

ANGLICAN CLAIMS AND THE OLD RELIGION

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CHAPTER I.

THE ANGLICAN “CONTINUITY” THEORY

Australia is the newest of new worlds: but her people are deeply aware—and, in general, proud—of their links with a mother country of ancient tradition. They owe allegiance to a monarchy which is older than any hereditary Kingship now in Europe: they have Parliamentary institutions which are patterned on the Parliamentary Constitution of England, which has grown up through centuries of development, without any radical breach with past history. Our law is English law, which has evolved continuously in the same fashion.

The patriotic Australian, like the patriotic Englishman, though he may be a radical, is not a “revolutionary” in the sense of wishing to destroy this inherited bond with the past. He believes that there is something very valuable in the continuity of a system which preserves the ancient essential loyalties, while it is still flexible to the requirements of a changing world. The example of other Western countries shows him that a working community organisation of this kind cannot be created artificially: that the habit of legality, of universal allegiance to a political system and readiness to act within its framework, is a root of freedom which cannot be pulled up with impunity.

It may well be that the rushing tide of revolutionary change in our own time will impose a strain to which even British adaptability will prove unequal at last: but, so far, the essential structure has survived even the fury of war which spread death and destruction through the homeland and changed the shape of our own Australian world. The imposing facade of the free British system still stands in a world shaken with war and revolution: its peoples confess proudly the solidarity of their institution with those existing through a history of splendid achievement.

Anglican Conservatism

This reflection on the English outlook is necessary if we are to understand certain claims made on behalf of the Anglican Church—the Church which has been the chief vehicle of Christian tradition in England since the seventeenth century; and which is regarded, even today, as expressing most fully the religious viewpoint of the English and their daughter-nations. These peoples love to think of themselves as the political inheritors of Magna Carta, of the rights secured by the 17th century Revolution, and gradually extended to all classes by the series of Reform Acts which began in 1832. They tend to ignore the fact that there are certain points at which the “natural” development was modified by quite violent changes, and that there are distinct cracks which have been neatly patched over by the Whig historians and lawyers.

It is the same desire for solidarity with the past which leads adherents of the Church officially “Established” in England to attach some importance to the claim of “continuity” in the sphere of religious tradition. The Anglican likes to believe that the ancient parish churches and cathedrals of England are truly his own: that the Anglican Bishops are true and lawful successors of the old English hierarchy who sat in the thrones of St. Augustine, St. Cuthbert, St. Chad and the other holy founders who first brought the Gospel to the Angles and Saxons. In order to do so, however, it is necessary to “reinterpret” the greatest revolution, of all the English nation’s history—the English Reformation.

“Rags of Popery”

This claim to traditional “legitimacy” has been assisted by the fact that the outward organisation of the new Church establishment in the 16th century retained a good deal of the ecclesiastical “machinery” of the past. The former names of high Church officers were retained—they occupied the ancient Sees and used the ancient symbols. The new service book in English adorned with the dignity and splendour of Cranmer’s prose—incorporated traditional elements largely, while purging out the Catholic teachings denied by the Reformers. The festivals of the old religion were mostly retained, and the saints were celebrated, if no longer prayed to. Indeed, the lack of logic in the new Prayer Book is to be attributed chiefly to the desire to retain ancient words and uses—we see revolution and tradition mingled in the strangest fashion in the address to the Communicant, which combined two sentences drawn up to express

conflicting doctrines.

These “Rags of Popery” in Church of England rites were pleasing to Queen Elizabeth, but exasperating to the stern Puritans, whose inspiration came from Calvinist Geneva. Their spirit was that of the fierce and implacable Scot, John Knox, who said, ‘burn the rookeries (monasteries) and the rooks will fly out,’ and who cared as little for the tradition of the Middle Ages, as the Bolsheviks for that of the Holy Russia of the Czars. I intend to show, in the course of this study, how absolute and complete the spiritual breach with the past has been in English religion, despite elaborate official pretences of legal continuity: but it is important to realise the real desire for legitimacy which lies behind the zealot’s attempts to deny the radical cleavage.

“Modern Romanism”

We must also understand the reaction of the Anglican, both English and Australian, to what he calls “Modern Romanism”—and his denunciation of it as an intruder and stranger, despite the Papal origins of English Christianity, and the long ages of English loyalty to the See of Peter. For the “Second Spring” of Catholicism in England has not been due to the work of the tiny remnant which preserved the traditional Faith through the darkness of the 18th century; it began through the influx of a new Irish population, combined with the enthusiasm of a group of converts, who derived much of their inspiration from abroad. The development of ideas, doctrine and organisation in the Catholic Church since the 16th century has gone on outside the life of England: there is much that is strange and new, without connection with historic English Catholicism. The new Catholic hierarchs were not allowed to assert their claim to the English heritage by using the old Catholic episcopal titles. There are new religious Orders, too—Jesuits, Redemptorists, Passionists, and many others, who played no part in old England. Even the liturgy has been modified—the old English “Uses” of Sarum, Lincoln and the rest having been suppressed in favour of the Roman Missal now used uniformly in the Latin West. Irish descended priests—Irish descended parishioners, with a sprinkling of converts—Roman liturgy. “What,” asks the English or Anglo-Australian nationalist, “has *this* Church to do with our life or traditions?” Names such as “the Italian Mission,” “Modern Romanism,” express this feeling that the Church, returned from her long exile, has become an alien in her former home.

The Theory of Continuity

The theory of continuity, as I have indicated, was put forward in order to explain away and minimise the fact that English religion has suffered a radical revolution which has changed the whole character of the nation’s life. Now, the great and vital change which made the others possible was the separation of England from Catholic unity by the denial of the Pope’s authority. The “Compleat” Protestant will be satisfied to claim that this Roman authority was a usurpation first made perhaps, at an early date, whereby the organisation of the Church’s life has been perverted, its freedom destroyed, and its teaching corrupted. This is not enough for the Anglican, however. He wishes to show that the Papal authority was usurped, not only in the Church generally, but in the English Church especially. If he can show that the Christianity to which England was converted was something other than “Romanism,” then the formation of a new national Church in the 16th century can be upheld, not as a successful revolution repudiating the English past, but as a restoration of liberties lost in the later Middle Ages, and a purification from superstitions which, had gathered around true religion in that time.

“Romanism,” according to this theory, was a phase through which the Anglican Church passed in its earlier development—a stage which may have been inevitable, and even beneficial for a time, but which she has now outgrown. As the nation attained full self-consciousness, she threw off the swaddling clothes of childhood and resumed her birthright of religious freedom—just as she resumed, in the Stewart age, the Parliamentary liberties set aside during the Tudor period in order that the national structure might be centralised and ordered under strong government.

“Ecclesia Anglicana” in History

This theory has to face the very grave difficulty that the whole history of the pre-Reformation “Ecclesia Anglicana” is closely identified with that of the Western Church as a whole. That Roman authority was continuously

asserted and recognised in England is unquestionable: that there was no variation from the teaching of the Roman Church is equally certain. Between the days of Pelagius in the Roman-British Church, and those of Wyclif in the fourteenth century, England was not affected with any heresy of the least importance. Finally the whole history of the Reformation shows both the clergy and the mass of the people very reluctant to depart from Catholic orthodoxy.

The Anglican will reply, however, that in every period the “national” claim of the Church to independence can be seen running like a thread, and that it is asserted against Rome from time to time by the clergy, and more often by kings and barons. He lays emphasis on those facts which suggest divergence between the English Church and Rome, whether liturgical or political, and he interprets them in accordance with his theory.

So, in the first stages of English Christian history, Anglicans are anxious to minimise the importance of the Roman Mission of St. Augustine and St. Paulinus, and to emphasise the part played by St. Aidan and the Celtic monks. The reason is that the former mission was directly sent by Pope Gregory I. and held its authority from the Holy See, while the latter belonged to a Church which had been cut off from contact with Rome and developed independently as regards its rites and discipline. If English Christianity can be presented as a Celtic foundation, the acceptance of the Roman discipline and rite at the Whithy Synod can be made to appear as the imposition of an alien authority.

During the Saxon period, the organisation of the Church was much relaxed, and the Canon Law loosely applied, while the appointment of ecclesiastical rulers was assumed by the kings. Hence, the Norman Conquest, which tightened up discipline, reforming the Church on the Continental model, can be claimed as a new interference from without with the national rights of the English Church—though it is generally allowed that the results were in many ways good. After this “Roman” authority is increased by the new claim to rights over episcopal appointments, and by constant Papal interference in the working of English ecclesiastical life. It culminates, in the time of John and Henry III, in the “Papal tyranny” of Pope Innocent III and his successors, over the English Church. Its “liberties,” however, are asserted in Magna Carta, and defended by such men as Archbishop Langton and Bishop Grosseteste, who resisted the Papal tax-gatherers.

The refusal of homage by Edward I and his anti-clerical legislation, are hailed as triumphs for the “Anglican” spirit of opposition to Roman Claims; later, the acts of “Provisors” and “Praemunire” attempted—though without great effect—to get rid of the control of the Pope in English Church affairs. The work of Wyclif, the “Morning Star” of the Reformation, set the seed of a purified Christian Church, which was destined, after germinating in obscurity, to ripen in the sixteenth century. The spirit of Lollardy, growing side by side with Nationalism amid the Roman corruptions of the old Church, prepared her for the change which was to restore her true form. From that change she emerged still traditional, but purified, Catholic yet liberal, incarnating the tolerant and comprehensive religious spirit of the nation, standing as a conciliatory “Via Media” between “Roman” Catholicism and Protestantism.

The Points of Criticism

Now, in criticising this “continuity” theory of Anglicanism, it will be necessary, *first*, to show that the origin of English Christianity came from sources which acknowledged the authority of the Holy See; *secondly*, that the controversies of the Middle Ages on purely political and legal matters did not affect the general recognition of Papal authority in spiritual matters, any more than Franco’s disagreement with Pius XII about the appointment of Spanish Bishops affected his own Catholic Faith or that of the Church of Spain. Finally, it must be demonstrated that the Reformation was not the reconstruction of the ancient Catholic Church, but its destruction—by savage violence—and replacement by a new State ecclesiastical organisation, whose connection with the old religion consisted chiefly in the fact that—like the Babylonians who carried the temple vessels from Judah—it “inherited” the property of the Church by usurpation.

After this, I shall show that the true tradition of the ancient “Ecclesia Anglicana” was maintained by the witness of the English “Recusants” —the small, faithful remnant who unceasingly protested against the revolution of the sixteenth century.

CHAPTER II.

THE EARLY ENGLISH CHURCH

The beginnings of the British Church are wrapped in legend. Its origins have been variously ascribed to St. Joseph of Arimathea and to Pope Eleutherius (173-188), but few traces of British Christianity have been found by modern research before the reign of Constantine. English tradition, however, preserves the names of a few saints, notably the martyr, St. Alban; and British bishops are recorded as having taken part in several early Western Councils. In the fifth century, a British cleric, Pelagius, taught a heretical doctrine about Divine Grace, which St. Germanus came from Gaul to combat. With the Saxon Conquest the eastern and central parts of the island lapsed into paganism, apparently, as the Roman culture was wiped out: but Christianity lived on among the Western Celts in Wales, Cornwall, Cumbria and part of South-west Scotland.

The Conversion of the Saxons

The reconversion of the land was carried out in the seventh century A.D. by missionaries from two sources, Rome and Ireland. The Roman mission, sent by Pope Gregory the Great, with St. Augustine at its head began preaching in Kent and the neighbouring kingdoms of the south, and proceeded to a notable victory in the north in the conversion of King Edwin of Northumbria by St. Paulinus. But this success proved only temporary; at Edwin's death the missionaries were expelled from the north, and there was a widespread lapse to paganism.

About the Roman character of this mission there can be no doubt. As Abbe Duchesne says, the new Church was "clearly a colony of the Roman Church." The very names and arrangement of the churches in Canterbury, where St. Augustine fixed his See, were imitated from those in Rome. Controversy, however, has been raised about the character of the Christianity reached by the Irish Monks who next entered the field. In 565 they had set up a monastery at Iona in Scotland; and after the fall of Edwin men from Iona entered Northumbria, headed by St. Aidan, and converted St. Oswald, its king. They founded the Abbey of Lindisfarne, on Holy Island, off the mouth of the Tyne, which became the great missionary centre of the north.

The Celtic Churches and Rome

These Celtic churches, of Gallic and British origin, differed in many ways from the Church of Rome in their discipline and liturgical observance; and these differences have been magnified to the point of claiming them as separate churches, independent of the Holy See. It may be pointed out, however, that the issue of Papal supremacy was never raised at all between the Celtic and Roman clergy in England. The Irish Church owed its foundation chiefly to the great St. Patrick, whose "Armagh Canon" recognised Rome as the final court of appeal in all religious controversies, and whose establishment of the Primatial See was only carried out after a visit to Rome in the reign of Leo I, in order to secure authority for his acts. The great Irish missionary, St. Columbanus, is strong in his assertion of the Roman claims. In a letter to Pope Boniface, he writes, "We Irish, though dwelling at the far ends of the earth, are all disciples of St. Peter and St. Paul.... We are bound to the Chair of Peter... on account of the two apostles of Christ, you (the Pope) are almost celestial, and Rome is the head of the whole world, and of the Churches." Cardinal Gilroy and Cardinal Griffin themselves could hardly go further than describing the Pope as "almost celestial"!

There is no evidence that St. Columba or St. Aidan held any different doctrine from this as to Roman supremacy: and the matter is not mentioned by St. Bede as having been discussed by St. Augustine at his meeting with the Welsh bishops. Had there been any question of the spiritual authority of Rome, the envoy of the Pope himself would hardly have allowed it to be passed over in silence!

In the final decision between the Celtic and Roman rites—at Whitby in 664—St. Colman was the Celtic protagonist. From the story of their debate given by St. Bede, it is clear that he fully assented to the claim of Petrine supremacy made by his opponent, St. Wilfrid, and that he acknowledged St. Columba's authority as inferior to that of St. Peter—even though he would not abandon his customs. Indeed, in the early days of missionary labour, the controversies between the two groups did not prevent inter-communion and peaceable co-operation. It was the practical inconvenience arising out of the double observance which led to disputes, later inflamed by a certain ill feeling. Those who read the pages of St. Bede, the chronicler of the English missions, and himself a fervent "Roman,"

cannot fail to be struck by his moderation and justice to the memory of the Celts. He makes not the least suggestion that they were “heretics,” though he regarded the obstinacy of some of them about their customs as a grave error.

The Questions at Issue

The questions between the Celtic and Roman missionaries were not, then, concerned with faith in the unity of the Church under the See of St. Peter, but simply with differences of custom and observance. The Churches of the West, in these early times, while united in their belief, varied a good deal in their rites of worship. That such differences of rite have nothing to do with orthodoxy is made clear, even today, by the existence of the Catholic “Uniate” Churches of the East, whose ceremonial rites, Liturgical languages, vestments and Church law are all different from those of the Roman Church, with which they are in full communion. The ancient Celtic divergence’s were slight in comparison with those of these Oriental Churches: they had arisen largely because of the isolation in which they had developed during the age of confusion which followed the collapse of the Western Empire. For the rest, while Rome’s final authority in faith and discipline was always maintained as a principle of orthodox Faith, it was only slowly that regular Papal administrative control grew up, even in the West: in the East, the older Patriarchates were always completely self-contained for purposes of ordinary government. It is essential that the principle of the supreme spiritual authority of the See of St. Peter—as testified by a long series of early witnesses—should not be confused with the practice of centralised Papal monarchy as it grew up in the West later on. The powers then exercised had always been inherent in the Roman See in virtue of the unique status given to St. Peter by Christ; but their unfolding occurred in a natural way, according to the laws of human historical development.

There were three main differences which caused the dispute in the English churches: the date of the observance of Easter, the form of the tonsure used by clerics, and some obscure difference of rite in the administration of Baptism.

The Celtic churches still adhered to a method of calculating the date of Easter which had been generally abandoned in the west after 457; while in Rome, a new system had been introduced from Alexandria in 525. This Easter question was unimportant in theory, but in practice a great nuisance—as, for instance, in the Court of Oswy of Northumbria, where the Queen (who was from the south) kept the Roman Easter and her husband the Celtic. In the matter of the tonsure, the Romans shaved the crown, the Celts the front of the head from ear to ear—a custom declared (probably untruly) to have been derived from the pagan Druids. Neither party was willing to abandon its customs; to the Irish, in particular, every detail of the tradition of St. Columba was sacred; and in communities where all life is regulated by ancient tradition, changes assume an importance which can hardly be imagined by modern men, living in a world of flux. Accurate, scientific history was yet unborn; it is worth noticing, in the matter of Easter, that neither St. Wilfrid nor St. Colman knew the real origins of the observances for which they disputed—so each of them attributed to his own custom an Apostolic character and sanctity which neither really possessed, the Celt claiming an Eastern origin for his usage which belonged, in fact, to the Roman.

In this matter the Papacy was concerned simply for a convenient uniformity, urging the Roman use when advice was sought, but without any attempt to go further than exhortation.

The Work of St. Theodore

The old English Church came into existence at a time when there was no English nation, or even the framework of such a thing: and the unity of England herself was mainly due to the civilising and organising work which the Church achieved.

The greatest of Church organisers was St. Theodore of Tarsus—a Greek of St. Paul’s own city. His very presence in the See of Canterbury testifies, first to the non-national character of the Church he ruled; and secondly, to the solidarity then existing between England, Rome and the East in matters of Faith and Church authority. It was St. Theodore who created a regular organisation in what had hitherto been the English mission field, fixing the Bishoprics and dividing up St. Wilfrid’s enormous See of York. The quarrel about this question between the two saints resulted in one of the most famous appeals from England to Rome, St. Wilfrid’s claim for restoration being granted “by the orders of the Apostolic See.” In the Synod of Hertford, held in 673, St. Theodore introduced himself to his clergy as “appointed Bishop of Canterbury by the Apostolic See.”

St. Theodore left the English Catholic Church united under the central control of Canterbury, while the land was still divided among a number of kings. That unity was broken later, however, by the creation of the Archbishopric of York for Northumbria in 735—once again by direct Papal action. A third Archbishopric—Lichfield—was both created and suppressed by Papal authority, in response to the request of the Mercian kings. In the Council of Cloveshoe, at which the latter decision was approved in 803, the Assembly declared “with one voice,” that their Faith was “that which was planted in the beginning by the Holy, Roman and Apostolic See, under the direction of the most blessed Pope Gregory.”

Christian Worship of the Anglo-Saxons

The worship of the newly founded Churches was Catholic in the strictly “Roman” sense. The Churches, altars, vestments and liturgies give evidence of a firm belief in the Sacrifice of the Mass, which was offered for the living and the dead. The usage of Communion under both kinds existed—but the fact that one kind was allowed to be given outside Mass shows that the view held of its sufficiency was that of the present day Church. It was identical, too, with it in the belief in Purgatory, in the use of prayers for the dead, and prayers to the saints—above all, in the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mother of God. The veneration of sacred relics, such as those of St. Cuthbert and St. Oswald, was practised everywhere in Britain and Ireland.

Pilgrimages to Rome were frequent, in spite of the difficulties of journeying; and a number of kings and rulers visited the shrine of the Apostles. The first English hostel there owed its foundation to King Ina of Wessex, who resigned his crown to die piously in the Holy City. Offa of Mercia established the offering of “Peter’s Pence”; Alfred the Great was taken to Rome as a child by his father. King Ethelwulf; and in later years, amid all his difficulties, repeatedly sent envoys and gifts to the Pope. Canute, the Danish conqueror, went on pilgrimage in 1027. Every Archbishop received from Rome the “Pallium” or sign of authority which had been given first to St. Augustine, and many paid a personal visit to the Pope in order to receive it. It is interesting to note that this ancient symbol of office is still represented in the official crest of the Anglican See of Canterbury, though the Roman authority which it symbolises has been repudiated since Elizabethan times!

In the days of misfortune, when the Danish invasions degraded and ruined English civilisation, the Church suffered most of all in the general disaster. The destruction of monasteries—among them St. Bede’s glorious Jarrow—led to the shipwreck of culture. Ignorance and laxity prevailed, with immorality among clergy and laity alike. The Western law of celibacy, indeed, proved impossible to enforce among the secular clergy until long after the Conquest; but in other respects the Church’s life was regenerated by the reforms of St. Dunstan, the restorer of monasticism. A second period of decay set in, however, with the disorders and miseries of the reign of Ethelred the Unready, which was ended only with the reforms of the Norman age.

Church and State

To speak of the English Church as a “National Church” during this period is to use a term which is simply meaningless since the nation itself did not yet exist. The people still spoke three different languages; and the Danish invasions introduced a new alien element which took long to assimilate even after their conversion. Loyalty was still mainly given to the local chief or Earl; and such sanctity as the Kingship possessed before men was given to it by the Church, whose consecration had changed the King from a tribal war chief into an anointed ruler representing God’s authority in the temporal sphere.

The Church was, indeed, much bound up with the life of the monarchy. On account of their superior learning in a barbarous age, as well as the sacredness attributed to their office, clerics often played a political role more important than that of kings or nobles. Bishops and Abbots sat in the great Council, the “Witan,” the Bishops judged side by side with the Earls in the shire courts—for there was as yet no clear separation of jurisdictions. It is true also that, while the Pallium remained as the symbol of Papal authority, the custom grew up whereby the King nominated Bishops and Archbishops, since much depended on the loyalty of such mighty lords as the rulers of the Church had become. But to see in this any real resemblance to the position later claimed by Henry VIII and Elizabeth in ecclesiastical affairs is to misconstrue the whole sense of Anglo-Saxon history.

The authority of Rome in spiritual things was again and again asserted in the course of that history—it was never challenged or denied in principle. It is only necessary to compare the position of such a prelate as St. Dunstan even with that of Archbishop Laud—the most powerful among the later Anglican Church rulers—to see the difference. Certainly, the indignant saint, when he dragged the wretched King Edwy by main force from his mistress' side back to the Coronation feast he had dishonoured, had no inkling that he was laying sacrilegious hands on the person of the Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

PART II: THE MEDIAEVAL CHURCH

CHAPTER I

THE CHURCH IN NORMAN AND ANGLICAN ENGLAND

The normal Anglican view of the pre-Reformation English Church has been summed up by the eminent historian Bishop Creighton. "There was never a time in England," he says, "when the papal authority was not resented; and really, the final act of the repudiation of that authority followed quite naturally as the result of a long series of similar acts which had taken place from the earliest times." Here, then, is the thesis. Papal authority existed—but by violence, resisted by kings and people when possible; finally overthrown with general approval.

It may be well to observe, first, that a spiritual authority such as that of the Papacy can only exist in virtue of consent. Even if it is backed by the temporal power, the ruler must be able to secure a general acquiescence in the authority so imposed if he is to succeed. In the Middle Ages, the modern machinery for imposing the will of the Government did not exist, there were no great propaganda organisations, no police force, no national education under State control. How, then—one may ask—could Papal authority have been made effective in face of any considerable resentment against its principle—especially if kings and people had been in agreement in this opposition?

Apart, however, from this general reflection there is—as Gairdner has pointed out—simply no evidence for the continuous protest asserted by Creighton. The most popular saint in mediaeval England was the "Holy Blissful Martyr" to whose Canterbury shrine pilgrims flocked in Chaucer's day: St. Thomas Becket, who, having died to save the rights of the Popes and Church from Royal usurpation, was regarded as the champion of liberty—the liberty of the spiritual against the temporal power. It is significant that one of the earliest actions of Henry VIII, after his usurpation of Papal supremacy, was to degrade publicly the name of the public hero as "disloyal," and to desecrate his tomb.

CHURCH QUARRELS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

To speak of a "national" opposition to the Papacy during a great part of the Middle Ages is to ignore the whole character of mediaeval civilisation. The modern national way of life and thought had not yet appeared. For three hundred years after the Conquest, England was governed by a French-speaking aristocracy, while the plain folk spoke varied dialects. Literature was almost exclusively written in Latin—the language of Christian culture, science and philosophy. The independent authority of a supranational body, the Church, with the Holy See as its supreme earthly Governor, was simply assumed. No English King, however powerful, claimed to be lord of the spirituality. The disputes were not between the State and "disloyal" clerics who appealed to a "foreign Bishop"—they were about the legal limits of the sphere of spiritual and temporal jurisdictions, where they affected the same set of people; or about the administrative and financial claims of the Papal Court.

Bishops, for instance, were subject to the Pope as regards their spiritual authority: that was undeniable. But they were also administrators of great lands within the kingdom, exercising princely temporal power as barons. Had not the king, therefore, a claim on their allegiance? Must he not be able to secure himself against the appointment of his enemies to these great public offices? This was the heart of the "Investiture" controversy, which was going on during the Norman period—a conflict which ended in a compromise securing the essential rights of both parties. "Spiritual matters," to quote Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln, "should be in the hands of ecclesiastical and spiritual persons, and secular matters in those of lay people." As the national states developed side by side with the Centralised Papal administrative system there were inevitable tensions and collisions—but neither, during the Middle Ages, denied the rights of the other within its own sphere. It was simply a matter of where the lines should be drawn.

Both English kings and clergy again and again assert the supremacy of the Papacy in spirituals, as founded on the

promise of Christ to St. Peter. The Papal intervention in English Church Government is not exceptional, but normal; as to doctrine the Roman Church's teaching is always the accepted standard of orthodoxy. The great doctor of the fourteenth century, Scotus, whose theology dominated English universities, taught that "It is of faith that the Holy Roman Church... admits no error and teaches the truth." In her beliefs, laws and customs the English Church was an integral part of "Roman Catholic" Western Christendom.

LANFRANC AND ST, ANSELM

Let us now examine some of the conflicts which arose between the Papacy and English rulers in the Middle Ages, and notice the issues.

The thorough reform of the Church after the Conquest was chiefly the work of an Italian, Lanfranc, whom William I made his Archbishop of Canterbury. Lanfranc was famous as a defender of transubstantiation—a doctrine categorically denied in the Anglican prayer book—against Berengarius. He began his work in England by a Synod held at Winchester, over which Papal Legates presided. King William had a brush with Rome over two matters—the arrears due for "Peter's Pence" (hardly a doctrinal question!) and a claim made by the Pope that he should do homage for England—as the Norman kings did for Sicily and Naples—as a fief of the Holy See. The first claim the king acknowledged, the second he refused—while declaring his filial obedience to the spiritual power of the Pope, and begging for his prayers.

The second Primate, St. Anselm—another Italian—refused to submit to a claim made by William Rufus, that he had the right to decide which of two claimants to the Papacy was to be acknowledged in England. Under Henry I the dispute was over the right assumed hitherto by kings in Europe and England, of investing bishops with ring and crozier. The Pope, afraid lest this ceremony should be misconstrued as giving the temporal ruler power over the spirituality, insisted that it should be discontinued and that the Papacy alone should invest. The compromise settled upon in England—investitures by the Papacy, homage to the King—was ultimately accepted on the Continent also.

ST. THOMAS AND HENRY II

The cause of trouble under Henry II—the first Plantagenet—was the claim of the king to assume jurisdiction over clerics in certain cases. The Royal demand was that the temporal courts should have the right of deciding, after a preliminary hearing, what causes were to go to the Church courts. The king also claimed power to prevent the clergy from leaving England, or appealing to Rome without his permission. The effect of such an arrangement would have been to give the temporal power a predominance over the ecclesiastical, which had always been regarded as by its nature superior. The Church would have been brought under a Royal despotism, and deprived of the possibility of independent action. The popular attitude in this dispute is significant, especially as in Norman times the masses generally supported the monarchy in its conflict with the baronage. St. Thomas, however, had their fullest sympathy in his battle for the rights of the spirituality—and, as we have seen, when he attained victory by martyrdom his shrine became the most famous centre of pilgrimage in the whole West.

ENGLAND A PAPAL FIEF

The high tide of Papal authority in England was reached under Henry II's son, King John, and his grandson, Henry III. John began a conflict with Pope Innocent III—perhaps the greatest of Papal rulers—by refusing to accept his nomination to the See of Canterbury, made to settle a dispute. The king confiscated the possessions of the Cathedral monastery, driving the monks overseas—whereupon the Pope placed the country under an Interdict. The king seized the goods of the clergy and suffered excommunication; and, since he remained obstinate, the Pope threatened to release his subjects from allegiance to a rule which was a tyranny opposed to the laws of God and man. The King of France was preparing to enforce the Papal sentence when John saved his throne by submission—agreeing not only to accept the Pope's terms, but also to recognise him as his feudal overlord.

There is no evidence as to the general opinion in England about this act. It was nothing startlingly new in Christendom—for Portugal, the Spanish Kingdoms, and Naples-Sicily were Papal fiefs, indeed, it might be claimed that John was only confirming his father's surrender to the Pope after the murder of St. Thomas. In any case, it was no

more humiliating than his brother Richard I's allegiance to the German-Roman Emperor, which is almost forgotten. The barons, in their fight for the great Charter, found Innocent III's support of the king a grave inconvenience—for the Pope never realised the villainy and deceit of his "beloved son," and even Cardinal Langton, of Canterbury, his own nominee, was involved in censure for his part in the revolt. In despair, a section of the Baronage turned to France—an act difficult to reconcile with the theory of their strong English patriotism—and when John suddenly died it looked as if Prince Louis's accession would make the country a French dependency. That this did not happen was due largely to the Papal Legate, Gualo, who took control of the affairs of the child Henry III. He wisely accepted the Charter in the Pope's name, and rallied an increasing number of the barons to the Plantagenet cause. In fact, in this crisis it may be claimed that the Papacy played a leading part in saving the independence of the English monarchy.

HENRY III AND THE CHURCH

During the long reign of Henry III the Roman controversy assumed a new character. The feudal overlordship of Rome led to an alliance of Pope and king, as—a result of which the Church was fleeced by Papal and Royal taxgatherers, in order to provide the war-chest for the long struggle of the Papacy with the Emperor Frederick II, and to support Henry's schemes for winning new kingdoms for his relatives. English benefices, too, were used to provide salaries or rewards for Papal bureaucrats.

Naturally, indignation ran high among clergy and laity alike; and it was led by some of the best and most upright among them. They complained—with justice—of the misuse of endowments granted for the feeding of Christ's flock in England. But the resistance never touched the spiritual authority of the Holy See. Its greatest leader, Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln, even in his last letter to Pope Innocent IV—refusing to execute a Papal provision—professes his complete devotion to the Holy See "as to both parents." "In a filial and obedient spirit" he cries, "I do not obey—I refuse and I rebel." The authority was not denied; only its abuse was the cause of protest.

PROVISORS AND PRAEMUNIRE

King Edward I repudiated the Pope's feudal authority, but remained his obedient spiritual son. The disputes in this reign are about the Royal taxation of Church lands: they led, at one time, to an "outlawing" of the clergy by the king in order to overcome the resistance of Archbishop Winchelsea.

Under Edward III, two acts, "Provisors" and "Praemunire" were passed—aiming once again at the heavy taxation which the Papacy—now resident at Avignon in France—was levying in order to make up for the loss of its Italian revenues. The fees charged for Papal "provisions"—or appointments to Church benefices—were a serious burden on the clergy. Both fees and provisions, therefore, were abolished by "Provisors," while "Praemunire" laid severe penalties on those procuring these Papal grants from abroad. These laws were never fully applied—the king dispensing with them when he chose by private arrangement with the Papacy. It is obvious that they had nothing whatever to do with the recognition of the Pope's spiritual authority in England.

These disputes, then, have no reference to "national" claims as against the unity of Catholic Christendom. They never for a moment affected belief in the rights of the Holy See, inherited from St. Peter, to act as shepherd of Christ's flock. The feeling of the plain people varied with the matter at issue. Under Henry II they favoured the cause of St. Thomas; under Henry III they opposed the Papal exactions. But of "resentment" concerning the Roman claim to supremacy there is no sign at all. When not quietly assumed, it was clearly asserted—often by the very men who are opposing the political action of Rome.

Catholic bishops, assembled at the General Council of Constance in the fifteenth century, paid a tribute to this loyalty of the English to the Holy See. "The Kingdom of England," they declared, "has never swerved from its obedience to the Roman Church; it has never tried to rend the seamless coat of Our Lord; it has never endeavoured to shake off its loyalty to the Roman pontiffs."

CHAPTER II ENGLISH LOLLARDY

Before concluding our account of the pre-Reformation Church, a word ought to be said about the "Lollard"

movement. "Lollardy" flourished in the fourteenth and early fifteenth century in England, and was introduced into Central Europe by Hus, to become the standard of Slav revolt against the German rulers of Bohemia. It is one of the curious features of Anglicanism that some of those who claim "continuity" with the English Church of the Middle Ages are equally ready to claim connection with the Lollard sectaries whom that Church condemned, persecuted and ultimately crushed, with the help of the Catholic rulers of the time. This is indeed to "run with the hare and hunt with the hounds"!

It has been commonly maintained that John Wyclif, the founder of Lollardy, was the "Morning Star" of the Reformation that the mind of England was turned to the pure Gospel by his revolt, which was a popular movement; that, though apparently crushed, heresy survived underground, preparing the minds of the people for the great change of the sixteenth century, when a growing swell of public feeling strengthened the national revolt against "Papalism." We must now see how much truth there is in this theory.

THE BLACK DEATH AND THE GREAT SCHISM

In 1349 and the years following, England, in common with the rest of Europe, was swept by the most destructive pestilence in recorded history—the Black Death. It is reckoned that a full half of the English nation was wiped out. The marvel is that the mediaeval social system survived at all—not that it suffered a shock from which it never fully recovered. There was, very naturally, a terrific mortality among the clergy—especially the best of them, who were most devoted in bringing spiritual succour to the sick and dying victims. To fill up vacancies, too many young and unlearned and unworthy were ordained—so that the quality of the clerical body suffered throughout Christendom.

Moreover, the Church of the time was afflicted by many scandalous evils. The Papacy—now established at Avignon—had come under powerful French influence, losing much reputation and loyalty thereby. After the ending of the "captivity" at Avignon, the Pope's return to Rome, a worse evil yet came with the Great Schism, in which the right of the Chair and authority of Peter were disputed between two and later three claimants. The kings of Europe took sides with one or another as it served their purpose. The discipline of the Church fell into chaos: the keystone of the arch, it seemed, was lost. The long duration of this apparent fission in the Papacy led men, for the first time in the West, to question whether there could be some other basis of Church organisation than the authority of the Holy See; and the claims made at the Council of Constance led to a confusion about Papal power which was only finally ended by the definition of Infallibility in 1870.

The power of the rulers of rising national States became increased in Church matters—for who else could maintain order in the existing ecclesiastical chaos? Churches began to assume the new "national" complexion, even while the Faith of Europe was still one. In both England and France, the higher Church offices tended to become a preserve of the great aristocratic houses, so that the hierarchy became detached from the lower clergy and people, and was involved in the rising unpopularity of the ruling class. In the economic conflict between peasants and their feudal lords, which followed the Black Death, culminating in England in the rising of 1331, the bishops were attacked—too often with good reason—as lordly oppressors of the poor. Meanwhile, the lay barons themselves hoped to increase their power and wealth by taking advantage of the weakness of the Church, to plunder it for their own profit.

JOHN WYCLIF

It was in this disturbed atmosphere that John Wyclif set forth some new and revolutionary religious opinions at Oxford, which obtained a good deal of support. Like many modern philosophers, he was very susceptible to the trend of contemporary political thought; and he tried—without conspicuous success—to base it on philosophic foundations. He argued that the Church had no need of wealth. Christ and His Apostles had been poor; and riches were a cause of spiritual corruption. Moreover, the political influence of the Church was an abuse, since such things belonged to Caesar—this argument has a curiously modern ring. But there followed a piece of absurdity which it is difficult to take seriously—that of "Dominion founded on Grace." All civil dominion being derived from God, was conditional upon being in a "State of Grace"—that is free from grave sin!

This—Wyclif was careful to explain—did not justify a general attack on the property of ungodly men: but apparently it did justify an attack on the wealth of the Church by the civil power. The king should seize it, and use it

for improving the social and military position of the kingdom.

Such teaching—which was revolutionary, while not strictly heretical—appealed much to the great lords covetous for more wealth. Wyclif found a patron in John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, whose dominion was certainly not founded on grace. When the doctor was hauled before the Convocation of Canterbury, Gaunt protected him, though he was nearly lynched by a London mob aroused not so much by his heterodoxy as by hatred of his princely protector. After a second enquiry at Lambeth—again broken up by mob violence—he retired to Oxford.

WYCLIF'S HERESIES

Inspired, apparently, by the model of St. Francis of Assisi—whom he admired—Wyclif began to send out a number of disciples, the "poor priests," to preach their master's doctrine. These men were under no real discipline, and their sermons soon assumed a social-revolutionary character which secured their popularity with a discontented peasantry. Meanwhile the doctor began a translation of the Scriptures—a work not yet done in English, whose literary development was in its childhood. His mind progressed rapidly towards dogmatic heresy, and his views began to assume what we may call a "Protestant" complexion. He found in the Bible, privately interpreted, a sufficient guide to life. He denounced pilgrimages and also Indulgences—which were, indeed, grossly abused by the operations of fraudulent "Pardoners," and repudiated the veneration of holy images and prayer to the Saints. He regarded sacramental grace as a secondary matter, and the hierarchy of the Church as a doubtful blessing. Finally, he denied the very cornerstone of the Catholic system—the doctrine of Transubstantiation in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

Wyclif's powerful supporters began to drop away as soon as he became definitely heretical: and since, in the Peasant Rising of 1381, the new Lollard view of property had inspired some of the leaders, his adherents were expelled from the universities. He himself retired into obscurity at Lutterworth. He was summoned to Rome, but died in the same year, 1384. His immunity was probably due largely to the state of confusion in the Papacy, and the Catholic world, resulting from the "Great Schism."

THE LOLLARDS

The movement in Oxford was broken—and after Wyclif's death his following was chiefly among the lower middle class, and was confined to certain regions, mainly of Eastern England, and to London. Its spread in Continental Europe—owing to the connection of Bohemia and England through King Richard II's marriage—does not concern us here. Richard himself opposed Lollardy, but was reluctant to persecute; indeed, this reluctance served as a handle to his enemies. With his overthrow, and the usurpation of Henry IV of Lancaster, the work of repression began in earnest. It was undertaken—be it noted—by an Act of Parliament. Judgment on heresy was given in the Bishops' Courts, but the delinquent was to be burnt if he refused to abjure, by the State authority. The persecution policy was dictated, probably, by panic at the revolutionary Lollard views about property rather than by their purely religious theories. Comparatively few, however, were burnt, the vast majority recanting as soon as they were brought to trial.

During the first thirty years of the fifteenth century, Lollardy continued to be of some importance: the extent of its spread is somewhat difficult to ascertain, because Conservatives of the period have a habit of using the term "Lollard" to describe anti-clericals and radicals of all sorts—just as "Commo" and "Bolshie" are loosely used today. When we read, for instance, that in Leicestershire "every second man" was a Lollard, it really tells us very little of the extent to which real heresy prevailed.

THE DECLINE OF LOLLARDY

Under King Henry V. Lollardy began to become definitely unpopular with plain folk, owing to the opposition of its chief exponent, Sir John Oldcastle, to the rising spirit of patriotic loyalty to the warrior king. Oldcastle was executed for treason at the time of the French War, and thereafter the Lollards no longer appear in the forefront of English history. Lollardy was weakened, too, by its complete lack of organisation, and by the "cranky" views of many of its adherents. After the Council of Constance, the Schism was healed and the Hussite rebels suppressed in Europe; and by the reign of Henry VII, the first Tudor, heresy only survived among small groups of ignorant and obscure men. Occasionally heresy trials indicate that it was not entirely extinguished, but in 1520 it had exercised no influence for a

half century or more. The remnants of English Lollardy combined with the later rising tide of Protestantism under Henry VIII, but they contributed little to the flood, it seems. There is no evidence that any of the prominent early reformers had been Lollards before they became Protestants.

The discontent with clerical wealth and clerical abuses continued; but under Henry VII and Henry VIII a movement of Catholic reform was active within the Church, promoted by such men as Morton, Colet, St. John Fisher and the great St. Thomas More. This work had already begun to produce good results in a revival both of learning and Christian spirit in the clergy, when it was broken in upon by a revolution managed not from below, but from above; a revolution whose chief motive power was the same one which had inspired Gaunt's support of Wyclif in his first days—the lust of rich men for the Church's wealth.

THE EVE OF THE REFORMATION

The parish records of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries; the fact that the monastic bodies, though not in their first fervour, were still flourishing; the general veneration, above all, for the Blessed Sacrament, and for the great shrines of the Saints—such as St. Thomas of Canterbury and Our Lady of Walsingham—all these combine to show that the English nation of that epoch was as fully Catholic as any other part of the West. Even those who were most dissatisfied with the political absorption of the Papacy and the spiritual torpor of Christendom would never have dreamt that the best way to reform the Church was to destroy its whole organisation.

English Protestantism, in fact, owes nothing to a spontaneous revulsion of the nation from "Popery." The revolution came into being by gradual stages—originating in the violence, greed and lust of a king, at a time when kingly authority was most worshipped and the spiritual tone of the Papacy had fallen to a low level. The triumph of the Reform in England was no more "inevitable" than its failure in Spain or France. Henry VIII stood at one of those turning points in history in which a straw can deflect the current of its stream: and it was a straw that did so. To contributing causes—servility, corruption, indifference, discontent—we can allow full weight; but the divorce of Queen Catharine of Aragon by Henry VIII was the deciding factor.

In 1521 the old English Church's loyalty to the Catholic Faith was declared by the Bishop who presented King Henry's own work against Luther to the Pope. England he declared, yielded to no other nation, not even to Rome itself, in the service of God and the Faith and in obedience to the Roman Church; "Even as there is no nation which more opposes, more condemns, more loathes this monster (Protestantism) and the heresies which spring from it." He expressed, undoubtedly, the general feeling of the Englishmen of his time towards the new doctrines.

Part III.

THE REFORMATION AND THE "RECURSANTS"

Chapter I.

THE TRANSITION TO ANGLICANISM

In the previous sections of this study—Parts I and II—I have shown that in every period of the old English Church from St. Augustine to the sixteenth century that Church was "Roman Catholic" in belief and rites, and in full communion with the Papal See. We have now to consider the nature of the changes carried out under the Tudors, and whether they can be described as a conservative reform which purified the ancient Church, leaving the substance of its faith and tradition intact, or rather as a religious revolution by which an entirely new structure was erected in the place of the older "Ecclesia Anglicana."

HENRY VIII

Macaulay is no friend of Catholicism though little concerned with "continuity." This stalwart Whig and Protestant, however, minces no words in his commentary on the English Reformation. It was, he writes, the work of worldly, unprincipled men and Royal murderers—"sprung from brutal passion, nurtured by selfish policy." The facts of its history bear out these words.

The motive of the changes wrought by Henry VIII was power and pillage, their inspirer Thomas Cromwell, is a man who has found few apologists—though his type is common enough in our own time, where, beside every tyrant,

is his efficient "stooge" —his Gestapo or N.K.V.D. organiser—to carry out his robberies and killings with smooth silent despatch. The servility of the episcopate and clergy made a schism with Rome possible at the time of the Divorce: and the declaration of the Royal supremacy was received with apparent indifference by the common people, since it left the traditional forms of worship and religious teaching substantially unaltered. Reverence for the Holy See had suffered much from the worldliness and political absorption of the Renaissance Papacy, and from the scandals of the Court of Rome which were the common gossip of Europe, and there were many—especially of the middle class who were not displeased to see the King set up over the clergy, though in the matter of the Divorce, feeling was strong against Henry, and Anne Boleyn was bitterly hated.

But the first attempts at a radical change of doctrine—inspired by Seymour and Archbishop Cranmer—fell flat, having little support anywhere, and none from the King. At a conference with Lutheran divines, articles based on the Confession of Augsburg were agreed to, but Henry could not forget that he himself had written against the German Reformer—and he was sensitive to the taunt of heresy. Finally, the period of radical Bishops' flirtations with heresy was ended, for a time, by the issue of the Six Articles which asserted a very full body of orthodox Catholic doctrine on the religious matters in dispute on the Continent. The destruction of the monasteries, however, whetted the appetites of the gentry for spoil, and accustomed simple folk to the sight of plunder and also to blasphemous irreverence towards things hitherto deemed holy. The Shrines of Canterbury and Walsingham were ravished, with the religious houses up and down England; certain "superstitious" images were destroyed, and many Church vessels and rich vestments confiscated—most of the plate to be melted down, the rest turned to secular use. Thus the road was made clear, and men's minds hardened and prepared for the next phase.

In fact, the most important result of Henry's work was that the church was no longer inviolable; its rights had been invaded, and the invasion could be carried further. Above all, the distribution of the Church's property among the ruling class created a strong "vested interest" hostile to Catholic restoration, and ready to move further towards Protestantism to make themselves secure against it—gathering up further plunder, of course, as they went. This fact is worth remembering when we consider the story of the next three reigns.

EDWARD VI

In Henry VIII's last years, the reforming clique's power tended to grow as the King's faculties decayed and his hold on power relaxed. Its political leader was Seymour, the uncle of the young Prince of Wales: and, when the Prince became King Edward VI at the age of nine, a doubtful Royal Will was produced which enabled this group to assume authority. Young Edward—a sickly priggish little boy, brought up to hate "Popery"—was hailed as the "Young Josiah" of the Reform.

The first English Prayer book was issued by Royal Authority in 1549. It was a "compromising" work based on miscellaneous Latin and Greek sources, ambiguous on the Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament, ignoring the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, but retaining the word "Mass" in a subtitle, and much Catholic language, even prayers for the dead were included. This book satisfied nobody—not even its authors, who were taunted by the conservative leader, Bishop Gardiner, with their own denial of its doctrine!

It was replaced, therefore, in 1552 by the second prayer-book—substantially that used in the Anglican Church of today. In this book, the Liturgy was radically altered and the Canon mutilated, the Catholic allusions to "Mass," altar, and so on were removed; unction of the sick was suppressed, as well as Reservation of the Sacred Elements, and prayers for the dead were abolished. The stone altar—symbol of the sacrificial Mass—was to be replaced by a communion-table. A new ordinal was introduced in 1550, from which all mention of the sacrificial priesthood—the "sacerdotium"—had been expunged. The Conservative Bishops, standing by the Six Articles, revolted against these changes as contrary not only to true Faith, but to Law—having been carried through in the King's minority. They were replaced by others, including some consecrated according to the new ordinal.

The simple folk failed to notice the "continuity" of the new service with the old. Its introduction caused widespread riots in the country, whose discontent was added to by the rapacity and usurpations of the new landlords. In the South West, particularly, a genuine Catholic rising had to be suppressed by foreign hired bands. For the rest, the ruling gang were soon at one another's throats. The first leader, the Protector Somerset, was pulled down and killed by a more

ruthless ruffian, Dudley, who made himself Duke of Northumberland, and pretended a great fervour for Calvinistic reform. He planned to set up his own son as puppet-King, marrying him to a young cousin of King Edward's, and securing the dying lad's consent to the exclusion of his half-sisters, Mary and Elizabeth, in her favour. But the plot miscarried. The people detested the "new disorder" and wanted to go back to the old laws and ways—above all, to be rid of Northumberland's tyranny. Mary, the daughter of Catherine of Aragon, was acclaimed in Norfolk, and rode in triumph to London (1553).

THE MARIAN RESTORATION

For a moment it seemed that the—"Reform" was over. All the religious legislation of Henry VIII and Edward VI was repealed: Catholic doctrine and worship were completely restored—though not the secularised property of the Church. The Conservative Bishops returned to full Catholic allegiance—and thenceforth, with one exception, remained loyal to the Holy See. The "Reforming" Bishops were formally deprived of their Sees; and those consecrated according to the new ordinal found their orders invalidated.

The ill-success of Mary is well-known. Her work was never completed owing to the shortness of her reign and the lack of a Catholic successor. She identified the Catholic cause fatally with Spanish Imperialism by her marriage with Philip II. Her persecution was based on the old laws against Lollardy. It was openly religious rather than political, leaving almost all the real criminals of the last two reigns unpunished—and most of them in public office and power—while a number of simple and sincere people were put to death, whose sufferings brought new unpopularity on the clergy. But perhaps the greatest cause of her failure was the fear aroused by the restoration among the powerful persons who had despoiled the Church. The Queen had set an example by returning as much of her father's and brother's plunder as lay in her hand—and they were afraid that, if the Church were solidly re-established, others might be expected to do likewise. With her death therefore, and that of her able Archbishop, Cardinal Pole, the "Reform" returned again to power—this time finally.

THE LAST OF THE OLD CHURCH

The ancient Church, though re-established, had been weakened, its leaders servility had led to schism, its restoration, like its overthrow, had been accomplished by the secular power, to whose usurpations in the spiritual sphere Englishmen had grown accustomed in the past thirty years. There was no prospect of serious resistance to a second attack upon it by the turncoats and profiteers from ecclesiastical spoil who had retained office through three reigns and three religious "settlements." The hierarchy was depleted in numbers—ten Sees being vacant, including the primatial See of Canterbury. Those who remained were resolute in their loyalty to the Faith, all save one, but they showed no capacity for more than passive resistance. Gardiner of Winchester, the greatest and most statesmanlike of the defenders of Conservative orthodoxy under Henry VIII, had died in the reign of Mary. There was no Duke of Guise in England to rally the forces of lay Catholicism against William Cecil, the shrewdest politician in the nation, and the new Queen's chief adviser.

Elizabeth was crowned with Catholic rites by the Bishop of Carlisle—much troubled by his apprehensions—but it was evident from the first that changes were coming. Anne Boleyn's daughter would not endure the Papacy which had refused to legitimate her mother's marriage; and the Catholic Bishops would not compromise a second time by accepting a settlement of Henry's "Six Articles" type. She was forced—probably against her will—to move further to the left, back again to the Protestant Edwardian settlement of the second Prayer book.

The new Parliament—obedient as usual to the Royal will—re-enacted the laws abolishing Papal authority and annexing the Papal rights of Church Government to the Crown. The Queen was called "Governess" instead of Head—but it made no difference: for the new settlement was legislated into existence by the secular power. The Canterbury Convocation made a last stand for the old "Ecclesia Anglicana," affirming the Sacramental doctrine of the Church, the Sacrifice of the Mass, the authority of the Holy See and the rights of the spirituality; and the Universities joined them in their protest. The Bishops in the Lords, with Archbishop Heath of York at their head were solid in maintaining the cause of Catholicism and the unity of Christ's Church. However, after a farcical debate between Catholic and Protestant clerics, the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity were passed. The visitors appointed under it tendered the

oath to the Bishops but only one—Kitchin of Llandaff—took it. The rest refused firmly and were deprived. As they died, one by one, in exile or confinement, the ancient hierarchy was extinguished.

THE NEW BISHOPS

A new line of Protestant Bishops came into existence with Dr. Matthew Parker, intruded by Royal authority into Canterbury after a period of general vacancy of the Bishopsrics. Parker was consecrated by four deprived Bishops of Edward VI's time. Of these one, though a Protestant, had received consecration according to the old Catholic rites, two had been consecrated according to the rite adopted in King Edward's reign, which the Catholic authorities had held to be invalid; one, Barlow, may never have been consecrated at all! The rite of the Second (1552) Prayer book was used, in which the office of Bishop was not mentioned in the words of Consecration. The whole modern Anglican hierarchy and clergy as tracing its orders back to Parker, depends on his status for the validity of theirs. It has thus no Catholic standing whatever, and no "continuity" with the ancient hierarchy of the Church founded by St. Augustine.

Parker himself was a gentle, estimable man, definitely Protestant in his beliefs. His Episcopal brethren held varying views, like their modern successors, being united chiefly in their strong rejection of "Popery." A number regarded the new Elizabethan settlement as an unsatisfactory compromise and encouraged the movement towards more radical "Puritanism." The clergy frequently disregarded the Prayer book, and the Royal "Injunctions" in order to follow their own caprices, so that the religious arrangements of parishes showed from the first a great variety.

THE PARISH CLERGY

While the Catholic Bishops rejected the oath of Supremacy, it is a shameful fact that the majority of the parish clergy accepted it—even if the highest figures are taken for refusals, there were no more than a thousand. Their failure, if inexcusable, is not inexplicable.

Many had been ordained in Henry VIII's time, under the Royal Supremacy. The changes of recent years had been temporary, and the Queen's weak health gave reason for surmising that the latest might endure no longer than the others. The Queen of Scots would come in then, and Catholic worship would be restored. A number of priests said Mass in secret, while observing the new worship publicly, a minority became "hedge-priests," and others, who at first confirmed, seem to have joined them later. In these conditions, the authorities found it difficult to provide for parishes, and curés came to be held by many ignorant and ill-conditioned persons—many churches had only lay readers. The Reformation brought no reform of the clergy in either learning or morals—the evidence testifies rather to the contrary. Things may have been ill before—they were worse afterwards.

"ROYAL INJUNCTIONS"

The Act of Uniformity made Church attendance compulsory, under pain of a heavy fine. This rule was increasingly enforced while special fines—of crushing weight—were later laid on Catholic "Recusants" (refusers). A Royal visitation to enforce the oath of Supremacy was provided with "injunctions" as to parish worship under the new regime.

These provide an interesting light on the question of "Continuity." The clergy were required to preach against the Papacy, in favour of the Royal Supremacy, four times a year. They were to warn their people that pilgrimages, candles and rosaries were idolatrous. The old religious processions were forbidden, shrines, religious images and other monuments of "idolatry and superstition" were to be destroyed, as well as stained-glass windows. Altars were to be removed, and inventories made of Church ornaments, plate and books—especially those connected with Catholic worship. No wafers were to be used in communion—only plain bread.

The Visitors' work was continued by the hated Court of High Commission, which administered the Royal supremacy until its abolition on the eve of the Great Rebellion in Charles I's reign. After the Restoration of Charles II, the work was taken over by Parliament.

THE WRECKERS

The wrecking of the churches had begun even before the Visitors arrived; for as early as August, 1559, there was

an "Auto da fe" of crosses, images, censers altar-cloths books and banners in London and similar deeds took place all over the country. Everything connected with Catholic worship was usually destroyed, sometimes the vestments were made into dresses or uniforms. The removal of stone altars—symbols of sacrifice—took place often amid scenes of revolting profanity. The Government wished, at first, to have all chalices melted down as "superstitious." Crucifixes and crosses—even in graveyards—were destroyed. Houses were searched for Catholic service books, which were burned. Pews and carved work were cut up for bedsteads, the niches of the smashed images were whitewashed. In a word, the old parish churches were practically gutted from end to end.

As for the new service, its performance was often hardly decent. The Communion table was moved hither and thither—treated as a hat-stand in one church, while in another it was "decked like an altar." As for vestments, early attempts to secure the use of the Cope at Communion failed, the surplice itself was barely tolerated in the first years after the new settlement.

THE CHARACTER OF THE CHANGE

These, then, are the facts: and it may well be asked how, in the face of them, it is possible to establish any genuine "continuity" between the old "Ecclesia Anglicana" and the new Anglican Church. We see the ancient authority outraged; the very existence of a "Visible Church" in the old sense denied; doctrines, even the most fundamental, overthrown by Act of Parliament; the ancient hierarchy expelled, and its place usurped by State-appointed officials, ordained by a new, unheard of ritual; the churches plundered and wrecked to destroy the least vestige of Catholic worship. If this is not a radical religious revolution, there is no such thing.

True, there came later a movement of partial restoration; decency and even splendour in worship reappeared with the reforms of the Stewart period, and some ancient Church doctrines were revived. But no stream can rise above its source and the source of the Anglican hierarchy and authority is not the Church of St. Augustine, but the Church of Elizabeth and Parker, set up by the religious revolution of the sixteenth century, in which the old Catholic English Church was done to death.

Chapter II

THE RECUSANTS AND OLD ENGLISH TRADITION

After the usurpation of the throne of England by William and Mary in 1689, the rights of the ancient Royal dynasty continued to be asserted by a dwindling body of British loyalists—the "Jacobites"—until its extinction in 1805. So it was with the rights and faith of the ancient English Church—only that in its case, the claim has been upheld until the present day, and has never at any time been without supporters in England. Though the ancient hierarchy perished, Catholicism did not have to be reintroduced into the country, for a minority always remained who refused to "bow the knee" to the Baal of the new Royally imposed religious order. Sometimes it dwindled—sometimes expanded, at last, in the eighteenth century, it sank almost entirely out of view until the coming of the "Second Spring" after Emancipation. This body of "Recusants," English and even ultra loyalist, served by English priests trained in seminaries founded and staffed by English exiles, continued the tradition of the ancient Church founded by St. Augustine, they, and they alone, have the indefeasible right to the name of "English Catholics."

NATIONALISM OF THE CATHOLICS

It is interesting to notice how little there was among them of what was later styled "Ultramontanism"—the particular attachment to Italian devotions and ways of worship, and insistence upon the mediaeval political claims of the Papacy over secular rulers. The great body of English Catholics were unswervingly, even absurdly national under the most adverse conditions; and it was their loyalty to the rulers under whose bloody persecutions they suffered which, from the first, made organised resistance so difficult. The readiness of the majority of them to accept a form of allegiance to James I drafted in the most insulting terms, even when it was condemned by the Pope, is only one sign of their attitude. The group of exiles who held, with Parsons, the Jesuit, that Catholics should support a foreign intervention to overthrow Elizabeth or force her to change her religious policy, found themselves handicapped by the enthusiastic nationalism of their English co-religionists. The clergy—even though after the dying out of the "Marian"

priests, they were all trained and ordained abroad—were filled with the same spirit. Educated at Douay, Seville or Rome, under the protection of the Pope and the King of Spain—both declared foes of the Queen at the end of her reign—they yet accepted her authority. Their spirit was that of Blessed Edmund Campion who prayed for "Elizabeth, my Queen and your Queen" on the scaffold, to which she had doomed him after tortures which beggar description.

It was not for Catholics who were persecuted for their loyalty to spiritual authority, to deny the rights of the temporal power within its own sphere. As they had refused the spiritual revolution, so they rejected the temporal revolts of the next century—thereby suffering a double ruin. It was a paradox that the children of those who were harried under James 1 for "disloyalty" should suffer under Cromwell's Government, as later under that of the Orange usurper, for their attachment to the lawful King. It was left for the sons of the subservient "loyalists" who had aided the Tudors in their usurpation's, first, to rebel against their sovereign and kill him, and later, to commit the very crime which Catholics had again and again been accused of plotting—that of summoning over a foreign prince and army to overthrow the Government.

CHARLES II ON CATHOLICISM

Charles II, probably the ablest of all our Kings, fully realised the importance of the English Catholic tradition to the monarchy. His attitude, at a time when he himself hovered between scepticism and the Faith, may be compared to that of the great modern infidel who has defended Catholicism in France—Charles Maurras. The nature of Protestantism was, as he saw it, inconstant. Having in the past abandoned one authority to which they were bound by every tie of tradition and law—the Holy See—there was no reason, he held, to suppose that Anglicans might not equally abandon the Royal authority at a crisis, despite their fervent assertions of the principle of "Divine Right." And so, in fact, it proved: for, even though Charles I had died a martyr for Anglicanism, it was Anglican Bishops who gave the signal, by their revolt, for the revolution which drove out his son. The "continuity" of political as well as religious tradition was to be found in the highest degree among Catholics, who remained faithful, to a man, to the House of Stewart; while of Anglicans, only a remnant, the "Non-Jurors," were prepared to stand by their principles of Sacred Kingship.

THE RITUAL TRADITION

Even if we go down to the least details Of the history of the English Catholics, we find the same feature of a clinging to the national traditions. The ancient "Uses" of England in the matter of rites and festivals had varied through the country in the Middle Ages. The "Sarum" (Salisbury) use was general in the South, but in the North and West there were others, as well as "customs" observed in certain dioceses from the old days. In times of persecution it was well-nigh impossible for migrant priests, trained abroad in the Roman rite and harried to and fro over the land, to continue to observe these local varieties of "Use"; yet they were upheld in principle for long, and only abandoned when the prospect of restoration of settled parish life was seen to be hopeless.

THE CONTINUITY OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS

The continuity of the hierarchy was broken, as we have seen, by the failure to consecrate titular Catholic Bishops to replace those of Queen Mary at their deaths, but the same was not always true of the religious Orders. Several of the English Catholic Orders of our time possess unbroken continuity with those of the Middle Ages others only died out some time after the establishment of the new Protestant Church.

Thus, a remnant of the Carthusians, whose house, founded in 1412, was suppressed by Henry VIII, had fled overseas. They returned, under Queen Mary, to Sheen, but emigrated again after Elizabeth's accession.

They retained their identity as a separate group in the Charterhouse at Bruges, and eventually founded a house of their own, "Sheen Anglorum," whose Prior bore the old title. This house, finally settled at Nieuport, continued until its dissolution under the Emperor Joseph II in 1783; the last of the old line of English Carthusians died in 1821.

The Bridgettines of Syon, whose house was founded in 1415, still remain, having an unbroken tradition of more than 500 years. The English Benedictines possess continuity with the old Abbey of Westminster, built by King Edward the Confessor—one survivor, Dom Buckley, having handed on the heritage to the reestablished congregation in 1607. The Franciscans, who maintained a 'hidden' province in England until 1614, continued their line in the same

way through Father Stanney, who gave the habit to Jennings, the founder of the Second Province at Ypres.

The witness of a continuous tradition in these instances, and the revival of other English Orders abroad in the seventeenth century, is sufficient to expose the falseness of the claim made for modern Anglican groups bearing the traditional names that they are "reviving" the religious life of old England.

HOW ENGLAND WAS CHANGED

I have written enough to show the falseness of the view that the modern Catholic Church is a mere "Italian Mission" without any link with the historic tradition of the English-speaking world. I have sufficiently indicated the attitude of the Elizabethan Church towards the Mass, the priesthood, Catholic doctrine and devotions, to prove that between Mary's Cardinal Pole and Elizabeth's Archbishop Parker there is a great gulf fixed which no theory of continuity can traverse. The English were finally dragooned and propagandised into accepting Protestantism—though the authority of the Queen's political Church never secured the unanimous assent even of Protestants. The methods of terrorism and pressure by which the change was achieved bear a striking resemblance to those which have been employed, in our own time, in order to destroy the faith and transform the outlook of great masses of people, by the Nazi and Communist regimes. The resources of despotic government were smaller in those days, however, and its means for imposing its will less effectual; so that the process was long and difficult, taking more than a century to complete.

Acts of Parliament and Royal decrees created new formularies and enforced their acceptance, as a test of loyalty, under pain of drastic penalties which were continually increased. Measures were taken to make it impossible to secure Catholic education, whether at home or abroad, and to prevent the training and introduction of priests into the country. Catholics were constantly harried and subjected to brutalities; they were driven from public life, excluded from political office, economically ruined by fines and confiscations. Their clergy were imprisoned, tortured and slain. Like the Soviet Union, again, the English Government was adept at fostering dissension and schismatical movements among those loyal to the Church, so as to set Catholic against Catholic. At last, the Faith was so far crushed out that even its memory was a sinister shadow in eighteenth century parishes. It remained for men of the next age to assert that "English Catholicism" and Anglicanism were the same—that the new Communion was the equivalent of the Mass which had been so bloodily suppressed; and to refuse the name of "English Catholics" to the sturdy remnant which had survived the storms of persecution, and the converts who had rallied to the Faith of their remote ancestors.

THE PRINCES IN THE TOWER

Some years ago, a controversy arose as to the right of the Anglican clergy to assume charge of the bodies of the young princes murdered by King Richard III, which were discovered in the Tower of London. Edward V and his brother were committed to the grave with Anglican ceremonies; but can anyone seriously doubt as to which Church, Anglican or "Roman," they would have recognised as the "English Church" of 1483, the year of their tragic end? The Archbishop of Canterbury at that time was Cardinal Bouchier, who had received his pallium of office, as well as the sacred Purple, from the Pope, and he, with the whole bench of English Bishops, had sworn allegiance, in ancient set form, to the Holy See. The Seven Sacraments, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and the other Catholic doctrines had been clearly taught from infancy to the unhappy sons of Edward IV; they were accustomed to pray to Our Lady and to their patron saints, to revere holy images and relics, and the shrines of the saints. Such was the faith of Englishmen—a Faith whose public denial was heresy, punishable by death under the secular law as a crime against society. Yes—and the very ruffian who killed the children had sworn in his Coronation oath, to observe the rights and liberties of the Church so constituted. The new Church has usurped the bodies of the princes as it usurped the temporalities and shrines of the old "Ecclesia Anglicana" but it has no shadow of valid claim to either.

WESTMINSTER AND CANTERBURY

What is the position of the Catholic hierarchy in England today? What are the claims of Archbishop Fisher and Cardinal Griffin respectively to the heritage of St. Augustine? Dr. Fisher has the old title, the Cathedral and its property, the Palace at Lambeth. But these are mere external, legal trappings. The spiritual authority of the ancient

Catholic Archbishops was obtained from the Holy See, symbolised by the grant of the "pallium"; they swore allegiance to the Pope, and bound themselves to every detail of the Roman creed as the standard of orthodoxy—and so it had been since St. Gregory first sent St. Augustine to the shores of Kent. They even held the title of "Legatus natus" as permanent representatives of the Papacy in England. It was in virtue of this spiritual power that they ruled the old English Church. Clerical temporalities—for which they owed duty to the King—might be, and sometimes were, held by laymen. In virtue of these they were Barons and Lords in Parliament. Cardinal Griffin professes the Faith of Augustine, of Lanfranc, of Langton, of Bourehier, of Pole, the present Archbishop of Canterbury could not possibly accept that Faith without renouncing the Articles and Prayer book to which his ministry binds him, and the official supremacy of the King as governor of the Church. The Cardinal has, like St. Augustine and his successors, the Roman pallium as a symbol of his allegiance, like them, he has been ordained and consecrated according to the ancient sacerdotal ritual of the West.

This is the substance of the Catholic claim that its modern episcopate, in England and the English-speaking world of English Christianity are inheritors of the lawful hierarchical tradition of the ancient Church of the English. The present Catholic hierarchy of England, and the hierarchies of the English-speaking Dominions, owe their origin to the same Papacy which erected Canterbury and York and the old English Sees: these Bishops profess the same faith, and exercise their office under the same obedience, as the Bishops who reigned in England before the changes of the sixteenth century.

"YE KNOW NOT WHAT"

In conclusion, we make reflect that the most striking difference between the ancient Catholic "Ecclesia Anglicana" and the new Anglicanism is expressed in the contrast drawn by Our Lord Himself between Jerusalem and Samaria, whose "patriotic" assertion of a separatist claim has an interesting resemblance to the Anglican attitude. In the King James version the text runs: "Ye worship ye know not what: we know we worship; for salvation is of the Jews."

The ancient Catholic "Ecclesia Anglicana" shows the utmost clarity and definiteness in doctrine and loyalties—it is intolerant of division and heresy of every kind. On the contrary, ambiguity and evasion have been the notes of official Anglican teaching from the days of Elizabeth on. The Church of England has shown itself to be incapable either of defining its Faith with clarity or of dealing with those who deny fundamental Christian doctrines from positions of authority in the Church itself. It is a prey to irreconcilable dogmatic and disciplinary confusion, for which some of its adherents attempt to console themselves by glorying in its "tolerance" and "comprehensiveness." This very contradiction of character is a refutation of its claim to be the inheritor of the spiritual tradition of the old religion.

Yet, let us remember that Our Lord loved the Samaritans, even while condemning their errors; and that He often held them up as an example to the cold ingratitude of Israel. For this, too, has a meaning for us.
