicious men of London, merciless men of London? No, no, I may not say so: they will be offended with me then. Yet must I speak. For is there not reigning in London as much pride, as much covetousness, as much cruelty, as much oppression, and as much superstition, as there was in Nebo? Yes, I think, and much more too. Therefore I say, Repent, O London! repent, repent! Thou hearest thy faults told thee, amend them, amend them. I think, if Nebo had had the preaching that thou hast, they would have been converted. And you, rulers and officers, be wise and circumspect, look to your charge, and see you do your duties; and rather be glad to amend your ill living than be angry when you are warned or told of your fault. What ado was there made in London at a certain man, because he said (and, indeed, at that time on a just cause), "Burgesses," quoth he, "nay, butterflies." What ado there was for that word! and yet would that they were no worse than butterflies! Butterflies do but their nature: the butterfly is not covetous, is not greedy of other men's goods, is not full of envy and hatred, is not malicious, is not cruel, is not merciless. The butterfly glories not in her own deeds, nor prefers the traditions of men before God's word; it commits not idolatry, nor worships false gods. But London cannot abide to be rebuked: such is the nature of men. If they are pricked, they will kick: if they are galled, they will wince: but yet they will not amend their faults, they will not be ill spoken of. But how shall I speak well of them? If you could be content to receive and follow the word of God, and favour good preachers, if you could bear to be told of your faults, if you could amend when you hear of them, if you could be glad to reform that which is amiss; if I might see any such inclination in you, that you would leave off being merciless, and begin to be charitable, I would then hope well of you, I would then speak well of you. But London was never so ill as it is now.

In times past men were full of pity and compassion, but now there is no pity: *for, in London their brother shall die in the streets of cold, he shall lie sick at the door, and perish for hunger.* Was there ever more unmercifulness in Nehu? I think not. In times past, when any rich man died in London, they were wont to help the poor scholars of the universities with exhibitions. When any man died, they would bequeath great sums of money towards the relief of the poor. When I was a scholar in Cambridge myself I heard very good report of London, and knew many that had relief from the rich men of London; but now I hear no such good report, and yet I inquire into it, and hearken for it: but now charity is waxen cold, none helps the scholar nor yet the poor. And in those days, what did they when they helped the scholars? They maintained and gave them livings who were very papists, and professed the pope's doctrine; and now that the knowledge of God's word is brought to light, and many earnestly study and labour to set it forth, now hardly any man helps to maintain them.

It was thus frankly, and without any softening of terms to qualify the unpalatable truth with honied falsehood, that King Edward's clear-voiced, trenchant speaker, preaching before the wealthiest and most powerful people of the nation,—preaching, too, in the chief pulpit of the metropolis, and in the hearing alike of employers and workmen at fierce war on questions concerning the remuneration of labour,—charged the sufferings of the needy upon the rich, as a mass of crime for which they were responsible, and upbraided purse-proud merchants and selfish capitalists for tolerating a state of things that permitted Christian men and women to die of starvation in the midst of plenty. In these days of smooth words and courteous euphuisms, when 'mealy-mouthed rectors' are more ready to extol the affluent for their little virtues than to upbraid them for their great faults, such language would be severely reprehended by 'good society' as violent, reckless, calumnious, and calculated to 'set class against class.' That it was not acceptable to prosperous and insolent selfishness in the sixteenth century, the quoted passage furnishes conclusive testimony: and Latimer's sermons abound with proof of how he was detested and vilified by the wily plutocrats, whose greed and falseness he denounced,

whilst they kept their eyes fixed on the weathercocks which showed how the winds of Protestantism and Popery rose and fell, and took heed when the Protestant breeze was steady and strong to give no offence to the man who would be powerful, should Catholic gales again prevail. Butterflies in their fickleness, wolves in their ravenous greed, serpents in subtlety and poisonous bite, these people chuckled in their sleeves when in the following reign the preacher, who had told them to be guardians instead of robbers of the poor, was committed to the fiery death.

The apt phrase which now-a-days charges inconveniently earnest philanthropists with setting class against class had not been devised in King Edward's time; but Latimer's enemies had constantly on their lips a word that did them all the service that 'setting class against class' could have done. Master Latimer was 'indiscreet,'—that was the word, on every form of which the preacher's maligners incessantly played, as though the discretion which they approved and practised—the caution of cowardice and selfishness—were the chief virtue requisite in a minister of the gospel. Master Latimer lacked discretion! If Master Latimer would but be discreet, there would be contentment on the part of the poor, and an affluence of all such good fortune as discreet citizens could desire for the common weal. 'In England,' this lamentably indiscreet pastor exclaimed in his sermon on 'Covetousness,' 'if God's preacher, God's minister, is anything quick, or do speak sharply, then he is a foolish fellow, he is rash, he lacketh discretion. Nowadays, if they cannot reprove the doctrine that is preached, then they will reprove the preacher, that he lacketh due consideration of the times, or that he is of learning sufficient, but he wanteth discretion. They say, "What a time is this picked out to preach such things! he should have a respect and a regard to the time, and to the state of things and of the commonwealth." It rejoices me sometimes, when my friend comes and tells me that they find fault with my discretion, for by likelihood, think I, the doctrine is true; for if they could find fault with the doctrine, they would not charge me with lack of discretion, but they would charge me with my doctrine, and not with the lack of discretion, or with the inconvenience of the time.'

But if Latimer's denunciations of the pride and cruelty of the rich remind us vividly of some of the worst social evils that disfigured the decadence of feudal life, the abject condition of the poor, writhing under the tyranny and impoverished by the exactions of the privileged orders, is yet more forcibly and pathetically displayed by the passages of Tindal's 'Exposition upon the Sermon on the Mount,' which urge the humbler folk to submit meekly to the arrogance and dishonest practices of their landlords and landlords' stewards. 'If any man rail on thee and rebuke thee,' the preacher says, in his illustrations of the blessings attendant on meekness, 'answer not again, and the heat of his malice shall die in itself, and go out immediately, as fire does when no more wood is laid thereon. If the wrong done be greater than thou art able to bear, trust in God, and complain with all meekness to the officer that is set of God to forbid such violence. And if the gentlemen that dwell about thee be tyrants, be ready to help to fetch home their wood, to plough their land, to bring in their harvest, and so forth; and let thy wife visit my lady now and then with a couple of fat hens, or a fat capon, and such like, and then thou shalt possess all the remnant in rest, or else one quarrel or other may be picked with thee, to make thee quit of all together.' In the same graphic and familiar style, continuing to set forth the evil treatment which needy tenants endured at the hands of their taskmasters and official plunderers, Tindal, in a later section of the 'Exposition,' observes,—'Let all the world study to do thee wrong, yea, let them do thee wrong, and yet, if thou be meek, thou shalt have food and raiment enough for thee and thine. And moreover, if the worst come, God shall yet set such a tyrant over thee, that, if thou be meek and canst be content that he poll thee properly, and even as thou mayest bear, shall defend thee from all others. Who is polled intolerably, so that his life is bitter and even death to him, but that he is impatient and cannot suffer to be polled? Yea, poll thyself and prevent others, and give the bailiff or like officer now a capon, now a pig, now a goose, and so to thy landlord likewise. or if thou have a great farm, now a lamb, now a calf; and let thy wife visit thy landlady three or four times in the year with spiced cakes, and apples, pears, cherries, and such like. And be thou

ready with thine oxen or horses, three or four, or half-a-dozen days in the year, to fetch home their wood, or to plough their land; yea, and if thou have a good horse, let him have him good cheap, or take a worse for him, and they shall be thy shield and defend thee, though they be tyrants and care not for God, so that no man else shall dare poll thee. And thereto thou mayest with wisdom get of them that shall recompense all that thou doest to them. All this I mean, if thou be patient, and wise, and fear God thereto, and love thy neighbour, and do no evil. For if thou keep thyself in favour with hurting thy neighbour, thy end will be evil; and at the last desperation in this world, and hell after. But if thou canst not poll thyself with wisdom, and laugh and bear a good countenance, as though thou rejoicest while such persons poll thee, every man shall poll thee, and they shall maintain them, and not defend thee. Let this, therefore, be a common proverb,—“Be contented to be polled of some man, or to be polled of every man.” Hideous must have been the condition of the husbandmen and other members of rural commonalty, and scarcely removed from serfdom, when a preacher, so liberal, and enlightened, and spirited, as William Tindal, could thus counsel them to contend against their rapacious oppressors with hypocritical submissiveness and politic servility. The counsel, however, was no less judicious than needful in those revolutionary times; and the homely language in which it was conveyed is characteristic of the preacher, who, to demonstrate the unprofitableness of mere ceremonial observances, quaintly remarked, ‘He that goes about to purchase grace with ceremonies *doth but suck the ale-pole to quench his thirst*, inasmuch as the ceremonies were not given to justify the heart, but to signify the justifying and forgiveness that is in Christ’s blood.’

The sermons of old Anglican divines contain no better illustrations of our ancestors’ erroneous notions respecting the science of commerce than the terms in which the preachers of the reform period denounced usury; not only the usury that insisted on inordinate interest for small loans, but that system of lending money on terms in exact accordance with its value in open market, which is at the same time the mainspring of commercial enterprise and the chief source of our national prosperity.



‘Here,’ says Jewell, in his commentary ‘On the First Epistle to the Thessalonians,’ ‘will I speak somewhat of the unhappy trade of usury, because therein stands the most miserable and shameful deceiving of the brethren. I will not speak all that may be said, for it would be too long and over-wearisome . . . Many simple men know not what is usury, nor ever heard of the name of it. The world were happy if no man knew it, for evil things do less harm when they be most unknown. Pestilence and plagues are not known but with great misery. But that you may learn to know it, and the more to abhor, this it is. Usury is a kind of lending of money, or corn, or oil, or wine, or of any other thing, wherein, upon covenant and bargain, we receive again the whole principal which we delivered, and somewhat more, for the use and occupying of the same. Whence, then, springeth usury? This is soon showed. Even thence, whence theft, murder, adultery, the plagues and destruction of the people do spring; all these are the works of the devil, and the works of the flesh . . . Let us see further what are the fruits which come of usury. For perhaps it doth some good, and you may think that many are the better for it. These, therefore, are the fruits,—It dissolves the knot and fellowship of mankind; it hardens man’s heart; it makes men unnatural, and bereaves them of charity and love to their dearest friends; it breeds misery, and provokes the wrath of God from heaven; it consumes rich men; it eats up the poor; it makes bankrupts, and undoes many households. The poor occupiers are driven to flee, their wives are left alone, their children are helpless, and driven to beg their bread, through the unmerciful dealing of the covetous usurer . . . They were wise men; they thought that an usurer was much worse than a thief. For a thief is driven by extremity and need—the usurer is rich and hath no need; the thief stealeth in the corners, and in places where he may be unknown—the usurer, openly and boldly at all times, and in any place; the thief, to relieve his wife and children—the usurer, to spoil his neighbour, and to undo his wife and children: the thief stealeth from the rich who have enough—the usurer from the poor who have nothing; the thief fleeth, and will be seen no more—the usurer standeth by it, continueth and stealeth still, day and night, sleeping and waking, he always stealeth: the

thief repents of his deed, he knows he has done wrong, and is sorry for it—the usurer thinks it his own, that it is well gotten, and never repents nor sorrows, but defends and maintains his sin impudently; the thief, if he escape, many times becomes profitable to his country, and bestows himself painfully upon some trade of life—the usurer leaves his merchandise, forsakes his husbandry, gives himself to nothing whereby his country may have benefit; the thief is satisfied at length—the usurer never has enough.’

Inferring from the excessive warmth of this invective against a commercial practice which, when fairly exercised, is eminently beneficial to mankind, that the prelate meant his remarks to be applied to none but dishonest money-lenders, one of his editors asks us to believe that Jewell spoke only ‘against advantage taken unfairly in the use of money or other commodities, to the ruin of those who borrow.’ But whilst, on the one hand, the lecturer on the First Epistle to the Thessalonians makes no such exception of honest dealers in money, it is, on the other hand, a matter of certainty, that in Elizabethan England every practice of usury, every mode of deriving benefit from capital by placing it out at interest, was deemed by the clergy immoral, and an infringement of divine law. It was not till the civil troubles of the seventeenth century had driven many of the ejected clergy to convert their modest accumulations into sources of income, that clerical opinion reluctantly sanctioned the commercial system in which every holder of government-stocks is a participator. Expelled from their parsonages, deprived of their glebe and tithal incomes, and left with no means but the inadequate and irregularly paid ‘fifths’ for the support of themselves and families, a considerable proportion of the incumbents displaced by the Parliamentary Committees preserved themselves from almost total destitution, or at least from painful straits, by a timely relinquishment of their scruples against usury.

Dr. (afterwards Bishop) Sanderson is one of the most interesting of these cases; for, though he had previously written against usury, the Doctor, on being ejected from all his preferments with the exception of his modest Lincolnshire living, consented to make profit out of his capital by a device which he could reconcile to his conscience, as having in it no savour

of the money-lender's sin. In 'Church and Dissenters Compared,' an able refutation of some of the impudent assertions in Dr. Walker's 'Sufferings of the Clergy,' Dr. Calamy says of this subtle teacher and pious Churchman,—'Thus, for instance, the learned Dr. Sanderson, though he met with some trouble at his living of Boothby Panel, in Lincolnshire, yet after a short confinement at Lincoln, he being exchanged for Mr. Clark of Allington (who was prisoner at Newark), matters were so compromised between them two (the one being by agreement a security for the other), that the Doctor was far from being reduced to any poverty in those times, nor was he in a pitiful condition in 1658. He lived in as much plenty as the better sort of clergy did upon his rectory, and maintained his family fashionably. His living was valued at 130*l.* or 140*l.* per annum, and he had money besides, which did not lie dead. For though he did not put it out to interest in the ordinary way, which he had written against, yet did he dispose of it in a way really more advantageous to the lender, and sometimes to the borrower. For he would give an 100*l.* for 20*l.* for seven years. This he thought lawful, but not the common way, which occasioned reflections from several on his casuistical skill.'

The Elizabethan preachers used plain and discourteous language in ridiculing the effeminacy and egregious vanity of fops, and the extravagant apparel of fine ladies; but of all the clerical denouncers of costly attire and grotesque adornments I know of none more piquant and humorous than the author of the homily against 'Excess of Apparel.' 'But alas,' exclaims this censor of fashionable folly, 'now-a-days, how many may we behold occupied wholly in pampering the flesh, taking no care at all, but only how to deck themselves, setting their affection altogether on worldly bravery, abusing God's goodness when He sendeth plenty, to satisfy their wanton lusts, having no regard to the degree wherein God hath placed them. The Israelites were contented with such apparel as God gave them, although it were base and simple. And God so blessed them, that their shoes and clothes lasted them forty years; yea, and those clothes, which their fathers had worn, their children were contented to use afterward. But we are never contented, and therefore we

prosper not; so that most commonly he that ruffeth in his sables, in his fine furred gown, corked slippers, trim buskins, and warm mittens, is more ready to chill for cold than the poor laboring man, which can abide in the field all the day long, when the north wind blows, with a few beggarly clouts about him. We are loth to wear such as our fathers have left us; we think not that sufficient or good enough for us. We must have one gown for the day, another for the night; one long, another short; one for winter, another for summer; one through-furred, another but faced; one for the working-day, another for the holy-day; one of this colour, another of that colour; one of cloth, another of silk or damask. We must have change of apparel, one afore dinner, another after; one of the Spanish fashion, another Turkey; and to be brief, never content with sufficient. . . . Certainly, such as delight in gorgeous apparel are commonly puffed up with pride, and filled with divers vanities. So were the daughters of Sion and people of Jerusalem, whom Isaiah the prophet threateneth, because they walked with stretched-out necks and wandering eyes, mincing as they went, and nicely treading with their feet, that almighty God would make their heads bald, and discover their secret shame. "In that day," saith he, "shall the Lord take away the ornament of the slippers, and the cauls, and the round attires, and the sweet balls, and the bracelets, and the attires of the head, and the slops, and the head-bands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, the rings, and the mufflers, the costly apparel, and the veils, and wimples, and the cringing-pins, and the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the lawns." . . . Yea, many men are become so effeminate that they care not what they spend in disguising themselves, ever desiring new toys, and inventing new fashions. Therefore a certain man that would picture every countryman in his accustomed apparel, when he had painted other nations, he pictured the Englishman all naked, and gave him cloth under his arm, and bade him make it himself as he thought best, for he changed his fashion so often, that he knew not how to make it. Thus with our fantastical devices we make ourselves laughing-stocks to other nations; while one spendeth his patrimony upon pounces and cuts, another

bestoweth more on a dancing-shirt, than might suffice to buy him honest and comely apparel for his whole body. Some hang their revenues about their necks, ruffling in their ruffs, and many a one jeopardeth his best joynt, to maintain himself in sumptuous rayment.'

Turning again, and yet more fiercely, on the clients of the Mesdames Rachel of the sixteenth century, and on the Elizabethan 'girls of the period,' the homilist exclaims,—'But it will be here objected and said of some nice and vain women, that all which we do in painting our faces, in dying our hair, in embalming our bodies, in decking us with gay apparel, is to please our husbands, to delight his eyes, and to retain his love toward us.\* O vain excuse, and most shameful answer, to the reproach of thy husband. What couldst thou more say to set out his foolishness, than to charge him to be pleased and delighted with the devil's attire? Who can paint her face, and curl her hair, and change it into an unnatural colour, but therein doth work reproof to her Maker, who made her? As though she could make herself more comely than God hath appointed the measure of her beauty. . . . What else dost thou, but settest out thy pride, and makest of the undecent apparel of the body the devil's net, to catch the souls of them which behold thee? O thou woman, not a Christian, but worse than a Paynim, thou minister of the devil! Why pamperest thou that carrion flesh so high, which sometimes doth stink and rot on the earth as thou

\* That the clergy of more recent periods equalled, if they did not surpass, the clergy of Elizabeth's time in the frankness with which they preached against woman's taste for artificial adornments, we know from one of the 'Guardians,' in which Addison says, 'I know a parish, where the top woman of it used to appear with a patch upon some part of her forehead; the good man of the place preached at it with great zeal for almost a twelvemonth, but instead of fetching out the spot which he perpetually aimed at, he only got the name of Parson Patch for his pains. Another is to this day called Dr. Topknot, for reasons of the same nature. I remember the clergy, during the time of Cromwell's usurpation, were very much taken up in reforming the female world, and showing the vanity of those outward ornaments in which the sex so much delight. I have heard a whole sermon against a white-wash, and have known another against a coloured ribbon. The clergy of the present age are not transported with these indiscreet fervours, as knowing that it is hard for a reformer to avoid ridicule when he is severe upon subjects which are rather apt to produce mirth than seriousness.'

goest? Howsoever thou perfumest thyself, yet cannot thy beastliness be hidden or overcome with thy smells and savours, which do rather deform and misshape thee than beautifie thee.'

Such broad and intemperate language may seem scarcely meet for delicate ears in these times of refinement and dainty speech, but it is still regarded by authority as fit to be read aloud in our parish-churches.

## CHAPTER IX.

### FUNEBRIOUS RITES.

**R**ICH though they were in pictorial sights, the streets of old London afforded loungers few spectacles more pompous and impressive than the pageants with which the corpses of important and wealthy persons were conveyed from their relinquished dwellings to the grave. The funereal procession, arranged and conducted by heralds with nice attention to every detail of the deceased person's worldly honours, comprised a numerous body of robed priests and choristers who marched before the coffin, chanting in plaintive strains the Latin words of the Catholic dirge. Immediately preceded by an ecclesiastical servitor who swung to and fro a sacred bell, the coffin was either conveyed on an open car (from which we derive the modern hearse), or borne on the shoulders of the dead man's nearest friends; and, instead of being veiled by a black pall, it was usually decked with flowers or draped with a coverlet made of sacerdotal copes. Sometimes the coffin was preceded by an open chariot which displayed to spectators the 'lively effigy' or waxen image of the individual whose corporeal remains were being taken thus sumptuously to the tomb. The rear of the procession consisted of a long train of black-robed mourners, bearing in their hands floral wreaths or sprigs of rosemary.

On April 12, 1559, whilst the spirituality were still designing the important changes in our national faith and religious observances which are now-a-days designated by the comprehensive word—Reformation, Sir Rice Mansfield, a knight of ancient lineage and honourable achievements, was interred in Blackfriars Church with all the picturesque formalities usual at the burials of great men in Catholic England. 'The corpse,' says Strype,

in his notice of this characteristic interment, 'was brought from Clerkenwell into the Blackfriars, with two heralds, and the rest of the ceremonies usual: twenty-four priests and clerks singing before him, all in Latin. The friars' church was hung with black, and coats of arms. The dirige was sung both in the parish where he died and likewise where he was buried. There were carried along with him four banners of saints and many other banners. The morrow masses were said in both churches. Afterward was his standard, coat, helmet, target, offered up at the high altar. And all this being performed, the company retired to his place to dinner. This was the common way of funerals of persons of quality in the popish times.'

Not quite two months later, the obsequies of a lady of quality were celebrated with similar pomp, but with significant innovations, in the time which may be called the Elizabethan interval betwixt the Papal and Protestant periods of our national history.' 'June the 2nd,' says Strype, in his 'Annals of the Reformation,' 'was buried in Little St. Bartholomew's the Lady Barnes, late wife of Sir George Barnes, Knt. Sometime lord mayor of London. . . . There attended the funeral Mr. Clarenceux, and twenty clerks singing afore her to the church, *all in English*. All the place (*i. e.* her house), and the streets through which they passed, and the church, all hung in black and coats of arms. Being come to the church and *the English service sung*, Mr. Home made a sermon. After that, the clerks sung "Te Deum," *in English*, then the corpse was buried with something sung—I suppose it was the versicles, beginning "Man that is born of a woman." The weeks that elapsed between Sir Rice Mansfield's funeral and Lady Barnes's interment, had been weeks of rapid religious progress, resulting in more important changes than this introduction of English into the religious service of the gentlewoman's obsequies.

The same instructive collector, to whom we are indebted for the foregoing accounts of burials in the first year of Elizabeth's reign, has also given us a graphic picture of the forms observed, or rather instituted, at the obsequies of a Protestant lady who was committed to the grave, four days before Sir Rice Mansfield's burial, by friends whose Protestantism was of a puritanical complexion. 'April the 7th,' says Strype, in 'Annals of the



Reformation,' 'a gentlewoman was buried at St. Thomas of Acre; whose funeral being performed after a different way from the common superstitious and ceremonial custom, my journalist sets it forth down as a matter worthy his noting; and writes, that she was brought from St. Bartholomew's beside Lothbury, with a great company of people, walking two-and-two, and neither priests nor clerks present (who used ever to be present [and that in considerable numbers] at the burials of persons of any note, going before, and singing for the soul of the departed). But instead of them went the new preachers in their gowns; and they neither singing nor saying, till they came to the church. And then, before the corpse was put into the grave, a collect was said in English (whereas before time all was said in Latin), and the body being laid in the grave, one took earth and cast it upon the corpse, and read something that belonged to the same; and incontinently they covered it with earth. And then was read the epistle out of St. Paul to the Thessalonians for the occasion. (Perhaps that place where it begins, "But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others, which have no hope," *i. e.* unless here be a mistake, and the Thessalonians put for the Corinthians; the epistle that is appointed in our Common Prayer-book to be read at funerals). And after this they sung the "Pater Noster" in English, as well preachers as all the company, women not excepted, after a new fashion. And after all one went into the pulpit and made a sermon. This was accounted strange at this time; but it seems to be partly the office of burial used in King Edward's time, and some other additions to it. And this was somewhat boldly done, when as yet the old religion was in force.'

For many years after Elizabeth's accession, choristers, chanting sacred strains whilst they marched through the streets before the coffin, continued to be a feature of important funerals. 'It is a custome,' we are told by Greene in 'Concept' (1548), 'still in use with Christians, to attend the funerall of their deceased friendes with whole chantries of choyce quire-men singing solemnly before them; but behind followes a troope all clad in black, which argues mourning; much have I marveled at this ceremony, deeming it some hidden paradox, confounding thus

in one things so opposite as these signes of joy and sorrowe.' Gradually relinquished in our cities so that, so far as they are concerned, it may be said to have expired in the seventeenth, this custom was retained in various parts of the provinces so late as the close of the eighteenth century. Pennant tells us that in his time the usage was preserved in North Wales in 'a custom of singing psalms on the way as the corpse is carried to church.'

When the coffin was exposed to view, and sometimes when it was draped with an embroidered pall, the undertakers of Elizabethan England used to adorn it with flowers and branches of trees—not laid upon the lid, but stuck into the wood of the mortuary chest, so that they stood up like planted shrubs. In Bishop Hall's 'Occasional Meditations' we read;—'On the sight of a coffin stuck with flowers:—Too fair appearance is never free from just suspicion. While here was nothing but mere wood, no flowers was to be seen here; now, that this wood is lined with an unsavoury corpse, it is adorned with this sweet variety. The fir, whereof that coffin is made, yields a natural redolence alone; now, that it is stuffed thus noisomely, all helps are too little to countervail that scent of corruption.' Just as the mutes and black-clothed footmen, now-a-days employed by undertakers to heighten the pomp of funereal processions, officiate in place of the banner-bearers and walking guard with which the heralds of former time surrounded an obsequious car and train of mourners,—the rigid sticks of black material, miscalled plumes, which disfigure rather than adorn our modern hearses or coffin-cars, are supposed to represent the growth of gloomy foliage with which coffins were decked for public exhibition by our forefathers.

In Elizabethan England the word 'hearse' was applicable to three different objects—the coffin in which a dead man's actual corpse was carried to the tomb; the funereal car which preceded the coffin in obsequious processions, and on which, in an open coffin, was exhibited the deceased person's 'lively effigy,' modelled in wax; and the catafalco, or temporary structure of a draped and artfully-decorated scaffold, erected in the church where the obsequies were celebrated. The Shakespearian reader of Scene II., Act I., Richard III., does not need

to be reminded of the pathetic speech with which Lady Anne opens the scene,—

‘Set down, set down your honourable load,—  
If honour may be shrouded in a hearse.’

The words following this order, construed literally, imply that Henry the Sixth's corpse, and not his ‘lively effigy,’ was the object of the mourner's regard as well as the burden borne by the bearers; but it is probable that the dramatist merely designed to represent the royal widow and the royal usurper as gazing on the dead man's waxen image, though, to a late date of England's medieval story, the actual corpses of the dead were displayed at their obsequies in open coffins. That the interlocutors in the scene speak of the figure as the actual corpse is no evidence with respect to the poet's intention; for had he specified in a stage-note that the exhibited form was only a ‘lively image,’ he would have been none the less true to nature and usage in making Lady Anne and Richard address it and speak of it as though it were the thing which it represented. But whether the bearers are understood to be carrying an open coffin, in which the relics of the murdered king are visible, or a closed coffin surmounted by a couch, containing a lively effigy, the object is called a hearse, in accordance with the usage of our Elizabethan ancestors, who applied the term indifferently to a draped coffin and a funeral car as well as an ecclesiastical catafalco.

Draped with black cloth the catafalco, or fixed hearse, was the platform on which were exhibited, in the church of his interment, the deceased man's waxen image, the heraldic description of his ancestry and honours, his armorial coat and the banners of his house, the account of his virtuous achievements, and the numerous verses, original or adopted, which friendly pens inscribed to his glorification. The catafalco of an important person usually stood a month or six weeks for the admiration of gentle mourners and simple gazers, when it was removed to make way for another mortuary structure of the same kind. The fixed hearses of kings or other royal personages stood for much longer periods; and, in times when deaths were frequent, an important church in a populous parish was seldom without

two or three of the costly and cumbrous erections. Westminster Abbey rarely had less than half-a-dozen of them reared at various points of its interior; and it was a favourite amusement with the loungers and quidnuncs of the Elizabethan time to visit the church, for the sake of inspecting the adornments of its hearses, and reading the numerous laudatory writings in verse and prose which had been affixed to their draperies. The hearse of an eminent patron of letters, or of a writer popular amongst the members of his craft, sometimes had a score, or even two score, of these literary tributes, which, in Elizabethan England, were inspired by sympathy for the living as well as by respect for the dead, and achieved the ends nowadays more exactly and appropriately effected by letters of condolence. Of these epitaphs for exhibition on catafalcos, no finer specimen exists than the well-known lines in which Ben Jonson rendered meet honour to the Countess of Pembroke,—

‘ Underneath this sable hearse  
Lies the subject of all verse.  
Sidney’s sister, Pembroke’s mother;  
Death! ere thou hast slain another,  
Learned, and fair, and good as she,  
Time shall throw a dart at thee.’

That this custom of adorning fixed hearses with poetical compositions survived the Elizabethan period, and was observed in comparatively recent time, it is needless to remark; but readers, not familiar with Anthony à Wood, will like to peruse a passage of his autobiography, which relates to the obsolete usage. In 1655, when Oxford was in the hands of the Puritans, Anthony’s eldest brother, Edward Wood, fellow of Merton, died to the great concern of the University, whilst he was still occupying the office of junior proctor. ‘His body,’ says Anthony, the antiquarian, ‘was carried into the common hall of Merton College, where the society, and such masters of art that were pleased to come to pay their last respects to him, had gloves, wine, and bisket in abundance, as also had the doctors, heades of houses, and his brother proctor, Samuel Bruen, to which last E. Wood had bequeathed money to buy him a mourning-gown. Afterwards, his body being carried to Merton College Church, there was a sermon preached for that occasion

by his aforesaid quondam tutor, which, being not extant, I cannot refer to it. His hearse was adorned with escocheons and verses; among which last was a copie, made by his acquaintance Dr. Barton Holyday, archdeacon of Oxford, running thus,—

‘Upon the Death of his vertuous and prudent Friend, Mr. Edw. Wood, in the beginning of his Proctorship of the Universitie of Oxon.

Chosen he was a censor of the times;  
He chose to dye, rather than view the crimes;  
The Cynique’s lanterne he far wiser thought,  
That for an honest man at high-noon sought,  
Then bring a midnight sinner to the light,  
Whose darker actions do outshade the night.  
Friend! thou wast wise, with honour thus to dye.  
Fame is thy epitaph, thy tombe the skye.’

That the black pall was not generally used to veil the coffin in funereal processions before the civil war of Charles the First’s time may be inferred from a passage in Francis Cheynell’s ‘Chillingworthii Novissima,’\* the work in which one of the wildest of puritanical fanatics set forth the particulars of William Chillingworth’s sickness, death, and interment at Chichester. After inveighing with equal fervour and indecency against the acts and imputed motives of his dead adversary, Cheynell informs us that Chillingworth’s coffin was draped with a ‘mourning herse-cloth, instead of being covered with a pall made of old copes; and that his bearers were provided, in accordance with the custom of the country, with gloves, mourning-scarves, and branches of rosemary.’ ‘First,’ the writer observes, ‘there were all things which may any way appertaine to the civility of a funerall, though there was nothing which belongs to the superstition of a funerall. His body was decently laid in a convenient coffin, covered with a mourning herse-cloth, more seemly (as I conceive) than the usuall covering, patched up out of the mouldy reliques of some moth-eaten copes. His friends were entertained (according to their own desire) with wine and cakes, though that

\* The writer’s temper is indicated by the abusive title of this scandalous publication,—‘Chillingworthii Novissima; or, The Sicknesse, Heresy, Death and Buriall of William Chillingworth (in his own Parish), Clerk of Oxford, and, in the Conceit of his Fellow-Souldiers, the Queen’s Arch-Engineer and Grand Intelligencer. Set forth in a Letter, &c. By Francis Cheynell, late Fellow of Merton College.’

is, in my conceit, a turning of the house of mourning into an house of banqueting. All that offered themselves to carry his corpse out of pure devotion, because they were men of his persuasion, had everyone of them (according to the custom of the country) a branch of rosemary, a mourning-riband, and a paire of gloves.' In the persistency with which our forefathers of the seventeenth century clung to this ancient use of palls made out of copes, long after repugnance to Catholic opinion and practices had become a ruling sentiment in all classes of the laity, we have an instructive illustration of the slowness and reluctance with which men relinquish long-established customs that stir the affections without revolting the conscience.

Cheynell omits to say who were Chillingworth's bearers; but we may safely presume that the author of 'The Religion of Protestants' was borne to his last earthly resting-place by friends who were members of his sacred profession as well as 'men of his persuasion.' That clergymen in Catholic times were ordinarily carried to the grave by men of their own vocation and spiritual quality, the reader needs not to be told; and that this comely practice was observed in Charles the First's time we have an abundance of biographic evidence, but no single piece of testimony more worthy of commemoration than the terms in which Dr. Humphrey Henchman, after becoming Bishop of London, recalled the part he had taken at George Herbert's funeral. 'I laid my hand, then, on Mr. Herbert's head,' the prelate remarked to Isaak Walton, in reference to Herbert's ordination; and, after a pause, he added with emotion, 'and, alas! within less than three years, I lent my shoulder to carry my dear friend to the grave.'

Funereal sermons were delivered in old time over the graves of the persons to whom they specially referred; and, like the obsequious eulogies still uttered in many countries over the open tombs of distinguished men, they appear almost invariably to have been dictated by a wish to confer honour on the dead and afford comfort to the survivors. In England's variable climate it was, however, soon found most convenient for the preacher and the congregation of mourners that the panegyric should be spoken under cover of the adjacent church, where the orator could more easily render justice to his subject and the

auditors could listen with greater comfort and profit. The next change, modestly introduced and gradually made general, was to postpone the utterance of the funereal encomium from the day of interment,—when in the case of a comparatively humble person's death, no large concourse of listeners would be present,—to the nearest holy-day, when the dead man's praises would be sounded in the ears of a full congregation. Occasionally preachers ventured to point the moral of a bad man's life by speaking frankly of his misdeeds on the solemn day when, had he been a worthy man, his memory would have been covered with affectionate praise; but public opinion seldom failed to express disapprobation of these unusual departures from the established etiquette of funereal oratory, and the clergy, in commenting on the lives of deceased parishioners, were constrained to respect the rule that awards silence or praise to men who are no longer in the world to answer their censors. But if charity gained, social sincerity was often injured, by this arrangement. When significant reticence had become the instrument by which the conscientious priest demonstrated his disapproval of a dead man's character and career, the pastor's silence became no less condemnatory and dreadful than audible censure; and, fearful of the evil report, 'He was a sorry fellow: even the parson could speak no good of him,' dying men, solicitous for their posthumous respectability, were wont to leave their parish priests legacies on condition that the reverend legatees spoke of them from the pulpit,—the testators knowing well that, if mentioned at all by a public preacher, they would be mentioned with charitable forbearance, if not with enthusiastic eulogium. Hence arose the class of obsequious panegyrics, aptly denounced by a funereal orator of the Commonwealth period as 'the vain flourishes of mercenary tongues, and the weak supports of an emendicated fame.'\*—sermons which resulted from tacit compact between preachers and dying men, or the representatives of dead men,

\* 'The testimony given him at his interment by him who performed that last office with many tears, and which he knowingly spake from his long and intimate acquaintance and conversing with him almost forty years, take with you for a close in that minister's own words out of the pulpit:—"Although funerall orations are commonly either the vain flourishes of mercenary tongues, or the weak supports of an emendicated fame; and since good men's works shall praise them

that the former should give praise and the latter reward it directly or indirectly with adequate remuneration.

Tenacious of the ancient funereal usages which had originated in medieval superstition and feudal pomp, our Protestant ancestors were especially obstinate in maintaining all those obsequious practices which added to the pecuniary expense of burials. Superstitious attachment to old ways, family pride, and affection for the dead, concurred in rendering them unwilling to resist the costly exactions of the undertaker, and slow to abolish the ostentatious ceremonies with which fantastic heralds and extortionate tradesmen had given meretricious attractiveness to the necessary and repulsive business of interment. The obsequies of a gentle person, even so late as the close of the last century, were seldom performed without a wasteful expenditure of money on the useless display of a long funereal train; on presents of mourning-clothes and mourning-rings to the relatives and mourners of the deceased person; on funebrious hangings for the church in which he was buried; on exorbitant fees to clergymen and clerks, organists and singers, sextons and ringers; and on a luxurious banquet, from which the guests seldom retired until they had conquered their transient grief with excessive indulgence in wine. In the days of Charles the Second, it was ordinarily remarked that it cost a private gentleman of small estate more to bury his wife than to endow his daughter for marriage with a rich man; and the same might have been said at any time prior to George the Third's accession. When Samuel Pepys died in straitened circumstances, at the opening of the eighteenth century, so many as one hundred and forty-two gold rings were distributed amongst his kinsmen, friends, and slight acquaintances; and from the several entries in his Diary, which make mention of burials at which he, in common with invited and uninvited mourners, received gold mourning-rings, I am disposed to think that the number of

in the gates, 'tis but to light a candle to the sun; and since bad men's works cannot be covered with so thin a daub, 'tis but to paint a rotten post. Yet some testimony is due to such, as having obtained a more eminent place in Christ's mysticall body the Church, have also been instruments of more than ordinary good to His members.'—*I'ide* 'Life and Death of Mr. Samuel Crook, late Pastor of Wington.' (1651.)



these useless mementoes given away at his own obsequies did not surpass custom.

Aware of the harm which this funebrious prodigality wrought to gentle but not wealthy families, that had neither the courage to refuse nor competent means to accede to the claims of ancient obsequious fashion, several of our eminent Anglican divines set an example of prudent simplicity in the directions which they left for the celebration of their own obsequies. Thus Bishop Sanderson, dying whilst Charles the Second was still a new king, gave the following orders in his last testament: ‘As for my corruptible body I bequeath it to the earth whence it was taken, to be decently buried in the Parish Church of Buckden . . . . and that with as little noise, pomp, and charge as may be, without the invitation of any person how near soever related to me, other than the inhabitants of Buckden; without the unnecessary expense of escutcheons, gloves, ribbons, &c., and without any blacks to be hung anywhere in or about the house or church, other than a pulpit-cloth, a hearse-cloth, and a mourning-gown for the Preacher; whereof the former—after my body shall be interred—to be given to the preacher of the funeral sermon, and the latter to the curate of the parish for the time being. And my will further is, that the Funeral Sermon be preached\* by my own household Chaplain, containing some wholesome discourse concerning mortality, the Resurrec-

\* John Evelyn’s commendatory notice of the sermon delivered at the obsequies of his father-in-law, Sir Richard Browne, Knt., gives us a complete picture of what was deemed in Charles the Second’s days an appropriate funebrious encomium for a gallant and scholarly gentleman. ‘The vicar,’ says the diarist, ‘preached a short and proper discourse on Psalm xxxix. 10, on the frailty of our mortal condition; concluding with an ample and well-deserved eulogy on the defunct, relating to his honourable birth and ancestors, education, learning in Greek and Latin, modern languages, travels, public employments, signal loyalty, character abroad, and particularly the honour of supporting the Church of England in its public worship during its persecution by the late rebels’ usurpation and regicide, by the suffrages of divers Bishops, Doctors of the Church, and others, who found such an asylum in his house and family at Paris, that in their disputes with the Papists (then triumphing over it as utterly lost), they used to argue for its visibility and existence from Sir R. Browne’s chapel and assembly there. Then he spake of his great and loyal sufferings during thirteen years’ exile with his present majesty, his return with him in the signal year 1660, his honourable employment at home, his timely recess to recollect himself, his great age, infirmities, and death.’

tion of the Dead, and the Last Judgment; and that he shall have for his pains 5*l.*, on condition that he speaks nothing at all concerning my person, either good or ill, other than I myself shall direct, only signifying to the auditory that it was my express desire to have it so.'

The funebrious practices with church-bells—still observed with greater or less irregularity at many, if not most, of our churches, were derived from Catholic campanology, the professors of which ancient and fantastic art laid down rules for the ringing of passing (or soul) bells, peals to announce the soul's arrival in purgatory, peals to remind Christians of their obligation to pray for human spirits retained in purgatorial bonds, and joy-peals to dispel the gloom contracted by the performance of obsequious rites. Rung whilst the sick person lay *in extremis*,—sometimes in his hearing, and to his great perturbation,—the passing-bell was tolled from the moment when his attendants pronounced him to be sinking, until he had actually expired his last breath. At the same time an announcement to the priest to hasten to the dying man's side, and a warning to pious mortals that their supplications were needed by a fellow-creature, who had not relinquished the body's fetters, the passing-bell had its wholesome uses, besides the pernicious influence which it exercised on the imaginations of superstitious misbelievers who had been trained to think that its resonant pulsations drove off satanic spirits, and hindered them from worrying the soul during its departure and passage to the next world.

By one of the advertisements for due order, published in the seventh year of Elizabeth, it was ordered: '*Item*, that when any Christian bodie is in passing, that the bell shall be tolled, and that the curate after the time of this passage to ringe no more but one short peale: and one before the buriall, and another short peale after the buriall.' Against the moderate use of the passing-bell—*i. e.* used whilst the soul is actually leaving its earthly tenement, and not continued beyond the moment of death—nothing can be alleged on Protestant grounds. Nor can the Protestant object to the peal rung immediately before the burial, so long as it is regarded only as a summons to the congregation to attend the obsequies of a departed brother from motives of affection. But as much can-

not be said for the intermediate peal, which can serve no social purpose apart from its original design to call on the living to pray for the dead. That the passing-bell continued so late as the middle of the last century to be rung whilst the person, in whose behalf it was sounded, retained life in his body, we know from Nelson who says in his ‘Fasts and Festivals of the Church’ (1732), ‘If his senses hold out so long, he can hear even his passing-bell without disturbance.’ Strangely, however, repugnance to superstitious usage has caused us to discontinue the ringing of passing-bells, which do not necessarily involve any countenance of vain superstitions, and yet almost as universally we preserve the custom of ringing the second or intermediate peal—*i. e.* the peal between the old passing peal and the peal immediately before burial, which in the first instance had only a superstitious use and significance. In many parishes, where the passing peal has been discontinued, its name has been conferred on this second peal which, in the opinion of some antiquarians, was the soul-bell of Catholic times. For instance,—to name one out of thousands of parishes,—at Framlingham in Suffolk, the miscalled ‘passing-bell’ is tolled when the soul of the dead person *has* passed from the body a certain number of hours.

The sixty-seventh canon of the church defines precisely the times for the four bells,—1, the passing-bell; 2, the second (or soul) bell; 3, the burial-bell, to summon mourners to the interment; 4, the quick (or joy) peal after interment. ‘When’ runs the canon ‘any person is dangerously sick in any parish, the minister or curate, having knowledge thereof, shall resort unto him or her (*if the disease be not known, or probably suspected, to be infectious* \*), to instruct and comfort them in distress, according to the order of the Communion Book, if he be no preacher; or if he be a preacher, then as he shall think most needful and convenient. And when any is passing out of this life, a bell shall be tolled, and the minister shall not slack to do his last duty. And after the party’s death, if it so fall out, there shall be rung no more than one short peal, and one other before the burial, and one other after the burial.’

\* To the honour of our clergy be it observed, that they seldom avail themselves of the pretext for negligence held out by this cruel and cowardly clause.

In his 'History of Whiteford and Holywell,' Pennant says, with respect to these four bells for the dead, 'That excellent memento to the living, the passing-bell, is punctually sounded. I mention this because idle niceties have, in great towns, often caused the disuse. It originated before the Reformation, to give notice to the priest to do the last duty of extreme unction to the departing person in case he had no other admonition. The canon (67) allows one short peal after death, one other before the funeral, and one other after the funeral. The second is still in use, and is a single bell solemnly tolled. The third is a merry peal, rung at the request of the relations; as if, Scythian like, they rejoiced at the escape of the departed out of this troublesome world.'

Not only did our Elizabethan ancestors terminate their funereal rites with a quick and joyous peal, but, on the anniversary of a notable person's death, they would sometimes commemorate the doleful event by a repetition of the merry ringing. And from this singular and inconsistent practice arose the still general custom of celebrating royal birthdays with the music of church bells. The particular circumstances that gave rise to this latter practice are recorded in Anthony à Wood's 'History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford;' and the annalist's notice of the affair is all the more worthy of insertion in this work because it has escaped the researches of the several collectors of the curiosities of campanology, with whose writings I am familiar.

Filling the Catholics with deep dejection in proportion as it elated the Protestants, Queen Mary's death was at the same time a cause of open rejoicing to the one, and of secret lamentation to the other, party of our forefathers; and in no city of the kingdom was this conflict of feelings and opinions deeper and keener than at Oxford, where the majority of the gownsmen were warmly attached to the old faith, and the citizens no less cordially devoted to religious reform.\* From an early date the

\* The terms in which Anthony à Wood speaks of Edward the Sixth's unhappy reign and Queen Mary's beneficent rule, show how enthusiastically the Caroline Royalists cherished the sentiments of the Marian Catholics. 'And now, reader,' says Wood, 'having given you a brief relation of the unhappy transactions of the University in the reign of King Edw. VI., I shall speak of the affairs acted in the time of Q. Mary, who, obtaining the crown, Religion and Learning put on another

town had thus opposed the university with a hostile spirit that, surviving the quarrels of the ecclesiastical revolution, has displayed itself in antagonism to the academic authorities from the days of Elizabeth to the days of Victoria, with the exception of the brief period of the *interregnum*, when popular politics prevailed alike in the municipality and the schools. Under Elizabeth, when the scholars were for the most part fierce High Churchmen or disguised favourers of the Papacy, the citizens were supporters of the Puritans. In the days of Laud's supremacy, the Oxford burgesses prayed and plotted for the subversion of the episcopacy and the triumph of the Presbyterians; and when Oxford became the head-quarters of the royal army, and the students formed themselves into regiments sworn to defend their sovereign's cause and person, the authorities of the town, sullenly submitting to the martial law which they dared not openly defy, did their utmost to aid the Parliament by revealing the movements of the Royalist forces to the scouts and spies of the rebel armies. In later days, when the university was Jacobite, the town was Hanoverian,—when the colleges were nurseries of Tory politicians, the tradesmen who subsisted on the colleges proved themselves staunch Whigs; and so, at the present hour, whilst the university is represented at Westminster by two Conservatives, the city sends two Liberals to Parliament.

But never, either before or since the triumph of Protestantism, was the feud between town and gown hotter or more malignant than it was during the opening years of Elizabeth's reign, which saw the university tradesmen become more insolent as their party became more triumphant, and rendered the Marian Churchmen more acrimonious to the city in proportion as they lost influence in the state. The mutual animosity of the belligerents broke out in bickerings and recriminations, assaults and riots; but on no occasion was it productive of anything more comic at the time, or more notable in its results, than the alter-

face (fancy it, if you please, to have been so as at the restauration of K. Ch. II.), in some things for the better, in some for the worse. All these observations and oaths that were put upon each society by the king and his council, to be performed and taken in the admission of every head and fellow, especially that of denouncing the Pope, were now commanded to be taken away; and all things to be as anciently, before anything of the Reformation began.\*

cation which took place between the Puritan mayor, John Wayte, and the fellows of Lincoln College, on November 17th (St. Hugh's Day), 1561.

St. Hugh's Day had formerly been the gaudy day of Lincoln College; and in 1561, the fellows of Lincoln, after dining in hall, adjourned to the church of All Saints to amuse themselves with a turn at bell-ringing. Anthony à Wood represents that they had no object in thus sounding their fine peal of bells, apart from a desire for suitable recreation by means of an art in which they excelled; but it is probable that they were not unmindful of Queen Mary's death, or unwilling to recall her memory by a brilliant feat of campanology. Anyhow the most offensive construction was put on their conduct by Master John Wayte, the mayor of the city, whose ears had no sooner caught the resonance of the All Saints' bells, than he hastened to the church to demand how the ringers presumed to render such honour to the late queen. The door of the belfry was closed, and the angry mayor was constrained to knock more than once and raise no little hubbub before he could gain admittance to the campanologists. At length, however, he effected an entrance; and, having forced himself into the presence of the ringers, he reviled them as Papists for thus ringing a dirge to the Popish queen. Dismayed by the mayor's vehemence, and fearful lest the affair would bring them into trouble, most of the ringers began to stammer out assurances that they had rung only for amusement's sake and out of no regard to the dead queen; when one of the offenders—a gentleman of rare inventiveness and self-possession—silenced his comrades, and extricated them from a perilous embarrassment by a statement which no one but a person endowed with a genius for lying could have uttered on the spur of the moment. Reminding the mayor that, if Mary had died on St. Hugh's Day, it was also on that same day that her successor had been proclaimed, the ready and subtle gentleman averred that he and his fellow-collegians had rung the peal in honour of their sovereign's accession, and not in regret for her predecessor's death. In fact, they were ringing altogether for joy at having gained a Protestant ruler, and in no degree for sorrow at having lost a Catholic sovereign. 'Whereupon,' says the annalist, 'the mayor,

going away satisfied, caused St. Martin's bells to be rung, and as many others as he could command. From hence the custom grew in Oxford to ring on that day during her reign (for so also it appears in the rolls of several parish churches accompted, wherein this still runneth,—“Item, to the ringers on St. Hugh's Day——”), as also on the days of coronation and births of kings and princes, which yet remaineth.'

Another device of campanology, still practised in many parts of England, is the method by which ringers at the end of funereal ringings signify whether the deceased person was a man, a woman, or a child. In case of a child's interment, where this custom is observed, the ringing ends with three solemn knells—a stroke or 'teller' for each person of the Sacred Trinity. The ringing for a woman's death concludes with six strokes—two knells for each of the Sacred Persons. The bell music for a man terminates with a yet higher multiple of three. The campanological rule, as it is ordinarily enunciated by a rustic ringer, for this practice, runs,—‘Three for a child, six for a woman, and nine tellers make a man.’

## CHAPTER X.

## VICAR OF BRAY.

**D**URING the religious struggles that occupied the interval between Henry the Eighth's rupture with Rome and the secure establishment of the Reformed Church under Elizabeth, England witnessed no such secession of ordained persons from the clerical ranks as the voluntary retirement of the two thousand ministers who, on the restoration of episcopacy by Charles the Second, simultaneously relinquished the preferments and offices which they might no longer retain on terms reconcilable to their consciences.

On the contrary, the English clergy exhibited a singular plasticity to the wishes of civil authority, and moved to and fro—now in the direction of Rome, and now in the direction of Geneva; at one time declaring their enthusiasm for episcopal rule and at another manifesting seasonable tolerance of the Presbyterian method,—in accordance with the fashion of the hour, and the policy of the existing government. Nor are we justified in attributing exceptional baseness to the ecclesiastics who, thus veering with the wind, obeyed forces which they were powerless to resist, and took timely heed for their personal interests amidst the perplexities and distractions of a revolutionary period. They were men, and in this respect they acted after the wont of men under circumstances of like difficulty,—effecting successive compromises between their notions of what was right and their perceptions of what was obviously needful; consenting on compulsion to do for a time what they secretly hoped they should not be required to do for long; complying from mingled motives of private policy and public necessity with arrangements which they regarded as provisional and temporary innovations. It was thus that the majority of our



priesthood—at heart sincerely attached to the Catholic system and traditions—accepted new laws and satisfied new exigencies during the later years of Henry the Eighth, and throughout the reign of Edward and the earlier years of Elizabeth. Thus, on the other hand, a considerable section of the Anglican Reformers, bending to the storm which menaced them with destruction, said masses at the Marian altars, whilst longing for the time when they should be again called upon to read English prayers in the naves of the churches. The censors, who are nowadays most vehement in declaring disdain for this clerical pliancy, would most probably have displayed the same prudent moderation and politic plasticity, had they lived either as priests or laymen in the restless and perilous days which gave birth to our Established Church.

When the Anglican clergy were required by their sovereign on the one hand to acknowledge his spiritual supremacy, and by the Pope on the other hand to prove their devotion to his rule by withdrawing themselves from the realm of the excommunicated king, no one having any knowledge of the instincts and governing principles of human nature imagined for a moment that the Catholic ecclesiastics would generally endeavour to obey the latter order. Before they could have taken the first steps to gratify the pontiff's arrogance, they would have been seized by the servants, and thrown into the prisons, of a king who did not fear to enforce submission to his despotic will by inflicting death on dignified ecclesiastics and laymen of the highest rank. The monarch, who beheaded a venerable prelate and an exemplary chancellor for declining to acknowledge his supremacy, and who did not hesitate to commit priors and monks to ignominious deaths for no worse offence than their conscientious inability to declare him the head of the Church, was a terrible power, with whom such humble mortals as country rectors and provincial curates had better not trifle. The Pope was at a distance, the king was at hand; and knowing well that to repudiate the sovereign's supremacy sent the recusant to death, the clergy, with a few exceptions, verbally gave up the Pope for a time, soothing their disturbed consciences by reflecting that they were taking the only course by which they could hope to promote the interests of the true Father of the Church. Their

disobedience was thus regarded even at Rome, whence permission soon came to the Catholic clergy of England to render all the external concessions that triumphant heresy demanded of them. So long as they were true at heart to the Pope, and zealous for the welfare of the Church, they might be false to their spiritually-deposed king,—and in fighting heresy with fraud they might exercise their own discretion in deciding what evasions and flat perjuries might be justifiably employed for the attainment of righteous victory. Upon this understanding with the Holy Father, the most severely conscientious of the English Catholic clergy, alike during Henry's later years and throughout Edward the Sixth's reign, deemed themselves not only justified, but righteously engaged, in discharging the functions of Reformed priests, and at the same time secretly plotting to re-establish the Papal power within the English kingdom.

There is no doubt that a large proportion of the Marian clergy acted with perfect honesty and sincere delight in relinquishing the Protestant professions and usages of King Edward's days, and proclaiming themselves true members of the one and everlasting Catholic Church; for in many parts of the country their conversion—or rather, let us say, the revelation of their real sentiment—preceded the legal re-establishment of Papal authority. Before the mass had been formally ordered, the clergy hastened to celebrate it in most of our important towns. Anthony à Wood tells us of the zeal and pleasure with which the fellows of the Oxford colleges, and the priests of the Oxford churches—who had apparently gone with the Reformers in King Edward's days—on Mary's accession brought out the mass-books and Catholic vestments, the images and pictures, the crucifixes and relics, which, instead of having been destroyed in compliance with successive injunctions for their demolition, had merely been stowed away in cellars and secret closets until it should once again be lawful to exhibit and use them. And these doings of the Oxford Catholics accorded with the performances of the national priesthood in other parts of the kingdom. Nor did the genuinely Protestant minority of the unmarried clergy generally manifest any strong disinclination to accommodate themselves to the crisis by adopting the sacerdotal

robes and restored ritual of the foreign Church. Some eight hundred English Protestants,\* of whom a considerable proportion were ecclesiastics, fled from the coming storm, and found safety in exile at Embden, Weasel, Arrow, Strasburgh, Zurich, Frankfort-on-the-Main, and other continental towns. But of the clergy amongst these eight hundred refugees, there probably was not one who could have saved his life by any compliances had he remained at home,—not one who had any alternative besides exile or martyrdom. Of the clergy who remained at home and suffered at the stake for the Protestant cause, several gave proof of their readiness to escape the extreme punishment by timely recantation; and no doubt they would have been more numerous had not the persecutors shown that a heretic's pardon would not as a matter of course follow on his recantation. The genuine Protestants amongst Edward's sixteen thousand clergy, rated at the lowest, must have numbered several thousands, of whom only a small proportion† went

\* 'The storm gathering so thick upon the Reformers, above eight hundred of them retired into foreign parts: among whom were five bishops, viz. Poynt of Winchester, who died in exile; Barlow of Bath and Wells, who was superintendent of the congregation at Embden; Scory of Chichester; Coverdale of Exon; and Bale of Ossory: five deans, viz. Dr. Cox, Haddon, Horn, Turner, and Sampson: four archdeacons, and above fifty doctors of divinity and eminent preachers, among whom were Grindal, Jewel, Sandys, Reynolds, Pilkington, Whitehead, Lever, Nowel, Knox, Rough, Whittingham, Fox, Parkhurst, and others famous in the reign of Queen Elizabeth: besides of noblemen, merchants, tradesmen, artificers, and plebeians, many hundreds. Some fled in disguise, or went over as the servants of foreign Protestants, who, having come hither for shelter in King Edward's time, were now required to leave the kingdom: among these were Peter Martyr and John a Lasco, with his congregation of Germans.'—NEALE'S *History of the Puritans*.

+ What this proportion was must remain matter for conjecture. Parker makes the wild and ludicrous calculation, that of the 16,000 clergymen officiating at the time of Mary's accession, not less than 12,000 were deprived in 1554,—a statement that gives a colour of moderation to Walker's estimate of the number of clergy deprived by the Parliamentary committees for the reform of religion. Neale could not think that the number of priests deprived at the opening of Mary's reign exceeded 3000, since in the diocese of Norwich only 335 clergy were deprived. The married priests, who would not repudiate their wives, were no doubt summarily ejected and permanently deprived. Strype states the fact when he remarks, that in the successive changes of religion the clergy 'went to and fro with the stream.' It must also be remembered, that those of Mary's deprived clergy who renounced their wives were sent to other cures.

to exile or the stake, or relinquished spontaneously their preferments, whilst the remainder, with a prudent contempt of the honours of martyrdom, adopted the Catholic faith and practices, thereby preserving to themselves at the same time their lives and their livings.

In justice to Cranmer—about the sin of whose ‘unworthy right hand’ so much ungenerous censure has been penned by historians, forgetful how far easier it is to despise cowardice from a position of security than to act heroically in the very face of great danger—we should remember that, if in a weak moment of his decay he succumbed to dread of death and love of life, the age which witnessed his momentary lapse—a fall so bitterly repented and nobly redeemed—was an age in which the more enlightened and courageous of our clergy, together with the multitude of obscure priests, floated backwards and forwards from Catholicism to Protestantism, borne to and fro by the tempestuous billows of controversial warfare and religious persecution. Cranmer’s recanted recantation was not a solitary instance of transient imbecillity followed by sharp remorse and glorious atonement. Bilney wavered and fell before the terrors of the law against heresy ere he summoned courage to place deliberately on his sacred brow the crown of martyrdom. On the first application of menace, Jewell subscribed his acceptance of the Catholic creed before he fled to Frankfort, whilst Cranmer, who might also have saved himself by flight, elected to remain at the post of duty and danger, and receive whatever recompense his enemies should award to him for his services to the Reformed Church. Of the martyrs of the sixteenth century, whose labours and sufferings are recorded in Foxe’s noble book, a considerable proportion were relapsed heretics,—Reformers who, like the martyr-primate, had repudiated the new doctrines, ere they paid the extreme penalty for recanting their recantation.

Whilst the nobler and more resolute Reformers were thus driven hither and thither by the blasts and counterblasts of the raging storm, now weakly denying and now bravely asserting the doctrines of their party, the Protestant clergy—of the lukewarm and less heroic sort—turned without a struggle as the tide turned, and with less of spiritual fickleness or mental

instability than of sheer worldly prudence, marched and counter-marched, wheeled to right or left, as the word of command came to them from their superior officers. In fact the general body of the sacerdotal force acted in those revolutionary times just as the general body of the French army has acted under similar circumstances in these later generations,—recognising the *ipso facto* government of the hour. Speaking of the versatility which distinguished the clergy of these unsteady times, and more especially of the ease with which the Protestant curates accommodated themselves to the requirements of the Marian prelates, Strype says, in the ‘Ecclesiastical Memorials,’ ‘It was now about the middle of the Queen’s reign, and Popery was completely settled again, and the mass celebrated everywhere; and the mass-singers, who boggled at the work at first, went currently and jollily on with it in their several parish churches, and became great enemies and informers against those that frequented it not. For the Popish priests and curates, in the change of religion, went generally along with the stream, how little soever they liked to see the English liturgy changed for a Latin mass, and a reasonable service thrown by for a superstitious, unintelligible worship. For most of them knew the truth well enough, and upon their first conformity with the old religion, would privately, among their friends, freely confess it. But after some time had passed over their heads, and a year or two’s use of the mass had made it familiar to them, they were very well reconciled to it, and even zealous in its behalf.’

That the general body of this versatile priesthood did not exhibit more alacrity and ease in adopting Catholicism under Mary than they displayed in becoming Protestants under Elizabeth, is shown by the fewness of the dignified and inferior ecclesiastics who surrendered their preferments rather than comply with the injunctions put upon them by the latter queen. By the measures which Elizabeth instituted for the religious settlement of the country, a handful of contumacious prelates, a few recusant deans and archdeacons, and an insignificant number of inferior parochial incumbents, were deprived of their offices and preferments. The atrocious Bonner\*—out

\* Of the treatment which this ecclesiastical Jeffreys received in prison, Strype says:—‘As for Boner, I find he was committed to the Marshalsea in April, 1560,

of merciful regard for his personal safety, and in no degree from vindictiveness for his barbarous excesses—was imprisoned in the Marshalsea, where he passed the remainder of his life, faring daintily, receiving the visits of his friends, and extolling the pious achievements of what he regarded as his misunderstood career. But of all the ecclesiastics who sung mass and glorified the Pope in Queen Mary's reign, not two hundred and fifty were found who resigned their preferments rather than read English prayers, acknowledge the sovereign's supremacy, and denounce the Pope, when Elizabeth had ascended the throne. According to the lowest computation, the number of the Marian ecclesiastics deprived for adherence to the Papacy in the early years of Elizabeth was one hundred and seventy-seven, according to the highest it was no more than two hundred and forty-three.\* Dean Marshall was but one person amongst the thousands of his order who were successively Catholic, Protestant, Catholic, and Protestant, as the one or other religion became the religion of the state.

Whilst the clergy thus moved to and fro, like weather-cocks controlled by contrary winds, the main body of the laity, alike gentle and simple, displayed the same docility to official authority. But having seen how erroneous it would be to regard the clerical versatility of this strange period as a sign of clerical indifference to the religious questions and ecclesiastical interests

and seems to have been at liberty till then. It is true he was kept in the prison of the Marshalsea, and that turned to his own safety; being so hated by the people, that it would not have been safe for him to have walked in public, lest he should have been stoned or knocked on the head by some of the enraged friends and acquaintance of those whom he had but a little before so barbarously beaten or butchered. He grew old in prison, and died a natural death in the year 1569, not suffering any want or hunger, or cold. For he lived daintily, had the use of the garden and orchard when he was minded to walk abroad and take the air; suffered nothing like imprisonment, unless he was circumscribed within certain bounds. Nay, he had his liberty to go abroad, but dared not venture; for the people retained in their hearts his late bloody action.—*Vide* 'Annals of the Reformation.'

\* 'When the visitors had gone through the kingdom, and made their report of the obedience given her majesty's laws and injunctions, it appeared that not above two hundred and forty-three clergymen had quitted their livings; viz. fourteen bishops and three bishops elect, one abbot, four priors, one abbess, twelve deans, fourteen archdeacons, sixty canons or prebendaries, one hundred beneficed clergy, fifteen heads of colleges in Oxford and Cambridge: to which

concerned in the struggle, we must also remember that it would be no less erroneous to infer from the apparent unanimity with which the populace went to and fro, that they were for the most part careless as to the eventual issue of the contest. To draw such an inference would be as unjust as to argue that the masses of the French people are totally devoid of political principles and predilections, because they are found industrious and orderly citizens, busy in the acquisition of material prosperity and prizing the blessings of peace above the calamities of civil contention, whatever may be the constitution of their present government. History says enough of abortive risings and conspiracies against the parties successively in power, enough also of the persecutions of the later Lollards, to show that, even when the general demeanour of the gentry and populace was most strongly marked by submissiveness to authority, our ancestors were not driven hither and thither like flocks of sheep, to which some historians have ventured to compare them.

But though the laity sought security from persecution in outward conformity to opinions, which they secretly regarded with disapprobation, they could not allow that the clergy were justified in adopting the same policy of prudent hypocrisy. It seemed to them that ministers of religion were bound to adhere rigidly to their principles, to subscribe to no doctrine which had not their sincere credence, and to stand or fall by their pro-

may be added, about twenty doctors in several faculties. In one of the volumes in the Cotton Library the number is one hundred and ninety-two. D'Ew's Journal mentions but one hundred and seventy-seven; Bishop Burnet, one hundred and ninety-nine: but Camden and Cardinal Allen reckon as above. Most of the inferior beneficed clergy kept their places, as they had done through all the changes of the last three reigns; and without all question, if the queen had died and the old religion had been restored, they would have turned again: but the bishops and some of the dignified clergy having sworn to the supremacy under King Henry, and renounced it again under Queen Mary, they thought it might reflect a dishonour on their character to change again, and therefore they resolved to hold together, and by their weight endeavour to distress the Reformation. Upon so great an alteration of religion, the number of recusants out of nine thousand four hundred parochial benefices was inconsiderable; and yet it was impossible to find Protestants of a tolerable capacity to supply the vacancies, because many of the stricter sort, who had been exiles for religion, could not come up to the terms of conformity and the queen's injunctions.'—NEALE'S *History of the Puritans*.

fession. The layman, as a comparatively worldly creature, might, without scandal to his fellows or injury to his own soul, practise arts of concession and evasion that, in the case of an ordained priest, would amount to sin against the Holy Ghost. That this view of laical privilege and clerical obligations,—a view arising from a romantic estimate of sacerdotal nature,—was on the one hand far too lenient to the laity, and on the other hand far too exacting to the priests, whom ordination had not altogether purged of human weakness, there is no need to demonstrate. For the present purpose it is enough to say that our forefathers of the sixteenth century had one standard of honesty and courage, with respect to religious matters, for simple laymen who claimed to be no better than their neighbours, and a far higher standard for spiritual persons who arrogated to themselves the honour due to superior devotion and godliness; and that drawing this distinction between secular and sacred individuals, they were moved with deep indignation at beholding the latter no less unstable and time-serving than the former.

There was, however, a numerous class of priests for whom they cherished a disdain far more acrimonious and personal than the qualified and general contempt with which they looked down upon the ordinary sort of sacerdotal turncoats, who forbore to add the offences of the persecutor to the less odious failings of the timorous renegade. This especially hateful class of priests consisted of men who, after changing their religion from prudential motives, were not content to live quietly with their neighbours, but, partly from a desire to justify their conduct to their own consciences, partly from an ambition to convince the worldly of the sincerity of their latest conversion, but chiefly from a base design to win professional advancement by noisy zeal, became angry disputants in behalf of their newly adopted tenets, and bitter maligners of those outward conformists whom they suspected of secret attachment to prohibited opinions. In King Edward's time these men railed with equal rancour and insolence at the creatures of papal bigotry; after Mary's accession they became malicious informers against peaceful folk who seldom attended mass and were suspected of inclinations to Lollardy; under Elizabeth they raised their harsh voices with characteristic



spitefulness against Catholic recusants and Puritan precisians. For these men, odious in the extreme to moderate people of all parties, popular satire invented a nickname that bids fair to live so long as the English tongue endures. It was seen that they were men of no charity, no manly feeling, no truthfulness, no real religion,—but they could *bray*. Their *bray* was audible in every part of the kingdom, it was uttered now on this side, now on that, as interest dictated. To their incessant braying they were indebted for notoriety, influence, preferment. They brayed themselves from miserable curacies into rich livings; they brayed themselves into deaneries and episcopal thrones. For each of these men, whatever his rank in the sacerdotal class, what nickname could be more exact and pungent than—Vicar of Bray? Only the other day, lashing the malice and uncharitableness and arrogance of a sanctimonious sectarian, Tom Hood compared the object of his invective to a noisy jackass, who had ‘not got no milk *but* he could *bray*.’ In the same spirit of healthy loathing and fierce disdain, the satirist of the sixteenth century designated the vindictive turncoats and shouters of the pulpit—‘Vicars of *Bray*.’ The offender might hold no actual vicarage; he might be a mere stipendiary lecturer; he might be rector, archdeacon, a dean, or even a prelate, but if he exhibited the qualities of virulent turncoat, he was called a Vicar of Bray.

The term became proverbial: and when the proverb had survived the odious class for whose special infamy it was invented—when the original delinquents had passed out of the world and popular memory—the nickname gave rise to a mythical story of a certain vicar of the parish of Bray, in the county of Berks and the diocese of Oxford, who was supposed to have distinguished himself in the reigns of Henry the Eighth, Edward the Sixth, Mary, and Elizabeth, by figuring successively as a Papist, a Protestant, a Papist once more, and yet again a Protestant. Fuller gravely tells his readers that this particular vicar of Bray—who thus distinguished himself by merely doing exactly what thousands of English clergymen did in the same reigns—was Simon Aleyn, canon of Windsor, who held the vicarage of Bray in Berkshire from 1540 to 1588; and that this same vicar Aleyn, on being taunted with his continual changes of religion, an-

swered his assailant with jocular effrontery, that, though a turncoat in creeds, he had stuck to his one grand principle, which was 'to live and die the vicar of Bray.' The mythical nature of this anecdote is apparent to a glance. By acting as Simon Aleyn is said to have acted, no clergyman of the period in question would have achieved notoriety or earned special attention. Instead of being the actual title of a particular individual, the term was a satiric nickname originated for a class of clergyman. Moreover, the foundations of Fuller's narrative have been swept away by research into the parish register of Bray in Berkshire. No clergyman, either named Aleyn or bearing any other name, held the vicarage for the term mentioned by the anecdotal annalist. Simon Symonds was instituted, on March 14, 1522-3, to the vicarage of the only Bray in the list of Anglican benefices; and Simon Symonds remained vicar of this Berkshire parish till 1551 — the year of his death. Consequently the case against Fuller's story stands thus:—no vicar of the parish of Bray in Berkshire can have acted as the narrative alleges: and had any vicar of that parish acted in the manner alleged, his conduct would have been so perfectly commonplace and ordinary that it would have caused no extraordinary observation.

Many of Fuller's contemporaries, however, believed no less than the annalist himself in the mythical story of the Berkshire vicar: and amongst the Restoration preachers who missed the exact force of the old proverb, and attributed the saying to the conduct of a particular parson, was John Evans, who, preaching in 1632 before the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, took occasion to say, 'And if this be moderation, the old vicar of Bray was the most moderate man that ever breathed.'

Having survived the Civil War, the Commonwealth, the Restoration, and the fierce politico-religious contentions of the closing years of the seventeenth, and the earlier years of the eighteenth centuries, the proverb acquired additional popularity from the familiar song which applied its satire to the versatility which distinguished the vicars of Bray, who between Charles the Second's restoration and George the First's accession emulated the fickleness and malignancy of their precursors of the sixteenth century.

‘ In good King Charles’s golden days,  
When loyalty no harm meant,  
A zealous High Churchman was I,  
And so I got preferment.  
To teach my flock I never missed,  
Kings were by God appointed,  
And lost are those that dare resist,  
Or touch the Lord’s anointed.  
And this is law that I’ll maintain  
Until my dying day, sir,  
That whatsoever king may reign,  
I’ll still be the Vicar of Bray, sir.

When royal James possess’d the crown,  
And Popery grew in fashion,  
The penal laws I hooted down,  
And read the Declaration;  
The Church of Rome I found would fit  
Full well my constitution,  
And I had been a Jesuit  
But for the Revolution.  
And this is law, &c.

When William was our king declared,  
To ease the national grievance,  
With this new wind I steered,  
And swore to him allegiance;  
Old principles I did revoke,  
Set conscience at a distance;  
Passive obedience was a joke,  
A jest was non-resistance.  
And this is law, &c.

When royal Anne became our queen,  
The Church of England’s glory,  
Another face of things was seen,  
And I became a Tory:  
Occasional conformists base  
I blamed for moderation,  
And thought the Church in danger  
was  
By such prevarication.  
And this is law, &c.

When George in pudding-time came  
o’er,  
And moderate men looked big, sir,  
My principles I changed once more,  
And so became a Whig, sir;  
And thus preferment I procured  
From our new faith’s defender,  
And almost every day abjured  
The Pope and the Pretender.  
And this is law, &c.

The illustrious house of Hanover,  
And Protestant succession,  
To these I do allegiance swear,  
While they can keep possession:  
For in my faith and loyalty  
I never more will falter,  
And George my lawful king shall be,  
Until the times do alter.  
And this is law, &c.

The author of this admirable song is said to have been a soldier in Colonel Fuller’s troop of dragoons. To demonstrate its humour and vigorous lightness there is no need of a single word of comment; but it is well to observe that the writer caught exactly the original signification of the old nickname. The versatile parson of the song is a vicar who brays, not a preacher who changes sides in order to retain possession of a particular living, but one who plays the part of a braying vicar, so that he may acquire fresh preferment. Apply Fuller’s interpretation to the words ‘Vicar of Bray,’ and the chorus loses its force, and renders the entire song a blunder. To retain preferment, to which he had been inducted in Charles the Second’s reign, a beneficed clergyman was under no necessity to change

his politics with the times; but to obtain further promotion from patrons, who favoured in turn each of the politico-religious theories, which sprung successively into fashion, such a gownsman as the songster satirised would have made the turns and twists enumerated in the song. Thus, having brayed himself in one fashion into a living under Charles, the versatile pulpiteer, after talking for further advancement in three different strains under James, William, and Anne, by adopting a new note, secured another piece of preferment from George the First.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE SUNDAY IN OLD TIME—FROM THE SAXON PERIOD TO THE REFORMATION.

**I**N the absence of such historic data as would enable us to speak precisely concerning the manner in which the Lord's Day was observed by our ancestors of the Saxon period, it is uncertain how far they held opinions analogous to those maintained by the Sabbatarians of recent centuries. Enough, however, is known of their religious life to justify the assertion that, with respect to their keeping of the weekly holy day, their reverential use of holy places, and their sepulchral arrangements, its severity is far more in accordance with the sentiment of the nineteenth century than with the notions and practices of our feudal forefathers. Some of the Saxon laws for the celebration of the Christian Sunday display the determination of their promulgators to render it a day of rest after the model of the Jewish Sabbath; but, since it is matter for conjecture how far these laws were strictly enforced, and made uniformly operative on rich and poor, the social historian hesitates to infer from them that the Lord's Day of the Saxon epoch was kept in any part of the country with the decorum and devoutness which would have resulted from their precise and consistent execution.

In an early year of the eighth century, the West-Saxon king, Ina, ordained that if a slave profaned the weekly holy day by working at the command of his master, the latter should be punished with a fine of thirty shillings and the loss of his bondsman, whom the law, with illogical generosity, endowed with liberty because his owner was a sinner. It was also provided, that a servant, guilty of his own free will and without his employer's instigation of working on the Lord's Day, should be mulcted and whipped; and that the free man who, with or with-

out an employer's order, perpetrated the same offence against religion should be either reduced to bondage, or compelled to pay a fine of sixty shillings—a sum which no Saxon of the poorer sort could have paid even for the preservation of his freedom. In the middle of the same century Archbishop Cuthbert, with the sanction of an ecclesiastical synod, ordered that the Sunday should be strictly set apart for the worship and glory of the Lord. More than a century later, together with other regulations for the celebration of sacred days, Alfred the Great made a law that no malefactor should be executed on Sunday; and Alfred's successor, Edward the elder, pursuing the same Sabbatarian policy, induced the Danish Gunthrum to concur with him in forbidding markets to be held on Sundays, and ordering that the Lord's Day should be strictly observed as a day of rest from worldly labour. By this piece of concurrent legislation, the Dane who bought anything on a Sunday was punishable with the forfeiture of the purchased article, and a fine of sixteen shillings: but the Saxon, found guilty of the same crime, was punished with the far higher mulct of thirty shillings—a distinction alike significant of the Danish legislator's comparative lukewarmness in religious reform, and of the relative positions of the Saxon and Danish peoples. The act of Edward and Gunthrum further ordained that freedmen, guilty of labouring on Sunday, should be reduced to bondage if they could not redeem their freedom with money; that slaves for the same offence should be flogged, unless they could purchase immunity from the scourge by the payment of fines; and that masters, whether Saxons or Danes, should be regarded as the actual perpetrators of whatever offences they caused their servants to perpetrate against the Sabbath law. But how far these and other like enactments of Saxon and Danish legislators were impartially and vigorously enforced it is impossible to say. The promulgation of such laws, however, demonstrates conclusively the direction and tenor of religious opinion in the times of their enactment.

Whatever sabbatarian preciseness may have characterised the observance of the Lord's Day in Saxon and Danish England, it is certain that it had no influence on the Norman invaders, who had no sooner planted themselves in the country, on which they imposed their institutions and laws, than they imparted to

the national Sunday the jubilant air and festive usages, from which it was eventually freed by the triumph of Puritanism in the seventeenth century. The intruders, who imposed their language on the markets and law-courts in the vain hope that the subjugated people would exchange their mother-tongue for the speech of their oppressors, were little likely to respect the religious scruples of a despised populace, whom it was their purpose to retain in abject degradation. The arrogance which required the Saxon people to adopt Norman fashions, or remain the objects of Norman contempt, expressed itself no less insolently in the domain of religion than in other departments of social life. The control of the National Church passed from Saxon clergy to Norman ecclesiastics, who, whilst resembling the Norman laity in passionate love of pomp and inordinate devotion to field-sports, surpassed them in haughtiness to the down-trodden Englishry. Under the rule of these splendid prelates the Church became more affluent, and powerful, and magnificent, than she had ever been; but, in exchange for new pomp and luxury, she relinquished her old simplicity and earnestness.

The weekly holy day, no longer a time of rest, became the peculiar day for riot and festivity,—for gorgeous pomps and costly ceremonials. Alike by the clergy and noble laity, it was regarded as the fittest of the seven days for such national solemnities or local feasts as exacted unusual labour from a large proportion of the poorer people, and encouraged all classes of the rich to indulge with extraordinary license in hilarious pleasure. It grew to be the day for coronations and court-pageants, for the ceremonious and costly openings of ecclesiastical councils and parliaments; and whilst our forefathers in peaceful periods deemed it a peculiarly auspicious day for peaceful affairs, in times of war they regarded it as no less propitious to military undertakings. Just as Friday was a day of ill-luck for works of peace and enterprises of war, Sunday was thought to be surcharged with propitiousness, which resulted in success to every performance attempted upon it. Hence it was a day for the inception of all kinds of important transactions,—for christenings and marriages, for the commencement of negotiations and the execution of treaties, for the settlement of public compacts and the arrangement of private bargains.

William Rufus, Stephen, Henry the Second, Richard the First, and John, were all crowned on the Lord's Day. It was noticed as a favourable omen by contemporary observers, that Richard the First, on coming from Normandy to assume the English crown, reached the English coast on Sunday,—a favourable event, to which he had taken the first step by starting from France at such a time, that, with a fairly prosperous voyage, he might hope to catch sight of England on the Sunday's dawn. And having thus reached the white cliffs on the Lord's Day, instead of making it a day of rest, he forthwith continued his journey to London, and in so doing encountered at every stage of the route fresh companies of his most loyal and august subjects, so that when he reached the metropolis he was attended by archbishops and bishops, earls and barons, and was followed by a long retinue of knights, mounted on mettlesome steeds and brilliant with flashing armour. In the following September he was crowned on a Sunday; and after his return from the Holy Land, his second coronation was also celebrated on a Sunday. When the Patriarch of Jerusalem and William of Scotland, together with all the chiefs of the English and Scotch nobility, both lay and spiritual, waited on Henry the Second, to hear him decline the proffered sovereignty of Jerusalem, it was the Lord's Day (the first Sunday in Lent) on which Henry, in one of the proudest moments of his life, received the dazzling throng. And on the fourth Sunday of Lent, this same sovereign yet further showed how he thought Sundays should be kept, by conferring the dignity of knighthood on his son John, in the presence of a superb assemblage of courtly spectators, and sending him forth to Ireland.

That the commonalty of the kingdom imitated the nobles and high ecclesiastics in keeping the weekly holiday with festive riot we have remarked in the first section of this work, where we noticed how Sunday was a general day for fairs and markets, for wedding-feasts and social jollity in every part of Wycliffe's England, the manners of which period were derived from former times. In the same section, also, occasion was taken to show how the Lollards earned obloquy and hatred by denouncing such flagrant violations of a day which it was their wiser practice to observe with Sabbatical strictness as a day for rest and prayer.



It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that Wycliffe's followers were the first Englishmen to raise their voices against the carnal profanations of the holy day. The Sabbatarians of the fourteenth century had their precursors in the disciples of the French priest Fulco, whose emissary, the Norman Abbot Eustatius, visited England for the express purpose of decrying the general abuse of the Lord's Day, and urging our forefathers to keep it with decency and devoutness. Eustatius came to this country in the first year of the thirteenth century, and by preaching in the southern parts of the land against Sunday amusements drew upon himself such a storm of disapprobation, that he prudently retired before the agitations which his zeal had created, and recrossing the Channel sought further instructions and encouragement from the instigator of his missionary endeavours.

In the following year he resumed his enterprise, fortified with a miraculous epistle in which the Almighty was represented to have expressed in legible writing the abhorrence with which He regarded the universal violations of His day of rest. The blasphemous fabrication was entitled, 'An Holy Mandate touching the Lord's Day;' and the zealots who published it had the daring to declare that, having been sent down from heaven to Jerusalem, it had been found on Saint Simeon's altar in Golgotha, where Christ had suffered for the sins of the world. For three days and three nights the spectacle of this awful letter, lying unopened on the altar, had filled a multitude of worshippers with terror and admiration, causing them to prostrate themselves on the ground and implore their Creator to have mercy on their wretched sinfulness. For awhile the chiefs of the spirituality refrained from touching the mystic scroll; but after taking counsel with one another and their heavenly Master, the Patriarch and Archbishop Akarias ventured to examine its contents, which, in justice to its writer it must be admitted, were in perfect harmony with the impious charlatanry of the outward description. 'I am the Lord,' began this marvellous piece of writing, 'who commanded you to keep holy the Lord's Day, and you have neither kept it, nor repented of your sins.' After enumerating the enormities which it denounced, and commenting on the futility of the milder punishments by which Sabbath-breakers had been reminded of their duty to their Creator, the

latter threatened that unless they forthwith and completely changed their ways, the heavens should rain down upon them stones, and wood, and scalding water,—and that, for the destruction of such incorrigible misdoers there should be sent amongst them a new sort of ravenous and loathsome beasts—creatures with the heads of lions, the hair of women, and the tails of camels.

The bearer of this terrifying epistle, Eustatius, made a second voyage to England; but instead of reappearing in the districts which in the previous year had exhibited a strong desire to reward his zeal with the honours of martyrdom, the abbot went to York, where he found a fitter field for his exertions in a populace more abounding in credulity and more inclined to fanaticism than the people of the southern province. Alarmed by the prospect of death at the jaws of lions adorned with women's hair and camel's tails, the men of the North vowed that they would never again buy aught but needful food and drink on the Lord's Day, and would do their utmost to put down Sunday marketing. Associations were hastily formed—not to petition Parliament as modern reformers do, but to compel universal compliance with the abbot's requirements by means more accordant with the temper of mobs: and, as though the miraculous letter were not sufficiently wonderful and horrifying, the zealots invented a number of wild stories about the various ways in which the Deity had manifested his hatred of Sabbath-breakers. At Wakefield, a miller, having worked his mill after three o'clock P. M. of Saturday—the hour at which the Sunday was supposed to commence—had received clear proof of his iniquity in the sudden stopping of his mill-wheel, and the equally unaccountable presence of a quantity of blood in his flour bin. At Nafferton, a Sabbath-breaker had baked a cake on Saturday evening, and having supped off a portion of the bread he was about to breakfast on the remainder, on the following morning, when he had no sooner broken it than from the crumb of the accursed loaf there exuded drops of blood. Elsewhere a carpenter, for making a wooden pin after three o'clock of a Saturday afternoon, and a woman for weaving at the same period of the same day, were suddenly smitten with palsy. It was also told by Yorkshire gossips how a certain mysterious prophet,

having on his back a white coat, but wearing no shoes on his feet, had in a previous generation accosted the King of England at Cardiff in Wales, in the sacred names of John the Baptist and Peter, and had warned him that, unless he prohibited every sort of trading and servile labour on the Lord's Day, he should ere the lapse of twelve more months receive such news as would bring him with sorrow to the grave. Roused by such fables as these, and by the inflammatory harangues of the Sabbatarian clergy who sided with Eustatius, the northern zealots appeared in places where Sunday markets were being held, and ventured to upset the booths and destroy the wares of the impious dealers. Whereupon, finding that the agitation threatened disaster to the state, the king and his council, taking the matter in hand, dealt so roughly with the leaders of the movement that it soon died down from flaming rage into a smouldering distemper, and ordinary mortals—disposed to think more highly of old ways than new fashions—went marketing on Sundays as heretofore.

Whilst the Lord's Day was observed thus hilariously, it was rated by the Church merely as one of its higher festivals, and in no way more sacred than other holy days of the first rank. By an ecclesiastical council, held at Oxford in 1222, the holy days were divided into three orders,—the first being made to comprise all the Sundays of the year, the feast of Christ's nativity, the feasts of the Virgin Mary (with the exception of the festival of her conception), the parochial feasts of dedication, *i. e.* wakes, certain holy days suppressed by the Reformation, and all the holy days which the Church of England still observes. The second class of sacred festivals comprised some score or more holy days, on which days Christians were enjoined to a partial cessation from servile labour of comparatively slight moment, according to the various usages of different localities,—of which sort of inferior feasts was that of St. George, which, just two centuries later, Archbishop Chicheley ordained should be celebrated no less pompously and reverentially than the feast of Christmas. The third and lowest rank of festivals—such as those of the Octaves of the Epiphany, John the Baptist, and St. Peter, and the translations of John the Baptist and St. Peter—required no abstinence from toil on the part of orderly persons who had begun the day with public mass. But though

a general restraint was thus put on labour on feast-days of the highest rank, the council specially provided that necessary works of husbandry and maritime enterprise might be performed on Sundays and other chief holy days.

From the rise of the Wycliffian agitation down to the Reformation, and still later down to the triumph of Puritanism in the seventeenth century, Sabbatarian sentiment and profane usage were at continual war with respect to the proper mode of observing the Lord's Day; and it is noteworthy that, whilst busy in the work of discrediting or exterminating Lollardy, the Church—wishing perhaps to deprive heterodox believers of all plausible pretext for clamouring against ecclesiastical practices—displayed at times a decided disposition to adopt the Sabbatarian views of the miserable Lollards.

In the middle of the fourteenth century, Archbishop Islip, with the advice and concurrence of his prelates assembled in provincial synod, put a restraint on Sunday labour throughout his province,—requiring that the Lord's Day should be understood to commence on Saturday evening, and not a moment sooner, lest the ignorant people should be led to confound the Christian Sunday with the Jewish Sabbath. Of Archbishop Stafford's decree (1444) against fairs and markets held in churches on Sundays, notice has been taken in an earlier section of this work, where it was also remarked that, whilst forbidding fairs and markets to be held in churches or churchyards on Sundays, the order allowed them to be held in the temples on the Lord's Day during times of harvest. Witnessing a decided growth of Sabbatarian opinion, the fifteenth century saw the promulgation of several ecclesiastical, parliamentary, and municipal orders, which aimed at the suppression of Sunday trading, either throughout the kingdom or in particular localities. In 1444, the year of Archbishop Stafford's decree against Sunday church-fairs, the lord mayor and common council of London ordered, 'That upon the Sunday should no manner of thing within the Franchise of the cite be bought or sold, neither victual nor other thing; nor none artificer should bring ware unto any man to be worne, or occupied that day; as tailors garments, and cordwayners shooes, and so likewise all other occupations.' Fabian, however, assures us that this ordinance failed to accomplish its object.

Seven years later Henry the Sixth—following in the steps of Edward the Third, who forbade the shewing of wools on the Lord's Day—supported his primates with a strong Sabbatarian enactment, which enjoined, 'That all manner of Faires and Markets on the said principall Feasts and Sundayes, and Good Friday, shall clearly cease from all shewing of any Goods and Merchandise, *necessarie Victuall onely except*, upon paine of forfeiture of all the Goods aforesaid to the Lord of the Franchise or Liberty, where such Goods be or shall be shewed, contrarie to this Ordinance: *the foure Sundayes in Harvest except.*'

Fourteen years later (1465) Edward the Fourth in parliament gave his assent to a Sabbatarian enactment, which is a curiosity of unequal legislation, for whilst forbidding shoemakers to ply their craft on Sunday in the city, or within three miles of the city of London, it made an exception in the favour of the shoemakers of St. Martin's-le-Grand, who were expressly authorised by the new statute to make shoes on Sunday, as heretofore. 'Our Sovereign Lord the King,' ran the act, 'hath ordayned and established that no cordwainer or cobbler, within the city of London, within three miles of any part of the said city, doe upon any Sunday in the yeere, or on the feastes of the Ascension or Nativity of our Lord, or on the feast of Corpus Christi, sell or command to be sold any shooes, huseans, or galoches; or upon the Sunday or any other of the said Feastes, shall set or put upon the feete or leggs of any person any shoes, huseans, or galoches, upon paine of forfeiture and losse of 20 shillings, as often as any person shall doe contrarie to this ordinance.' This singular statute, framed in the interests of religion and the shoemakers of St. Martin's-le-Grand, remained in force till 14 & 15 of Henry the Eighth, when it was repealed, 'that to the honour of Almighty God, all the king's subjects might be hereafter at their liberty, as well as the inhabitants of St. Martin's-le-Grand.'

The views taken by orthodox and moderate churchmen with respect to the observance of the Lord's Day, in the middle of the fifteenth century, may be gathered from the terms in which John de Burgo, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, discriminated between lawful and unlawful works for the day of rest. That Christians were bound to abstain on Sundays

from the labours of husbandry and the mechanical arts, and from the business of the markets and law courts, the chancellor was clear. He was no less firm in teaching that Sundays and other chief holy days should be principally spent in public worship, private prayer, and deeds of charity. But he was equally emphatic in declaring that all works of necessity might be performed innocently on those sacred days; and in defining what were needful works, he showed no disposition to convert the Lord's Day into a Jewish Sabbath. In times of harvest, hay might be stacked and corn garnered on Sunday, to protect it from the storm. Butchers and victuallers might on the holy days prepare for the morrow's sale such articles as, being prepared on the eve of a holy day, would not be fit for consumption on its morrow. Carriers, barbers, surgeons, farriers, messengers, postmen, might follow their ordinary vocations on Sunday, provided they could not desist from them without causing injury to the Commonwealth. On the Lord's Day travellers might journey for the transaction of important affairs, and millers might grind corn by water-mills or wind-mills, though not by means of horse-mills. With respect to Sunday recreations, the Chancellor of the University was no less liberal,—affirming that young men and maidens might without sin dance on the Lord's Day, provided they danced from unaffected gaiety of heart and for no vile purpose. When a grave chancellor, instructing the religious youth of a great national seminary, could sanction such freedom of behaviour on the restful day, it may be fairly presumed that the popular observance of the weekly holy day was at wide variance with Puritanical opinion.

Of the Sunday life of our ancestors, in the times of Henry the Seventh and his son, a suggestive picture is given in the 'Ship of Fools,' in the following verses 'On Sabbath-breaking and Profanation of Saints' Days:—

'These dayes were ordeyned for men to exercise  
 Themselves in prayer, goodness and vertue,  
 Our Lorde and His Saintes to honour, and likewise  
 Of word and deede all excesse to eschewe;  
 But for that we more gladly subdue,  
 To worldly trifles, and bodely pleasour,  
 We violate the faith by our wilfull errour.

Those laudable customs we defile and violate,  
By the holy lawes (alas!) we set nothing,  
But on the holy day made riot and debate  
Troubleth the service of the Almighty King.  
The holy day we fill with eche unefull thing,  
As late feastes and bankettes saused with gluttony,  
And that from morning to night continually.

\* \* \*

The tavern is open before the church be;  
The pottes are ronge as bels of dronkenesse,  
Before the church bels with great solemnitie.  
There here these wretches their mattins and their masse.  
Who listeth to take heede shall often see dowlless,  
The stalles of the tavern stuffed with eche one,  
When in the church stalles he shall see few or none.'

How the Sunday was observed by grave and God-fearing English folk, and in what manner decent people were expected to demean themselves on the weekly holiday, the reader may learn from 'The Institution of a Christian Man'—the authoritative treatise on the duty of Christian citizens first put forth in 1537 by the bishops, eight archdeacons, and seventeen eminent doctors. Commenting on the difference between the Jewish Sabbath and the Lord's Day, this official declaration remarks, 'But this precept of the sabbath, as concerning rest from bodily labour, the seventh day is ceremonial, and pertained onely to the Jewes, in the old Testament. Neverthelesse, as concerning the spirituall rest, which is figured and signified by this corporall rest, that is to say, rest from all carnall workes of the flesh, and all manner of sinne; this precept is morall, and remaineth still, and bindeth them that belong unto Christ; and not for every seventh day onely, but for all dayes, houres, and times. For at all times we be bound to rest from fulfilling our owne carnall will and pleasures.' That this distinction between ceremonial rest and figurative rest was a subtlety beyond the comprehensions of simple folk the authors of the 'Christian Man' were aware; and not to leave such readers without practical guidance for their conduct on the Lords Day, the writers went on to say, 'Furthermore, besides this spirituall rest, which chiefly and principally is required of us, we be bound by this precept, at certaine times, to cease from bodily labour, and to give our minds entirely and holly unto God; to heare the Divine Service, approved, used,

and observed in the church; and also the word of God; to acknowledge our owne sinfulness unto God, and his great mercie and goodnesse to us; to give thankes unto him for his benefits; to make publike and common prayer for all things needfull; to visit the sick, to instruct every man his children and family in vertue and goodnesse, and such other like workes.' But lest this statement in behalf of decorous and prayerful observance of the Sunday should be construed as affording sanction to the extreme opinions of the Sabbatarians, the authors of the 'Christian Man' were careful to add, 'That men must have a speciall regard, that they be not over-scrupulous, or rather superstitious, in abstaining from bodily labour on the holy day. For notwithstanding all that is afore spoken, it is not meant, but wee may upon the holy day give ourselves to labour, for the speedie performance of the necessarie affaires of the prince and the commonwealth, at the commandment of them that have rule and authoritie therein; and also in all other times of necessity; as for the saving of our corne and cattell, when it is like to be in danger, or like to be destroyed, if remedie be not had in time. For this lesson our Saviour taught us in his holy gospel, and we need not have any grudge or scruple in conscience, in case of such necessitie, to labour on the holy dayes; but rather we should offend, if we should for scrupulositie not save that God hath sent for the sustenance and relief of his people. And yet, in such times of necessitie, if their business be not very great and urgent, men ought to have such regard to the holy day, that they doe bestow some convenient time, in hearing divine service, as is aforesaid.'

The same view of the Christian Sunday is set forth in Edward the Sixth's 'Injunctions' (1547), one of which, after enjoining meet observance of the holy days concludes, 'Yet notwithstanding, all parsons, vicars and curates, shall teach and declare unto their parishioners, that they may with a safe and quiet conscience, in the time of harvest, labour upon the holy and festivall days, and save that thing which God hath sent. And if for and by any scrupulosity or grudge of conscience, men should superstitiously abstain from working upon those days, that then they should grievously offend and displease God.' In the same spirit and almost in the same words, Queen Elizabeth's Twentieth



injunction (1559) sanctions necessary labour on Sunday in times of harvest; but this precept requires husbandmen to abstain from such needful toil on such holy day until they have joined their fellow-parishioners in Common Prayer.

That the requirements of Edward's injunction for the better observance of the weekly holy day far exceeded the respect usually accorded to Sunday by his subjects, is shown by the very words of the ordinance which says, 'And whereas in our time, God is more offended than pleased, more dishonoured than honoured, upon the holy day, because of idleness, pride, drunkenness, quarrelling and brawling, which are most used in such days, people nevertheless persuading themselves sufficiently to honour God on that day, if they hear mass and service, though they understand nothing to their edifying.' In accordance with this statement of the grievous profanations of a sacred institution Crowley in his 'Epigrams concerning Abuses,' says,—

'Nedes must he have places for vitayle to be sold,  
For such as be syck, pore, feble, and old.  
But, Lord, to how great abuse they be grown,  
In eche little hamlet, vyllage and towne!  
They are become places of waste and excess,  
An harbour for such men as lyve in idlennesse.  
And lightly in the contry they be placed so,  
That they stand in men's way when they should to church go.  
And such as love not to hear theyr faults told  
By the minister that readeth the N. Testament and Old,  
Do turn into the alehouse, and let the church go:  
And men accompted wise and honest do so.  
But London, God be praised! al may commend,  
Which doth now this great enormity emende.  
For in servyce-tyme no dore standeth upp,  
Where such men are apt to fyl can and cupp:  
Wold God in the country they would do the same,  
Either for God's love or for worldly shame.'

The closing of taverns and shops on holy days in London during hours of Divine service was only one of several measures by which the spiritual and lay authorities of Edward the Sixth's time endeavoured to bring about a sabbatical observance of the Lord's day: of all which measures the one that produced the deepest and most enduring effect on national opinion was the adoption of the words of the ten Mosaic commandments into the common service of the Church. Absent from the Liturgy

authorised in the second year of Edward's reign, the commandments were introduced into the liturgy appointed for public use in the churches by the statute of 5 and 6 of Edward the Sixth; and it would be difficult to exaggerate the effects of this important alteration on the growth of those views to which we are mainly indebted for the distinctive characteristics of the modern Sunday. In the days of Charles the First, when episcopacy waged its disastrous war with Puritanical nonconformity, pious folk were subjected to criminal prosecutions in bishop's courts, for the offence of attending prayer-meetings and prohibited lectures, when orthodox Churchmen were demonstrating their devoutness by dancing and quoit-throwing on public greens. It was the fashion of the Laudian clergy to insist that it had never been the intention of the Church to teach, or of the legislation to urge, that the Sunday ought to be kept rigidly as a restful day after the model of the Sabbath. In requiring the minister of every parish-church to repeat solemnly the fourth commandment as though it were a precept binding Christian men with regard to the Lord's Day, and in requiring the people to respond imploringly, 'Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law,' the church and the legislature, it was averred, did not mean to imply that the fourth commandment should be kept literally and completely, but kept in 'as far as it contained the law of nature, and had been entertained in the Christian Church.' But so far as the attainment of their end was concerned, it was bootless for the clergy to put this nice distinction before simple and earnest worshippers, to whose sight the words of the fourth precept were exhibited, legibly printed on church-walls, and from whose lips the solemn and plaintive entreaty periodically ascended,—'Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.' If the law was to be kept with a reservation, why had not the Church, they asked, taught them to pray, 'Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law, so far as the laws of nature and the church require it to be kept?'

\* 'As for the Prayer there used,' says Peter Heylyn, striving to explain away the obvious meaning of the Prayer-book, 'wee may thus expound it, according to the doctrine and practice both of those very times; viz., that their intent and meaning was to teach the people, to pray unto the Lord, to incline their hearts to keepe that law, as furre as it contained the law of nature, and had been entertained in the Church.'—*Vide* Peter Heylyn's 'History of the Sabbath.'

Thus, whilst the Sabbatarians, who were hostile to the Church, clamoured for a literal application of the fourth commandment to Sunday observance, the doctrine of the high church pulpits was practically contradicted by the liturgy and the principal internal adornment of the parish church.

Abolishing the restraints which her brother had imposed on the customary festivals of the Lord's Day, Mary restored the Sunday to what it had been in her father's earlier years,—a restoration, it may be observed, that had comparatively slight effect on most of the rural districts, where provincial conservatism exhibited characteristic repugnance to the innovations of the religious Reformers. The Protestant interludes were forbidden; but the plays and moralities, which favoured Catholic opinion, were put upon the stage for the diversion of Sunday holiday-makers, who were also entertained with bear-baitings, bull-baitings, and other sports equally discordant to the merciful and humanizing sentiments of Christianity. 'The same day, being Sunday,' says Strype, in the 'Ecclesiastical Memorials,' of a sensational mishap that roused a commotion amongst Marian Londoners, '(for it seems these sports and pastimes were commonly practised on these days) was a bear-baiting on the Bankside, when a sad accident happened; for the great blind bear brake loose, and running away, he caught a serving-man by the calf of the leg, and bit off a great piece of it, and after by the huckle-bone, and within three days after he died.'

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE SUNDAY OF ELIZABETHAN AND LAUDIAN CHURCHMEN.

WHAT the Sunday was during Mary's short reign, we know from the manner in which it was observed in Elizabeth's earlier years,—an affair of history, over which the scribes of the period have allowed no obscuring cloud to rest. Biographers, preachers, pamphleteers, framers of parliamentary enactments, concur in proving that, notwithstanding the many steps taken in the long interval for securing a better observance of the weekly holy day, the Elizabethan Sunday closely resembled the Sunday of Wycliffe's England. It was still a day for fairs and markets, for public games and private banquets, for the clamorous amusements of the bear-garden and the maypole. Artisans, without incurring reproof, followed their ordinary vocations on the Lord's Day, or desisting from toil spent the hours of rest on the benches of ale-houses. The preamble of a parliamentary proposal which failed to become law, drawing attention in 1562 to the general profanation of the sacred day, observes, 'That the people commonly kept fairs and markets on this day, and other great festivalls,' and that 'those that kept victualling-houses, and artificers, admitted guests, and opened their shops in time of divine service.' To put an end to this last-mentioned scandal, the abortive proposal suggested, 'That no victualler or craftsmen have his shop open before the service be done in his parish where he dwelleth.'

The homily on the 'Place and Time of Prayer,' presenting us with a still more striking picture of these abuses, observes, 'But, alas! all these notwithstanding, it is lamentable to see the wicked boldness of those that will be counted God's people, who pass nothing at all of keeping and hallowing the Sunday. And these people are of two sorts. The one sort, if they have

any business to do, though there be no extreme need, they must not spare for the Sunday, they must ride and journey on the Sunday, they must drive and carry on the Sunday, they must row and ferry on the Sunday, they must keep markets and fairs on the Sunday; finally, they use all days alike, work-days and holy-days are all one. The other sort is worse. For although they will not travel nor labour on the Sunday, as they do on the week-days; yet they will not rest in holiness, as God commandeth; but they rest in ungodliness and filthiness, prancing in their pride, pranking and pricking, pointing and painting themselves, to be gorgeous and gay; they rest in excess and superfluity, in gluttony and drunkenness, like rats and swine; they rest in brawling and railing, in quarrelling and fighting; they rest in wantonness, in toyish talking, in filthy fleshliness: so that doth too evidently appear that God is more dishonoured, and the devil better served on the Sunday, than upon all the days in the week beside.'

Nor did these profanations cease or even grow less flagrant after Elizabeth had firmly established herself on the throne. Stephen Gosson, writing 'The School of Abuse' in 1579, remarks, with respect to the most profligate women of Elizabethan London, 'For they that lack customers al the weeke, either because their haunt is unknown or the constables and officers of their parish watch them so narrowly that they dare not quealche, to celebrate the Sabbath flock to the theatres,' where sinners, putting no cloak over their abominable propensities, gloried in their uncleanness. And throughout the reign of good Queen Bess, stage-players pursued their calling on Sunday without rousing general censure, or encountering much vexatious opposition. In 1580 it was ordained by her majesty and the civic magistracy that plays and interludes should no longer be acted on Sunday within the liberties of the city: but though this ordinance was enforced, the result was only a local hindrance or temporary embarrassment to the players who forthwith opened theatres outside the municipal bounds for the dramatic performances on the day of rest. In proportion as decorum was enforced in the city, licence prevailed in the suburbs. The bear-baitings and theatrical diversions of Paris gardens were attended by gentle and simple, to the horror and indignation of

precise observers of the nation's wickedness, whose dismay was not without a pleasant approval of so signal a manifestation of divine vengeance, when on January 14, 1583, eight persons were suddenly killed and a still larger number of sabbath-breakers seriously injured by the fall of an over-crowded scaffold in the said gardens.

It is probable that had no inauspicious influence checked the righteous intentions of Elizabeth and her prelates, they would have taken efficient steps to secure the Lord's day from the profanations which too generally attended its observance from the beginning to the end of her reign: but unfortunately for the interests of public religion and morals, the question of Sunday usages became a principal ground on which the orthodox Churchmen and the Puritans fought their fierce battle with equal bitterness and violence. The two parties had many points of vindictive difference: they were at variance about vestments, the use of the sign of the cross, the doctrines of the Prayer-book, the nature and functions of episcopacy; but there was no matter about which they wrangled more furiously than the customary mode of keeping the Lord's day. In language less discreet than substantially truthful the Puritans declared their abhorrence of practices which made the popular Sunday all that the homily on 'The Place and Time of Prayer' admitted that it had become to a large proportion of the English people; and whilst declaiming against abuses which cried aloud for correction, the zealots either expressly or suggestively charged them upon the perversity and pride of the stiff-necked prelates.

To a reader, with no accurate knowledge of the controversial spites and frenzies of the Elizabethan period, it is difficult to convey in a few words any adequate notion of the extravagances of which the extreme Sabbatarians were guilty. They taught, that to commit murder or adultery was not a greater sin than to do a turn of secular work on the weekly holy day; that the man who attended a wedding-feast on Sunday was as odious a reprobate as the ruffian who turned upon his father with a knife or cut his child's throat. Regarding the fury of these agitators with reasonable disapprobation, Elizabeth recognised in them the uncompromising enemies of her bishops, her church, her spiritual supremacy; and instead of distinguishing between the

reasonable and the unreasonable, the virtuous and mischievous, elements of the Protestant party that opposed her ecclesiastical policy no less resolutely than the Catholics fought against it, she cherished the liveliest repugnance to every person and thing that had a taint of Puritanism. It was the same with the more influential of her bishops who, as the rage of Puritanism grew fiercer and more fierce, became no less thoroughly convinced that the precisians were the enemies of goodness and order, than the orthodox churchmen of the fourteenth century had been convinced that the Lollards were in the highest degree pernicious as miscreants and hurtful as political agitators. Whatever the Puritans demanded must either be bad in itself or required for a bad end. Since the impiety of Sunday sports and the urgent need for a sabbatical observance of the Lord's Day were foremost articles of the Puritan platform, it was clear either that the sports and the profane observance of the day were beneficial to the Church, or that their suppression under existing circumstances would be detrimental to the Establishment.

It is singular, and very noteworthy, that the English sovereign who closed the theatres on Sundays, and forbade the holding of bear-baitings and bull-baitings on the Lord's Day, was the king who subsequently published the proclamation in favour of Sunday games—the proclamation destined to work incalculable disaster to the Church, and to become notorious in history under the misleading title of the 'Book of Sports.' One of the few acts, by which James the First raised the hopes of his Puritan subjects, and gave an appearance of sincerity to the professions of favour to Puritanism, with which he took leave of Scotland and entered England, was the order given at Theobalds, May 7, 1603: 'That whereas he had beene informed, that there had beene in former times a great neglect in keeping the Sabbath-day, for better observing of the same, and avoiding of all impious prophanation of it, he straitly charged and commanded,—That no Beare-baiting, Bull-baiting, Interludes, Common Playes, or, other like disordered or unlawfull exercises, or Pastimes, be frequented, kept or used at any time hereafter, upon any Sabbath Day.' The publication of this manifesto, with respect to Sunday observances, occasioned the Puritans lively satisfaction: but a scarcely less remarkable concession to their views, and

evidence of the general respect for their opinions, was the conduct of Convocation in omitting for their republication of Elizabeth's Injunction for the celebration of holy days, the words which sanctioned Sunday toil in harvest-time. But important though they were, these concessions, instead of satisfying the Puritan clergy and laity, only whetted their appetite for further favours and greater triumphs. The contest between the Sabbatarians and the bishops soon surpassed its former fury and virulence; and in 1618, the king—whose qualified forbearance to Puritanism was very transient, and who had vowed again and again to be king of his subjects' souls no less than of their bodies, published the 'Book of Sports.'

Like his father, Charles the First at the opening of his reign made insufficient concessions to the sabbatarian zeal of the large and rapidly increasing section of his subjects, who were bent on rendering the Lord's Day what it finally became and still is. But without conciliating the party of change, the king's concessions irritated the party of resistance; and after a stormy interval—during which our forefathers had kept the sabbath puritanically, or profaned it indecently, in illustration of their politico-religious sentiments—Charles followed up the affair of the Somersetshire wakes, by republishing at Laud's suggestion, the fatal 'Book of Sports,' whereby his subjects were invited to show their loyalty to the king, and their contempt of the Puritans, by spending their Sunday afternoons in riotous merriment. It is not too much to say that—by exasperating the Puritan gentry and commonalty against the bishops, by demonstrating to intelligent Englishmen how completely the supreme head of the Church was a puppet in the hands of the arrogant and fantastic primate, and by planting in the minds of simple folk an unreasonable and unjust conviction of their sovereign's hostility to religion,—this untimely republication of an unwise proclamation\* did more than any one other act of Charles's long career of blunders to bring him to the scaffold.

\* Some of my readers will like to peruse in its republished form the manifesto that proved in the end alike disastrous to Charles and the Church:—'The King's Majesty's Declaration to his Subjects, concerning Lawful Sports to be used. 1633.—Our dear Father of blessed memory, on his returne from Scotland, coming through Lancashire, found that his subjects were debarred from lawful



Of the manner in which Sunday was ordinarily kept in rural parishes, during the reigns of James the First and Charles the First, the pious and learned Richard Baxter gives a remarkably vivid picture in his autobiography, ‘*Reliquiæ Baxterianæ* ;’ where he tells us that his father, a regular attendant at church and a consistent respecter of bishops, was derided and slandered for a malignant Puritan by the godless people of Eaton Constantine and other parishes in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury, because the worthy man refrained from taking part in the Sunday sports of his parish, and used to read the Scriptures to his family whilst his neighbours got drunk at the may-pole.

recreations upon Sundays, after Evening Prayers ended, and upon holy dayes; and hee prudently considered, that if these times were taken from them, the meaner sort, who labour hard all the weeke, shoulde have no recreations at all to refresh their spirits. And after his returne hee further saw, that his loyall subjects in all other parts of his kingdome did suffer in the same kinde, though perhaps not in the same degree; and did therefore, in his princely wisdom, publish a Declaration to all his loving subjects concerning lawfull sports to be used at such times, which was printed and published by his royall commandement in the yeare 1618. For the tenor of which hereafter followeth:—By the King. Whereas upon our returne the last yere out of Scotland, we did publish our pleasure touching the recreations of our people in those parts under our hand: for some causes us thereunto moving, wee have thought good to command these directions then given in Lancashire, with a few words thereunto added, and most applicable to these parts of our realme, to bee published to all our subjects. Whereas, wee did justly, in our progress through Lancashire, rebuke some Puritanes and precise people, and tooke order that the like unlawfull carriage should not be used by any of them hereafter, in the prohibiting and unlawful punishing of our good people for using their lawful recreations, and honest exercises upon Sundayes and holydayes, after the afternoon’s sermon or service: Wee now finde that two sorts of people wherewith the county is much infected (we mean Papists and Puritans) have maliciously traduced and calumniated those our just and honourable proceedings; and, therefore, lest our reputation might upon the one side (though innocently), have some aspersion layd upon it, and that, upon the other part, our good people in that country be misled by the mistaking and misinterpretation of our meaning. We have, therefore, thought good hereby to cleare and make our pleasure to be manifested to all our good people in those parts. It is true that at our first entry to this crowne and kingdome, wee were informed, and that too truly, that our County of Lancashire abounded more in Popish recusants than any county of England; and thus hath still continued since, to our great regret, with little amendment save that now of late, in our last riding through our said county, we find, both by the report of the judges and of the bishop of the diocese, that there is some amendment now daily beginning, which is no small contentment to us. The report of this growing amendment amongst them made us the more sorry when, with our owne eares, we heard the generall complaint of our people, that they were barred from all lawfull recreation and exercise

‘In the village,’ says Baxter, in his personal memoir, ‘where I lived, the Reader read Common Prayer briefly, and the rest of the day till dark night almost, except eating-time, was spent in dancing under a may-pole and a great tree, not far from my father’s door, where all the town did meet together; and, though one of my father’s own tenants was the piper, he could not restrain him, nor break the sport; so that we could not read the Scripture in our family without the great disturbance of the taber, and pipe, and noise of the street. Many times my mind was inclined to be among them, and sometimes I broke loose from conscience, and joynd with them; and the more I did it,

on the Sundaye afternoon after the ending of all Divine Service, which cannot but produce two evils: the one, the hindering of the conversion of many, whom their priests will take occasion hereby to vexe, persuading them that no honest mirth or recreation is lawfull or tolerable in our religion, which cannot but breed a great discontentment in our people’s hearts, especially of such as are peradventure on the point of turning; the other inconvenience is, that this prohibition barreth the common and meaner sort of people from using such exercises as may make their bodies more able for warre, when we or our successors shall have occasion to use them. And in place thereof gets up filthy tiplings and drunkenesse, and breeds a number of idle and discontented speeches in their ale-houses. For when shall the common people have leave to exercise, if not upon the Sundays and holydaies, seeing they must apply their labour and win their living in all working-daies? Our expresse pleasure, therefore, is, that the lawes of our kingdome and canons of our Church be as well observed in that countie as in all other places of this our kingdome. And on the other part, that no lawfull recreation shall be barred to our good people which shall not tend to the breach of our aforesaid lawes and canons of our Church, which is to expresse more particularly, our pleasure is, that the bishops, and all other inferiour Churchmen and churchwardens, shall for their parts be carefull and diligent, both to instruct the ignorant, and to couvince and reforme them that are misled in religion, presenting them that will not conforme themselves, and obstinately stand out to our judges and justices; whom we likewise command to put the law in due execution against them. Our pleasure likewise is, that the Bishop of that diocesse take the like straight order with all the Puritans and Precisians within the same, either constraining them to conforme themselves, or leave the county according to the lawes of our kingdome and canons of our Church, and so to strike equally, on both hands, against the contemners of our authoritie and adversaries of our Church. And as for our good people’s lawfull recreation, our pleasure likewise is, that, after the end of Divine Service, our good people be not disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawfull recreation; such as dauncing, either men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any other harmlesse recreation, or from having of may-games, Whitson ales, and Morris dances, and the setting up of may-poles, and other sports therewith used, so as the same be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or neglect of Divine Service; and that women shall have leave to carry rushes to the church for the decorating of it,

the more I was inclined to it. But when I heard them call my father *Puritan*, it did much to cure and alienate me from them; for I considered that my father's exercise of reading Scripture was better than theirs, and would surely be better thought of by all men at the last, and I considered what it was that he and others were thus derided. When I heard them speak scornfully of others as Puritans whom I never knew, I was at first apt to believe all the lies and slanders wherewith they loaded them. But when I heard my own father so reproached, and perceived the drunkards were the forwardest in the reproach, I perceived that it was mere malice; for my father

according to their old custom, And, withal, we doe here account still as prohibited all unlawful games to be used upon Sundayes onely, as beare and bull-baitings, interludes, and at all times, in the meaner sort of people by law prohibited, bowling. And likewise we barre from this benefite and liberty, all such knowne recusants, either men or women, as will abstaine from coming to church or Divine Service, that will not first come to church and serve God: prohibiting in like sort the said recreations to any that, though conforming in religion, are not present in the Church at the service of God before their going to the said recreations. Our pleasure likewise is, that they to whom it belongeth in office shall present and sharply punish all such as, in abuse of this our liberty, will use these exercises before the end of all Divine Service for that day. And we likewise straightly command, that every person shall resort to his owne parish church to heare Divine Service, and each parish by itselfe to use the said recreation after Divine Service. Prohibiting likewise any offensive weapons to be carried or used in the said time of recreations; and our pleasure is, that this our Declaration shall be published, by order from the Bishop of the Diocesse, through all the parish churches, and that both our Judges of our circuit and our Justices of our Peace be informed thereof. Given at our manour of Greenwich the foure and twentieth day of May, in the sixteenth yeare of our reigne of England, France, and Ireland, and of Scotland the one and fiftieth. Now out of a like pious care for the service of God, and for suppressing of any humours that oppose truth, and for the ease, comfort, and recreation, of our well-deserving people, wee doe ratifie and publish this our blessed Father's Declaration; the rather because of late, in some counties of our kingdome, we find that, under pretence of taking away abuses, there hath beene a generall forbidding not onely of ordinary meetings, but of Feasts of the Dedication of Churches, commonly called wakes. Now our expresse will and pleasure is, that these feasts, with others, shall be observed, and that our Justices of the Peace in their severall divisions shall looke to it; both that all disorders there may be prevented or punished, and that all neighbourhood and freedome, with manlike and lawfull exercises, bee used. And we farther command our Justices of Assize in their severall circuits, to see that no man doe trouble or molest any of our loyall and duetiful people in and for their lawfull recreations, having first done their duties to God, and continuing in obedience to us and our lawes. And of this wee command all our Judges, Justices of the Peace, as well within the liberties as without, Maiors, Bayliffes, Constables,

never scrupled Common Prayer or ceremonies, nor spake against bishops, nor ever so much as prayed but by a book of form, being not even acquainted with any that did otherwise; but only for reading Scripture and the life to come, he was reviled commonly by the name of Puritan, precisian, and hypocrite; and so were the godly, conformable ministers that lived anywhere in the county near us, not only by our neighbours, but by the common talk of the vulgar rabble of all about us. By this experience I was fully convinced that godly people were the best, and those that despised them and lived in sin and pleasure were a malignant, unhappy sort of people; and this kept me out of

and other officers, to take notice of, and to see observed, as they tender our displeasure. And wee farther will, that publication of this our command bee made by order from the bishops through all the parish churches of their severall dioceses respectively. Given at our palace of Westminster the eighteenth day of October, in the ninth year of our reign. God save the King.'

How the publication of this foolish manifesto incensed the Puritans whilst it increased their numbers and influence in the country, how the declaration was regarded by a large section of the king's subjects as a violation of common decency as well as a sin against religion, how the affront of its utterance rankled in the bosoms of those against whom it was levelled, may be inferred from the action of the Long Parliament, which ordered that the offensive proclamation should be publicly burnt by the hangman,' 'Die Veneris, 5 Maii, 1643. It is this day ordered,' runs the broadside by which the public were informed of the Parliament's retaliation of the king's insult to his Puritan subjects, 'by the Lords and Commons in Parliament, that the Booke concerning the enjoyning and tollerating of sports on the Lord's Day, be forthwith burned by the Hangman in Cheapside, and other usuall places; and to this purpose, the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex respectively are hereby required to be assistant to the effectuall execution of this order, and see the said Booke burnt accordingly. And all persons who have any of the said books in their hands are hereby required forthwith to deliver them to one of the Sheriffes of London, to be burnt accordingly to this order.

'JOHN BROWNE, *Cler. Parl.*

HENRY ESSYNGE, *Cler. P. D. Com.*

'The Sheriffes of London and Middlesex have assigned Wednesday next, the 10th of this instant May, at twelve of the o'clock, for the putting in execution of the aforesaid ordinance; and, therefore, doe require all persons that have any of the bookes therein mentioned to bring them in by that time, that they may be burned accordingly.—JOHN LANGHAM, THOMAS ANDREWES. London: printed for Thomas Underhill, in Great Woodstreet, May 9, 1643.' Close on this public burning of the odious declaration followed the deaths of the king who had published it, and the primate who had caused its publication. On January 10, 1644-5, Laud's head rolled from the axe into the sawdust on Tower Hill, just five years before Charles suffered penal death at Whitehall.

their company, except now and then, when the love of sports and play enticed me.'

Further light is thrown on the Sunday usages of fairly decent people in the earlier half of the seventeenth century by the way in which writers against Puritanism relate, as preposterous and almost incredible instances of Sabbatarian extravagance, matters of demeanour or opinion that are nowadays the ordinary features of the peaceful English Sunday. 'I adde what I myself heard,' says Peter Heylyn, in his elaborate defence of Sunday sports (1636) 'at Sergeant's Inne in Fleet Street, about five years since, That temporall death was at this day to be inflicted, by the law of God, on the Sabbath-breaker; on him who on the Lord's Day did the workes of his daily calling. With a grave application, unto my masters of the law, that if they did their ordinarie workes on the Sabbath day, in taking fees and giving counsell, they should consider what they did deserve by the law of God.' To Peter Heylyn—the clever, courtly, scholarly priest, enjoying Laud's affectionate confidence and Charles's personal regard—it seemed that the preacher was fast ripening for the restraints of Bedlam who could tell a congregation of ancient lawyers that they did ill in receiving their clients and earning fees on the Lord's Day. That, though the courts were closed, the barristers of Charles the First's London busied themselves on Sunday with their clients and chamber business, I took occasion to show in my 'Book About Lawyers,' on the authority of D'Ewes, who tells us how, with the exception of Mr. Henley, a newly-admitted clerk, who set his face against such an 'atheistical profanation of God's own holy day,' the six clerks used to sit 'in their studies most part of the Sundays in the afternoon, to take their fees and do office-business, many of their under-clerks following their profane example.' Serjeants and outer barristers, crown-lawyers and scribes, acted in like manner; and the divine who ventured to reprove them, did so at the risk of being called a fanatic and mad Puritan by dignified members of the sacred profession.

To Heylyn's modern readers, his other instances of preposterous Puritanism are far less marvellous than they were to the historian of the Sabbath. Scarcely thinking that he will be believed, he tells us of fanatics 'that will not suffer either Baked

or Rost to be made readie for their dinners on the Sabbath-day, lest by so doing they should eate and drinke their owne damnation ;' of some that on a Sunday 'will not sell a pint of wine, or the like commoditie ; though wine was made by God, not only for man's often infirmities, but to make glad his heart, and refresh his spirits ; and therefore no less requisite on the Lord's Day than any other ;' and of some two or three maid-servants, 'who, though they were content to dresse their meat upon the Sabbath, yet by no meanes could be perswaded either to wash their dishes or make cleane their kitchen.' A wilder case of fanatical darkness yet remains to be told. 'But,' says the narrator, with equal astonishment and grief, 'that which most of all affects me, is, That a gentlewoman, at whose house I lay in Leicester, the last Northerne Progresse, anno 1634, expressed a great desire to see the King and Queene, who were then both there. And when I proffered her my service, to satisfy that loyall longing, she thanked me, but refused the favour, *because it was a Sabbath day.* Unto so strange a bondage are the people brought, that, as I before said, a greater never was imposed on the Jewes themselves, what time the consciences of that people were pinned most closely on the sleeves of the Scribes and Pharisees.'

The triumph of Puritanism terminated the long and disastrous controversy concerning the manner in which Christians should keep the Lord's Day. The parliament put an end to the Sunday sports, and its divines instructed their flocks to withdraw themselves as completely as possible from scenes of worldly pleasure on the day which it was their duty to spend in prayer, charitable works, religious study, and common worship. And when the regime of the saints came to an end, the cavaliers, who restored episcopacy and consigned the nonconforming ministers to miserable poverty, did not venture on another republication of the 'Book of Sports.' The Prayer-book and its ceremonies were revived ; but there was no attempt on the part of the chief restorers to bring about an universal re-institution of the profane practices of the medieval Sunday. Maypoles were replanted on Charles's return from exile ; and long after his death—even down to times within the memory of living men—many of our rural parishes retained vestiges of

their old Sunday sports, in social gatherings at churchyard corners and games upon the turf of commons; but in spite of local demonstrations against new ways and corresponding endeavours to re-introduce discarded fashions, the English Sunday of the eighteenth century was in most of its social characteristics identical with the Sunday of the Commonwealth Period. In fact the modern Sunday, with its quietude and peacefulness, with its general abstinence from open pleasure and almost universal forbearance from needless labour, with its orderliness in places of worship and its precise decorum in the public ways, is one of the valuable legacies that have come to us from the Puritanism of old time.

‘It is not enough,’ Robert Nelson observes in his ‘Companion to the Festivals and Feasts of the Church of England,’ ‘that we rest from the works of our calling, but our time must be employed in all such religious exercises as tend to the glory of God, and the salvation of our souls. We must regularly frequent the worship of God in the public assemblies, join in the prayers of the church, hear his holy word, receive the blessed sacrament when administered, and contribute to the relief of the poor, if there be any collection for their support. In private, we ought to enlarge our ordinary devotions, and to make the subject of them chiefly to consist in thanksgivings for works of Creation and Redemption; withal, recollecting all those particular mercies we have received from the bounty of heaven through the whole course of our lives; to improve our knowledge by reading and meditating upon divine subjects; to instruct our children and families; to visit the sick and the poor, comforting them by seasonable assistance; and if we converse with our friends and neighbours, to season our discourse with prudent and profitable hints for the advancement of piety; and to take care that no sourness or moroseness mingle with our serious frame of mind.’ Robert Nelson makes no reflections upon the nice and excessive scrupulosity of devout persons who refrain superstitiously on the Lord’s Day from needful labour,—*i. e.* such labour as worldly men might think convenient to the Sabbath. Nor does he urge on his readers the propriety of closing the Sunday with a game of quoits or pitch-bar. On the contrary, this high-church layman of the

Restoration period insists that the Sunday should be spent just as the Elizabethan Puritans spent it,—just as Richard Baxter's Puritanical father spent it at Eaton Constantine; and the terms in which he states this view are such as would have been derided as sheer Puritanical cant in the times when prelates were eloquent about the beneficial influence of Sunday wakes, and so conscientious a parish priest as George Herbert was of opinion that a model country parson could not close the Lord's Day better than by giving or being present at a supper-party.\*

But, though the Restoration adopted the Commonwealth Sunday, so far as its purely social characteristics are concerned, it would be a mistake to suppose that the restorers cordially approved the tone of the restful day, which they forbore, on political grounds, to deprive of the peacefulness which the saints had imparted to it. On the contrary, the 'society' of the period—the world of fashion and wealth in town and in the country—adhered as far as possible to the Sunday usages of Charles the First's ascendancy. Well pleased to see his tenants and peasantry gather round the restored Maypole, and dance to the music of a fiddle on the Lord's Day, and cautiously encouraging his people to 'keep up their old Sunday customs,' the typical Church-and-State squire of Charles the Second's reign continued to regard the Sabbath afternoon and evening as a time specially provided for social hilarity—for dancing and suppers, for cards and wine. In the chief reception-room of his manor-house the honest gentleman on Sunday evening was usually surrounded by his boon companions who, drinking confusion to hypocrites and success to the present company, alternately cursed Noll's memory, and swore that the nonconformists would sooner or later bring the country to ruin.

And what the squire did in his hall, the king did in his palace, where Sunday evening, beyond every other time of the week, was the occasion when courtiers of both sexes crowded its

\* 'At night,' says Herbert, of his model pastor, 'he thinks it a very fit time, both suitable to the joy of the day, and without hinderance to publicke duties, either to entertaine some of his friends, or to be entertained of them; where he takes occasion to discourse of such things as are profitable and pleasant, and to raise up their minds to apprehend God's good blessing to our Church and State; that order is kept in the one and peace in the other without disturbance or interruption of publick divine offices.'



galleries and flocked to the royal presence. Every reading Englishman knows Evelyn's description of Charles the Second's court on the last Sunday evening of the monarch's life,—a piece of history which Mr. E. M. Ward has adequately illustrated in a noble picture. 'I can never forget,' says the diarist in a journal which represents the feelings of his old age, when it was actually penned from old memoranda, rather than the sentiments which the recorded events occasioned at the time of their occurrence, 'the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming, and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening), which this day se'ennight I was witness of, the king sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, and Mazarine, &c., &c., a French boy singing love-songs, in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at Basset round a large table, a bank of at least 2000 gold before them: upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment. Six days after was all in the dust.'

I suspect that Evelyn was far less shocked at this scene than he imagined himself to have been, when he reflected on it, after the king's death had changed the gay spectacle into a solemn and appalling lesson. I doubt not that, writing in his old age and the following century, when Robert Nelson's notions respecting Sunday had been generally accepted by persons of quality, the diarist was much more sensible of the profanity of the revel than he was when taking part in it. Very likely his friends may have expressed disapprobation at the dissoluteness of the company and the magnitude of the gamblers' stake, but it is not credible that they were shocked at finding their sovereign the centre of a glittering throng on a Sunday evening. Charles was merely spending the time in his customary way,—the way in which he was well known to spend it, and in which every world-loving nobleman, every opulent and world-loving Londoner, was wont to pass the Sabbath evening according to his means. Had Evelyn really disapproved of such practices in 1685, he would not have voluntarily presented himself before his sovereign when the court was in full enjoyment of the Sunday evening's festival.

## PART V.—RELIGION UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### RESULTS OF PURITANISM ON THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE PRESENT GENERATION.

SO far as their political principles and theological views are concerned, the Friends maintain that they are to-day exactly what they were two centuries since; and though the strictest members of their society may perhaps have departed in certain subtleties farther than they are aware from the doctrines of their famous founder, it cannot be questioned that the Quakers, with no written code of articles of faith, have adhered more closely to their original tenets than any other body of religious separatists who proceeded from the spiritual agitations immediately consequent on our severance from the Church of Rome. In polity they are as much the enemies of war and priestly domination as they were when the Leicestershire enthusiast proclaimed the uselessness and unscriptural nature of a clergy set apart for the spiritual guidance of their fellow-creatures, and would not permit his disciples to speak of our parish churches by any more respectful appellation than ‘steeple-houses.’ In theology they have shown themselves tenaciously conservative of their predecessors’ opinions concerning ‘the perceptible presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the obedient,’ although many of their present orthodox leaders, pointing to the unscriptural error and secession

of the American Hicksites, do not hesitate to say that, in so far as it encouraged believers to exalt the 'universal and saving light' as a guide unto salvation above the written word of the gospel, George Fox's teaching possessed a share of human fallibility, and must be held largely accountable for those 'secessions through Deistical tendencies' which have in these later days reduced the numbers and afflicted the hearts of the faithful. But though they still teach that each believer must be his own priest, and that no man can do aught for his neighbour's spiritual guidance beyond such services of sympathy and instruction as may help him to find the light which shines for the illumination of every believer,—and though they maintain without abatement their disapproval of war, state churches, slavery, oaths, and capital punishment,—the successors of Barclay and Penn have recently laid aside so many of the outward badges and formal peculiarities of their sect, that the Quakerism which moved the derision of our grandfathers may be described as an affair of the past.

Even so late as ten years since, the annual meeting of the Friends changed the appearance of the London thoroughfares by the number of drab-clothed men and hugely-bonneted women who assembled from the provinces for conference with their companions in belief; but at present the broad brims, long coats, square-toed shoes, and other articles of old-world Quaker garb, have been so generally relinquished by the society, that the appearance of a Friend dressed in the mode of the Quakers of John Joseph Gurney's date attracts almost as much attention in Oxford Street or Cheapside as a Hindú costume. In other respects, the Friends of the new differ noticeably from the Friends of the old school. Though some of them adhere to the old forms of address, the majority have discontinued the eccentric use of 'thou' and 'thee,' which only the other day was one of the universal peculiarities of their party, and no longer hold it reprehensible to call the days of the week by names of Pagan origin. In like manner, with respect to diversions and pursuits, they manifest such a disposition to conform to the ways of the world that it would not greatly astonish me to hear that a Quaker had won the Derby, or undertaken to manage an opera-house. That these changes in matters affecting none of

the vital principles of Quakerism seem to me to be an affair for congratulation, on the part of society as well as the sect, it is needless to remark; but whilst regarding them as alterations which promise benefit to the general public, by removing inducements to ridicule the action of devout persons, and strengthen the particular fraternity by putting an end to profitless distinctions that somewhat diminished its salutary influence, I notice with a kind of regret the disappearance of customs which varied the uniformity of English manners, and were interesting relics of the style and ways of seventeenth-century Puritanism.

At a period when old-world Quakerism may be said to have recently expired, and Friends of the new school have liberated themselves from the trammels of traditional usages, without surrendering any of the points for which they have contended for more than two hundred years, Mr. William Tallack has recently given us a brief and ably-written memoir\* of George Fox's life and services, prefacing the strictly biographic part of his volume with a statement of the past achievements and present position of the Society, of which he is a conspicuous member. Both in the personal memoir and the historic survey, the author exhibits abundant knowledge and perfect freedom from prejudice; but the feature of his book which distinguishes it from other volumes on the same subject, is its careful demonstration that 'George Fox was rather the organizer, or completing agent, than the founder of Quakerism;' that his doctrines were taken mainly from the Baptists, with whom he associated intimately in the first years of his ministry; and that the peculiarities of opinion and practice—which in these later times have given distinctiveness to the Friends—are clearly referable to the same source.

To students who have considered minutely the religious agitations which resulted in, attended, and followed the Reformation, there is, of course, nothing novel in this assertion of the origin of the principles and usages of Quakerism; but whilst the parentage of George Fox's system has been strangely overlooked by his numerous biographers, the nature of his labours

\* 'George Fox, the Friends, and the Early Baptists: by William Tallack;'—a modest and excellent little book, which I cordially commend to the notice of students.

has been even more strangely misapprehended by the great body of educated Englishmen who keep Hooker's 'Ecclesiastical Polity' in their libraries, but seem more disposed to commend than to peruse it. Though Hooker died in the first year of the seventeenth century, and forty-seven years before George Fox commenced his public ministrations, he had observed attentively the demeanour of the Separatists, who were the religious progenitors of the Friends of Charles the Second's reign. The exaltation of the inner light above the doctrines of churches, and even above the statements of Scripture, which was a prominent feature of Fox's theology, and in recent times has occasioned the Friends much perplexity and misfortune, was noticed by the author of the 'Ecclesiastical Polity' as a distinguishing feature of those early enthusiasts, concerning whom he writes in his preface: 'Wherefore, that things might again be brought to the ancient integrity which Jesus Christ by his word requireth, they began to control the ministers of the Gospel for attributing so much force and virtue unto the Scriptures of God read; whereas the truth was, that when the Word is said to engender faith in the heart, and to convert the soul of man, or to work any such spiritual divine effect, these speeches are not thereunto applicable, as it is read or preached, but as it is engrafted in us by the power of the Holy Ghost, assuring the eyes of our understanding, and so revealing the mysteries of God, according to that which Jeremiah promised before should be, saying, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and I will write it in their hearts."'

Whilst these Elizabethan zealots thus asserted the primary doctrine of the Foxian Friends, they anticipated the abhorrence which those pious enthusiasts expressed for usages that had any savour of earnest enjoyment, or indicated forbearance towards Pagan superstitions: 'Where they found men, in diet, attire, furniture of houses, or any other way, observers of civility and decent order, such they reprov'd as being carnally and earthly minded.' They rendered themselves conspicuous in law courts by declining to be sworn witnesses, and opposed the interests of government by 'forbidding oaths, the necessary means of judicial trial, because Christ hath said, "Swear not at all."' Raising their voices against the sinfulness of personal display,

these men were noticeable for the meanness of their attire and avoidance of terms borrowed from heathen mythology. 'They so much affected to cross the ordinary custom in everything, that when other men's use was to put on better attire, they would be sure to show themselves openly abroad in worse. The ordinary names of the days in the week, they thought it a kind of profaneness to use, and therefore accustomed themselves to make no other distinction than by numbers,—“the first,” “second,” “third day.”' That he alluded to only a few of their many peculiarities, Hooker intimates in the passage where, speaking of their novelties of doctrine and discipline, he observes, 'When they and their Bibles were alone together, what strange fantastical opinion at any time entered into their heads, their use was to think that the Spirit taught it them. And forasmuch as they were of the same suit with those of whom the Apostle speaketh, saying, “They are still learning, but never attain to the knowledge of truth,” it was no marvel to see them every day broach some new thing not heard of before, which restless levity they did interpret to be their going on to spiritual perfection, and proceeding from faith to faith.'

From the holders of these peculiar views came the General Baptists and Particular Baptists of James the First's time, from whom the Foxian Friends took most of their eccentric rules of manner and nearly all their characteristic opinions.

Notwithstanding their great material prosperity and abundance of intellectual power, their perfect discipline and missionary zeal, the Friends are weak in number. With justice, they tell us that their influence is far greater than the fewness of their old members and the paucity of their new converts would lead a superficial observer to think; and Mr. Tallack may be justified in intimating that they regard their present position with complacency, and are consoled for the thinness of their congregations by a sincere conviction that—by the agency of schools whose pupils seldom become Quakers, and preachers who fail to make converts—they do 'as much for the present and eventual advantage of the great body of the people (as to moral and intellectual progress), as the whole of the Anglican Church has ever done with its enormous revenues, State patronage, and ten or fifteen millions of real and nominal adherents.'

In spirit and design, the Quaker is a missionary church; but converts to its peculiar tenets are not the fruit that springs from the seed which it literally scatters on the hearts of men. 'In the Eastern district,' Mr. Tallack records, 'the Quaker ranks are now becoming smaller and smaller. For instance, their congregations at Norwich and Ipswich, notwithstanding they have contained some of the most influential and worthy persons in the vicinity, have for years been sadly dwindling. Thus, Norwich, which about forty years ago contained five hundred Friends, has now barely forty.' Whilst George Fox's disciples have thus dwindled to two score persons in the stronghold of Quakerism, where Mrs. Opie penned her moral tales after ceasing to write novels, and John Joseph Gurney swayed the deliberations of the faithful, the Friends have lost ground in other parts of the United Kingdom, so that at the present time their total number 'in Great Britain and Ireland barely amounts to 15,000 (far fewer than could be contained in the Agricultural Hall at Islington).'

But notwithstanding his conviction that the vitality of a church depends less on the number than the individual excellence of its members, even Mr. Tallack will admit that, should the numerical decadence of Quakerism progress at the rate which it has maintained during the last thirty years, the time cannot be far distant when his church, through want of adherents, will vanish from the number of our religious organizations. Whatever may be his spiritual quality, the last surviving Friend will not of himself constitute a church. But I am far from anticipating a speedy extinction of George Fox's association. Holding that its recent numerical decay has been mainly due to the peculiarities which the new Friends have decided to relinquish, I am inclined to think that ere long it will receive large accessions of adherents from the ranks of those who, whilst concurring with the vital principles of Quakerism, have been withheld from joining the society by considerations which, through the operation of recent reforms, have ceased to exist. Should this prediction, however, be falsified by the utter dissolution of the Quaker church, the Friends will not pass away without having seen the partial or complete triumph of most of their distinctive doctrines.

Regarded as the most thorough and uncompromising kind of seventeenth-century Puritanism, the Society of Friends may be largely credited with the successes of the religious movement which, whether for good or evil, has reformed England in accordance with Puritan doctrine. Prelacy, indeed, survives and flourishes; but apart from the ecclesiastical system which it strove to demolish, Puritanism has accomplished its most important ends. How much the England of to-day is the England that Puritans wished her to become cannot be seen until we compare the England of the seventeenth century with the England of this present time; but when that comparison has been made it is apparent how completely Puritanism has vanquished its enemies on some of those very points where its success seemed least probable.

Episcopacy remains; but the church has conformed to the Puritanic sentiment of the nation. The calm, decorous English Sunday, with its abstinence from labour and worldly diversion, is the product of Puritan doctrine; and from no class of living Englishmen do its essentially Puritanical requirements meet with heartier compliance than from the lineal and official successors of the Cavaliers and Churchmen who maintained that the Lord's Day should be kept as a weekly Carnival. At a time when persons of every degree and both sexes habitually garnished their utterances with revolting imprecations, the Puritans exclaimed against the wickedness of profane speech; and though their protest against conversational profanity roused the derision of courtiers and grand ladies, the modern representatives of those same courtiers and fine ladies have agreed to adopt the Puritan style as an important element of good breeding. When it was the fashion with fine people to encumber their verbal communications with extravagant metaphors and insincere professions, the Puritans offended them by declaring that simple language was the best vehicle for honest thoughts; and though the wits of the period were furious about the insolence of the boorish malignants who ventured to criticise the manners of their social superiors, English gentlemen have adopted the criticism as an unassailable canon of taste. Prynne lost his ears for denouncing the immoralities of the stage; but after a lapse of generations public taste has indorsed the



animadversions for which the Puritan barrister paid so heavy a penalty, and no theatrical manager of our own time would dare to restore the abuses which the 'Histriomastix' eventually swept away. Our women, it is true, have neither adopted the Quaker costume nor relinquished the garnitures and fashions which were a scandal to austere precisians; but the male descendants of the old Cavaliers have long since adopted the sober garb and coiffure which gained for the Puritan reformers their reputation of 'sadness,' and their nickname of Roundheads. And whilst, with respect to such trifling matters as fall within the province of the tailor's craft and hairdresser's business, our most frivolous men of fashion have become zealous precisians, the more important principles of the old Puritans are finding large favour amongst all classes of the people. Their views respecting slavery, unpalatable still to a few of us, have triumphed in both hemispheres. Oaths are still administered in our courts of justice, but our most enlightened legislators have come to the conclusion that the practice is prejudicial to public morals and a hindrance to justice. War is still the business and delight of a large proportion of civilised men: but, even in this period of vast standing armies and iron fleets, the Friends have grounds for asserting that their doctrines concerning the sinfulness and inexpediency of war were never more acceptable to or influential over the rulers and masses of mankind than at the present time. Whilst most persons admit that war is neither glorious in itself nor desirable for its own sake, few persons decline to regard it as a terrible evil, arising from the sinfulness of man's nature. And whilst the Quaker doctrine of the sinfulness of war has thus gained the almost universal acquiescence of thoughtful minds, it is no less generally conceded, even by the apologists of warfare, that one of the first duties of statesmanship is to diminish the temptations to martial strife and the occasions when, under existing circumstances, an appeal to force becomes the only practicable mode of settling differences of opinion. The Peace Congresses are derided, but the influence of their doctrines on the policy of nations is more powerful than the men of war are aware.

Should, therefore, the Quaker Church pass away to-morrow, it would not perish without having witnessed the partial or

complete triumph of several of the most important of the principles which George Fox adopted from the Baptists, and for which his followers have resolutely contended. Before Quakerism laid aside its quaint garb and modes of speech, it witnessed the defeat of the evils against which those peculiarities were a protest. Puritanism has not been vanquished by the world, but has fairly overcome society; and amongst the forces of the victorious side in the long and obstinate conflict, no party rendered greater or more enduring service than George Fox's band of resolute disciples.

## CHAPTER II.

### ROYAL SUPREMACY.

**T**HROUGHOUT the long conflict between episcopacy and Puritanism—a conflict which comprises the most momentous and exciting incidents of our ecclesiastical history, from Elizabeth's accession to Charles the First's Fall—the crown gave an unwavering and enthusiastic support to the cause of prelacy. Ay more, believing that its own interests would be greatly advanced by the triumph, and proportionately injured by the defeat, of episcopacy, it regarded with acrimonious hostility every party or person that ventured to oppose or question the authority of bishops; and, by a process of reasoning less logical than natural, it maintained that disapprobation of a particular ecclesiastical system necessarily involved disaffection to the throne. It being assumed as unassailable axioms of political science that the sovereign would be powerful and glorious in proportion as the national Church enjoyed the confidence and affection of the people, and that no ecclesiastical polity could conduce so much as the episcopal system to the strength and efficiency of the Church, it did not need to be demonstrated that the opponent of episcopacy was at war with the Church whose well-being depended on government by bishops, and was an enemy of the sovereign whose brightest honour and majesty resulted from his official connection with the Church of which he was supreme governor.\*

\* At its first origination, no less than now, the Royal Supremacy meant the Supremacy of the English law, of which the sovereign was the chief representative; but in the sixteenth century, when the crown exercised in all public matters a personal authority, which has been either modified or extinguished by recent constitutional amendments, or the steady action of constitutional principles, the sovereign's sway over religion and the spirituality was necessarily a more personal government than it became in course of time. Henry the Eighth,

To appreciate the considerations which induced Elizabeth, James, and Charles to espouse the cause of prelatie rule, and to fight for it with an enthusiasm which made them altogether misapprehend the nature and aims of its antagonists,—the student must remember that, throughout the ninety years

Edward the Sixth, and Mary, were titular as well as actual governors of the Church. The last-named sovereign relinquished the title of Supreme Head of the Church: a title which Elizabeth, on the Parliament offering it to her, declined to accept, though, as a Protestant sovereign, she had neither the inclination nor the ability to decline the responsibilities and powers of the office with which the title had previously gone. Edward the Sixth's article of 'Civil Magistrates' says,—'The king of England is supreme head in earth next under Christ of the Church of England and Ireland,' the object of this declaration of a politico-religious principle being pointed to by the next words of the article,—'The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England.' The prudential considerations which determined Elizabeth to decline the titular distinction of the Royal Supremacy, which she asserted with characteristic vigour and arrogance, are reflected in the language of the Thirty-seventh Article, which recognised her authority over the Church in apologetic terms.—'The Queen's Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England and other her Dominions, unto whom the chief government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any Foreign jurisdiction. *Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the chief government, by which Titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended,* we give not to our Princes the ministering either of God's word or of the Sacraments, the which thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in the holy Scriptures by God Himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers.' Thus, whilst Elizabeth refrained from inviting ridicule and provoking resentment by the use of a title, which, when borne by a woman, was calculated to offend *slanderous folk*, who would have seen nothing to object to in its assumption by a *king*, the Thirty-seventh Article—forbearing to use the words 'supreme head,' and jealously defining her ecclesiastical prerogatives—speaks of her 'chief government.' It has been recently asserted, by a very able writer on Ecclesiastical History, that no English sovereign since Mary's time has borne the title of Supreme Head of the Church; and that, though some of Mary's successors may have actually exercised all the powers of supreme governors, no one of them has been Head of the English Church: statements which, it must be admitted, are somewhat at variance with Charles the Second's declaration, printed in the book of Common Prayer, in which the title and office of Supreme Governor of the Church are said to be enjoyed by him.—'Being by God's Ordinance, according to our just Title, Defender of the Faith and *Supreme Governour of the Church*, within these our Dominions,' are the opening words of his Majesty's Declaration, which contains this concise assertion of the Royal Headship of the Church, 'We are Supreme Governour of the Church of England.'

between Mary's death and the triumph of Puritanism, in contending for the authority of bishops and those ecclesiastical interests which were supposed to be identical with or inseparable from the interests of episcopacy, the sovereign was actuated by personal and selfish, no less forcibly and profoundly than by devout or patriotic motives. By strengthening the church, and resisting all who ventured to oppose its discipline, the sovereign was seeking strength for himself, and asserting the privileges of that Royal supremacy which Mr. Disraeli recently designated the brightest jewel in the English crown, but which has, in these later generations, been so modified and changed by the development of constitutional principles and the influence of legislation, that it is scarcely recognisable as the same prerogative which invested Henry the Eighth with the powers of a pontiff in his own dominions, and almost justified James the First's insolent boast that he was king of his subjects' souls no less than of their bodies.

It is not my intention to insinuate that in doing battle for episcopacy the three English sovereigns, who occupy the interval between our last Catholic monarch and the Commonwealth, were influenced altogether or mainly by jealous concern for their official dignities and privileges. Nor do I suggest that, had it not been for the Royal supremacy and their personal interest to guard its privileges against the encroachments of the populace as well as of the Pope, they would have been lukewarm for the Church or favourably inclined towards Puritanism. On the contrary, I doubt not that they were all three so sincerely attached to the principles of prelatic government, that,—if the Reformation, instead of endowing the crown with ecclesiastical supremacy, had put the headship of the national church upon an Anglican patriarch who owed the crown no spiritual allegiance,—they would have still been cordial approvers of episcopacy. Indeed, the episcopal system was so precisely in harmony with the principles and provisions of feudal government that it is difficult to conceive how any person of the Elizabethan period, who had been reared under feudal traditions and under circumstances likely to inspire him with respect for those traditions, could be otherwise than heartily episcopalian.

The feudal system placed the supreme command of the state

in the hands of a solitary chief, who was the source of all secular dignity and power, and to whom all persons in their various degrees owed allegiance. Representing his majesty and administering his power in their respective shires and districts, the great nobles governed their dependents with a rule that was identical in principle and aims with the authority by which they were themselves controlled: and subject to the classes—who ruling those beneath were ruled by those above them, so that the entire community of subordinate rulers obeyed harmoniously the will of the supreme director,—came the populace who, without being admitted to participate in the delights and dignities of governing, were deemed sufficiently fortunate in being permitted to obey the behests of their superiors. This was the theory of sound government in the feudal ages,—a single supreme ruler at the head, a docile populace at the base, of the social structure: betwixt the monarch and the populace, a series of nobles, magistrates, and minor authorities, each grade of whom derived its powers directly or indirectly from the sovereign who directly or indirectly governed all.

The same gradations of authority from a supreme ruler to a multitude having no, or but few, governmental privileges, were discernible in the ecclesiastical system of medieval Christendom; and, though there were, of course, many points of historical and political difference between the secular dignities and ecclesiastical offices, the analogy between them was so general and striking that, to every thoughtful observer of hierarchic order and feudal government, the places of the former seemed to derive countenance from, and afford sanction to, the magistracies of the latter. What the barons were in the state, the bishops were in the Church; there was enough resemblance between the powers of lay-judges and the functions of clerical commissaries to remind the social spectator of the general harmony between church and state: the sheriff and the archdeacon were, in some respects, corresponding offices: the spiritual authority of a rector in his parish was analogous to the temporal power of a territorial squire within the limits of his manor. Consequently had episcopacy been a new device, begotten by the agitations of a revolutionary period, its general consonance with feudalism would have commended it to our ancestors of the reform period,

as thoroughly practical and suited to the requirements of society. When, therefore, it is remembered that, in addition to its harmony with the secular government of the epoch, episcopacy possessed the sanction of ancient usage, and had been our mode of ecclesiastical government from the earliest date of our Christian story, no reader will find difficulty in believing that Elizabeth and her two nearest successors on the throne of England were conscientiously persuaded that prelatie rule was the only hierarchical system compatible with a sound and vigorous administration of secular affairs. It should, moreover, be borne in mind that nearly every consideration, which disposed the feudal mind to regard episcopacy with favour, roused its repugnance to presbytery, which was nothing else than an application of republican principles to spiritual interests and ecclesiastical discipline.

But notwithstanding the general harmony of the two systems, the ecclesiastical government and secular authority of Catholic England seldom co-operated amicably for any considerable time, for whilst they always represented more or less conflicting interests, they obeyed different masters. Even in the periods of our Catholic history when the Papal supremacy was weak, the national priests professed nothing stronger than a qualified allegiance to the secular power. The layman's first duty was to his sovereign; the priest's paramount obligations were to the Church. By 'the Church' he might mean the pope, his primate, his bishop, the clerical order, the general spiritual interests of Christian persons; but it never meant his sovereign or his sovereign's realm. Even when he laboured most enthusiastically in the service of his king and for the benefit of his country, his zeal for his sovereign was lukewarm in comparison with his devotion to his chief ecclesiastical commander, and his patriotism was of far thinner texture and paler complexion than the layman's love of country. Hence arose the continual jealousies and conflicts which embittered the relations and disturbed the intercourse of the spirituality and ruling laity of feudal England. So long as the occupant of the throne could command the co-operation of the clergy, his labour was easy and his life pleasant; but in critical and troublous times the spirituality for the attainment of their peculiar ends were vexatiously apt to

stand aloof from the sovereign, who was powerless to control their movements. Sometimes the Church opposed the Sovereign on just and humane grounds: but quite as often its opposition was dictated by selfish policy, or pique, or some other worldly motive. However strong, therefore, his pious admiration of the Church, and however fervent his superstitious devotion, the medieval king regarded with more of fear than of affection the vast army of ecclesiastics who, constituting an *imperium in imperio*, cherished for him no loyalty that would not disappear at the nod of spiritual authority, and who were likely enough at his next moment of embarrassment to turn upon him and work his discomfiture.

The Reformation afforded the crown a long wished-for opportunity to assert its supremacy over the Church, and thereby bring the two consonant and harmonious systems of government—episcopacy and feudalism—under the control of a single will; and the alacrity and completeness with which Henry availed himself of this opportunity occasioned the liveliest satisfaction to the majority of his subjects. Regarded as a political change, this royal assumption of ecclesiastical supremacy was in the highest degree acceptable to that large section of our ancestors, who, though Catholic in every matter of dogma, were scarcely less jealous of the Pope's political encroachments than the Lollards were indignant at his spiritual pretensions. The modern Englishman is prone to think that Henry's conduct in thus seizing the headship of the Church was not without a savour of absolute profanity, and that it must have seemed a monstrous act of desecration to most of the pious folk who accommodated themselves to the usurpation. But without entering on the question whether the despotic layman was guilty of an outrage on Christian law, I have no hesitation in saying that no one step—of all those diverse revolutionary acts to which we apply the term 'Reformation'—was more generally and heartily approved of by our ancestors of the sixteenth century than this change which put an end to the system of double government that had repeatedly brought the nation to calamity and humiliation. The prevailing sentiment of the period, even amongst orthodox Catholics, was that the Bishop of Rome was a very unfit person to be the political head of the English Church,



and that of all official persons the sovereign of England was the only person who could be trusted to govern that Church alike for its own advantage and the welfare of the English people. What interest had the Pope in restraining the licentiousness and amending the errors of the clergy of a country which was to him a foreign and remote land? But to the sovereign of England it was a matter of the highest moment that the National Church should be thoroughly efficient and in every respect conducive to the health of his people. To whose hands, than those of England's sovereign, would it be more safe to entrust the powers of an ecclesiastical patriarch? Patriotism, love of order, shrewd common sense, all commended the determination that henceforth the king of England's realm should be the pope of England's Church.

At the present time, when the royal supremacy means nothing more than a political arrangement and a constitutional principle—an arrangement which empowers the queen's responsible ministers to select new bishops and distribute a large amount of ecclesiastical patronage; a constitutional principle, which submits clerical opinion to secular tribunals, and ecclesiastical interests to a parliament chiefly composed of laymen—it is difficult to realize the strictly personal sense in which our ancestors of the sixteenth century wished their sovereign to be a veritable English pope, ruling his spirituality with a strong hand, reforming abuses, introducing new practices, and giving utterance to decisions on matters of faith. An insular pope of this kind was Henry the Eighth, who, with the approval of his subjects, either with or without the sanction of convocation, published edicts and ordinances for the government of his Church, put forth new articles of belief, and on his own personal authority did far more for the guidance and determination of religious opinions than any pope of Rome would have ventured to do. At this day, English people are frequently seen to smile at an allusion to our queen's supremacy over the Church, as though it were some pleasant legal fiction, which, though it may once upon a time have served a useful purpose, belongs to the same order of fabrications as the imaginary transactions of Mr. John Doe and Mr. Richard Roe. But the Reformers of three centuries since had no intention that the

royal supremacy should be regarded as a constitutional pleasantry,—no anticipation of the day when the sovereign would discharge the functions of his chief government of the Church by means of cabinet ministers, judicial committees, and parliament. Their wish was that the sovereign should be a personal pontiff,—a prying, meddling, dictatorial pontiff. How Edward the Sixth was trained to regard himself as the Pope's successor within his realm we know from the language in which his divines addressed him and spoke of him in his presence, when his youthful mind was being fashioned by them for the proper discharge of his kingly duties. 'Consider,' said Latimer, the least servile of court preachers, addressing a congregation assembled in the banqueting-hall of Westminster Palace, 'also the presence of the Kynges Maiestie Gods highe vycare in earth, hauyng a respect to his personag, ye ought to haue it, and consider that he is goddes hygh minister, and yet alloweth you all to be partakers with hym of ye heryng of gods word.' By language such as this, from the lips of a preacher little given to the utterance of flattery and formal courtesies, the twelve years' old boy was educated to think of himself as God's high vicar on earth,—the actual representative of divinity to his people. Edward's early death deprived the world of the full fruits that otherwise would have resulted from this training; but when the chief government of all estates of this realm had devolved on a Protestant queen, England saw that, though she prudently refrained from styling herself head of the Church, she was far from regarding herself as disqualified by her sex for the task of ruling her clergy with personal despotism. Instead of taking her ecclesiastical policy from her bishops, Elizabeth marked out the line which they were to take; and on the appearance of a disposition in them to disregard her orders, she was not slow to tell them that she was their mistress,—that they disobeyed her at peril of dismissal from their places,—that she who had frocked them could unfrock them. When her primate Grindal differed from her with respect to prophesyings, and declined to issue orders for their suppression, she sent her commands to the prelates without his assistance, and suspended him from his office until he had humbled himself and submitted to her imperious spirit.

Though James the First had not been trained from youth upwards to regard himself as God's vicar on earth, in matters spiritual as well as temporal, he had not been many days on the throne of England before he was firmly resolved that his royal supremacy should be no bare assertion of a constitutional principle, but a personal protectorate of the religion of his realm. Cordially detesting Presbytery, he no less heartily approved of Episcopacy; and at the Hampton Court Conference he declared with instructive frankness why he loved the one and hated the other. Episcopacy conjoined with royal supremacy enjoyed his favour, because it enhanced the splendour and power of the regal office, making him a real king, master of his subjects' souls as well as their bodies, whereas the sovereign who had not the same kind of spiritual dominion over his people was only half a king. On the other hand he loathed the Presbyterian system, because it inflated social nobodies with self-esteem, and encouraged them to be insolent to their rulers. He averred that Presbytery 'agreed with monarchy as well as God and the devil,' that at their Presbytery any obscure 'Jack and Tom, Will and Dick, might meet and at their leisure censure him and his council.' Giving vent to his wrath with Jack and Tom, he exclaimed to the Puritan divines, 'Therefore, pray stay one seven years before you demand that of me, and if then you find me pursy and fat, and my windpipe stuffed, I will perhaps hearken to you; for let that government be up, and I am sure I shall be kept in breath; but till you find I grow lazy, pray let that alone. I remember how they used the poor lady my mother in Scotland, and me in my minority.' Turning from the Puritan divines to the bishops, he added, 'My lords, I may thank you that these Puritans plead for my supremacy; for if once you are out and they in place, I know what would come of my supremacy, for No bishop, no king.' It is needless to remind most readers that in undertaking to preside personally at this conference, James claimed for himself by virtue of his supremacy the right to act as the spiritual chief of his people, no less than as the political head of the Church. His tone, when it was innocent of abusiveness and buffoonery, affected the air of a grave theologian, profoundly versed in the learning and subtleties of controversialists; and far from re-

senting his dictatorial loquaciousness as an attempt on the part of a layman to encroach on the functions of spirituality, the prelates applauded the wisdom and Christian temper of his utterances. Overcome by his emotions, the primate exclaimed, 'Undoubtedly your majesty speaks by the special assistance of God's spirit;' and the fashion arose to speak of a garrulous pedant as the British Solomon.

Were this work a history of Puritanism, I should take occasion to relieve the Presbyterian party and other Puritans of the imputation of deep-rooted and universal antagonism to the royal supremacy, which the Episcopalians sedulously fixed upon them. I should show that, in times when religion had no third alternative beyond a choice between the supremacy of the Pope and the supremacy of the crown, *i.e.* the government of a foreign potentate or the government of national law, men were favourable to the latter in proportion as they were hostile to the former; and that, whilst the ordinary Englishman's detestation of the Pope was the measure of his friendliness to the spiritual prerogatives of the crown, the English Puritans were necessarily quite as affectionately disposed as the English High Churchmen to the royal supremacy. The purposes of these volumes, however, merely require us on this point to state that, from Elizabeth's accession to Charles's fall, the crown resented every attack on Episcopacy as an offence against its choicest prerogatives, and that Charles the First was even less able than James and Elizabeth to distinguish between dislike of prelacy and disaffection towards the throne.

That Charles was upon the whole a religious and conscientious man I regard as a fact discernible to impartial students, notwithstanding the immorality of much of his conduct, and in spite of the obscuring clouds of misrepresentation with which rancorous enemies and impious flatterers have darkened a never brilliant character. That he was genuinely attached to the doctrines of the Church of England, and that the prevailing mood of his narrow mind was a desire to do his duty in the exalted state of life, to which he had been called without having been naturally qualified for it, I am satisfied: but, though I credit him with a sincere belief, that in exalting the Episcopacy and persecuting the Puritans he was only doing his duty to

God and his people, I hold it to be a matter of certainty that insolent pride in his spiritual prerogative, and jealousy for its lustre, were the lights which enabled him to take this view of his kingly responsibilities.

That he exercised this prerogative tyrannically and vindictively, that he exercised it with results alike calamitous to his people and to himself, is almost universally admitted by the present generation: but whilst recognising the foolishness of his policy, and detecting the cruelty and miserable resentments which too frequently animated him in his suicidal course, charitable judges of his conduct, who can make fair allowances for the difficulties which he was called upon to encounter and for the influences to which he was exposed, forbear to condemn him severely for errors which any ordinary mortal, tried and tempted as he was, would inevitably have perpetrated. For the resoluteeness with which he fought for his mistaken notions of right, whilst no one condemns, most persons enthusiastically admire him. The dignity of his last days and death mollifies those who, from certain points of view, regard him with abhorrence and disdain. But in proportion as truth-loving Englishmen are disposed to render justice to a fame which has suffered less from the slander of enmity than from the profane commendations of clerical adulators, they are shocked by the duplicity and untruthfulness, the subterfuges, evasions, sheer falsehoods, to which he had recourse for the attainment of what he thought his lawful ends.

For Charles's astounding untruthfulness, moreover the circumstances of his career, and the view which he had been trained to take of his relations to his subjects, offer an apology, of which he should be allowed the full benefit. Moralists concede that there are circumstances which sanction breaches of verbal engagements, and justify the employment of falsehood. It is almost universally admitted, that a promise is not binding on its utterer unless it has been made freely and without unlawful pressure. The promise which a man, who has fallen amongst robbers, makes to preserve his life or recover his liberty, he may disregard when it has served his purpose. In like manner, to preserve ourselves from the violence of dangerous maniacs, or protect them from their own insane desires, it is not questioned

that we may have recourse to any kind of artifice, to every form of deceit. Their condition is such that we are under no obligation to deal truthfully with them; ay, more, their condition is such that it may be our duty to tell them what is untrue. In Charles's opinion, his rebellious subjects were both robbers and madmen. They were robbers bent on depriving him by force of his kingly rights; they were madmen whose minds Satan had so thoroughly disordered, that they could not recognize in him the Lord's vicegerent on earth, and therefore a being accountable to no earthly tribunal. He had fallen amongst thieves: clearly promises made under compulsion to armed thieves were not binding. He was dealing with madmen, for whose safety, no less than his own, he was bound to effect by fraud all such needful measures as he could not accomplish without deceit. To some it may seem scarcely credible that Charles took this view of his rebellious subjects and his obligations to them; but the fact will appear less marvellous when they reflect, that the king was one of those ordinary men who are precisely what schoolmasters and circumstances make them, and that he had been trained from boyhood in delusive theories, which had completely deranged his intellect, so far as its power of judging between himself and his rebellious subjects was concerned. Moreover, Charles was far from being the only Englishman to take this startling view. On the contrary, the entire body of its assumptions, inferences, and conclusions, was deemed one great mass of political and politico-religious truths by the majority of his adherents. Egregiously absurd though it appears to the ordinary intelligence of the nineteenth century, it constituted a large part of the doctrine which was distributed to the people from the royalist pulpits of Charles the First's England.

## CHAPTER III

### THE BREWING OF A STORM.

AFTER a calm survey of the literature with which the Puritans strove to discredit the orthodox Churchmen, and the zealous Conformists declared their abhorrence of the precisians, the impartial critic does not hesitate to say that both parties are alike chargeable with faults of violence, bad taste, and injustice. From Elizabeth's accession till the close of the seventeenth century the controversy was carried on with mutual ferocity, and the intemperate publications which it evoked from the partisans of both sides abound with instructive evidence how Christians and fellow-countrymen can hate one another.

Archbishop Parker described the Puritans as 'schismatics, bellie-gods, deceivers, flatterers, fools, such as have been unlearnedlie brought up in profane occupations; puffed up in arrogancie of themselves, chargeable to vanities of assertions; of whom it is feared that they make post-haste to be anabaptists and libertines, gone out from us, but belike never of us; differing not much from Donatists, shrinking and refusing ministers of London; disturbers, factious, wilful entanglers, and encumberers of the consciences of their hearers; girders, nippers, scoffers, biters, snappers at superiors; having the spirit of irony, smelling of Donatistrie, or of Papistrie, Rogatianes, Circumcellians, and Pelagians.' Whitgift remarked of them, 'that when they walked in the streets they hung down their heads and looked austerely, and in company they sighed much, and seldom or never laughed.' Dugdale was pleased to record of them 'a viperous brood, miserably infecting these kingdoms,

they pretended to promote religion and a purer reformation; but rapine, spoil, and the destruction of civil government, were the woeful effects of those pretences; they were of their father the devil, and his works they would do.'

That the vulgar ribaldry, which qualified the writings of the more violent Puritan pamphleteers, afforded some countenance and appearance of fairness to Parker's account of their sect, readers may ascertain on referring to the tracts of Martin Marprelate. In one of his outpourings of indecent abuse, Martin, addressing the conforming clergy, remarked, 'Right reverend and terrible priests, my clergy, masters of the confocation or conspiracy-house, whether fickers, paltripolitans, or others of the holy league of subscription—right poisoned, persecuting, terrible priests, my learned masters, your government, your cause is anti-Christian, your cause is desperate, your grounds are ridiculous—Martin understands all your knavery, you are intolerable withstanders of the Reformation, enemies of the gospel, and most covetous, wretched, and Popish priests.' Whilst a club of Separatists, writing under cover of a *nom-de-plume*, could speak thus indecently of the national clergy, graver and more courageous men, who did not shrink from the peril of avowing their publications against the new religious settlement, used language which was all the more calculated to rouse popular aversion to episcopacy, because its terms, though surcharged with animosity and disdain, did not altogether misbeseeem scholarly and pious men. Beginning with these heats the controversy, which brought so many rash men to undeserved calamity, so many honest families to destitution and shame, grew in fierceness and intemperance until the zealots of either party had persuaded themselves that the mildest and most charitable of their opponents were miscreants of an atrocious type. I am not aware of any literature more absolutely discreditable to authors, professing to write in behalf of the interests of religion, than some of the abusive, foul, scandalous pamphlets, in which the Prelatists of the one part, and the anti-Episcopalians of the other part, exchanged defiance, calumny, and spiteful suggestion. To give an exact notion of the coarseness and repulsive scurrility with which Bastwick, and men of his temper, sometimes inveighed against prelates and



the entire clerical order, I should have to transcribe from their works passages which would render this book unfit for circulation amongst gentlewomen. The remembrance of their virulence and abusiveness lessens our commiseration for the sufferings inflicted on them at pillories and whipping-posts, and would totally extinguish it, were not the recollection of their misdemeanours attended with a memory of equally flagrant excesses committed by the men who corrected them with fines, stripes, and barbarous mutilations.

Appearing at a time when this contention, after raging for two generations, was approaching its hottest fury, and had drawn within its contrary currents all classes of the community, the ecclesiastic, who, more than any other member of his profession, determined Charles the First's religious policy, should have studiously refrained from all speeches and actions that were calculated to stimulate the passions of the contendents and aggravate the heats of the controversy. Had he been a sagacious and thoroughly capable man—sufficient for the exigencies of an arduous office in extremely perilous times—Laud, whilst ruling his clergy with a firm hand and fearlessly protecting the rights of the Church, would have forborne to constitute himself the leader of any one party; and, instead of exasperating the Puritans by opposition which could work no substantial good to the Establishment, would have striven to conciliate them by discharging the functions of his place with exact fairness and freedom from passion. But Laud was by no means the man to perform this difficult task. The Anglican Church in Charles the First's reign had urgent need of exceptionally great men to control and direct its forces; but, though he had sufficient learning, much zeal, and a conscientious desire to do his duty to God and the State, Laud was very far from being an exceptionally great man. From some points of view he might be called a contemptibly little man. He was not a bad one. I differ altogether from those writers who insist that malevolence and cruelty were chief elements of his moral nature. It appears to me that the whole significance of his story is lost to those who cannot see that his worst errors were due to intellectual incapacity rather than to wickedness. With a nervous and excitable temperament, he threw himself into a fight from which

he should as far as possible have held himself aloof—a fight that he should have watched from a high ground, and, on the first signs of exhaustion in the combatants, should have endeavoured to terminate by leading the belligerents to a compromise. Under the influence of the personal heats consequent on his participation in the fatal conflict, he said and did things which were malignant and barbarous; but these exceptional exhibitions of noxious qualities point rather to the evil of which conscientious and kindly persons are capable than to the chief characteristics and ruling forces of his nature. He was vain and arrogant, as men holding places higher than their abilities very often are; he was petulant, and occasionally resentful, as partisans are apt to be; like many pious men he had strong superstitious tendencies, which resulted in his fondness for ceremonial observances that were abhorrent to the Puritans. But when all his faults of irritability, vindictiveness, vanity, insolence, and superstition, have been taken into account, and rated at their highest, he must be credited with more than an ordinary amount of amiability, devoutness, and goodness of purpose.

At the present time, when there is a growing disposition in the national mind to render justice to all the conspicuous actors in the troubles of the seventeenth century, Laud suffers far less from the extravagances of his vituperators than from the excesses of the injudicious, and in places almost impious, adulators, who require that he should be commended as a consummate statesman, extolled as a Christian philanthropist, and glorified as a martyr for the true faith. Exaggeration provokes contradiction; and they are not the least generous of our species who are moved by a spirit of antagonism to put unjust censures on the characters whom they are dictatorially ordered to treat with injustice in the direction of praise. But in spite of the doubts which cover many points of Laud's career, in spite of the confusions arising from the fervour, the malice, and the sheer dishonesty of his bitterest assailants, in spite of the irritating absurdities and fanciful fabrications of his injurious eulogists, it is not difficult to separate the good of his nature from the evil, and to see that the former predominated over the latter.

Often and justly it has been remarked of Charles the First, that had he been a constitutional monarch in quiet times, ruling a country in which the power of the crown was exactly and clearly defined, he would have been a prosperous and useful sovereign, and might have earned a splendid fame for sagacity and goodness. With equal justice a similar judgment may be passed on Charles's unfortunate primate. Had he ruled the Church in a tranquil period, when religious life was more disposed to sloth than dangerous activity, and when there was no embarrassing inclination in the people to resist ecclesiastical authority, the very same qualities which brought him to the scaffold would have earned for him the applause and gratitude of his country. The energy, the restlessness, the busybodyism, which, in an age of vehement contention, made him do harm and provoke animosities in every direction, would have been eminently serviceable to the Church in serene and slumberous days—would have had on the entire machinery of the hierarchical system the same effect that judicious friction and lubrication produce on the various parts of a complicated piece of mechanism. They would have felicitously corrected the clerical tendency to sloth, and guarded the church from rust and decay.

To his misfortune and the injury of our land he rose to eminence at a time, when all his distinctive, and some of his best, qualities rendered him an especially unfit person for the high posts to which he was lifted; and of all those qualities, perhaps, the most hurtful were his delight in uniformity and love of external orderliness. There is a type of ecclesiastics who are prone to exaggerate the value of unity of design and outward order. To attain the former they sacrifice the vital forces of a true church; to preserve the latter they drive their congregations into rebellion. Like those martinets of the army who prize perfection of drill above patriotism and soldierly devotion to duty, and worry their men into insubordination and hatred of the service by vexatious rules about pipeclay and straps, these Churchmen are precisians on matters of external form and ceremonial detail, as though the spirit were of small moment in comparison with the modes of service. And of these hierarchs Laud was an extreme specimen.

Prudence and the interests of religion required that, whilst steadily maintaining the dignity of the clergy and the authority of the Church, he should have held the balance evenly between the contending parties; should have taken no needless notice of the squabbles of the factions; should have borne a courteous front to Nonconformists; and, so as to prevent their increase, should have winked at local demonstrations of Puritanical feeling and trivial offences against the canons. Such a moderate course, however, was impossible to the primate, who—in his government of the college of which he had been president, in his management of the sees to which he was successively preferred, in his control of the university of which he was chancellor, and in the direction of his archiepiscopal province—made outward orderliness and exact obedience to rules the first objects of his discipline. His ideal of a perfect state was a society whose members moved with universal precision in compliance with the commands of authority. His ideal of a perfect national church was one that enjoyed the support of the entire nation, and was so administered that its clergy and laity observed its rules with the regularity of clock-work in their various spheres, like a well-drilled army, obedient to a supreme will. He prayed for the time to come, when, throughout the land, the ecclesiastics of each order would wear precisely the same vestments; when priests would read the appointed services at the same hours, in the same time, with one voice, with one uniform series of bowings and genuflexions. For the sake of uniformity he wished that the communion-table of every parish church should be put in one way against the east wall, should be placed on a platform raised above the floor of the chancel, should be surrounded with rails; and that harmony of design should be discernible in the furniture of every place of worship. To promote the decency and comeliness which gratify the eye, he encouraged incumbents and churchwardens to return to some of those modes of decorating churches, which the Reformers had forbidden or discountenanced, and which he knew to be offensive to many of the clergy and a considerable proportion of the laity. It would be unfair to represent that this outward orderliness was all at which the innovator aimed. He believed that it would have definite results on the minds and tempers of men of all classes, and that it

would train the populace to unity of opinion; and, whilst prizing it highly for itself, he valued it yet more for what it would effect.

This ideal of a national church was peculiar neither to himself nor to a small coterie of ecclesiasties; and the means by which he sought to reform the church into accordance with his ideal were cordially approved by a large proportion of the fastidious aristocracy and the superstitious vulgar. The feudal theory of government was decidedly in their favour, and his views were countenanced by the traditions and practices of the Catholic system which was still beloved by many who avowed abhorrence of the Pope. The æsthetic sense of the country went heartily with Laud, whose innovations were loudly extolled by good society as wholesome corrections of the irregularities which had occasioned scandal and provoked reproof in Elizabeth's reign, but had survived all the measures which had in former time been taken for their amendment. Such men as George Herbert and Nicholas Ferrar—whose natural gentleness and submissiveness fitted them to be the placid disciples of an authoritative church, whilst their refinement and delicacy revolted at the violence and noisy rudeness of the sectaries—were filled with joy at the growth of Laudian theories.

As he grew in dignity and power, Laud became more arrogant and disdainful to his opponents. That he would have been less willing to irritate, and more anxious to conciliate them, had he known their number and influence, no one can question who, with the page of history before him, sees how the primate's policy is so far accountable for the civil war and its results to monarchy and episcopacy, that the conflict may be fairly called the bishops' war. Whilst courtiers applauded him, and the rulers of the church imitated him, and people of fashion cried him thanks, he roused amongst the majority of the inferior gentry, the commercial classes, and the yeomanry, the resentments which brought king and primate to the scaffold, disestablished the cathedrals, exalted Presbytery on the ruins of Prelacy, and drove the royal house into exile. When we remember how he goaded, mocked, insulted the great party which after long endurance of vexatious persecution wreaked its vengeance on their contemptuous oppressors in so terrible a manner, we are reminded

of the fearlessness with which children walk on the edges of yawning precipices, or play tricks with gunpowder, all unconscious of the danger they approach and the destruction which they risk.

But for awhile the Laudian clergy and laity had an appearance of grounds for congratulating themselves on the success of their chief's restoration of discipline. In some particulars the movement unquestionably resulted in good. Reviving the taste for ecclesiastical architecture, it stirred patrons and parsons to renovate the churches which in spite of the ordinances for their proper maintenance and repair had fallen in some parts of the country into scandalous dilapidation.\* Alike in the capital and other Cathedral cities, in provincial market-towns and rural villages, were audible the hammers of masons and carpenters employed on restoring places of worship. Religion became fashionable; and the social status of the clergy visibly improved. Men of gentle birth and good estate more frequently deigned

\* Heylyn's biography gives us a characteristic picture of his activity as a church-restorer at Alresford. 'Into this living he' (*i. e.* Heylyn) 'was no sooner instituted and inducted, but he took care for the service of God to be constantly performed by reading the Common Prayers in his church every morning, that gave great satisfaction to the parish, being a populous market-town; and for the Communion-table, where the blessed sacrament is consecrated, he ordered that it should be placed according to ancient custom, at the east end of the church, and railed about decently, to prevent base and profane usages; and where the chancel wanted anything of repairs, or the church itself, both to be amended. Having thus showed his care first for the House of God to set it in good order, the next work followed, was to make his own dwelling-house a fit and convenient habitation; that to the old building he added a new one, which was far more graceful, and made thereto a chappel next to the dining-room, that was beautified and adorned with silk-hangings about the altar; in which chappel himself or his curate read morning and evening prayers to the family; calling on his labourers and work-folk, for he was seldom without them while he lived, saying that he loved the music of the workman's hammer.' In the same way, on settling in the same period at Little Gidding, Huntingdonshire, Nicholas (Deacon) Ferrar—that gentlest of Laudian High Churchmen—renovated the parish church, and provided his manorial house with a chapel, wherein to perform daily services to the numerous members of the devout, industrious, and orderly household, which was stigmatized by its traducers as an Arminian nunnery. 'Many workmen having been employed near two years,' says the deacon's biographer, 'both the house and church were in tolerable repair, yet, with respect to the church, Mrs. Ferrar was not well satisfied. She, therefore, new floored and wainscotted it throughout. She provided also two new suits of furniture for the reading-desk, pulpit, communion-table; one for the week-days, and the other for Sundays and other festivals. The

to enter the clerical profession. Incumbents were more frequently put into commissions of peace; and the increase of esteem for the clergy was visible in the comparative alacrity with which gentlewomen condescended to become the wives of such beneficed clergymen as ‘condescended to matrimony.’

Whilst they rebuilt the steeples and outer walls of their churches, the Laudian patrons and rectors decorated the temples with the pictures in glass or on canvas, with the sculptures in wood and stone, which often gave great offence to worshippers who, instead of openly exclaiming against such Popish mawmetries, nursed their wrath against the time when their bite should accompany their bark. The clergy of the prevailing school introduced new modes of reading the common-prayer, and were distinguishable from the Puritan clergy by the genuflexions, and prostrations, and bowings to the east by which they endeavoured to enhance the effectiveness of the liturgy. The communion-tables were very generally removed to the eastern walls, against which they were put ‘altar-wise’ within rails, and so retained until the par-

furniture for week-days was of green cloth, with suitable cushions and carpets. That for festivals was of rich, blue cloth, with cushions of the same, decorated with lace and fringe of silver. The pulpit was fixed on the north, and the reading-desk over against it, on the south side of the church, and both on the same level; it being thought improper that a higher place should be appointed for preaching than that which was allotted for prayer. A new font was also provided, the leg, laver, and cover, all of brass, handsomely and expensively wrought and carved; with a large brass lectern, or pillar and eagle of brass for the Bible. The font was placed by the pulpit, and the lectern by the reading-desk. The half-pace, or elevated floor, on which the communion-table stood at the end of the chancel, with the stalls on each side, was covered with taffety and cushions of the finest tapestry and blue silk. The space behind the communion-table, under the east window, was elegantly wainscotted, and adorned with the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, engraved on four beautiful tablets of brass gilt. The communion-table itself was furnished with a silver paten, a silver chalice, and silver candlesticks, with large wax candles in them. Many other candles of the same sort were set up in every part of the church, and on all the pillars of the stalls. And these were not for the purposes of superstition, but for real use; which, for great part of the year, the fixed hours for prayer made necessary for morning and evening service. Mrs. Ferrar, also, taking great delight in church music, built a gallery at the bottom of the church for the organ. Thus was the church decently furnished, and ever after kept elegantly neat and clean.’ For particulars about this interesting family, the Ferrars of Gidding Hall, the reader should refer to Deacon N. Ferrar’s ‘Life;—’ Cambridge in the Seventeenth Century. Part I. Nicholas Ferrar’ (Macmillan); and to that scurrilous and lying tract, ‘The Arminian Nunnery’ (1641).

liamentarian reformers brought them back to their former positions at the entrance of the chancel or in the nave. Sunday-afternoon sermons were prohibited, and the laity were instructed to show their gratitude to heaven and their attachment to the church by spending the later part of the Lord's Day in games, dancing, and feasting. Even in rural districts incense was burnt freely in the churches; and to those who disapproved of the innovations it appeared that the church was bent on undoing the Reformation and restoring the Catholic system. This opinion was held alike by moderate Puritans and thoughtful Catholics. When Laud asked a lady of fashion, one of the Earl of Devonshire's daughters, why she had gone over to Rome, she answered pithily, 'It is chiefly because I hate to travel in a crowd;' and on Laud pretending not to catch the meaning of the reply, she added, 'I perceive your grace and many others are making haste to Rome; and therefore, to prevent my being crowded, I have gone before you.' Regarding the Laudian movement from another point of view, Lord Falkland declared that the primate had 'brought in superstition and scandal under the titles of reverence and decency, and defiled the church by adorning the churches.' Even the high-church Heylyn was constrained to admit that Laud 'attempted more alterations in the church in one year, than a prudent man would have done in a great many.'

Laud had an abundance of warnings and intimations of the offence which his innovations gave to his opponents,—of the rancorous ill-will which they were stirring up against Prelacy and the Establishment. But his temper and mental narrowness caused him to despise the warnings, and think lightly of his adversaries. With a smile he remarked that he was prepared for a certain amount of opposition, and knew how to deal with it. Schismatics, contumacious troublers of the church, rash contemners of authority were malefactors of no novel sort. They were in the church what thieves and other vulgar criminals were in the state; and it was the spiritual magistrate's duty to chastise and subdue them. To what other end was the spiritual magistrate armed with such swords—as rods and whips for bare backs, knives for slitting noses and cropping ears, hot irons for branding cheeks; the power to ruin industrious families with



fines; the right to throw noisy, prating fellows, like Leighton and Prynne, into dungeons? And whilst the primate spoke thus confidently, society wore such a superficial appearance of general acquiescence in the movement, that its promoters mistaking silence for consent could congratulate themselves on their success.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE STORM BURSTS.

THE election of members to serve in the Long Parliament announced to the most careless observers of public events that the days of trouble and vengeance, so long foretold by sagacious politicians, had actually arrived. When it was seen how generally the constituencies had rejected the court-candidates, and selected representatives who were known to look with disapprobation on the Laudian innovators, and to regard the Star Chamber with abhorrence, the courtiers and High-church clergy knew that matters would not flow smoothly with the king and the spokesmen of the nation. But they were far from imagining all the evils which were fast coming upon them. Unaware of the extent to which they had sinned against public opinion, they could neither appreciate the crisis nor anticipate the events of the revolution, which, in the course of a few short years, would sweep away the throne and church, the bishops and the temporal peers. Though the court party had found little favour with the electors, it was seen that the constituencies had chosen men of honourable lineage and good estates, respected in their various neighbourhoods for their intelligence and virtue—men who were grave conformers to the established religion, and supporters of Episcopal government. It could not be imagined that such men would prove dangerous to the state and implacably hostile to the Church.

Like the rest of his famous narrative of the Rebellion, Clarendon's account of the Long Parliament is thickly studded with unjust insinuations, glaring inaccuracies, and impudent untruths: but he says rightly of the temper and character of the Englishmen who composed it, 'As to their religion, they were all members of the Established Church, and almost to a

man for Episcopal government. Though they were undevoted enough to the court, they had all imaginable duty for the king, and affection for the government established by law or ancient custom; and without doubt the majority of that body were persons of gravity and wisdom, who, being possessed of great and plentiful fortunes, had no mind to break the peace of the kingdom, or to make any considerable alterations in the government of the Church or State.' From the haste which these English gentlemen made to reform the abuses of the Church, the resolution which they showed to effect their purpose, and the facility with which they passed from their original design to a policy of destruction, the reader may see how profoundly and fiercely they had been incensed by religious innovations, which they had patiently endured until it was in their power to abate them.

The Long Parliament was opened November 3rd, 1640; and on the following Sunday, all its members received the Sacrament in Westminster Abbey from Bishop Williams, Dean of Westminster; but, whilst thus demonstrating their concurrence in the doctrine of the Anglican Church, they signified their disapprobation of Laudian novelties by requiring that the sacred bread and wine should be administered to them at a communion-table placed in the body of the church, instead of at the rails which had been put round the altar-like table. On November 6th, 1640, a Grand Committee of Religion, consisting of the whole house, was appointed under the chairmanship of Mr. White, an able lawyer and member for Southwark, to inquire into the immoralities of the clergy—a committee which gave rise to the various sub-committees and provincial commissions that bestirred themselves with memorable effect to correct the insolences and vices of clerical delinquents, and to eject from their preferments such incumbents as were imprudent enough to espouse the royal cause and oppose the revolutionary measures of the Parliament.

From the appointment of the Grand Committee, measure followed measure for the alteration of the ecclesiastical arrangements of the country, and for the humiliation of the bishops, until, in the brief course of a few years, Episcopacy had been abolished and the cathedrals disestablished. It had not completed the first nine months of its existence when the Parli-

ament, by a measure\* to which Charles reluctantly accorded his assent, deprived the consistorial courts of those coercive powers which had been employed as instruments of Episcopal vengeance on pious people, who, whilst conforming in all important matters to the lawful requirements of the Church, had resisted or spoken against the Laudian innovations. On February 14th, 1642, Charles gave his assent to the act† which expelled the bishops from Parliament, and deprived them of all their secular power through the years that intervened between the passing of this measure of radical reform and the revival of Episcopacy on Charles the Second's restoration. Resolutions

\* This act provided 'that no archbishops, bishops, vicars-general, chancellor, or official, nor commissary, of any archbishop, bishop, or vicar-general, or any other spiritual or ecclesiastical officer, shall by any grant, license, or commission from the king, his heirs or successors, after the 1st of August, 1641, award, impose, or intlict any pain, penalty, fine, amercement, imprisonment, or other corporal punishment, upon any of the king's subjects, for any contempt, misdemeanour, crime, matter or thing whatsoever, belonging to the spiritual or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or shall *ex-officio* tender or administer to any person any corporal oath, to make any presentment of any crime, or to confess or accuse himself of any crime, offence, delinquency, or misdemeanour, whereby he or she may be liable to any punishment whatsoever, under penalty of treble charges, and 100*l.* to him or them who shall first demand or sue for the same.'

† Here are the words of this memorable enactment:—'Whereas bishops and other persons in holy orders ought not to be entangled with secular jurisdiction, the office of the ministry being of such great importance that it will take up the whole man. And for that it is found by long experience, that their intermeddling with secular jurisdictions hath occasioned great mischiefs and scandals both to church and state, his majesty, out of his religious care of the church and souls of his people, is graciously pleased that it be enacted, and by authority of this present parliament be it enacted, that no archbishop or bishop, or other person that now is or hereafter shall be in holy orders, shall at any time after the 15th day of February, in the year of our Lord 1642, have any seat or place, suffrage or vote, or use or execute any power or authority, in the parliaments of this realm, nor shall be of the privy council of his majesty, his heirs or successors, or justices of the peace of oyer and terminer or jail-delivery, or execute any temporal authority, by virtue of any commission; but shall be wholly disabled, and be incapable to have, receive, use, or execute, any of the said offices, places, powers, authorities, and things aforesaid. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid, that all acts from and after the said 15th of February, which shall be done or executed by any archbishop or bishop, or other persons whatsoever in holy orders, and all and every suffrage or voice given or delivered by them or any of them, or other thing done by them or any of them, contrary to the purport and true meaning of this act, shall be utterly void to all intents, constructions, and purposes.'

hostile to prelacy, cathedral establishments, clerical privileges and practices, were voted by the House of Commons with large majorities in rapid succession; and, though some of them stopped short of becoming law, they helped to familiarize Parliament and the country with thoughts of clerical despoliation and ecclesiastical change, and to create a public feeling which speedily enabled the legislature to deprive the bishops and confiscate the property of the cathedrals. In neither House of Parliament had the prelates any important body of cordial supporters: for, whilst the Commons had learnt to detest them for their acts of persecution, the upper chamber disdained them as upstarts of plebeian birth, who presumed to arrogate to themselves equality with the ancient nobility of the country. It was observed, that when episcopal interests were under consideration their warmest defenders would leave the house for purposes of social enjoyment. ‘They who hate bishops,’ Lord Falkland remarked, ‘hate them worse than the devil; and they who love them, do not love them as well as their dinner.’ Whatever friendliness towards the bishops had animated any section of the Commons, before the actual commencement of the Civil War, ceased altogether to be operative in the deliberations of the popular assembly, so soon as the king had withdrawn from his capital and appealed to arms; and by the time the Royalists had seen the futility of offering further resistance to the Parliamentary forces, there was no power in the legislature capable of mitigating the severities of the ‘Ordinances for abolishing Archbishops and Bishops, and providing for the payment of the just and necessary debts of the kingdom, into which the same has been drawn by a war, mainly promoted by, and in favour of, the said archbishops, bishops, and other their adherents and dependents.’

The execution of Charles was followed speedily by the final blow to the ancient hierarchical system of the nation, when, to provide yet more completely for the debts and pecuniary needs of the country, the Commons decided,—‘That from and after the 29th day of March, in the year 1649, the name, title, dignity, function and office of Dean, Sub-dean, Dean and Chapter, Archdeacon, Prior, Chancellour, Chaunter, Sub-chaunter, Treasurer, Sub-treasurer, Succentor, Sacrist, Prebend, Canon, Canon

resident or non-resident, Petty Canon, Vicar Choral, Choirester, Old Vicars and New, and all other titles and offices of, and belonging to any cathedral, or collegiate church, or chapel, in England and Wales, lower of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and Isles of Guernsey and Jersey, shall be, and are, by the authority aforesaid, wholly abolished and taken away.' As for the estates of the ecclesiastical corporations thus suppressed, the act vested them in trustees who were empowered to sell them. Not content with abolishing the offices, confiscating the property, and reducing the authorities and subordinate place-holders of these ecclesiastical corporations from affluence to comparative penury, the more zealous Reformers wished to pull down the cathedrals and sell their stones and bricks, as material for building. Believing that most of these magnificent churches in no degree furthered the interests of religion, and that the preservation of their structures would tend to keep superstition alive, they recommended that no time should be lost in treating them as many superb minsters, and hundreds of less superb chapels, had been dealt with at or since the dissolution of the monasteries. It was even referred to a Parliamentary Committee to decide, 'What cathedrals are fit to stand, and what to be pulled down; and how such as shall be pulled down may be applied to the payment of the public faith.' In support of this barbarous proposal for the wholesale demolition of the noblest works of Gothic architecture—a proposal that emanated from men who cared nothing for art, but much for what they considered the vital concerns of religion—it was urged, that unless 'the nests were destroyed the birds would return to them.' And in the 'Sufferings of the Clergy,' Dr. Walker, with manifest malevolence and questionable veracity, asserts that the more violent Dissenters of Queen Anne's time used to declare that the great error of the Puritans in their hour of triumph was their neglect to destroy the cathedrals.

But, though the Puritans forbore to destroy utterly the disused churches, no steps were taken during the Commonwealth to repair the injuries which the cathedrals sustained during the Civil War, alike from the Royalist and Parliamentary troops, or to preserve them from decay; and when the bishops regained possession of them, after the Restoration, the sacred fabrics had

fallen into a miserable condition of dirt and dilapidation. Of nearly every cathedral town, which during the war had been a centre of military operations, the chief church had been used for the purposes of the belligerents, as a fort, a magazine for ammunition, a stable for troopers' horses, or a place of drill in foul weather. Both parties in the conflict seem to have been equally ready to deal with sacred edifices thus profanely; and the neglect of years following on the violences of the war, and on the methodical despoliation effected by the Parliamentary agents, furnished the Episcopal clergy of the Restoration period with acceptable grounds for inveighing indignantly against the manner in which the rebels had defiled holy places. Bishop Hacket's biographer, Dr. Thomas Plume, speaks with mingled pathos and horror of the way in which horses were stabled beneath the roof, and fed at the high altar of St. Paul's Cathedral.\* And the same writer, giving a graphic picture of the state in which Bishop Hacket found Lichfield Cathedral at the opening of Charles the Second's actual reign, remarks.—'Therein before the wars had been a most beautiful and comely cathedral church, which the bishop, at his first coming, found most desolate, and ruined almost to the ground; the roof of stone, the timber, lead, iron, glass, stalls, organs, utensils of rich value, all were embezzled; 2000 shot of great ordinance and 1500 granadoes discharged against it, which had quite battered down the spire, and most of the fabrick; so that the old man took not so much comfort in his new promotion as he found sorrow and pity in himself to see his cathedral church thus lying in the dust; so that the very next morning, after his lordship's arrival, he set his own coach-horses on work, together with other teams, to carry away the rubbish; which pile having cleared, he procured artizans of all sorts to begin the new pile, and before his death set up a compleat church again, better than ever it was before: the whole roof from one end to the other, of a vast length repaired with stone . . . This rare building was finished in eight years.'

\* 'In those doleful days that was done in St. Paul's which Selymus threatened to St. Peter's at Rome—to stable his horses in the church and feed them at the high altar: whereupon our Doctor was very confident their reign grew ripe apace, and not long after hapned the death of Oliver.'—PLUME'S *Life of Hacket*.

Of the manner in which clerical historians of the Restoration period and the following century generally speak of the silence and desolation of the cathedrals under the Commonwealth, some characteristic illustrations may be found in the 'Sufferings of the Clergy,' the author of which intemperate falsification of history says,— 'Thus were the early structures of our ancestors (distinguished among all the nations of the earth for their devotion) and the memorable monuments of their piety defaced and profaned; the patrimony of the Church solemnly set apart, and consecrated to God with such grievous execrations on those who should alienate them; and devoted to the honour of Christ and His holy religion sacrilegiously torn from the Church, and applied to the vilest purposes of a most execrable rebellion; the daily sacrifice of morning and evening prayers throughout the several dioceses of the kingdom made to cease; the continual fountains, from which such constant supplies flowed to many thousands of the poor, stopped up.'

It is almost needless to observe that so far as this language is applicable to the Puritans who disestablished the cathedrals in the seventeenth century, it may be applied to the Reformers of an earlier time who dissolved the monasteries, and, having pulled down scores of monastic churches, converted some into dwelling-houses, whilst they left others to the piety of subsequent ages to transmute into farm-buildings; and that, far from being injured by ecclesiastical changes which attended or followed from the struggle between Charles the First and the Long Parliament, the poorer classes of the country derived more succour from clerical munificence during the Commonwealth than they had received from the same source at any time since the Reformation.



CHAPTER V.

SCANDALOUS AND PLENDERED CLERGY.

**D**URING the Civil War there was no ecclesiastical government in regular and uniform operation throughout the country. Until the abolition of Episcopacy had been finally and authoritatively declared, the government by bishops, modified by parliamentary ordinances and controlled by parliamentary committees, was presumed to exist even in those parts of the land where no prelate had any practical power. And whilst the prelate rule had been actually extinguished, though nominally retained, in localities where the authority of Parliament was paramount, it had also become weak or totally inoperative in quarters which continued to declare allegiance to the crown. Ecclesiastical discipline disappearing before the exigencies and demoralising influences of the war, the incumbents and inferior clergy of the loyal districts were left very much to their own devices, and were at liberty to perform as much or as little of their appointed duties as they thought fit. The majority of the cavalier clergy, so long as they retained their preferments, I doubt not, discharged their official duties as exactly and conscientiously as they had been wont to perform them before the commencement of the civil disturbances; but it is also certain that not a few of them took advantage of the license of the times to neglect their parishes, and to expend their energies on the pleasures of hilarious company and field-sports. On the other hand, in those towns and rural parishes where Parliament was supreme, the Divine service of the churches was distinguished by numerous irregularities and novelties, characteristic of the disorder and temper of the period.

Wherever the Parliament held sway fasts were rigidly observed, and public prayers were frequent. The Irish insur-

rection and massacre had moved the Parliament to recommend the king to appoint a monthly fast, which the public should keep with prayerful humiliation so long as the grievous condition of the country should seem to indicate that England was an especial object of Divine displeasure; and to this reasonable and devout suggestion Charles had appointed (January 1641) that the last Wednesday of every month should be strictly observed as a national fast. On the actual commencement of the civil conflict, the Parliament ordered that this fast should be kept with increased rigour; an order which, seeming to reflect on the king's appeal to arms as though it were an additional crime against heaven, resulted in a royal order for the discontinuance of the fast, and a general inclination of the Royalists to convert the monthly fast into a monthly festival. After the Wednesday monthly fast had been for a considerable time neglected by the Royalists, and kept with a suggestive ostentation of severity by the Puritans, the king (October 5th, 1643) published the following proclamation,—‘When a general fast was first propounded to us in contemplation of the miseries of our kingdom in Ireland, we readily consented to it. But when we observe what ill use has been made of these public meetings, in pulpits, in prayers, and in the sermons of many seditious lecturers, to stir up and continue the rebellion raised against us within this kingdom, we thought fit to command that such a hypocritical fast, to the dishonour of God and slander of true religion, be no longer continued and countenanced by our authority; and yet we being desirous to express our own humiliation and the humiliation of our people for our own sins and the sins of the nation, are resolved to continue a monthly fast, but not on the day formerly appointed by us. But we do expressly charge and command that in all churches and chapels, &c., there be a solemn fast religiously observed on the second Friday in every month, with public prayers and preaching where it may be had, that as one man we may pour out our prayers to God, for the continuance of His gracious presence and blessing upon us, and for establishing a happy peace; for which purpose we have caused devout forms of prayer to be composed and printed, and intend to disperse them, that they may be used in all parts of our kingdom.’ Whereupon there were two rival monthly fasts

--the one being kept by the Parliamentarians, whilst the other was observed by Royalists. Every man proclaimed his political opinions by his selection of the one or the other day for hunger and humiliation; and whereas the fasters on the second Friday of every month prayed for the defeat of the rebel forces, the fasters on the last Wednesday of every month implored with equal earnestness that the Royalists might be brought to penitence or destruction.

In London, where the monthly fast was rigidly observed by all classes, a fashion arose of having public prayers in one or other of the churches at an early hour of every morning. The practice originated in the Church of St. Mary Magdalen, Milk Street, where the minister, Mr. Case, finding himself embarrassed on every Lord's Day by the number of solicitations that he would offer up special prayers in behalf of particular persons serving in Essex's army, determined to perform a morning's service, of an hour's duration, on every day of the week; of which service one half should consist of prayers for Parliamentarian soldiers, and the other half should take the form of a seasonable sermon to the congregation. After a month's trial, which demonstrated its popularity, this service was removed to another church, whence, after another month of crowded attendances, it was transferred to a third church. The morning lecture or 'exercise' soon became a conspicuous feature of the religious life of the metropolis; and, on the termination of the war, when the object of its institution no longer existed, it was continued as a casuistical lecture till Charles the Second's restoration. Various eminent preachers took part in the delivery of these daily discourses, which were published in several volumes, under the name of 'Morning Exercises.' In a modified form, this lecture was retained by the successors of the ejected ministers so late as the middle of the last century.

Whilst our forefathers fasted once a month, to win their Creator's favour and show abhorrence of their opponents, the pulpits filled the country with the clamour of political controversy. Though the time was fast approaching when the clergy gradually ceased to discharge those educational functions which are nowadays performed by anonymous journalists and magazine writers, the preachers of the English Church were still regarded

as the official instructors of the people on all affairs of national interest, and especially on all matters pertaining to the government of the realm. Alike in the cities and the rural districts, the congregations expected their clergy to declare the path which conscientious Englishmen ought to take amidst the troubles of a period rife with dissensions and perplexities; and, whilst reserving their right of private judgment and of open opposition to official doctrine, they were greatly influenced by the political manifestoes and arguments of the pulpit-orators; not less guided, perhaps, by such spoken instruction than ordinary citizens of the present time are controlled by the exhortations and reasonings of the press.

These facts must be borne in mind by the reader when he considers the harsh and summary methods which each of the contending parties adopted to silence hostile preachers. The clergy were the chief newsmen and public commentators on news. At a time when the only newspapers were meagre and irregularly distributed sheets of vague and inaccurate intelligence, sermons delivered in parish churches exercised on the ordinary population of the country an influence analogous to the influence of our public journals; and the same considerations which impel governments to limit or destroy the freedom of the press, decided governments in past time to interfere with the freedom of the pulpit. In a period of intestine commotions and urgent perils no government would be accused of illiberality or despotic excess that, for the maintenance of social order and the protection of the paramount interests of a commonwealth, should imprison the editors and close the offices of newspapers which embarrassed its action and defeated its policy by passionate misstatements and inflammatory appeals to the malcontent populace. On the contrary, at moments of exceptional danger, even in the opinion of the most enthusiastic champions of the press, the government would be deemed guilty of contemptible weakness and grave crime which should forbear to exact from the chief directors and promoters of public discussion the same respect and submission that it required from all other constituents of the state. When, therefore, we read of Cavalier soldiers silencing exemplary Puritan ministers, and of Parliamentary authorities driving meritorious Caroline rectors from their livings, we must regard the sufferers

on either side as silenced political lecturers rather than as ejected preachers of the peaceful gospel; and, whilst commiserating them for the hardships which befell them, we must remember that their counterparts in modern society—conscientious proprietors and editors of opposition journals—would, as a matter of course, be just as arbitrarily and severely dealt with by injured authority at the present time in like trying emergencies.

When the various Parliamentary Committees for inquiring into the scandalous immoralities of the clergy commenced their labours, they bestirred themselves chiefly in setting aside the devices and practices of the Laudian innovators, in providing efficient ministers for parishes where Divine service was altogether, or almost entirely, disused through non-residence or non-appointment of clergy, and in bringing to punishment the numerous clerical delinquents, whose lives were notoriously discordant with their sacred vocation. Though partisan scribes, with alternate ignorance and dishonesty, have ventured to deny that these clerical black sheep had any existence save in the imaginations of the malignant calumniators of the Church, all the more candid and reputable historians of the Royalist party have admitted that amongst the inferior clergy, more especially amongst the inferior clergy of the rural neighbourhoods, there prevailed an amount of open and disgusting vice, which called loudly for correction. The social characteristics of the age, the incidental admissions of contemporary delineators of society, the reluctant avowals of grave historians, the exact narrations of sworn eye-witnesses of the enormities which they describe, furnish a mass of testimony which leaves no room for uncertainty respecting the condition of our less scrupulous and efficient clergy during Richard Baxter's boyhood and manly prime. 'We lived in a country,' Baxter wrote of his birthplace in Shropshire, 'that had but little preaching at all. In the village where I was born there were four readers successively in six years' time, ignorant men, and two of them immoral in their lives, who were all my schoolmasters. In the village where my father lived, there was a reader of about eighty years of age that never preached, and had two churches about twenty miles distant; his eyesight failing him, he said Common Prayer without a book; but for the reading of the psalms and chapters, he

got a common thresher and day-labourer one year, and a taylor another year (for the clerk could not read well); and at last he had a kinsman of his own (the excellentest stage-player in all the country, and a good gamester and good fellow), that got orders and supplied one of his places. After him another young kinsman, that could write and read, got orders;\* and at the same time another neighbour's son that had been a while at school turned minister, and who would needs go further than the rest, ventured to preach (and after got a living in Staffordshire); and, when he had been a preacher about twelve or sixteen years, he was fain to give over, it being discovered that his orders were forged by the first ingenious stage-player. After him another neighbour's son took orders, when he had been awhile an attorney's clerk and a common drunkard, and tipleed himself into so great poverty that he had no other way to live. It was feared that he and more of them came by their orders the same way with the afore-mentioned person. These were the school-masters of my youth (except two of them); who read Common Prayer on Sundays and holy-days, and taught school, and tipleed on the week-days, and whipt the boys when they were drunk, so that we changed them very oft. Within a few miles about us, were near a dozen more ministers that were near eighty year old a-piece, and never preached; poor ignorant readers, and most of them of scandalous lives; only three or four constant, competent preachers lived near us, and those (though conformable all save one) were the common marks of the people's

\* The Elizabethan bishops, and the prelates of our first James and first Charles, occasionally conferred holy orders on candidates whose want of learning was extreme; and sometimes, if not usually, such candidates achieved their ambition without having undergone any 'bishop's examination;' their only credentials of fitness for the divine office, and only certificates of accurate culture, being 'the good words' of those who recommended them to the notice of the prelate who laid hands on them. Of Morton, bishop of Durham, the literary author of the famous 'Book of Sports,' it is observed by his autobiographer, as a conclusive proof of episcopal conscientiousness, 'He never ordained any for priests and deacons (which he commonly did at the foure ordinations) but such as were graduates in the university (or otherwise well qualified in good learning). And for a tryall of their parts, he always appointed a set time to examine them in univ-ersity learning, but chiefly in points of divinity; and in this he was very exact, by making them answer syllogistically, according to their abilities. And he trusted not his own chaplains in this sacred business, though otherwise very able and learned divines.'

obloquy and reproach, and any that had but gone to hear them, when he had no preaching at home, was made the derision of the vulgar rabble, under the odious name of a Puritane.’

On the outbreak of the Civil War, it devolved on the Parliament to legislate for the entire body of the clergy, in the Parliamentary quarters of the country, as well as to abate the evils of non-residence and pluralism, reform Laudian abuses, and correct the ecclesiastics who offended flagrantly against religion and morals. So soon as Charles, by withdrawing from the capital, and levying forces for the subjugation of the national assembly, had relinquished the constitutional control of the realm, it appeared to the members of that assembly that they had, rather through the sovereign’s retirement from his lawful office than by their own usurpation, become responsible for the security of the country. Under circumstances known to every Englishman they had become the *ipso facto* government of the country; and they claimed from the nation the same allegiance and submission which were due to the king, in whose name they determined to wield the supreme power, or such part of the supreme power, as they could command. Henceforth, for a clergyman to preach against their authority and urge the populace to resist them became almost the same treasonable offence that it would have been, before the actual commencement of hostilities, for the same clergyman to declaim against the king and exhort the people to dethrone him. Of course, to those who maintain that the Parliament had no legal or justifiable status in the conflict, its assumption that it had a claim to the support or tacit acquiescence of the priesthood is a preposterous absurdity. But, even by those who cherish respect for the exploded theories of non-resistance and the unlawfulness of rebellion, it will be allowed that, having undertaken to carry on the government of the country, the leaders of the Parliament would have courted defeat and deserved obloquy had they forborne to assert their authority over the pulpits.

Nor was it by preaching alone that the Royalist clergy aided the king’s cause, and embarrassed the enemies of prelacy and despotism. On Sundays and the days of monthly fasting they stimulated the loyalty of their hearers, and confirmed their congregations in suspicion and abhorrence of the Parliament, by

sermons which displayed, in piteous terms, the wrongs of the sovereign, and, attributing the most nefarious motives to the directors of the rebellion, aimed at proving that the Council of Westminster was no lawful Parliament, but a mere combination of plunderers, bent on enriching themselves by the destruction of the monarchy, the despoliation of the Church, and the impoverishment of the community. The effect of such declarations from the parochial pulpits on the credulous multitude was very great; but the Royalist incumbents were still more successful in fostering sympathy for the crown and hatred of the usurpers by domestic gossip and fire-side agitation. At every festive meeting—in the squire's hall or the yeoman's parlour, over the table of a church-ale or round the foot of a may-pole—the rector, the vicar, the curate, the men of cloth and speech, deplored the hardships of the times, groaned over the burdens of new taxes, predicted the speedy arrival of worse evils than the calamities of civil war, and boldly attributed all the troubles of the crisis to the impious politicians who had driven the king from his capital, and were bent on driving him from his realm.

Yet further. The Royalist clergy, distributed over the country, and so placed that they could hold unobtrusive communication with one another, proved themselves most valuable auxiliaries to the royal cause, as cautious, intelligent, and trustworthy agents for the transmission of intelligence. Wherever the Parliamentary forces appeared, their movements were accurately reported to the king's advisers, and the Cavaliers in every part of the country, by the parochial priests. When the king, or any leader of the king's party, wished to disseminate encouraging news amongst the Royalists of distant parts, or to prepare the Cavaliers of a particular locality for the occurrence of events likely to affect the subsequent course of the struggle, he had only to confide his information to a clerical confederate, and forthwith it travelled throughout the land, or to the special district which it was designed to influence. The intercommunication which the Cavaliers in the different parts of the country maintained throughout the war, to the great benefit of their party and the corresponding disadvantage of their antagonists, was mainly effected by clerical agency; and in the covert ope-



rations of the Cavaliers from the beginning of the contest to its close, and further onwards till the restoration of Charles the Second, no class of partisans exceeded the zeal and craft of the numerous divines who, like Heylyn\* and Allestree, repeatedly imperilled their lives in the secret service of the crown. From the results which flowed from this clerical support of Charles the First—the strength which it brought to the royal forces, the embarrassments which it occasioned the Parliament—the

\* From the time when he gained Charles the First's favour by the promptitude with which he read the 'Histriomastix,' and marked out its objectionable passages for the guidance of its author's prosecutors, until his death in 1663, Heylyn was actively engaged in ecclesiastical politics and secret counsels. Of the dangers he encountered and the disguises he assumed much is said in his biography, which throws light on the doings of the clerical politicians of the Commonwealth period. 'So that,' says the biographer, 'being no longer able to maintain himself and his family in Oxford, he sent his wife to London, to get what money she could amongst her relations: himself went out of Oxford, A.D. 1645, walking as a poor traveller throughout the country, and disguised both in his name and habit: he sometimes went under the name of Barker; at other times he took the name of Harding, by which he was well known among his friends, and not discovered by his enemies. His habit changed from that of a priest to a layman, and in the likeness usually of an honest countryman, or else of a poor decayed gentleman, as indeed he was.' Having reached Winchester without falling into the hands of the Parliamentary agents, who were on his track, Heylyn 'settled himself, wife and eldest daughter, in the house of a right honest man, one Mr. Lizard, with whom they tabled a good while, where he had a comfortable time of breathing and rest after his former troubles . . . But those halcyon days quickly vanished, as seldom prosperity continues so long as adversity; for that town and castle, especially, which was thought strong enough to resist a greater force than came against it, were both treacherously delivered up to the hands of their enemies in those days; and now every house was full of soldiers quartered amongst them. Poor Dr. Heylyn was in more danger than ever, had not Mr. Lizard taken care of him as his dearest guest, and hid him in a private room, as Providence ordained to save his life: which room formerly was supposed to be made for the hiding of Seminary priests and Jesuits, because the house heretofore belonged to a Papist family; and indeed it was so cunningly contrived, that there was no door to be seen, nor entering into it, but behind an old bed's head; and if the bed had not been there, the door was so neatly made like the other wainscot of the chamber, that it was impossible for a stranger to find it out. In which room, instead of a Papist, a right Protestant doctor, who was a professed enemy both to Popery and Puritanism, was now secured from the rage and violence of the soldiers, who sought after him with no less eagerness than if he had been a heretic, followed by the Spanish Inquisition, when the good man was in the very next room to them, adjoining to the dining chamber, where he would hear all their villany and mirth, their gaming at cards and dice: for those idle Purdanes spent their time only in riot and pleasure at home, and when they went abroad would tread the maze near the town. He took this opportunity

reader may form some conception of the far greater difficulties which would have accrued to Henry the Eighth from the opposition of the regular clergy, had he refrained from dissolving the religious associations, whose members, in case of a civil war between the Papal Catholics and national Churchmen, would have fortified their abbeys and colleges in the Pope's service, and would have used all their wealth and influence to make their sovereign once more the spiritual vassal of the pontiff.

on the market day to put on his travelling-ropes, with a long staff in his hand, and so walked out of the town confidently, with the country crowd, bidding adieu to the little room, that he left for the next distressed gentleman: in the meanwhile his wife and daughter he intrusted to Mr. Lizard's care, his faithful friend. But now he must again travel to seek his Fortune, which proved more kind to him than she did before: yet he met with a hard adventure not many miles from Winchester, where some straggling soldiers lighting upon him and catching hold of his hand, felt a ring under his glove, which through haste of his escape he forgot to pull off; which no sooner discovered, but they roughly swore he was some runaway Cavalier. The ring being hard to get off, the poor Doctor willingly helped them: in which time came galloping by some of the parliament's scouts, who said to their fellow-soldiers, "Look to yourselves, the Cavaliers are coming!" At which words being affrighted, they took that little money that was in his pocket, and so rid without further search; and he, good man, soon jogged on to the next friend's house, with some pieces of gold that he had hid in his high shoes, which, if the rogues had not been so hastily frightened away, would have been undoubtedly found, and might have cost him his life by further suspicions of him. At what friend's house he was now secured from danger, though I have heard him named, indeed I have forgot; but from thence he travelled to Dr. Kingsmill, a loyal person of great worth and ancient family, where he continued, and sent for his wife and daughter from Winchester to him; and from thence removed to Minster Lovel (Oxfordshire), the pleasant seat of his elder brother, in the year 1648, which he farmed for his nephew, Colonel Heylyn, for six years. Being deprived of his ecclesiastical preferments, he must think of some honest way for livelihood.'

Richard Allestree was another of the Oxford clergy who, in days when a clergyman was seldom a sluggish and lukewarm politician, rendered important services to his party, as a secret agent and communicator of intelligence between the scattered associations of Cavaliers. Of the part which Allestree played in bringing about the restoration, Bishop Fell says, 'After several difficult journeys successfully performed, in the winter before his majesty's happy restoration, he was sent over into Flanders; from whence returning with a party of soldiers, who waited for him, the rebel's spy, who was employed by them in his majesty's court, having given notice of his dispatch, and described particularly his person and habit. But notwithstanding this diligence of the rebels, Mr. Allestree had so much presence of mind as to rescue his letters and shift them into a faithful hand, and took care of them.' Allestree was taken to London and thrown into Lambeth House, whence he was liberated by time-serving watchers of events, who lived to see him become Provost of Eton.

The Royalists demanded from the clergy the same submissiveness and co-operation which the Parliamentary authorities required from the occupants of parochial pulpits. Wherever the king's power was supreme, summary and harsh punishments were dealt out to incumbents and assistant-curates who had either sided with the Parliament or exhibited any inclination to Puritanism. The rector who had forborne to read the royal proclamations to his congregation, or who, in compliance with parliamentary orders had removed the communion-table from the east end to the middle of his church, was deemed a traitor. If the king's soldiers caught him, he was cast into prison, although his neglect to read the king's proclamations might have resulted only from fear of the Parliament's vengeance, and though his reversal of Laudian innovations might have proceeded from the necessity of the moment. Whether a captive in the hands of the Royalists, or a fugitive from their vengeance, he was deprived of his preferment, and his house was plundered by Cavalier soldiers. Hundreds of clerical families were thus reduced to absolute beggary; and, flying to London, they gave such deplorable accounts of their condition as induced the Parliament (December 31, 1642) to appoint a committee to devise means 'for the relief of such godly and well-affected ministers as have been plundered: and what malignant clergymen have benefices in and about the town, whose benefices being sequestered, may be supplied by others who may receive their profits.' The state of the entire clerical body, at this time, was one of extreme anxiety and general hardship. From the action of the Royalists who silenced and ejected the Puritan incumbents, and the operation of the committees who deprived the Cavalier clergy, distress rapidly increased within the ecclesiastical order; and those of the beneficed clergy who had hitherto escaped injury, or even derived material profit from the revolutionary occurrences, had reason to fear for the permanency of their good fortune.

That the committee for *plundered* ministers,—or as the Cavalier satirists preferred to designate it, the 'committee for *plundering* ministers,'—stimulated the various parliamentary and local committees for amending religious scandals to deal more severely than heretofore with contumacious and disorderly

clergymen, is certain; but the evidence of facts is altogether opposed to the partisan historians of Clarendon's school, who charge those committees with gross and almost invariable injustice, and represent that the clergy ejected by the parliamentary inquisitors—or rather ejected by the Parliament on the recommendation of its inquisitors—were for the most part pious and honourable persons, whose sole offence was loyalty to their sovereign. To say nothing of the improbability that English gentlemen would perpetrate the enormities imputed to these committees by the Royalist scribes, the testimony of moderate men of both parties in the conflict justifies the proceedings of the ejectors. Fuller, Kennet, Baxter, Eachard, concur in the opinion that many of the displaced clergy were scandalously vicious. Fuller declares 'that several of the offences of the clergy were so foul, that it is a shame to report them, crying to justice for punishment.' Baxter, with more preciseness, records 'that in all the countries where he was acquainted, six to one at least, if not many more, that were sequestered by the committees, were by the oaths of witnesses proved insufficient or scandalous, or especially guilty of drunkenness and swearing.' Moreover, it may be fairly advanced in behalf of the committees, that, in many of the cases where they exercised an excess of severity, and seem to have been actuated by resentment, they were provoked inordinately by the insolent language and defiant bearing of the clergy under trial.

To counteract the clamours and false reports which the Royalists raised against the numerous ejections of scandalous clergy, Mr. White drew up a brief memoir of a hundred instances of the kinds of misconduct for which these clergy had been evicted; and this justificatory statement was printed by order of the Committee of Religion (Nov. 17, 1643) under the title of 'The First Century of Scandalous, Malignant Priests, Made and Admitted Into Benefices by the Prelates, in Whose Hands the Ordination of Ministers and the Government of the Church hath been.' For his familiar appellation of 'the centurist' Mr. White was indebted to this characteristic publication, which, interesting on many grounds, is especially noteworthy for the evidence which it affords that the Parliamentarians not only deemed themselves justified in silencing

ministers who resisted their authority, but were also confident that public opinion would hold them to be justified in so doing. Several of the priests mentioned in the 'First Century' were abominable offenders against common decency; but not content to rest the justice of their punishment on their flagrant sins against temperance, chastity, and reverence for God's name, the compiler in nearly every case finishes up the catalogue of their crimes with a statement that they were malignant talkers against the Parliament.

One of the most revolting cases of clerical iniquity mentioned in the hundred instances, is the case of an Essex rector, who was proved on conclusive evidence to have perpetrated a series of disgusting enormities, that may not be minutely set forth on a page intended for general circulation. This wretch's conduct, apart from his political excesses, would have justified a far severer punishment than social degradation and dismissal from office; and yet the Centurist—strengthening his case perhaps to contemporary readers, but greatly weakening it to the student of the present date—goes on to say that the said delinquent was a 'forward maintainer and practiser of the late illegal innovations, and hath expressed great malignancy against the Parliament, affirming, "That they sate to make lawes by authoritie, and brake them without authoritie, which was mere hypocrisy." And in his pulpit spake against the present defensive warre, protesting that now when "every child lift up his sword to shed innocent blood, it was high time for him to lift up his voyce like a trumpet." And did read in his church declarations set out in his Majestic's name, but refused to reade any declarations of Parliament, and at Christmas was 12 moneth having appointed a communion, and all things were ready for it, and the parishioners prepared, he turned his backe and went away, refusing to deliver it, because the surplice was not there. And falsely affirmed "that the Parliament gathered great summes of money to enrich their own purses."'

Another misdemeanor, of a milder and comparatively agreeable sort—the statement of whose contumacious proceedings it is difficult to read without a smile—was the Rev. Cuthbert Dale, rector of Kettleburgh, Suffolk, whose living the Parliament had sequestered, 'for that he was a constant observer

of late illegall innovations in the worship of God, and prevented and troubled his parishioners in the Ecclesiastical Courts for not comming up to the rails to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and not observing other of the said Innovations, and is a common swearer and curser, and in his sermons hath maintained, "That the angells did mediate for the children of God, and that men might drinke one pot for necessity, a second for recreation, and a third for good-fellowship; and that it is not the blood of Christ that takes away sinne before God, but it is repentance and tears that washes away sinnes," and hath read the "Book of Sports" on the Lord's Day, and hath slighted and neglected the monethly fast, and suffered his servants to worke thereupon; and seeing a stranger in church put on his hat\* in sermon time, he openly then called him, "Sawcy, unmannerly clowne," and bid the churchwardens take notice of him, and the next Lord's Day tooke occasion in his sermon againe to speake of him being then absent, and to call him Lobb, Sawcy Goose, Idiot, a Wigeon, a Cuckoo, saying he was a scabbed sheep, a stragler, and none of his flock; and is a common ale-house and tavern-haunter, and hath been often drunk, and frequently in his pulpit upbraideth his parishioners, calling them Knaves, Devils, Raskalls, Rogues, and Villains, using other opprobrious speeches against them, and in one of his sermons affirmed, "That he hoped that the late Lord Cooke was in hell, for maintaining prohibitions," and hath been very negligent in his cure, oft absenting himself for many weekes together, and leaving the same in his absence to very scandalous curates, and hath wholly deserted his said cure for above nine weekes last past, and hath expressed great malignancy against the Parliament.'

\* The reader of a former page of this work does not need to be told, that in Charles the First's time to sit in church with one's hat on was not the same sign of irreverence that it is at the present day. Old-fashioned folk, even in towns, still continued to wear their hats in church. That a country rector should venture thus to upbraid an otherwise unoffending worshipper for keeping his hat on his head under the roof of a rural church, is a proof, however, that the good people in and near Kettleburgh had generally adopted the new fashion of sitting uncovered in the Lord's house. Mr. Cutlbert Dale was an eccentric and impulsive gentleman, but he would scarcely have inveighed violently against an ancient usage which the good society of his neighbourhood still countenanced.

The proceedings of a local court of inquisitors, acting on authority derived from the Committee of Religion, were often attended with ludicrous incidents. The clergy who appeared to answer to the charges preferred against them frequently raised the laughter of their rustic auditors by maliciously holding up to ridicule the deficient learning of their judges, who were for the most part such deputy-lieutenants and magistrates of the locality as adhered to the cause of the Parliament. Occasionally the evidence, given by humble and untaught persons, was trivial and irrelevant to the articles of indictment; and the friends of the ejected incumbents were not slow to make the most of the trivialities and irrelevancies, as though they comprised all the evidence against the deprived parsons. Thus stories floated into circulation that one rector had lost his living because he had walked in his garden on a Sunday morning, that a second had been deprived because his hound killed a hare on the Lord's Day, that a third was declared scandalous because he had eaten too much custard at a supper. In the high-church days of Queen Anne, when it was the fashion to declare that the ministers ejected in 1662 had suffered no worse than the Episcopalian clergy who were deprived during the civil war, Dr. Walker turned these piquant anecdotes to account in his 'Sufferings of the Clergy.' 'But I cannot forbear,' wrote the doctor, 'preventing myself by producing an incident or two at present of the trifling and ridiculous things that were alleged against some of them. In Cumberland a gentleman was avowedly ejected for hunting. The crime against another was "Walking in his garden on a Sunday morning." And against a third was alleged the fault of his servant, which it was impossible for him to have prevented. A reverend clergyman of Gloucestershire had this accusation against them, "That he coursed a hare on the Sabbath-day, which was no other than his grey-hounds pursuing, and killing an hare that accidentally came before them . . . . A clergyman suffering his children to play at cards for pins hath helped, it is affirmed, to make up one of the crimes against him; and it is said that the Reverend Mr. Lionel Playters of Ugshall, in Suffolk, was accused of "eating custard after a scandalous manner;" not that he was, as I suppose, accused in these words; but probably something

in his eating was produced in countenance of some matter alleged against him.'

In his special memoir of this Mr. Playters, Dr. Walker shows precisely that, if the sequestrators had no other grounds of complaint against this scandalous eater of custard, they at least had sure proof that he was a violent politician and implacable enemy of the Parliament. 'He was,' says the narrator of clerical sufferings, 'the son of Sir Thomas Playters of Satterly, knt., and baronet, which honour he afterwards enjoyed himself, on the death of his elder brother Sir William Playters . . . June 20, 1644, articles were exhibited against him before the sequestrators under the Earl of Manchester; the substance of which, as entered in the proceedings of those investigators, was his observing the rules and orders prescribed by the Church, preaching up submission to his Majesty, inveighing earnestly against the rebellion, refusing the covenant, keeping company with one who afterwards, as 'twas asserted, went to the Cavalier Popish army, and saying that he had a parcel of hemp to sell, and hoped it would bear a good price; because, if the times continued, a great many would want hanging: and that rather than fail, he would give it to the king to hang up the Round-heads. I have also been informed, that one chief article against him (which was so much insisted upon before the sequestrators, that it was looked upon as a prime cause of his ejection) was, his eating custard in a very scandalous manner, of which, it seems, he was a very great lover. But if they had so little conscience as to turn him out for this, 'tis certain they had more wit than to avow it, and let it stand upon record: For I do not find anything of it in that extract of the original article against him, which I have received from another hand.'

Unscrupulous in covering the deprived clergy with adulation, Dr. Walker is no less reckless in what he says to the discredit of their successors. 'Two of Mr. Tyllot's successors at Depden in Suffolk,' the partisan records, 'were illiterate mechanics, as appears from the Parish Register-Book, where they under their hands left lasting monuments of their insufficiency by writing nonsense and false grammar, as often as they had occasion to write at all. The Lady Eden's coachman (whose name was Ongue)



succeeded to the sequestered living of Keldon in Essex: and it may be he was the coachman (though 'tis not impossible, that two of that employment might go into the pulpit, as well as the coach-box, in those days, and no doubt, drove on furiously) who preached sometimes at Hampstead in Hertfordshire.' From this sample the reader may judge of the fairness with which Dr. Walker writes of the national clergy who after the Restoration either joined the Episcopalian establishment and became members of his own order, or resigned their preferments from conscientious scruples.

Dr. Edmund Calamy's reply to Dr. Walker's 'Sufferings of the Clergy' aids the inquirer not a little in his attempts to form an impartial estimate of the politico-religious delinquents ejected by the parliamentary Committees of Religion, and throws much light on the condition of the Anglican clergy in Charles the First's time. Concerning Mr. Belton of Mexbrough—a choice specimen of the clerical roisterers of Caroline England, in whose favour Dr. Walker refrains from speaking anything definite, although he has included him in the list of ecclesiastical sufferers from the Puritanical persecution—the author of 'Church and Dissenters compared' remarks, 'His living was reckoned but at £10. per annum, besides a dinner on the Lord's Day; which was too much for him, unless he had been better. For he was infamous for his impudence and impiety, and promoting prophaneness among the loose gentry. About fifteen of them entered into a fraternity, and chose him for their ghostly father; and being a single man, he spent most of his time at their houses, making them sport with his scurrilous profane wit. He was such a rake, that the whole country rang of him his pranks.'

In the pages of the same learned and reverend writer, appears another clerical black sheep of the same sort,—Mr. Francis of Staunton in Nottinghamshire, a gentleman who had the free run of several country-houses, in which he played the part of buffoon by turns to the quality in the dining-room and to the menials in the servants' hall. 'He was a drunken, prophane wretch,' says Calamy, who tells farther how this cassock-wearing scapegrace 'one Sunday in the evening, in the summer-season, called at the house of a certain baronet in his

return from Grantham Market to Staunton. He happened to come in when the servants were at supper in the hall. They desired him to sit down with them, which he did. When supper was ended, they desired him also to return thanks: which he did in these words.

‘The Lord be blessed for all His gifts,  
The Devil be hang’d for all his shifts.’

‘Methinks a number of such worthies as these,’ adds the pious Calamy, ‘would not much have recommended any cause in Christendom.’

Mr. Ven of Otterton in Devonshire, commended by Dr. Walker as a worthy man, had a keen appetite for good liquor, and sometimes drank more than prudence allowed. But though he was now and then fined by a magistrate or reproved by his graver brethren for inebriety, he retained the respect of his political allies by the fervour with which he denounced Puritans and Parliamentarians. ‘When Mr. Duke,’ says Dr. Calamy, ‘attended to receive the sacrament, though he was his patron, yet without any warning or exception before, Mr. Ven told him at the table, he could not administer the sacrament to a rebel; and yet his house was a garrison for the king, and he was a very pious and peaceable gentleman, that meddled little with the affairs of those times.’

Amongst wits whose humour found expression in comical exaggerations and grotesque lies, Mr. Charles Churchill, the ejected pastor of Feniton, had neither superior nor equal throughout Devonshire. He ‘was a man,’ says Calamy, ‘of a lying tongue, that was continually talking of jocular lies, to ridicule religion and religious men. Insomuch that his own wife would say, you must not believe my husband: for he uses to tell his lies to make noblemen laugh. He was much addicted to prophane jeerings and mocking at holy things. Once when he was riding along by a Puritan’s door, and found he was at family prayer, he said he prayed so heartily that he was in bodily fear his horse would have fallen down on his knees. And he was so much given to drunkenness that he had debauched the greatest part of the gentlemen and farmers in the parish, who had the greatest deliverance in the world when he was

turned out, and succeeded by so excellent a person, and so good and exemplary a Christian as Mr. Hieron.'

Another of the eccentric persons whom Dr. Walker includes amongst his sufferers under the Puritan persecution was Lovis, the miserable vicar of Brandeston in Suffolk, who was tried for necromancy, and executed at Bury as a wizard. 'He had been vicar of this living fifty years,' says Dr. Walker, 'and was executed with about sixty more, for being a wizard, at Bury in this county. But a neighbour Justice of the Peace, and a Doctor of Divinity, who both knew him very well, altogether acquit him of that crime, as far as they could judge; and did verily believe the truth of it is, he was a contentious man, and made his parishioners very uneasy, and they were glad to take the opportunity of those wicked times and get him hanged, rather than not get rid of him; so that matter hath been represented to me. If this be the true state of the case, and the party were glad of any occasion, not only to sequester but also to hang up the clergy of the Establishment, there cannot be any question made, but that Mr. Lovis doth most justly claim a place in the list: but if any who live nearer to the place or have any other opportunities of searching to the bottom of this story than I have, can discover the contrary, I shall most gladly discard him, and readily joyn in acknowledging the justice of his sentence.' From the terms in which he conditionally acquits this luckless vicar of necromantic guilt, it is clear that the sapient author of the 'Sufferings of the Clergy,' writing in the last year of Queen Anne, had not relinquished belief in witchcraft and the black art.

In judging the men and actions of a time when aged clergymen and senile ladies could be solemnly tried and brutally murdered by process of law for unholy dealings with Satan, it is impossible to make too much allowance for the ignorance of the period and for the immorality that usually attends gross superstition and mental blindness.

Of the wide difference between the England of to-day and the England of the seventeenth century the reader must not be unmindful, when considering the faults and virtues, the merited punishments and the undeserved sufferings of the so-called 'scandalous clergy,' who for a while filled the prisons of London to overflowing, and of whose companions in misery Clarendon

wrote, ‘ Not only all the prisons about London were quickly filled with persons of honour and great reputation for sobriety and integrity to their counties, but new prisons were made for their reception, and of which was a new and barbarous invention; very many persons of very good quality, both of the clergy and laity were committed to prison on board the ships of the river Thames, where they were kept under decks, and no friend suffered to come to them, by which many lost their lives.’

## CHAPTER VI.

### CHURCH SERVICE UNDER ASSEMBLERS AND TRIERS.

TO supply the place of Convocation, an institution which had perished for the time, Parliament created the Assembly, consisting of thirty laymen and one hundred and thirty-one clerical persons,\* who were invited to meet on July 1st, 1643, at Westminster, in King Henry the Seventh's Chapel, to deliberate on the religious concerns of the country, and to assist the Parliament with counsel on questions of ecclesiastical polity. Amongst the laymen summoned to this council were ten peers of great influence and character, and several commoners of brilliant parts and extraordinary learning. John Selden, the two Vanes, John Glynne, White the Centurist, Bulstrode Whitelocke, Oliver St. John, John Pym, John Maynard, and Matthew Hale, had seats in the Parliament's Convocation, which, from the time of its first meeting in 1643 till its separation in 1652, exercised a beneficial, though inadequate, influence on the religious action of the people.

The Assemblers—as the members of this mushroom convocation were called—had a difficult part assigned to them in days when spiritual authorities were held in no high esteem :

\* Amongst these ecclesiastical persons were several staunch Royalists, some high dignitaries of the Church, and several who became bishops after the Restoration. Archbishop Usher, Bishop Prideaux, Bishop Brownrigge, Drs. Sanderson, Morley, and Hammond, were in the original list of Assemblers, or rather, of divines invited to assemble. 'Their first list,' says Sir John Birkenhead, 'was sprinkled with some names of honour (Dr. Sanderson, Dr. Morley, Dr. Hammond, &c.); but these divines were too worthy to mix with such scandalous ministers, and would not assemble without the royal call. Nay, the first list had one archbishop, one bishop, and an half (Bishop Brownrigge was then but elect); but now their assembly, as philosophers think the world, consists of atoms, petty small Levites, whose parts are not discernible.'

and the Cavalier satirists were never weary of ridiculing their conduct and exaggerating their dissensions. In Sir John Birkenhead's 'Assembly-man,' written in the year 1647, the reader may see the way in which these religious councillors were derided by the Episcopalian. That some of them were learned men and personages of the highest distinction, the author of this pungent satire could not deny; but he represents that these Assemblers of superior quality only attended the Assembly for the sake of diverting themselves with the ignorance and bad manners of the Puritan clergy, who affected the dignity of profound legislators, and far exceeded the bishops in arrogance. 'Mr. Selden,' says the pamphleteer, 'visits them, as Persians use to see wild asses fight; when the Commons have tired him with their new law, these brethren refresh him with their mad gospel. They lately were graveled betwixt Jerusalem and Jericho; they knew not the distance betwixt these two places; one cried twenty miles, another ten; it was concluded seven for this reason, "That fish was brought from Jericho to Jerusalem Market." Mr. Selden smiled, and said, "Perhaps the fish was salt fish," and so stopped their mouths.\*

The grossness of the reverend Assembler's appetite; his meanness in feeding himself cheaply at threepenny ordinaries,† when he dined at his own cost, and gorging himself with food at tables where he was a free guest; the grotesque ways in which he clothed himself and dressed his hair; the violence and occasional

\* That Selden was an effective speaker in the Assembly, and sometimes worried the reverend assemblers with his superior scholarship, we know from White-locks, who says that he (Selden) would sometimes say, in a warm discussion on a Biblical question, 'Perhaps in your little pocket Bible with gilt leaves the translation may be thus: but the Greek and Hebrew signifies thus and thus!'

† A shilling dinner in Victorian London—such a dinner as clerks and students of narrow means get at cheap dining-rooms—is the modern equivalent of the threepenny dinner of Caroline London. 'The Assembler's diet,' says Sir John Birkenhead, 'is strangely different; for he dines wretchedly on dry bread at Westminster, four Assemblers for thirteen pence: but this sharpens and whets him for supper, when he feeds *gratis* with his city landlord, to whom he brings a huge stomach and news: for which crammed capons cram him.' Bread being the chief ingredient of the threepenny dinner, the Assemblers are described as dining on that alone; but the reader must not infer from the satire that they had no meat. Master Poorest and Master Needham, the curates of 'The Curates' Conference' (1641), dine at a threepenny ordinary, and converse about their fare

indelicacy of his pulpit eloquence; the badness of his taste in psalmody,—are matters on which Sir John Birkenhead writes with more warmth than veracity. ‘His shortest things are his hair and his cloak,’ says the Assembly-man’s delineator; ‘his hair is cut to the figure of three; two high cliffs run up his temples, whose cape of shorn hair shoots down his forehead, with creeks indented, where his eyes ride at anchor. Had this false prophet been carried with Habakkuk, the angel had caught fast hold of his ears, and led him as he leads his auditory. His eyes are part of his tithe at Easter, which he boils at each sermon; he has two mouths, his nose is one, for he speaks through both; his hands are not in his gloves, but his gloves in his hands; for betwixt sweatings (that is, sermons) he handles little else except his dear mammon. His gown, I mean his cloak, reaches but his pockets. When he rides in that manner, with a hood on his shoulders, and a hat above both, is he not then his own man of sin with a triple crown? You would swear some honest carpenter dressed him, and made him the tunnel of a country chimney. His doublet and hose are of dark blue, a grain deeper than pure Coventry; but of late he is in black, since the loyal clergy were persecuted into colours. His two longest things are his nails and his prayers.’

To the people for whose immediate benefit they deliberated, and also to the student endeavouring to realize the religious life of our ancestors under the Commonwealth, the most important act of the Assemblers was the publication of the ‘Directory for

thus:—‘*Mr. P.* What say you, Master Needham: how strong are you? Will you go and show me that pretty banqueting-house for curates? I mean, the threepenny ordinary, for I can go no higher. *Mr. N.* I will, with all my heart, for I am almost at the same ebb. But let us hope better: things will not always rise in this rack . . . . *Mr. P.* . . . . but now let us leave off discourse and fall to our commons. What a pretty molicum I have here! Sure this ordinary-keeper has been cook or scullion in a college! How dexterously the fellow plays the logician in dividing the meat! It is an excellent place, sure, to learn abstinence by. I promise you, I will visit this house, as my stock holds out. It is just one degree above dining with Duke Humphrey. It is good as preservative against surfeits.’ The fee to the waiter at a threepenny ordinary was one farthing—a twelfth of the sum spent on food. Thus the four Assemblers paid thirteen pence—a shilling for dinners and a penny for attendance. At the present time the customary fee to the waiter, upon a shilling dinner, is a penny—also the twelfth of the sum spent on refreshments.

Public Worship,' which, by the same Parliamentary ordinance (January 3rd, 1644) that abolished the Book of Common Prayer, became the rule for the conduct of those extemporaneous prayers and comparatively informal services which constituted the public worship, rendered by our forefathers to the Almighty during the interval between the overthrow and revival of the Episcopal system. Having thus suppressed the Prayer-book, and put the 'Directory' in its place, the Parliament, in the course of the following summer (August, 23rd, 1645) called in all copies of the Common Prayer, and forbade its use 'in any church, chapel, or place of public worship, or in any private place or family, under penalty of 5*l.* for the first offence, 10*l.* for the second, and for the third a year's imprisonment.' The ordinance further provided, that 'such ministers as should not observe the 'Directory' in all exercises of public worship should forfeit 40*s.*; and they who, with a design to bring the 'Directory' into contempt, or to raise opposition to it, should preach, write, or print, anything in derogation of it, should forfeit a sum of money not under 5*l.*, nor more than 50*l.*, to be given to the poor.'

To correct the practice of bowing towards the east on first entering the church—a usage in which the Laudian High-church clergy had sedulously trained their congregations—the 'Directory' enjoined,—'Let all enter the assembly, not irreverently, but in a grave and seemly manner, taking their seats or places without adoration, or bowing themselves to one place or other. The congregation being assembled, the minister, after solemn calling on them to the worshipping of the great name of God, is to begin with prayer.' This preliminary exercise was known as first prayer; and, after giving general directions for its tenor and purport, the 'Directory' left the minister to choose his own words for the extemporaneous supplication. The minister is enjoined to pray aloud to God as the mouth-piece of the congregation, 'humbly beseeching him for pardon, assistance, and acceptance, in the whole service then to be performed, and for a blessing on that particular portion of His word then to be read; and all in the name and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ.'

To do away with the noisy restlessness which prevailed in



congregations of olden time, and especially to put down the fashion which simple folk had contracted of rising and rendering feudal obeisance to their social superiors, when the latter joined a congregation after the commencement of service, the 'Directory' ordained,—'The public worship being begun, the people are wholly to attend upon it, forbearing to reade anything, except what the minister is then reading or citing; and abstaining much more from all private whisperings, conferences, salutations, or doing reverence to any persons present or coming in; as also from all gazing, sleeping, and other indecent behaviour, which may disturb the minister or people, or hinder themselves or others in the service of God.'

After 'First Prayer' came the 'Public Reading,' concerning which part of the service the 'Directory' observed,—'How large a portion shall be read at once is left to the wisdom of the minister. But it is convenient that ordinarily the chapter of each Testament bee read at every meeting, and sometimes more, where the chapters be short, or the coherence of matter requireth it . . . . When the minister who readeth, shall judge it necessary to expound any part of what is read, let it not bee done until the whole chapter, or psalme bee ended; and regard is always to be had unto the time, that neither preaching or other ordinance bee straitned or rendered tedious, which rule is to be observed in all other publique performances.'

After 'reading' the congregation sung a psalm, or portion of a psalm; and then the minister appointed to preach delivered the 'Second Prayer,' which was the grand supplicatory effort of the service. This oration, it was directed, should confess private and public sins, should bewail the wickedness of human nature, and acknowledge the special frailties of every sort of mankind; should fervently petition for light, guidance, and all the qualities of Christian health. 'We judge this,' remarks the 'Directory,' 'to be a convenient order in the ordinary publique prayers; yet so, as the minister may deferre (as in prudence he shall think meet) some part of these petitions till after his sermon, or offer up to God some of the thanksgivings, hereafter appointed, in his prayer before his sermon.'

The sermon followed the 'Second Prayer,' and the preacher might either sermonize or postillize. Occasionally there was a

second sermon. The 'Directory' even contemplated occasions when there would be a third sermon in a single service. 'Where,' says the 'Directory,' 'there are more ministers in a congregation than one, and they of different gifts, each may more especially apply himself to doctrine or exhortation according to the gift wherein he most excelleth, and as they shall agree between themselves.'

Sermon was followed by a third prayer uttered by the minister as the mouthpiece of the congregation. In second prayer the orator was required to pray for Henrietta Maria, the religious education of the Prince of Wales, and the welfare of other important personages and institutions, and particularly 'to pray for all in authority, especially for the King's Majesty, that God would make him rich in blessings, both in his person and government, establish his throne in religion and righteousness, save him from evill counsell, and make him a blessed and glorious instrument for the conservation and propagation of the gospell, for the encouragement and protection of them that doe well, the terrour of all that doe evill, and the great good of the whole church, and of all his kingdome.' Giving further rules for prayer, the 'Directory' remarks, 'And whereas, at the administration of the sacraments, the holding publique fasts and dayes of thanksgiving, and other speciall occasions, which may afford matter of speciall petitions and thanksgivings: It is requisite to expresse somewhat in our publique prayers (as at this time, it is our duty to pray for a blessing on the Assembly of Divines, the armies by land and sea, for the defence of the King, Parliament, and Kingdome) every minister is herein to apply himselfe in his prayer before, so after his sermon, to those occasions; but for a manner, he is left at liberty as God shall direct and enable him in piety and wisdome to discharge his duty.' Third prayer was followed by another exercise of psalmody, after which the congregation was usually dismissed. 'The prayer ended,' says the 'Directory,' 'let a psalme be sung, if with conveniency it may be done. After which (unlesse some other ordinance of Christ that concerneth the congregation at that time be to follow) let the minister dismisse the congregation with a solemne blessing.'

With respect to the sacrament of baptism, the 'Directory'

enjoined, 'Nor is it to be administered in private places or privately, but in the place of publique worship, and in the face of the congregation, where the people may most conveniently see and heare; and not in the places where Fonts in the Time of Popery were unfitly and superstitiously placed.' In its injunctions for the administration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the 'Directory' observes, 'After this exhortation, warning, and invitation, the table being before decently covered, and so conveniently placed, *that the communicants may orderly sit about it, or at it.*'\* The minister is to begin the action with sanctifying and blessing the elements of Bread and Wine set before him.'

An altogether erroneous notion prevails that throughout the Commonwealth-period marriages were never or seldom solemnized in the churches. Neither under the assemblers nor during the ascendancy of Cromwell's triers did usage accord with this misconception. The 'Directory,' providing for the solemnization of matrimony in places of worship, enjoined, 'After the purpose or contract of marriage hath been thus published, the marriage is not to be long deferred. Therefore, the minister, having had convenient warning, and nothing being objected to hinder it, is publickely to solemnise it in the place

\* In his 'Life of Hooker,' Isaak Walton gives the following picture of a company of Puritan worshippers receiving the sacred bread and wine:—'But it so fell out, that about the said third or fourth year of the Long Parliament, the then present parson of Bourne was sequestered—you may guess why—and a Genevan minister put into his good living. This, and other like sequestrations, made the clerk express himself in a wonder and say, "They had sequestered so many good men, that he doubted if his good master, Mr. Hooker, had lived till now, they would have sequestered him too." It was not long before this intruding minister had made a party in and about the said parish, that were desirous to receive the sacrament as in Geneva: to which end the day was appointed for a select company, and forms and stools set about the altar, or communion-table, for them to sit and eat and drink; but when they went about work there was a want of some joint-stools, which the minister sent the clerk to fetch, and then to fetch cushions—but not to kneel upon. When the clerk saw them begin to sit down, he began to wonder; but the minister bade him "cease wondering, and lock the church door." To whom he replied, "Pray take you the keys, and lock me out. I will never come more into this church; for all men will say my Master Hooker was a good man, and a good scholar, and I am sure it was not used to be thus in his days." And report says, the old man went presently home and died. I do not say he died immediately, but within a few days after.'

appointed by authority for publique worship, before a competent number of credible witnesses, at some convenient houre of the day, at any time of the year, except on a day of publique humiliation. And we advise that it be not on the Lord's Day.'

The appointed service consisted of a solemn prayer by the officiating minister, an extempore declaration by the same person of the ends of marriage, and an exhortation to the bride and bridegroom, followed by joining of hands (without the use of the ring) and an exchange of promises. 'After solemn charging of the persons to be married, before the Great God, who searcheth all hearts, and to whom they must give a strict account at the last day, that if either of them know any cause, by precontract or otherwise, why they may not lawfully proceed to marriage, that they now discover it. The minister (if no impediment be acknowledged) shall cause, first, the man to take the woman by the right hand, saying these words,—“I, *M.*, doe take thee *N.*, to be my married wife, and doe in the presence of God, and before this congregation, promise and covenant to be a loving and faithful husband unto thee, untill God shall separate us by death.” Then the woman shall take the man by the right hand, and say these words,—“I, *N.*, doe take thee, *M.*, to be my married husband, and I doe, in the presence of God, and before this congregation, promise and covenant to be a loving, faithful, and obedient wife unto thee, untill God shall separate us by death.” Then, without any further ceremony, the minister shall, in the face of the congregation, pronounce them to be husband and wife, according to God's ordinance; and so conclude the action with prayer to this effect.'

Amongst other prudent enactments for the government of the country, the Barebones parliament ordained, 'That after the 29th of September, 1653, all persons who shall agree to be married within the Commonwealth of England, shall deliver in their names and places of abode, with the names of their parents, guardians, and overseers, to the registrar of the parish where each party lives, who shall publish the banns in the church or chapel three several Lord's Days, after the morning service; or else in the market-place three several weeks suc-

cessively, between the hours of eleven and two, on a market-day, if the party desire it. The registrar shall make out a certificate of the due performance of one or the other, at the request of the parties concerned, without which they shall not proceed to marriage. It is further enacted, that all persons intending to marry shall come before some justices of the peace, within the county, city, or town corporate, where publication has been made, as aforesaid, with this certificate, and with sufficient proof of the consent of the parents, if either party be under age, and then the marriage shall proceed in this manner:—The man to be married shall take the woman by the hand, and distinctly pronounce these words, “I, *A. B.*, do here in the presence of God, the searcher of all hearts, take thee, *C. D.*, for my wedded wife; and do also, in the presence of God, and before these witnesses, promise to be to thee a loving and faithful husband.” Then the woman, taking the man by the hand, shall plainly and distinctly pronounce these words, “I, *C. D.*, do here in the presence of God, the searcher of all hearts, take thee, *A. B.*, for my wedded husband; and do also in the presence of God, and before these witnesses, promise to be to thee a loving, faithful, and obedient wife.” After this the Justice may, and shall, declare the said man and woman to be from henceforth husband and wife; and from and after such consent so expressed, and such declaration made of the same (as to the form of marriage), it shall be good and effectual in law; and no other marriage whatsoever, within the Commonwealth of England, shall be held or accounted a marriage, according to the law of England.’

The Protector’s parliament confirmed this Act in the year 1656, with the exception of the clause, ‘That no other marriage whatsoever within the Commonwealth of England shall be held or accounted a legal marriage.’ Thus, for about three years, all persons marrying were compelled to be married before the civil magistrate; but during this period it was customary for the bride and bridegroom to be twice married,—once before the civil magistrate for the sake of legal sanction, and again for peace of conscience, by the minister. During this period no law prohibited the solemnization of marriage in churches; and with the exception of this brief space, civil marriage, or lay-marriage,

as it was called, was not compulsory. From 1656, until the revival of episcopal rule, the law of marriage was in its present state — lay-marriages by the civil magistrate being valid ; but other customary solemnizations of matrimony being equally recognized by law. Several instances have been given in this work of marriages performed during the Republic in accordance with the ritual of the Common Prayer. Even the Rev. Mr. Marshall, the assembler, married his daughter to her husband with book and ring, at a time when the Prayer Book was prohibited and the use of the ring was condemned as superstitious. It is, moreover, especially noteworthy, that alike by the ‘Directory,’ and the subsequent Acts of Parliament, woman was liberated during the Commonwealth from the servile necessity of promising to *serve* her husband. She engaged to be his obedient wife, without undertaking to be his slave.\*

With respect to sacred sepulture, the ‘Directory’ enjoined : ‘When any person departeth this life, let the dead body, upon the day of buriall, be decently attended from the house to the place appointed to publique buriall, and there immediately interred, without any ceremony. And because the customs of kneeling down, and praying by, or towards the dead corpse, and other such usages, in the place where it lies, before it be carried to the buriall, are superstitions; and for that praying, reading, singing, both in going to, and at the grave, have been grossly absurd, and in no way beneficial to the dead, and have proved many ways hurtful to the living, there let such things be laid aside. Howbeit, we judge it very convenient, that the Christian friends which accompany the dead body to the place appointed for publique buriall, do apply themselves to meditations and conferences suitable to the occasion ; and that the minister, as upon other occasions, so at this time, if he be present, may put them in remembrance of their duty. That this shall not extend to deny any civill respects or differences at the buriall, suitable to the rank and condition of the party deceased while he was living.’ An ordinary funeral in the Commonwealth was

\* For a sample of the manner in which the Episcopalian clergy wrote and spoke against the civil marriages of the Commonwealth, the reader is referred to ‘*Ἰστορικὴ Γαμικὴ*, Christ at the Wedding,’ by Dr. (Bishop) Gardener, the author of the famous political fiction, *Εἰκὼν Βασιλική*.

conducted very much in the way in which the Quakers continue to inter their dead: but people being, for the most part, strongly disposed to adhere to old customs of interment, there was no inclination on the part of authority, during the interregnum, to hinder peaceable persons from burying their dead in accordance with discontinued and even prohibited practices.

Of the manner in which psalmody was usually conducted and practised in our churches during the same period, the reader may form an accurate notion from the following passage of the 'Directory': 'In singing of psalmes, the voice is to be tunably and gravely ordered; but the chief care must be to sing with understanding and with grace in the heart, making melody unto the Lord. That the whole congregation may joyne herein, every one that can reade is to have a psalme book, and all others, not disabled by age or otherwise, are to be exhorted to read. But for the present, where many in the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers, doe reade the psalme, line by line, before the singing thereof.'\*

Of the labour and consequent exhaustion which the church service of the Commonwealth period entailed on conscientious and zealous ministers, a view is obtained in Dr. Edmund Calamy's 'Life of the Rev. John Howe, court-chaplain to Richard Cromwell.' 'I shan't,' says the biographer, 'easily forget the account he once gave me in private conversation, of the great pains he' (*i.e.* Howe) 'took among them' (*i.e.* the congregation at Torrington, Devonshire) 'without any help or assistance, on the Publick Fasts, which, in those days, returned

\* Ridiculing the psalmody of the Puritans in the 'Assembly-Man,' Sir John Birkenhead says, 'He tore the liturgy, because, forsooth, it shackled his spirit; he would be a devil without a circle; and now, if he see the Book of Common Prayer, the fire does it next, as sure as the bishops were burnt who compiled it. Yet he has mercy on Hopkins and Sternhold, because their metres are sung without authority (no statute, canon, or injunction at all); only, like himself, first crept into private houses, and then into churches. Mr. Rous (*i.e.* Francis Rous, Presbyterian Provost of Eton College) moved those metres to be sequestered, and his own rhymes to enjoy the sequestration; but was refused, because John Hopkins was as ancient as John Calvin: besides, when Rous stood forth for trial, Robin Wisdom was found the better poet.'

pretty frequently, and were generally kept with very great solemnity. He told me it was upon such occasions, his common way, to begin about nine in the morning, with a prayer for about a quarter of an hour, in which he begged a blessing on the work of the day; and afterwards read and expounded a chapter or psalm, in which he spent about three quarters of an hour; then prayed for about an hour, preached for another hour, and prayed for about half an hour. After this, he retired, and took some little refreshment for about a quarter of an hour or more (the people singing all the while), and then came again into the pulpit, and prayed for another hour, and gave them another sermon of about half an hour's length; and so concluded the service of the day, at about four o'clock in the evening, with about half an hour or more in prayer; a sort of service that few could have gone through, without inexpressible weariness to themselves and their auditors.'

The same biographer, describing the zeal with which Baxter laboured at Kidderminster, both before the civil war and during the Commonwealth, says: 'Before the civil war he preached twice every Lord's Day, but afterwards but once, and once every Thursday, besides occasional sermons. Every Thursday evening, those of his neighbours that had inclination and opportunity, met him at his house. One of them repeated the sermon, and afterwards they proposed any doubt about it, or any other case of conscience which he resolved. He then caused sometimes one, and sometimes another of them to pray; and sometimes prayed with them himself, and so the meeting broke up with singing a psalm. Once a-week some of the younger sort, who were not fit to pray in so great an assembly met among themselves privately, spending three hours in prayer. Every Saturday night, they met at some of their houses, to repeat the last Lord's Day's sermon, and to pray and prepare themselves for the day following. Once in a few weeks, there was a day of humiliation kept, upon one particular occasion or another. Once in a few weeks, every religious woman that was safely delivered, instead of the old gossippings, if she were able, kept a day of thanksgiving with some of her neighbours about her, praising God and singing psalms and soberly feasting together. Two days every week he and his assistant took



fourteen families between them for private catechising and conference . . . . His whole afternoons on Mondays and Tuesdays were this way employed. Every first Wednesday of the month he had a meeting for parish discipline; and every first Thursday of the month was a meeting held of neighbouring ministers for discipline and disputation; in which disputations he was generally moderator, taking pains to prepare a written determination of the question to be debated.'

That the pulpit oratory of the Commonwealth period was acceptable to the congregations we know from records of the delight which the people found in listening to the discourses of their preachers: that the best of it was of a high order of ecclesiastical eloquence we learn from the printed sermons of Baxter, Fuller, Howe, and other eminent divines who were silenced at the Restoration, or continued to be popular preachers under episcopal government. But the Cavaliers of the seventeenth and the high churchmen of the following century, delighted to exaggerate the grotesque extravagance of a few indiscreet pulpiteers of the puritan churches, and to represent that they were fair specimens of the puritan school. Dr. Walker tells with glee and derision, 'There was a sermon licensed and printed in 1645, in which is this triumph: "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious, and his mercy endureth for ever; who remembered us at Nazeby, for his mercy endureth for ever; who remembered us in Pembroke-shire, for his mercy, &c.; who remembered us at Lincoln, for his mercy, &c.; who remembered us at Bristol, for his mercy, &c." "Honourable patriots, Christ is gone out with his triumphing army, conquering and to conquer: and if you want arms, or money, or horse for their accommodation, God is the great Landlord of Heaven and earth. Art thou then God's tenants? and dost owe Him knight's service and plough service: and doth He want thine horse and shall He not have it?" saith Mr. Teesdale to the Commons.'

In the same spirit describing the oratory of the typical assembly-man, Sir John Birkenhead wrote: 'To do him right, commonly he wears a pair of good lungs, whereby he turns the church into a belfry: for his clapper makes such a din, that ye cannot hear the cymbals for the tinkling. If his pulpit be

large, he walks his round, and speaks as from a garrison; his own neck is palisaded with a ruff. When he first enters his prayer before sermon, he winks and gasps, and gasps and winks, as if he prepared to preach in another world. He seems in a slumber, then in a dream, then rambles awhile, at last he sounds forth, and then throws so much dirt and nonsense towards heaven, as he durst not offer to a member of parliament. Now, because Scripture bids him not to curse the king in his thought, he does it in his pulpit, by word of mouth; though Heaven strike him dumb in the act, as it did Hill at Cambridge, who, while he prayed, "Depose him, O Lord, who would depose us," was made the dumb devil.'

## CHAPTER VII.

### EPISCOPALIANS UNDER THE PROTECTOR.

IF the number of the clergy ejected by the Parliamentary Committees be computed at fifteen hundred, I am disposed to think it would not be greatly understated. Computed at anything over two thousand it would be exaggerated. The great majority of the Commonwealth ministers were divines who, like Baxter, had received ordination from the bishops; and of this large body of episcopally ordained clergy an overwhelming majority were strongly attached to prelatic rule, and, throughout the period of its abeyance, longed for its revival no less fervently than the Catholic party in Edward the Sixth's priesthood longed for the re-establishment of the Papal doctrines and system. Of the clergy who entered the sacred ministry between the abolition of Prelacy and its re-establishment after the Restoration, under the ascendancy of the Assemblers or the subsequent regime of the triers, many, like Bishop Bull and Bishop Stillingfleet,\* in addition to the credentials openly conferred upon them, received clandestine ordination from the ejected prelates, who continued, after their deposition, to discharge privately the functions of the Episco-

\* 'Here' (*i. e.* at Sutton), says Stillingfleet's biographer (1735), 'therefore, he first took upon him the charge of a parish, and which ought not to be forgotten, he did not climb up by the way of those days of confusion and disorder, but entered at the right door by means of episcopal ordination. For he had well considered who they were that our Saviour had commissioned to ordain labourers for His vineyard, as he professes himself (Pref. to his Ordination Sermon at St. Peter's) he even thus received episcopal orders, and followed the directions of an excellent bishop of our church, the truly pious and reverend Dr. Brownrigg, the ejected bishop of Exon. For by him it was that Mr. Stillingfleet was separated to the work of the ministry.'

pace for the benefit of the depressed church, and the satisfaction of the cavalier nobility and gentry. As to the number of the young clergy who thus received Episcopal ordination in secret violation of law, which they regarded as in no way binding on themselves, it is impossible either to speak positively or make any plausible conjecture; but it certainly was not small in the earlier days of the Commonwealth, before the ranks of the dispossessed prelates had been reduced by death, and whilst the bishops retained the bodily vigour and zeal requisite for so painful and hazardous a performance of their duty.

On the termination of the civil contest, when Parliament had re-established discipline in the universities, and had no immediate cause to fear the opposition of the Royalists, there was no disposition on the part of the authorities to deal harshly with the Episcopalians. Those of the clergy who had been shut up in jails or floating prisons were liberated; and no fresh steps were taken to apprehend or harass the divines who had exerted themselves conspicuously in the king's behalf. Like the ministers ejected in 1662, the dispossessed clergy bestirred themselves to make the best of adverse circumstances. Many of them found entertainment in the houses of the Cavalier aristocracy and gentry, and repaid the hospitality of their patrons by acting as private chaplains, tutors, secretaries, land-stewards. The former dignitaries of disestablished cathedrals and deprived incumbents were secured from absolute penury by the small and often irregularly-paid pensions allotted to them by Parliament, but they usually had other means of subsistence, apart from the contributions of the wealthy laymen of their party. The expelled bishops in many cases received allowances from the public purse. Some of the silenced hierarchy applied for the means of maintaining their families to agriculture, commerce, petty trade; others became authors by profession and political agents in the paid service of employers plotting for the restoration of monarchy. But a considerable proportion of the scandalous, or so-called scandalous, divines, after losing their preferments, endured privations on which, even at this distance of time, it is impossible to reflect without lively regret. The most luckless of them died the slow death of the starvation which is not called starvation; and their widows and children were left to swell

that mass of clerical misery which resulted in our modern system of Life Assurance.

No long time elapsed after the Parliamentary visitation of Oxford, ere a considerable proportion of the expelled Royalist clergy and scholars returned to the university; where, under the government of the Puritans, learning and discipline flourished, to the keen chagrin of the Cavaliers, in a manner that contrasted strongly against their decay during Charles's reign. The number of students steadily increased, and their general zeal for learning bore fruits which even Clarendon was compelled to recognise. 'It might,' he says, after noticing the Parliamentary visitation of Oxford, 'reasonably be concluded, that this wild and barbarous depopulation would extirpate all that learning, religion, and loyalty, which had so eminently flourished there; and that the succeeding ill-husbandry and unskilful cultivation would have made it fruitful in Ignorance, Profanation, Atheism, and Rebellion; but, by God's wonderful blessing, the goodness and richness of that soil could not be made barren by all that stupidity and ignorance. It choked the weeds, and would not suffer the poisonous seeds, which were sown with industry enough, to spring up; but after several tyrannical governments, mutually succeeding each other, and with the same malice and perverseness endeavoured to extinguish all good literature and allegiance, it yielded a harvest of extraordinary good and sound knowledge in all parts of learning; and many who were wickedly introduced, applied themselves to the study of good learning, and the practice of virtue, and had inclination to that duty and obedience which they had never been taught; so that when it pleased God to bring King Charles II. back to the throne, he found that university (not to undervalue the other, which had nobly likewise rejected the ill infusions which had been industriously poured into it) abounding in excellent learning, and devoted to duty and obedience, little inferior to what it was before its desolation; which is a lively instance of God's mercy and purpose, for ever so to provide for his church, that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'

Whilst learning flourished in the universities under the Commonwealth, the Cavalier clergy and scholars found shelter in those ancient seminaries of the Church; but it was at Oxford

—the last city in which the martyr-king had maintained courtly splendour and a show of regal power—the place which had been his chief stronghold and the seat of his government during the war, and whither the brave men and fair women of the cavalier party had congregated in brilliant force whilst the civil struggle was in progress—that the wealthier of the silenced ecclesiastics and disguised Episcopalian clergy assembled in greater number than at any other spot in the kingdom. Coffee-houses\* came into fashion at Oxford during the Commonwealth: and, at the coffee-rooms frequented by the loyal scholars, Cromwell was denounced, and the king's health drunk in language of which the Protector was duly informed, though he prudently feigned to know nothing about it. At Oxford the services of church † were secretly

\* 'The first coffee-house in Oxford was opened in the year 1650, by Jacob, a Jew, at the Angel, in the parish of St. Peter in the East; and there it was by some, who delighted in novelties, drunk. When he left Oxford, he sold it in old Southampton Buildings in Holborne, neare London, and was living there 1671. In the year 1654 Cirenes Jobson, a Jew and Jacobite, borne near Mount Libanus, sold coffey in Oxon, in the houses between Edmund Hall and Queen's College Corner. In this year (1655) Arth. Tillyard, apothecary and great Royalist, sold coffey publicly in his house against All Souls' Coll. He was encouraged so to do by some Royalists now living in Oxon, and by others, who esteemed themselves either virtuosi or wits: of which the chiefest number were of Alls. Coll., as Peter Pett, Thom. Millington, Tim. Baldwin, Christopher Wren, George Castle, Will. Bull, &c. There were others also, as Joh. Lampshire, a physician, lately ejected from New College, who was sometimes the natural droll of the company; the two Wrens, sojourned in Oxon, Matthew and Thomas Wren, sons of Dr. Wren, bishop of Ely, &c. This coffey-house continued till his majestie's return, and after; and then they became more frequent, and had an excise set upon coffey.'  
—ANTHONY A WOOD.

† In his memoir of John Fell, bishop of Oxford, Salmon says:—'He was the son of Dr. Samuel Fell, the suffering dean of Christ Church, born at Sunningwell, near Abingdon, in Berks, or at Longworth, educated chiefly at the Free-school of Tame, in Oxfordshire, made student of Christ Church at eleven years old; anno 1636 he took degrees in arts, that of master in 1643; carried arms for the king in the garrison of Oxford, and was afterwards an ensign. He was in orders when the Visitation of 1648 dispossessed him of his studentship. He kept still in Oxford till the Restoration, sometimes in the lodgings of his brother-in-law, Mr. Thomas Willis, in Canterbury Quadrangle; sometimes at his house against Merton College Church. Here he performed his office of a priest amongst the distressed loyalists who came to him. On the Restoration he was installed Canon of Christ Church, in the room of Ralph Button, ejected; was created Doctor of Divinity, Chaplain in Ordinary to the King, and Dean of Christ Church. In the deanery he succeeded Dr. Morley, who had but just time to restore the surviving members ejected 1649.'

performed in college-rooms by clergymen robed in surplices; and from Oxford, whilst Puritanism ruled in the schools, proceeded the influences which kept alive the hopes of the Episcopalian clergy throughout the land.

Of the Cavalier clergy and scholars, who resided chiefly or frequently at Oxford in the interval between Charles the First's death and his son's return from the Continent, several were habitual guests at Minster Lovel, and subsequently at Lacies Court, Abingdon, where Peter Heylyn, notwithstanding his loss of lucrative preferment and the exaction of the Goldsmiths' Hall commissioners, remained so rich a man that he could support his family with dignity, and entertain liberally his numerous Cavalier acquaintance who resided in or near Oxford. 'And yet,' says Heylyn's biographer, 'He had several diversions by company, which continually resorted to his house; for having (God be thanked) his temporal estate cleared from sequestration, by his composition with the commissioners at Goldsmiths' Hall, and this estate which he farmed besides, he was able to keep a good house, and relieve his poor brethren, as himself had found relief from others' charity. Thus his house was the sanctuary of sequestered men, turned out of their livings, and of several ejected fellows out of Oxford, more particularly of some worthy persons which I can name, as Dr. Allibone, Mr. Levite, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Ashwell, who would stay for two or three months at his house, or any other acquaintance that were suffering men, he cheerfully received them, and with a hearty welcome might tarry as long as they pleased. . . . In the year 1633, he removed to Lacies Court in Abingdon, which seat he bought for the pleasantness of its situation, standing next the fields, and not distant above five miles from Oxford, where he might be furnished with books at his pleasure, either from the booksellers' shops or the Bodleian Library.'

Throughout the Commonwealth the Episcopalian clergy were treated by the successive authorities with as much toleration as was deemed consistent with the safety of the state and the stability of government. So long as they conformed outwardly to the requirements of power, or rather so long as they did not openly defy it, they were allowed a measure of freedom which

the enthusiastic prelatists never thought of exhibiting to opponents. Forbidden to read the Book of Common Prayer to their congregations, they repeated its forms by heart with as much closeness as their hearers would permit. It was known that they used the prohibited services in their own houses, at the bedsides of their loyal parishioners, at the private baptisms of the children of Cavalier gentry; but so long as they refrained from open defiance of public law and local opinion, they were not punished for disobedience. Even of the more violent prelatistical clergy, whose political action had caused their ejection from preferments, several were allowed to retain benefices, rich enough to keep them in comfort. Hacket, though he had repeatedly provoked the resentment of Parliament, was suffered to reside on his living of Cheam. Sanderson lost his Regius Professorship, but continued to hold his rural benefice of Boothby Pannell, in Lincolnshire, where, says Dr. Calamy, he 'lived unmolested after the wars, tho' he connived at the parishioners following their sports on the Lord's Day, as formerly, when they had a wicked license for it.' The writer adds, 'The same person tells me, he was present in 1656, when the doctor married a couple by the Common Prayer Book, read the confession, and absolution &c., many of the gentry being present.' Though it was not even suspected that he was the author of the *Icôn Basilikè*, Gauden was known to have been a violent loyalist and writer against the Parliament; and yet he was suffered to continue in possession of the valuable living of Bocking, in Essex.

Cromwell's policy towards the Episcopalians affords a parallel to the policy which Elizabeth, in the earlier years of her reign, observed to the Catholics. From the moment when he first rose to the chief power till the stormless and serene \* hour

\* The story of Cromwell expiring at a moment when nature was convulsed by a storm of indescribable violence, is one of those picturesque fictions which it is almost impossible to discredit, after they have attained universal acceptance as veracious history. Most probably, by the majority of readers, this graphic and highly sensational untruth will be as firmly believed in coming, as it has been in past, time. It is, however, certain that no hurricane was raging over London when the Protector's soul was liberated from his body. Says Anthony à Wood in his 'Antobiography':—'A.D. 1658. Aug. 30, Monday, a terrible raging wind hapned, which did much hurt. Dennis Bond, a great Olivarian and Anti-



in which he breathed his last breath, the Protector was the consistent friend of religious toleration; and so far as the prelatie Royalists would allow him to do so, he gave them the full benefit of his generosity to all the various religious parties from whom he differed in opinion. Excepted from toleration by the letter of the law,\* the Episcopalians enjoyed by its lenient application the fullest practicable measure of tolerance. The use of the Common Prayer was forbidden even in private houses, but it was not the Protector's design to enforce the prohibition or to interfere with the private devotions of any Protestants who demeaned themselves with orderliness, and refrained from conspiring to upset his government. Conniving at the assemblies of Episcopalians who congregated for worship in meeting-rooms, he permitted Royalist preachers—who had either been bishops under the late king, or were known expectants of mitres on the

monarchist, died on that day, and then the devil took Bond for Oliver's appearance. Sept. 3. Oliver Cromwell, the Protector, died. This I set downe, because some writers tell us that he was hurried away by the devil in the wind before mentioned. Sept. 6. Richard Cromwell, his son, was proclaimed protector at Oxon, at the usual places where kings have been proclaimed. While he was proclaiming before S. Marie's church-dore' (at Oxford). 'the mayor, recorder, town-clerk, &c., accompanied by Col. Unton Croke and his troopers, were pelted with carrot and turnip-tops, by yong scholars and others who stood at a distance.' With respect to this storm Hearne says, 'Which they make to have happened upon Sept. 3, upon which day likewise the Earl of Clarendon (by mistake) fixes the wind.'

\* The Protector's religious policy was declared in the following three of the articles 'For the Government of the Commonwealth:—'Art. 35. That the Christian religion contained in the Scriptures be hold forth, and recommended as the public profession of the nations, and that as soon as may be, a provision less subject to contention, and more certain than the present, be made for the maintenance of ministers; and that till such provision be made, the present maintenance continue. Art. 36. That none be compelled to conform to the public religion by penalties or otherwise; but that endeavours be used to win them by sound doctrine, and the example of a good conversation. Art. 37. That such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, or discipline, publicly held forth, shall not be restrained from, but shall be protected in, the profession of the faith and exercise of their religion, so as they abuse not this liberty to the civil injury of others, and to the actual disturbance of the public peace on their parts: provided this liberty be not extended to Popery or Prelacy, or to such as under a profession of Christ hold forth and practise licentiousness.' The liberty, however, was, to a great degree, extended to Prelacy, and would have been still further extended to it had the Prelatists acted prudently and quietly.

restoration of the exiled prince—to occupy pulpits in the capital. Such men as Hall (the future bishop of Chester) Wilde, Pearson, and Bishop Brownrigge recovered their liberty of preaching. Archbishop Usher was empowered to perform the duty of preacher at Lincoln's Inn; and other divines of less ability, but greater will and capacity to embarrass the government, found themselves free to instruct their flocks. That Cromwell did not consistently and fully carry out his liberal intentions to the bishops and their followers was due to their provocations and violence; and whatever severe measures he took for their humiliation and repression, were no consequences of spiritual intolerance, but steps taken in self-defence and for the preservation of order.

In his 'Panegyric Narrative of the life, sickness, and death of George, by Divine Providence, Lord Bishop of Derry,' Dr. Mossom gives us a glimpse of a Royalist divine's labours, and of an Episcopalian congregation under the Protectorate: 'Our first meeting was in the Fiery Furnace of the churches persecutions; (and of those things I may speak the more knowingly, *Quorum magna pars fui*, as having had a great share with him in those sufferings), though indeed such was the power of Divine Providence, restraining the fury of those flames, that they scorched not his garments, nor a hair of his head perished; notwithstanding he stood in the face of the then prevailing factions, and was daily threatened with surprise and imprisonment. For some years, he hovered, sometimes preaching in the country, and sometimes in the city, sometimes in private and sometimes in public, as he found opportunity offered to promote piety and persuade loyalty. At length Divine Providence receives the dove into the ark; an house is provided near Fleet Street in London, and in the house an ὑπερεξῆσον, an upper room, is prepared, after the manner of primitive devotion, which upper room becomes an oratory, fitted for the preaching of the word, and administering the sacraments, with constant use of the Publick Liturgy of the church. . . . And now the shepherd which kept this flock even in the midst of wolves, amidst all the variety of state-confusions, instructing, supporting, and encouraging, by precept, by pattern, by prayer,—it was Dr. George Wilde, afterwards by Divine Providence, Lord Bishop of Derry.'

## PART VI.—BEFORE AND AFTER THE RESTORATION.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### ICÔN BASILIKE.

FROM the date of Charles the First's execution till the fall of Richard Cromwell, various influences combined to strengthen the hands of the Royalists and prepare the nation for the recall of the exiled prince and the re-establishment of Episcopalian monarchy. Time softened the recollections of the errors and crimes of the martyred sovereign, the grievances of whose rule lost their appearance of enormity in proportion as death reduced the ranks, and years mitigated the resentments, of the individuals who had suffered most acutely from them. All the circumstances which favour the growth of political oppositions acted propitiously for the hopes of the Cavaliers. The high-handed justice which the Protector exhibited to the numerous sects and factions into which the country was divided, and the unvarying resoluteness with which he controlled the rival parties, created implacable enemies to his despotism in each of the several politico-religious combinations, whose intolerance of opposition and lust of authority would have been satisfied by nothing less than supreme sway. The very means by which he raised the nation's credit throughout Europe occasioned domestic discontents, more detrimental to his popularity than the brilliant successes of his rule were conducive to the stability of his government. Every successive year that witnessed an extension of his authority, aggravated the troubles

and irritations of the numerous and influential class of persons whose social prosperity, depending on the frivolous pleasures of the wealthy and dissipated, endured depression, almost amounting to extinction, from a *régime* which discountenanced luxurious tastes and put a firm rein on vicious prodigality. And whilst the country, year by year, saw less to condemn in the conduct of the late king, and more to fret against in the actions of his successors in the government, the Episcopalian clergy never ceased to agitate for the re-establishment of constitutional and prelatie monarchy in the person of the prince whom they regarded as the lawful king of Great Britain.

But of all the numerous influences which operated in behalf of the House of Stuart, none was more fruitful in result than a little book which emanated from the pen of a comparatively obscure Essex clergyman at a time when the fortunes of the royal family appeared to many observers to have fallen irrecoverably. Charles was a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, and his troublous career was fast approaching its hideous end, when Dr. John Gauden—a clerical politician, who sided with the ecclesiastical Reformers at the opening of the Long Parliament, who would fain have sat in the Assembly to which he just missed an invitation, and who was not slow to seek Oliver Cromwell's favour as soon as the Protector's star was in the ascendant—conceived the daring project of rousing the nation's sympathy for the captive king by putting forth a comprehensive picture of his sufferings and actions, which, whilst palliating all the worst features of his misrule with specious apologies, should exhibit him to the admiring world as a model of Christian dignity, gentleness, and rectitude. The work should be in the form of an autobiographic memoir, touching lightly on the principal events of the late troubles, and comprising a series of prayerful utterances, which readers should be induced to receive as supplications which the injured monarch had actually poured forth at the footstool of Omnipotence. If a spurious memoir of this singular design could be widely circulated, it would prove an admirable instrument for convincing the king's subjects that, instead of being the relentless tyrant and odious dissembler which his enemies declared him to be, he was an exceptionally generous, merciful, and conscientious man,—capable of erring

through misapprehension, or inadvertence, or defective judgment, but utterly incapable of any sin against human or Divine law that would justify his subjects in withdrawing their affection and confidence from him.

When all the circumstances of the case are taken into consideration, it is sufficiently astonishing that a private clergyman, of no great importance in his profession or in society, having no great weight with the Royalist leaders, and no personal knowledge whatever of the sovereign, should have imagined himself qualified to produce a portrait of the monarch's character, a presentment of his most secret thoughts, a personal apology for his conduct at each of the most critical stages of his conflict with the people. But the matter becomes less marvellous when a survey is taken of the literary conditions and fashions of the revolutionary period. The excitements and requirements of society during the progress of the civil war had stimulated in an unprecedented manner the inventiveness of the political scribes, whose efforts to disseminate true and false intelligence amongst the adherents of their respective parties resulted in a hasty and inordinately vicious literature, which in due course gave birth to modern journalism. It was the period of 'Diurnals' and 'Mercuries'—printed newsletters, abounding with such falsifications of truth, or impudent inventions, as appeared likely to serve the ends of the parties in whose service the Diurnalists plied their unscrupulous, and too often venal, pens. It was an age of spurious manifestoes, and proclamations of which the proclaimers had never authorised a line. The producers of this mendacious literature did things which, in calmer times, they would not have dared even to imagine; and of them all, the boldest and most successful was John Gauden, minister of Bocking, Essex, under the Puritans,—successively Bishop of Exeter and Bishop of Worcester, under Charles the Second. A restless, keen-witted, ambitious man, he had sided with the Parliamentarians whilst it seemed safe to co-operate with them and till they began to suspect his honesty. After the Parliament had shown its determination to proceed to extremities against the king, the minister of Bocking, finding himself avoided by the Assemblers, became an enthusiastic monarchist, and carrying out his design for a spurious auto-

biography of the king, rendered to the royal cause a service the value of which it is impossible to overrate.

Unfamiliar though he was with courts, and totally wanting in personal knowledge of the king, Gauden was admirably qualified to perform the daring and delicate task which he accomplished with such consummate tact and ability. Had he been reared in the atmosphere and under the traditions of nobility, he could not have displayed that considerateness for popular sentiment, that politic respect for what may be termed fireside prejudices, which contributed largely to the success of his fabrication. Personal acquaintanceship with Charles would have only fettered the hand and weakened the nerve of the clever apologist. Far more serviceable to the scribe, than any intimacy with the sovereign could have been, was his exact knowledge of the intelligence and temper of Royalists and moderate Parliamentarians. He knew precisely what the homely cavalier squire, the royalist parson, the conservative yeoman, delighted to think of the unfortunate king,—what excuses for his errors, what allowances for his indiscretions, what compassionate sentiments for his fallen estate, were current arguments in the homes of ordinary English folk. And working on this knowledge, he produced a piece of literary portraiture which accorded precisely with their most favourable conceptions of their sovereign's character, and flattered their self-love by showing that what they had always declared of their monarch was exactly what he professed of himself. Commencing with the calling of the Long Parliament, and closing with the royal captive's meditations in Carisbrook Castle, the review made the king say, think, feel, exactly what his most judicious supporters had endeavoured to believe that he must have said, thought, felt, at each of the critical occasions brought under consideration. When the work had been completed, it was submitted to Charles, who, after conquering his repugnance to take part in a scheme that was alike hypocritical and ignoble, consented to adopt the book as his own justificatory appeal to the loyalty of his people. The views ascribed to him were agreeable to his own views of his past conduct; the estimate of his character was flattering to his self-esteem, and congruent with his notions of personal dignity; the prayers put upon his lips were either just such

supplications as he had uttered or ought to have uttered. So the royal leave was given for the publication of the spurious production.

Had the *Icôn Basilike* appeared without delay, it would probably have saved Charles's life, though it is scarcely possible that it would have restored him to his throne; but published immediately after his death, it caused a sensation that had no precedent in literary annals, and was a chief influence in the many forces that put the crown on his son's head. In addition to all the interest which belongs to works by royal authors, it possessed the charm and solemn authority of the last testament deliberately uttered on the grave's brink by a monarch whose violent death had filled men's hearts with horror and compassion. In a single year it passed through fifty editions. Translators reproduced it in every European tongue; and whilst it caused the wide world to marvel at the piety, the moderation, the grandeur of the murdered prince, it made thousands of Englishmen, who had hitherto been on the side of the Parliament, relent towards the miserable monarch, and entertain repugnance for his murderers. 'It is not easy,' says Hume, 'to conceive the general compassion excited towards the king by the publishing, at so critical a juncture, a work so full of piety, meekness, and humanity. Many have not scrupled to ascribe to that book the subsequent restoration of the royal family. Milton compares its effects to those which were wrought on the tumultuous Romans by Antony's reading to them the will of Cæsar.' A highly critical public, put on its guard against the pretensions of the work, would doubtless have detected its clerical source, in the prominence which it gives to the affairs of the Church, to the king's admiration of episcopacy, and to his commiseration for the sufferings of his loyal clergy. But the readers who went mad about the *Icôn* were not critical.

So long as the Commonwealth endured, Gauden kept his authorship of the '*Icôn Basilike*' a profound secret to himself and the few faithful persons who were cognisant of its history. That the secret was withheld from the world is not wonderful, for every sharer in it was strongly concerned in preserving to the king's memory and cause the credit which they had derived

from the successful fraud. Dr. Wordsworth, Master of Trinity, Cambridge—who went to the grave stoutly declaring in the teeth of conclusive evidence that Bishop Gauden was a shameless cheat, and that Charles was the actual author of the spurious memoir—maintained that, if Gauden had actually composed the work, he would have revealed the fact to Cromwell at the time when he sought to ingratiate himself with the Protector. But Gauden was too prudent a man of the world to sell for a good living to Cromwell the intelligence which, if preserved from public knowledge, would earn him a mitre on the re-establishment of the Stuart dynasty. That Cromwell would have gladly availed himself of the information to damage the Royalists, no one can question; that he would have rewarded Gauden liberally for the revelation, is not impossible; though it is far more probable that the Protector would have conceived repugnance to and abhorrence of the crafty priest and false scribe, whose successful forgery had done the Stuarts a service which no exposure of the forger could undo. That Milton—one of the few critical readers of the ‘*Icôn*,’ and one of the first impugnors of its authenticity—would have rubbed his hands with glee on learning that Charles Stuart’s book was the fabrication of a pamphleteering parson, is certain. It is moreover credible that, had Gauden been satisfied of the stability of Oliver’s government, and been hopeful that in case of the Protector’s death there would be no restoration of the Stuarts, he would have sold his secret to the Cromwellian party. But like the majority of sagacious Englishmen, he foresaw the restoration, and believed that it would occur much sooner than 1660. Under these circumstances, Gauden was under no temptation to perpetrate a folly which the Royalists on their return to power would have resented as an act of perfidy to their party, and have punished as an abominable crime against their king.\*

\* A literary controversy ceases to be interesting so soon as its questions have been conclusively answered: protracted after its reasonable termination, it becomes tedious; but Dr. Wordsworth’s tracts in defence of King Charles’s title to the authorship of the ‘*Icôn Basilike*,’ written after the memoir had been conclusively shown to be the work of Bishop Gauden’s pen, deserve attention, as illustrations of the difficulty which vigorous minds may experience in freeing themselves from erroneous views, and as demonstrations how a strong



On the Restoration, Gauden was rewarded with a mitre. Apart from his authorship of the 'Icôn,' he had rendered the Stuarts no service which would not have been amply repaid by the gift of a good living, a prebendal stall, or a poor deanery. As it was, on the recommendation of those who knew his great title to consideration, he was appointed to the impoverished bishopric of Exeter,—at that time failing to yield its occupant a greater income than six or seven hundred pounds a-year. Gauden had been assured that the income would not be less than 1000*l.* a-year; but on reaching his diocese he found the episcopal palace unfit for habitation, and was assured that the see would not give a larger revenue than 500*l.* a-year. He was cruelly disappointed, and furious at the slight put upon him. His pen had restored the monarchy and re-established the Church; and now, in the distribution of preferments, whilst men who had rendered the royal cause no important service were loaded with wealth and honour, he was banished to a district remote from the capital, and told to support himself as he best could on a beggarly 500*l.* a-year. Nothing in clerical

and subtle intellect may exhibit admirable ingenuity in defending a hopeless cause, and yet lack the power to discern the hopelessness of the cause and the worthlessness of the defence. Of Dr. Wordsworth's fairness, a good specimen is afforded in his frank and full statement of the following part of Gauden's case:—'But again, to whom, I ask, did Gauden fearlessly prefer this extraordinary claim? To those very individuals who, of all men that can be thought of, were the best qualified, and the most bound in duty to examine into, and to denounce the detection of his claim, if it were not well grounded—to the king's two sons; to the Earl of Clarendon, the great, the good, the faithful, the wise, and deeply attached minister of the martyred king; and to the Earl of Bristol: perhaps also, in some degree, to Sir Edward Nicholas,—men, in ability and opportunities for the discovery of the truth in this question, very little, if at all, inferior to Clarendon himself. Again, to whom did Gauden refer as vouchers of what he said? Were his pretensions involved in mysticism and obscurity, as would befit a matter that could not bear the light, but must be kept huddled in a corner? He appeals to Duppa, the tutor of King Charles the Second, the faithful attendant and counsellor of King Charles the First—him, with whom that prince had, perhaps, more intercourse during his troubles than with any other bishop; to Morley; and, lastly, to the good and truly noble Marquess of Hertford. This third witness, indeed, was recently dead; but he had left friends behind him, of whom we are to suppose inquiries might be made, and who could hardly fail to know his sentiments and declarations on a subject which had been, to an extraordinary degree, the topic of every tongue and matter of interest to all hearts. Surely the whole of this can denote nothing but the confidence of truth. What further could have been done that Gauden has neglected? . . . Put, it is not

biography is at the same time more droll and revolting than the alternate violence and meanness, the covert menaces and the wheedling entreaties, with which he wrote to Clarendon—by turns suing for and demanding more honour, more power, more money. He had a wife and children,—for their sakes he implored for something better than the barren see of Exeter. He was master of a great secret, the revelation of which might even yet do the King irreparable mischief; and in consideration of his fidelity he must have more money.\*

In one of his letters to Lord Clarendon, Bishop Gauden wrote from Exeter thus:—‘All I desire is an augment of 500*l.* per annum, yf it cannot bee at present had in a commendam; yet possible the King’s favour to me will not grudg mee this pension out of the first-fruits and tenths of this diocesse, till I bee removed or otherwayes provided for; nor will your Lordship

merely the *wickedness* of Gauden, if his claim were a false one. Can anything, upon *that* supposition, be equal to its *folly*? Is it possible that so much senseless fatuity and determined dishonesty should meet in the same individual? To what incredible suppositions are we not reduced, if his claim was not true? How was it possible that he should escape detection? Did he hope that Clarendon would never inquire of Duppa, or of Morley? Did he expect to gain his point before their answers could arrive? And after, would he be content to make up his choice for the bad part, and care nothing about the rest? Or, are we to suppose that, in making this claim, he was wholly abandoned by all self-possession and self-control; morally and intellectually deranged; reason and conscience, for the time being, utterly overwhelmed and lost, through the furious passions of pride, envy, avarice, and ambition?’ And yet, in the face of these facts; in spite of the recognition of Gauden’s claim by those who must have known its falseness if it were false; in spite of the bishopric which Gauden received from the crown in express recognition of his service; and in the total absence of positive testimony that Charles originated a single line of the book; Dr. Wordsworth comes to the conclusion that the bishop was the immeasurably wicked fool, which he must have been had he claimed the authorship of the ‘*Icon*’ without having written it. And the Doctor arrives at this conclusion on the strength of a number of wild conjectures, trivial hypotheses, verbal discrepancies, and unimportant contradictions; the like of which might be brought together by any ingenious casuist to prove that Walter Scott never wrote a line of the ‘*Waverley Novels*.’

\* The clergy of post-restoration times were bold beggars for preferment, but I know of none more vehement, coarse, and grasping, than the prelate who said, ‘Give me a better bishopric for having fabricated and uttered a stupendous political lie!’ Here is a characteristic story of clergymen running after preferment, told by the biographer of ‘The Right Honorable and Right Reverend Dr. Henry Compton, late Lord Bishop of London,’ the prelate who, before entering the clerical order of the church militant, had been a cornet in a cavalry regiment.

startle at this motion, or wave the presenting it to hys Majesty, yf you please to consider the pretentions I may have beyond any of my calling, not as to merit but duty performed to the Royall Family; true I once presumed your Lordship had fully known that arcanum, for soe Dr. Morley told mee at the King's first coming, when he assured mee the greatnes of that service was such, that I might have any preferment I desired. This consciousness of your Lordship (as I supposed) and Dr. Morley made mee confident my affaires would be carried on to some proportion of what I had done, and he thought deserved. Hence my silence of it to your Lordship; as to the King and Duke of York, whom before I came away, I acquainted with it, when I saw myselfe not so much considered in my present disposure as I did hope I should have beene; what sense their royall goodnes hath of it is best to be expressed by themselves, nor doe I doubt but I shall by your Lordship's favour find the fruits as to some-

'There is a story,' says the biographer, 'which I have heard pretty well attested, though I will not avouch for it, that his lordship's brother, Sir Francis Compton, lieutenant-collonel to Oxford's regiment, quartering for some time in the country of Hertford, within the dioecess of London, and having contracted an esteem for a neighbouring clergyman, who sometime kept him company; it happened that another minister thereabouts was taken so dangerously ill, that there was no hope of his recovery. He was possessed of a good living, upon which his neighbour immediately had his eye, and applying to Sir Francis for a letter in his behalf to the bishop, he readily granted it, and heartily recommended him to his lordship. The breath was no sooner out of the good man's body but he rid away for London, put up his horse, and going to a coffee-house in Aldersgate Street, near London House, to refresh himself before he went to wait upon my lord bishop, he there found a clergyman, to whom in discourse he discovered where he was going, and about what affair; who, thereupon, taking his leave, immediately went to the bishop, and putting him in mind of former promises, that he should have the first living, worth his acceptance, that became vacant, he told his lordship such an one was so. The good bishop immediately gave him his word he should have it. He was no sooner gone, but the other clergyman came with Sir Francis's letter. When the bishop had read it, he told him he was heartily sorry he could not comply with his brother's recommendation in his behalf, and the more because it was the first time that he had asked such a favour of him, for he had already disposed of the living. The clergyman was much surprised, and telling his lordship "that the man was but that minute dead, when he rid away for London with all the expedition he could; and that he tarried nowhere but for a very short space at a coffee-house hard by to refresh himself, where there was a clergyman to whom he told the business he was upon:" the bishop advised him to keep his own counsel better for the future, for he had given the living to that very person.'

thing extraordinary, since the service was soe; not as to what was known to the world under my name, in order to vindicate the Crowne and the Church, but what goes under the late blessed King's name, the *Εἰκων*, or Portraiture of hys Majesty, in hys solitudes and sufferings. This book and *figure was wholly and only my invention*, making, and design, in order to vindicate the King's wisdome, honor and piety. My wife, indeed, was conscious to it, and had a hand in disguising the letters of that copy which I sent to the King in the Isle of Wight, by the favour of the late Marquise of Hertford, which was delivered to the King by the now Bishop of Winchester; hys Majesty graciously accepted, owned and adopted it as hys sense and genius; not only with great approbation, but admiration; hee kept it with hym, and though his cruel murderers went on to perfect hys martyrdome, yet God preserved and prospered this book to revive hys honor and redeeme hys Majesty's name from that grave of contempt and abhorrence and infamy, in which they agreed to bury hym. When it came out, just upon the King's death: Good God! what shame, rage, and despite filled hys murderers! What comfort hys friends! How many enemies did it convert! How many hearts did it mollify and melt! What devotions it rayed to hys posterity, as children of such a father! What preparations it made in all men's minds for this happy restouration, and which I hope shall not prove my affliction! In a word, it was an army, and did vanquish more than any sword could. My Lord, every good subject conceived hopes of restouration; meditated reveng, and reparation; your Lordship and all good subjects with hys Majesty enjoy the reall and now ripe fruits of that plant; O let mee not wither! who was the author, and ventured wife, children, estate, liberty, life, and all but my soule, in soe great an achievement, which hath filled England, and all the world, with the glory of it. I did lately present my faith in it to the Duke of York, and by hym to the King: both of them were pleased to give me credit and owne it as a rare service in those horrors of times. Thus I played this best card in my hand something too late; else I might have sped as well as Dr. Reynolds and some others; but I did not lay it as a ground of ambition, nor use it as a ladder, thinking myselfe secure in the just valed

of Dr. Morley, who I was sure knew it, and told me your Lordship did soe too; who I believe intended mee something at least competent, though less convenient in this preferment. All that I desire is that your Lordship would make that good, which I think you designed.'

However disgusted and wearied they may have been by Gauden's importunities, Charles the Second, the Duke of York, and Clarendon could not deny that he had strong claims on the crown. The restored king was so disposed to satisfy the aggrieved suitor that on Bishop Duppa's death he actually promised him the bishopric of Winchester; but Clarendon, who bore the literary prelate no good will, intervened between him and the king's munificent purpose, so that Gauden had the mortification of seeing Dr. Morley advanced to Winchester, whilst he was only promoted to the inferior see of Worcester, vacated by Morley. His translation from Exeter to Worcester was a great change for the better; but he had possessed the richer see barely half-a-year, when he died—as his enemies avowed, of a heart broken by mortification at missing his promised preferment to Winchester.

## · CHAPTER II.

## THE CHURCH POLITICAL.

THE romantic portraiture of Charles the First, which was ‘wholy and only the invention, making, and design’ of a literary clergyman who knew the king only by report, produced a greater effect on the fortunes of England than any single piece of veritable history wrought by a conscientious pen. It trained our forefathers to regard the insolent, scornful, stammering Stuart as a man of princely nature and incomparable goodness, whose worst fault was excessive zeal for the religious welfare of his subjects, and whose life had been ‘taken away by the hands of bloody and cruel men.’ The imaginary portrait has been reproduced as an exactly truthful picture by every writer on the troubles of England in the seventeenth century, who has regarded Charles’s policy with the slightest degree of approbation; and its influence is discernible in the pages of the comparatively few historians who have held up his conduct to reprobation, and vindicated the patriotism and dutifulness of his destroyers.

Had Protestantism permitted the creation of a new saint, Charles would unquestionably have been canonized. In her inability to glorify him as Saint Charles, the Church lost no time in declaring him a martyr for the Christian faith: and the Book of Common Prayer was forthwith enriched with a special service to his honour, which applied to the faulty man, some of the most musical and pathetic passages of Holy Writ, that were prophetic of the sufferings and sacrifice of the Blessed Saviour. Though it is but the other day that we removed that form from the collection of beautiful services, which it had disfigured for two centuries, it seems almost incredible that the pious rulers

of the re-established Church were so blinded by political passion as not to see the shocking and hurtful nature of the extravagant adulation which it offered to the memory of an imperfect king. Nor is it less difficult to realize the intellectual and moral condition of the devout laity of the seventeenth century, who found nothing impious in the theory of divine government, which taught them to regard Charles's death as an act of sacred justice, whereby the heavily displeased God had punished a wicked people, and at the same time as a national crime for which the Deity was so likely to visit again and again with terrible chastisements the descendants of its perpetrators, and the descendants of all Englishmen contemporary with its perpetrators, that it behoved them on each anniversary of the day of blood to pray passionately: 'But, O gracious God, when thou makest inquisition for blood, lay not the guilt of this innocent blood (the shedding whereof nothing but the blood of thy Son can expiate), lay it not to the charge of the people of this land: nor let it ever be required of us, or our posterity.'

Thirty years had not passed since the authoritative publication of this penitential avowal of the unspeakable wickedness of the rebellion which deprived Charles of his crown and life, when another rebellion, in which the nobles and clergy of the land co-operated no less cordially than men of inferior degree, drove from our land the son of the martyred sovereign who, just forty years earlier, had fallen before 'the unnatural rebellion, usurpation, and tyranny of ungodly and cruel men.' To reconcile their consciences to their departure from the principles of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance, the chief promoters of and participators in this second rebellion devised an ingenious fiction that James the Second had abdicated his throne, and that in consequence of his voluntary retirement from the kingly office they were free, and indeed in duty bound, to look out for another ruler, to whom they might swear and render allegiance 'until the times should alter.' So far as it contributed to the success of the revolution, this baseless assumption that the monarch had voluntarily relinquished his office may be commended as a justifiable and politic effort of imagination. It served the purpose of the revolutionists with thousands of simple folk who, but for the seasonable use of some such specious piece

of political cant, would have remained obstinately faithful to the martyred king's son—who had not thought of withdrawing even from his capital until the revolution was an accomplished fact: who, on retiring from the ground where he could not for the moment remain, declared by act and word that his withdrawal was no abdication: and who, far from affording the slightest countenance to the pleasant fiction of an abdication and a vacant throne, resisted by arms the revolution in which he was assumed to have acquiesced. The second rebellion succeeded: and forthwith the Church, retaining the service of humiliation for Charles the First's martyrdom and the service of thanksgiving for the restoration of the house of Stuart, ordered the people to give thanks once a year in the churches for the revolution which, by bringing in His Majesty King William, had wrought the 'deliverance of our Church and Nation from Popish tyranny and arbitrary power.'

In accordance with the spirit which caused our ancestors to discover a resemblance between Charles the First and the Sacred Redeemer of the human race, and animated them to denounce the iniquity of the rebellion which resulted in the Stuart's dethronement and death, the Restoration pulpits resounded with the servile doctrines of Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance,—those doctrines the enunciation of which was powerless alike to save Charles's head from the axe, and secure to James the allegiance of his alarmed and incensed subjects. By Charles the First Dr. Manwaring had been rewarded with a bishopric for preaching that 'the king is not bound to observe the laws of the realm concerning his subjects' rights and liberties, but that his royal will and pleasure, in imposing taxes without consent of Parliament, doth oblige the subjects' conscience on pain of eternal damnation.' For the sermon, in which this declaration was made in the king's presence, Manwaring was sentenced by the House of Lords to pay a fine of a thousand pounds, to apologise publicly at the bars of both houses of parliament, and to endure imprisonment during the Lords' pleasure. The peers further declared that he was incapable of holding any ecclesiastical dignity. But to show his contempt for parliament, and to encourage other pulpiteers to imitate so excellent an example of clerical servility, Charles



lost no time in giving Dr. Manwaring a free pardon and a rich benefice, and in due course a bishopric. So soon as the Restoration had been effected, Manwaring's notions of a constitutional sovereign's right to do whatever he pleased with his subjects' persons and property were caught up and repeated by every glib hunter after preferment, who hoped to float into the higher places of the hierarchy on the waves of politico-religious prejudice and fashion.

The Caroline sermon in assertion of the sovereign's superiority to law, and in denial of the subject's right to resist the despotic excesses of a wicked monarch, has by this time become a clerical curiosity at which the general readers of this work will like to glance. As a young bachelor of arts, when it was the prevailing fashion to flatter Cromwell, Robert South had composed a Latin poem in glorification of the Protector who had just made peace with the Dutch ; but on the re-establishment of the Anglican Church, the young clergyman, who had received episcopal ordination in the year preceding that of Charles the Second's return, ranged himself with the high-church politicians, and preached Non-Resistance and Passive Obedience, as boldly and loudly as any rising pulpiter of the day. Preaching in London on the text, 'If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men,' he took occasion to say, 'Now the foundation of the lawfulness of war in all the forementioned cases is, because whatsoever a man has a lawful right to possess or enjoy, he has by consequence a right to use all those means which are absolutely necessary to the possession or enjoyment of that thing. You will say now, that, according to this doctrine, when the prince encroaches on his subjects' bodies, estates, or religion, they may lawfully resist or oppose him. This objection brings in the resolution of the first particular case proposed by us to be discussed, which is, whether it be lawful for subjects in any case to make war upon the magistrate? My answer to it is in the negative: and the reason is, because the subject has resigned up all right of resistance into the hands of the prince and governor. And for this we must observe, that as every man has naturally a right to resist any one that shall annoy him in his lawful enjoyments, so he has a general, natural right, by which he

is master of all the particular rights of his nature, so as to retain them or recede from them, and give them away as he pleases. Now when a man consents to be a subject, and to acknowledge any one for his governor, he does by that very act invest him with all the necessary means to be a governor: the chief of which is a yielding and parting with that natural right of resisting him upon any occasion whatsoever. And every man consents to have such an one his governor, from whom he covenants to receive protection, and to whom he does not actually declare a non-subjection. This being laid down, it follows, that it is not more natural for a man to resist another particular man, who would deprive him of his rights, than it is natural for him not to resist his prince upon the same occasions. Forasmuch as by a superior and general right of nature, he has parted with this particular right of resistance: and consequently, having given his prince the propriety of it, he cannot any more use it unless his prince should surrender it back to him again: which here is not supposed.' It was, however, supposed in the case of James the Second, by the devisers of the fiction of a royal abdication, which imaginary abdication was construed as a real act by which James had surrendered back to his subjects that right of resisting him, of which they had been imagined to have divested themselves for his benefit.

On another occasion, preaching on the text, 'Woe to him that buildeth a town with blood,' South addressed a crowded congregation thus;—'Whosoever sheds man's blood ought by man to have his blood shed. A judgment made up of all the justice and equity that it is possible for reason and religion to infuse into a law. But now the execution of this law being upon no grounds of reason to be committed to every private hand, God has found it necessary to deposit it only in the hands of his vicegerents, whom he intrusts and deposes as his lieutenants in the government and protection of the several societies of mankind; and so both to ennoble and guard their sceptres, by appropriating to the same hands the use of the sword of justice too. From which it follows that the law has not the same aspect upon sovereign princes that it has upon the rest of men; nor that the sword can, by any mortal power, be authorised against

the life of him to whom the sole use of it is by divine right ascribed. Upon which account, if it so fall out that a prince invades either the estate or life of a subject, that law which draws the sword of justice upon the life of any private person doing the same things, has no power or efficacy at all to do the same execution upon the supreme magistrate whose supremacy, allowing him neither equal nor superior, renders all legal acts of punishment or coercion upon him (the nature of which is still to descend) utterly impossible.'

In this same sermon on bloodshed, the preacher speaking of the rebellion said, 'As for that' (*i. e.* bloodshed) 'which is public, it is as certain, that he who takes away a man's life in war, commenced upon an unjust cause, and without just authority, is as truly a murderer as he that enters his neighbour's house, and then stabs him within his own walls. And as for the late war, upon the account of all laws, both of God and man, whether we respect the cause for which it was raised, which was the removal of grievances where there were none, or the persons that carried it on who were subjects armed against their prince, it was in all the parts and circumstances of it, a perfect, open, and most bare-faced rebellion. For not all the Calvins, Bezas, Knoxes, Buchanans, or Paræus's in Christendom, with all their principles of anarchy and democracy, so studiously maintained in their respective writings, can by any solid reason make out the lawfulness of subjects taking arms against their prince. For if government be the effect and product of reason, it is impossible for disobedience to found itself upon reason; and therefore our rebels found it necessary to balk and decry this, and to fetch a warrant for all their villainies from ecstasy and inspiration. But besides, if we translate the whole matter from the merit of the cause to that of the person, no people under heaven had less ground to complain of, much less to fight against, their prince, than the English then had, who at that time swam in a full enjoyment of all things but a thankful mind: no prince's reign having ever put subjects into a condition so like that of princes, as the peaceable part of the reign of King Charles the First: which indeed was the true cause that made them kick at the breasts that fed them, and strike at that royal

oak under whose shadow they enjoyed so much ease, plenty, and prosperity.'

While South demonstrated that no sort of misrule, no excess of revolting iniquity in a royal chief, would justify subjects in freeing themselves from his tyranny, inferior and less discreet clergymen perverting the words of Scripture, with adulation alike servile and blasphemous, ventured to teach that Charles the Second was a deity. A characteristic specimen of this appalling kind of pulpit sycophancy may be found in, 'The Divine Original and the Supreme Divinity of Kings, no Defensative against Death: a Sermon Preached the 22 February 168— Before the Right Worshipful the Fellowship of Merchants Adventurers of England, residing at Dordrecht, upon the occasion of the decease of our late most Gracious Sovereign Charles II of Ever Blessed Memorie. By Aug. Frezer, M. A. St. Edmund's Hall, Oxon.' The text of the sermon was, 'I have said ye are gods, and all of you children of the most High; But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes. Arise, O God, judge the earth, for then thou shalt inherit all nations.' The opening sentence of the discourse was,—'If a sparrow which is sold for less than a farthing, or (which is of less consideration than a sparrow) if a hair of our heads falls not to the ground without the direction of our Heavenly Father, then certainly the death of kings, who are not only the Image of God after a more excellent manner than other men, *but Gods themselves*, does not happen but by an extraordinary appointment.'

Perhaps the two most noticeable qualities of the sermons, delivered by the inferior preachers of the Restoration period, are their abusiveness towards persons and political parties, and their comical redundancy of Greek and Latin words. I could name sermons of this period in which a Greek or Latin phrase is dragged in for the adornment of every paragraph. But even more characteristic of the period than this shallow pedantry,\* is

\* In the 'Spectator,' No. 221, Addison notices with apt ridicule the same fashion in the unlearned or insincere clergy of his day, who were wont to pepper their sermons with Latin words, in order to pass themselves off as unusually learned divines on their rustic auditors. 'I have heard,' says the Essayist, 'of a couple of preachers in a country town, who endeavoured which should outshine one another, and draw together the greatest congregation. One of them being well versed in the fathers, used to quote every now and then a Latin sentence to

the rancorous malignity with which the pulpiteers of the Non-Resistance school assailed those whom they suspected of differing from them in opinion. ‘Our English pulpits,’ says Fuller, with unaffected quaintness and right feeling, ‘for these last eighteen years have had in them too much criminal anger venting by snapping and snarling on both sides. But if ye bite and devour one another, saith the apostle, Gal. v. 15, take heed ye be not devoured of one another. Think not that our sermons must be silent, if not satirical, as if divinity did not avoid smooth subjects enough, to be insisted on in this juncture of time. Let us try our skill whether we cannot preach without any dog-letter, or biting word; the art is half learned by intending and wholly by serious endeavouring of it.’

Of the violence with which the less discreet and polite of the Restoration divines used to inveigh against their political adversaries from the pulpit, the reader may form some conception

his illiterate hearers, who, it seems, found themselves so edified by it, that they flocked in greater numbers to this learned man than to his rival. The other, finding his congregation mouldering every Sunday, and hearing at length what was the occasion, resolved to give his parish a little Latin in turn: but being unacquainted with any of the fathers, he digested into his sermons the whole book of *Quæ Genus*, adding, however, such explications to it as he thought might be fit for the benefit of his people. He afterwards entered up “*As in presenti,*” which he converted in the same manner to the use of his parishioners. This, in a very little time, thickened his audience, filled his church, and routed his antagonist.’ Very delicately and pungently, also, does Addison satirize the politico-religious agitators of his time, and the use made of that old and almost worn-out cry of ‘The Church in Danger!’ In ‘The Freeholder,’ No 7, he says:—‘When a leading man, therefore, begins to grow apprehensive for the Church, you may be sure that he is either in danger of losing a place, or in despair of getting one. It is pleasant, on these occasions, to see a notorious profligate seized with a concern for his religion, and converting his spleen into zeal. These narrow and selfish views have so great an influence on this city, that, among those who call themselves the landed interest, there are several of my fellow-freeholders who always fancy the Church in danger upon the rising of Bank-stock. But the standing absurdities, without the belief of which no man is reckoned a staunch Churchman, are, that there is a Calves’-head Club, for which (by the way) the same pious Tory has made suitable hymns and devotions; that there is a confederacy among the greatest part of the prelates to destroy Episcopacy; and that all who talk against Popery are Presbyterians in their hearts. The emissaries of the party are so diligent in spreading ridiculous fictions of this kind, that at present, if we may credit common report, there are several remote parts of the nation in which it is firmly believed that all the churches of London are shut up, and that, if any clergyman walks the street in his habit, it is ten to one but he is knocked down by some sturdy schismatic.’

from the indecent abusiveness to which South sank when he made mention of Cromwell in a sermon delivered (February 22nd, 1684-5) in Westminster Abbey, before a crowded congregation of courtiers and people of fashion. 'Who that had looked,' observed this wittiest and most highly accomplished of the Restoration preachers, 'upon Agathocles first handling clay, and making pots under his father, and afterwards turning robber, could have thought that from such a condition he should come to be King of Sicily? Who that had seen Masaniello, a poor fisherman, with his red cap and his angle, could have reckoned it possible to see such a pitifull thing, within a week after, shining in his cloth of gold, and with a word or a nod absolutely commanding the whole city of Naples? And who that had beheld such a bankrupt, beggarly fellow as Cromwell, first entering the Parliament House with a threadbare, torn coat, greasy hat (perhaps neither of them paid for), could have suspected that, in the space of so few years, he should, by the murder of one king and the banishment of another, ascend the throne?' When a court-chaplain could win the approval of good society, by railing thus coarsely at the great Protector, cavalier squires and their ladies were disposed to think well of the country parson who covered Dissenters with contumelious epithets borrowed from the bear-garden.

The worship of Charles was at its hottest enthusiasm when Bishop Ken, in his 'Hymns on the Festivals,' glorified the royal martyr with an ode, which compares the Stuart, who had laid down his life for the Church, to the murdered Edmund,—

<p>' But when illustrious Charles laid down, For Church and Realm, his life and crown, Heaven Edmund's hymn remembered well, Saw Charles's triumph far excell; All his heroic grace admired, Which now triumphant song inspired.</p>	<p>He victim was to Pagan might, This to apostate Christian spite.</p>
<p>Edmund by foreign outrage bled, The blood of Charles his natives shed; King Edmund fell by foes proppressed. King Charles by subjects was dis- tressed:</p>	<p>He was in heat of war subdued, Blessed Charles was in cool blood pur- sued; He overpowered, by conquest died, Charles by mock-form of law was tried; He had a martyr's causeless hate, Blessed Charles a malefactor's fate.</p>
	<p>His virtues were to Danes unknown, Those of bright Charles obscure to none;</p>

At Edmund numerous darts were flung,  
Charles felt the sharper of the tongue:  
Both lost their heads: he in the field,  
This to the axe was forced to yield.

\* \* \* \*

Charles with the higher throne is  
graced,  
Next him in heaven is Edmund placed;  
The heart of Charles, while living here,  
Flew hourly to the heavenly sphere:  
'Tis now a monumental star,  
Bright rays diffusing wide and far.

May I in bliss obtain a seat  
At our blessed, martyred sovereign's  
feet;

His foes will have the same desire,  
If penitent, when they expire.  
My God, indulge them when they die,  
To be as near blessed Charles as I.

'Twill super-effluent joys create  
To see his foes in happy state;  
His tears in life on them he spent,  
He'll sing a hymn at their ascent:  
They'll God adore, who made their  
crime

The occasion of their bliss sublime.'

In the same strain is the Royalist bishop's hymn to be sung  
'On the 29th of May, being the day of the King's Restoration,'  
of which effort of the sacred muse the following verses are a  
favourable specimen,—

'The regal line were then exiled,  
And all who loyal were reviled;  
Pastors were of their flocks deprived,  
New errors broached and old revived:  
All faithful souls their lives bemoaned,  
And under persecution groaned.

Cursed sacrilege the Church devoured,  
Strange cant God's worship overpow-  
ered;

Temples and altars down were cast,  
Religion gasping out its last;  
The mourners little hope descried  
Their flowing tears should e'er be dried.

But God, who in the needful time  
Extracts a blessing out of crime,  
Turned even the weapons of our foes  
To instruments of our repose:  
On this glad day knocked off our chains,  
For which we offer grateful strains.

Our king exiled was now restored,  
God with true worship was adored,  
Fallen temples built, the shut unlocked,  
The pious to our altars flocked,

The loyal sufferers were relieved,  
And priests their portions due retrieved.

The Church and State seemed both to  
have

A resurrection from the grave;  
The mourners wiped away their tear,  
Their joy reached the supernal sphere;  
And all the angels with them joined,  
By Heaven in Albion's guard combined.

Full praise to Thee, great God, we sing,  
For laws, deliverance, church, and king;  
The hearts of the rebellious band  
Were all in Thy almighty hand:  
The turn was wrought by Thee alone,  
All praise to Thy propitious throne.

\* \* \* \*

Lord, on Thy goodness we rely,  
With gracious aids the land supply,  
Apostate spirits all restrain,  
May tares ne'er choke the heavenly  
grain!

May no relapse excite Thy hate,  
And mortal prove to Church and State!

Of the average merit of Bishop Ken's poetical effusions the foregoing lines are much juster examples than his 'Morning Hymn' and 'Evening Hymn,' which are so greatly superior to the bulk of his wretched versifications that it is difficult to believe that he was their real author.



### CHAPTER III.

#### A FOLIO OF PORTRAITS.

IN an earlier part of this work we had occasion to remark on the richness and brightness of clerical dress in medieval society, on the brilliance of the colours and the costliness of the silks and furs,\* with which the wealthier ecclesiastics decorated themselves in the centuries when the affluent members of the community lavished upon personal adornments the greater part of their superfluous means.

It is certain that the civil troubles of the fifteenth century, by impoverishing the clerical, together with every other, class of society, tended to diminish very perceptibly the external splendour of spiritual persons, who may, moreover, have been induced to abate something of their long-used magnificence and sumptuousness out of deference to Lollard sentiment, which continued to influence society for the better after political Lollardy had been utterly extinguished. Nor, whilst endeavouring to realize the outward bearing and habiliments of the medieval ecclesiastics, must we fail to remember that, though a considerable proportion of them could afford to wear fur and silk, the majority of the beneficed clergy and the entire body of stipendiary curates, in every generation of the feudal period, endured a degree of indigence that compelled them to exercise the most

\* In Edward the Third's time it was ordered, 'That the clerks which have a degree in a church, cathedral, collegial, or in schools, and the king's clerks which have such an estate that requires fur, do and use according to the constitution of the same; and all other clerks which have above two hundred marks rent per annum, use and do as knights of the same rent; and other clerks under that rent, use as requires of an hundred-pound rent; and that all those, as well knights as clerks, which by this ordinance may use fur in winter, by the same manner may use it in the summer.'—*Rot. 37 Ed. III.*

stringent economy in their personal expenditure, and to be content with raiment of a cheap and modest kind.

But, whatever the effect of Lollardy and the civil wars in lowering the luxury and brightness of clerical costume in the fifteenth century, it cannot be doubted that, throughout the earlier part of his reign, Henry the Eighth's clergy were as bravely clad as the English clergy of any previous time since the coming of the ostentatious Normans. Partly from motives of policy, but chiefly to gratify one of the strongest passions of his lordly nature, Wolsey exhibited in his dress, retinue, and equipments, a determination to surpass the splendour of the secular nobles, whose envy he roused by his exorbitant power and insufferable arrogance; and the example of the most powerful and splendid ecclesiastic, who had swayed the fortunes of the country since the fall of Becket, had a notable effect on all the grades of the clergy in making them vie with each other in luxury and display. England had never witnessed a wealthier or more gorgeous body of sacerdotal persons than the array of dignitaries and monastic residents whom the Reformation stripped of their revenues and influence, reducing them from the estate of a peculiarly fortunate and dangerously dominant class to a condition of helplessness, indigence, and insecurity. Ejected from their peaceful colleges, and compelled to support life on small pensions, many of the deprived monks had neither the disposition nor the means to play the part of ecclesiastical fops. Nor were the monks the only ecclesiastics who were prejudicially affected by the suppression of the religious houses. It being part of Henry's policy to provide for deprived regulars by inducting them into small livings, in order that they might be more intimately blended by fortune and labour with the secular priests, and that the funds set apart for the maintenance of dispossessed monks might be rendered available for other uses, it was not long before the seculars found unprecedented difficulty in acquiring better preferments, or such small livings as incumbents had hitherto been accustomed to hold together with more lucrative benefices. Thus, whilst the monks were despoiled and depressed, the seculars were grievously affected by a sudden increase in the number of candidates for the offices for which they had heretofore been the chief applicants.

But no sooner had the clerical order rallied from the shock and impoverishment consequent on Henry's ecclesiastical changes, than its more fortunate members provoked the anger of severe censors by their indulgence in delicate and costly apparel. Velvet gowns were again frequently seen on the backs of prosperous priests, some of whom were even guilty of the effeminacy of wearing velvet shoes and slippers. 'Such men,' exclaimed honest Latimer, 'are more fit to dance the morris-dance, than to be permitted to preach.' The clergy of whom Master Latimer spake thus disdainfully were the clerical fops of Edward the Sixth's cathedral towns. The restoration of the Papacy by Edward's successor stimulated the vanity of these fancifully attired priests, of whom Strype records: 'The priests, especially the better sort of them, took much care about the habit and apparel they wore. They went about in side-sweeping gowns, with great wide sleeves, four-cornered caps, and smooth smirk faces.' The four-cornered or geometrical cap—of which sufficient notice has been taken elsewhere—was universally resumed by those of the Marian clergy who, after laying it aside together with other badges of orthodoxy in Edward's time, determined like prudent men to accommodate themselves to the wishes of the Catholic queen.

Even more noticeable as marks or badges of party were the modes in which the clergy of the Reformation period dressed their hair, when authority left them at liberty to select their own ways of arranging it. After the tonsure had been forbidden or disused, as a sign of superstition and Papistry, whilst the High-church clergy cut their locks close, and shaved their cheeks as smooth as apples, the ministers of Genevan proclivities wore long hair and grew beards. Others of the clergy, occupying the middle ground between the extreme schools of ecclesiastical opinion, sometimes showed their liberality and disregard for trifles by removing or wearing beard, whiskers, and even moustaches, according as the humour took them to be more or less hairy. In my folio of clerical portraits I have the pictures of several eminent divines, whose moustaches lead me to infer that throughout the greater part of the seventeenth century, from the days of Elizabeth to the end of Charles the Second's time, clergymen wore moustaches much more generally than most

people suppose. For instance, my engraving of Lancelot Andrewes, bishop of Winchester (who died A.D. 1626, in the 71st year of his age), represents the prelate as wearing moustaches and a small peaked beard. Archbishop Usher,\* who entered holy orders in the reign of Elizabeth and died during the Commonwealth, in my portrait of him, wears black gown and scarf, circular ruff, black skull-cap with the wearer's locks coming out from beneath it, and moustaches. Archbishop Leighton, who died in 1684,† is also depicted in my likeness of him with moustaches, which are rendered especially conspicuous by the closeness and cleanness with which his cheeks and chin have been shaved. Thus we have three chief ecclesiastics, a prelate and two primates—each of them marking one of three

\* This primate saw Charles the First's execution from the roof of Lady Peterborough's house, near Charing Cross. 'Divers of the Countess's gentlemen and servants,' says my authority, 'got upon the leads of the house, from whence they could see plainly what was acting at Whitehall. As soon as his majesty came upon the scaffold, some of the household came and told my lord primate of it, and askt him if he would see the king once more before he was put to death. My lord was at first unwilling, but was at last persuaded to go up, as well out of a desire to see his majesty once again, as also curiosity, since he could scarce believe what they told him unless he saw it. When he came upon the leads, the king was in his speech: the lord primate stood still and said nothing, but sighed, and lifting up his hands and eyes (full of tears) towards heaven, seemed to pray earnestly; but when his majesty had done speaking, and had pulled off his cloak and doublet, and stood stripped in his waistcoat, and that the villains in vizards began to put up his hair, the good bishop, no longer able to endure so dismal a sight, and being full of grief and horror for that most wicked fact now ready to be executed, grew pale and began to faint: so that, if he had not been observed by his own servant and some others that stood near him (who thereupon supported him), he had swooned away. So they presently carried him down and laid him on his bed, where he used those powerful weapons which God has left His people in such afflictions, viz. prayers and tears.'

† Leighton's death occurred in an inn, in accordance with his often expressed wish that he should expire away from home and friends, and in a tavern. 'He considered,' says Mr. Jerment, 'such a place as suitable to the character of the Christian pilgrim, to whom the world is an inn, a place of accommodation by the way, not his home; and that the spiritual sojourner steps with propriety from an inn to his Father's house. Leighton thought, also, that the care and concern of friends were apt to entangle and discompose the dying saint; and that the unfeeling attendance of strangers weaned the heart from the world, and smoothed the passage to heaven. Our author obtained his wish: for he died at the Bell Inn, in Warwick Lane; and none of his near relations were present during his last illness. If he had not the consolation to see his nearest relation, a beloved sister, the feelings of both were spared the agony of a final adieu.'

grand divisions of the seventeenth century; the Elizabethan, the Laudian, and the Restoration period,—and each of them wearing moustaches.

The ordinary costume of the Episcopalian clergy of the seventeenth century was fixed at the opening of James the First's reign by the 74th canon, which enjoins 'That the archbishops and bishops shall not intermit to use the accustomed apparel of their degrees. Likewise all deans, masters of colleges, archdeacons, and prebendaries, in cathedral and collegiate churches, (being priests or deacons), doctors in divinity, law, and physic, bachelors in divinity, masters of arts, and bachelors of law, having any ecclesiastical living, shall usually wear gowns with standing collars, and sleeves strait at the hands, or wide sleeves, as is used in the universities, with hoods or tippets of silk or sarcenet, and square caps. And that all other ministers admitted or to be admitted into that function shall also usually wear the like apparel as is aforesaid, except tippets only. We do further in like manner ordain, That all the said ecclesiastical persons above mentioned shall usually wear in their journeys cloaks with sleeves, commonly called priests' cloaks, without guards, welts, long buttons, or cuts. And no ecclesiastical person shall wear any coif or wrought high-cap, but only plain night-caps of black silk, satin, or velvet. In all which particulars concerning the apparel here prescribed, our meaning is not to attribute any holiness or special worthiness to the said garments, but for decency, gravity, and order, as is before specified. In private houses, and in their studies, the said persons ecclesiastical may use any comely and scholarlike apparel, provided it be not cut or pinkt: and that in public they go not in their doublets and hose, without coats or cassocks; and that they wear not any light-coloured stockings. Likewise poor beneficed men and curates (not being able to provide themselves long gowns) may go in short gowns of the fashion aforesaid.'

In accordance with the letter of this canon, but with greater sumptuousness than it contemplated, the rector was dressed, concerning whom Master Poorest, in the 'Curates' Conference,' (1641), remarked,—'He weareth cassocks of damask and plush, good beavers, and silk stockings; can play well at tables, or glee; can hunt well and bowl very skilfully; is deeply experienced in

raey canary, and can relish a cup of right claret; and so passeth time away.

Disposed though he was to preserve the ancient pomps of the Church, and endowed though he was with a vain man's love of whatever ostentatious ways promised to magnify his importance to ordinary people, Archbishop Laud was commendably simple in his dress, and never omitted to rebuke the clergy who appeared before him in raiment that misbeseemed their calling and means. At a visitation in Essex, during his tenure of the see of London, he sharply rated a clergyman who, to use Fuller's words, 'appeared before him very gallant in habit.' To give point to his reproof the prelate drew attention to the contrast between his own sober costume and the clothes of the foppish priest. 'My Lord,' retorted the unabashed offender, 'you have better clothes at home, and I have worse.' Like Laud, Bishop Hacket preferred simple to sumptuous attire, both for himself and the clergy whom he governed. 'His apparel,' says Dr. Plume, 'was ever plain, not morose or careless, but would never endure to be costly on himself, either in habit or diet, often quoting that of St. Austin, "*Projectò de pretiosá veste erubesco.*" He was as much ashamed of a rich garment as others of a poor one, and thought that they were fitter for a Roman Consul than a Christian Præsul, and accordingly never put on a silk cassock but at a great festival, or a wedding of some near friend; holding that a glittering prelate without inward ornaments was but the paraphrase of a painted wall.'

So that the reader, unfamiliar with old portraits, may realize the outward characteristics of clerical dress in times before and after the Restoration, from Elizabeth's day to Queen Anne's period, I will put before him briefly the more noteworthy points of the costumes preserved in my folio of ecclesiastical portraitures. Bearded and moustached Andrewes (Elizabethan Bishop of Winchester) used to wear a frilled collar, *i. e.* the ruff or band that had not begun to droop or fall into the fashion of the bands worn by Charles the First's courtiers; and a geometrical cap with rounded corners,—a head-covering which was a kind of practical compromise between the High-churchman's sharply-cornered square cap, and the Puritan's rounded bonnet. The portrait of Archbishop Williams, which forms the frontispiece

of Hacket's 'Scrinia Resecrata,' presents the primate wearing a ruff round his neck, and on his head a broad-brimmed, Quaker-like hat,—doubtless the hat which he wore while presiding, as Lord-keeper, in the Court of Chancery. Though Hacket lived in 1670, at which time the younger clergy, as well as the 'junior bar,' had generally adopted falling bands—corruptly designated band-strings—he appears in his picture wearing a short, stiffly-plaited frill-collar of an Elizabethan fashion, and the canonical black night-cap, which, after the Restoration, was gradually discarded in favour of the wig. Williams wears neither whiskers nor beard, nor any indication of moustaches; but the hair of his head appears beneath his skull-cap. Heylyn, who lived to see the Restoration and to die in his old quarters at Westminster, stands before me in gown, cassock, black skull-cap, at the backward edge of which his curls are visible, and a plain round collar neatly folded over his canonical vest. Closely shorn like Heylyn, Dr. Hammond, the Oxonian doctor, appears in cap and gown; and he wears a large plain collar, reaching almost to the curve of the shoulder on either side, and lying in front along the collar-bone.—a collar which may be regarded as one of the intermediate types that serve to establish a connexion in millinery between the early falling band and the bands of the later Restoration clergy. Bishop Ken survived to the reign of Queen Anne, but, like Chief-Justice Hale, who stoutly refused to adopt the Restoration fopperies of wig and bands, the amiable prelate continued to wear the canonical skull-cap to the end of his days, in preference to the flowing wig, which had become the mode for all kinds of social dignitaries, as well as for men of fashion. The Bishop of Bath and Wells, however, wore bands,—that are excellent illustrations of how the string-band came from the falling collar; they protected the collar of the bishop's vest, put a white line round his neck, and dropped in broad rectangular shape about three inches beneath his chin. Moustaches-wearing Leighton wears his hair long over the ears, and short over the forehead, and his band is the large plain collar of the seventeenth century, falling behind and at the sides as well as at the front, and cut square under the chin. Usher, till the time of his death under the Commonwealth, wore the circular ruff and the black coif-cap, from be-

neath which the locks of the moustaches-wearing primate peeped out.

During the Commonwealth the clergy relinquished the canonical dress,—some with gladness, because they disliked everything that reminded them of episcopal government; and some reluctantly at the instigation of prudence, which enjoined them to lay aside the square cap and cassock, which had been objects of ridicule to the populace. But not content with giving up these features of their old costume, which had gone out of fashion, the loyal clergy—*i. e.* the deprived ministers and those of the officiating clergy whose hearts were with the Cavaliers, and who entertained no fear of assemblers or triers—contracted a habit of wearing bright colours, averring that they thus disguised themselves in laical garb in order to escape the obloquy which, in the days of hypocritical misrule, attached to members of the sacred profession. ‘Thus,’ says Dr. Gauden, in the ‘*Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Suspiria*,’ bewailing the contempt into which the clergy had fallen, ‘while the soulder looks big, and glories to be seen in his arms, as the ensigns of his well-paid profession; while wary lawyers keep as grave and wise men to their robes and gowns, as badges of their calling, which is their honour and gain too; while the civil fraternities and companies of trades own their *vests* and *liveries*, onely the poor ministers of England study with great artifice to disguise themselves, as manifestly, and not a little ashamed of their order and function, and this not only in highways and markets, but even in their very churches and pulpits, and they had rather appear as Lawyers, Physitians, Troopers, Graziers, yea, mechanicks, apprentices, and serving-men, than in such a colour, garment, garb, and fashion, as best becomes (in my judgment) grave scholars and venerable preachers; so great is the damp and discountenance they are sensible of, when they come among Laymen, being always loth, and oft afraid to be taken for ministers, lest they be openly disgraced, jeered, and contemned; this makes many leave off their wearing black, when they have cause enough to be in mourning.’ Noticing this same tendency of the Royalist clergy to lay aside black and wear colours, Sir John Birkenhead, in ‘*The Assembly-man*,’ says of his typical assembler, ‘His doublet and hose are of dark blue, a grain



deeper than pure Coventry, but of late he is in black, since the loyal clergy were persecuted into colours.' Whilst the Cavalier clergy thus indicated their political principles by wearing colours, on the plea that by clothing themselves in black they would draw upon themselves the insults everywhere showered on the clerical order, the ministers of the other party generally clothed themselves in black, and, instead of experiencing any discomfort from social disesteem of 'the cloth,' were more cordially received by the gentry, and more affectionately regarded by the congregations, than the parochial clergy of England had ever been since the Reformation.

Slowly following in the wake of the fashion which brought in wigs and long falling bands—a fashion which the legal profession was as slow to adopt as it has been resolute in maintaining it—the clergy of the Restoration period laid aside the canonical night-cap in favour of false hair, and substituted string-bands for the round or dropping collars of the Commonwealth time and earlier days of Charles the Second. Tillotson was one of the first Anglican divines to wear a peruke in the pulpit; and the ecclesiastics of this period on rising to prelate office assumed the long-flowing wig, which bishops relinquished within the memory of the present generation. Stillingfleet and Bull, who received episcopal ordination during the Commonwealth, Atterbury and Tillotson, are all represented in their portraits adorned with flowing curls of borrowed hair. But apart from their relinquishment of the black skull-cap, the Anglican clergy persevered in obedience to the seventy-fourth canon, till the middle of the eighteenth century,—or at least till several years had elapsed since the death of Queen Anne. The 'Spectator' of Oct. 20, 1714, describes a young clergyman, walking about London in the canonical costume, and speaks of him as deeming himself 'but half-equipped with a gown and cassock for his public appearance, if he hath not the additional ornament of a scarf of the first magnitude.' After an almost total discontinuance by their order of the canonical garb for about a century, some of our parochial clergy—who, if not in all cases High-churchmen, are favourably disposed to canonical rule and ancient discipline—ordinarily wear waistcoats resembling the cassock, and coats with standing collars

fashioned somewhat after the model of the discarded ecclesiastical dress. I am not aware that any of our clergy show themselves in society, wearing ‘plain night-caps of black silk, satin, or velvet;’ but there is a growing disposition on the part of our parish-priests to make habitual use of the four-cornered cap, which a few years since was seldom worn by any class of persons except resident members of the universities, collegiate clergy, and schoolboys receiving instruction in ancient seminaries, or in modern academies affecting collegiate style and usages.

## CHAPTER IV.

### POOR CURATES.

FROM the time when the stipendiary clerks, in common with all other ill-paid labourers, demanded higher wages after the Black Death, to the indignation of Archbishop Islip, who, upbraiding them for their unholy appetite for worldly gain, ordered them to desist from seeking the just remuneration of their services, down to the present day of benevolent associations for supplying indigent clergymen with the cast-off clothing of more fortunate gentlemen, the sufferings of the least prosperous and least exalted members of the clerical order have been a favourite topic of compassionate discourse with persons of tender natures, and with those less humane critics of society who are more apt to deplore than quick to alleviate the distresses of their fellow-creatures.

That the sorrows of our poor curates are neither imaginary nor trivial is admitted even by those who have so many difficulties of their own to contend against, and so many troubles in their private affairs to think about, that they have neither time to bewail nor means to mitigate the afflictions of their neighbours; and I should be sorry to say aught that would check the currents of sympathy and aid which steadily flow towards such fit objects of Christian commiseration. But, notwithstanding the vast amount of penury which embitters the lives and wastes the energies of a large number of clerical persons, I am of opinion that the present generation is happy beyond all previous periods of our ecclesiastical history since the Reformation, in its comparative freedom from grinding poverty in the lowest grades of the hierarchy.

It is certain that the Reformation affected prejudicially the

inferior clergy, by leaving them at liberty to contract imprudent marriages at a time when ecclesiastical persons, holding the richest benefices and chief offices of the Church, could seldom improve their worldly fortunes by matrimonial alliances. Even in these days of prudence and calculating forethought, when the consequences and responsibilities of marriage are more loudly proclaimed than its delights and honours, the poor are found far more eager for the costly privileges of wedlock than the rich, to whom the maintenance of offspring would cause neither difficulty nor concern. And in the sixteenth century, when no Malthus had taught young lovers that marriage without means was a crime without a valid excuse, the stipendiary curates and incumbents of miserably poor benefices hastened to burden themselves with wives and children, whilst the superior and more affluent ecclesiastics held themselves aloof from marriage, as an estate bordering on sinfulness, to which they could not condescend without loss of dignity and holiness. The consequence, as we remarked in an earlier section of this work, was the production of a large number of clerical families, whose daily experiences differed very little from the daily experiences of the peasantry.

Before the middle of the seventeenth century the sufferings of the stipendiary curates had become so extreme, that their discontent broke out in angry denunciations of the beneficed clergy, and in vague proposals for an organized attempt on their part to obtain a more liberal share of the wealth of the Church. Exclaiming against the avarice and cruelty of pluralist rectors, Master Poorest, in 'The Curates' Conference,' (1641), observed, 'They deal with us as they do with their flocks—I mean their parishioners; for they starve their souls and pinch our bodies.' Whereto Master Needham responded, 'I wonder how these life-parsons would do, should there be but once a general consent of all the curates to forbear to preach or read prayers but for one three weeks, or a month only; how they would be forced to ride for it, and yet all in vain: for how can one person supply two places at one time twenty miles distant?' But before the afflicted curates could put their threat in force, the political convulsions, which proved so disastrous to the prelates and other dignified clergy, afforded stipendiary priests a larger measure of good

fortune than they could have obtained by the most felicitous co-operative movement.

Taking vigorous measures to correct the abuses of pluralism the Long Parliament insisted, that the services of the Church should be performed with an approach to efficiency in every place of worship, to which was attached an ecclesiastical revenue sufficient for the maintenance of a minister; and that all incompetent and scandalously negligent incumbents should be deprived of their cures, so that their places might forthwith be filled by able and hardworking men. Whatever injustice attended the summary execution of its ecclesiastical policy, there can be no doubt that the Parliament, by its wholesale evictions of peccant ministers and redistribution of ecclesiastical patronage, affected most beneficially a large number of the particular clerical class to which the Poorests and the Needhams belonged, and would have continued to belong to the last, had not a social revolution given them preferments. But though the sufferings of hundreds of curates were thus alleviated at the expense of a somewhat smaller number of ejected incumbents—whose wretched families helped to swell that doleful flood of clerical misery of which we have already spoken at length—the poverty of curates continued to afflict humane observers and menace society with serious disaster.

A century later the same grievances, which had roused the resentful murmurs of the Laudian curates, inspired the stipendiary priests of Georgian England with sentiments of bitter hostility against the incumbents whom they served for paltry remunerations. George the Third had not been six years on the throne when Lloyd undertook the advocacy of the curates' hopeless cause; and in 'The Curate, a Poem: Inscribed to all the Curates in England and Wales,' poured a torrent of angry abuse and unjust satire on the rich rectors, whom he regarded as chiefly accountable for the miseries of their professional inferiors. That this indiscreet patron was not qualified to render effectual service to his unfortunate clients is apparent from the following specimen of his verse,—

'Behold Nugoso! wriggling, shuffling on,  
A mere Church-puppet, an automaton

In orders : note its tripping, mincing pace,  
 Religion creams and mantles in its face !  
 Is all religion from the top to toe !  
 But milliners and barbers made it so.  
 It wears religion in the modish way,  
 It brushes, starches, combs it every day :  
 For our prim Doctor is but such a saint  
 As sign-post daubers o'er a shop-door paint ;  
 An effigy, a reverend bust, whose head  
 Is but a perriwig, and bronzed lead ;  
 Whose orthodoxy lies in outward things,  
 In beavers, cassocks, gowns, bands, gloves and rings :  
 It shows its learning by its doctor's hood,  
 And proves its goodness,—'cause its cloaths are good ;  
 Preaches (nor thinks Invention frames the lie)  
 Its Christmas-sermon on a Christmas-pye,  
 Orthodox pudding next, and in the rear  
 (Salvation thrown aside) a good New Year.  
 Search but the North, the South, the West, the East  
 Of this great town, you'll find this Pastry Priest.  
 Yet shall this ape of Form, this Fashion's Fool,  
 Pretend to keep an Apostolic school ;  
 Shall dare with insolent, Rectorial Pride,  
 Its curate, spite of all his virtues, chide,  
 And scoffing, cry,—“ You ne'er can find the way  
 To heaven !” “ Why ?” “ Your stockings are too gay,  
 Your wig is not quite orthodoxly curled,  
 To hope for favour in another world ;  
 Your cassock is too rusty, and your gown  
 Is for the Court of Justice much too brown.  
 Your band is not half starched enough—your hat  
 Too fiercely cocked,—the Apostles wore them flat.  
 Pray in your coat, too !—worse than all the rest !  
 God's not at home, sir, if the Priest's undrest.  
 Mend and reform—in cloaths—for no one goes  
 To heaven's gay court except canonic beaux !  
 It chatters, prattles, snivels, whines, and cants,  
 More tedious than a world of aunts.”

Whatever may have been the shortcomings of worldly rectors in the middle of the last century, so feeble and unmannerly a satirist as the author of 'The Curate' was not the censor to whip them into better sense and greater kindliness.

Fifty years and rather more had passed since the publication of 'Lloyd's Metrical Plea for Curates,' when the destitution of a large number of the inferior clergy was urged upon the attention of the benevolent public in another poem, entitled 'The Curate.' That very many of the unbeneficed clergy of the

period were enduring sharp and humiliating privation is demonstrated by the pathetic statements of the seventy-eight necessitous curates who applied for a portion of the ludicrously insufficient fund of 800*l.*, which Dr. Taylor and Mr. W. Middleton provided for the relief of extremely indigent clergymen. One of the candidates for aid from this source was a Cumberland pastor, who had entered the fifty-fourth year of his age without obtaining a larger income than 25*l.* per annum for the maintenance of himself and his ten children. But, though the distressed curates sorely needed an eloquent patron to stir society in their behalf, he was not found in the anonymous author of 'The Curate: a Poem' (1810), who described the homely humiliations and distresses of the necessitous priests with a sprightliness and occasional pungency, nowhere present in Lloyd's abusive satire, but, like Lloyd, fell into the error of railing at the affluent incumbents and dignitaries. Perhaps the lamest and faintest lines in the poem are the following verses, which are, however, more noteworthy than the stronger passages of the work, because they remind us of some of the features of a state of clerical society which, though it flourished less than half a century since, has completely passed away,—

' Say ye, whom to'ring mitres please,  
With sacred ore and pillowed ease ;  
Say, whom no cares nor wants appal,  
The sleek incumbents of a stall ;  
Say, whom the pointer leads to game,  
With Aaron's vest and Nimrod's fame ;  
Who Fox's Martyrs leave to your flocks,  
And fly yourselves to martyr fox ;  
Say, brothers of the Church—who crop  
Its harvest rich, and "sink the shop,"  
Tame gulls, that girls and gamblers  
light on,

At Weymouth, Chelt'nham, Bath, and  
P'rig-ton :  
Who living raise the world's compas-  
sion,  
Or die despised as men of fashion ;  
Foplings, whom vanity profanes  
With hats amorphous, aprons, canes ;  
Say all, whose pampered bodies thrive  
By curates, doom'd to starve alive :  
What penance, pilgrimage, denial,  
Can equal Slender's Christian trial ?

Against the charges of indolence, worldliness, and selfish greed, thus recklessly preferred against the beneficed, by the vituperative defenders of the unbeneficed clergy, any reader of Anglican biography could produce a long array of characteristic cases in which affluent incumbents and powerful dignitaries have displayed the most delicate and generous consideration for the wants and feelings of their curates and subordinate clergy,

like Bishop Bull, of whom Nelson narrates that he did not presume to discharge the functions of a friendly censor to his curates until he had first solicited them to point out to him in brotherly love whatever they found amiss in his conduct. 'For some time,' says George Bull's biographer, 'before his coming to Avening, he had made use of a curate to assist him in his parochial duties . . . . He preached once every Lord's Day, and read the prayers frequently himself the other part of the day, when his curate preached. He chose to divide, after this manner, the publick administrations, that the people might not entertain a mean opinion of his curates, as if they were not qualified for the duties of the pulpit . . . . There was one use, indeed, he made of a curate, which will appear surprising because I believe seldom or never practised, and that was to admonish him of his faults; the proposal was from himself, that they might agree from that time to tell one another freely, in love and privacy, what they observed amiss in each other. It is certain this might help to regulate the conduct of his own life; but it had this peculiar advantage, that it gave him a handle without offence with anything that appeared wrong in his curate, for, when the liberty was mutual, neither of them could be blamed for the use of it.'

The poor curate and the poor governess are companions in affliction—the unfortunate relations of good society; for whom we all wish a brighter lot, though, in certain cases, it is difficult to state precisely why they deserve it. The fashionable novel puts them side by side; and in dealing with their wrongs, and appealing to society to take steps for the amelioration of their hapless condition, it has recourse to the same arts of exaggeration and plaintive misstatement. The typical poor governess is always depicted by her enthusiastic champions as a lady of singular beauty and goodness, sprung from gentle parents and a noble ancestry, possessing every feminine accomplishment, and greatly excelling in intellect and style her insolent and oppressive employers. In the same way the fanciful delineators of the poor curate represent that he is gentle by birth as well as by profession; that he has had the expensive training of a public school and aristocratic college; that the large sum lavished on his education did not exceed the outlay requisite for the pro-



duction of a scholarly and efficient priest; and that, whereas his rectors are often mere prosperous and ill-bred dullards, he is a model of the thoughtful, zealous, and eloquent clergyman—gracious in manner, and endowed with noble presence. To persons of ordinary good sense there is no need to demonstrate the general inaccuracy of this fictitious portraiture, and to show that, whereas the majority of our well-born and highly-educated curates soon gain preferment, either through the influence of friends or by their personal merit, our poor curates—*i.e.* the clergy who remain curates till their later years—have, for the most part, been drawn from the less affluent grades of the middle class, have been educated at comparatively small cost at provincial schools and inferior colleges, and, so far as concerns their extraction, training, and natural parts, are in no way superior to the gentlemen who, in the other liberal professions and reputable callings, begin and end their careers in industrious penury. To estimate rightly the fortune of these infelicitous clergymen we should not contrast them against the successful members of their own profession, but compare them with the respectable but unsuccessful members of other professions—the surgeons and solicitors, who, through want of capital and other advantages in early life, continue in very humble and subordinate positions to the end of their days; the officers of the army and navy, who are found in middle age on half-pay, and burdened with necessitous families; the barristers, who, after vain struggles for position at the bar, retire from the Inns of Court, and seek their sustenance in humbler fields of employment; the merchants, who fail without dishonour, and sink to be clerks on salaries far beneath an ordinary curate's stipend; the schoolmasters, who, through no misconduct or moral defect, drop to be ushers; the authors and artists—honourable and good men, some of them richer in learning and insight than their early and prosperous competitors—who arrive at old age without distinction, office, or bare security from want.

Compared with the other learned and liberal professions, the Church will, I think, be found to have a smaller proportion of necessitous members, than any other calling to which the gentlemen of our time have recourse for subsistence. And in spite of the great deal, the far too much, that we hear of clerical

poverty, and the miserable prospects of the young clergy who have neither private wealth nor powerful connexions, I am disposed to think that no profession surpasses the clerical vocation in affording young men of average intelligence, pleasant manners, and honest life, the means of attaining material prosperity. Unsustained by money, or strong friends, the young barrister has no career open to him at all. The same may be said, with limitations and reserves, of officers in the army and navy. The civil service offers modest maintenances, but very few bright chances, to the young men who are admitted to it. Compared with impecunious surgeons and young solicitors who have no capital the poor curate is found to possess many advantages. The conditions of his office are favourable to economy and prudent demeanour. He has fewer inducements to carry his expenditure beyond his narrow means than the young lawyer or young doctor, for whose indigence society has no consideration. He is more readily received into close intercourse by wealthy families, and has many more chances than the impecunious layman of enriching himself by marriage.

The real hardship of the poor curate's position is seen in the rule which denies him power to lay aside his orders and retire from the clerical profession, when he has conceived a repugnance to it or has reason to believe that it is a calling in which he is never likely to succeed. Of course this prohibition does not now-a-days always act as an absolute bar to voluntary relinquishment of the sacerdotal office. Most of us know men who, though they received episcopal ordination in their youth, have so completely withdrawn themselves from the ways and freed themselves from the style of clergy, that no one ever thinks of them as reverend and ecclesiastical persons. It has recently been decided that a clergyman may enter an Inn of Court and compete for the honours of the law; and some years since I had the pleasure of knowing an excellent gentleman, a pawnbroker of London, who had starved for years on a perpetual curacy in Norfolk, before he threw up his wretched preferment, and sinking his dignity, provided for his numerous family, and won the means of exercising munificent charity to the poor of his metropolitan neighbourhood, in a department of trade which few poor curates would like to enter. But though it may be avoided, the rule operates

as a powerful restraint on the poor curates who would like to be rid of their orders, and to be working under brighter auspices in some secular industry. The rule also has injurious results on the few adventurous priests who, disregarding it, divest themselves as far as possible of their priestly character. In this respect the poor curate is at a decided disadvantage. The layman who has failed in one vocation is at liberty to seek another: but the poor curate is bound by tyrannical usage, and not obsolete law, to the service, in which he can never hope to prosper.

## CHAPTER V.

## DOMESTIC CHAPLAINS.

THE curates are still with us; but England long since saw the last of those humble domestic chaplains whose precursors in the seventeenth century provoked the anger of bishops and the scorn of satirists by the sycophancy with which they complied with the caprice and courted the favour of their patrons. Our nobles, indeed, in compliance with feudal usage, still retain ecclesiastics, who discharge an uncertain amount of spiritual duty for the benefit of their employers and their employers' families; but the well-beneficed rector, who holds the honourable and almost sinecure post of domestic chaplain to a peer of the present day, corresponds in nothing but official title to the ordained clerk who was found in almost every squire's manor-house two centuries since,—and who, besides saying graces daily at his entertainer's table, and reading prayers periodically in the hall of his patron's residence, rendered in return for board, lodging, and a trifling salary, a variety of services which, though they implied no such personal abasement as many modern writers have erroneously imagined, were such services as no member of a liberal profession would now-a-days perform for any employer, however exalted.

The fashion, which provided a considerable proportion of the poorer clergy with shelter and maintenance beneath the roofs of the inferior landed gentry, had its origin in feudal times, when priests were permitted to bestir themselves in industries that have for several generations been regarded as derogatory to the sacerdotal character, and when every nobleman found employment in his establishments or on his estates for several clerical persons. What was the number of ecclesiastics thus retained by the secular nobles and gentry at any

time of the feudal period I would not venture even to conjecture; but their number must have been considerable, when the laity were for the most part devoid of scholastic culture, and when few persons outside the clerical order were sufficiently educated to perform the literary work that now-a-days devolves on the landed proprietor's bailiff, steward, and attorney. The knight or squire of the fourteenth or fifteenth century found himself in continual need of a trusted domestic counsellor who could cast accounts, had a smattering of law, and possessed the slender amount of learning requisite for the economy of an important estate; and this adviser was almost always found in the person of an ecclesiastic, who, whilst discharging the secular functions for which he was especially retained, neither omitted to fulfil the higher duties of the priest, nor failed to command the respect due to his sacred character.

The Reformation certainly did not diminish,—I am disposed to think that it must have greatly increased,—the number of these menial clergy. Many, perhaps a majority, of the ejected monks were for a time more or less regularly employed as domestic chaplains in gentle households, where they earned honourably many material comforts to which they had been long accustomed, and which they would have ceased to enjoy had they lived in idleness on their small pensions. Drawn from the superior families of the land the regular clergy were, as we have seen, the aristocratic members of the ecclesiastical order: and on the dissolution of their colleges, not a few of them returned to the castles and halls in which they had been born, and became the guests of kinsmen with whom they had played in boyhood. And many a monk, who thus found shelter in his first home or a tranquil refuge within a cousin's walls, made ample recompense for seasonable hospitality by teaching his entertainer's sons their Latin primer, and practising in his host's garden and orchard the scientific horticulture, the secrets of which he had mastered in the grounds around the old abbey.

Though the domestic chaplains of past time were frequently, if not usually, without benefices, very many of them were incumbents of small livings in the immediate neighbourhood of their patrons' residences,—livings which, in the days when

husbandry was comparatively unproductive, and a great deal of what is now exuberant soil had never been brought under the plough, yielded a very scanty support, or even less than a bare maintenance for an officiating clergyman. It frequently happened that a squire, who wished to secure the services of an efficient pastor for his household and neighbours, lived in a parish of which the tithes were insufficient for the incumbent's reasonable wants: in which case the proprietor, when he was also patron of the living, would induce an eligible clergyman to accept the poor preferment by offering him a home at the hall, together with the usual perquisites of a domestic chaplaincy. Cases no doubt also occurred where a griping patron, more anxious to secure a secretary and steward on cheap terms than to attach an efficient priest to a small living, forbore to give his chaplain a salary, in consideration of the emoluments of the ecclesiastical preferment which went with the chaplaincy. But frequent though such cases of parsimony were, I have no hesitation in saying that the numerous clerical holders of small benefices, who received board and lodging in the mansions of the squirearchy, were far more often indebted for their comfortable quarters to the generous inclination of their hosts to befriend poor clergy and provide for the spiritual welfare of their dependants. In other localities this friendly feeling towards the cloth resulted in the fashion which affluent laymen observed almost to the present time, of inviting their parochial clergy to dine with them on Sundays.

But whether he was beneficed or unprovided with a living, the domestic chaplain was required to make himself useful in various secular ways within his patron's bounds. He kept the squire's accounts, wrote his letters, taught his children, superintended the men-servants, and, if he had a knowledge of horticulture, pruned the fruit-trees and laid out the beds of the garden. Instead of regarding himself as the equal of his employer, he, in some cases, modestly sat beneath the salt at the common table, and bore himself deferentially to the quality who occupied the higher places at the well-furnished board. But it would be a mistake to suppose that his activity in secular, and what would now-a-days be thought menial work, was incompatible with the dignity of an Elizabethan clergyman, or that

his formal respectfulness to his social superiors was not distinct from servile obsequiousness. To understand his position and demeanour, my readers must bear in mind that domestic service of the higher kind—‘gentle service,’ as our ancestors termed it—was positively honourable, in the days when gentlemen were waited upon at table and abroad by gentlemen, when the liveried attendants of great men were the cadets of noble houses, and when a younger son deemed it no dishonour to wear his elder brother’s livery and serve him on bended knee. Even so late as the concluding years of Elizabeth’s reign, though gentle service had lost much of its ancient prestige and lustre, and the sons of mere yeomen and tenant-farmers were forcing their way into the higher departments of domestic employment, a gentleman neither lost nor tarnished his gentility by becoming the servant of a nobleman or simple knight. And even to the end of the seventeenth century, notwithstanding the violence of the rude shocks which feudalism had sustained, notwithstanding the total abolition of many of its practices and theories, society continued to be so far influenced by feudal traditions that gentlemen of honour and high spirit habitually did many things which would now-a-days be deemed servile, and the word servant had a very different signification from that which attaches to it in the present generation. When the Elizabethan domestic chaplain sat at a great squire’s table immediately below the salt, he usually saw beneath him servants who were of gentle birth, or at least of a social extraction, much superior to that of the menial dependants of our own time.

In Elizabethan England, and still more generally during the years between Charles the First’s accession and the fall of episcopacy, the bishops regarded the numerous class of private chaplains with strong disfavour,—averring that the position of a clergyman housed in a squire’s mansion was seldom compatible with the dignity of the sacerdotal office: that he habitually performed tasks which caused the other members of the family and the ordinary visitors of the house to think lightly of the pastor’s title to reverence: that when he had a benefice, the duties of his chaplaincy caused him to neglect his cure: that when waiting for preferment he was more anxious to conciliate his patron, for the sake of advancement to the next vacant living to which the

squire had the right of appointing, than to discharge with fearlessness the spiritual functions of his partly sacred and partly secular post. The poets, dramatists, and pamphleteers of the seventeenth century, support the charges of sycophancy and moral laxity preferred against the chaplains by the prelates who, I doubt not, had substantially just grounds for their disapprobation of the menial clergy, though it is certain that their antagonism to the private chaplains was aggravated by the difficulty which prelatie authority experienced in controlling priests, who, enjoying the protection of powerful laymen, lived in a certain sense beyond the reach of ecclesiastical discipline. It not unfrequently happened that to annoy the rector of his parish, with whom he had quarrelled, a squire would incite his chaplain to embarrass the incumbent in the discharge of his parochial duties, and to put upon him vexations and affronts similar to those which the parochial clergy of the fourteenth century endured from the mendicant brothers.

One of the earliest and most effective denouncers of the menial clergy was Bishop Hall, who gives a forcible and painful picture of their position in the halls of disdainful employers. The typical chaplain of Hall's satire was required to take his turn at waiting at table with the other servants, and to sleep in a truckle-bed, near the superior couch of his pupil, the patron's son, whom he might not even chastise for his childish faults until the boy's mother had prescribed the exact number of cuts with the rod that his misconduct deserved. The bishop writes thus:—

' A gentle squire would gladly intertaine  
 Into his house some trencher-chaplain ;  
 Some willing man, that might instruct his sons,  
 And that would stand to good conditions.  
 First, that he lie upon the truckle-bed,  
 Whiles his yong maister lieth ore his head.  
 Second, that he do, on no default,  
 Ever presume to sit above the salt.  
 Third, that he never change his trencher twice.  
 Fourth, that he use all common courtesies ;  
 Sit bare at meales, and one halfe rise and wait.  
 Last, that he never his yong master beat,  
 But must ask his mother to define,  
 How many jerkes she would his breech should line.  
 All these observed, he should contented bee,  
 To give five markes and winter liverye.'



After the wont of satirists, Bishop Hall puts an extreme case as a specimen of the ordinary experiences of the menial clergy, and then exaggerates its worst features so as to heighten their repulsiveness: and, bad though it is, the bishop's instance of the servile degradation of the clerical class who lived in the homes of gentry, becomes even more extravagant and revolting than the painter designed it to be to those who fail to realize the conditions and results of gentle service in Elizabethan England. A clerical tutor would now-a-days regard it as an indignity if he were asked to share a bedroom with his youthful pupil; but under Elizabeth, when gentlemen of high rank would on a pinch sleep together in the same bed, and every collegian (Soph or B.A.) at Oxford and Cambridge had at night his 'chum,' or chamber companion, in the person of a junior undergraduate, sleeping on a truckle-bed at his side, a chaplain-tutor might occupy the same sleeping apartment with his pupil and yet think himself treated like a person of worth. Bishop Hall would have discerned nothing unseemly in such an arrangement, so long as the tutor enjoyed the superior bed and the youngster lay on the truckle couch. Usually the Elizabethan chaplain was allowed to sit above the salt; but, even in houses where he was placed below it, his position did not imply that he was to be ranked with such persons as had no better birth or breeding than our present domestic servitors. In Lincoln's Inn Hall, where certainly no affront is ever put on the Church, the chaplain does not sit at the benchers' or chief table, but has his chair in the first mess of the Senior barristers, or second table, *i. e.* immediately below the salt. That Bishop Hall's 'trencher-chaplain' was allowed a second clean plate at his meal is evidence that the repast was served to him with more decency than usually marked the dinners of common folk in the seventeenth century. In being required to sit bare at table, whilst the quality above the salt wore their hats and bonnets, he was only expected to observe one of 'those common courtesies' which all gentle servants were accustomed to render to their hosts and hosts' guests. It certainly was not usual for the domestic chaplain to take a turn at waiting on the sitters at the high table, during the former or latter half of the banquet; but when this service was put upon him in a great man's banqueting-

hall, he anyhow co-operated with servants of gentle degree, who were not domestic servants in the modern sense of the term. The stipulation which denied him the privilege of birching his pupil according to the everlasting fitness of things, and to his heart's content, was an ignominious curtailment of his pedagogic rights for which I suggest no apology. The salary offered for his services was ridiculously small; but the chaplain, it must be remembered, took service not so much for a salary as for 'the advantages of a desirable home:' and, though he seldom received more in money from his entertainer than ten pounds a-year, he sooner or later obtained in recompence for poorly-paid work a living that provided for his old age.

The strongest witness against the general tone and morality of the menial clergy of James the First's and Charles the First's England is George Herbert, who enjoyed peculiarly good opportunities for watching their demeanour in the houses of great people, and must have often observed in them the faults which he urged them to avoid in the following grave passage of 'The Country Parson:'—'Those that live in noble houses are called chaplains, whose duty and obligation being the same to the house they live in, as a parson to his parish, in describing the one (which is indeed the bent of my discourse) the other will be manifest. Let not chaplains think themselves so free as many of them do, and because they have different names, think their office different. Doubtless they are parsons of the families they live in, and are entertained to that end, either by an open, or implicit covenant. Before they are in orders, they may be received for companions, or discoursers; but after a man is once a minister, he cannot agree to come into any house, where he shall not exercise what he is, unless he forsake the plough and look back. Wherefore they are not to be over-submissive, and base, but to keep up with the Lord and Lady of the house, and to preserve a boldness with them and all, even so far as reproof to their very face, when occasion calls, but seasonably and discreetly.'

Touching satirically on the position and treatment of domestic chaplains in the houses of the Restoration gentry, Dr. Eachard, in 'The Contempt of the Clergy Considered,' observes, 'Or, shall we trust them in some good gentlemen's houses, there

to perform holy things? with all my heart: so that they may not be called down from their studies to say grace to every health: that they may have a little better wages than the cook or butler: as also that there may be a groom in the house, besides the chaplain: (for sometimes to the ten pounds a-year they crowd the looking after a couple of geldings): and that he may not be sent from the table, picking his teeth, and sighing with his hat under his arm, whilst the knight and my lady eat up the tarts and chickens: it may be also convenient, if he were suffered to speak now and then in the parlour, besides at grace and prayer-time: and that my cousin Abigail and he sit not too near one another at meals: nor be presented together to the little vicarage. All this, sir, must be thought of; for in good earnest, a person at all thoughtful of himself and conscience, had much better chuse to live with nothing but beans and pease pottage (so that he may have the command of his thoughts and time) than to have second and third courses, and to obey the unreasonable humours of some families.' Readers do not need to be reminded of the bold and effective, but very unjustifiable use, which Macaulay in his famous third chapter made of Eachard's satire on the inferior clergy of his day, dealing with the humorist's malicious suggestions and sprightly exaggerations as though they were the data of dry historic record, and as though its sarcasms, instead of being directed at exceptional abuses, were aimed at evils everywhere apparent in the nature and status of the clerical order. The witty and not over-scrupulous Master of Catherine Hall had the fairness and prudence to state that his droll caricature of the private chaplains of his day had special reference to ministers 'obeying the unreasonable humours of *some* families;' but Macaulay leads his readers to infer that the slights put upon menial clergy in these exceptional families were a sample of the indignities generally offered to their chaplains by the Caroline nobility and gentry.

Describing the quality and tone of the private chaplains who fawned upon powerful patrons a century after Herbert administered his cautious and temperate rebuke to the characteristic sycophancy of their class,—and almost seventy years after the publication of Dr. Eachard's famous satire—the author of 'The

Contempt of the Clergy considered' (1739) says, 'When I was at Bath last year, I was invited by a gentleman who lodged in the same house to go and spend a month with him at his seat in Somersetshire. I readily accepted his invitation, and went with him. We came thither on a Friday night, and on the Sunday morning I was preparing to go to church, which I always look upon as a decent compliment to my supervisors, who have been pleased to make the Christian religion a national establishment: but my friend took me out to walk in his park, and shew me the beauties of his situation. The next Sunday he contrived some other amusement to hinder our going to church. There was indeed a clergyman in the house, who had quite laid aside his sacerdotal character, but acted in several capacities as valet-de-chambre, butler, game-keeper, pot-companion, butt and buffoon, who never read prayers, or so much as said grace in the family whilst I was in it. Nay, don't laugh: whatever my own sentiments or practice may be, yet you must own my character is consistent; I am all of a piece: my sentiments and practice agree, and I have a much better opinion of a man that pretends to no sort of principles than I can have of one whose practice is a direct contrary to his profession. The next Sunday my curiosity led me to church, whilst my friend stayed at home to settle an account with his bailiff: where I had the pleasure of hearing a very plain, rational discourse, delivered with a decent warmth and manly authority. After service, suing me in a very obliging manner to dine with him, which I excused, but took half an hour's walk with him in his garden before dinner, and quickly found him to be a very learned, well-bred, religious man; but one that was resolved to support his sacred character, and not prostitute the dignity of his function, nor his superior understanding to the vanity and contempt of ignorance and folly. This was sufficient to exclude him from all the social comforts of the neighbourhood, whilst a dirty wretch, who seemed to live in defiance of virtue, decency, and good manners, and clean linen, was in a good measure the first minister and director of the family, always mentioned with the familiar appellation of honest Harry.'

Speaking of the disadvantage at which a conscientious clergyman was often placed by his virtues when venturing on intercourse with untaught and unworthy gentry, the same

satirical writer of free thoughts about men and manners observes,—‘ If the esquire happen to be wrong-headed, illiterate, sottish, or profane, what can the poor parson do? Can there be agreement betwixt virtue and vice? any communion betwixt light and darkness? If they should ever descend so low as to invite the poor vicar from his solitude, soup-maigre, and match-light, to make one of a party of frolic and madness; and he should refuse the invitation, or come awkwardly to it; if he should refuse to go to the utmost stretch of intemperance, or disrelish the many ungracious jokes which are always cracked over the doctor; it gives a sort of check to the merriment, and throws a damp upon the spirits of the good company; they immediately treat him with that indifference and contempt (if not with rudeness and ill manners) as may sufficiently discourage him from ever venturing among them again. From that moment he has a mark of contempt put upon him, as a sour, morose, ill-natured fellow.’

## CHAPTER VI.

## HONOUR AND CONTEMPT OF THE CLERGY.

READERS of the preceding chapters do not require to be assured in this late page that one of the immediate effects of the Reformation was a very great diminution of the dignity and social influence of the clerical order. The regulars were the aristocratic section of the national hierarchy; and by the revolution which dissolved the colleges of these superior clergy, and having confiscated their estates turned them adrift on the world to subsist on small annuities, or reduced them into the ranks of the inadequately beneficed seculars, the priesthood lost its personal connexions with the highest families of the land, and found itself hated and despised by the members of those powerful and patrician classes, in which the rupture with Rome and subsequent ecclesiastical changes had been most productive of humiliation and pecuniary loss.

The Catholic aristocracy, who before the Reformation had looked down upon the parochial clergy as a plebeian class, entertained no disposition to regard them more favourably, when they added the sin of heresy to the disqualifications of ignoble lineage. Again, the Protestant aristocracy—many of whom had been impelled to join the ranks of the reformers by a desire to deprive the ecclesiastics of their excessive wealth and power—were sharers in the disdain which the Catholic gentry cherished for the plebeian seculars, and were not likely to countenance any policy that promised to reinvest the clerical order with dangerous influence and inordinate riches. Thus despised on the one hand by the aristocracy, who disdained their domestic humility and abhorred their heresy, and coldly regarded on the other hand by the aristocracy, who, whilst openly defending the

new religious doctrine, secretly chuckled over the impoverishment and social abasement of its official teachers, the reformed clergy had to endure for many days the scornful animosity of their fervent foes and the disdainful pity of their lukewarm friends. Stripped of its finest endowments the clerical profession ceased, to a great extent, to be a vocation suitable to well-born and ambitious youth. Whilst the younger sons of the superior Catholic families never for a moment thought of taking orders and becoming candidates for the modest preferments of what they deemed an heretical establishment, the younger sons of the higher Protestant gentry were seldom drawn within the lines of a clergy whose most fortunate members, beneath the episcopal grade, were very needy and humble persons in comparison with the abbots and regular priests of past time.

Moreover, whilst the reformed church was loathed by the Catholics as an unspeakably wicked contrivance, it was distrusted and lightly esteemed by its Elizabethan supporters as a novelty, an experiment, a compromise which might work well, but very probably would prove a failure. Reflecting with pious pride and gratitude on the unbroken line of our episcopal ordinations, the Anglican churchman of the present day in his ecclesiastical retrospect passes lightly over the convulsions of the Reformation period, and refuses to regard his church as severed from the Holy Catholic organization. To his mind, the sixteenth century, instead of witnessing the creation or establishment of his church, beheld only its reformation,—and by ‘reformation’ he means a process that, without touching the spiritual foundations or everlasting truths of the Church, merely relieved it of certain superficial errors and imperfections, which will in time be removed from all other parts of the sacred and universal Church of which the Anglican establishment is an inseparable portion. Whether he is right in this view it is my purpose neither to affirm nor inquire; but they err greatly who imagine that any numerous section of the reformers of the sixteenth century took the same view of the grand religious revolt against the Papacy. Alike by the majority of those who opposed, and the majority of those who promoted it, the movement known as ‘the Reformation’ was regarded as a movement that aimed at the destruction of an

old church and the creation of a new one. The ecclesiastical directors of the change were careful to preserve the chain of episcopal connexion between the Protestant clergy and Catholic hierarchy; but in thus jealously maintaining the Apostolic succession, and providing that no enemy of the reformed body should be justified in denying its descent from the Catholic church, the Anglican bishops took thought for a matter in which, however important it was to the clerical mind, the laity felt scarcely any concern. And when the revolution was perfected, our ancestors of the laity, alike Protestant and Catholic, concurred in regarding the ecclesiastical settlement, which was one of its chief results, as a new thing.

Yet, further;—besides its newness, the reformed church laboured under the disadvantage of apparent instability. Long after Elizabeth had ascended the throne, it was only a minority of her subjects who were strongly confident or cordially hopeful that the Church would endure. Whilst the Catholics regarded it as a new offence against the Almighty, who would not suffer Himself to be mocked by it for any long time, the Puritans denounced it as a compromise between superstition and truth, which would speedily pass away and leave room for a purely evangelical structure. Nor were its most resolute upholders at all sanguine that it would endure. Was it credible, they asked, that so fair a ship would outlive the hurricane caused by two mighty winds blowing from directly opposite points of the compass? Henry the Eighth had found himself compelled to make change after change in his ecclesiastical polity. Edward the Sixth's church had been swept away by the Marian reaction. Would Elizabeth's church be more durable? At any moment she might fall by the assassin's knife or natural death; in which case the Catholics would regain the ascendancy,—and the fate of the new church would fulfil the prophecies of Rome and Geneva.

So long as the Church had the appearance of newness and instability, and had no funds for the enrichment of an ambitious hierarchy, the clerical profession had no attractions for men of birth and station, and was adopted by few persons of other than obscure parentage. Now and then the cadet of a noble but fallen family took orders in Elizabeth's church; but



usually the gentle younger sons of her reign preferred to push their fortunes at the bar, in military service, or in maritime adventure, and to leave for candidates of inferior condition the honours of an ecclesiastical system which perhaps would not outlive a generation. Most of the Queen's bishops and ecclesiastical dignitaries were persons of decidedly humble extraction; and even the best descended of them bore names unknown in history or to the majority of the people.

The records of a time, rife with animosities amongst churchmen who abused each other with equal malignity and violence, might be quoted unjustly to prove that the clergy of the later part of the sixteenth century were a mere rabble of ignorant and base-born adventurers. But allowance must be made for the habit of slander which seems to have infected every class of society during the Reformation period. Bishop Bonner was stated to have been the illegitimate son of a dissolute priest, and to have begotten sons whose birth was as shameful as his own: but whilst it is doubtful whether he had illegitimate issue, it is certain that he was the lawful son of a poor man who lived on a small patch of land in Gloucestershire. Gardyner of Winchester, Tonstal of Durham, Oglethorpe of Carlisle, were also said to have laboured under the stain of shameful birth, at a time when illegitimacy was scorned by good society far more than it is now-a-days. If Catholic annalists may be trusted, the earlier Anglican bishops were a most unsavoury class of mortals, and the earlier rectors of the reformed church were, for the most part, illiterate mechanics. According to eminent bishops of the Elizabethan church, the Puritan divines were untaught, shallow, dirty fellows. The extravagance and excess of the abuse, which the divines of the various parties hurled at their opponents, have the effect of making the cautious reader put no reliance whatever on the statements of the vituperators when there is the slightest ground for suspecting them to be under the influence of personal enmity or factious spite.

Under Elizabeth, episcopacy suffered greatly in popular esteem from the obscure origin of the prelates; and in the seventeenth century, when bishops grew rapidly in power and arrogance, there is conclusive evidence that they smarted under a consciousness of their ancestral inferiority to the nobles and

gentlemen who, incensed by their policy, were not slow to taunt them with their familiar meanness, and to deride them for being mere upstarts. In the opening days of the Long Parliament, when Lord Brooke put forth his book against the prelates, and insolently described them as being sprung ‘*de fece populi*—from the dregs of the people,’ they were foolish enough to lose temper and vindicate their gentility by stating from what highly respectable yeomen and shopkeepers they were descended. Archbishop Williams was as nobly born as ever a Welshman in North Wales; had he not proved his gentility by buying two estates in the principality, because they had belonged to his ancestors? Bishop Juxon’s ‘parents had lived in good fashion, and gave him a large allowance, first in the University, then in Gray’s Inn, where he lived as fashionable as other gentlemen; so that the Lord Brooke might question the parentage of any Inns-of-court-gentleman as his.’ In Bishop Morton’s behalf it was urged by himself and his friends that his father had been Mayor of York: ‘so that Lord Brooke might as well justly quarrel with the descent of any citizen’s sons in England.’ The ancestors of Bishop Cook of Hereford had lived in the same house for four hundred years, and some of them had been sheriffs of the county. Bishop Curl’s father had held the highly respectable office of auditor in the Court of Wards. Bishop Owen of St. Asaph was cousin, in some degree or other, to every man in Carnarvon and Anglesea who had 300*l.* a-year. Bishop Goodman derived a larger fortune from his father than Lord Brooke’s father had for the maintenance of himself and children. These vindications of the gentility of the bishops were put forth at a time when the bishops were on the point of losing their seats in the House of Peers, ‘and when,’ says Fuller, ‘the clerk of the Parliament, applying himself to the prevalent party, in the reading of bills, turned his back to the bishops, who could not (and it seems he intended they should not) distinctly hear anything, as if their consent or dissent were little concerned therein.’

In his speech on the Liturgy,—adopting the ungenerous tone with which the nobles of Charles the First’s time often spoke of prelates, even whilst consenting to or encouraging the assumptions of prelacy,—Lord Say and Seal taunted Laud with his

plebeian origin, and the small knowledge which he had of the great world before his professional elevation, describing him as ‘a man of mean birth, bred up in a college (and that too frequently falls out to be in a faction), whose narrow comprehension extended itself no further than to carry on a side in a college, or canvas for a Proctor’s place in the university.’ Whereto the insulted primate, defending himself to the public, replied,—‘This concerns me indeed, and very nearly; for I see his Lordship resolves to rake me up from my very birth: a way unusual for men well-bred, and little beseeming a person of honour; especially thus to insult upon a fallen fortune. But yet it concerns me not in my relation to a sectary, unless his Lordship would possess the world that I was bred in a faction, and so like enough to prove one. But how my lord is mistaken in this will plainly appear. First then, it is true, I am a man of ordinary, but very honest, birth; and the memory of my parents savours very well to this day in the town of Reading, where I was born. Nor was I so meanly born, as perhaps my Lord would insinuate, for my father had borne all the offices in that town, save the Mayoralty. And my immediate predecessor (whom I am sure my lord himself accounted very worthy of his place) was meanly born as myself, his father being of the same trade in Guildford that mine was in Reading.’

When the best-born bishops could say no more to the glorification of their ancestry and immediate parentage than that they were the sons of respectable and affluent citizens, who in their day were not without relations having some pretensions to gentility; and when the majority of the prelates had still less title to the respect which in the seventeenth century pertained to none but persons of gentle lineage, it was felt alike by nobles and commonalty that the chiefs of the church had been fairly described by Lord Brooke, and were very mean persons in comparison with the peers and ancient gentry whose forefathers’ banners had fluttered in the Crusades, and who were the lords of castles that had been built in the times of the Norman or Plantagenet sovereigns. Of the illiberality and essentially vulgar insolence which qualified the terms in which the feudal magnates, during the rapid decay of feudalism, declared their contempt for the plebeian origin of the most eminent ecclesias-

ties we will say nothing, save that the disdain under which these superior clergy writhed was neither more ungenerous in kind nor more violent in expression than the scorn which they in their turn exhibited to people beneath them in degree and fashion,—and more especially to the detested Roundheads.\*

Whilst the bishops of Charles the First's time were secretly contemned and sometimes openly taunted by the aristocracy for not being gentlemen by birth, the inferior grades of clergy comprised so large a majority of persons whose extraction, though respectable in a certain sense, was devoid of gentility, that the few young men of good families who entered the sacred profession were generally thought to derogate from their quality by associating themselves with the members of so lowly a calling. When George Herbert—a courtier and man of society, as well as a gentleman of noble lineage—proclaimed his purpose to take holy orders, 'a court-friend,' says Walton, urged him to relinquish so eccentric a design, on the ground that the clerical profession was 'too mean an employment, and too much below his birth, and the excellent abilities and endowments of his mind.' To which expostulation Herbert replied, 'It hath been formerly judged that the domestic servants of the King of Heaven should be of the noblest families on earth. And though the iniquity of the late times have made clergymen meanly valued, and the sacred name of priest contemptible; yet I will labour to make it honourable, by consecrating all my learning and all my poor abilities to advance the glory of that God that

\* In his answer to Lord Say's speech, Laud repays in scorn to the Roundheads the contempt put upon prelacy by his antagonist:—'The other is, that there is of late a name of scorn fastened upon the brethren of the separation, and they are commonly called Roundheads, from their fashion of cutting close and rounding off their hair: a fashion used in Paganism in the times of their mourning, and sad occurrences, as these seem to do, putting on, in outward show at least, a sour look and a more severe carriage than other men. This fashion of rounding the head, God himself forbids His people to practise, the more to withdraw them from the superstitions of the Gentiles: "Ye shall not round the corners of your heads." This express text of Scripture troubled the Brownists and the rest extremely; and therefore this Lord, being a great favourer of theirs, if not one himself, hath thought upon this way to ease their minds, and his own. For it is no matter for this text, nor for their resembling heathen idolaters; they may round their heads safely, since those things which were before can give no rule in this.'

gave them; knowing that I can never do too much for Him, that hath done so much for me as to make me a Christian. And I will labour to be like my Saviour, by making humility lovely in the eyes of all men, and by following the merciful and meek example of my dear Jesus.' That Herbert made this reply in the precise words attributed to him by his biographer, we can all the more readily believe, because of its exact accordance in tone and language with the remark which he makes on the social disesteem of the clergy, in the twenty-eighth chapter of 'The Country Parson.' In that chapter, entitled 'The Parson in Contempt,' the gentle priest says, 'The country parson knows well, that both for the general ignominy which is cast upon the profession, and much more for those rules, which out of his choicest judgment hee hath resolved to observe, and which are described in this book, he must be despised; because this hath been the portion of God his master, and of God's Saints his brethren, and this is foretold, that it shall be so still "until things be no more."'

By those who follow the old fashion of thinking and speaking of the church as a thing distinct and separate from the nation,—a fashion which came to us from the days when the church was a power, flourishing above and beyond the lines of strictly national life, rendering obedience and pecuniary tribute to a foreign government, and enjoying a limited exemption from the laws of the land, in which it stood without being altogether of it,—the Reformation is ordinarily spoken of as a revolution which deprived 'the Church' of a large part of its possessions, and was therefore guilty of despoiling an institution which had some other title to its property than the general good of the community. But to those who, refusing to take this view of the Church, regard the clerical order as a national institution created and sustained for the religious welfare, just as the army is a national institution created and sustained for the defence of the political interests, of the realm, the suppression of the regular clergy and the application of the wealth, which had maintained them, to other uses, appear precisely analogous to the measures of retrenchment and reform by which the governing powers of the country from time to time reduce the army, navy, or civil service, and direct to other national needs the sums withdrawn

from the expenditure on those services. By those who take this view—the nineteenth century's view—of the Church and its clergy, it appears that the Church and clergy were no more plundered by the Reformation, than the army is plundered when it is decided to cut down the estimates for its maintenance. In the sixteenth century our ancestors, after much angry talk and contention, concluded that the ecclesiastical establishment ought to be greatly reduced; that for generations the regular clergy had done nothing, or very little, for the accomplishment of the ends for which the Church had been created; that the clerical business of the country could be performed efficiently by the parochial clergy and the ecclesiastics of the cathedrals; and that it was desirable to relieve society and the Church of the splendid burden of the monastic houses. Not, as the popular imagination conceives, because they were more disposed than other men to bodily sloth, but because they were idle so far as the religious interests of the community were concerned, popular satire fixed upon the monks the reputation for laziness which still clings to them. As unprofitable and needless members of the ecclesiastical force, they were dismissed from the spiritual army on retiring pensions, or were required to labour in that inferior branch of the service, which henceforth comprised the entire rank and file of the clerical establishment. That the reformation was attended with no harsh measures, which in these days would be unanimously condemned as highly unjust to individuals, I do not contend; but whatever spoliation of clergy marked the revolution was perpetrated neither upon the Church nor the clerical order, but upon those numerous ecclesiastical persons who, when the nation had no longer a desire to retain them in their places, were discharged without due regard to what would now-a-days be called their vested interests.

But though neither the Church nor the clerical order can be justly said to have been plundered, and though the injustice of the change terminated with the lives of the deprived monks, the suppression of the religious orders and houses lowered the status of the entire clerical order by depriving it of an enormous amount of wealth, which, though its possession had pertained to a section, had conferred lustre on all the members, of the sacred profession; and for several generations poverty was a prevail-

ing characteristic of the national clergy, whereas they had previously enjoyed inordinate, though unequally distributed, riches. The primates and a few of the prelates still possessed the means of living with feudal magnificence,\* the ability to rival or surpass the secular nobles in costly ostentation. Here and there a deanery was lavishly endowed; and, until they condescended to matrimony, most of the cathedral clergy could live almost as luxuriously as the less affluent of the suppressed monks, whom they closely resembled in many of their external circumstances. But for the most part, even the richer parochial clergy had barely sufficient means to support themselves with decency and discharge the numerous obligations of their offices.

But, poor though they were, the reader is apt to overrate the indigence of our clergy under Elizabeth and her two nearest successors, who regards the smallness of their stipends and tithal incomes, and forgets that a country parson's glebe did much more, than it can now effect, to sustain his material prosperity, and to put him on a footing of pecuniary equality with his neighbours in times when the yeomanry and inferior gentry lived chiefly on the produce of their own farms, and had far less need of cash than their descendants of the present generation. Again, the customary payments of the clergy, such as Easter-offerings and other comparatively obsolete kinds of tribute, yielded much more to the affluence of the old incumbents than persons are apt to think, who forget how valuable money was in James the First's reign. Again, the fee-system was in full

\* The splendour and pomp with which Archbishop Whitgift appeared in public astounded foreign Catholics who saw it for the first time, after having been told that simplicity and lowliness were the distinguishing characteristics of the reformed hierarchy. 'His train,' says one of Whitgift's biographers, 'sometimes consisted of one thousand horse. The archbishop, being once at Dover, attended by five hundred horse, one hundred of which were his own servants, many of them wearing chains of gold, a person of distinction then arriving from Rome, greatly wondered to see an English archbishop with so splendid a retinue. But seeing him the following Sabbath in the cathedral of Canterbury, attended by the above magnificent train, with the dean, prebendaries, and preachers, in their surplices and scarlet hoods; and hearing the music of organs, cornets, and sacbuts, he was seized with admiration, and said, "That the people at Rome were led in blindness, being made to believe that in England there was neither archbishop, nor bishop, nor cathedral, nor any ecclesiastical government: but that all were pulled down." But he protested that, unless it were in the Pope's chapel, he never saw a more solemn sight, or heard a more heavenly sound.'

force in the seventeenth century; and no one who has intimately examined the social life of the period can doubt that the parochial clergy derived considerable emolument from the spontaneous generosity of those for whom they performed any of the special offices of the Church. Dr. Plume has recorded, that whilst Hacket was rector of St. Andrew's, Holborn, he received lavish gratuities from the wealthier members of his congregation for the ordinary routine duties of the Church. 'Whilst he lived in this parish,' says Dr. Plume, 'he would give God thanks he got a good temporal estate. Parishioners of all sorts were very kind and free to him; divers lords and gentlemen, several judges and lawyers of eminent quality, were his constant auditors, whom he found, like Zenas, honest lawyers, conscientious to God, and lovers of the Church of England, and very friendly and bountiful to their minister; Sir Julius Cæsar never heard him preach but he would send him a broad piece, and he did the like to others; and he would often send a Deau or a Bishop a pair of gloves, because he would not hear God's word gratis.\*' In days when the quality thus showered gifts on a rich pluralist, the country parson and his stipendiary curate received handsome *douceurs* on such occasions as baptisms, weddings, and funerals, in wealthy families.

Against the losses sustained in purse and dignity by the clerical order from the Reformation must be put the intellectual activity which the religious controversies and ecclesiastical changes occasioned in the clergy, as well as amongst the intelligent laity.

The Revolution found our ecclesiastics grossly ignorant;

\* Speaking of the liberality with which Hacket's friends subscribed for the repair and renovation of his church, Dr. Plume says, 'Scarce any of the quality dying, but according to ancient piety, at his request left a legacy to that purpose, which was laid up in the church chest . . . . By his persuasions many gave very liberally; in particular, I remember the pleasantness of Sir Henry Martin, who at his first speaking bade his man pay him thirty pounds: when he received it, because he gave him humble thanks, he bade his man count him five pounds more for his humble thanks. About anno '39, having many thousands in stock and subscription, he went to my lord's grace of Canterbury, to ask his lordship's leave, that what workmen were willing might indifferently be entertained by him, without being prejudicial to the repair of St. Paul's: but our troubles came on, and the Long Parliament seized the money gathered for the repair of the churches, to carry on this war against King and Church.'



and in the early years of Elizabeth's reign, to supply the comparatively few places rendered vacant by ejections of Catholic clergy, and the far larger number of livings where the performance of Divine service had been partially or wholly neglected by pluralist incumbents, the bishops were constrained to ordain and induct to benefices men who had never studied at either of the universities, or received any academic training better than the instruction of obscure grammar-schools. The difficulty of finding scholarly Protestants for the ministerial service was mainly due to the conscientious objections which many of the Reformers entertained against the requirements of the Elizabethan Church. But, however caused, it was a serious embarrassment to the prelates who were daily called upon to decide whether they should let congregations remain without curates, or confer the orders of the Church on comparatively unlearned candidates.

At St. Paul's Cathedral, Si-quis door was covered with advertisements for persons qualified to discharge the priestly functions;\* and in London, where Elizabeth's ecclesiastical policy occasioned at the opening of her reign a larger proportion of clerical displacements than in quarters remote from the

\* Elizabethan advertisements ordinarily began with the first two words of the old Latin form commencing '*Si quis*;' and one of the doors of old St. Paul's, on which the Londoners of the sixteenth century were wont to paste hand-bills stating the requirements of advertisers, was called Si Quis Door. In '*The Girl's Home Book*' Decker says, 'The first time that you enter into Paules, pass through the body of the church like a porter; yet presume not to fetch so much as a whole turne in the middle aisle; no to cast an eye upon Si Quis doore, pasted and plastered up with serving-men's supplications.' Elizabeth had not been many years on the throne, when it was rumoured that simoniacal patrons, or their wily agents, used to hang about this door, and make corrupt bargains for the sale of ecclesiastical presentations with curates on the look-out for preferment. The prohibitions of simony are conclusive evidence of its existence; but, as I have stated fully elsewhere, I cannot believe that it was greatly prevalent whilst the supply of clergy was inadequate to the needs of the Church, and when the emoluments of ordinary livings were not readily marketable, by reason of their insignificance and the poverty of the clerical class. Satire, however, magnified the misconduct of exceptional delinquents, and created an impression amongst the populace that Si Quis Alley was a regular 'Change for illicit traffickers in ecclesiastical benefices. In one of his satires (B. ii. Sat. v.) Bishop Hall says:—

'Saw'st thou ever Siquis patched on Paul's Church-door,  
To seek some vacant vicarage before?

centres of the Marian persecution, many of the parochial churches were supplied by priests of the slenderest scholastic attainments. Of the hundred and sixteen clergymen of the Archdeaconry of London, in the year 1563, forty-two were almost Latinless, thirteen had no tincture of classic learning whatever, and four were 'indocti'—so uniformly ignorant and untrained, that their tenure of clerical offices was scandalous. Of the other fifty-seven ecclesiastics, three were described in the register of the archdeaconry as '*docti latinè et gracè,*' twelve as '*docti,*' two as '*mediocriter docti,*' and nine as '*latinè docti;*' whilst against the names of the remaining thirty-one were appended the words, '*latinè mediocriter intell.*' In the letter in which he communicated these facts to Samuel Pepys, in 1696, Edmund—then Domestic Chaplain of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and subsequently Bishop of Lincoln—observed, 'If the London clergy were thus ignorant, what must we imagine the country divines were?'

Of course the enemies of the Reformed Church and vituperators of the new clergy did not fail to reproach them with the want of learning and gentility, which unquestionably characterized many of the recently ordained priests. When Dorman assailed Dean Nowel with scurrilous violence, ridiculing him for

Who wants a Churchman, that can service say,  
 Read fast and faire his monthly homiley?  
 And wed, and bury, and make Christen-soules?  
 Come to the left-side Alley of Seint Paules,  
 Thou servile foole: why could'st thou not repaire  
 To buy a benefice at Steeple-faire?  
 There moughtest thou, for but a slender price,  
 Advowson thee with some fat benefice.  
 Or, if thou list not wayt for dead men's shoon,  
 Nor pray eche morn th'incumbent's daies wer doon;  
 A thousand patrons thither ready bring  
 Their new fahn churches to the chaffering.  
 Stake three years' stipend: no man asketh more.  
 Go, take possession of the church-porch doore,  
 And ring thy bels; lucke stroken in thy fist,  
 The parsonage is thine, or ere thou wist.  
 Saint Fooles of Gotam mought thy parish bee,  
 For this thy brave and servile Symonie.'

Even so early as Elizabeth's time, griping patrons had discovered that it was not wrong to sell 'next presentations' of livings not yet vacant, though it was simony to sell vacant benefices. Three years' income was no inordinate price for immediate induction to a good living.

having suddenly risen to the fame of ‘a valiant preacher’ from the position of ‘a mean schoolmaster,’ the abusive censor of the age inveighed in the same strain of rancorous ill manners against the ‘tinkers, cobblers, cowherds, broom-men, fiddlers, and the like,’ who had been elevated to pulpits to instruct the multitude on the mysteries of religion. For the sake of the Church rather than his own fame, the Dean, replying to his maligner, observed, ‘None such are reputed or counted divines as you lying slander us. Indeed, your most cruel murdering of so many learned men hath forced us, of mere necessity, to supply some small cures with honest artificers, exercised in the scriptures; not in place of divines, bachelors or doctors, but instead of Popish Sir John Lack-latins and of all honesty; instead of Dr. Dicer, Bachelor Bench-whistler, Master Card-player, the usual sciences of your Popish priests; who continually disputed, *pro et contra*, for their form upon their ale-bench: where you should wot of them in all towns and villages; instead of such chaplains of lust, more meet to be tinkers, cowherds, yea, bearwards and swineherds, than ministers in Christ’s Church, that some honest artificers, who, instead of such Popish books as dice and cards, have travailed in the scripture.’

But the period during which unlearned persons—*i.e.* persons who had received no training at the universities or other superior education—were admitted to ecclesiastical orders in considerable numbers did not extend over many years. Strype assures us that the custom of ordaining unscholarly candidates disappeared so soon as the urgent necessity which justified it had come to an end. After 1564 orders were seldom conferred on lay-readers; and, after 1573, it was understood, amongst ordinary persons desirous of becoming clergy, that their ambition could not be attained until they had qualified themselves by a proper course of special study.\*

\* In his ‘Annals of the Reformation’ Strype says:—‘So that in this year (1559), and some years following, until the year 1564 inclusive, many of the laity, who were competently learned, and of sobriety and good religion, were appointed to read the service in the churches, by letters of toleration from the bishops, some as deacons, some as helpers of the ministry in the word and sacraments; and divers, having been made deacons, were admitted into priests’ orders and beneficed.’ And further in the same work, amongst his collections for the year 1573, the compiler adds, —‘As for the Bishops of the Church, they did what in them

That, in the course of two generations at most, the clerical order was relieved of whatever reproach it had fairly incurred from the rudeness and ignorance of a considerable proportion of its members we learn from Dr. Plume, who, in his memoir of 'Hacket and his Times,' observes, 'About this time of King Charles the First's reign it was justly said, "*Stupor mundi Clerus Anglicanus;*" and whereas, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's Reformation, Siquis's had been set in St. Paul's, if any man could understand Greek, there was a deanery for him; if Latine, a good living; but, in the long reign of Queen Elizabeth and King James, the clergy of the Reformed Church of England grew the most learned of the world; for, by the restlessness of the Roman priests, they were trained up to arms from their youth.' And that Dr. Plume did not exaggerate the general advancement of clerical learning abundant evidence is furnished by the controversial literature of the seventeenth century, and the contributions rendered by ecclesiastics to historical literature, biography, and poetry.

To Lord Macaulay's graphic and highly-humorous caricature of the disqualifications and defects of the clerical profession in Charles the Second's time is mainly attributable the prevalent and very erroneous impression, that the Restoration clergy were less learned and polite, less affluent in scholarship, and less esteemed in society, than their official precursors in pre-Commonwealth days. Lord Macaulay's familiarity with the writings of ecclesiastical authors, and with the extant sermons of the most famous preachers of the Restoration period, compelled him to render homage to the abilities and attainments of its learned

lay to take away anything that might justly give offence: as in the regulation of their courts, and in requiring competent learning, and study at one of the Universities, in those that were hereafter to be admitted into the ministry; as well as for their morals. For before those days, near the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and for some years after, the bishops were fain sometimes to admit into holy orders laymen, and such as formerly had followed trade or husbandry, and that were but of little learning. Yet if they were sober, and of honest lives, friends to the religion, and could read well, they would ordain them readers or deacons, to supply small cures: very many in those times being wholly vacant. This was the reason that many times unfit men got into the Church. But this was complained of; and not without cause. And the bishops resolved, as much as they could, to redress this abuse; refusing henceforth to admit any such to orders unless so qualified as before.'

clergy; but he insists that, whilst these learned clergy were few, and resided in the capital or the cathedral cities, the country rectors and curates were scandalously deficient in culture and boorish in style; that they were for the most part neither superior in mental endowments to the inferior gentry who had never been to college, nor more refined than the coarse and common yeomanry. To support the earlier part of this strange statement he groups together the names of several eminent ecclesiastics who preached in metropolitan pulpits, or held cathedral preferments, and he leaves it to be inferred that they had no part or companionship with the rural divines, and may not be regarded as in any degree representing the intellectual condition of the country clergy of their time.

Careful examination into the clerical biographies of the seventeenth century, and conscientious consideration of all the conditions of clerical life in that period, render me certain that this view is one of the most fallacious of the many unsound theories with which Lord Macaulay's more brilliant than learned book abounds. In putting it forward, the fascinating historian erred just as the writer would err who should argue that the country clergy of our own day are unlettered and dull because the most conspicuous examples of clerical erudition and eloquence are holders of preferment in the universities, London, or the other cathedral towns; forgetting that our bishops and deans, our learned canons and popular civic preachers, have, for the most part, rendered service in rural cures; and that in the country parishes, whence they were taken to be exalted to the chief places of the hierarchy, they were surrounded by clerical neighbours, from whom they differed in no great degree, so far as culture and natural capacity are concerned. Like the ecclesiastical dignitaries of our own day, many of the exalted clergy of the Restoration epoch held country livings concurrently with their university and cathedral preferments; and if Lord Macaulay had been candid, he would have reminded his readers that some of the learned and brilliant ecclesiastics, whom he contrasts against the untaught and boorish clergy of the rural districts, were themselves country clergymen as well as town clergymen, and that they were frequent, though inconstant, residents on their country preferments.

In some respects clerical life in the country was far more congenial to highly-educated clergymen under the Stuarts than it is at the present time. In the seventeenth century, when gentle lay families were far more numerous in agricultural districts than they are nowadays, and when those families were almost constant residents in their halls and manor-houses, the country rector of social qualities and easy circumstances had ten agreeable lay neighbours where his successor has one at the present time, when the estates of the humbler squires and gentle yeomanry have been absorbed by inordinately wealthy land-owners, who spend much of their time in London and on the Continent, pay only brief visits to their various rural seats, and associate with the clergy of their neighbourhoods far less familiarly than the rural knights and esquires of olden time consorted with their clerical friends. In the seventeenth century, 'neighbourhood' was an affair of more importance than 'county' to the home-loving country gentleman; and he was accustomed to draw habitually and frequently to his hall such humbler personages as now enter it only for a state-dinner and a few formal courtesies. His hospitality was exercised most liberally to the clergy whose conversation enlivened his table, and accorded with his tone of thought. Even the Puritan land-owners, who abhorred bishops, overflowed with civility to parochial ministers.

Throughout that century the rural squires are found courting the acquaintance of their ecclesiastical neighbours, and it merits notice that at the same time the country clergy comprised a large proportion of the most scholarly and polite of their order. Under Elizabeth the learned and gentle Hooker had preferred the quietude of a country living to the mastership of the Temple. Hall was for years a Suffolk rector, near that 'most civil town' of Bury St. Edmund's, before he became a bishop. Heylyn was a personage of mark amongst the divines of Charles the First's London, but he was also a rural incumbent and active country parson. When George Herbert—the man of letters and taste, as well as of birth and fashion—took orders, he retired to a parish in Wiltshire. Nicholas Ferrars, the deacon, fixed his pious abode in Huntingdonshire. Hacket

had a London living, and was one of the most popular of metropolitan preachers; but he had also his rectory of Cheam, where he resided frequently before the Civil War, and constantly during the Commonwealth. Gauden was an Essex parson; and whatever may have been his demerits, the author of the 'Icôn Basilike' was certainly no such character as Macaulay's typical country vicar. Sanderson and Hammond were magnates at Oxford, and beloved pastors in the country. One of the brightest and most musical poets of the seventeenth century was Herrick, a Devonshire parson, who lost his living in the Civil disturbances, and recovered it at the Restoration. These are names taken from amongst hundreds that might be adduced in proof that clergymen of learning and fine taste did not avoid the country and congregate in the towns of the seventeenth century, as Macaulay would have us believe.

From Elizabeth's accession to James the Second's fall, the English clergy steadily advanced in learning, quality, and esteem. Under the first James and the first Charles they grew in power and gentility, whilst they increased in arrogance to, and unpopularity with, the laity, every succeeding decade of those reigns seeing a decided improvement in the culture and social rank of the hierarchy in town and country. The Revolution, which swept away Episcopacy and suppressed the cathedral establishments, increased the influence and raised the general character of the parochial clergy, by relieving their class of the black sheep who had disgraced the sacred calling, and by bringing the incumbents and curates into harmony with the sentiment and taste of the more respectable and decorous members of the inferior gentry and the commercial classes. Favourable, as we have seen, to learning and discipline at the universities, the Commonwealth raised the intellectual status of ecclesiastical persons; and on Charles the Second's return from exile, he found the pulpits of the parish churches filled by men far better born and taught, and far more highly respected by the multitude, than the parochial priests of his grandfather's and father's times had been. That the general body of the Restoration clergy possessed a fair amount of such learning as the universities furnished, is demonstrated by Eachard, who,

whilst ridiculing the scholastic system of instruction,\* and showing every disposition to expose and magnify the intellectual deficiencies of the ordinary priests, does not charge them with scandalous ignorance of what Oxford and Cambridge professed to teach. Moreover it must be remembered, that though Eachard speaks disdainfully of the parts and capacities of the inferior clergy, he is even more derisive of the mental characteristics and affectations of the pert Templars and other superficially educated laymen who presumed to look down upon country parsons as an illiterate and brainless class.

But it was not till the revival of Episcopacy, on the return of Charles the Second, that the clergy realized the good results of the disasters which had befallen them in the troubles of Charles the First's later years. In the popular reaction towards monarchy, and all things pertaining to it, the ecclesiastical order reaped a larger measure of good than any other section of society. The Royalist clergy and Cavalier gentry, the spiritual nobles and the secular aristocracy, had been drawn and bound together

\* Just as Mr. Robert Lowe has recently urged on our university tutors the propriety of teaching their pupils modern history and natural science, Dr. Eachard, in Charles the Second's time, making efforts for scholastic reform and a wider diffusion of useful knowledge, was desirous that undergraduates and schoolboys should be taught arithmetic and geometry, as well as Latin and Greek. 'And first,' he says, 'as to the ignorance of some of our clergy: if we would make a search to purpose, we must go as deep as the very beginnings of education; and, doubtless, may lay a great part of our misfortunes to the old-fashioned method and discipline of schooling itself: upon the well ordering of which, although much of the improvement of our clergy cannot be denied mainly to depend, yet by reason this is so well known to yourself, as also that there have been many of undoubted learning and experience, that have set out their models to this purpose; I shall therefore only mention such loss of time and abuse of youth as is most remarkable and mischievous, and as could not be conveniently omitted in a discourse of this nature, though never so short. And first of all, it were certainly worth the considering, whether it be unavoidably necessary to keep lads to sixteen or seventeen years of age in pure slavery to a few Latin and Greek words? Or whether it may not be more convenient, especially if we call to mind their natural inclinations to ease and idleness, and how hardly they are persuaded of the excellency of the liberal arts and sciences, any further than the smart of the last piece of discipline is fresh in their memories: whether, I say, it be not more proper and beneficial to mix those unpleasant tasks and drudgeries, to some that in all probability might not only take much better with them, but might also be much easier obtained? As suppose some part of time was allotted them for the reading of some innocent English authors, where they need not go every line to a tormenting dictionary, and whereby they might come in a short



by adversity. If Monarchy had its martyr, so had the Church ; for the sovereign who had perished beneath the headsman's axe was the chief of the Church, for whose sake he was said, and not untruly said, to have laid down his life. The wave of revolution, which swept Strafford from the stage, had been quickly followed by another, which removed Land from the storm which he had helped so largely to raise. The convulsion which suppressed Prelacy had also abolished the House of Peers. Before the Commonwealth the Church had been a new thing, the outgrowth of a few generations of civil disturbance ; and even in King Charles's London, where the bishops were all-powerful, and courtiers coquetted with High-church preachers, it was deemed in good society congruous with patriotism and high tone to deride the prelates as plebeian upstarts, and to speak of the Church as a mushroom establishment, and an unsatisfactory compromise between Papistry and Reform. On the Restoration the Church was no longer a novel experiment, but one of the ancient and venerable institutions which murderous and cruel men had uprooted. On the one hand, it was

time to apprehend common sense, and to begin to judge what is true: for you shall have lads that are arch-knaves at the nominative case, and that have a notable quick eye at spying out the verb, who, for want of reading such common and familiar books, shall understand no more of what is plain and easy than a well-educated dog or horse. Or suppose they were taught (as they might much easier be than what is commonly offered to them) the principles of arithmetic, geometry, and such alluring parts of learning; as these things undoubtedly would be much more useful, so much more delightful to them, than to be tormented with a tedious story how Phaeton broke his neck, or how many nuts and apples Tytirus had for his supper. For most certainly youths, if handsomely dealt with, are much inclinable to emulation, and to a very useful esteem of glory, and more especially if it be the reward of knowledge; and therefore, if such things were carefully and discreetly propounded to them, wherein they might not only earnestly contend amongst themselves, but might also see how far they outskill the rest of the world. A lad hereby would think himself high and mighty, and would certainly take great delight in contemning the next unlearned mortal he meets withal. But if instead hereof you diet him with nothing but rules and exceptions, with tiresome repetitions of *Ano*'s and *Τυπώ*'s, setting a day also apart to recite verbatim all the burdensome task of the foregoing week (which, I am confident, is usually as dreadful as an old parliament fast), we must needs believe that such a one thus managed will scarce think to prove immortal by such performances and accomplishments as these.' This passage from 'The Contempt of the Clergy' anticipates much of what has been recently said, with greater finish and amplitude, in reviews and magazines, in behalf of educational reform in our grammar-schools and universities.

averred that Charles the First had died to preserve Episcopacy, —a sufficient reason why Prelacy should be re-established and re-endowed. On the other hand, it was stated that the Episcopal Church had fallen through devotion to the crown,—a sufficient reason why the crown should load it with honours and wealth. So the Elizabethan Church was replaced, to the delight of the aristocracy and the satisfaction of an overwhelming majority of the people: and since its restoration no one has ventured to deride it for its want of antiquity.

Thus re-established more than two centuries since in a nation that had discovered an urgent need for it whilst trying to exist without it, the Episcopal Church has flourished to a degree for which even its enemies cannot account, save on the supposition that it is congenial to the intellect and temper of the country, and does upon the whole satisfactorily accomplish the ends for which it was created, reformed, and rebuilt. Every political change which has convulsed the country since the Restoration has been productive immediately or indirectly of honour and stability to a system, imperfect in many respects, but fruitful of beneficent results, and glorious in its traditions. Every fresh generation has seen its clergy grow in power, and draw within its lines a larger proportion of the aristocracy of the land; and even at periods when they have incurred reasonable charges of levity, worldliness, and sloth, the shortcomings of the members of the ecclesiastical order have been slight in comparison with the faults of the laity. If they have reflected the evils of current society, they have also exhibited its virtues. Anyhow, they have advanced in knowledge and honour; and they have also grown in wealth in a manner which almost justifies the opinion that, though its Established Church should have no pecuniary endowments, the clergy of a wealthy people would not fail to acquire a liberal share of the riches of the land, so long as no celibatic rule precluded them from marriage.

## CHAPTER VII.

### HOSPITALITY AND GAMES.

IN olden times, before increase of wealth and refinement had raised our parochial clergy above the ordinary kind of affluent or fairly prosperous laity, and rendered them a distinct class in the aristocratic order, rural incumbents, in the exercise of hospitality to their parishioners, were wont to receive as guests at their parsonages families of a quality far beneath the humblest of those who are nowadays admitted to social intercourse with the wives and children of rectors and vicars. ‘The country parson,’ says Herbert, ‘owing a debt of charity to the poor, and of courtesie to his other parishioners, he so distinguisheth, that he keeps his money for the poor, and his table for those that are above alms. Not but that the poor are welcome also to his table, whom he sometimes purposely takes home with him, setting them close by him, and carving for them, both for his own humility and their comfort, who are much cheered with such friendliness. But since both is to be done, the better sort invited, and the meaner relieved, he chooseth rather to give the poor money, which they can better employ to their own advantage, and suitably to their needs, than so much given in meat at dinner. Having thus invited some of his parish, he taketh his times to do the like to the rest; so that in the compasse of the year hee hath them all with him, because country people are very observant of such things, and will not be perswaded, being not invited, they are not hated.’ This general exercise of hospitality towards parishioners was continued by the well-to-do rural clergy, so long as the fashion of taking their tithes in kind, or making special agreements for the payment of them in money, rendered it politic for the incumbents to maintain personal relations and a show of private friendship with their

tithe-paying parishioners; and a vestige of it is still seen in the customary tithe-dinners, which many of the country rectors prefer to give at village taverns, instead of at their official residences, in which many of the formal guests at tithe-dinners are nowadays never received on a footing of equality or even of social friendliness.\*

The repast, of which the rector of the seventeenth century invited his tithe-payers to partake at his private board, was an entertainment of homely fare, though cordial welcome. The dishes consisted of the solid joints and substantial puddings, which even the aristocracy of the time regarded as the choicest of food; and though the principal toasts were drunk in canary,

\* In olden time, after no less than before the Reformation, the exercise of generous, and even lavish hospitality, was one of the first duties of the superior clergy. Whilst the well-beneficed rector was required to spend a large proportion of his income on the sustenance of the poorer, and on the social enjoyments of the number of his parishioners, the archbishops and bishops were bound to live grandly, keep great tables, and scatter bounties whithersoever they went. The bishops of the present day are far less conspicuous personages in the social system than their predecessors of three centuries; but relieved of the necessity of exercising general and wasteful hospitality to strangers the whole year round, they have opportunities for amassing private wealth never enjoyed by the prelates of old time. In his *Life of Cromer* Stowe says—“For in the year 1541 the archbishop, with the consent of the other archbishop and most of the bishops, and divers other deans and archdeacons, made a constitution for moderating the fare of their tables, viz. That archbishops should not exceed six divers kinds of fish, as many dishes of fish on fish-days; a bishop not above five; a dean, or archdeacon, four; and all under that degree, three. But an archbishop was allowed at second course to have four dishes, a bishop three, and all others two; as on-wards, tarts, fritters, cheese, apples, pears, &c. But if any of the inferior clergy should entertain any archbishop, bishop, dean, or archdeacon, or any of the lay of like degree, as duke, marquis, earl, viscount, baron, lord, knight, they might have such provision as were meet for their degrees; nor was their diet to be limited when they should receive an ambassador.” It was ordered also, “That if the greater fish or fowl, as truces, swans, turkeys, haddock, pike, tench, there should be any one in a dish of lesser sorts than they, as capons, pheasants, quies, woodcocks, but two of less sorts still, as of partridges, an archbishop, three, a bishop and other degrees under him, two. The number of the black-birds was also counted to six at an archbishop’s table, and to four for a bishop; but of home birds, as larks, snipes, &c., the number was not to exceed twelve.” The object of these measures of retrenchment is expressly stated by the archbishop, who provides, “That whatever was spared out of the old housekeeping should not be pocketed up, but laid out and spent in plain meats for the relief of poor people.” Concerning Bishop Parkhurst’s hospitality at Norwich in Queen Elizabeth’s reign, and the consequent impoverishment of the prelate, the same

the cloth was no sooner removed than the guests looked for no more delicate drink than sound home-brewed ale and steaming punch. The conversation turned chiefly on agricultural matters, the affairs of the parish, and the political interests of the Church; and whilst his reverence and the churchwardens exchanged sentiments on such familiar topics, their admiring and less enlightened auditors nodded their heads approvingly over their tobacco-pipes. That the clergy of the Restoration Period were habitual, if not excessive, smokers, and saw no sin in the delight which comes from the fumes of the aromatic weed, may be inferred from the arrangements made for clerical smokers at Lambeth Palace during Sheldon's primacy. 'It was a practice,' writes Eachard's biographer, 'I suppose, from time immemorial,

author tells:—'He kept twenty-six men-servants in his house; among whom were, besides his secretary and gentleman, a cook, a middle cook, a brewer, a cater, a baker, a yeoman of the horse, a bailiff, two carters, and divers other inferior servants, besides six maids, six retainers, four poor aged folks maintained in the house, and three scholars found by him, one at Oxford, another at Norwich, and a third at Ipswich . . . For some years before his death he retired from Norwich, and lived at his house at Ludham; where latewardly he retrenched his family for his debt to the queen, yet lived in some port still. But before that misfortune his hospitality was so notable, that though the proportion of his yearly revenues was much inferior to others, it gave place to none of his profession and degree. He was not contented to feed the poor at his gate with fragments and scraps, but he had a table set for them: bringing them into his house, and having all necessaries ministered unto them for the relief of their needs.' If we go from the poor see of Norwich to the rich bishopric of Winchester, we find another Elizabethan prelate living beyond his means to fulfil the burdensome obligations of his place. Bishop Curtess of Winchester died 1585, and, noticing the inventory of the prelate's effects, Strype says:—'In which inventory are set down his books (valued 20*l.*), his parliament robes, one velvet cushion embroidered with gold and tasselled, one silk grograine gown faced with velvet, a velvet cassock, another grograine gown faced with velvet, a night-gown of buffin, one cloak lined with bayes, one velvet hat laid to pawn, one silver cup laid to pawn, two standing cups, gilt . . . His armour reckoned, viz. six corslets, six head-pieces, twelve calivers, ten pikes, ten jacks, ten bows, twelve halberds, sheaf-arrows, powder and match, seventeen caps and skulls . . . This bishop seemed to overlive his income: affecting good house-keeping and hospitality, after the quality of a lord bishop, and so died in great debt to the queen.' Of the hospitality which George Bull (bishop of St. David's, more than a century later, exercised at Brecknock, on his poor Welsh bishopric, Robert Nelson says: 'His doors were always thronged with the poor and needy, who found comfort and support from his bounty; and all the time he lived at Brecknock, which is a very poor town, about sixty necessitous people, truly indigent, were fed with meat, or served with money, every Lord's Day at dinner-time.'

when any guests dined at Lambeth, for the archbishop, when dinner was over, and after drinking two or three loyal toasts, to invite some of the company into a withdrawing chamber. The rest went up with the chaplains into their own room, situated in the highest tower of the palace, where they amused themselves with a pipe of tobacco, as honest Wood says, and a sober glass, till the bell invited the family to prayers.\*

But though our clergy are less ready than the incumbents of past time to entertain humble parishioners, and though they perhaps display too much of a fastidious disinclination to associate familiarly with persons who lack the style and culture of the gentle classes, it must be remembered that, instead of being specially chargeable on this account with arrogance and superciliousness to their social inferiors, or with a peculiar disposition to check parochial neighbourliness, they have in these respects only followed the fashion of these later generations, and put themselves in harmony with the spirit of an epoch in domestic civilization, which, whilst softening the hard demarcations of feudal rank, has broadened the lines which divide politeness from rusticity, and education from ignorance.

In their diversions, no less than in their ways of holding intercourse with the laity, an examination of the records of past manners will satisfy the impartial inquirer, that the clergy have respected the opinion and reflected the humour of their times far more than the reckless denouncers of 'the cloth' are either aware or likely to admit. In days when indulgence in field-sports was universal amongst all grades of fairly prosperous Englishmen, and when the excitements of the chase were neither

\* The same writer adds:—'In Archbishop Potter's time, I am told, this old custom received some small alteration. After the usual toasts, that prelate invited such of the company as chose it to drink coffee in another room, and immediately withdrew. At length Archbishop Secker made a very considerable alteration in the etiquette of Lambeth; so far, at least, as regards the matter in question. He broke through the strange and unpolite practice of distinguishing one guest from another. He laid aside the austerity of the high sacerdotal character, as unfit for festivity, and conversed at his table with the ease and freedom of a private gentleman. His constant method of entertaining his guests was such as became the Primate of all England, who ought to be at once a pattern of hospitality and an example of sobriety. His meals were cheerful, and always seasoned with discourse equally agreeable and instructive to all who were invited. When the hour of parting arrived, all the company went away together.'

inconvenient to society nor inordinately expensive to private persons, clergymen distinguished themselves in every hunting-field by the excellence of their horsemanship; but when considerations of social advantage discountenanced the sport which Somerville termed ‘the image of war without its guilt,’ and when enlightened opinion discerned under a novel state of affairs new grounds for regarding the chase as an unsuitable pastime for members of the sacred profession, ecclesiastics gradually ceased to be conspicuous patrons of an amusement in which they could no longer indulge without injuring their neighbours, or at least without giving offence to weak brethren.

Whether we find the clergy of old time generally and openly playing bowls\* or foot-ball,—two favourite sports with the rectors and curates of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,—or diverting themselves with games of skill and chance, which have dropped into neglect or disrepute in the present day, it is safe for us to infer that such pastimes were deemed appropriate to clergy, and that, in having recourse to them for daily recreation, ecclesiastics no more violated public decorum than the younger clergy of our time offend against prevailing opinion when they play in cricket-matches, or indulge in athletic sports. At the present date many of the ancient diversions of the English home are forbidden to ecclesiastical persons; but it is worthy of observation, that nearly every curtailment of the trivial pleasures of the clergy in one direction has been attended with a corresponding extension of them in another. The Victorian rector may not play with dice, save upon a backgammon-board; but he has free leave to provide himself with a billiard-table, and try to surpass Roberts in the

\* During his confinement in Christ Church Deanery, the aged Cranmer was permitted to amuse himself with bowls, whilst his subtle and merciless enemies were enticing him to abjure Protestantism. ‘In this mean time,’ says Foxe, ‘while the Archbishop was thus remaining in durance (whom they kept now in prison almost the space of three years), the doctores and divines of Oxford busied themselves all that ever they could about Master Craumer to have him recant, essaying, by all crafty practises and allurements they might devise, how to bring their purpose to pass. And to the intent they might win him easily, they had him to the Dean’s house of Christ’s Church, in the said university; where he lacked no delicate fare, *played at the bowls*, had his pleasure for walking, and all other things that might bring him from Christ.’—*Vide* ‘Acts and Monument-.’

difficult art of making breaks. He is thought to derogate from his dignity if he drive wooden spheres over the parish bowling-green, but society is well pleased to see him play croquet on his own lawn. He may not keep hounds, but no one thinks him precluded by official obligation from lavishing money on a handsome equipage and well-filled stable.

Of the diversions still popular with our clergy, chess is one of the very few which 'the cloth' favoured in old time. In clerical biographies of the Elizabethan period, and the later days of the seventeenth century, the reader continually comes upon passages that record in language of sympathy and approval the prowess of clerical chess-players. But Baxter and other Puritan divines of the Commonwealth period discerned evil in the game which prelates and deans, rectors and vicars, had played to their own delight and with the approbation of beholders from time immemorial. In 'A Letter from a Minister to a Friend concerning the Game of Chess' (1680)—a broadside preserved in the Harleian Miscellany—a conscientious and too scrupulous pastor, bewailing the faults into which an enthusiastic love of chess has betrayed him, observes, 'It hath not done with me, when I have done with it. It hath followed me into my study, into my pulpit; when I have (in my thoughts) been playing at chess: then I have had, as it were, a chess-board before my eyes: then I have been thinking how I might have obtained the stratagems of my antagonist, or make such and such motions to his disadvantage; nay, I have heard of one who was playing at chess in his thoughts (as appeared by his words) when he lay a-dying. . . . It hath wounded my conscience, and broken my peace. I have had sad reflections upon it, when I have been most serious. I find, if I were now to die, the remembrance of this game would greatly trouble me, and stare me in the face. I have read in the life of the famous John Huss, how he was greatly troubled for his using of this game a little before his death.'

In the 'Christian Direction,' Baxter, reflecting on the influence of lawful and not necessarily immoral games, says, 'And when I observe how far the temper and life of Christ, and his best servants, was from such accusations, I avoid them with the more suspicion. And I see but few but distaste it in ministers, (even shooting, bowling, and such more healthful



games, to say nothing of these and such others as fit not the end of recreation); therefore, there is somewhat in it that nature itself hath some suspicion of. That student that needeth chess or cards to please his mind I doubt hath a carnal, empty mind; if God, and all his books and all his friends, cannot suffice for this, there is some disease in it that should be rather cured than pleased; and for the body, it is another kind of exercise that profits it.'

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE ROYAL TOUCH.

WHEN England broke the chains which had long bound her to Rome, devout adherents of the Papacy expected that the Almighty would manifest his displeasure at the revolt by withdrawing from English sovereigns the faculty which they had derived from Edward the Confessor of curing scrofula by laying their sacred hands on the nodes and open sores of afflicted persons. It was not to be imagined, urged the zealous Catholics, that the monarchs of England would continue to enjoy so singular a proof of the Divine favour after losing their connexion with the Pontiff, who was, in fact, the channel through which all heavenly mercies flowed to the churches committed to his sway. And history informs us that, on finding the Protestant sovereigns no less powerful over struma than their Catholic precursors, many of the English Papists began to waver in their allegiance to the old faith, and to think that, after all, Protestantism might be in the right, since the King of kings still deigned to use the heretical potentates as remedial agents. It is recorded of a certain Popish recusant,—described by Fuller as ‘a stiff Roman Catholic,—whose scrofulous trouble had been charmed away by Queen Elizabeth’s hand, that he exclaimed, ‘I perceive now at last, by plain experience, that the excommunication denounced by the Pope against her Majesty is in very deed of none effect, seeing God hath blessed her with so great and miraculous a virtue.’

One would like to know precisely what was Elizabeth’s estimate of the efficacy of her royal touch on strumous disease; how far she concurred with her courtiers in believing that the imposition of her fingers really wrought the cures attributed to them, how far she regarded the theory and usages of her queenly

healings as droll relics of medieval superstition and credulity, and how far she deemed it reasonable to suppose that she was a miracle-worker by the same divine grace which, having exalted her to, sustained her in, the throne of her forefathers. I am disposed to think that, when arrogance and self-sufficiency held mastery over her vigorous intellect, she believed herself to be the healer that bishops and statesmen and professors of science proclaimed her, and that, when no deleterious influence or morbid temper impaired her self-knowledge or dimmed the natural clearness of her mental vision, she disdained the flatterers who marvelled at her miracles, and was uneasy under the obligations which required her to play from time to time the part of a sanctimonious charlatan. It is said that during a progress through Gloucestershire, when a crowd of scrofulous wretches pressed rudely upon her, and loudly clamoured for her touch and gold,\* she responded to their importunities by exclaiming, ‘Alas, poor people! I cannot—I cannot cure you! It is God alone that can do it:’ words which some have construed as a declaration of her impotency to do what was required of her, though they may have been designed only to direct the minds of her hearers to the true Healer, in whose hands she was a mere passive instrument. The kings of France, who were no less powerful than the sovereigns of England in driving scrofulous taint from languid bodies, were accustomed to utter modestly and devoutly to each person on whom they laid healing hands, ‘*Le roi te touche, Dieu te guérisse.*’

A pedant, prone to respect every superstition or old-wife’s tale supported by a scrap of Latin in a foolish book, James the First was not the man to have any doubts respecting the credibility of stories, or the reasonableness of a usage which glorified his kingly office, gratified his self-love, and rendered the populace contemptible. I doubt not that he was a firm believer in his power to vanquish the disease which baffled the skill of his physicians, and that, freed from the restraints of social opinion,

\* The gold angel which the royal healer gave to every patient after manipulation contributed greatly to the general faith in the curative process. The coin was hung to the patient’s neck by a string, that passed through a hole punched in the metal, which was worn as an amulet by the recipient—until he was sorely in need of ten shillings for his personal expenses.

he would have easily persuaded himself that the fiery death was the proper punishment for any malapert and blasphemous observers who ventured to question the efficacy of his royal manipulations.

Even more interesting to students of our social history than the political services which we have recently dropped from our forms of public worship is the following office, which the Church appointed for use at Royal Healings:—

‘ AT THE HEALING.

‘ THE GOSPEL.

‘ Written in the xvi Chapter of St. Mark, beginning at the 14 verse.

‘ “ Jesus appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and cast in their teeth their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen that he was risen from the dead. And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these tokens shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out

*\* Here the infirm persons are presented to the King upon their knees, and the King layeth his hands upon them.*

devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall drive away serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them. *\* They shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

So when the Lord had spoken unto them he was received into heaven, and is on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with miracles following.”

‘ THE GOSPEL.

‘ Written in the I. Chapter of St. John, beginning at the first verse.

‘ “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by it, and without it was made nothing that was made. In it was Life, and the Life was the Light of men; and the Light shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not. There was sent from God a man whose name was John. The same came as a witness, to bear witness for the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to

bear witness of the Light. \* *That Light was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came among his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to be made sons of God, even them that believed on his Name; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor yet of the will of man, but of God. And the same Word became Flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw the Glory of it, as the Glory of the only Son of the begotten Father, full of grace and truth."

\* *Herethey are again presented unto the King upon their knees, and the King putteth his gold about their necks.*

‘ THE PRAYERS.

‘ *Vers.* Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Resp.* Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Vers.* Christ, have mercy upon us.

*Resp.* Christ, have mercy upon us.

*Vers.* Lord, have mercy upon us.

*Resp.* Lord, have mercy upon us.

‘ Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

‘ *Vers.* O Lord, save Thy servants,

*Resp.* Which put their trust in Thee.

*Vers.* Send help to them from above,

*Resp.* And evermore mightily defend them.

*Vers.* Help us, O God our Saviour;

*Resp.* And for the glory of Thy Name deliver us: be merciful unto us sinners, for Thy Name’s sake.

*Vers.* O Lord, hear our prayer,

*Resp.* And let our cry come unto Thee.

‘ Almighty God, who art the giver of all health, and the aid of them that seek to Thee for succour, we call upon Thee for Thy help and goodness mercifully to be shewed unto these Thy servants, that they being healed of their infirmity, may give thanks unto Thee in Thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

‘ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all furthermore. Amen.’

This form of service—transcribed into the present pages from Sparrow's 'Collection'—was published in 1629–30, and a summary of its provisions appears in John Rushworth's 'Historical Collections,' in the section where the collector presents the reader with one of Charles the First's proclamations with respect to the Royal Healing:—"1630, on the sixth day of April, his Majesty caused to be published this proclamation for the better ordering of those who repair to the court for the cure of the disease called the King's Evil. "Whereas by the Grace and Blessing of God, the Kings and Queens of this Realm, for many ages past, have had the happiness by their sacred touch, and invocation of the name of God, to cure those who are afflicted with the disease called the King's Evil: and his now most Excellent Majesty, in no less measure than any of his Royal Predecessors, hath had good success herein, and in his most gracious and pious disposition is as ready and willing as any King or Queen of this Realm ever was, in any thing to relieve the distresses and necessities of his good subjects, yet in his Princely wisdom, foreseeing that in this, as in all other things, Order is to be observed, and fit times are necessary to be appointed for the performing of this great work of charity: His most Excellent Majesty doth hereby publish and declare his Royal Will and Pleasure to be: That whereas heretofore at the usual times of presenting such persons to his Majesty, for this purpose, even Easter and Whitsuntide, that from henceforth the times shall be Easter and Michaelmas, as times more convenient both for the temperature of the season, and in respect of any contagion, which may happen in this near access to his Majesty's Sacred Person, and his Majesty doth accordingly will and command, That from this time of publishing this Proclamation, none presume to repair to his Majesty's *Royal Court*, to be healed of that disease before the Feast of St. Michael's now next coming."

The fear lest the king should be impregnated with disease through personal contact with his scrofulous patients—a fear which doubtless occasioned the postponement of the customary Healings—is a noticeable feature of this proclamation by a royal miracle-worker, who might have been presumed to be exempt from such peril at the very moment when the pores of

his sacred skin were exhaling a mystic aura destructive of morbid humour in the bodies of his subjects. Some years later Charles the Martyr issued another proclamation, still more strongly expressive of the sense of danger under which he performed his curative functions to the base and unclean rabble who crowded to his court twice a-year for relief from physical ailment. Here is the official notice,—‘By the King: A Proclamation for suspending the time of healing the disease called the King’s Evil until Easter next. Whereas the King’s most excellent Majestie, by his proclamation, dated the first day of July last, did prescribe the times of his healing the disease, called the King’s Evil, to be Michaelmas and Easter, or within fourteen days next before, or next after those feasts: Nevertheless, his Majestie being now informed, that the sicknesse increaseth in many parts of the kingdome, and foreseeing the danger that may redound to his sacred person, by the confluence of diseased people at this Michaelmas now approaching, hath thought fit further to suspend all access to his court and presence for healing, till Easter next, or fourteen days before or after the same. And doth therefore strictly charge and command all persons whatsoever, hereby to take knowledge of his Majestie’s Royal Will and commandment herein: and that none presume untill Easter next, or within fourteen days next before, or next after the said feast, to resort to his Majestie’s Court or Presence for healing, under pain of his Majestie’s high displeasure, and to be further punished as shall be meet: His Majestie’s said proclamation of the first of July last, or any thing therein to the contrary notwithstanding, which nevertheless in all other the Directions and Declarations therein expressed, His Majestie willeth and commandeth to be duly and strictly observed, under the penalties therein mentioned.—Given at our Court at Oatlands the second day of September, in the fourteenth year of our reign. God save the King. Imprinted at London by Robert Barker, Printer to the King’s Most Excellent Majestie: and by the assigns of John Bill. 1635.’

On the restoration of the Stuarts the royal healings were resumed, and throughout the next half century such multitudes of people flocked to court for the benefit of the touch that it cost the successive sovereigns of that period no little gold, as well as

time and trouble, to satisfy the requirements of the credulous sufferers. The applicants for the cure came from all parts of the country, and from all grades of society,—some of them being of a condition of life which countenanced the suspicion that they cared more for the money than for contact with royalty; whilst others were of a rank that would have procured them access to the sovereign without a surgeon's passport, and of a degree of education which renders it difficult to believe that they had implicit faith in the curative power of the king's hand.

On June 23, 1660, Samuel Pepys went with his friend Tom Guy to Whitehall, to see the restored monarch lay hands on his strumous subjects: but the sight-seekers missed the object of their excursion. It rained violently, and whilst the sick people, who either awaited the king's appearance in the palace-garden, or expected momentarily to be admitted to his presence in the banqueting-hall, were drenched with water to the skin, the king was invisible, and his doors closed to the invalids and the attendant crowd. When Pepys and his companion had gone off home, in despair of beholding the spectacle which they had come from the city to witness, the king however (if I read Pepys rightly) received his forlorn patients in the banqueting-hall, whence he dismissed them, none the better for the cold and rheumatism which they had caught whilst 'forced to stand all the morning in the rain in the garden.' Perhaps under a wrong date (July 6th, 1660), Evelyn, in his 'Diary,' gives the following picture of the manner in which the merry monarch distributed charity and health to the persons selected for his miraculous treatment:—'July 6th, His Majesty began first to *touch for the evil!* according to custom, thus: his Majesty sitting under his state in the Banqueting-house, the chirurgeons cause the sick to be brought, or led, up to the throne, where they kneeling, the king strokes their faces, or cheeks with both his hands at once, at which instant a chaplain in his formalities says, "He put his hands upon them, and He healed them." This is said to every one in particular. When they have all been touched, they come up again in the same order, and the other chaplain kneeling, and having angel gold strung on white ribbon on his arm, delivers



them one by one to his majesty, who puts them about the necks of the touched as they pass, whilst the first chaplain repeats, "That is the true Light who came into the world." Then follows an epistle (as at first a gospel) with the Liturgy, prayers for the sick, with some alterations: lastly the blessing: and then the Lord Chamberlain and the Comptroller of the Household bring a basin, ewer, and towel, for his Majesty to wash.' Evelyn's account helps us to see how the officiating clergy performed 'the office' and presented the sick people to the king, and is serviceably minute in several particulars, but on one or two points it bears an appearance of discrepancy to the entry in Pepys' journal.\*

To protect the sovereign's pocket from the impositions of the knaves who, had no precautions been taken against them, would have applied repeatedly for the king's angelic money; and to preserve the royal touch from the disrepute of failing to effect cure in a large majority of the cases submitted to its influence, —no applicant for the monarch's manipulations was admitted to the healing presence unless he presented a certificate from the minister and churchwardens of his parish that he had not received the touch on a previous occasion, and also a certificate from one of the court surgeons or physicians that he was really a strumous sufferer, and therefore a suitable case for the miraculous treatment. That economy required the observance of the first of these regulations, may be seen from the fact that in fourteen years Charles the Second touched 92,807 persons, who drew from the royal exchequer a sum exceeding forty-six thousand pounds sterling. Nor were the considerations less cogent which suggested the propriety of rejecting, from the multitude of persons who sought the cure, the large proportion of invalids whose glandular swellings and cutaneous maladies were not the result of serofulous corruption. Prudent care for the interests

\* If, as I infer from Pepys' words, Charles touched the poor people in the Banqueting-house on June 23, his first public reception of applicants for the touch took place a fortnight earlier than Evelyn represents. Pepys' words, '*afterward* he touched them in the Banqueting-house,' may, however, mean, '*on a later day* he touched them,' &c. But, so far as dates are concerned, no reliance may be put on Evelyn, who is now and then a month or more out of the right time.

of the faculty rendered the physicians and surgeons desirous that the sovereign's exercise of the healing art should be confined within the limits prescribed by tradition and superstitious usage: and the crown was not slow to perceive that its pecuniary interests and reputation for miraculous power derived advantages from the arrangement which invested the chiefs of the medical profession with the privilege of selecting the cases for the royal touch. The physicians and surgeons of the court were instructed to give tickets to none but scrofulous cases,\* *i. e.* to none but sufferers whom the king's hand was likely to benefit: and it is probable that these courtly officials, adopting a course calculated to benefit the regular practitioners of medicine, and, at the same time, preserve the glory of the crown, retained for treatment by the faculty all grievously afflicted sufferers, and sent to the sovereign only such cases of trivial or transient ailment as gave promise of steady amendment or recovery under the ordinary processes of nature.

On March 30, 1712, Queen Anne laid her hands upon two hundred scrofulous sufferers, one of whom was Samuel Johnson, then in his third year and manifesting the earlier symptoms of the disease, which, in spite of her majesty's merciful condescension, accompanied him to the grave. Anne was the last English sovereign who ventured to exercise the miraculous power attaching to wearers of the English crown: but thirty years after her death, the young Pretender (following the example of his cousin Monmouth in the western rebellion) touched scrofulous cases in Scotland, and, restrained by poverty from giving them amulets of gold, distributed pieces of silver money to the patients, who went to their homes, hopeful of deriving benefit from contact with their crownless king. But though the rude German, who succeeded Anne on the British throne, bluntly refused to assist in perpetuating a ceremony which he deemed incompatible with kingly honour, and not devoid of impious presumption, 'The Office for the Healing' retained its place in at least four Oxford editions of the Common

\* In his 'Diary,' Evelyn says:—'1684, 28th March. There was so great a concourse of people with their children to be touched for the evil, that six or seven were crushed to death by pressing at the chirurgeon's door for tickets.'

Prayer-book, published after the accession of the House of Hanover. The zeal with which Georgian copies of the Prayer-book, containing this office, are sought after and bought at high prices by collectors of curious literature, has induced the manufacturers of 'choice and rare books' to produce a considerable number of spurious specimens of the four editions by inserting leaves, on which the suppressed form is printed, into the body of genuine copies of the Prayer-book published in George the First's time without the obsolete office. Amongst the few persons fortunate enough to possess a true and honest specimen of the Georgian Book of Common Prayer, containing the whole service for the healing, is my friend, Mr. Spencer Smith, the eminent surgeon.

In social history the presentation of little Samuel Johnson to the last of the Stuart sovereigns, for the remedial benefit of her Majesty's miraculous touch, is a good boundary-mark between the epoch of superstition and the period of general scientific enlightenment; and if Mr. Frith would reproduce on canvas this interesting scene of Court Life—Anne sitting in her chamber of state, supported by the gentlewomen of her household, and touching the afflicted persons brought to her footstool by her chaplains, through a dense throng of curious and watchful courtiers—he would undertake a task worthy of his pencil and peculiarly suited to his artistic powers.

## CHAPTER IX.

## FAREWELL.

WHEN I began to arrange the numerous facts comprised in these volumes, so that they should illustrate the social story of our national clergy from medieval to modern times, I determined that, whilst surveying the convulsions and changes of religious opinion and practice in past days, I would, as far as possible, refrain from touching on the various theological questions which occasioned or rose from those disturbances and alterations. Not that I think the lay-writer labours outside his proper sphere who states his sincere convictions and reverential judgments on points of faith. Nor that I shrink from supporting truths and combating errors, for whose maintenance or exposure the official teachers of religion are the most appropriate and powerful instruments. But writing with a view to the entertainment, and, in some slight degree, to the instruction of persons of all denominations, I felt that any needless declaration of my sentiments on matters pertaining to creed and controversy would only lessen my chances of achieving the useful, though comparatively humble, aim of my labour. And save in one or two places, where I felt it right to guard against misconstruction, I have not departed from the line of forbearance which I decided to adopt at the opening of my task.

With respect to the disquiet and strifes of the religious life of our own time there are, however, a few reflections which I may venture to make in bidding my readers farewell.

Alike by thoughtful friends in private discussion, and by some of the chief public directors of opinion, I am often told that the present generation is remarkable for the number and

alarming characteristics of its religious dissensions,—and that, whilst fraught with instant danger to the Established Church, and significant of deep-seated national disease, the conflicts of existing parties forebode evil to every class of the community in coming ages. With sincere respect for the good and wise men who take this gloomy view of recent events and increasing difficulties, I am thankful to say that history appears to me to contradict their conclusions and to discredit their mournful predictions. From the heart of the feudal period down to the present day, I know of no time in which our nation was innocent of spiritual sloth or strong inclination to religious lethargy, and at the same moment free from ecclesiastical commotions and controversial troubles. The struggle between Lollardy and Orthodoxy in the fourteenth century; the persecutions of the Wycliffian innovators; the successive convulsions and contests, revolutions and counter-revolutions, which resulted in the Reformation; the fierce and bitter feuds of the Churchmen, Recusants, and Nonconformists of Elizabethan days; the contentions of the divided Episcopalians and the disunited Puritans of Laudian England; the mad riot of the sects under the Commonwealth; the melancholy and calamitous battles between Catholics and Protestants, Churchmen and Dissenters, which disfigure our religious story from the Restoration to the time of the eighteenth century, when for a brief period our nation fell into a condition of intellectual and spiritual torpor, far more remote from religious health and beneficial belief than any kind of scepticism,—show that ecclesiastical perturbations and religious perplexities are no new experiences to the English people; and that clerical tranquillity and laical docility were not the prevailing conditions of our national life during the loftiest epochs of our history. Yet, further, when put in contrast against the spiritual ferments and commotions of the present earnest, inquisitive, and deeply reverential age, the religious controversies and struggles of our ancestors are found to exhibit certain excesses of vindictive quality and malignant hatred from which we may, in no spirit of Pharisaical pride, thank God for our comparative, if not total, freedom. We still have reason to deplore our shortcomings in respect of brotherly love and decent fairness to men whose religious convictions rouse our disappro-

bation and provoke our antagonism; but when compared with the periods specially considered in the foregoing pages, the present generation, while not found wanting in devoutness of temper and eagerness for truth, may be commended for tolerance and charity. My survey of the social aspects of the religious life of England in past times has brought me to this conclusion, in which I venture to hope that some of my readers will be sharers.

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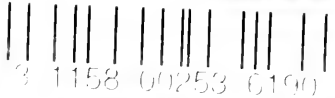
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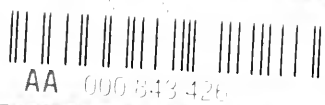
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