

# **THE LIVES OF THE PURITANS**



# THE LIVES OF THE PURITANS

A Biographical Account of Those Divines Who  
Distinguished Themselves in the Cause of Religious  
Liberty from the Reformation under Queen Elizabeth  
to the Act of Uniformity in 1662

VOLUME 1

Benjamin Brook



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# Foreword

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It is astonishing that for 180 years no one has reprinted this classic three-volume work of Benjamin Brook which sketches the lives of more than 450 Puritans.

Brook's work has much to commend it. Despite an occasional proneness to indulge in hagiography, Brook bases his biographies largely on reliable sources and writes judiciously. Much fascinating historical detail and many edifying anecdotes are sprinkled throughout these pages. Brook is particularly gifted in surfacing incidents in the lives of the Puritans that serve as windows through which we observe divine grace transforming the inner man to walk in the footsteps of Christ.

Brook's work is versatile. It feeds the layman and informs the scholar. It excels in bringing to light God's grace in the lives of numerous Puritans whose names would otherwise have been buried in oblivion. These volumes serve the role both of a devotional and an encyclopedia—something that can be attributed to few other titles!

Some may wonder at Brook's uneven treatment of the Puritans. In some cases he provides only a paragraph or two on a Puritan; in other cases he supplies more than twenty pages. It ought to be pointed out that this great variation was not intended by Brook to reflect the historical degree of importance of each Puritan, but rather the amount of biographical information that was available to him.

Some may also be surprised by Puritan names not included by Brook; others, surprised by names included. This is not the place to take up in detail the nettlesome problem of defining the essence and boundaries of Puritanism. Notwithstanding an able opening sketch of one hundred pages on basic Puritan history of non-conformity from the Reformation to the Act of Uniformity (1662), Brook himself is obviously more interested in describing Puritan characteristics and traits rather than in a tight definition of Puritanism itself. Suffice it to say that he would have responded to R.M. Hawke's following summary by affirming all of these traits, while emphasizing the last:

Was Puritanism essentially a theological movement, emphasizing covenant theology, predestination, and a reformed church service? Or was the heart of the matter political, asserting the inalienable rights of conscience before God, the rule of natural law over arbitrary prerogative courts, the dependency of the king in parliament, the foundation of state authority in the people? Some modern research has pointed to a third possibility, that the essence of Puritanism was its piety, a stress on conversion, on existential, heartfelt religion.<sup>1</sup>

There is much to learn from and about the Puritans through the able hand of Brook. By emulating the Puritans, we may learn how to cultivate a closer walk with God, as well as how to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3). Moreover, Brook's work

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<sup>1</sup> "The Logic of Assurance in English Puritan Theology," *Westminster Theological Journal* 52 (1990): 247.

ought to help counteract the half-truths and distortions which marked Puritan studies only a few generations ago. Though it is true that the Puritans unabashedly aimed for conversion-centered preaching, wholehearted allegiance to the totality of Scripture, and a distinctive piety, anyone who reads these volumes seriously will no longer embrace the caricatures that Puritanism was to be associated with inhuman morals and religious demands, intolerance in the social and political arena, barrenness and stagnation in intellectual life, and a negative and pessimistic outlook on life in general.

We are grateful to *Soli Deo Gloria* for seeing this set of biographical sketches back into print. In this age of revived interest in Puritanism, Brook's biographical sketches ought to find a home in many personal and public libraries. I have long sought these volumes myself, but was able to locate only one of three volumes. Now they will finally be readily accessible to those who love the Puritans and their teachings!

It is obvious that the writing of these volumes was a labor of time-consuming love for Benjamin Brook. His background trained him well for this task. Born in 1775 near Huddersfield, Yorkshire, Brook became a member of an independent congregation at Holmfield. He completed his studies at Rotherham College in 1801, after which he became the first pastor of a congregational church at Tutbury, Staffordshire. He pastored this flock for thirty years until ill health compelled him to resign. During the middle of this pastorate, he published *The Lives of the Puritans*. In 1830 he moved to Birmingham where he continued to study the history of the Puritans for an additional seven-

teen years until his death on January 5, 1848 at the age of seventy-two. In 1820 he published *The History of Religious Liberty* and, in 1845, *Memoirs of that Eminent Puritan, Thomas Cartwright*.

Brook's life passion was to stimulate Christians to walk in the paths of their godly Puritan forebearers. He hoped to especially influence the young people of various Protestant denominations to be prodded by Puritan biography—hence his dedication to the “rising generation.” May God bless the reading of these short biographies to young and old yet today in the manner Brook intended, that is, in the vein of Hebrews 12:1-2, “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Joel Beeke  
Grand Rapids, Michigan



# DEDICATION.

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TO THE

RISING GENERATION

AMONG THE VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS OF

PROTESTANTS.

---

MY YOUNG FRIENDS,

**T**HE formation of your principles, the instruction of your minds, and the salvation of your souls, are, unquestionably, objects of high importance to yourselves, to your connexions, and to the protestant interest at large. When your fathers are translated from the church militant to the church triumphant, you will inherit their property, and will occupy their stations. On you it will devolve to manage the affairs of religion, to be zealous for its interests, and active for its prosperity.

But, if you be ignorant of its principles and destitute of its blessings, this zeal and activity cannot be expected. By enlightening your understandings with truth, and by impressing your hearts with the power of religion, we hope to secure your attachment to the cause of God, and to engage your talents and your future influence in its service.

Of all books which can be put into your hands, those which relate the labours and sufferings of good men are the most interesting and instructive. In them you see orthodox principles, christian tempers, and holy duties, in lovely union and in vigorous operation. In them you see religion shining forth in real life, subduing the corruptions of human nature, and inspiring a zeal for every good work. In them you see the reproaches and persecutions which the servants of God have endured ; those gracious principles which have supported their minds ; and the course they have pursued in their progress to the

kingdom of heaven. Such books are well calculated to engage your attention, to affect your feelings, to deepen your best impressions, and to invigorate your noblest resolutions. They are well calculated to fortify you against the allurements of a vain world; to assimilate your characters to those of the excellent of the earth; to conform your lives to the standard of holiness; and to educate your souls for the mansions of glory.

The Puritans were a race of men of whom the world was not worthy. They devoted their days and nights to hard study; they cherished devotional feelings; and they enjoyed intimate communion with God. The stores of their minds were expended, and the energy of their souls was exerted, to separate the truths of the gospel from the heresies of the times in which they lived; to resist the encroachments of arbitrary power; to purify the church from secularity and corruption; and to promote the power of religion among the people. They persevered in this course

amidst a host of difficulties, and in defiance of the most powerful opposition. The rulers of those times persecuted them with wanton cruelty, in total contempt of every sacred law, of every just principle, and of every humane feeling.

From these volumes you will learn, that the glorious cause of Nonconformity has been adorned by the holy lives of a multitude of good men ; has been consecrated by the blood of martyrs ; and has been sanctioned by the approbation and protection of heaven.

For their exalted attainments in piety, their assiduous researches in literature and divinity, and their unwearied exertions in the cause of God and their country, the Puritan divines are entitled to the admiration and reverence of every succeeding age. Our political freedom, our religious liberty, and our christian privileges, are to be ascribed to them more than to any other body of men that England ever produced. When you learn

by what struggles these blessings have been acquired, and at what price they have been obtained, you will know how to estimate their value; and you will regard the men to whom we are indebted for them as distinguished benefactors to the English nation and the church of God.

For the sacred cause of religion, the Puritan divines laboured and prayed, wrote and preached, suffered and died; and they have transmitted it to us to support it, or to let it sink. With what feelings will you receive this precious inheritance? Will you lightly esteem what they so highly valued? Will you stand aloof from the cause which they watched with jealous vigilance, and defended with invincible courage? If the blood of these men run in your veins, if the principles of these men exist in your souls, most assuredly you will not.

That you may learn the wisdom, and imbibe the spirit of the Puritans;—that you may take them as patterns, imitate them as

examples, and follow them as guides, so far as they followed Christ;—that you may adhere to the cause of religion with the same firmness, adorn it with the same holiness, and propagate it with the same zeal, is the fervent prayer of

Yours respectfully

and affectionately,

**BENJAMIN BROOK.**

**TUTBURY,**

*October 6, 1813.*

## PREFACE.

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**A**T no period has biographical history been so much esteemed and promoted as in these days of christian freedom. The memoirs of wise and good men, especially such as have suffered for the testimony of a good conscience, afford interesting entertainment and valuable instruction. To rescue from oblivion impartial accounts of their holy actions, their painful sufferings, and their triumphant deaths, will confer a deserved honour upon their memory: and there is, perhaps, no class of men whose history better deserves to be transmitted to posterity than that of the persons stigmatized by the name of Puritans.

The cruelties exercised upon them were indeed very great. **THEY SUFFERED FOR THE TESTIMONY OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE, and an AVOWED ATTACHMENT TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST.** The proofs which they gave of their zeal, their fortitude, and their integrity, were certainly as great as could be given. They denied themselves those honours, prefer-

ments, and worldly advantages by which they were allured to conformity. They suffered reproach, deprivation, and imprisonment; yea, the loss of all things, rather than comply with those inventions and impositions of men, which to them appeared extremely derogatory to the gospel, which would have robbed them of liberty of conscience, and which tended to lead back to the darkness and superstitions of popery. Many of them, being persons of great ability, loyalty, and interest, had the fairest prospect of high promotion; yet they sacrificed all for their nonconformity. Some modestly refused preferment when offered them: while others, already preferred, were prevented from obtaining higher promotion, because they could not, with a good conscience, comply with the ecclesiastical impositions. Nor was it the least afflictive circumstance to the Puritan divines, that they were driven from their flocks, whom they loved as their own souls; and, instead of being allowed to labour for their spiritual and eternal advantage, were obliged to spend the best of their days in silence, imprisonment, or a state of exile in a foreign land.

The contents of these volumes tend to expose the evil of bigotry and persecution. When professed Protestants oppress and persecute their brethren of the same faith, and of the same communion, it is indeed marvellous. The faithful page of history details the fact with the most glaring evidence, or we could scarcely have



believed it. A spirit of intolerance and oppression ever deserves to be held up to universal abhorrence. In allusion to this tragic scene, Sir William Blackstone very justly observes, “ That our ancestors were mistaken in their plans of compulsion and intolerance. The sin of schism, as such, is by no means the object of coercion and punishment. All persecution for diversity of opinions, however ridiculous or absurd they may be, is contrary to every principle of sound policy and civil freedom. The names and subordination of the clergy, the posture of devotion, the materials and colour of the minister’s garment, the joining in a known or unknown form of prayer, and other matters of the same kind, must be left to the opinion of every man’s private judgment. For, undoubtedly, all persecution and oppression of weak consciences, on the score of religious persuasions, are highly unjustifiable upon every principle of natural reason, civil liberty, or sound religion.”\*

Perhaps no class of men ever suffered more reproach than the Puritans. Archbishop Parker stigmatizes them as “schismatics, belly-gods, deceivers, flatterers, fools, having been unlearnedly brought up in profane occupations, being puffed up with arrogance.”† His successor Whitgift says, “that when they walked in the streets, they hung down their heads, and looked austerely; and in com-

\* Blackstone’s Comment. vol. iv. p. 51—53. Edit. 1771.

† Sturpe’s Annals, vol. i. p. 481.—Peirce’s Vindication, part i. p. 61.

pany they sighed much, and seldom or never laughed. They sought the commendation of the people; and thought it an heinous offence to wear a cap and surplice, slandering and backbiting their brethren. As for their religion, they separated themselves from the congregation, and would not communicate with those who went to church, either in prayer, hearing the word, or sacraments; despising all, who were not of their sect, as polluted and unworthy of their company.\* Dugdale denominates them “a viperous brood, miserably infesting these kingdoms. They pretended,” says he, “to promote religion and a purer reformation; but rapine, spoil, and the destruction of civil government, were the woeful effects of those pretences. *They were of their father the devil, and his works they would do.*”† A modern slanderer affirms, “that they maintained the horrid principle, that the end sanctifies the means; and that it was lawful to kill those who opposed their endeavours to introduce their model and discipline.”‡ Surely so much calumny and falsehood are seldom found in so small a compass.

Bishop Burnet, a man less influenced by a spirit of bigotry and intolerance, gives a very different account of them. “The Puritans,” says he, “gained credit as the bishops lost it. They put on the appearance of great sanctity and

\* Strype's Annals, vol. ii. p. 5.

† Dugdale's Troubles of Eng. Pref.

‡ Churton's Life of Nowell, p. 215.

gravity, and took more pains in their parishes than those who adhered to the bishops, often preaching against the vices of the court. Their labours and their sufferings raised their reputation and rendered them very popular.”\* Hume, who treats their principles with ridicule and contempt, has bestowed upon them the highest eulogium. “So absolute,” says he, “was the “authority of the crown, that the precious spark “of liberty had been kindled, and was preserved, “by the *Puritans alone*; and it was to this sect “that the English owe the whole freedom of their “constitution.”†

It is granted that they had not all equally clear views of our civil and religious rights. Many of their opinions were confused and erroneous; yet their leading principles were the same. Though they had, in general, no objection to a national establishment, many of them maintained, “That all true church power must be founded in a divine commission: that where a right to command is not clear, evidence that obedience is a duty is wanting: that men ought not to make more necessary to an admittance into the *church* than God has made necessary to an admittance into *heaven*: that so long as unscriptural impositions are continued, a further reformation of the church will be necessary: and that every one who must answer for himself *hereafter*, must

\* Burnet's Hist. of his Time, vol. i. p. 17, 18.

† Hume's Hist. of Eng. vol. v. p. 134.

judge for himself *now*."\* These were the grand principles of their nonconformity.

The author of these volumes has spared no labour nor expense in the collection of materials, and has used the utmost care to retain whatever appeared interesting, curious, and useful. Not writing to please any particular sect or party, he has endeavoured to observe the strictest impartiality. In the lives of these worthies, he has not suppressed their imperfections, nor even the accusations of their adversaries; but has constantly stated their faults, as well as their excellencies, without reserve. Neither has he at any time connived at bigotry and persecution, whether found among prelates, presbyterians, or any others. Whoever were the persecutors or aggressors, their case is represented, as near as possible, as it is found in the faithful pages of history. His sole object has been to give a lucid and impartial statement of *facts*. Indeed, the documents are frequently transcribed in the very words of the authors; and, wishing to retain the genuine sense and originality of the whole as entire as possible, he has constantly avoided dressing them in any garb of his own.

Through the whole, he has invariably given his authorities. These might easily have been multiplied; but, when two or more authors have given accounts of the same facts, he has invariably chosen that which appeared the most authentic:

\* Calamy's Contin. vol. i. Pref.

or, when they have at any time contradicted each other, he has always given both, or followed that which appeared most worthy of credit. In the Appendix, a correct list is given of the principal books consulted; and, for the satisfaction of the more critical reader, the particular edition of each is specified. In numerous instances, reference will be found to single lives, funeral sermons, and many other interesting articles, of which the particular edition is mostly given. In addition to the numerous *printed* works, he has also been favoured with the use of many large *manuscript collections*, a list of which will be found at the close of the Appendix. From these rare documents he has been enabled to present to the public a great variety of most interesting and curious information never before printed.

After all, many lives will be found very defective, and will leave the inquisitive reader uninformed in numerous important particulars. Such defect was unavoidable at this distance of time; when, after the utmost research, no further information could possibly be procured. The author has spent considerable labour to obtain a correct list of the works of those whose lives he has given, and to ascertain the true orthography of the names of persons and places. Though, in each of these particulars, he has succeeded far beyond his expectations, yet, in some instances, he is aware of the deficiency of his information. He can only say, that he has availed himself of

every advantage within his reach, to render the whole as complete and interesting as possible.

The lives of these worthies are arranged in a chronological order, according to the time of their deaths.\* By such arrangement, the work contains a regular series of the History of Nonconformists during a period of more than a hundred years. It does not in the least interfere with any other publication; and forms a comprehensive appendage to Neal's "History of the Puritans," and a series of biographical history closely connected with Palmer's "Nonconformist's Memorial," containing a complete memorial of those nonconformist divines who died *previous* to the passing of the Act of Uniformity. To this, however, there are some exceptions. There were certain persons of great eminence, who lived *after* the year 1662; yet, because they were not *in the church* at that period, they come not within the list of *ejected* ministers, but are justly denominated Puritans. Memoirs of these divines will therefore be found in their proper places.

It was requisite, in a work of this nature, to give some account of the origin and progress of Nonconformity, together with a sketch of the numerous barbarities exercised upon the Puritans. This will be found in the Introduction, which may not prove unacceptable to the inquisitive and

\* It should here be remembered, that, in all cases, when the particular period of their deaths could not be ascertained, the *last* circumstance noticed in their lives is taken for that period.

pious reader. If its length require any apology, the author would only observe, that he hopes no part of it will be found superfluous or uninteresting; that he has endeavoured to give a *compressed* view of the cruel oppressions of the times; and that it would have been difficult to bring the requisite information into a narrower compass.

The work contains an authentic investigation of the progress and imperfect state of the English reformation, and exhibits the genuine principles of protestant and religious liberty, as they were violently opposed by the ruling ecclesiastics. The fundamental principles of the reformation, as the reader will easily perceive, were none other than the grand principles of the first Protestant Non-conformists. Those reasons which induced the worthy Protestants to seek for the reformation of the church of Rome, constrained the zealous Puritans to labour for the reformation of the church of England. The Puritans, who wished to worship God with greater *purity* than was allowed and established in the national church,\* were the most zealous advocates of the reformation; and they used their utmost endeavours to carry on the glorious work towards perfection. They could not, with a good conscience, submit to the superstitious inventions and impositions of men in the worship of God; on which account, they employed their zeal, their labours, and their influence to promote a more pure reformation.

\* Fuller's Church Hist. b. ix. p. 76.

And because they sought, though in the most peaceable manner, to have the church of England purged of all its antichristian impurities, they were stigmatized with the odious name of *Puritans*, and many of them, on account of their nonconformity, were suspended, imprisoned, and persecuted even unto death. These volumes, therefore, present to the reader a particular detail of the arduous and painful struggle for religious freedom, during the arbitrary reigns of Queen Elizabeth, King James, and King Charles I., to the restoration of King Charles II.

The reader will here find a circumstantial account of the proceedings of the *High Commission* and the *Star Chamber*, the two terrible engines of cruelty and persecution. The former of these tribunals assumed the power of administering an oath *ex officio*, by which persons were constrained to answer all questions proposed to them, though ever so prejudicial to themselves or others: if they refused the unnatural oath, they were cast into prison for contempt; and if they took it, they were convicted upon their own confession. The tyrannical oppressions and shocking barbarities of these courts are without a parallel in any Protestant country, and nearly equal to the Romish inquisition. The severe examinations, the numerous suspensions, the long and miserable imprisonments, with other brutal usage, of pious and faithful ministers, for not wearing a *white surplice*, not baptizing with a *cross*, not *kneeling* at the



sacrament, not subscribing to *articles* without foundation in law, or some other equally trivial circumstance, were among the inhuman and iniquitous proceedings of those courts.

These intolerant and cruel transactions, instead of reconciling the Puritans to the church, drove them farther from it. Such arguments were found too weak to convince men's understandings and consciences; nor could they compel them to admire and esteem the church fighting with such weapons. These tragic proceedings created in the nation a great deal of ill blood, which, alas! continues in part to this day. While the governing prelates lost their esteem among the people, the number and reputation of the Puritans greatly increased, till, at length, they got the power into their own hands, and shook off the painful yoke.

That the Puritans in general were men of great learning, untarnished piety, and the best friends to the constitution and liberties of their country, no one will deny, who is acquainted with their true character and the history of the times in which they lived. Many of them, it is acknowledged, were too rigid in their behaviour: they had but little acquaintance with the rights of conscience; and, in some instances, they treated their superiors with improper language: but, surely, the deprivation, the imprisonment, or the putting of them to death for these trifles, will never be attempted to be vindicated in modern times.

The author is aware, however, of the delicacy of many things here presented to the public, and of the difficulty of writing freely without giving offence. But, as honest truth needs no apology, so the pernicious influence of bigotry, superstition, and persecution, he thinks, can never be too fairly and openly exposed. He also believes that all professing Christians, except those who are blind devotees to superstition, or persecutors of the church of God, will rejoice to unite with him in holding up these evils as a warning to posterity.

The work is not to be considered as a medium, or a test of religious controversy, but an historical narrative of facts. It is not designed to fan the flame of contention among brethren, but to promote, upon genuine protestant principles, that christian moderation, that mutual forbearance, and that generous affection, among all denominations, which is the great ornament and excellency of all who call themselves Protestants. A correct view of the failings and the excellencies of others, should prompt us to avoid that which is evil, and to imitate that which is good.

When we behold the great piety and constancy with which our forefathers endured the most barbarous persecution, will not the sight produce in our minds the most desirable christian feelings? Though we shall feel the spirit of indignity against the inhumanity and cruelty of their persecutors, will not the sight of their sufferings, their holiness, and their magnanimity, awaken in our breasts the

spirit of sympathy and admiration? Shall we not be prompted to contrast our own circumstances with theirs, and be excited to the warmest thankfulness that we live not in the puritanic age, but in days of greater christian freedom? Shall we not be constrained to exclaim, "The lines are fallen to us in pleasant places; yea, Lord, thou hast given us a goodly heritage?"

The author has not attempted to justify any irregularities in the opinions, the spirit, or the conduct of the Puritans. Although he acknowledges that he has, in numerous instances, endeavoured to prove their innocence, against the evil reproaches and groundless accusations of their adversaries, so far as substantial evidence could be collected from historical facts; yet he has never attempted to vindicate their infirmities, or to connive at their sins. They were men of like passions with ourselves; and, from the cruel treatment they met with, we cannot wonder that they sometimes betrayed an improper temper. *Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad.* Oh, that we may learn to imitate their most amiable endowments!

Though he does not expect to escape the censures of angry partisans, he will thankfully receive any corrections or improvements from those who are disposed to communicate them, promising to make the best use of them in his power. If his endeavours should, through the blessing of God, prove successful in exciting Protestants, of various

denominations, to a zealous imitation of the excellent qualities of their worthy ancestors, he will in no wise lose his reward.

The author wishes here to present a tribute of gratitude to his numerous friends, who have favoured him with the use of books and other materials for the work; and, under a deep sense of his multiplied obligations, he now requests them to accept his most grateful acknowledgments.\* He desires particularly to express his special obligations to the Trustees of Dr. Williams's Library, Red-Cross-Street, London, for the use of several volumes of most curious and valuable manuscripts.

\* Valuable communications of books or manuscripts have been received from the following ministers:—The late Dr. Edward Williams, Rotherham—Dr. Joshua Toulmin, Birmingham—Dr. Abraham Rees, London—Dr. John Pye Smith, Homerton—Mr. Timothy Thomas, Islington—Mr. Joseph Ivimey, London—Mr. John Sutcliff, Olney—Mr. William Harris, Cambridge—Mr. James Gawthorn, Derby—Mr. Joshua Shaw, Ilkeston—Mr. Thomas Roome, Sutton in Ashfield—Mr. William Salt, Lichfield—Mr. John Hammond, Handsworth—Mr. Samuel Bradley, Manchester—Mr. John Cockin, Holmfirth—Mr. John Tallis, Cheadle. Also from the following gentlemen:—Francis Fox, M. D. Derby—John Audley, Esq. Cambridge—Mr. Walter Wilson, London—Mr. J. Simco, ditto—Mr. Joseph Meen, Biggleswade—Mr. T. M. Dash, Kettering—Mr. James Ashton, Leek—Mr. Isaac James, Bristol—Mr. William Daniel, Lichfield.

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# LIVES OF THE PURITANS.

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## INTRODUCTION:

CONTAINING A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF NONCONFORMITY FROM THE REFORMATION, TO THE PASSING OF THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY, IN 1662.

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### SECT. I.

*From the Commencement of the Reformation, to the Death of Queen Mary.*

PREVIOUS to the accession of King HENRY VIII. popish darkness overspread the whole island of Britain. This was followed by a train of most unhappy consequences. Ignorance, superstition, immorality and persecution were predominant in every part of the kingdom. Those who presumed to think for themselves on religious subjects, and to dissent from the national church, underwent all the oppressions and severities of persecution. From the days of Wickliffe to this time, great numbers of excellent christians and worthy subjects, fell sacrifices to popish cruelty. This proud monarch being at first a most obedient son of the pope, treated the bold confessors of truth as obstinate rebels; and because their piety and integrity condemned his licentiousness, he put multitudes to cruel tortures and to death.

Soon after Luther arose in Saxony, England became affected by his bold and vigorous opposition to the errors of the church of Rome. The young king, vain of his scholastic learning, was unwise enough to meet the bold reformer on the field of controversy, and published a book

against him.\* Luther treated his royal antagonist with sarcastic contempt, contending that truth and science knew no difference between the prince and the plebeian. The pope, however, craftily flattered the vanity of the royal author, by conferring upon him the title of *Defender of the Faith*,† which Henry was weak enough to value as the brightest jewel in his crown. This pompous reward from his holiness was conferred upon him in the year 1521.‡

The haughty king soon discovered his ingratitude. He quarrelled with the pope, renounced his authority, and became his avowed enemy. Being weary of Queen Katharine his wife, with whom he had lived almost twenty years; and having long sought, but in vain, to be divorced by the pope, he was so much offended, that he utterly rejected the papal power, authority and tyranny in England. This was a dreadful blow against the Romish supremacy. But the king soon after procured the dignified and flattering title of *Supreme Head of the Church of England*. This additional jewel to his crown was conferred upon him, first by the clergy in convocation, then by act of parliament.§ Thus, in the year 1534, Henry VIII. having renounced the supremacy of the pope, and having placed himself in the chair of his holiness, at least as far as concerned the English church, did not fail to manifest his usurped power and authority. He did not intend to ease the people of their oppressions, but only change their foreign yoke for domestic fetters, dividing the pope's spoils betwixt himself and his bishops, who cared not for their father at Rome, so long as they enjoyed honours and their patrimony under another head.||

\* Mr. Fox observes, that though "this book carried the king's name in the title, it was another who ministred the motion, and framed the style. But whosoever had the labour of the book, the king had the thanks and the reward."—*Acts and Monuments of Martyrs*, vol. ii. p. 57.

† It has been said, that the jester whom Henry, according to the custom of the times, retained at court, seeing the king overjoyed, asked the reason; and when told, that it was because his holiness had conferred upon him this new title, he replied, "my good Harry, let thee and me defend each other, and let the faith alone to defend itself." If this was spoken as a serious joke, the fool was undoubtedly the wisest man of the two.

‡ Burnet's *Hist. of Reformation*, vol. i. p. 19.—King Henry afterwards got this sacred title united to the crown, by act of parliament; and, curious and inconsistent as it may appear, it is retained to this day.—*Heylin's Hist. of Pres.* p. 235.

§ Burnet's *Hist. of Reformation*, vol. i. p. 112. 136. 157.

|| *Memoirs of Col. Hutchinson*, vol. i. p. 105. Edit. 1810.

On June 9, 1536, assembled the first reformed convocation in England ; in which Lord Cromwell, prime secretary, sat in state above the bishops, as the king's vicegerent in all spiritual matters.\* On this occasion, Cromwell, by order of the king, declared, " That it was his majesty's pleasure, that the rites and ceremonies of the church should be reformed by the RULES OF SCRIPTURE, and that nothing should be maintained which did not rest on that authority ; for it was absurd, since the scriptures were acknowledged to contain the laws of religion, that recourse should be had to glosses or the decrees of popes, rather than to them."† Happy had it been, if the reformers of the church of England had invariably adhered to this sacred principle. Much, however, was done even at this early period. The pious reformers rejoiced to see the holy scriptures professedly made the only standard of faith and worship, to the exclusion of all human traditions. The immediate worship of images and saints was now renounced, and purgatory declared uncertain. But the corporeal presence in the sacrament, the preservation and reverence of images, with the necessity of auricular confession, were still retained.‡ The publication of Tindal and Coverdale's Translations of the Bible, greatly promoted the work of reformation ; though it soon received a powerful check by the passing of the terrible and bloody act of the Six Articles. By this act, all who spoke against transubstantiation were to be burnt as heretics, and suffer the loss of all their lands and goods ; and to defend the communion in both kinds, or the marriage of priests ; or, to speak against the necessity of private mass, and auricular confession, was made felony, with the forfeiture of lands and goods.§ Towards the close of this king's reign, the popish party obtained the ascendancy ; the severity of persecution was revived ; and the Romish superstitions greatly prevailed. Till now, these superstitions had never been denominated *laudable ceremonies, necessary rites, and godly constitutions*. All who refused to observe them, were condemned as traitors against the king. To make the standing of the persecuting prelates more secure, and their severities the more effectual, this was ratified by act of parliament.|| Many excellent persons were, therefore, condemned to the flames : among whom were the famous Mr. Thomas Biluey,

\* Fuller's Church Hist. b. v. p. 207.

† Burnet's Hist. of Refor. vol. i. p. 214.

‡ Strype's Cranmer, p. 72.

‡ Ibid. p. 218.

|| Ibid. p. 130.

Mr. Richard Byfield, Mr. John Frith, and Dr. Robert Barnes, all highly celebrated for piety and zeal in the cause of the reformation.\*

King Henry was succeeded by his son, EDWARD VI., a prince of most pious memory. Being only nine years and four months old when he came to the crown, he was free from bigotry and superstition, and ready to observe the instructions of Archbishop Cranmer and the Duke of Somerset, by whose aid and influence, he set himself to promote sound religion. Upon his accession, the penal laws against protestants were abolished, the chains of many worthy persons confined in prison were struck off, the prison-doors were set open, and the sufferers released. Others who had fled from the storm, and remained in a state of exile, now with joy returned home. Among the former were old Bishop Latimer and John Rogers;† and among the latter, were Hooper, afterwards the famous martyr, and Miles Coverdale, afterwards a celebrated puritan.‡ Men of real worth were esteemed and preferred. Hooper became Bishop of Gloucester, and Coverdale was made Bishop of Exeter. The monuments of idolatry, with the superstitious rites and ceremonies, were commanded to be abolished, and a purer form of worship introduced. Though, during this reign, the reformation made considerable progress, the greatest part of the parochial clergy were in a state of most deplorable ignorance: but to remedy, as far as possible, this evil, the pious reformers composed and published the book of Homilies for their use.§ The order of public worship was a Liturgy or Book of Common Prayer, established by act of parliament. Though this act did not pass without much opposition, especially from the bishops, some were so enamoured with the book, that they scrupled not to say, “it was compiled *by the aid of the Holy Ghost.*”||

In the year 1550, the altars in most churches were taken away, and convenient tables set up in their places.¶ “And as the form of a table,” says Burnet, “was more likely to turn the people from the superstition of the popish mass, and bring them to the right use of the Lord’s supper, Bishop Ridley, in his primary visitation, exhorted the

\* Fox’s Martyrs, vol. ii. p. 227, 241, 256, 445.

† Burnet’s Hist. of Refor. vol. ii. p. 25.

‡ Fuller’s Church Hist. b. vii. p. 371.

§ Burnet’s Hist. of Refor. vol. ii. p. 25, 27.

|| Ibid. p. 94.

¶ MS. Remarks, p. 51.

curates and churchwardens in his diocese, to have it in the fashion of a table, decently covered.”\* This was very congenial to the wishes of many of the pious reformers, who, at this early period, publicly avowed their nonconformity to the ecclesiastical establishment. Among the articles of the above visitation, the bishop inquired, “Whether any of the anabaptists’ sect, or others, use any unlawful or private conventicles, wherein they use doctrine, or administration of sacraments, separating themselves from the rest of the church? And whether any minister doth refuse to use the common prayers, or minister the sacraments, in that order and form, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer?”† The disputes about conformity were carried into the pulpits; and whilst some warmly preached against all innovations, others as warmly preached against all the superstitions and corruptions of the old Romish church; so that the court prohibited all preaching, except by persons licensed by the King or the Archbishop of Canterbury.‡

In the convocation of 1552, forty-two Articles of Religion were agreed upon by the bishops and clergy, to which subscription was required of all ecclesiastical persons, who should officiate or enjoy any benefice in the church. And all who should refuse, were to be excluded from all ecclesiastical preferment. This appears to be the first time that subscription to the articles was enjoined.§ Here the reformation under King Edward made a stand.

During this king’s reign, there were numerous debates about the habits, rites and ceremonies; and many divines of great learning and piety, became zealous advocates for nonconformity. They excepted against the clerical vestments, kneeling at the communion, godfathers and their promises and vows in baptism, the superstitious observance of Lent, the oath of canonical obedience, pluralities and nonresidence, with many other things of a similar description.|| At this early period, there was a powerful and very considerable party disaffected to the established liturgy.¶ Though the reformation had already made considerable progress, its chief promoters were concerned for its further advancement. They aimed at a more perfect work; and

\* Burnet’s Hist. of Refor. vol. ii. p. 158.

† Sparrow’s Collection, p. 36.

‡ Burnet’s Hist. of Refor. vol. iii. p. 195.

§ Sparrow’s Collection, p. 39.—Strype’s Ecl. Mem. vol. ii. p. 420.

|| MS. Remarks, p. 51. ¶ Fuller’s Church Hist. b. vii. p. 426.

manifested their disapprobation of the numerous popish ceremonies and superstitions still retained in the church. King Edward desired that the rites and ceremonies used under popery, should be purged out of the church, and that the English churches might be brought to the APOSTOLIC PURITY. Archbishop Cranmer was also very desirous to promote the same ;\* and he is said to have drawn up a book of prayers incomparably more perfect than that which was then in use ; but he was connected with so wicked a clergy and convocation, it could not take place † And the king in his diary laments, that he could not restore the primitive discipline according to his heart's desire, because several of the bishops, some through age, some through ignorance, some on account of their ill name, and some out of love to popery, were opposed to the design.‡ Bishop Latimer complained of the stop put to the reformation, and urged the necessity of reviving the primitive discipline.§ The professors of our two universities, Peter Martyr and Martin Bucer, both opposed the use of the clerical vestments. To Martyr the vestments were offensive, and he would not wear them. "When I was at Oxford," says he, "I would never use those white garments in the choir ; and I was satisfied in what I did." He styled them *mere relics of popery*. Bucer giving his advice, said, "That as those garments had been abused to superstition, and were likely to become the subject of contention, they ought to be taken away by law ; and ecclesiastical discipline, and a more thorough reformation, set up. He disapproved of godfathers answering in the child's name. He recommended that pluralities and nonresidences might be abolished ; and that bishops might not be concerned in secular affairs, but take care of their dioceses, and govern them by the advice of their presbyters." The pious king was so much pleased with this advice, that "he set himself to write upon a further reformation, and the necessity of church discipline."|| Bucer was displeased with various corruptions in the liturgy. "It cannot be expressed, how bitterly he bewailed, that, when the gospel began to spread in England, a greater regard was not had to discipline and purity of rites, in constituting the

\* Neal's Puritans, vol. i. p. 73.—Strype's Cranmer, p. 299.

† Troubles at Frankford, p. 43.

‡ King Edward's Remains, numb. 2. in Burnet, vol. ii.

§ Burnet's Hist. of Refor. vol. ii. p. 152.

|| Ibid. vol. ii. p. 155—157.

churches.”\* He could never be prevailed upon to wear the surplice. And when he was asked why he did not wear the *square cap*? he replied, “Because my head is not square.”† The famous Dr. Thomas Sampson, afterwards one of the heads of the puritans, excepted against the habits at his ordination, who, nevertheless, was admitted by Cranmer and Ridley.‡ But the celebrated John Rogers and Bishop Hooper, according to Fuller, were “the very ringleaders of the nonconformists. They renounced all ceremonies practised by the papists, conceiving (as he has expressed it) that such ought not only to be clipt with shears, but shaven with a razor; yea, all the stumps thereof pluckt out.”§

The sad effects of retaining the popish habits in the church, began to appear at a very early period. In the year 1550, a debate arose, which to some may appear of small consequence; but, at this time, was considered of great importance to the reformation. The debate was occasioned by Dr. Hooper’s nomination to the bishopric of Gloucester. Burnet denominates him a pious, zealous, and learned man. Fuller says, he was well skilled in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.|| He was some time chaplain to the Duke of Somerset, and a famous preacher in the city of London;¶ but declined the offered preferment for two reasons,—1. Because of the form of the oath, which he calls foul and impious. And, 2. Because of the popish garments. The oath required him to swear by *the saints*, as well as by the name of God; which Hooper thought impious, because the Searcher of Hearts alone ought to be appealed to in an oath. The young king being convinced of this, struck out the words with his own pen.\*\* But the scruples about the habits were not so easily got over. The king and council were inclined to dispense with them, as his majesty openly signified in the above letter to Cranmer: but Cranmer and Ridley were of another

\* Heylin’s Hist. of Refor. p. 65. † Strype’s Parker, Appen. p. 41.

‡ Strype’s Cranmer, p. 192. § Church Hist. b. vii. p. 402.

|| Burnet’s Refor. vol. iii. p. 199.—Fuller’s Church Hist. b. vii. p. 402, 403.—King Edward, in his letter of nomination to Cranmer, dated Aug. 5, 1550, writes thus: “We, by the advice of our council, have called and chosen our right well-beloved and well-worthy Mr. John Hooper, professor of divinity, to be our Bishop of Gloucester; as well for his learning, deep judgment, and long study, both in the scriptures, and profane learning; as also for his good discretion, ready utterance, and honest life for that kind of vocation.”—*Ibid.*

¶ Strype’s Cranmer, p. 211.

\*\* Burnet’s Hist. of Refor. vol. iii. p. 208.

mind, and refused their allowance. Ridley was therefore nominated to a deputation with Hooper, with a view to bring him to a compliance ; but this proved ineffectual. Hooper still remained unconvinced, and prayed to be excused from the old symbolizing popish garments. These garments, he observed, had no countenance in scripture or primitive antiquity : they were the inventions of antichrist, and introduced into the church in the most corrupt ages : they had been abused to idolatry, particularly in the pompous celebration of the mass : and to continue the use of them, was, in his opinion, to symbolize with antichrist, to mislead the people, and inconsistent with the simplicity of the christian religion \* He could appeal to the Searcher of Hearts, that it was not obstinacy, but the convictions of his conscience alone, which made him refuse these garments.†

Ridley's endeavours proving unsuccessful, Hooper was committed to the management of Cranmer, who, being unable to bring him to conformity, laid the affair before the council, and he was committed to the Fleet. Having remained in prison for several months, the matter was compromised, when he was released and consecrated.‡ He consented to put on the vestments at his consecration, when he preached before the king, and in his own cathedral ; but was suffered to dispense with them at other times.§ How this business was adjusted, and with what degree of severity he was persecuted, is related by Mr. Fox, in the Latin edition of his " Acts and Monuments of the Martyrs." The passage, says Mr. Peirce, he hath left out in all his English editions, out of too great tenderness to the party. " Thus," says Mr. Fox, " ended this theological quarrel in the victory of the bishops, Hooper being forced to recant ; or, to say the least, being constrained to appear once in public, attired after the manner of the bishops. Which, unless he had done, there are those who think the bishops would have endeavoured to take away his life : for his servant told me," adds the martyrologist, " that the Duke of Suffolk sent such word to Hooper, who was not himself ignorant of what they were doing."¶ Horrid barbarity ! Who, before Hooper, was ever thrown into prison, and in danger of his life, merely

\* Neal's Puritans, vol. i. p. 62. † Fuller's Church Hist. b. vii. p. 404.

‡ Strype's Cranmer, p. 211—215.—Baker's MS. Collec. vol. xviii. p. 269.

§ Burnet's Hist. of Refor. vol. ii. p. 166.

¶ Peirce's Vindication, part i. p. 30.