

# HOW THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND BECAME PROTESTANT

## CHAPTER I

*The Church of England was cut off from communion with the rest of the Catholic Church presided over by the Pope.*

THE Church in England till the schism had never been a national Church in the sense that she was cut off from communion with the rest of the Christian Church presided over by the Pope. She was a component part of the universal Church known as the Catholic Church, of which the Bishop of Rome was the supreme ruler and teacher of truth. This was the secret of her strength, as it was of every other local Church in communion with the Apostolic See. This is why she was able to resist the oppressive action of the State which had so often threatened her rights and liberties ; for in her struggles she could always count upon the aid of her head the Bishop of Rome. From the days, however, that the Church in England ceased to form part of that vast organization we speak of as the Catholic Church, she was absorbed by the State, and became merely a State department. To the present day, so complete is the dependence of the Church on the State that she may not legislate in any matter of importance except with the sanction of the Crown. And be it noted that this condition of things is so completely acquiesced in by the bishops and clergy of the State Church that no such thing is ever heard of as a joint act of protest on the part of the clergy and bishops of the said Church against the action of the State.

Let us then briefly refer to the events which brought about the separation of England from the Apostolic See. Henry had been married to Queen Catherine of Aragon, niece of the Emperor Charles V, since the year 1509. In the year 1527 he began to take steps to endeavour to prove that his marriage was null and void, as he had determined to marry Anne Boleyn, one of Queen Catherine's ladies-in-waiting. To secure this object he nominated Thomas Cranmer for the Pope to appoint to the vacant Archbishopric of Canterbury—an appointment the Pope would never have made had he been better acquainted with the private life and religious principles of that unworthy member of the English clergy.

By a preconceived arrangement with the King, Cranmer, on being appointed archbishop, lost no time in petitioning him to allow of an official examination being made into the matrimonial cause. This was to be followed by a final sentence favourable to a divorce. In his reply the King answered, "Because ye be under us by God's calling and ours, the most powerful minister of our spiritual jurisdiction within this our realm, we will not refuse your humble request to make an end in our said great cause of matrimony."<sup>1</sup> On May 23; 1533, Cranmer declared the marriage between Henry and Queen Catherine null and void, and on the 28th he further pronounced the marriage with Anne Boleyn to have been valid. It had been celebrated on January 25 by the King's chaplain, Dr. Roland Lee, who was assured by Henry that the Pope had granted the Bull of Divorce.<sup>2</sup> On July 11 the Pope excommunicated the King and declared the newly contracted marriage null and void.

How loyal a Catholic the King had shown himself to be before he set his heart upon marrying Anne Boleyn, may be judged from the letter he addressed to Pope Leo X, who on February 13, 1513,

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<sup>1</sup> Collier, II, Rec.p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Stowe 561, *Archceologia*, XVIII, 81.

was elected to fill the See of Peter. On September 28 of this same year the King writes as follows : “We pray the most High God that even as He and no other has given your Holiness as an excellent helmsman to the tempest-tossed bark of His Church, so He may long preserve you whom we acknowledge and revere and venerate as the most true Vicar of Jesus Christ here upon earth and pastor of the universal Church. As soon as the storms of the present wars will permit, we shall send our ambassador in our name, who will do due obedience to your Holiness, and will promise you every service which as a devoted and most obedient son of your Holiness and of the Holy See we shall be able to render.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1521 the King sent John Clerke, Bishop of Bath and Wells, to convey to the Pope the work which he had written on the Seven Sacraments : it was a refutation of the teaching of Protestantism as set forth by Martin Luther, an apostate friar. The King’s ambassador made a public and official declaration of his sovereign’s loyalty to the Pope in full Consistory in presence of the cardinals and the ambassadors of the other Catholic nations. He spoke of England’s devotion to the Holy See in the following terms : “ Let others speak of other nations but unquestionably of my Britain—my England as in more recent times she has been called . . . as in the worship of God and the Christian faith and due obedience to the Roman Church she has never yielded to Spain nor to France, nor to Germany, nor to Italy, nor to any other less distant country, nor to Rome herself—so is it true that no nation is more opposed to this monster [Luther] and to the heresies born of him.”<sup>2</sup>

In recognition of the King’s services in the interests of the Church, Pope Leo X conferred on him the title of “Defender of the Faith.” “As we have by this title honoured you,” wrote the Pope; “we likewise command all Christians that they name your Majesty by this title, and that in their writing to your Majesty immediately after the word King they add ‘Defender of the Faith.’”<sup>3</sup>

The persecution by the King of the English clergy began with the opening of the year 1531, and in the first instance was probably commenced with the object of frightening the Pope into compliance with the King’s wishes. On January 6 Henry charged the clergy with having incurred the penalties of the law known as “praemunire,” seeing that they had submitted them-selves to the jurisdiction of Cardinal Wolsey in his capacity of the Pope’s Legate on the occasion of his having examined into the marriage cause. It is difficult to credit the King with such meanness as was involved in this act ; for it was at the King’s own request that the Cardinal had been made the Pope’s Legate in England, and the licence to hold this position had been granted him under the great seal.

In consequence of this alleged breaking of the law, the clergy of the Convocation of Canterbury were fined 100,000 (about 1,000,000 of our modern money), payable in five yearly instalments, and the Convocation of York was called upon to pay something over 18,000. Not satisfied with levying these fines, the King insisted upon the clergy acknowledging him as “Protector and Supreme Head of the English Church.” Finding that the clergy would not consent to assign this title to him, he sent word that after the word “head” the words “after Christ” should be added. But in the end the King had to be satisfied with the title being modified as follows : “We acknowledge His Majesty to be the special Protector, single and supreme Lord and, as far as the law of Christ allows, even supreme Head.”

The example of the Convocation of Canterbury was followed by that of York. Cardinal Wolsey being dead, there remained only Tunstall (Bishop of Durham) and Kite (Bishop of Carlisle) to represent the latter Con-convocation. The Bishop of Durham, before he would agree to accept the title the King asked to have assigned to him, wrote on behalf of his Convocation to know what sense would be given to the said title. The King, in his reply, bids the clergy understand that his rights were

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<sup>1</sup> In Vatican transcripts of Marini in Brit. Museum, vol. xxxvii, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> *Oratio Jo. Cleric apud Rom. Pontif.* in preface to *Assertio Sept. Sacrament* (2nd edit. 1688).

<sup>3</sup> Rymer, XIII. 757

not to be understood as interfering with the supreme authority of the Pope, but that his title as head of the English Church referred to his position as feudal lord over the clergy in things temporal.<sup>1</sup>

1532: February 24—just six months before his death—Archbishop Warham drew up a formal declaration with reference to the action he had taken as regards Church legislation, and stated therein that he never meant to confer on the King anything derogatory to the rights of the Roman pontiff or the Apostolic See.<sup>2</sup> His example encouraged for the time being his fellow-bishops to stand firm in their allegiance to the Pope, and when, on April 10, Parliament, before adjourning, was induced by the King to pass an act to deprive the Pope of the customary offering of the “annates” (the first year’s income on benefices), “all the bishops opposed it,” writes Chapuys, the Spanish ambassador to Charles V. He adds the sad item of information that “the lords, who were about thirty, consented, except the Earl of Arundell, so that the majority were for the King.”<sup>3</sup>

In their first reply to Henry’s proposals, they had said : “ As to the royal assent being required to authorize the laws made by them and their predecessors, the King must know from his learning and wisdom they could not submit the execution of their charges and duties to his royal assent.” In their second reply they had said “that the prelates of the Church had spiritual jurisdiction to rule and govern in faith and morals ; that they had authority to make rules and laws tending to that purpose. . . . The authority proceeded immediately from God, and from no power or consent of the prince.” It is sad to have to record that the presence of the members of the King’s council, who had instructions to assist at their deliberations, so completely overawed the bishops that they agreed to a resolution which laid it down “that no legislation by the clergy should be valid without the King’s consent and his permission for its execution.” A commission of thirty-two persons, all selected by the King—of whom sixteen should be laymen—were to consider whether there were ecclesiastical laws and ordinances which should be repealed.<sup>4</sup>

A series of articles against the Pope was introduced into Parliament/in March, 1534, among which were the following : Bishops were no longer to be appointed by the Pope ; Peter’s Pence and all other contributions of England to the Pope for the general administration of the Catholic Church were to be discontinued ; licences were to be asked for from the archbishop, and not from the Pope ; it was to be accounted treason to make any laws for the Church in England without the consent of the King the archbishops were to address themselves to the King in chancery, instead of to the Pope. An Act was passed incorporating the language contained in the declaration of 1532, known as the “submission of the clergy.” The King’s headship over the Church in England was set forth, no mention being made of the qualifying words with which the clergy in convocation (1532) had accepted it—“so far as the law of Christ allows.”

November 3. Parliament reassembled for some six weeks,<sup>5</sup> and passed the statute of the King’s supremacy, of which we will give the following extract : “ Be it enacted by the authority of this present parliament that the King our sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, Kings of this realm, shall be taken, accepted and reputed the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England called Ecclesia Anglicana, and shall have and enjoy annexed and united to the imperial crown of this realm, as well the title and style thereof as all honours, dignities, pre-eminences, jurisdictions, etc., to the said dignity of supreme head of the same Church belonging . . . and shall have full power and authority from time to time to visit, reprove . . . and amend all such errors, heresies, etc., whatsoever they be, which by any manner, spiritual authority or jurisdiction, may be lawfully reformed, repressed, etc., any usage, custom, foreign law, foreign authority, prescription or any thing or things

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<sup>1</sup> Wilkins, III, 762 ; Collier, II, 63 (1st ed.).

<sup>2</sup> Wilkins, In, 746. Collier II, 63 (1st ed.).

<sup>3</sup> *Cal. State Papers*, Henry VIII.

<sup>4</sup> Stubbs’s *Appendix*, p. 927.

<sup>5</sup> Stubbs’s *Appendix*, IV, p. 110.

to the contrary hereof notwithstanding.”<sup>1</sup>

In the House of Lords, out of twenty-one bishops only four were present, of whom one was Archbishop Cranmer. It seems certain that they were so cowed and disheartened that, though they would not co-operate by their vote in passing the Supremacy Bill, they had not the courage to take an active part in endeavouring to have it thrown out. The Lower House of Convocation was ordered by the King to declare whether there was anything to be found in Scripture to show that “the Bishop of Rome had greater jurisdiction in the realms of England than any other bishop.” By this cunning device Henry foresaw that he would obtain the reply he desired ; for of course there could be no reference in the Old or New Testament to the Bishop of Rome or to the realms of England. It is probable, however, that the reply of the bishops was misunderstood by the majority of the people in England, who in consequence will have had less difficulty in taking the oath of supremacy.

It is sad to have to relate that this oath was taken by all the bishops of England with the exception of John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, who, rather than consent to do so, laid down his life on the scaffold. So far as a declaration of a majority of votes in both Houses of Parliament, and the oath as taken by her bishops, could be said to represent correctly the mind of the people as a nation, England was now in schism. She was then for the first time since the introduction of Christianity to her shores out of communion with the Apostolic See. “Then,” as Bishop Gore, late of Oxford, has truly put it, “the Church of England began to possess a separate and independent existence.”

## CHAPTER II

*How the Church of England, which had been ‘made schismatical under Henry VIII, became Protestant in the reign of Edward VI. Action of the English people in defence of the Old Faith,*

HENRY VIII died January 28, 1547, and was succeeded on the throne by his only son, Edward VI, a mere boy of nine years old, who was little more than a tool in the hands of Archbishop Cranmer, Somerset the Protector, and the other leaders of the so-called Reformation. Though he separated the Church in England from the Apostolic See, Henry did not introduce into her creed doctrines or church services at variance with those of the Catholic Church. “The Church of England,” writes Dr. Short, Anglican Bishop of St. Asaph (1847), “first ceased to be a member of the Church of Rome during the reign of Henry VIII, but it could scarcely be called Protestant till that of Edward VI. . . . During the short reign of Edward VI it became entirely Protestant, and in point of doctrine assumed its present form.”<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to say that it was in the reign of this youthful King that the work of Protestantizing England commenced in earnest. The Mass was abolished, and the Book of Common Prayer was first introduced in the year 1547. The acceptance of certain articles of belief known as the Thirty-nine Articles—of which not a few are opposed to the teaching of the Catholic Church—was made obligatory on all who wished to be ministers of the Church in England.

It may well be doubted whether the so-called Church of England would ever have taken root in England had it not been for the aid of the bands of German heretics who were invited over to help on the work of crying down and slandering the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church. Martin Bucer, an apostate priest, writing from London, August 14, 1549, to Albert Hardenberg, states that there were “from six to eight hundred Germans “at that time assisting him to propagate the new

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<sup>1</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Doc. Illust. of Engl. Church History*, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. of Church of England*, p. 593.

religion.<sup>1</sup>

John a Lasco, also an apostate priest, had under him a congregation composed of foreigners in the very heart of London, Dutch, German and Netherlander Protestants, all of whom, mainly through Bishop Hooper's influence, were naturalized on July 24, 1550. Italian and French Protestants had each a meeting house, and there were others at Glastonbury composed of French and Walloons ; and bands of fanatics had found their way to Sandwich, Ipswich and Bristol. Need it be added that all these foreign Protestants gave their aid to every measure that had for its object the overthrow of the Catholic religion? No doubt the faith of many Englishmen was corrupted by these preachers who were sent from town to town and from village to village to ridicule and misrepresent the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church. Bishops and priests who were not known as supporters of the new religion were not licensed to preach, and thus the heretics had it all their own way in most places.

Meanwhile the greater part of the people showed their unwillingness to give up the old religion by their refusal to assist at the services of the new Church that was being started ; and it is stated expressly in the preamble of the Act passed by Parliament in 1552 "for the due coming to Common Prayer," that "a great number of people in diverse parts of the realm do wilfully and damnably refuse to come to their parish churches."<sup>2</sup>

"When Hugh Latimer, first Anglican Bishop of Worcester, preached the Lent sermons in 1549 at St. Margaret's, Westminster, his language was so coarse and abusive against the Catholic religion that those present who maintained it cried out in condemnation ; but this foul-mouthed preacher reiterated his slanders in language still more coarse and with energy still more furious. There was a free fight consequently ; heads were bruised and pews and glass broken. The riot was only quelled by some pikemen"<sup>3</sup>

Hooper, first Anglican Bishop of Gloucester, bears evidence to the love of Englishmen for the old religion, its doctrines and its practices, when he writes in one of his letters as follows : " The impious Mass, the most shameful celibacy of the clergy, the invocation of saints, auricular confession, superstitions, abstinence from meats, and purgatory were never before held by the people in greater esteem than at the present moment."<sup>4</sup>

When the insurgents of Devonshire (1549) had risen in arms in defence of the old faith they declared in their petition, "We will not receive the new service, because it is but like a Christmas game, but we will have our old service of Matins, Mass, Evensong and Procession in Latin as it was before."<sup>5</sup> In this same year we find Sir William Paget, a shrewd statesman of his day, writing as follows : " The use of the old religion [Catholic] is forbidden, the use of the new [Anglican] is not printed in the stomachs of eleven of twelve parts of the realm."<sup>6</sup>

There is nothing more touching than to read the records of the determined attempts of our English fore-fathers to save the old faith. No less than eleven of the southern counties rose in defence of the old religion. From the western and midland counties the insurrection spread to the East, and in Wiltshire three serious outbreaks of popular indignation could only be suppressed by a wholesale slaughter. Oxfordshire, Devon-shire and Norfolk lost large numbers in defence of their faith. "Ab Ulmis" writes as follows : "The Oxford-shire papists are at last reduced to order, many of them having been apprehended and some gibbeted and their heads fastened to the walls."<sup>7</sup> "Whilst life

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<sup>1</sup> Lee, *King Ed. VI*, 121.

<sup>2</sup> Gairdner, *Hist. Engl. Church*, p. 303

<sup>3</sup> Lee, *King Ed. VI*, 112.

<sup>4</sup> Hooper to Henry Bullinger, Jan. 27, prob. 1548.

<sup>5</sup> Strype, *Cranmer*, vol. 11, p. 826, ed. 1812.

<sup>6</sup> Froude, vol. v, p. 121.

<sup>7</sup> *Original Letters*, p. 391.

and limb remained they [Catholics] fought with a fury and intrepidity which drew from Lord Grey the observation that he had never seen the like in any of his foreign wars. The overthrow was total ; where they fought they fell, and a few were left alive to tell to others the tale of their disastrous fortune.”<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER III

#### *The brief return of the Church of England to communion with the Church of Rome.*

QUEEN MARY, a fervent Catholic, succeeded her brother as sovereign of England on July 6, 1553, and her first thoughts were directed to the reconciliation of England to the See of Rome.

This happy event took place on St. Andrew’s Day, 1554. In the House of Lords a petition for reunion with the Church of Rome was read by the Lord Chancellor, the Bishop of Winchester, to Queen Mary and her husband, King Philip of Spain.

The words of the petition ran as follows :

“We, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Commons assembled in this present Parliament, representing the whole body of the realm of England, . . . do declare ourselves very sorry and repentant of the schism and disobedience committed in this realm and dominions aforesaid, . . . offering ourselves . . . to do that shall lie in us for repealing of the laws and ordinances [against the supremacy of the See of Rome], and desire that we may obtain from the Apostolic See . . . absolution and release from all danger of such censures and sentences as we may have fallen into . . . and as children repentant be received into the bosom and unity of Christ’s Church. . . .”<sup>2</sup>

Cardinal Pole, the Papal Legate, then rose from his chair and pronounced the formal absolution ; while the King and Queen and all present fell on their knees. “ Our Lord Jesus Christ,” said the Cardinal, “ which with His most precious blood hath redeemed and washed us from all our sins and iniquities . . . absolve you ; and we, by apostolic authority given unto us (by our most holy Lord Pope Julius III, his vicegerent on earth), do absolve and deliver you . . . from all heresy and schism . . . and also we do restore you again, unto the unity of our Mother the Holy Church. . . . in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”<sup>3</sup>

This absolution being pronounced, both Houses of Parliament answered aloud, ‘ Amen, amen.’ Then rising up many of them were seen to embrace and congratulate with one another, with tears in their eyes for joy of so happy a deliverance.”<sup>4</sup>

We may feel sure that none will have rejoiced more on that happy day than the English episcopate, who, excepting a few, were at heart sincere Catholics, though through fear of death they had taken the oath in which the King was accepted as the head of the Church of England.

Dr. Scott, Bishop of Chester, one of those who had been induced to take the oath of supremacy to King Henry, has left on record his testimony to the grief with which he and his fellow-bishops looked back to their fall, and atoned for it as far as they could by re-signing their sees rather than again disgrace themselves by taking the said oath on the accession to the throne of Queen Elizabeth.

“It is alleged,” he said, speaking from his seat in the House of Lords, “ that there was a Provincial Council or Assembly of bishops and clergy of this realm of England [in 1534] by which the authority

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<sup>1</sup> Memoirs of the House of Russell, vol. 1, pp. 367-8.

<sup>2</sup> Dodd, III, p. 550; Foxe, III, p. 90 ed. 1684.

<sup>3</sup> Foxe, iii, go.

<sup>4</sup> Dodd, Tierney, II p. 62.

of the Bishop of Rome was abolished and disannulled, which some inculcate against us as a matter of much weight and authority, whereas in very deed it was to be taken for small authority or none. For firstly, we know that particular or provincial councils can make no determination against the universal Church of Christ. Secondly, of learned men that were doers then, so many as be dead, before they died were penitent and cried, 'God's mercy!' for that act, and those that do live, as your Lordships know, have openly revoked the same and acknowledged their error."<sup>1</sup>

Let me conclude these few lines on the last days of Catholic England by quoting the decree of the bishops of England, in their synod, held in the year 1556, not long before the death of Queen Mary, Cardinal Pole, Archbishop of Canterbury, being at the time Papal Legate. "We lay down," so the decree runs, "that the holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff hold the primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman Pontiff in his own person is the successor of the Blessed Peter, the Prince of the apostles, and is the true Vicar of Christ, the head of the Church, and the father and instructor of all Christians ; and that to him, in the person of the Blessed Peter, was granted by the Lord Jesus Christ the full power of feeding, ruling and directing the whole Church, as is also contained in the acts of the oecumenical councils and in the sacred canons."<sup>2</sup>

This then was the profession of faith of the bishops of England of those days when no longer under fear of death.

#### CHAPTER IV

##### *How the Church of England was definitely separated from the Catholic Church—Action of the Catholic Clergy.*

No doubt the less educated classes of non-Catholics in England are much impressed by the fact that the bishops and clergymen of the Church of England are in possession of the many magnificent cathedrals and parish churches which date back so many centuries. "They consequently take for granted that the Church which possesses them at the present day is the Church that built them in olden days. A moment's reflection, however, ought to show the thoughtful reader that this is not so, and that the fact of the Church of England being in possession of the cathedrals and old parish churches in England does not in the least go to prove that she is in lawful possession of the same. Suppose I were bid by a tyrannical king or queen to take violent possession of somebody's house or property or revenues, and, moreover, were to call myself by his family name or title, would this make me the lawful possessor of the goods thus seized? and would his descendants recognize my descendants as representing his ancestry? Certainly not, you would reply.

Turn, then, to the pages of history, and read how the bishops of old England were driven from their sees by Queen Elizabeth, and how she appointed men to fill them who rejected the faith which till that period had been held by the people of England. The last Catholic bishop of the sixteenth century was Thomas Goldwell, Bishop of St. Asaph, who died in exile on April 3, 1585, and since the English schism none but Anglican bishops have occupied our Catholic Sees. But let history tell its sad story. from the commencement of the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

1558. November 17, Queen Mary died, and was succeeded by her sister Elizabeth, who was crowned Queen of England on January 15, 1559. When, shortly before her death, Queen Mary had sent to ask her whether she was true to the Catholic faith, she replied by "praying God that the earth might swallow her up alive if she were not a true Roman Catholic."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Strype, *Annals*, III, 204 sq.

<sup>2</sup> Wilkins, IV, 125.

<sup>3</sup> H. Clifford, *Life of Duchess of Feria*, Lingard, *History of England*, vol. v, p. 258.

The sincerity of Elizabeth may well be questioned when we see with what zeal she proceeded to undo the work that had been effected during her sister's short reign.

It would be too long for the space at our disposal to give a detailed account of the struggle of the Catholics of England headed by their bishops to resist the Bill which was to make the Queen the head of the Church in England. The members returned to sit in this memorable session of 1559 were by no means men who represented the real feelings of Englishmen of those times. The envoy of Mantua, Schifanoia, has left some important particulars, recently brought to light, bearing upon the condition of religion at the accession of Elizabeth to the throne ; and he may well be supposed to have had opportunities to arrive at accurate information. " Although," he writes (p. 53), " the Protestants increase in numbers, they are not so powerful as the Catholics, who comprise all the chief personages of the kingdom with great power in their counties and many followers ; the greater part of the common people out of London in several provinces are much attached to the Roman Catholic religion." " The Mass is said in all the churches, the Host being elevated as usual in the presence of numerous congregations who show much devotion. . . . All the clergy are united, though some will perhaps change their minds."<sup>1</sup>

But the system under which the elections were carried out was most ill-suited to produce a Parliament which was to declare by its votes whether the people of England wished their Church to be again cut off from the See of Rome. We know that the Crown sent to the voters the names of five persons from whom one was to be elected, and to the sheriffs who had the right to elect a member of Parliament three names were likewise forwarded. It was obligatory on them to choose one of the three. Of course by thus packing Parliament with anti-Catholic members, the Queen and her counsellors obtained what they wanted. It has been left on record by a contemporary writer that of the two hundred members returned to represent the nation at the opening of Parliament under Queen Elizabeth, only ten were known to be loyal to the old religion.<sup>2</sup>

In the House of Lords the majority of the peers were still Catholics, but the fear of incurring the displeasure of their new sovereign seems to have powerfully influenced their votes. "The Lords temporal," we are told by the aforesaid writer, had nothing to say on any point. Though they confessed that they admired the wisdom and learning of the bishops, yet they always dissented from them, their reason being no other than this—that the Queen, so they understood, wished otherwise."<sup>3</sup> The Archbishop of Canterbury was dead, but all the Catholic bishops, headed by the Archbishop of York, voted against the Bill which was to abolish once more the Pope's authority in England. " By forsaking the See of Rome," exclaimed the Archbishop, as if foreseeing the future history of the Church of England, " we hazard ourselves to be overwhelmed in the waves of schism, of sects and divisions." But in the end the Crown was victorious. By a packed party in the " beardless Parliament and a majority of one voice in the House of Lords, from which by threats and cajolery she (Elizabeth) had caused the chief Catholic nobles to absent themselves, against the unanimous decision of the bishops and the expressed wishes of Convocation, she substituted the Anglican establishment for the Catholic Church."<sup>4</sup>

In January of 1559 the Queen caused to be re-enacted by Parliament the oath of supremacy which Mary had repealed. It was to be taken by " all and every bishop and all and every ecclesiastical person and other ecclesiastical officer and minister, of what estate, dignity, pre-eminence or degree soever he or they may or shall be, and all and every temporal officer and judge, justice, mayor and other lay or temporal officer and minister, and every person having your Majesty's fee or wages within this realm, or any of your Highness's dominions." The oath is as follows : " I, A.B., do utterly

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<sup>1</sup> State Papers, Venetian Calendar, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Sanders, *De Schismate*, Lewis's trans., p. 254.

<sup>3</sup> Sanders to Card. Moroni, MS., Vatican Archives, arm. 64, vol. XXVIII, p. 2J9.

<sup>4</sup> Simpson's *Life of Campion*, p. 5.

testify and declare in my conscience that the Queen's Highness is the only supreme governor of this realm, and of all other her Majesty's dominions and countries as well in spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes as temporal, and that no foreign prince, person, state or potentate has or ought to have any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm ; and therefore I do utterly renounce, forsake all foreign jurisdiction, powers, superiorities and authorities. . . . So help me, God, and by the contents of this book [the Gospels]."<sup>1</sup>

Once more England was in schism; but this time the bishops of England were not to be intimidated. They had learnt by sad experience how dangerous a thing it was to temporize in hopes of appeasing an unscrupulous sovereign. Hence of all the bishops only Kitchen of Llandaff and Stanley of Sodor and Man could be induced to take the oath just referred to.

Shortly after, an "Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Service in the Church and Administration of the Sacraments " was passed. In force of this Act the Catholic service known as the Mass was once more abolished ; and with some slight modifications the Communion Service as drawn up in 1552,t in the Book of Common Prayer, was henceforward to be used throughout England.

Of the twenty-seven bishoprics of England, ten became vacant by the death of those who held them before Elizabeth commenced the work of rooting up the old religion. The following is the list of these ten vacant sees : Canterbury, Rochester, Bristol, Salisbury, Chichester, Hereford, Oxford, Gloucester, Bangor and Norwich. Fifteen of the seventeen bishops then living were deposed by the Queen before December 29, 1559, and men who would accept the new religion were appointed in their place (as also to the aforesaid vacant sees)—Kitchen of Llandaff and Thomas Stanley of Sodor and Man alone retaining their sees, being willing to conform.

The names of the Catholic bishops deposed by Elizabeth are as follows : Nicolas Heath, Archbishop of York ; Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham ; Edmund Bonner, Bishop of London ; John White, Bishop of Winchester ; Richard Tate, Bishop of Worcester ; James Turberville, Bishop of Exeter ; Thomas Watson, Bishop of Lincoln ; David Pole, Bishop of Peterborough ; Gilbert Bourn, Bishop of Bath and Wells ; Ralph Bayne, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield ; Thomas Thirlby, Bishop of Ely ; Cuthbert Scott, Bishop of Chester ; Henry Morgan, Bishop of St. David's ; Thomas Goldwell, Bishop of St. Asaph ; Owen Oglethorpe, Bishop of Carlisle. We are told that some of these bishops were kept in strict confinement, others were prisoners at large, and others went abroad, namely, the Bishops of Chester, Worcester and St. Asaph.<sup>2</sup>

Historical evidence goes to show that the clergy of England followed the example of their bishops, and as a body refused to accept the new religion. Jewel, the Anglican Bishop of Salisbury, in a letter to Peter Martyr, an apostate friar, wrote as follows, August 1, 1559: " Now that religion is everywhere changed, the Mass-priests [Catholic priests] absent themselves altogether from public worship, as if it were the greatest impiety to have anything in common with the people of God [Anglicans]."<sup>3</sup> Strype, the well-known historian of those days, tells us that " the popish priests, that is the majority of them, utterly refuse to assist " [at the Anglican services.]<sup>4</sup> Lawrence Vaux, the last warden of the Collegiate Church of Manchester (November 2, 1566), bears evidence to the horror with which the Catholic clergy looked upon the services prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. " There is," he says, " not one of the old bishops or godly priests of God that will be present at the schismatic .or damnable communion now used ; for the which cause they have lost their livings. "Some be in corporal prison, some in exile, and like good pastors be ready to suffer death . . . and, thanks be to God, a number not only of the clergy but as well the temporality [laymen] . . . do follow

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<sup>1</sup> Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, p. 449 f First edition published 1549

<sup>2</sup> l.c. ; cf. *Zurich Letters*, 1st series, n. 33 and 35.

<sup>3</sup> l.c. n. 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Annals*, c. xi. ; cf. Wood, *Fasti Oxon.* A.D. 1562.

their bishops constantly, and will in no wise come to the schismatical service.”<sup>1</sup>

In the visitation of the province of York in August and September, 1559, out of ninety clergymen summoned to take the Oath of Supremacy only twenty-one came and took it.<sup>2</sup> In the province of Canterbury the dean and canons of Winchester Cathedral, the warden and fellows of the college and the master of St. Cross all refused the oath.<sup>3</sup> Out of 8,911 parishes and 9,400 beneficed clergymen only 806 subscribed.<sup>4</sup> Archbishop Parker had instructions “not to push any one to extremities on account of his oath” ;<sup>5</sup> and the presence of Catholic priests who had been ordained before the accession of Queen Elizabeth was largely connived at by the Government as being so numerous. It was only gradually that they were removed to make way for men who were willing to conform to the requirements of the new Church.

Thomas Lever, writing July 10, 1560, says, “Many of our parishes have no clergymen, and some dioceses are without a bishop, and out of the very small number who administer the sacraments throughout this great country there is hardly one in a hundred who is both able and willing to preach the word of God.” The Anglican Bishop Jewel writing to Peter Martyr, November 6, 1560, says, “We are only wanting in preachers, and of these there is a great and alarming scarcity. The schools also are entirely neglected.”<sup>6</sup>

The vast majority of the clergy ‘of England were as loyal to the old religion as were the bishops. They would not be severed from the Apostolic See by renouncing their allegiance to the Pope in spiritual matters ; nor would they accept the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church or use the Book of Common Prayer. They were consequently dismissed from their respective parishes, and their places filled as far as possible with men willing to conform to the requirements of the Church henceforth to be known as the “Church of England.” Some went to live in foreign countries, many are known to have found employment as chaplains to Catholic noblemen and country gentlemen, to whose children in many cases they acted as tutors. Another and a still larger portion of the clergy quietly withdrew of their own accord to their homes. The policy of the Government was to leave them unmolested, and to trust to death gradually to remove them.

It must, however, be admitted that a certain number of the clergy fell away from the old religion and con-formed, at least outwardly, to the new order of things —some because they had not the courage to sacrifice their worldly interests to those of God ; others in con-forming excused themselves with the hope that matters would eventually right themselves, as had happened after the death of Edward VI. They fondly hoped that Elizabeth, once firmly settled on the throne, would cease to persecute the upholders of the faith of her forefathers.

Meanwhile many were the parishes without any one to attend to the spiritual wants of the people, for as yet the number of ministers of the new Church was not sufficient to replace the Catholic priests. Hence Hallam says that “for several years it was the common practice to appoint laymen, usually mechanics, to read the service in the vacant churches.” It seems certain that in not a few cases laymen were suffered to act as clergy. This abuse had reached such a pitch that in 1571 Grindal, Archbishop of Canterbury, laid it down that we do enjoin and straightly command that from henceforward no parish clerk, nor any other person not being ordained at least for a deacon, shall presume to solemnize matrimony, or to minister the sacrament of baptism, or to deliver to the communicants the Lord’s cup at the celebration of the holy communion.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Rambler*, December, 1857.

<sup>2</sup> S.P.O. *Dom. Eliz.* vol. x.

<sup>3</sup> S.P.O. *Dom.* June 30, 1559.

<sup>4</sup> S.P.O. *Dom. Eliz.* vol. cv1, n. 7 ; and Camden, *Eliz.* 1, 32.

<sup>5</sup> Strype, *Parker*, p. 125.

<sup>6</sup> *Zurich Letters*, 1st series, n. 35.

<sup>7</sup> Grindal’s Injunctions.

What was the mind of the educated classes as re-presented by the universities of Oxford and Cambridge may be gathered from reliable writers of those days. Anthony Wood assures us that “in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth the University of Oxford was so empty after the Roman Catholics had left it upon the alteration of religion that there was very seldom a sermon preached in the University Church called St. Mary.”<sup>1</sup>

“There was not then “(1564), writes the same author, “one in that society [of Merton College] that could or would preach any public sermon in the College turn ; such was the scarcity of theologians, not only in that house, but generally throughout the University [of Oxford].”<sup>2</sup>

The heads of the colleges which compose the University of Oxford, on being called upon to acknowledge the Queen as supreme governor of the Church in England in place of the Pope, refused to do so, and were at once removed from their respective posts. They deserve to have their names handed down to posterity : Marshall, Dean of Christchurch ; Reynolds, Warden of Merton ; Coveney, President of Magdalen ; Cheadsey, President of Corpus Christi ; Wright, Master of Balliol ; Hodgson, Provost of Queen’s ; Hernshaw, Rector of Lincoln ; Hythurst, President of Trinity ; Belsire, President of St. John’s ; Marshall, Principal of St. Alban’s Hall ; Holland, Warden of All Souls ; and Drysale, Master of University College. Most of these sufferers for the old faith retired to Gloucester Hall, where, with many others who refused to embrace the new religion, they were allowed to remain unmolested, at least for some few years.. Many fellows and members of the university followed the example of the heads of their respective colleges, and were consequently called upon to resign their offices ; those who refused to do so were ejected.

Referring to Catholics in the University of Oxford who were conspicuous for their loyalty to the old religion, Wood tells us that twenty-two persons of note [in 1560] were ejected out of New College or left their places ; seven out of St. John’s ; and a great number out of St. Mary Magdalen, Lincoln and Trinity.<sup>3</sup>

In Exeter College as late as 1578 there were not above four Protestants out of eighty, “all the rest were secret or open Roman affectionaries. These chiefly came from the West, where popery greatly prevailed, and the gentry were bred up in that religion.”<sup>4</sup>

We can well believe that there was a great scarcity of able men to be found in Oxford now that the services of Catholics were to be dispensed with, for Bishop Jewel had only a few months before written to the Queen (May 22, 1559) the following account of Catholicity in that university : “ Our universities are in a most lamentable condition ; there are not above two in Oxford of our [Church of England] sentiments.”<sup>5</sup>

Parker, .to whom Elizabeth had given the Arch-bishopric of Canterbury, confirms Jewel’s opinion as to the Catholic spirit of the universities. He assures the Queen that there were not “two men able or willing to read the Lady Margaret lecture,” when they had cleared the universities of their ablest men, who were loyal Catholics.

The University of Oxford seems to have upheld the cause of the old religion from the first days of the persecution in the days of Edward VI, for we find already in the year 1550 one of Bullinger’s friends writing to him that “Oxford abounds with those beasts the Romanists,”<sup>6</sup> and that “the Oxford men were still pertinaciously sticking in the mud of popery”<sup>7</sup> Strype tells us<sup>1</sup> that “the universities

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<sup>1</sup> *Athen. Oxon.* vol. 1, p. 161, ed. 1721.

<sup>2</sup> 1.c. p. 429.

<sup>3</sup> *Antiq. Oxon.* 283 ; cf. 284, 285.

<sup>4</sup> Strype, *Annals*, II, 639.

<sup>5</sup> Jewel to Bullinger in *Bibl. Tigurina*, p. 134.

<sup>6</sup> “Ab Ulmis,” p. 464.

<sup>7</sup> 1.c. p. 291.

were so addicted to popery that for some years few educated in them were ordained.”

The reader should be now in a position to judge for himself of the love of Englishmen for the religion of their forefathers in days gone by. In the case of the vast majority it is correct to say that they did not abandon the old faith, but it was with violence wrenched from their grasp ; and “for three or four generations their descendants preserved the perfume of Rome,” as Cotton quaintly puts it.

Meanwhile England with each year sank deeper into Protestantism, and, as a nation, has continued to be Protestant to the present day.

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<sup>1</sup> *Life of Grindal*, p. 50.