

LECTURE III.

HISTORY OF PURITANISM UNDER THE EARLIER STUART KINGS.

IN my last lecture I gave you an account of the history and development of English Puritanism during the reign of the last of the Tudor sovereigns. In the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, it may be said to have been still in its infancy: before her death it had almost attained its maturity. Under the unkindly treatment its advocates received, it tended more and more to develop in a polemical as well as a practical form. The defences employed against it showed the same tendency to develop. First the 'nocent ceremonies' formed the chief subject of attack; then, when concessions as to these were refused or withdrawn, the attack was pushed further. The worship and government of the church were more generally assailed, and finally the war threatened to extend into the region of doctrine, in which chiefly they contended for more than mere toleration. The principle which lay at the root of all the contentings of its advocates, and to which most of their varied

assaults in matters of minor importance can be traced up, was the principle that the church has no right to burden the consciences of her members in matters of faith and worship with aught that is contrary to or *beside* (*i.e.* in addition to) the express or implied teaching of the Word of God. In other words they claimed to restrict the authority of the church within narrower limits than their opponents, and to reclaim for liberty a larger province than they were disposed to allow her. They did not as yet themselves perceive the full import of the principle for which they contended. They were reluctant to extend it rigidly to the constitution and government of the church as well as to her articles of faith and forms of worship. But as the contest proceeded, they could not fail to be led on more and more distinctly to assert it with a fuller consciousness of its far-reaching consequences, and a more earnest longing to bring back the church in constitution and government, as well as in faith and worship, to what they believed to be 'the pattern showed in the mount.' Their opponents were also led by the necessities of the warfare to develop their defence. The first Elizabethan bishops accepted the ceremonies and habits, and reluctantly submitted to various restrictions, because the queen so ordered it, and they failed to bend her will in the direction they desired, and in the direction their Protestant brethren abroad had

already led the way. Their successors, more wedded to that to which they had become accustomed, resolutely undertook its defence, asserting against the Puritan position the counter proposition that while Scripture supplied an absolute rule of faith, and no doctrine not drawn from it was to be imposed on the consciences of the members of the church, yet that it was not meant to be a complete or absolute rule in matters of worship and church constitution, but that much for which Scriptural precedent might be alleged might be now unnecessary or inexpedient, and much which Scripture had left undetermined might be necessary to be regulated, and that the church had authority to regulate all matters of this sort and to require obedience to her regulations, provided they were not positively contrary to Scripture. They asserted that the church had a right to retain her polity and forms if ancient and accordant with those of the state in which her lot was cast, and that agitation for a more popular form might be not only inexpedient and unseemly, but even unlawful under a monarchy.

This in brief was the position maintained with much logical dexterity and persistence by Whitgift and Cooper, and with certain modifications by the great and gifted Hooker in that treatise of Ecclesiastical Polity which still excites the admiration of men of so divergent sentiments for the candour and

acuteness of its reasoning, and the stately majesty of its diction. Finally, as the controversy became more embittered, some zealots in defence of the existing order of things advanced beyond the lines of Whitgift, or even of Hooker. They claimed for the constitution and government of the Anglican church a *jus divinum*, and maintained that the episcopate was by divine right above the presbyterate, and that to assert the opposite was not merely an error but a 'heresy.' This position, first broached by Bancroft in the reign of Elizabeth, was to find many supporters in the period I am now to describe, and for a time almost to drive the more liberal and attractive theory of Hooker out of the field, even in the church he adorned.

It was on the 24th of March 1602-3, that Elizabeth's long reign came to a close, and she was succeeded by James I. of England and VI. of Scotland. The character of James, while calculated favourably to impress on superficial observation, discloses after deeper study elements which could not fail to mar the success of his reign. There was, as has been said, a 'strange mixture in it of sagacity and folly.' Love of letters and learned men combined with a passion for low sports; professions of religion and zeal for Protestantism discredited at times by mean truckling to 'catholic' powers, by shameful insincerity and vulgar profanity. 'His intellectual

powers were of no common order, his learning, especially on theological subjects, by no means contemptible.' His courtiers—even those of them who were ministers of the church—were wont to speak of him as the British Solomon. Some modern historians, on the other hand, affirm that, as Henry IV. of France said, he was only 'the wisest fool in Christendom.' He was good-natured, but he allowed his goodness to be abused by unworthy favourites. He was shrewd and cunning, and yet could so far conceal his artifice, that he imposed, for a time at least, on many good men in Scotland, and on many of the great statesmen and churchmen of England.¹ But he became, as Bishop Burnet has said, 'the scorn of his age,' and 'was despised by all abroad as a pedant without true judgment, courage, or steadiness, a slave to his favourites, and delivered up to the counsels or rather the corruption of Spain.'² He was fond of

¹ 'Such a king as since Christ's time hath not been.'—Bancroft. 'The learnedest king that ever sat upon this throne, or as I verily think since Solomon's time or any other.'—Bishop Hall. 'A king of incomparable clemency, and whose heart is inscrutable for wisdom and goodness.'—Lord Bacon.

² His defects Mr. S. Rawson Gardiner is disposed to trace to 'that scene of terror which passed before his mother while he was yet unborn. He came into the world imperfect. His body, his mind, and his heart appear alike to have been wanting in that central force by which the human frame and the human intellect are at the same time invigorated and controlled. His ungainly figure was the type of his inner life. . . . No true and lofty faith ever warmed his heart. No pure reverence ever exalted his understanding.'—*History of England from 1603 to 1616*, vol. i. p. 56. See also Green's *History*, vol. iii. pp. 55, 56.

absolute power, and implacable against those who called in question any of his prerogatives, fond of theological discussion, especially when he could count on an opponent courtly enough not to press him too hard in argument, fond of talking and writing against Popery, yet often found really acting for it. Above all, he was fond of management and trickery, and vain of his ability and success in this, which he dignified with the name of kingcraft. But this craft in which he deemed himself a master failed to secure the subservience of his Parliaments, or to crush the aspirations of his people after greater liberty in church and state. His accession to the English throne could not fail to raise hopes of kindlier treatment in the minds of the Puritans. He had previously to some extent shown himself their friend, had invited more than one of their leaders, when harshly oppressed in England, to occupy a chair in a Scottish University,¹ and had ventured to intercede with Queen Elizabeth on their behalf. He had himself sanctioned and subscribed in 1581 what was termed the 'negative' Confession of Faith, in which the ceremonies and the hierarchy appeared to be utterly condemned, and on one memorable occasion had spoken of the English Prayer-Book as 'an evil said mass in English, wanting nothing

¹ Cartwright and Travers were invited to join Melville in the New College, St. Andrews. M'Crie's *Life of Melville*, p. 153.

of the mass but the liftings.' He had no pronounced ritualistic proclivities, no impracticable *jure divino* notions as to the office of a bishop as he had of the 'divinity that doth hedge a king,' and he was too well read in theology not to know what was really Protestant doctrine and what was not. But unfortunately he had already come into collision with the leaders of the more decidedly Puritanic party in the Scottish church, both through his exercise of despotic power and through the coarser vices to which he or his courtiers were addicted, and had given more plain than pleasant evidence of his dislike to them in his *Basilicon Doron*. So plain and unmistakeable indeed was this that he had to make more than one attempt to explain his words away. But notwithstanding all his explanations, there was from his known peculiarities ground to fear that he might be tempted to avenge on their southern co-religionists the defeats and affronts he had received from their Scottish brethren, and might be induced to throw himself into the arms of the prelates, who were prepared to make common cause with him in the maintenance of prerogative, and sedulously to foster in his mind the idea that its maintenance was closely bound up with the preservation of their cherished hierarchy—in fact, to give all possible currency to his favourite maxim, 'No Bishop no King.'

As he proceeded on his way to take possession of his new kingdom, petitions for relief or indulgence were presented to him by the oppressed Puritans, showing how partial effect the harsh measures of Elizabeth and Whitgift had really had in checking the growth of this obnoxious school. Chief among these petitions was the Millenary Petition,—so designated either from its being signed or approved of¹ by nearly a thousand (in reality about 800) ministers, or from the assertion contained in it that it represented the views of more than a thousand of the ministers of the church. It was expressed in deferential and moderate language, and its prayer for relief might have been granted without the slightest danger to the church or injury to the cause of religion in the land. An opportunity of repairing the mistake Elizabeth had made in the early years of her reign, and had persisted in to the last, was now in God's good providence presented, and had the king been really touched by the grateful and graceful salutation addressed to him by the old Puritan leader from his deathbed, and risen to the occasion, or had he followed the counsels tendered by statesmen like Bacon, and acted with ordinary prudence

¹ Some say approbation, not subscription, was asked, and that the numbers so approving were 750. A pamphlet printed in 1606 gives the numbers in 25 English counties, the sum of which is 746. But no mention is made of the Welsh counties or of most within the province of York, from which returns may have been later.

and moderation at this juncture, peace might have been restored to the distracted church on very favourable terms, and relief granted to many earnest men warmly attached to the institutions of their country and desirous to aid in the more efficient maintenance of them. The king with great tact consented to hold a conference to consider the grievances of which the petitioners complained, and to learn in detail what the bishops had to say for themselves.

To this conference, held on the 14th, 16th, and 18th January, 1603-4, he invited four of the ablest and most moderate of the Puritan ministers, viz., Dr. Reynolds of Oxford, Dr. Chaderton of Cambridge, Dr. Sparkes and Mr. Knewstub, along with Archbishop Whitgift, eight bishops and as many inferior dignitaries.¹ Had he only held the balance evenly between the contending parties, allowed each fully and fairly to state its case, and endeavoured to decide between them as a calm judge rather than as a keen partisan, he could hardly have failed to conciliate the favour of the one without alienating the other. But he managed matters with such arrogance and coarseness as brought him little thanks for the few concessions he ultimately made, and deeply wounded the feelings of the party he refused more fully to relieve. He knew that he had that

¹ Patrick Galloway was also present and wrote an account of the Conference, to the presbytery of Edinburgh.

party at his mercy and wished to make them feel that it was so. Their desire for a carefully revised translation of the Scriptures was approved of and in due time was carried out, and those who would give the credit of that great undertaking entirely to others need to be reminded that it was originally suggested and pressed by the more learned Puritans, and that no one while he lived took greater interest in helping it on than the old Oxford Puritan who had urged it at this conference. Some of the more objectionable chapters from the Apocrypha were agreed to be struck out of the Table of Lessons, and Archbishop Abbot held that the old injunctions of Queen Elizabeth left ministers the discretion of going further in that direction. Certain additions explaining the nature of the Sacraments were authorised to be made to the Church Catechism, and the rubric of the service for private baptism was so altered as to discourage lay-baptism. The Act of Edward VI. declaring the lawfulness of clerical marriages was promised to be revived. But there was no concession in regard to the three nocent ceremonies which Bacon then, and Ussher forty years later, would willingly have given up, nor in regard to the terms of subscription which have, with consent of all parties, in our own day, been changed into a form that would have almost met the scruples of the petitioners ere the church was yet rent and

English Protestantism hopelessly divided. There was no attempt to provide a remedy for the scarcity of preachers and the redundance of non-preaching pluralists,—scandals from which the church continued to suffer for nearly half a century. With respect to those meetings of the clergy for prayer and religious conference which Grindal and other bishops had desired to tolerate in the previous reign, as also more formal meetings of the Presbyters in Synod with their Bishop, which no authority would now think of opposing, the king, coarsely interrupting their representative, said they were aiming at a Scottish Presbytery, which ‘agreeth with a monarchy as well as God with the devil. There Jack, and Tom, and Will, and Dick, shall meet and at their pleasures censure me and my council.’ The closing scene was even more coarse and offensive. ‘Well, Doctor,’ he said, addressing Dr. Reynolds, ‘have you anything else to say?’ ‘No more at present, please your majesty,’ was the meek reply. ‘If this,’ rejoined the king, ‘be all the party hath to say, I will make them conform, or else I will harry them out of the land, or else do worse, hang them—that is all.’ And this, according to Hallam, was addressed to a man who ‘was nearly, if not altogether, the most learned man in England.’¹ It was a gross violation of the assurance he had given in his writings that

¹ Others suppose it was spoken aside to some of the opposite party. For further details as to this Conference, see App., Note C.

learned and moderate Puritans of this stamp would be held by him in equal honour and love with their opponents.¹

The same year which witnessed this memorable Conference witnessed also the summoning of the king's first Parliament and of the Convocation of the Church.² The concessions agreed to at the conference were not submitted for the approval of Convocation, though that is maintained by Anglo-Catholics now, as well as by Puritans then, to be the course which in such a case ought to be followed. It was thought more for the honour of the king that they should be made simply by his prerogative royal, save the one relating to clerical marriages, which required to be submitted to Parliament. But while the House of Commons was discouraged from interfering on behalf of the Puritans,³ permission was given to the Convocation to prepare a series of constitutions and canons ecclesiastical which were duly sanctioned by royal authority, and which, so far as the clergy

¹ 'The style of Puritans belongs properly to that vile sect of the Anabaptists only, called the family of love. It is only this sort of men that I wish my son to punish. . . . But I protest upon mine honour I mean it not generally of all preachers, and others that like better of the single form of policy in our Church of Scotland than of the many ceremonies in the Church of England. No, I am so far from being contentious in these things that I do equally love and honour the learned and grave of either opinion.' (E. 204, No. 2.)

² It is called the Convocation of 1603, but though it began on 20th March 1603-4, most of its sittings fell within what even in the old style was the year 1604.

³ Three parts of the House were said to be favourable to them.

are concerned, and they have not been allowed to fall into desuetude, are held still to embody the law of the Church of England. They were 141 in number, and several of them were directed expressly against the Puritans, and seem to us sufficiently harsh. 'If cursing,' says Dr. Price,¹ 'could have effected their destruction, it would have been now inevitable. The sentence of excommunication *ipso facto* was now added to the other penalties of nonconformity.' They were anathematised if they remained in the church, holding any of its rites to be superstitious and repugnant to Scripture. They were anathematised if they seceded and ventured to affirm that their meetings or congregations apart were true and lawful churches. Even in the Convocation which passed these harsh canons one bishop was found bold enough to plead for concession or at least forbearance in regard to *subscription* and the nocent ceremonies, enlarging on the evils of a house divided against itself, and the mistake of silencing so many able preachers at a time when their services were so much needed, and warning his brethren of a day 'when for want of their joint-labours some such doleful complaint might arise as fell out upon an accident of another nature recorded in the Book of Judges, when it is said that for the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings

¹ *History of Protestant Nonconformity*, vol. i. p. 476.

of heart.' One who bore a name long and honourably associated with moderate Puritanism made a more direct attempt to gain the sovereign's ear. Dr. John Burgess, afterwards of Sutton Coldfield, in his sermon before the king at Greenwich, on 19th July 1604, boldly warned him of the dangers of the course on which he had entered, and pleaded for indulgence to the many worthy men who were exposed to his displeasure. The reasons given for this bold step in the apology he made, were 'new and unwonted urging of the ceremonies and subscription beyond what law required (whereby six or seven hundred of the ablest ministers in the land are like to be put out), the general depraving of religious persons (if they be conscionable) under the scorn of Puritanism, as if, the body of religion standing upright, men would yet cut the throat of it . . . the withdrawing of ecclesiastical causes from Parliament, though in the present and in your majesty's days safe, yet in the precedent and sanction of doubtful consequence.' Not even Bacon could have put the matter more forcibly, nor followed this up more moderately and persuasively than he proceeded to do. 'Things which I confess I hold not impious, but needless and scandalous, many hundred ministers think them unlawful and would surely die rather than use them. . . . What is yielded upon suit for peace's sake might go out

with flying colours, one side satisfied with their justifying, and the other gratified with their removal, the form of the present government being still continued with good approbation, and confirmed by our inward peace.¹

Shortly after the adjournment of Parliament and Convocation a royal proclamation was issued, enjoining strict conformity to the established order of the church; many Puritan clergy were silenced, some who ventured to petition for indulgence were imprisoned; their flocks were irritated and the lawfulness of separating from the National Church began to be more openly discussed.² The number of silenced and deprived ministers is variously estimated. Some place it as high as 1500, but this more probably represents the number of those who at first refused to subscribe to the three articles of the new Canon making the terms of conformity more stringent than Acts of Parliament warranted. Others have reduced the number as low as fifty. Calderwood and Neale say it was above 300, Brooke makes it 400. Others were borne with by individual bishops, and through all this reign even kneeling at the Communion was not enforced in some places, and 'prophesyings' were in one or two instances winked at. The Archbishop of York is said to have been more tolerant than his brother of Canterbury. Neale

¹ Sermon, etc. (E. 145, No. 2.) ² Marsden's *Early Puritans*, p. 276.

gives various touching instances of the hardships to which several of the silenced ministers were subjected, but none of these is so touching as is the case of the Scottish ministers, who about the same time were decoyed from their distant homes, professedly to advise with the king as to the changes contemplated by him in the Scottish church, but really to deprive their brethren opposed to these changes of the benefit of their counsel and courageous example. Dr. Hook is pleased to make merry over their case as a very harmless piece of revenge for all the lectures they had inflicted on the king in former times. But the device of summoning from Scotland, into what was virtually a foreign land, men whose only offence was the influence their talents and character gave them, and the exercise of the liberty the laws of their country allowed them, was as illegal as it was harsh and spiteful. The long imprisonment of Andrew Melville¹ in the Tower of London, and the life-long detention of his nephew

¹ No one who has read the sad story of his later years when a prisoner in the Tower of London, or an exile in a foreign land, can fail to commiserate the hard fate of this great scholar and patriot. One can read, if not without indignation yet without disgust, the passionate words of the youthful Mary, when she thought she had at last got Knox into her power; but one cannot think without indignation and disgust of her son, now in the maturity of his powers, listening behind the tapestry while his honest, if stern, reprove, at length entrapped into what was to him a foreign country, was being badgered and baited by the English Privy Council.

James from his native land, on both of which the Doctor is judiciously silent, were among the most unjust and tyrannical actions of James's reign. They gave to his Puritan subjects in the south a practical exemplification of what he meant by the coarse threat of harrying them out of the land. That in fact was what it came to. A number of their leaders as well as Andrew Melville, Forbes, Dury, and Welsh from Scotland, had to seek abroad, in the Protestant Colleges of France, or among the merchant communities of their countrymen in the free cities of the Netherlands, the toleration which was denied to them at home. There, using in the service of ingenuous youth of other lands or of their countrymen settled in foreign cities, the stores of learning they had amassed in more favourable times, they were honoured to do good work for the Master they loved, and to train a seed to serve Him and to bear the banner of His crown and covenant when they should be called away.

Soon after the close of the Hampton Court Conference the long life of Archbishop Whitgift came to an end. He was an acute disputant, a sound, well-read divine, a firm supporter of the Augustinian or Calvinistic theology, a zealous and courageous prelate, but a man of imperious and 'choleric temper,' harsh and cruel towards his opponents. He looked forward with apprehension

to the approaching meeting of Parliament, and expressed a wish he might be summoned to give in his account in another world before it met. He may have had a dim presentiment of some of the sad consequences of the tacit alliance he and his fellows had formed with despotism in the state, and more than a dim presentiment of the consequences which must follow from the more than tacit alliance, which now could hardly fail to be struck between the more resolute of the Puritans and the patriots of the House of Commons.

Whitgift was succeeded by Bancroft, Bishop of London, who had been the champion of the hierarchy at the Hampton Court Conference, was more blind to consequences, more decidedly High Church, and more hostile to the Puritans,—‘a sturdy piece,’ according to Bishop Kennet, ‘who proceeded with rigour, severity, and wrath’ against them. He was in many respects the true precursor of Laud, not only in asserting the *jus divinum* of episcopacy but also in attempting to revive disused ornaments and ceremonies. His primacy was short, and after seven years he was succeeded by George Abbot, a man naturally more tolerant and kindly to all who valued the principles of the Reformation, of more extensive erudition, more thoroughly Protestant, and the last Augustinian, I suppose, who sat on the throne of Canterbury. It is said to have been at his

expense that the great work of his old Augustinian predecessor, Bradwardine—*De causa Dei contra Pelagium*—was finally given to the world. His former experiences at Oxford had made him fully alive to the dangers which nascent Anglo-Catholicism, and a more indulgently treated Romanism, might occasion to the church and nation, and it was no doubt the earnest and hearty services rendered by the moderate Puritans in the defence of the principles of the Reformation, which secured for them gentler usage at his hands. Under his régime their condition appears to have been considerably ameliorated. Those who still remained in benefices were not harshly prosecuted as they had been before; while those who did not see their way so far to conform to the requirements of the Canons and Prayer-Book as to qualify themselves, for benefices were encouraged to use their gifts in the service of the church as lecturers and preachers. Those who scrupled to subscribe Whitgift's terms of conformity, might still obtain orders on more favourable conditions from Irish bishops, and not a few of them acted as chaplains in the families of the nobility and gentry, or earned a precarious subsistence by teaching. Through the liberality of many of the lay friends of the party, and the purchase of impropriated tithes, fixed salaries were provided, and the number of these lecturers was gradually increased. The cause of

religion under their earnest lectures and catechisings prospered much in London and the provincial towns, and to their oral teaching was added a multitude of practical religious treatises, issued through the press, which extended their influence far and wide, and made this era one of the most memorable in this department of literature.¹ If they had not theoretically abandoned the opinions of Cartwright, practically, like himself in his later days, they had ceased to contend for them, and devoted themselves to peaceful work. Abbot, while a courtier and a conscientious conformist, was like many of the bishops of king James an Augustinian, or Calvinist, in thorough sympathy with the reformed churches abroad, and with no hankering after that scheme which at times had attractions for James himself, and greater for his unfortunate successor, the endeavouring to bring about an understanding between the Papists and the Church of England. It was through his counsels that the king was persuaded in 1615 to

¹ What Hepe says of them at a somewhat later period was certainly true of them at this date also: Wirkten sie nicht nur als begeisterte Prediger, sondern auch als eifrige Katecheten—indem sie die *Katechisation* als ein besonders wirksames Mittel zur Verbreitung des Evangelium's ansahen—sowie als die treuesten, ernstesten Seelsorger, als Wohlergeben der ihnen anvertrauten Gemeinden in allerlei Weisen zu fördern und zu heben suchten. Strenge Kirchenzucht, fleissig besuchte Katechisationen, und häufig zusammentretende Conventikel der Gemeindeglieder sah man überall wo pietistische Prediger wirkten, und *ebenso sah man den Segen ihrer Wirksamkeit.*—*Geschichte des Pietismus*, pp. 50, 51.

authorise the Irish Articles, and so virtually to concede beyond the Irish Channel what had been refused on this side at the Hampton Court Conference, and also in 1618 to send deputies from the English church to the famous Synod of Dort in Holland, and so give practical countenance to the reformed churches on the Continent; and on more than one occasion he sought to mediate in the doctrinal disputes of the Protestants in France. It is said to have been by his influence that the general reading of the Proclamation regarding sports lawful on the Lord's Day was not enforced. If at times in his last years James showed favour to the Arminians, yet in raising Ussher to the primacy of the Irish church he provided beforehand a friend to shelter the Puritans when their protector in England had passed away, a defender of Protestantism whose learning and competency none could question, an Augustinian whose varied gifts Laud and his followers might envy but could not outvie, and dared not contemn.

The king's eldest son, Henry, Prince of Scotland and Prince of Wales, a young man of high spirit and great promise, in sympathy with all that was earnest and good, the one real ornament of his father's court, was cut off by a mysterious illness in 1611. Like that son of Jeroboam, in whose heart some good thing was found, he was taken away, to the grief of all good men, in those

anxious times. His removal dashed their cherished hopes, that a happy solution of questions pending in Church and State which it was evident could not now be long deferred might by his means have been attained and the hold of the Stuart dynasty on the affections of the English people mightily strengthened. The marriage of his eldest sister to the Protestant Elector Palatine, the prospect of which had cheered him in his last hours, and the consequences of which were ultimately to be so much more blessed to the nation than even he could then anticipate, was celebrated soon after his death, and in some measure lightened the gloom of that event. It increased the interest of the people in the fortunes of the foreign Protestants, and had the king only shared their spirit its more immediate consequences to the Protestants at home and abroad, and to the Stuart dynasty, would have been more blessed still.

The throne at the death of James passed to his younger son Charles,—a prince in character more noble, chivalrous, and high-minded than his father, but withal inheriting in aggravated form his despotic principles, favouritism, duplicity, and fondness for kingcraft. His father in his vanity would have him wedded to a Popish princess, whose unquiet, intriguing spirit wrought him only less harm with his people than her superstitious religiosity was sure to do.

James had got on ill with his parliaments, Charles got on worse with his—the House of Commons being resolute for redress of grievances in Church and State. Determined to assert his prerogative and yield up nothing to the popular wishes, he in 1628 dissolved his parliament, and endeavoured for twelve years to govern without the advice of the Houses. To do this he had to arrogate increased power to his Privy Council, to resort to various questionable devices in order to raise supplies, and to surrender himself to the guidance of able but unscrupulous men, who thought to carry out in England the policy Richelieu had pursued with success in France, and make their master absolute. They were unscrupulous, perhaps, rather than unprincipled, but their great principle was, that if the end of good government was attained, it mattered little what were the means used to attain it,—little how prerogative was stretched, or ancient liberties were invaded ; little how the spirit of the constitution was violated if any semblance of respect for the letter of it could be preserved. They were generally men of pure lives and by no means destitute of high purposes, generous impulses, or genial manners. But, like their master, they lived in isolation, and were unconscious of the strength of the forces that were ranging themselves against them. They were committed to a dangerous game in which success

meant ruin to the liberties of their country, both civil and religious,—a despotism more abject than that of the most despotic of the Tudors,—while failure meant ruin to their master, to themselves, and all associated with them. To the gentle and tolerant, yet thoroughly Protestant Abbot succeeded in the see of Canterbury, the resolute, untiring, overbearing Anglo-Catholic Laud, who even as Bishop of London had been chief counsellor in Church affairs during Abbot's declining years. Laud was personally blameless in life, vigilant in the discharge of duty, earnestly religious according to his light, devoted to his sovereign, almost the only one of his trusted counsellors who was above taking a bribe or using his power for purposes of mere favouritism or self-aggrandisement; but narrow-minded, unscrupulous, haughty, by no means free from irascibility and vindictiveness, blindly ritualistic, and cruelly despotic.¹ For years he was the king's most confidential adviser in State as well as in Church affairs. He sought and found able and unscrupulous coadjutors in the work of 'harrying' Puritans out of the Church and constitutionalists out of the State, setting up, in lieu of their ideal of regulated freedom, the system to which he himself gave the name of THOROUGH,—thorough absolutism in the

¹ 'In the dull immobile face, the self-satisfied mouth, the rheumy obstinate eyes, can be read as in a book the explanation of his character and the tragedy of his end.'—*Edinburgh Review*.

State, thorough despotism in the Church. He virtually proscribed and stigmatised as Puritanism the old Augustinian doctrines which his predecessor not only tolerated, but approved, and for which the House of Commons so resolutely contended. He used the powers of his high office and of the Courts of Star-Chamber and High Commission with a rigour and savagery unknown before, condemning to life-long imprisonment, or to cruel mutilations, or ruinous fines men whose offences did not justify such extreme proceedings, and meting out to grave divines, practised lawyers, physicians, and scholars, punishments till then reserved for the lowest class of felons and sowers of sedition.

The indignities perpetrated on Leighton, Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick are well known, and the liberation of these sufferers from their long imprisonment, and the exhibition of their mutilated faces raised to its height the popular indignation against Laud and his accomplices. Attempts have been made even in our own day to mitigate the disgust and indignation their treatment still awakens by questioning whether the sentence in its full extent was executed in each case, and whether it was not pronounced and the fines imposed¹ rather *in terrorem*, than with the

¹ It has been concluded that the fines imposed were seldom exacted, as they are not entered in the Exchequer books as being paid. But considering how common it was to make gifts of such casualities to court favourites, it would require some further

deliberate intention of being carried out to the letter. But it is a matter of comparatively minor importance whether Leighton lost one ear or both, whether he had to stand in the pillory and to endure branding and scourging on one occasion or two. The natural feeling will still be what was so well expressed in later years by that son whose boyish letters, found in his father's study, were by a refinement of cruelty used in evidence against him.¹

The Archbishop's argument in vindication of the course he followed was ingenious, if not ingenuous: that harm—serious harm—was being done to religion by the differences so long tolerated in regard to minuter matters of ritual and church arrangement, and still more by the embittered pamphlets against the hierarchical government of the Church, and the persistent obtruding

evidence than the negative one that the fines are not entered in the Exchequer books to prove that they were not meant to be exacted from the unfortunate men, so far as the means they possessed could be got at. In fact, from what we know of the venality of many of the privy councillors and the attempts made by Bishop Williams when in trouble to secure their favour, we seem rather warranted to conclude that it was only a less costly matter to get a fine remitted than to pay it. The argument for disbelief of facts authenticated by contemporary testimony on the ground of omissions in the official records of these times may easily be carried too far. The Journals of the House of Commons (vol. ii. p. 124) certainly mention Leighton's fine and 'the cutting off his ears.'

¹ 'If that Persian prince could so prize his Zopyrus who was mangled in his service, how much more will this Lord esteem those who suffer *so* for him?'—*Sermon* on 2 COR. v. 20.

of those Augustinian or Calvinistic doctrines which erewhile had been generally received and freely taught in the universities and in the Church, and that there was no remedy for this but in absolute submission and unreserved obedience to the king, God's appointed vicegerent—and to the injunctions issued by him through his wise and trusty counsellors in regard to all these things. The course he followed, as Hallam so pertinently observes, 'could in nature have no other tendency than to give nourishment to the lurking seeds of disaffection in the English Church. Besides reviving the prosecutions for nonconformity in their utmost strictness . . . he most injudiciously, not to say wickedly, endeavoured by innovations of his own, and by exciting alarms in the susceptible consciences of pious men, to raise up new victims whom he might oppress. Those who made any difficulties about his novel ceremonies, or even who preached on the Calvinistic side, were harassed by the High Commission Court as if they had been actual schismatics. The resolution so evidently taken by the court to admit of no half conformity in religion . . . convinced many that England could no longer afford them a safe asylum. The state of Europe was not such as to encourage them to attempt settling on the Continent, though Holland received them kindly. But turning their eyes to the newly discovered regions beyond the Atlantic ocean, they

saw there a secure place of refuge from present tyranny, and a boundless prospect for future hope.

‘They obtained from the Crown the charter of Massachusetts Bay in 1629. About 350 persons,¹ chiefly or wholly of the Independent sect, sailed with the first fleet. So many followed in the subsequent years that these New England settlements have been supposed to have drawn near half a million of money from the mother country before the civil wars. Men of higher rank than the first colonists . . . men of capacious and commanding minds formed to be the legislators and generals of an infant republic, were preparing to embark for America, [among them John Hampden and Oliver Cromwell,] when Laud, for his own and his master’s curse, procured an order of Council to stop their departure. So far were these men from entertaining schemes for overturning the government at home, that they looked only to escape from imminent tyranny. But this in his malignant humour the Archbishop would not allow. Nothing would satisfy him but that they should surrender at discretion, soul and conscience, to his direction.’

That in fact was the issue now unmistakably presented by him,—surrender of soul and conscience to his direction,—in matters not of

¹ Such is the number given by Hallam, but this is rather the number of Robinson’s congregation in Holland than of that portion (about 100) which actually went over with ‘The Mayflower.’ For further references to this important event see Appendix, Note D.

ritual and ceremony only, but of vital Protestant doctrine too, which they believed to be founded on the Word of God, and to have been acknowledged by his own predecessors to be so. That in fact was what Puritanism with all its tenacity was being led on to resist.

Having after years of patient and untiring labour at last succeeded, outwardly at least, in moulding his own province and that of York substantially in accordance with his wishes, the Archbishop turned his thoughts to the other dominions of the King where Puritanism had been allowed freer scope or treated with greater indulgence, as if, while refusing a Cardinal's hat from Rome, he wished to be indeed *veluti papa alterius orbis*. By the aid of the talented but unscrupulous Wentworth, his trusted confidant and chosen instrument in the work of repression, he succeeded in 1634, in securing the adoption of a new and much more elaborate code of canons in Ireland, and in assimilating subscriptions there to those of the Church of England. By care in the appointment of bishops for the future, he no doubt hoped gradually to accomplish his purpose, and to root out the Puritans from that old refuge where they had so long found shelter, and were admitted to have done good service in upholding the Reformed faith among the old English settlers, and the new Scottish colonists. This trusted agent reports with

an apparent chuckle how adroitly he had managed to overreach the good Archbishop of Armagh, who wished to retain in their old honour the Irish Articles, while subscribing *hic et nunc* to the English, and who with all his learning and sound Protestantism was no match in diplomacy for either of these determined schemers.

Having succeeded thus far in Ireland, Laud turned his thoughts all the more wistfully to Scotland—now the last refuge of those he had so persistently hunted down, and still a stronghold of Puritanism, notwithstanding the changes which James in the interest of absolutism in Church and State had endeavoured, though with but partial success, to introduce in the government and ritual of the Church. A series of letters, printed by the late Mr. David Laing in the Appendix to his invaluable edition of Baillie's *Letters and Journals*, show what pains the English Primate took to draw reluctant Scotch bishops on to the use of their 'whites,' and to countenance more ornate services than had been in favour in Scotland ever since the Reformation. At length he resolved the time was come to provide them with stronger meat, and he thought the train had been well laid for the changes he contemplated; but as King James had said long before, 'he knew not the stomach of that people,' and perhaps he recked not what a great conflagration this train he had laid was to

light up. Their Liturgy or Book of Common Order, as Knox left it, or even as King James would have altered it, was regarded by him as no meet form for worshipping the Lord in the beauty of Holiness; their form of administering the holy communion, even if the act of kneeling were more generally enforced, was in the eyes of high churchmen sadly defective in important particulars; and their forms of conferring holy orders, even as revised under King James in 1620, were insufficient to convey a valid mission.¹ The king, he said (and he was always careful to put him in the forefront when enjoining or advising what he knew would be distasteful), was much troubled to hear of these sad blemishes in the Church of his baptism. He might quite competently have provided a remedy for them by his prerogative royal, *i.e.* of course, by the advice of Laud himself, who was really the keeper of his conscience and chief counsellor in affairs of State as well as of the Church, but he would rather that this were done with the concurrence of the bishops in Scotland. Thus partly by flattery, partly by threats, Spottiswoode, the wary primate of Scotland, and his

¹ 'In the admission to priesthood the very essential words of conferring orders are left out. At which his majesty was much troubled, as he had great cause, and concerning which he hath commanded me to write, that either you do admit of our Book of Ordination, or else that you amend your own in these two gross oversights.'—*Laud to Wedderburn.*

older colleagues among the bishops, were drawn or forced into courses of which their own deliberate judgment did not approve, and of which they had a sad presentiment that they would put in peril all that by 'canny convoyance' they had gained during the previous thirty or forty years.

No doubt Laud, when on his trial, insisted that all he aimed at was to insure uniformity with the Church of England, and the acceptance in their entirety of the English Prayer-book, Articles and Canons. But, even if it were literally so, he cannot be absolved from gravest responsibility. The men who urged a somewhat different course were the younger men, whom he had himself favoured and promoted, and who could have effected little with the king without his tacit or open acquiescence. And if changes were to be pressed at all, there was a good deal to be said in favour of the course they proposed, namely, that there should be certain differences allowed between the Liturgies of the two countries, and the Scots should not be asked ecclesiastically to bow their necks purely and simply to the yoke of England. There was a good deal to be said for it, that some of these differences should be concessions to their invincibly puritanic predilections, as the almost entire exclusion of the Apocrypha from the table of lessons, the uniform substitution of the word presbyter for priest, the adoption of the new

(authorised) English version of the Bible in the epistles, gospels, occasional versicles, and even in the prose Psalms intended to be read or chanted, the more especially, if others of them should be concessions (no doubt as moderate and in appearance as harmless as possible) to the Anglo-Catholic, and Romanising parties of which these hot-headed young men were pronounced adherents, and to foster whose tendencies was the real, if not avowed, object of this policy.¹

A book of canons, in several respects more severe than the English—especially in prohibiting extemporary prayers, under pain of deprivation—was also prepared, and was authorised by royal authority, even before the Liturgy which it enjoined was published. Thus the train was laid and fired, and in one rash hour all that King James and King Charles had succeeded in imposing, all that Spottiswoode and his brethren had given their days to carry out, all that Laud and Wentworth had given their lives in pawn for, was put in jeopardy. Far different was the issue from that the reckless schemers had intended and expected. It was chiefly disastrous to their sovereign and themselves, spreading dismay and destruction through their own ranks, not through the ranks of their opponents. The English patriots and Puritans, in appearance at least, had

¹ See Appendix, Note E.

been cowed ; those who had taken refuge in Ireland had been muzzled, and matters had indeed reached the last extremity. But the Scotch, whose stern persistence has never failed at such a crisis, proved equal to the occasion, and fairly turned the tide of battle. Their *præfervidum ingenium*, once fully roused, had a contagious influence on the friends of Protestant truth and Puritan order everywhere throughout the British dominions.

Over the events which then followed each other so rapidly in Scotland, and the marvellous revolution in which they issued, I must not linger. They are familiar to you all: the meetings in Edinburgh of peers, gentry, commoners and divines ; the appointment of the Tables or committees by each of them ; their remonstrances against the introduction of the new service-book ; the rejection of their petitions and remonstrances ; the attempt to introduce the obnoxious book, the tumult which the introduction of it occasioned in St. Giles' Kirk ; the renewal of the Confession or Covenant originally approved by the king's father in 1581, with certain additions suited to the new crisis ; the petition for a free and lawful General Assembly to determine the matters in controversy, the tardy compliance with the prayer of the petition and the suspension of the orders respecting the ill-omened book ; the preparation for the Assembly, its actual meeting in the High

Kirk or Cathedral of Glasgow, its attempted dissolution by the king's Commissioner; its refusal to dissolve till the work for which it had been summoned was done; its trial and judgment of the bishops and their chief supporters, its declaration of the nullity of the Assemblies which had given a sort of sanction to the hierarchy, and its restoration of the old presbyterian government of the Church as it had been ratified by King James and his Parliament in 1592; the attempt of the king to accomplish by force what he had in vain striven to effect by policy and proclamations; his quailing when he saw the covenanting host on Duns Law, consenting to treat with them, and promising them an Assembly and Parliament in which their grievances should be duly considered and redressed; the renewed outbreak of hostilities when neither Assembly nor Parliament was found compliant with his wishes,—the refusal of his English Parliament at last brought together again—and known ever since as the short Parliament—to vote a subsidy for the expenses of the war, and the readiness of the English Convocation,—the notorious Convocation of 1640—to do so; the march of the covenanting army into the north of England, the successes it gained, and the permission granted it to winter there; the despatch of Scottish Commissioners to London to conclude a new treaty, and the friendly

relations then established between them and the leading Puritans of the south—all these important events, following each other almost with the suddenness of a dream, are narrated at length in the commonest histories, and are familiarly known to all who are acquainted in any measure with the story and fortunes of the Kirk.

Ere the negotiations with the Scotch could be brought to a conclusion Charles had been constrained by the necessities of his position to call another Parliament, which has become famous in all succeeding time as the Long Parliament. It was summoned for the 3d November 1640, on which day Charles once more occupied the throne of his ancestors, surrounded by his peers. 'The Bishops clad in rochet and chimere,' to use the words of Dr. Stoughton, 'once more occupied their old benches, and the Speaker of the House of Commons in florid diction congratulated the monarch on the prosperity of his realms. Outwardly, the Church like the State looked strong, but an earthquake was at hand destined to overturn the foundations of both.' A storm which had been long gathering was now to burst in pitiless fury, and sweep away abuses which had defied every effort made to reform them. In my next Lecture I shall have much to say of the doings of this eventful parliament.