

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND

J.J. Dwyer

THE BACKGROUND

THE REFORMATION in England was the result of governmental initiative and action, in three stages:

1. by Henry VIII, in his Reformation Parliament, 1529-36; and, subsequently,
2. under Edward VI, by the initiative and continued action of the Council;
3. after the 'Marian Reaction', by Elizabeth I and her Ministers.

The English Reformation was consolidated, but not created, by the plunder of the Church. Henry VIII had completely broken away from the Holy See before anyone could have had any expectation of acquiring an acre of monastic land. One of the first things to be understood is that, notwithstanding the expression *Ecclesia Anglicana* in Magna Carta, there never was a separate and distinct National Church in this country. That expression means no more, and never did mean any more, than, for example, *Ecclesia Germanica* for the Germans, or *Ecclesia Gallicana* for the French. There were in England two provinces of the Universal Church, viz. Canterbury and York, just as in France the provinces of Lyons, Rheims, Rouen, Bordeaux, etc.

No country throughout the centuries before the Reformation and even in Saxon times acknowledged papal authority and jurisdiction so fully as did England. There were more appeals to the Pope from English ecclesiastical courts than from those of any other country. There was nothing in England that resembled the 'Gallicanism' of the French or the anti-Italian feeling always prevalent in Germany, but there was a strong sense of nationalism.

The unrest in England in the sixteenth century was economic and agrarian. There was, however, a certain amount of anti-clericalism in London and the larger towns which was in no way doctrinal but was due to the exaction of fees and to a large degree of clerical control over the affairs of everyday life. The Courts Ecclesiastical took cognizance of all cases concerning the validity of marriages, legitimacy, the validity, interpretation and administration of wills, and this could extend to the supervision of the conduct of executors. For any sexual irregularities, libel or slander, simony, and even for refusal to attend church, people could be, and were, summoned and were liable to fine or imprisonment. For a long period before the Reformation Parliament of Henry VIII this had been a cause of unpopularity of the clergy, especially in view of a certain professionalism of the clerical body - Holy Orders were often considered as a livelihood as much as a vocation.

Throughout the hundred or hundred and fifty years before the Reformation the stream of endowments went almost entirely to education, i.e., for colleges at Oxford and Cambridge and grammar schools, and not at all to monasteries.

Lollardy had more or less gone underground, but it persisted among the artisan classes, mainly in the smaller towns. Imported translations of the Bible were read and passed around surreptitiously, especially in East Anglia; Cambridge University was to become for a time a focus of Lutheranism. But, for the most part, the Lollards, i.e., followers of Wyclif, were regarded as ignorant anarchists, contemners of law and authority in matters extending beyond religious doctrine. The Hussite movement in Bohemia had produced civil war and many calamities; this was held against Lollardy.

Lay people, aware of pluralism and gross inequalities in ecclesiastical revenues, indifferent to religion and irritated by the exaction of fees (especially 'mortuaries' for burials), were not really Lollards. Much has been made of the so-called Secularization of the Papacy and of the fact that a series of Popes in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries directed their energies largely to the formation and aggrandizement of an Italian principate. But belief was not affected by these tendencies or these events, simply because they were unknown to the general body of people in England and could not be known (in the then conditions) to any people outside governmental and Court circles and the higher clergy. Clerical students who went in a stream to Italy during the fifteenth century seldom went to Rome; they lived at Bologna or Padua, attending the universities.

HENRY VIII (1509-1547)

THE 'DIVORCE'

HENRY'S FAILURE to secure the annulment of his marriage was not the cause of anti-clericalism any more than it was the cause of Lollardy or Lutheranism. But his disappointment and rage made the occasion.

Henry did not want the Pope to judge his case. What he asked for was for the Pope to pronounce, without any proper trial, nullity of marriage, so that he could marry again; i.e., the Pope was to ratify what he had already decided. He was asking for canonical authority to marry a woman to whom he was already related by previous adultery with her sister, Mary Boleyn, in exactly the same degree as he would have been to Katharine if her marriage to his elder brother, Arthur, had been consummated. (It had not.)

On January 25, 1533, Henry secretly married Anne Boleyn. On February 21 Cranmer was made Primate of England; Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury from 1503, having died during the previous year. Cranmer pronounced the divorce of Henry and Katharine of Aragon on April 23, 1533, and on June 1 Anne Boleyn was crowned Queen.

The claim that Katharine 'could not give him an heir' was false. She had had five children, three of them male. That they were stillborn, or died at once, was not her fault. Anne Boleyn's second child, after miscarriages, born Jan. 29, 1536, was still-born; the birth of Edward VI was fatal to Jane Seymour.

THE REFORMATION PARLIAMENT

The work of the Reformation Parliament, a systematic series of attacks on papal authority, was set in motion and maintained by the personal action and pressure of Henry, as a direct result of the collapse of the Divorce Trial at Blackfriars. The Reformation Parliament (1529-36) passed the following statutes:

- (1) Anti-clerical legislation, curtailing privileges of the clergy;
- (2) Reformation legislation affecting doctrine and/or the jurisdiction of the Pope.

(1) Anti-Clerical Legislation

1531. 22 Hen. VIII cap. 15: Clergy were held liable to the penalties of Praemunire for accepting Wolsey as Legate and fined £118,840. Acknowledgment of the King as Supreme Head of the Church was demanded 'as far as the law of Christ allows'. (This clause was added by Fisher.)

1532. 23 Hen. VIII cap. 20: Conditional discontinuance of payment of 'first-fruits' of bishoprics to the Pope.

(2) Reformation Legislation

1533. 24 Hen. VIII cap. 12: Appeals to Rome forbidden by statute. This was the severance from Rome.

1534. 25 Hen. VIII cap. 20: Ecclesiastical Appointments Act: no one to be presented to the Pope for appointment. 25 Hen. VIII cap. 21: Dispensations to be granted by the Archbishop of Canterbury, not by the Pope. 25 Hen. VIII cap. 19: Submission of the Clergy Act: Henry declared Head of the Church absolutely. 25 Hen. VIII cap. 22: Succession Act: settling Succession on children of Anne Boleyn. 26 Hen. VIII cap. 1: Act of Supremacy: The King to be the only Supreme Head on earth of the Church in England, with full power over heresies, abuses, offences whatsoever, that may be reformed by spiritual authority. 26 Hen. VIII cap. 2: Second Succession Act. 26 Hen. VIII cap. 13: Treason Act¹: Treason (i.e. death) to deny in words any dignity or title of the King, or to call him heretic, schismatic or tyrant. 26 Hen. VIII cap. 3: Second Annates Act: First-fruits, formerly to the Pope, now to be paid to the King. (Annates were the first year's revenue of bishoprics and certain other preferments.)

By this legislation Henry became, in the words of Stubbs, 'the Pope, the whole Pope, and something more than the Pope'; in fact, a Khalif. He did what no Pope had ever done — deposed all the bishops and reappointed them himself, by his own authority (1535).

Four bishops refused to accept this and were deprived: Fisher (Rochester), Athequa, a Spaniard (Llandaff), Campeggio, an Italian (Salisbury), and Ghinucci, an Italian (Worcester). (The three foreigners held in commendam.)

¹Note that More and Fisher, the Carthusians and others, were not put to death 'for refusing to acknowledge Anne Boleyn as Queen' (as falsely stated in hundreds of English books), but for refusing to acknowledge Henry as Supreme Head on Earth of the Church in England and for refusing to renounce the spiritual authority of the Pope.

In 1535 Henry appointed a layman, Thomas Cromwell, as Vicar General over the Church. Henry thus claimed for himself the cure of souls. In 1536, in his general pardon to the Pilgrims of Grace, it is stated that the King had the chief charge of them under God 'both of your souls and bodies'. He was the Head of his Church and his subjects were the members. It was for this heretical claim that he was excommunicated by Paul III².

The above legislation in the 'Reformation Parliament' did not touch doctrine — that was to come after — although it made a revolutionary change. It is probably because Henry VIII did not embrace Lutheranism or Calvinism that French Catholic writers still persist in calling it 'the Anglican Schism' or 'the Henrician Schism'. To them, doubtless, it so much resembles Gallicanism that they see no great harm, at least in its first stages; but they do not appear to understand what was done under Edward VI and Elizabeth I. They are unduly impressed by the fact that Henry burnt people for denying Transubstantiation and not sufficiently by the fact that his assumption of the power of personally determining doctrine was essentially heretical. Henry persuaded himself, and claimed, that he possessed, as King, spiritual functions; he exercised them by determining doctrine and actually delegated his powers to a layman. Moreover, these writers have always paid more attention to the quasi-Catholic element in the Prayer Book than to the Calvinistic Articles, and (being hardly aware of the writings of the Reformers and knowing far too little about their acts) they do not know that the latter insisted that they had now 'the new religion of Christ's Gospel'.

Henry based his claim to supremacy on Scripture: "The King's most royal Majesty is and hath always been, by the word of God, Supreme Head on earth of the Church in England and hath full power and authority to correct, punish and repress all manner of heresies . . . and to exercise all other manner of jurisdiction commonly called ecclesiastical jurisdiction". It is absurd to describe this as an 'administrative' change.

Note the 'hath always been'. In that case, the Headship of the Church must have changed hands several times during the Wars of the Roses, between Henry VI and Edward IV; and by the result of the Battle of Bosworth, it was transferred from Richard III to Henry VII!

The absurdity of the claim was soon demonstrated by events: (1) Edward VI at his accession was a boy of nine; (2) Philip and Mary were joint sovereigns, but Philip was a foreigner; (3) Elizabeth was really a politique with no religious convictions.

It was Thomas Cromwell who gave Henry the advice to destroy all the monasteries and seize their lands and goods, whereby he could make himself 'the richest Prince in Christendom'. This was a drastic enlargement on the destructive, but not the constructive, side of a scheme formerly meditated by Henry and Wolsey for forming a number of new dioceses and making some of the greater abbeys the cathedrals of such dioceses. This was subsequently done in only six cases: Chester, Gloucester, Bristol, Peterborough, Oxford, and Westminster³. Cromwell, moreover, persuaded Henry that he could do whatever he pleased by merely putting it into an Act of Parliament and making the denial of it treason. J. R. Green, in the Short History of the English People, described Cromwell's proceedings as a 'reign of terror'.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES

This was done in two stages: the 'Lesser Monasteries' (i.e., with incomes not more than £200 per annum) by Act of Parliament in 1536. (This gave rise to the 'Pilgrimage of Grace' in the Northern Counties.) The Greater Monasteries were surrendered to the King, without further legislation, 1538-40. This was carried out by Cromwell and his agents. These abbeys had previously been described as 'the great solemn monasteries of the realm, where religion was right well observed'.

The following figures are taken from J. Gairdner's English Church 1509-1558:

Lesser Monasteries (not over £200 per annum) (1536)	215
Nunneries suppressed under the same Act	103

²Act of Parliament (35 Henry VIII cap. 3; 1543) specifically re-conferred the title of Defender of the Faith 'after the withdrawal of the title from Henry VIII by the Pope'. Paul III excommunicated Henry in 1538, but this was ignored in England. In any case, the title was held good in England under the Treason Act (see 1534 above), which remained in force. Mary, of course, was entitled to use it, for she was a defender of the faith. (She and Philip did use it.)

³For ten years (1540-1550) Westminster Abbey was the cathedral of a new diocese of Middlesex.

Greater Monasteries, 'surrendered to the King' ...	158
Greater Nunneries, 'surrendered to the King'	30
Monasteries suppressed by attainder as result of Pilgrimage of Grace	12
Commanderies and Preceptories of Knights of St John	<u>43</u>
	<u>561</u>

Between 1536 and 1540, 561 Religious Houses of monks and Canons Regular disappeared. In addition, all the Friaries in about 125 towns were suppressed. In the more important towns there were the four main Orders of Friars, i.e., Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, and Austin Friars; in some larger towns three Orders were to be found, nearly always the first two, and in some instances just one. Their value was very small, as they could not hold any land. Altogether, over 850 Religious Houses were destroyed.

Except in the case of attainder, after the Pilgrimage of Grace, the monks in every case were awarded small pensions which ceased if they obtained other clerical employment. The accusations against the monks were, in the vast majority of cases, altogether false. Many were probably inert or slack, but very few were immoral. The accusations made against the 'Lesser Monasteries' were never formally made against the 'Greater'. A few of the Northern monasteries lent aid to the Pilgrimage of Grace, a rebellion which began as a protest against the Dissolution. These suffered accordingly in the reprisals: ten abbots and priors and fourteen other clerics were executed.

The suppression of all Houses of Religious meant the discontinuance for ever of many thousands of Masses for the Dead for which money had been given or bequeathed. This contributed greatly to the abolition of the Mass itself. The long step was from the Dissolution (1536-40) to the Chantries Act (1547); the short step was from that to the First Prayer Book of 1549.

Two other consequences may be noted: the number of Lords Spiritual was halved—there were as many mitred abbots as bishops in the House of Lords; a great impulse was given to the idea of clerical marriages.

The old belief that the monastic property was 'distributed among his courtiers' by Henry VIII was long ago demolished by A. Savine (English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution). The King's object was cash and the lands were sold at about ten years' purchase; 95% of it was sold very rapidly and the proceeds were paid into an office created for the purpose, the Augmentation Office.

The proceeds in cash of the sales amounted to about £1 million. During the decade 1536-47 the royal revenue (E100,000 p.a.) was doubled.⁴

There were very few gifts: 41 cases out of 1,593 'grants'. The sales were always expressed as being 'grants' because the King was the vendor. The number of outright sales was 1,186; there were also a number of 'exchanges', all very profitable to the King.

When the sales were completed, a vested interest of impregnable strength was created. The 'reconciliation' under Mary (1554) did not, and could not, touch it. There had been created—in Parliament, the judiciary, the local government (Lords Lieutenant, sheriffs, justices of the peace, etc.) and officials—an Upper Thousand who were strong enough in the following century to break the monarchy. Their power was essentially secular (economic and political); there was nobody of high birth, substance, or commanding ability among the Elizabethan and Jacobean clergy.

DOCTRINE

There were four different statements of belief put out between 1536 and 1543:

(1) The somewhat Lutheran Ten Articles of 1536, the work of Henry himself and Foxe of Hereford. The number of Sacraments was reduced to three, viz., Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and Penance.

(2) The 'Bishops Book' of 1537 (The Institution of a Christian Man). In it, one page out of 180 was about the Holy Eucharist—as Communion, not the Mass.

(3) The much more Catholic Six Articles of 1539, generally described as 'reactionary'.

(4) The 'King's Book' of 1543 ("That Christian Kings and Princes will provide ministers to teach the true doctrine of Christ").

⁴*This does not include gold, silver, precious stones, etc., and a vast quantity of valuable objects all of which went to the King.*

Other steps in the process of severance were:

The appointment of Bishops (1540-47) by Letters Patent. In one or two cases (e.g. Barlow) it was doubtful whether they were even consecrated. Barlow had proclaimed his disbelief in the necessity of ordination or consecration.

Revision of the Litany by Cranmer (a concealed Protestant and married), whom Henry had made Archbishop of Canterbury.

The circulation of Lutheran pamphlets, etc., was tolerated, but open preaching of Protestantism was punished as heresy, i.e. by death.

In 1538 the Royal licence for Coverdale's Bible was granted. Coverdale was a strong Protestant who had been in controversy with Sir Thomas More.

In 1544 came the issue of the English Litany and the Primer (a book of Prayers) in English.

[There were three kinds of Bishops under Henry VIII in the latter part of his reign (1540-47): (1) Catholics (but who accepted all his legislation): Gardiner, Tunstall, Stokesley, Longland, Clerk, Bonner. (2) Protestants: Cranmer, Latimer, E. Foxe, Shaxton, Goodrich, Hilsey, Barlow. (3) The rest doubtful – ready to agree to anything: e.g. Holgate (York), who took a wife (because he was told to do so) under Edward VI.]

Had Henry VIII lived longer, there would almost certainly have been more Protestant doctrine than he had allowed, because what he had begun was increasing. He could not stop it. According to A. F. Pollard, "We have Cranmer's word for it that in September 1546 Henry was meditating the transformation of the Mass into a Communion." (Polit. Hist. of England, vol. VI, 1547-1603.) The 'Six Articles' of 1539 were a swing back to Catholicism, but not all the way. It was impossible to undo what he had done.

The Protestant element in the Council was stronger in Henry's last years - Gardiner, the leading Catholic bishop, was left out of the Regency. The little Prince Edward's tutors were all staunch Protestants, viz., Sir John Cheke, Sir Antony Cooke, Dr. Richard Coxe.

[All the foregoing legislation was repealed under Mary: but its effect could not be removed. Protestantism took root during those nine or ten years from 1538 to 1547. Had Henry been succeeded at once by Mary, in 1547 (instead of in 1553), she could not have restored everything. Before Henry died he was planning the destruction of the Chantries (endowed chapels where Masses were said for guilds), and this was done soon after his death.]

1545. An Act (37 Hen. VIII cap. 4) for the Dissolution of Colleges, Chantries and Free Chapels authorized him to seize all chantries and all colleges.

EDWARD VI (1547-1553)

DRASTIC STEPS were now taken to establish Protestantism, but without any further reference to foreign affairs; there was no question of alliance with Lutheran princes, and the manifest object now was plunder. The death of Edward VI came in time to prevent the abolition of episcopacy and the confiscation of the episcopal and capitular estates.

1547. The Statute of Chantries (1 Edw. VI cap. 14) gave the Crown all colleges, free chapels and chantries, with all endowments for obituaries and anniversaries (i.e. Masses for souls of benefactors), and stipends of curates to say them. Fresh commissions were drawn up for bishops who were to hold office *quamdiu se bene gesserint*, i.e., so long as their conduct was satisfactory to the Supreme Head (aged nine). The same year (1547) saw the repeal of Henry's 'Six Articles'. Bishops to be appointed by Letters Patent, as under Henry VIII between 1540 and 1547.

1548-50. 'The Great Pillage': abolition of images from churches - great destruction of shrines, ornaments, stained glass, etc. The effects of this and the subsequent havoc are now commonly attributed to 'Oliver Cromwell and the Puritans'. This was the favourite incantation of cathedral vergers.

1548. Abolition of blessed candles, ashes, palms, etc. Priests allowed to marry.

1549. First Act of Uniformity: First Prayer Book: substitution of Communion Service for the Mass. This came into use on Whit Sunday, June 9, 1549. There was a rebellion against it in Devon and Cornwall.

1550. New Ordinal in lieu of Catholic Pontifical. This was based on the work of Martin Bucer and it changed the ordination service for priests and consecration service for bishops. The chalice and patten were no longer to be handed to the newly-ordained priest, but merely a Bible. Bucer, moreover, had provided only one rite for bishops, priests and

deacons. This is what destroyed the validity of Anglican Orders; these rites professed to give power merely to preach and teach; every word about offering sacrifice was carefully removed.

As soon as Edward VI was King, Cranmer invited into England a crowd of foreign Reformers, most of them of an advanced type. The most prominent were: Martin Bucer (ex-Dominican), made Professor of Divinity at Cambridge; Peter Martyr Vermigli (ex-Austin Canon), made Professor of Divinity at Oxford; Bernardino Ochino (ex-Capuchin); Dryander, a Spanish Lutheran; Jan Utenhove, a Fleming, who became head of the Huguenot congregation at Canterbury; John á Lasco, a Polish Calvinist, who became the minister at Austin Friars. These men had great influence; above all, Bucer. Most of them left the country at once on Mary's accession, but their influence, which was almost wholly Calvinistic, lasted. The common people were told that they could find nothing in the New Testament about cardinals and bishops, deans and canons, monks and friars - all that was the invention of Satan; the Pope, of course, was Anti-Christ - but they knew that already.

The Catholic bishops were deposed and sent to the Tower. Thus, Bonner (London) was replaced by Ridley; Heath (Worcester) by Hooper; Day (Chichester) by Scory; and Gardiner (Winchester) by Poynt. All these men were extreme Protestants.

Sir John Cheke, the boy-King's tutor, was explicit about the intentions of the Council: 'He (i.e. the King) has overthrown idolatry, abolished the Mass, and destroyed every kind of superstition'.

Cranmer's Book of Homilies explicitly sets out the doctrine of Justification by Faith alone (a cardinal tenet of the Reformer) as 'a most certain and wholesome doctrine for Christian men'.

1552. The Forty-Two Protestant Articles of Religion were much more Protestant than even the Second Prayer Book.

In the Second Prayer Book, which was very different from the First, Morning and Evening Prayers were the principal Services. The Ten Commandments were added to the Communion Service. All vestments were abolished except the surplice. The so-called Black Rubric was inserted, stating that kneeling at the reception of Communion denoted only respect, not adoration.

In the Second Act of Uniformity (5 & 6 Edw. VI cap. 1) a table was substituted for the Altar; the celebrant was to stand on the north side of it, i.e., not as in the Mass, with his back to the congregation, but so that the people could see all he did. The use of English was imposed for the same reason, viz., to emphasize the change.

1553. By this time there had been seventeen editions of Tyndale's New Testament, full of anti-Catholic notes and intentional mistranslations⁵. It was this book that Henry VIII had described as 'false, crafty and malicious'. It was supplemented by the publication of numerous and violent attacks on the Mass and the doctrine of Transubstantiation, e.g., Ochino's *Usurped Primacy of the Bishops of Rome*, etc.

MARY (1553-1558)

1553. July 6: Death of Edward VI. When he was dying, John Dudley, the Duke of Northumberland, obtained his signature to Letters-Patent, transmitting the Crown to Lady Jane Grey (Northumberland's daughter-in-law), a descendant of Henry VII. This was signed by Cranmer and Ridley (Bishop of London). July 10: Northumberland proclaimed Lady Jane but the country rallied to Mary. November 13: Cranmer was tried for treason along with Lord Guildford Dudley; sentenced, but reprieved and imprisoned in the Tower; Ridley was likewise sent to the Tower.

In the same year (1553) Catholicism was officially restored. All the Edwardine ecclesiastical legislation was annulled.

1554. November 30: England was formally reconciled to the Holy See by the legate, Cardinal Pole.

1555. Repeal of Henry's Reform Statutes from 1529. All Statutes against the Holy See since 1529 were annulled. Monastic property, however, was not to be restored, the purchasers under Henry VIII and present owners being explicitly confirmed in possession. This House of Commons was far from being unanimously Catholic and was somewhat anti-papal. According to Professor Sir J. E. Neale, more than sixty of them were convinced Protestants.

In the same year (1555) Parliament re-enacted the old Statute (1401) for the burning of heretics. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer and many others, 273 in all, suffered under these laws. The prime movers in this campaign of persecution⁵ *E.g., priest as elder; church as congregation; grace as favour; images as idols.*

were certainly the lay members of the Council. Mary herself declared that she was not desirous of 'punishing ignorant people who had been misled'; but nobody was prepared to oppose what was understood to be the will of the Government.

1556. March 21: Cranmer burned at Oxford. Cardinal Pole thereupon became Archbishop of Canterbury. He was the last Catholic primate. His successor Matthew Parker, chosen by Elizabeth, was as much a Protestant as Cranmer. Elizabeth's bishops were all Calvinist in doctrine.

1558. November 17: Death of Mary and Cardinal Pole on the same day. During this year seven bishops died. On January 2, 1559, nine sees were vacant. But for this fact Elizabeth's Act of Uniformity would have been defeated in the House of Lords. It passed by only three votes.

ELIZABETH I (1558-1603)

ELIZABETH plainly intended to have less of continental Protestantism and more Royal Supremacy, but throughout her long reign she had to fight a losing battle with the growing forces of Puritanism. The extreme Reforming element was not so much weakened by the prompt departure of the continental Protestants brought in by Cranmer as it was strengthened by the return to England from Switzerland and Germany of the 'Marian exiles', who had carefully maintained contact with their friends here.

The two famous Statutes of Elizabeth, the Acts of Uniformity and Supremacy (1559), put her back, legally, into the position of Henry VIII.

The Act of Supremacy (1 Eliz. cap. 1): "An Act restoring to the Crown the Ancient Jurisdiction over the Estate Ecclesiastical and Spiritual and abolishing all Foreign Powers repugnant to the same".

The Third Act of Uniformity (1 Eliz. cap. 2): "An Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Service in the Church and the Administration of the Sacraments". This Act decreed that the Second Prayer Book⁶ of Edward VI was to be used as from St John Baptist's Day (June 24), 1559. All people had to attend Common Prayer under penalties.

The ecclesiastical legislation of Mary's reign was all repealed and that of Henry VIII and Edward VI re-enacted, with one exception: marriage of the clergy was still unlawful until the Act of James I (1603-4: cap. 25, section 8). Meanwhile, the marriage of the clergy was allowed, by Royal prerogative, under conditions.

Note the complete 'line of cleavage' established in Elizabeth's first year (1558-9). The Act of Supremacy finally repudiated the Pope's jurisdiction. The Act of Uniformity abolished the Mass, Missal and Pontifical; it readopted the Book of Common Prayer and the Edwardine Ordinal, and so completely severed England from the Catholic Church.

The Form of the Oath, "I, A.B., do utterly testify and declare in my conscience that the Queen's Highness is the only Supreme Governor in this realm . . . as well in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things or causes as temporal: and that no foreign prince or potentate, person, prelate, state, 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 and forsake all foreign jurisdictions, powers, superiorities and authorities", almost emptied Oxford and resulted in the emigration of Catholic scholars and dons to Louvain.

Among the Catholic exiles to the Low Countries were Allen, Stapleton, Harding, Campion, Persons, Gregory Martin. These were the real literary successors of Sir Thomas More. Between 1559 and 1603 they brought out more than two hundred works of English prose, including the translation of the Bible, but to bring these books into England meant death to the importers (23 Eliz. cap. 2).

Further destruction of statues,⁷ windows and ornaments in churches took place under Royal Injunctions, e.g., the altar stones were put in the floor of church porches to signify the abolition of 'idolatry'.

Under the Act of Uniformity the following penalties for non-use of the Protestant Prayer Book were enforced:

Laity.—Absence from parish church on Sunday: progressive fines.

Clergy.—Fine for first offence; deprived for the second; life imprisonment for the third. (Any priest who after June 24, 1559, said Mass according to the rites of the Catholic Church was, for the first offence, fined one year's income of his benefice and got six months' imprisonment; for second offence, imprisoned for one year and deprived of all spiritual promotion; for third, imprisoned for life.)

⁶*Schedule of this Act.* ⁷*The Lady Chapel of Ely Cathedral is an eloquent witness of reforming zeal.*

A first refusal of the Oath of Supremacy meant loss of all offices and lifelong disablement from all offices. For laity who denounced or hindered Prayer Book services the fines were enormous: 100 or 400 marks; for third offence, Praemunire.

To enforce the Act of Supremacy the Court of High Commission (described by Cecil himself as a sort of Protestant Inquisition) was appointed. This was subsequently used to persecute Puritan nonconformists who objected to the Prayer Book and 'ornaments'.

Between June and November 1559, sixteen bishops were deprived of their sees, because they would not conform to these changes. Kitchin of Llandaff was reinstated on taking the oath.

Within one year of her accession the Elizabethan government had got rid of the whole Marian episcopate, except Kitchin. Seven were put into the Tower: Heath, Thirlby, White, Pate, Watson, Bourne and Turberville. [Pate (1565) and Heath (1578) died in the Tower.] It is therefore false to say that the Catholic bishops were merely deprived and not otherwise molested. All who did not escape abroad spent the rest of their lives in custody. They had all refused to consecrate Parker. Elizabeth eventually got Barlow, Hodgkin, Scory and Coverdale, of whom three had not been properly consecrated themselves, to act on December 17, 1559. They had no intention of conferring Catholic Orders because they had no belief in them. (Barlow had publicly proclaimed his unbelief in orders.)

In 1561 Elizabeth rejected the invitation to send representatives to the Council of Trent.

Elizabeth wished to go back, in the main, to the system of her father — 'Religion to be as in King Henry's time' — but found she was unable to do so. She had been welcomed to the throne and supported on it by a band of strong Protestants headed by Cecil. She represented Protestantism in her own person, as the daughter of Anne Boleyn. The extreme Protestant element was too strong for her. That is why she disliked and despised her own bishops (except Matthew Parker). She despised them for their bigotry, their want of learning, their undignified mode of life, and, in many cases, unsuitable marriages. (She detested the idea of married clergy, anyhow.) What she wanted was no religious fanaticism (she had virtually no religious beliefs herself), uniformity, decorum (copes and surplices, crucifix and candles), external conformity under Royal Supremacy. But she never got it: and as her reign lengthened, matters got worse. Before it was over, she was persecuting the Puritan fanatics. Her Established Religion, divided between a few moderate and many extreme Protestants, was stricken with deep disunion from its commencement.

Elizabeth was well aware that Calvinism was also theocratic republicanism, that its ministers held that the State should be subject to their admonition; she knew that Calvinism had already produced armed rebellion and open war in three countries. She actually regarded the Catholics as more loyal politically to herself than the Puritan extremists, and she said so. "I will tell you", said Edwin Sandys, Archbishop of York, to one John Wilson on January 15, 1587, "what the Queen's Majesty said, that these Puritans were greater enemies to her than the Papists". In 1586-87 there was actually an attempted Puritan revolution: Wentworth and others in the House of Commons proposed the adoption of the Genevan Prayer Book, and the abolition of all laws, customs and ordinances affecting Church Services, ecclesiastical courts and episcopal jurisdiction; in short, a clean sweep of Elizabeth's Established Church.

It is false to say that Catholics were not molested by Elizabeth's government until the Rebellion of 1569-70. Their religion was made illegal at the outset, as shown above. No Catholic was put to death before January 4, 1570; but he was unmolested only if he would submit to the complete cessation of Catholic worship and teaching for himself and his children; if he would attend two Protestant Services every Sunday; and if he would for life abandon all hope of any office, position, or profession.

ACTIVE PERSECUTION

Active persecution really started with the Act of 1563 which was officially described as "The Bill against those that extol the power of the Bishop of Rome and refuse the Oath of Allegiance". It increased the penalties of the Act of 1559 and extended the obligation to take the Oath of Supremacy.

It is also false to say that the persecution was confined to priests. Under the later Statutes, 62 lay folk were put to death and many died in prison. To harbour a priest was felony, and some were hanged for that alone. Thousands were ruined by heavy fines and long imprisonment. The fine for non-attendance at church was increased from the twelve pence of 1559 to £20 per lunar month in 1581. Many families of Catholic gentry were thus reduced to the lowest level

of subsistence. Others left England for ever.

In 1563 the Act of Assurance (5 Eliz. cap. 1) imposed the Oath of Supremacy on all but Peers. (For first refusal, the penalties of Praemunire; second refusal, High Treason.)

In 1563-4 the Thirty-Eight Articles of Religion were made the standard of doctrine instead of Edward VI's Forty-Two. (See page 14.)

In 1565 (8 Eliz. cap. 1) an Act declared the making and consecrating of Archbishops and Bishops of this realm, 'good, lawful and perfect'.

In 1568 Allen founded the Douay College for the English Mission.

In November-December, 1569, a rising of Catholics in Northern Counties, headed by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, was easily defeated.

In 1570 Pope Pius V issued a Bull of Deposition and Excommunication against Elizabeth. This, coming after the suppression of the Northern Rebellion, had no other effect than to aggravate the difficulties of English Catholics, then and long after.

In 1571 an Act (13 Eliz. cap. 1 and 2) made it treason to call the Queen a tyrant, a heretic, usurper, etc., and to introduce Papal Bulls into England. In the same year (1571) came the Thirty-Nine Articles. (Revision of the Prayer Book and Ordinal, 1661.)

The persecution to death for all priests and for any converts started in 1581. The Act (23 Eliz. cap. 1) made it High Treason to reconcile or to be reconciled to 'the Romish Religion'. Mass was forbidden in private houses. It was treason to print or circulate books against Queen Elizabeth (23 Eliz. cap. 2).

In 1585 the Act against Jesuits, Seminary Priests and other suchlike disobedient persons (27 Eliz. cap. 2) made it High Treason to be a priest within the Queen's dominions, and felony for anyone to receive or relieve a priest. Nearly all the martyrs of the next hundred years were condemned under this Statute.

In 1593 an Act (35 Eliz. cap. 2) was passed, "for the better discovery of wicked and seditious persons calling themselves Catholics, but being rebellious and traitorous subjects".

[These penal laws were confirmed by James I (1 Jas. I, cap. 4): an Act for the due execution of Statutes against the Jesuits, seminary priests, etc.]

Of the 127 priests 94 were put to death in the reign of Elizabeth solely because they were priests ordained abroad since June 24, 1559, and had returned to England. Of the 62 lay people, 31 were put to death for harbouring or rescuing priests, 9 for denial of the Supremacy, 3 for printing or circulating Catholic books, and 7 simply for being 'reconciled'. There was however this difference: Henry VIII's savagery fell upon individuals: 45 clerics and 5 lay people. Under Edward VI, the activities of the governing clique were concentrated on plunder, not on persecution; they were indifferent to conformity and there were no martyrs. Under Elizabeth, the aim was the extirpation of Catholicism during her lifetime. The result was the extinction of numerous families by execution, imprisonment, fines leading to beggary, and exile. Whole classes of people were thus eliminated. This was not the personal policy of the Queen, but of Cecil, Walsingham and her ministers and of a large majority of the House of Commons.

The Elizabethan Protestants knew nothing about 'Continuity' with the pre-Reformation Church. Preaching before Elizabeth herself, Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, said: "The poor people lieth forsaken and left as it were sheep without a guide . . . they are commanded to change their religion . . ." Cox of Ely, likewise, said that "the religion of Christ was now restored" and that "traditions are, for the most part, mere blasphemies". Fletcher, the son of a Bishop of London, coined the phrase hocus pocus (a travesty of Hoc est Corpus) in derision of the Mass. "Not the simplest and most ignorant papist", said Whitgift, "could mistake the Communion for the Mass." But, very soon, they began to denounce the private judgment of the unlearned and their 'fantastical opinions'. Bancroft, Bishop of London, in 1589 used language very similar to that of Sir Thomas More sixty years earlier.

The curious thing was that all these people held firmly that heresy was the worst of all crimes and worthy of death; only what they believed was never heresy. Cranmer's *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum* (never enacted) proposed the death penalty for 'heresy', i.e., for what he and his associates considered to be heresy.

Cecil took care not to say, when defending the persecution, that any man was put to death for believing in Transubstantiation or acknowledging the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope, or for saying Mass — though in fact they

were. It was always for 'withdrawal of allegiance', or 'compassing the Queen's death', or 'adhering to her enemies', and so forth. But in the case of the first missionary priest martyred in her reign, Cuthbert Mayne (November 30, 1577), "the only charge", said Hallam,⁸ "was his religion". The actual counts of the indictment were: (1) possessing a copy of the Jubilee Bull of 1575; (2) publishing it; (3) upholding the ecclesiastical authority of the Pope; (4) bringing into the country an object blessed by the Pope, to wit, an Agnus Dei; (5) giving it to another person; (6) saying Mass.

All that was years before the 'Jesuit invasion' (1581), or the Armada (1588). In a number of cases the priest was offered his life, at the foot of the gallows, if he would go to church: after he had been convicted and sentenced for 'treasonable practices' connected with rebellion and foreign invasion!

The missionary priests knew very little about Guise or Parma, and politics were rigidly excluded from their training at Douay.

In 1583 Burghley, to parry the general accusation that people were being put to death simply for being Catholics, invented the question: "What would you do if a Papal or Spanish army landed in England?" A presumption against the priest was thereby created — before the trial — by his answer (or his refusal to answer) a hypothetical question. Before that, he had relied upon: "What do you think of the Pope's authority to depose the Queen?" Conversion was thus identified with withdrawal of allegiance, and the accused (clerical or lay) was 'prejudiced' before he was tried, as a conspirator or potential assassin.

THE AFTERMATH

FINALLY, it should be noted that the Arminian-Anglican movement by Lancelot Andrewes, Laud, and others, towards 'High Church' doctrines and practices, was essentially an innovation, and as such it was violently resented by the Puritan majority. It was the Caroline divines who imagined a 'Bridge Church' to span the gap between Rome and Geneva. No such views had been held by Elizabeth, let alone her father. Meanwhile, Lutheranism faded away, and the middle years of the seventeenth century, 1640-1660, beheld the ruinous triumph of Calvinism.

Two supreme benefits were claimed for the Reformation: 'direct access to God' without the intervention of any ecclesiastical organization, and the abolition of the 'unscriptural' authority of the Roman Pontiff. What actually resulted was that, after rebellions and conspiracies, persecutions and civil wars, men everywhere found they were not free to worship as they pleased but were required to profess the religion of the ruler (or the ruling group) of the territory they lived in. In England the famous phrase of Magna Carta, *quod Ecclesia Anglicana sit libera* (the Church in England is to be free) has been sedulously misinterpreted. Sir Thomas More, who quoted it at his trial, meant by it exactly what Stephen Langton meant at Runnymede: that the Church in this country, as part of the Church Universal, was not under the control of the King.

⁸*Hallam wrote in 1827, long before modern historical research, when England was strongly Protestant.*

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Roman Canon Law in the Church of England, by F. W. Maitland. 1898. The Reformation in England, by Philip Hughes. I, II, III. 1950, 53, 54. Sir Thomas More, by R. W. Chambers. 1935.

History of England from 1485-1547, by H. A. L. Fisher. 1913. English Church in the Sixteenth Century, by J. Gairdner. 1904. England under the Tudors, by G. R. Elton. 1955.

Henry VIII and the English Monasteries, by A. Gasquet. 1902. English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution, by A. Savine. 1909.

Edward VI and the Book of Common Prayer, by A. Gasquet and E. Bishop. 1891.

Mary Tudor, by H. F. M. Prescott. 1953.

Cranmer and the Reformation under Edward VI, by C. H. Smyth. 1926. The Elizabethan Religious Settlement, by Dom N. Birt O.S.B. 1907.

England and the Catholic Church under Queen Elizabeth, by A. O. Meyer. 1916.

Elizabeth and Her Parliaments: I (1559-1581); II (1584-1601), by J. E. Neale. 1953 and 1957.

The Babington Plot, by A. Gordon Smith. 1936. The Religious Orders in England. Vol. III.

The Tudor Age, by Dom David Knowles. 1959.

Economic Problems of the Church from Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament, by C. Hill. 1957.

The English Catholics in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth, by J. H. Pollen S.J. 1920.

Eucharistic Sacrifice and the Reformation, by Francis Clark S.J. 1960. Anglican Orders and Defect of Intention, by Francis Clark S.J. 1956. The Catholic Church and Anglican Orders, by Francis Clark S.J. 1962.