

LECTURE II.

DEVELOPMENT AND HISTORY OF PURITANISM UNDER QUEEN ELIZABETH.

IN my last Lecture I carried down my historical sketch of the origin and development of Puritanism to the time of the Marian persecution and the dispersion of the English exiles among the Continental Protestants. These exiles did not need to go abroad to learn the rudiments of Puritanism, either of its doctrinal teaching, or of its forms of worship or of church order. These I told you they had already learned from honoured teachers in their own land, who had drawn their principles chiefly from their personal study of the Word of God. The thing, I told you, existed before the name, but soon after the time to which we have come the name appeared as well as the thing.

The exiles were now brought into contact with men who by their own independent study had been led to similar conclusions, and there were circumstances in the recent history of Continental Protestantism which naturally inclined them to attach special importance to these conclusions.

A few years before, the Emperor Charles v., in his anxiety to prevent a disruption of the church in Germany, had endeavoured at the moment of his political triumph over the Protestant Princes to impose on them and their subjects an *Interim* which, while allowing them, till a general Council should determine otherwise, to retain in a modified form some of the more important of their doctrinal convictions, required them to receive back the old ritual and ceremonies, including of course the old priestly dresses and ornaments. This was yielded to by many for a time from dire necessity, but resisted by the more resolute. Even the question whether the surplice might be worn was answered by these negatively.¹ The consequence was that when the temporary pressure was withdrawn and they recovered their liberty, they again discarded the old rites and dresses, and became more decided against them than before. They were symbols of their temporary enslavement as well as relics of Popery, not retained as in England to wean them from its more essential corruptions, but to draw them back to the Old Church more fully.

While these feelings were yet fresh and strong the English exiles came among them. The magistrates of Frankfort accordingly, in granting them an asylum and a church for their wor-

¹ Antwort M. F. Illyrici auff den Brieff etlicher Prediger von der Frage, ob sie lieber weichen denn den Chorrock anziehen sollen.

ship, made the condition that they should not dissent in doctrine or ceremonies from the French congregation, which also met in the same place. The more advanced of them were probably glad of such a good reason for moving in the direction in which they wished to move. They would not lack encouragement from à Lasco, who had stood by them in England and was then at Frankfort, worshipping with his Dutch congregation in the same church with the French and the English. At any rate they secured the harmonious consent of all the company to the conditions, and in testimony they appointed certain representatives to sign the Confession, which the minister, doctor, and elders of the French Church had already signed. A form of service and of church discipline was also drawn up, and an invitation given to their countrymen dispersed in other cities to come and share their privileges. But their harmony was disturbed by the new arrivals, and their difficulties increased apace, till, after various attempts at compromise, the more advanced members of the company were outvoted, and sought another asylum where they might hope to enjoy the forms and discipline they valued. This they found at Geneva, through the special favour of Calvin. The congregation they had left behind, with consent of the syndics, put on somewhat more of the 'face of an English Church,' but not even so did

it attain to peace, nor did it ever venture to introduce the surplice or the observance of kneeling at the reception of the communion, of the sign of the cross in baptism, or the use of the ring in marriage;¹ and when the happier days they sighed for came, most of them at first sided with those who pleaded for a continuance of liberty in such matters.

These happier days were supposed to have dawned in November 1558, when Elizabeth succeeded to her sister's throne. Immediately, Protestants who had been living in retirement in their own country or in exile elsewhere hastened to London and paid their court to the new sovereign. All were received with more or less favour and encouraged to accept employment in the reconstituted Church, save some of those who came from Geneva. During the few bright years they had spent there, they had enjoyed the friendship and protection of Calvin, and as a congregation had been left in a great measure free to follow their own bent, and develop their own discipline and forms. They had thought of the needs of others besides themselves, and by the preparation of their metrical Psalter and new version of the Scriptures in their native tongue, to say nothing of their Book of Common Order and trans-

¹ *Original Letters of English Reformation*, p. 754 :—'We gave up private baptizing, confirmation of children, saints' days, kneeling at the holy communion, the linen surplices and crosses, and other things of like character.'—*Cox and others to Calvin*.

lation of Calvin's Catechism, long used in Scotland, and in part circulated in England too, they had done more real and permanent service to the cause of the Reformation in their native land than all the rest of the exiles then on the Continent. Geneva was in their eyes 'such a school of Christ as the world for many ages had not seen,' and they had striven by their lives and labours to make their own congregation worthy of this school. Their efforts had been appreciated and acknowledged. Their ministers Knox and Goodman, and some of their members, had had the freedom of the city conferred on them, and at their departure had intrusted to its custody that 'Livre des Anglois' which is the earliest register of a Puritan church and is still preserved with care in the archives of the city. Knox however, while there, had had the misfortune to publish his treatise 'On the Monstrous Regiment of Women,' and Goodman his treatise, 'How Superior Powers should be obeyed,'¹ offences which a Tudor queen could hardly be expected to overlook or forgive, and the offences of the ministers brought the flock also under suspicion. Knox in returning to Scotland was not allowed to set foot on English soil, and all his efforts to explain were

¹ Possibly Poynt's treatise 'Of Politique power and of the true obedience which subjects owe to kings and other civil governors,' reprinted in 1642, and said in reprint (E 154, No. 36) to have been first published in 1556, may have been so at Geneva.

haughtily rejected. Goodman for a time was so repulsed that he deemed it best to yield to the request of his former colleague and aid him in his great work in Scotland ;¹ and other members of the congregation had difficulty in making their peace.

Elizabeth, the new queen, was happily surrounded by wise and faithful counsellors who made her reign illustrious and prosperous, and controlled its policy in great crises ; yet, as one determined to rule as well as reign, she insisted often on settling important matters according to her own arbitrary will and without regard to the wishes of her Council or her Parliament. In particular she took into her own hands from the first the reformation of the Church and the regulation of its worship almost with as much imperiousness as her father had done. While scrupling to assume the title of 'Supreme Head on earth, under Christ, of

¹ Goodman was a man of superior abilities and extensive learning. His book was highly esteemed by Milton and other patriots in the following century, and will not be thought meanly of yet by any unprejudiced reader. Having been Divinity Reader at Oxford in 1553, Goodman was deemed the fittest person to be made minister at St. Andrews in 1560. But his predecessor, who had been vicar before the Reformation, and had acted as minister in 1559-60, was allowed to carry the emoluments of his vicarage with him to Aberdeen, and Goodman, after four or five years' faithful service, failing to secure an adequate maintenance, returned to England. There he was exposed to many hardships, and had to make a sort of recantation of his political sentiments. He survived till 1602, and was held in great esteem even outside the Puritan circle. Ussher long treasured and repeated the pious sayings he had heard from him on his deathbed.

the Church of England,' she assumed, and exercised without scruple, all the power which the title was held to imply. While professedly adopting the second Prayer Book of her brother, she imported into it that Ornaments' rubric from his earlier Book, which was to work such woe in her day, and has caused such trouble even in ours. As already mentioned she prefixed words to those enjoined in it to be used at the distribution of the elements in the Lord's Supper which were meant to make it possible even for a Romanist to communicate, and she excluded that rubric put in originally in deference to the scruples of Knox, which was the most Protestant thing in the book. She prevailed on Parliament when passing the Act of Uniformity, to recognise her right to add, to those already appointed, such further rites and ceremonies as she should judge to be for the glory of God and the honour of religion ; and had she found the old bishops as compliant as her father had done, she might have been led to use this right in such a way as might gratify them in minor things rather than their opponents. With all her good and noble qualities (and they were many) she was a Tudor every inch, and less disposed to yield one jot of her prerogative in matters ecclesiastical than in matters civil. She thought her subjects should loyally submit to the injunctions of their sovereign, in regard to the

former as fully as to the latter. Even when the dangers which at first threatened her and might have palliated if they could not justify her early imperiousness were passed, she could still play the despot, and endeavour by sheer force to stamp out intensely earnest convictions, which, more gently dealt with and more lovingly guided, would have been a strength to her throne and to the institutions of the land. She had a natural predilection for the mongrel faith and worship of her father's later years, a fondness for external pomp and symbolism which her most favoured prelates at times found it hard to wink at—impossible to justify, and but little sympathy with the practical side of Puritanism and with that inner experience and holy self-denying life which were its crown and glory. She looked with ill-concealed dislike on the marriage of the clergy, and never repealed her sister's Act against it. Her first purpose seems to have been to retain the Marian bishops in office (if they had consented to turn with the tide once more and take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy), and only to fill up the vacant sees with men of decided Protestant convictions. But by the refusal of these bishops to take the oath of supremacy and conform to the new order, she was obliged to fall back on the Protestant bishops who had been dispossessed in the beginning of her sister's reign, and the men who had

identified themselves with the reforming party in her brother's time, and who had had their convictions matured in retirement or in exile.

It is difficult to believe, notwithstanding assertions to the contrary by the High Church biographer of the Archbishops of Canterbury, that they had not ample assurance given them that the Church in which they were asked to serve was meant to be the restoration of that of King Edward's time,¹ and some encouragement to hope that the things they would rather have had away were continued merely for reasons of state policy, and might (as was professed by him), if borne with for the time, be ultimately abandoned or modified. In fact, they had a right to regard the acceptance of Coverdale's services without the episcopal habits, at the consecration of Archbishop Parker, as a pledge not only that the same indulgence would be extended to him in the future but also that the practical toleration they had themselves enjoyed in King Edward's days would not be denied them

¹ Lee in his recent work, *The Church under Queen Elizabeth*, admits this frankly:—'Bishops Pilkington, Sandys, Grindal, Overton, Meyrick, Bale, Bullingham and Parkhurst were each and all thoroughly agreed in their principles and course of action; and in substituting the new religion which had been set up for the old one, which had been deliberately and duly abolished by Parliament, . . . they were only carrying out the obvious and avowed intentions of those state officials who had placed them in high ecclesiastical positions expressly to carry out the changes . . . resolved upon.'—Vol. i. p. 272.

again. The great bulk of the Marian clergy abandoned their former bishops and conformed externally to the new order of things, and if they, Romanist in all but the name, were to be continued and borne with, that the nation might be kept united in one comprehensive Church, much more surely might they who were ministers in Edward's days, and were seeking only what was practically conceded then,—the men who were heartily attached to the new order of things, and had the learning, the zeal, the earnest Christian life, and the preaching abilities needed to insure among the masses an intelligent acceptance of this new order,—much more surely had they a right to expect that reasonable concessions should be made to them, and a *modus vivendi* be allowed them, even if, in the interest of union among Englishmen, the obnoxious ceremonies were not entirely to be removed.

Various efforts were made in the first Convocation that assembled after the reconstitution of the Church formally to secure this,¹ and for a few years it seems at least to have been practically conceded. We cannot suppose that those bishops who had

¹ It was only by a single vote, and that a proxy, that in 1562 the Lower House of Convocation rejected proposals which would probably have done this:—'That in baptism the cross may be omitted, . . . that the order of kneeling (at the communion) may be left to the discretion of the ordinary, . . . that it be sufficient for the minister . . . (once) to wear a surplice . . . That the use of organs be removed.'—Strype's *Annals*, vol. i. pp. 336-339.

pleaded so strongly as Grindal, Jewell, Horn, and Parkhurst had done to have these stumbling-blocks taken out of the way, would be at all disposed to press hardly on scrupling brethren, or that even the Archbishop, though not so kindly befriending them, would of his own accord have left his quiet antiquarian researches and other much-loved studies to enter into conflict with them. We cannot suppose that Elizabeth's wise counsellors, who saw the necessity of encouraging the Dutch and the Huguenots in their struggles, as well as of standing by the Protestants of Scotland though they would 'remit nothing of that they had received from Geneva,' could be so blind to their true interests at home, as for the sake of tippet or surplice, cross or ring, to cut off the right arm of their strength.¹ But the queen either of her native wilfulness, or from jealousy of their increasing influence with the citizens of London and the tendency of their opinions in the political sphere, or at the instigation of some busybody who had a grudge

¹ 'The great object of Elizabeth's ministers . . . was the preservation of the Protestant religion, to which all ceremonies of the Church and even its form of discipline were subordinate. An indifferent passiveness among the people, a humble trust in authority, however desirable in the eyes of churchmen, was not the temper which would . . . have quelled the generous ardour of the Catholic gentry on the queen's decease; . . . but every abhorrer of ceremonies, every rejector of prelatial authority might be trusted as Protestant to the heart's core, whose sword would be as ready as his tongue to withstand idolatry.'—Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*, vol. i. pp. 195, 196.

against them, or sought by unworthy means to gain her favour, was at length unfortunately persuaded to put forth her authority against them and to enjoin the bishops to restrain or deprive them. She knew it was not a popular business, and she would rather the odium of it should light on them than on herself. But in case of need she was always ready to give help, and, once committed to a side, could never again be brought to treat them with kindness and forbearance, and frankly to utilise their acknowledged gifts for the preaching of the gospel and advancement of Christian knowledge and godly living among the uninstructed masses of her people. She became only the more peremptory, the more their influence became apparent, and the sympathies of others were drawn forth towards them, and a love for more popular control in affairs of government began to be developed, the more determined to uphold her prerogative and to humble and crush them, even if in so doing much of the earnest life of the Church had to be crushed out, many of the most effective preachers to be silenced, and many of the firmest supporters of her throne had to be maltreated or discredited.

Your time will not admit of my entering much into details as to the melancholy blunders, merciless oppression, and savage cruelties which characterised her ecclesiastical administration in its relation to the

Puritans. That has been done pretty fully by Dr. Hetherington in the introductory chapters of his *History of the Westminster Assembly*, and still more fully and impartially by Mr. Marsden in his *History of the Early Puritans*, and by some of our recent secular historians, as well as by Neale and other Puritan writers in earlier times. To certain prominent occurrences I must briefly refer, as the ultimate shape and direction of the Puritan struggle was largely determined by them.

The returned exiles who accepted bishoprics and other high dignities, were, as already mentioned, almost all in favour of concessions being made to the scruples of the Puritans, if not even anxious for the entire removal of the rites and ornaments to which they objected; and perhaps one of the greatest services rendered by the Parker Society in our own day has been the transcription and publication of their correspondence with Bullinger and other Continental reformers, in which these facts are so clearly brought out. But they hesitated to insist on obtaining such concessions before accepting office, when firmness on their part might possibly have secured them, and they never were in a condition to insist on them afterwards. Nay, against their own better judgment and wishes, some of them were forced on to deal harshly with brethren whom they loved, and on whom they knew they must chiefly rely to give life and vigour

to the new Church, and to defend and propagate among the ignorant and careless that reformed faith which they, not less than these brethren, held dear. 'Oxford had but three preachers in 1563, and they were chief men among the Puritans. The case of Cambridge was very similar ;'¹ and in fact throughout the kingdom generally it was the same. It was to them the queen and her counsellors must look for the earnest and resolute defence of their common faith, in the only way in which access could be got for it to the minds of the unreading masses. It was to them she must look for the vigorous defence of her own rights against Pope and Stuart and all opponents. It was not by homilies on the peril of idolatry or the sin of wilful rebellion, lifelessly drawled out by men who had changed from side to side and had no very deep convictions either way, that the crisis could be met, and the more intelligent of the people roused to the seriousness of the issue.

What Froude has said of Knox² may be said in a measure of his Puritan brethren in England : that they saved Elizabeth's throne and secured the triumph of Protestantism in Britain, in spite of herself, and all her caprice and cruelty towards them. The men who at first presented themselves for ordination in the restored Church were generally men of mean condition and miserably

¹ Marsden, pp. 100, 101. ² *Short Studies*, 1867, vol. i. p. 168.

qualified for the sacred offices to which they aspired, and so limited was the supply, even of such men, that many churches were left without ministers for a time, or consigned to the charge of men of doubtful ordination¹ as well as deficient education. Ecclesiastical lands and revenues in several cases were appropriated by the queen, in several were made over to her courtiers; bishoprics were kept vacant—Ely and Oxford for about twenty years. Several of those in high ecclesiastical offices showed more concern to enrich themselves and their families, than to aid in supplementing confessedly inadequate livings or to guard against further alienation and abuse. The incumbents of Queen Mary's days, who to so large an extent had nominally submitted to the new régime, were too often either popishly affected or grossly ignorant—dead to the living meaning of the changes which had been made, or unable to preach, at times even to read, in an edifying and impressive manner—clinging, as has been said, to the old forms, which they could repeat by rote, rather than taking the trouble of making themselves familiar with the new—in some cases using the breviary or the missal in private, and the Anglican liturgy in public—oft but able to read

¹ Lee often refers to this, and holds that many of the monks and friars who conformed and got benefices, if in orders at all, were only in minor orders—*lectores*, *acolyti*, etc. So probably were many of those admitted as Readers in Scotland.

the prescribed English prayers and homilies, and keep up a certain routine of service, and seldom able to speak any 'word of exhortation' fitted to touch the hearts of their people, or to exercise a permanent influence for good among them. The returned exiles had in most cases a respectable amount of learning, and Christian experience, and the ability and will to put both to use in popular preaching and more didactic argument in defence of the Reformed faith; and at first they had no great cause to complain that their claims were overlooked. Their metrical Psalter was allowed to be sung before and after prayers and sermons, and their translation of the Bible, without formal allowance, was largely circulated and often reprinted, and certain prayers and the Confession in their Book of Common Order were generally appended to the Psalter and possibly used in the pulpit though not in the reading-desk. Their earnest labours and solid learning, wisely and generously directed, and their scruples reasonably yielded to or winked at, would with God's blessing have sufficed in a single generation to change the face of England, and make the common people not less educated and zealously Protestant than the people of still ruder Scotland became. But those in power determined to put uniformity and submission to rigid law or to arbitrary will in the forefront, and to exalt prerogative above all limitations of regulated freedom, and the

benefits of a mechanical routine above the blessing of a living active ministry and a moral, intelligent, grave, and deeply earnest people.

It was in the year 1564-5 that the first lamentable attempt was made to enforce a rigid uniformity, and by prerogative royal exact subscription to it from the scrupling Puritans, till then generously treated or grumblingly tolerated. The peremptory mandate requiring them to give this subscription issued from the sovereign herself; but it was carried out, if with reluctance yet with submission, by several of the prelates, and especially by Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury,¹ and Grindal, Bishop of London, in whose diocese many of the leading Puritans were settled, and by consistent Christian living, as well as by efficient pastoral

¹ Historians are not agreed how far she, and how far Parker was, in the first instance, to blame for the earlier proceedings against them. I have no doubt the real explanation is that given above, that the queen wished and urged him to proceed, just as she encouraged Aylmer's action against Cartwright, but that (as in that case) she wished him to take the *onus* on himself. No doubt the bishops, as well as she, thought that firmness and a little severity was all that was needed to crush the party, and instead of retracing their steps when they found they were mistaken, they exaggerated the dangers of a policy of concession, and clamoured for one of repression. Thus, ere many years had passed, we find Sandys writing to the Privy Council in the following excited terms: 'The city will never be quiet till these authors of sedition, who are now esteemed as gods . . . be far removed from the city. The people resort to them as in popery they were wont to run on pilgrimages. . . . A sharp letter from her Majesty would cut the courage of these men. Good my Lords, for the love you bear to the Church of Christ, resist the tumultuous enterprises of these newfangled men.'

work, were commending themselves and their cause to the popular sympathy. Sampson, Humphreys, Lever, and many others—above thirty in all—several of the best, as the Archbishop himself acknowledged, appeared and consented to be suspended or deposed rather than subscribe to observe the proposed uniformity. Not a few sought to delay the evil day by not appearing. The noble-hearted Foxe, to whom Protestant England owes so much, is reported to have pulled out his Greek Testament and said, ‘To this only will I subscribe. I have but a humble prebend in the Church, and if you take it from me, much good may it do you.’ He seems to have been borne with; but even good Father Coverdale who, as Grindal before, when pleading for his promotion, had said, ‘ante nos omnes in Christo fuit,’ could not be spared, though the plague had just spared him. After little more than a year’s enjoyment of his humble benefice of St. Magnus Rectory, he had to retire once more into obscurity and privation. He was revered and followed in London, and, by his influence, was putting the city out of sympathy with the Court, and must, to use the unfeeling words of her Majesty about another, be fitted for heaven, ‘but walk thither without staff or mantle.’ He was left in his extreme old age ‘without stay of living, “pauper et peregrinus,”’ in the land which gave him birth, and

which he had laboured so hard to enrich with the true riches of God's Word in his native tongue.

Such measures once taken, further trouble arose, first about private meetings for worship in London, at which Knox's Book of Common Order was used instead of the Liturgy, and then in connection with the more public meetings known as 'the prophesyings.' These were gatherings of ministers and pious laymen for the study and exposition of the Scriptures, and in the great dearth there then was of qualified preachers they were of much service to many, both in stimulating them to the study of the Word of God, and in training them to expound it with readiness and accuracy. They had been held with profit in the Dutch and French churches in London when under the charge of à Lasco, and had probably been resumed by them on their return from the Continent. At the accession of Elizabeth they were a standing institution at Zürich as well as at Geneva, and were introduced with much benefit into Scotland by Knox, soon after 1560. By the commencement of the following decade they appear to have found their way into various parts of England. Several bishops who were earnest for the more thorough reformation of their dioceses,¹

¹ The sad complaints of several of these bishops as to the state of their dioceses, from the ignorance of the people, and their dislike of the new régime, are given from State Papers and other contemporary sources, by Lee, vol. i. ch. iv.

finding them useful in quickening zeal for the reformed faith, and increasing the number of qualified preachers, gave them their countenance, and endeavoured, by prudent regulations, to avert or restrain any excesses to which, in incautious hands, they might be liable. They were especially dear to Grindal, who had by 1576 succeeded Parker in the primacy. He was a thorough Protestant himself and anxious for the continuance of a thoroughly Protestant ministry, and willing to employ any means which had been found useful in training men for it elsewhere. But the queen, either taking umbrage at the meetings having been set up without her sanction, or dreading the effect they might have in promoting discussion, encouraging greater liberty in the expression of opinion, and fostering a desire for a more popular organisation either in the church or state, determined rigorously to suppress them. She spoke slightingly of the need of preachers, affirming that two or three were enough for a whole county, and that the common people were far better not to have their stolid quiet disturbed by such over-zealous instructors. She peremptorily commanded him to issue formal orders for the suppression of the obnoxious meetings. The archbishop nobly remonstrated against the suppression of an institution which, he was satisfied, had done much good, and might easily be purged of any abuses which,

through the infirmity of men, may have arisen to mar the good it did. But he remonstrated in vain. The queen not only disregarded his courageous and earnest pleading, but carried her displeasure so far as to suspend him from his high office, and confine him as a prisoner to his own house. It is said that, but for the unpopularity of the measure, she would have proceeded to deprive him altogether. He never fully regained the favour of his sovereign, with whom he had as boldly and faithfully remonstrated, as became the high office he held. But it is said that, when he was broken down by grief and the infirmities of old age, and bereft of sight; she relented somewhat and sent him a kindly message, and that he made such acknowledgment as a Christian bishop could honourably make. His virtues and misfortunes made him beloved and revered by his contemporaries, caused his name to be embalmed in the verse of the immortal Spenser, and have secured for him a word of warm commendation from the High Church biographer of the Archbishops of Canterbury, who is never more sparing of his praise than to prelates of the Evangelical school, to which Grindal belonged.

Soon after the commencement of the prophesying, the more thorough-going Puritans who had been led on to substantially presbyterian opinions, but discouraged by friends abroad and debarred

by the authorities at home from overtly seceding from the national church, began to hold secretly private meetings for mutual conference and prayer, and possibly also for the exercise of discipline over those who voluntarily joined their associations and submitted to their guidance. It is even said that a presbytery was formed at Wandsworth in Surrey, wherein eleven lay-elders were associated with the lecturer of that congregation and certain leading Puritan clergymen. But if this was really a formal presbytery, it is probable that it was what was then called the lesser presbytery or session, not the greater presbytery or *classis* to which the name is now usually restricted. It is more certain that when Cartwright, the redoubted leader of this school of Puritans, was arrested in 1585 and his study searched, a copy was found of a Directory for church-government, which made provision for synods, provincial and national, as well as for presbyteries, greater and lesser. This, according to some authorities, had been subscribed by about 500 Puritans of this school, and, for some years, as I said, had, to a certain extent, been carried out, and a church within the church¹ virtually formed. The book was republished in 1644, and so was known and consulted by the Westminster divines; and it has been reprinted

¹ *Ecclesiola in ecclesia*. Their synods are said to have met in London, Oxford, Cambridge, Warwick, Northampton, etc.

in our own day by Principal Lorimer. It bears considerable resemblance to the famous Ordinances of Calvin and the Second Book of Discipline of the Scottish church, but it is more explicit in its directions as to preaching, and the forms of worship.

I must pass over with bare mention the harsh usage meted out to the great Puritan leader¹ by Whitgift in his early days, and by Aylmer in his later, the ungenerous treatment of Travers, and the pitiless oppression of many 'godly ministers,' when, on Whitgift's accession to the primacy, the Court of High Commission was reconstituted, and more extensive powers were intrusted to it, and a series of interrogatories was devised for extorting a confession from the accused, which even Cecil pronounced to be worthy of the Inquisition itself. I must pass over the harsh imprisonment of Brown

¹ Thomas Cartwright, B.D., first Margaret Professor of Divinity, and one of the preachers in the University Church at Cambridge, where his influence and example probably led to that outbreak of Puritanism on the part of the young men, which some suppose first roused the queen against its advocates. He was harshly expelled the University, and had twice to seek shelter abroad from the cruel usage he experienced at home. In his old age he was allowed, though not without occasional restraint and even imprisonment, to hold the chaplaincy of the hospital at Warwick. He was an able disputant, an eloquent preacher, 'a pure Latinist, an accurate Grecian, an exact Hebrean,' a scholar so learned that Beza said he did not think the sun shone on one more so, according to Marsden 'the Hooker of nonconformity, his equal in acuteness though not in penetration; in eloquence, though not in learning, his superior; his inferior perhaps only in profound dexterity and skill in argument mingled with an awful reverence for truth.' See also Appendix, Note B.

and other extreme Puritans of the Independent school—the tyrannical proceedings of the Court of Star-Chamber against the supposed authors of the satirical Marprelate Tracts, and the cruel sentences on Penry and Udal. Neither can I dwell on the illegal restraint of the freedom of discussion on ecclesiastical affairs in the House of Commons, in various Parliaments, from 1571 downwards, and the noble stand made in behalf of forbearance and healing measures by Wentworth, Strickland, and other patriots in that House—the worthy precursors of Pym and Hampden in the following century. Nor finally shall I advert to the doctrinal disputes which began to be raised before the close of this reign till I come, in a subsequent lecture, to treat of the history and development of doctrine more expressly.

It was indeed a policy of stamping out which was now initiated by the queen, with the aid of despotic Courts of Star-Chamber and High Commission; and with singular disregard of the feelings and convictions of many true-hearted patriots and accomplished Christian scholars, it was attempted to be remorselessly carried out. But the attempt failed as disastrously as it has generally done where authority and prerogative have set themselves against deep and earnest convictions. Many who had not the courage at first openly to avow it, secretly sympathised with

the patriots and the Puritans, and, in time, were emboldened to confess it. By their noble bearing under oppression and tyranny, 'men were led to examine the foundations of the power by which they were so cruelly oppressed. The influence of education and early attachment was thus counteracted, until at length a determination was avowed to overturn a system whose reformation only had previously been sought.' They were forced to seek outside the church what they were refused within, and, in the end, to let loose over the land as a devastating flood those waters which, had proper channels been opened for them, would have flowed on in them to revivify and transform the old church, and make its parched wastes 'rejoice and blossom as the rose.' 'Little as they thought what the consequences of their acts would be, Elizabeth and Whitgift, James and Bancroft,' as Rawson Gardiner says, 'by making a schism inevitable, were the true fathers of Protestant dissent.'

Occasionally guided by considerations of state policy and desire to avoid unpopularity, or yielding to the remonstrances of her patriotic councillors in favour of particular individuals belonging to the party who had been imprisoned or deprived, Elizabeth may have forborne to press hard on them. But ever and anon new occasion was found for restraining and gagging the more obnoxious, whether they sought shelter within or toleration

without the church, whether they sought minor changes or more important reforms in its constitution, whether they advocated these in their sermons, or through the press, or through the instrumentality of friends in Parliament. Even the archbishop, less averse to the repulsive task than some of his brethren, failed at times to satisfy his sovereign gradually becoming more jealous of her prerogative, more harsh and despotic just in those matters of conscience and religion in which she should have been less so, more giddy and frivolous as she advanced to years when the follies of youth should have been laid aside, and the realities of the faith she professed to defend should have bulked larger in her view.¹ She might on great occasions still come forward as the champion of Protestantism, and act with true dignity and spirit as she had done in 1572 when receiving in mourning and with expressions of deepest sorrow the ambassador of the French

¹ 'Towards the conclusion of her reign, the example of the court of Elizabeth was decidedly irreligious, and the contagion spread rapidly among the common people. A preposterous extravagance in dress . . . the prevalence of oaths (freely indulged in by the queen herself) and, to crown the whole, the studied desecration of the Sabbath, mark too plainly the hollowness of that religious profession which even men of fashion were still constrained to make. . . . Social meetings for prayer and praise and for conference among the clergy are almost inseparable from a vigorous piety and an effective ministry, and these had been discouraged. They were chiefly to be met with in the chambers of the Puritans.'—Marsden's *Early Puritans*, p. 239.

king after the massacre of St. Bartholomew ; and again in 1588, when, in prospect of the arrival of the Spanish Armada, she laid aside her usual *hauteur*, courageously cast herself on the sympathies and loyalty of her people, and placed herself at their head. But that wealth of religious life and activity which the new faith so exuberantly called forth, and all the effects intellectual and industrial which it drew in its train, she failed to utilise or even to recognise as the true strength of her throne, and her best security against Popish reaction. That growing love of freedom and impatience of minute restraint which religious and intellectual activity necessarily fostered, she failed to satisfy or appreciate, or even generously bear with. She fell behind instead of continuing to keep in advance of her advancing people, and endeavouring to anticipate their just aspirations, and by kindly treatment retain their devoted affection. That alone could have made the continuance of personal government still possible, and like several of her successors in similar crises of our history, Elizabeth failed to realise it, and at the proper time to act on it. She, who with due forethought and self-restraint might have permanently attached all hearts to her, and guided their progress, from imperiousness and arbitrary temper missed the possibility, threw away the splendid opportunities, and when at last she awoke

in some measure to the 'consciousness of what she had missed or thrown away, became peevish and irritable, and sank into deep and hopeless melancholy. 'That bright occidental star' paled, and set in a gloomy and angry sky.

The queen's popularity, I have said, had greatly waned during her later years. Even impartial secular historians, like Hallam, ascribe this not so much to weightier taxation, or to blunders and arbitrary proceedings in her civil government, as 'to her inflexible tenaciousness in every point of ecclesiastical discipline.' The ablest historian of the Puritans tells us that at one period of her reign, when Whitgift was allowed to have his way uncontrolled, nearly one-third of the beneficed clergy of England had incurred suspension, and that this to most of them involved destitution and penury, and to most of their flocks a total deprivation of the means of grace. Men could not fail to ask: 'Would it not be wiser to provide for the effervescence of a well-meaning zeal, however troublesome, within the bosom of the church, than to cast off those fiery energies which might and probably would be arrayed against her?' The numerous party among the laity who sympathised with them had begun to ask this, and others than they were beginning to do so. How anxious thoughtful men, altogether unconnected with the party, had by that time become that all this should be changed, and a more conciliatory

course be tried, appears notably from a tractate written by Francis Bacon, the accomplished philosopher and statesman, before the close of the year at which we have now arrived, and possibly drawn up for the guidance of Elizabeth's successor when assuming the government of the English state. In this tractate Bacon indorses their objection to the use of the words priest, absolution, and confirmation, 'takes exception to the various matters of ceremony at which the Puritans scrupled, inveighs against the abuses of excommunication, non-residence and plurality, the *ex officio* oath, and the excessive power of the bishops, against all which they protested ;' and in the spirit of a true patriot, he demands why the ecclesiastical state should be put at greater disadvantage than the civil, and not as considerately adapted to the changing wants and desires of Christian men.¹

¹ 'I would only ask why the civil state should be purged and restored by good and wholesome laws made every third or fourth year in Parliaments assembled, devising remedies as fast as time breedeth mischiefs, and contrariwise the ecclesiastical state should still continue upon the dregs of time, and receive no alteration now for these five-and-forty years and more. If it be said to me that there is a difference between civil causes and ecclesiastical, they may as well tell me that churches and chapels need no reparations though houses and castles do, whereas commonly, to speak the truth, dilapidations of the inward and spiritual edification of the church of God are in all times as great as the outward and material. Sure I am that the very word and style of reformation used by our Saviour *ab initio non fuit ita* was applied to Church matters, and those of the highest nature.'—Spedding's *Bacon*, vol. iii. p. 105.