

THE
HISTORY OF THE PURITANS;

OR,

PROTESTANT NONCONFORMISTS;

FROM

THE REFORMATION IN 1517, TO THE REVOLUTION IN 1688;

COMPRISING

An Account of their Principles;

THEIR ATTEMPTS FOR A FARTHER REFORMATION IN THE CHURCH, THEIR SUFFERINGS, AND
THE LIVES AND CHARACTERS OF THEIR MOST CONSIDERABLE DIVINES.

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A NEW EDITION, IN THREE VOLUMES.

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WITH HIS LIFE OF THE AUTHOR AND ACCOUNT OF HIS WRITINGS.

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CHAP. VI.

FROM THE DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP PARKER TO THE DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP GRINDAL.

DR. EDMUND GRINDAL, archbishop of York, succeeded Parker in the see of Canterbury, and was confirmed February 15, 1575–6. He was a divine of moderate principles, and moved no faster in courses of severity against the Puritans than his superiors obliged him, being a friend to their preaching and prophesyings. Sandys was translated from London to York, and Aylmer was advanced to the see of London. This last was one of the exiles, and had been a favourer of Puritanism; for in his book against Knox, entitled, “An harbour of faithful subjects,” he declaims against the wealth and splendour of the bishops, and speaks with vehemence against their lordly dignities and civil authority. In the convocation of 1569, when the question about the habits was debated, he withdrew, and would not be concerned in the affair; but upon his advancement to the episcopal order he became a new convert, and a cruel persecutor of the Puritans. He was a little man, of a quick spirit, and of no extraordinary character.

The parliament being now sitting, a bill was brought into the house of lords, to mulct such as did not come to church and receive the sacrament, with the payment of certain sums of money; but it was thought proper to drop it for the present.

The convocation was busy in framing articles touching the admitting able and fit persons to the ministry, and establishing good order in the church.¹ Thirteen of them were published with the queen’s licence, though they had not the broad seal; but the other two, for marrying at all times of the year, and for private baptism by a lawful minister, in cases of necessity, her majesty would not countenance. One of the articles makes void all licences for preaching, dated before the 5th of February 1575, but provides, that such as should be thought meet for that office should be re-admitted without difficulty or charge. This had been practised once and again in Parker’s time, and was now renewed, that by disqualifying the whole body of the clergy, they might clear the church of all the Nonconformists at once; and if all the bishops had been equally severe in renewing their licences, the church would have been destitute of all preaching; for the body of the conforming clergy were so ignorant and illiterate, that many who had cure of souls were incapable of preaching, or even of reading to the edification of the hearers; being obliged by law only

¹ Strype’s Life of Grindal, p. 194.

to read the service, and administer the sacrament in person once in half a year, on forfeiture of five pounds to the poor.

The Nonconformist ministers, under the character of curates or lecturers, supplied the defects of these idle drones, for a small recompence from the incumbent, and the voluntary contribution of the parish; and by their warm and affectionate preaching gained the hearts of the people: they resided upon their curacies, and went from house to house visiting their parishioners, and instructing their children; they also inspected their lives and manners, and, according to the apostolical direction, reprov'd, rebuked, and exhorted them, with all long-suffering and doctrine, as long as they could keep their licences. Thus most of the Puritan ministers remained as yet within the church, and their followers attended upon the word and sacraments in such places where there were sober and orthodox preachers.

But still they continued their associations and private assemblies, for recovering the discipline of the church to a more primitive standard: this was a grievance to the queen and court-bishops, who were determined against all innovations of this kind. Strange! That men should confess in their public service every first day of Lent, "that there was a godly discipline in the primitive church; that this discipline is not exercised at present in the church of England, but that it is much to be wished that it were restored;" and yet never attempt to restore it, but set themselves with violence and oppression to crush all endeavours that way! For the reader will observe, that this was one chief occasion of the sufferings of the Puritans in the following part of this reign.

Some of the ministers of Northampton and Warwickshire, in one of their associated meetings, agreed upon certain rules of discipline in their several parishes; but as soon as they began to practise them, the court took the alarm, and sent letters to the new archbishop to suppress them.¹ His grace accordingly sent to the bishops of these diocesses, to see things reduced to their former channel; and if need were, to send for assistance from himself or the ecclesiastical commissioners: accordingly Mr. Paget and Mr. Oxenbridge, the two heads of the association, were taken into custody and sent up to London.

Some time after there was another assembly at Mr. Knewstub's church, at Cockfield in Suffolk, where sixty clergymen of Norfolk, Suffolk, and Cambridgeshire, met together to confer of the Common Prayer-book, and come to some agreement as to what might be tolerated, and what was necessary to be refused. They consulted also about apparel,

¹ Life of Grindal, p. 215.

holidays, fastings, injunctions, &c.¹ From thence they adjourned to Cambridge, at the time of the next commencement, and from thence to London, where they hoped to be concealed by the general resort of the people to parliament: in these assemblies they came to the following conclusions, which were drawn up in an elegant Latin style by Mr. Cartwright and Travers, and given to the ministers for their direction in their several parishes.

Concerning Ministers.

“Let no man, though he be a university man, offer himself to the ministry; nor let any man take upon him an uncertain and vague ministry, though it be offered unto him.

“But such as are called by some church, let them impart it to the classis or conference, of which they are members, or to some greater church-assemblies; and if the called be approved, let them be commended by letters to the bishop, that they may be ordained ministers by him.

“Those ceremonies in the Book of Common Prayer, which being taken from Popery are in controversy, ought to be omitted, if it may be done without danger of being put from the ministry; but if there be imminent danger of being deprived, then let the matter be communicated to the classis in which that church is, to be determined by them.

“If subscription to the articles and Book of Common Prayer shall be again urged, it is thought that the book of articles may be subscribed, according to the stat. 13 Eliz. that is, ‘to such only as contain the sum of the Christian faith and the doctrine of the sacraments.’ But neither the Common Prayer-book, nor the rest of the articles, may be allowed; no, though a man should be deprived of his ministry for refusing it.

Concerning Churchwardens.

“It seems that churchwardens, and collectors for the poor, may be thus turned into elders and deacons.

“Let the church have warning of the time of ejection, and of the ordinance of the realm, fifteen days beforehand; but especially of Christ's ordinance, touching appointing of watchmen and overseers in his church, who are to take care that no offence or scandal arise in the church; and if any such happen, that it be duly abolished.

¹ Fuller, b. 9. p. 135.

Of Collectors for the Poor, or Deacons.

“Touching deacons of both sorts, viz. men and women, the church shall be admonished what is required by the apostle; and that they are not to choose men of custom or course, or for their riches, but for their faith, zeal, and integrity; and that the church is to pray in the meantime, to be so directed, that they may choose them that are meet,

“Let the names of those that are thus chosen, be published the next Lord’s day, and after that, their duties to the church, and the church’s duty towards them; then let them be received into their office with the general prayers of the whole church.

Of Classes.

“The brethren are to be requested to ordain a distribution of all the churches, according to the rules set down in the synodical discipline, touching classical, provincial, comital, and assemblies for the whole kingdom,

“The classes are to be required to keep acts of memorable matters, and to deliver them to the comital assembly, and from thence to the provincial assembly.

“They are to deal earnestly with patrons, to present fit men whensoever any church falls void in their classis.

“The comital assemblies are to be admonished to make collections for the relief of the poor, and of scholars, but especially for the relief of such ministers as are deprived for not subscribing the articles tendered by the bishops; also for the relief of Scots ministers, and others; and for other profitable and necessary uses.

Provincial synods must continually foresee in due time to appoint the keeping of their next provincial synods; and for the sending of chosen persons with certain instructions to the national synod, to be holden whensoever the parliament for the kingdom shall be called, at some certain time every year,”

The design of these conclusions was to introduce a reformation into the church without a separation. The chief debate in their assemblies was, how far this or the other conclusion might consist with the peace of the church, and be moulded into a consistency with episcopacy. They ordained no ministers; and though they maintained the choice of the people to be the essential call to the pastoral charge, yet most of them admitted of ordination and induction by the bishop only, as the officer appointed by

law, that the minister might be enabled to demand his legal dues from the parish.

In the room of that pacific prelate Parkhurst, bishop of Norwich, the queen nominated Dr. Freke, a divine of a quite different spirit, who in his primary visitation made sad havoc among the Puritan ministers. Among others that were suspended in that diocese, were, Mr. John More, Mr. Richard Crick, Mr. George Leeds, Mr. Thomas Roberts, and Mr. Richard Dowe, all ministers in or near the city of Norwich; they addressed the queen and council for relief; but were told, that her majesty was fully bent to remove all those that would not be persuaded to conform to established orders.—The reverend' Mr. Gawton, minister of Goring in the same diocese, being charged with not wearing the surplice, nor observing the order of the queen's book, he confessed the former, but said that in other things he was conformable, though he did not keep exactly to the rubric.¹ When the bishop charged him with holding divers errors, he answered, "We are here not above half a dozen unconformable ministers in this city [Norwich]; and if you will confer with us by learning, we will yield up our very lives if we are not able to prove the doctrines we hold to be consonant to the word of God." After his suspension he sent his lordship a bold letter, in which he maintained, that Christ was the only lawgiver in his church. "If any king or prince in the world ordain or allow other officers than Christ has allowed, we will (says he) rather lay down our necks on the block than consent thereunto; wherefore do not object to us so often the name of our prince, for you use it as a cloak to cover your cursed enterprises. Have you not thrust out those who preached the lively word faithfully and sincerely? Have you not plucked out those preachers where God set them in? And do you think that this plea will excuse you before the high Judge, 'I did but execute the law?'"

Mr. Harvey, another minister of the sarnie city, was cited before the bishop May 13th, for preaching against the hierarchy of bishops and their ecclesiastical officers; and at a court held at St. George's church he was suspended from his ministry, with Mr. Vincent Goodwin and John Mapes.

Mr. Rockrey, B.D. of queen's college, Cambridge, a person of great learning and merit, was expelled the university for nonconformity to the habits.² Lord Burleigh the chancellor got him restored, and dispensed with for a year, at the end of which the master of his college admonished him three times, to conform himself to the custom of the university in the habits, which he refusing, was finally discharged, as an example to keep

¹ M.S. p. 253. Stype's Ann, p. 448.

² MS. p. 285.

others to their duty.

About the same time Mr. Richard Greenham, minister of Drayton, was suspended,¹ a man of a most excellent spirit, who, though he would not subscribe or conform to the habits, avoided speaking of them, that he might not give offence; and whoever reads his letter to Cox bishop of Ely, will wonder what sort of men they must be who could bear hard on so peaceable a divine.

Some time before the death of archbishop Parker, Mr. Stroud, the suspended minister of Cranbrook, returned to his parish-church; but being represented to the present archbishop as a disturber of the peace, he was forbid to continue his accustomed exercises in the church, and commanded to leave the country; but the good man was so universally beloved, that the whole county of Kent almost signed petitions to the archbishop for his continuance among them.

“We know, most reverend father (say they), that Mr. Stroud has been several times beaten and whipped with the untrue reports of slanderous tongues, and accused of crimes whereof he has most clearly acquitted himself to the satisfaction of others. Every one of us, for the most part, most gracious lord, hath heard him preach Christ truly, and rebuke sin boldly, and hath seen him hitherto apply to his calling faithfully, and live among us peaceably; so that not only by his diligent doctrine our youth has been informed, and ourselves confirmed in true religion and learning; but also by his honest conversation and example we are daily allured to a Christian life, and the exercises of charity; and no one of us, reverend father, hath hitherto heard, from his own mouth, or by credible relation from others, that he has publicly in his sermons, or privately in conversation, taught unsound doctrine, or opposed the discipline, about which great controversy, alas! is now maintained; yea, he has given faithful promise to forbear the handling any questions concerning the policy of the church, and we think in our consciences he has hitherto performed it. In consideration whereof, and that our country may not be deprived of so diligent a labourer in the Lord's harvest; nor that the enemies of God's truth, the Papists, may find matter of joy and comfort; nor the man himself, in receiving a kind of condemnation without examination, be thus wounded at the heart and discouraged: we most humbly beseech your grace, for the poor man's sake, for your own sake, and the Lord's sake, either to take judicial knowledge of his cause, to the end he may be confronted with his adversaries; or else, of your great wisdom and goodness, to restore him to his liberty, of preaching the

¹ Pierce's Vindication, p. 97.

gospel among us. And we, as in duty bound, shall ever pray, &c.”

This petition was signed by nineteen or twenty hands; another was signed by twenty-four ministers; and a third by George Ely vicar of Tenderden, and twenty-one parishioners; Thomas Bathurst, sen. minister of Staplehurst, and nine parishioners; William Walter, of Frittenden, and fourteen of his parishioners; Antony Francis, minister of Lamberhurst, and four parishioners; Alexander Love, minister of Rolenden, and eighteen parishioners; Christopher Vinebrook, minister of Helcorne, and nine parishioners; William Vicar, of Tysherst, and ten parishioners; Matthew Wolton, curate of Beneden, and eleven parishioners; William Cocks, minister of Marden, and thirteen parishioners; William Hopkinson, minister of Saleherst, and eight parishioners.¹

Such a reputation had this good man among all who had any taste for true piety, and zeal for the Protestant religion! He was a peaceable divine, and by the threatening of Aylmer, bishop of London, had been prevailed with to subscribe with some reserve, for the support of a starving family; and yet he was continually molested and vexed in the spiritual courts.

Two eminent divines of Puritan principles died this year; one was James Pilkington, B.D. and bishop of Durham; he was descended from a considerable family near Bolton in Lancashire, and was educated in St. John's college, Cambridge, of which he was master. In the reign of queen Mary he was an exile, and confessor for the gospel; upon the accession of queen Elizabeth he was nominated to the see of Durham, being esteemed a learned man and a profound divine; but could hardly be prevailed with to accept it on account of the habits, to which he expressed a very great dislike; he was always a very great friend and favourer of the Nonconformists, as appears by his letters, and a truly pious and Christian bishop.² He died in peace at his house Bishops-Auckland, January 23, 1575-6, in the sixty-fifth year of his age; Dr. Humphreys, and Mr. Fox the martyrologist, adorning his tomb with their funeral verses.

The other was Mr. Edward Deering, a Nonconformist divine, of whom mention has been made already; he was born of an ancient and worthy family in Kent, and bred fellow of Christ's college, Cambridge; a pious and painful preacher, says Fuller,³ but disaffected to bishops and ceremonies; he was a learned man and a fine orator, but in one of his sermons before the queen he took the liberty to say, that when her majesty was under persecution her motto was *Tauquam ovis*; but now it might be,

¹ MS. p. 196.

² Ath. Ox. 1, 590.

³ Fuller, b, 9. p. 109.

Tanquam indomita juvenca, As an untamed heifer.¹ For which he was forbid preaching at court for the future, and lost all his preferments in the church.

Archbishop Grindal had endeavoured to regulate the prophesyings, and cover them from the objections of the court, by enjoining the ministers to observe decency and order, by forbidding them to meddle with politics and church government, and by prohibiting all Nonconformist ministers and laymen from being speakers. The other bishops also, in their several diocesses, published [in 1577] the following regulations:

That the exercises should be only in such churches as the bishop under his hand and seal should appoint.

That the archdeacon or some other grave divine, appointed and allowed by the bishop, should be moderator.

That a list of the names of those that are thought fit to be speakers in course, be made and allowed of by the bishop; and the bishop to appoint such part of Scripture they shall treat of.

That those ministers that are judged not fit to speak publicly, be assigned some other task by the moderator, for the increase of their learning.

Ante omnia, that no lay-person be admitted to speak publicly in the exercises.

That if any man glance at affairs of state, the moderator shall immediately silence him, and give notice to the bishop.

If any man inveighs against the laws concerning rites and ceremonies, and discipline established, he shall immediately be silenced, and not be admitted to speak any more, till he has given satisfaction to the auditory, and obtained a new admission and approbation of the bishop. And

No suspended or deprived ministers shall be suffered to be speakers, except they shall first conform to the public order and discipline of the church, by subscription and daily practice.

But the queen was resolved to suppress them; and having sent for the archbishop, told him, she was informed that the rites and ceremonies of the church were not duly observed in these prophesyings; that persons not lawfully called to be ministers exercised in them; that the assemblies themselves were illegal, not being allowed by public authority; that the laity neglected their secular affairs by repairing to these meetings, which filled their heads with notions, and might occasion disputes and seditions in the state; that it was good for the church to have but few preachers,

¹ Life of Parker, p. 380.

three or four in a county being sufficient.¹ She farther declared her dislike of the number of these exercises, and therefore commanded him peremptorily to put them down. Letters' of this tenor were sent to all the bishops in England.²

¹ MS. p. 203.

² The copy of her majesty's letter to the bishop of London, with his lordship's order thereupon, being before me, I shall impart it to the reader,

“Salutem in Christo,

“Having received from the queen's majesty letters of strait commandment, touching the reformation of certain disorders and innovations within my diocese; the tenor whereof I have inserted, as followeth:

ELIZABETH.

“Right Reverend Father in God,

“We greet you well. We hear to our great grief, that in sundry parts of our realm there are no small number of persons presuming to be preachers and teachers in the church, though neither lawfully thereunto called, nor yet meet for the same; who contrary to our laws established, for the public divine service of Almighty God, and the administration of his holy sacraments within this church of England, do daily devise, imagine, propound, and put in execution, sundry new rites and forms in the church, as well by the inordinate preaching, reading, and ministering, the sacraments, as by unlawfully procuring of assemblies, and great numbers of our people, out of their ordinary parishes, and from places far distant; and that also of some of our subjects of good callings (though therein not well advised), to be hearers of their disputations, and new-devised opinions upon points of divinity, far unmeet for vulgar people; which manner of ministrations they in some places term, prophesyings, and. in some other places exercises; by means of which assemblies great numbers of our people, especially of the vulgar sort (meet to be otherwise occupied with some honest labour for their living), are brought to idleness, seduced, and in manners schismatically divided among themselves into variety of dangerous opinions, not only in towns and parishes, but even some families are manifestly thereby encouraged to the violation of our laws, and to the breach of common orders, and not sinally to the offence of all our quiet subjects, that desire to live and serve God according to the uniform orders established in the church, whereby these [exercises] cannot but be dangerous to be suffered. Wherefore considering it should be the duty of bishops, being the principal ordinary officers in the church of God (as you are one), to see these disorders against the honour of God, and the quietness of the church reformed, and that by the increase of these, through sufferance, great danger may arise, even to the decrease of Christian faith, whereof we are by God appointed the defender; besides the other inconveniences, to the disturbance of our peaceable government,

“We, therefore, according to the authority which we have, do charge and command you, as bishop of that diocese, with all manner of diligence to take order throughout your diocese, as well in all places exempt, or otherwise, that no manner of public or divine service, nor other form of ministration of the holy sacraments, or any other rites and ceremonies, be in any sort used in the church, but directly according to the order established by our laws; neither that any manner of person be suffered in your diocese to teach, preach, read, or exercise, any function in the church, but such as shall be lawfully approved and licensed, as persons able by their knowledge, and conformable to the ministrations in the rites and ceremonies of this church of England. And where there shall not be sufficient able persons for learning in any cure, to preach and instruct their cures, as are requisite, then shall you limit the curates to read the public homilies, according to

Most of the bishops complied readily with the queen's letter, and put down the prophesyings; but some did it with reluctance, and purely in obedience to the royal command; as appears by the following letter of the bishop of Litchfield, and Coventry, to his archdeacon:

“Salutem in Christo.

“Whereas the queen has been informed of some matters handled and abused in the exercise at Coventry, and thereupon hath written to me a strait charge to inhibit the said exercise; these are therefore to will and require you, and nevertheless in her majesty’s name to charge you, to forbear and stay yourselves from that exercise, till it shall please God we may either by earnest prayer, or humble petition, obtain the full use thereof with her good pleasure and full authority; and in the meantime so to use the heavenly and most comfortable gift of preaching, that you may seek and set forth Jesus Christ and his kingdom without contempt and controlment of the state and laws, under which we ought to live in unity and peace; which I beseech God grant unto you and me, and all that look for the coming of our Saviour Christ, to whose direction I commit you, this 18th of June, 1577.¹

“Your loving friend and brother in Christ,

“THOMAS Cov. and LITCHEF,

“To my very loving friend and brother in Christ, Thomas Lever,

the injunctions heretofore by us given for like cause.

“And furthermore, considering the great abuses that have been in sundry places of our realm, by reason of the aforesaid assemblies called exercises; and for that these are not, nor have been appointed or warranted by us or our laws; we will and straitly charge you, that you do cause the same forthwith to cease, and not to be used; but if any shall attempt to continue or renew the same, we will you not only to commit them to prison, as maintainers of disorders, but also to advertise us or our council of the names and qualities of them, and of their maintainers and abettors; that thereupon for better example their punishment may be made more sharp, for their reformation. And in these things we charge you to be so careful and vigilant, as by your negligence (if we shall hear of any person attempting to offend in the premises without your correction or information to us), we be not forced to make some example in reforming of you according to your deserts. Given under our signet at our manor of Greenwich, the 7th of May, 1577, and in the nineteenth year of our reign.”*

“Therefore I will and straitly charge you, in her majesty’s name, that immediately upon the receipt hereof, you do diligently and carefully put in execution, in every point, all such things as therein be contained, throughout and in every place within your whole archdeaconry; so that at my visitation, which God willing shall be shortly, sufficient account may be given of that your doing and diligence in that behalf accordingly. Fail you not so to do, as you will answer the contrary, at your peril.

“Your loving brother,

“John London.*

* MS. p. 283.

¹ MS. p. 231.

archdeacon of Cov. or in his absence to the censors of the exercise there.”

But our archbishop could not go this length; he who had complied with all the queen’s injunctions, and with the severities of the ecclesiastical commissioners against the Puritans hitherto, is now distressed in conscience, and constrained to disobey the commands of his royal mistress, in an affair of much less consequence than others he had formerly complied with. Instead therefore of giving directions to his archdeacons to execute the queen’s commands, he writes a long and earnest letter to her majesty, dated December 10, 1576, to inform her of the necessity and usefulness of preaching, and of the subserviency of the exercises, to this purpose: “With regard to preaching, nothing is more evident from Scripture (says his grace), than that it was a great blessing to have the gospel preached, and to have plenty of labourers sent into the Lord’s harvest. That this was the ordinary means of salvation, and that hereby men were taught their duty to God and their civil governors. That though reading the homilies was good, yet it was not comparable to preaching, which might be suited to the diversity of times, places, and hearers; and be delivered with more efficacy and affection. That homilies were devised only to supply the want of preachers, and were by the statute of kind Edward VI. to give place to sermons whensoever they might be had. He hoped therefore her majesty would not discountenance an ordinance so useful, and of divine appointment.

“For the second point, concerning the exercises, he apprehended them profitable to the church; and it was not his judgment only, but that of most of the bishops, as London, Winton, Bath and Wells, Litchfield, Gloucester, Lincoln, Chichester, Exon, and St. David’s, who had signified to him by letter, that by means of these exercises the clergy were now better versed in the Scripture than heretofore; that they had made them studious and diligent; and that nothing had beat down Popery like them. He affirms that they are legal, forasmuch as by the canons and constitutions of the church now in force, every bishop has authority to appoint such exercises, for inferior ministers to increase their knowledge in the Scriptures, as to him shall seem most expedient.”¹ Towards the close of this letter his grace declares himself willing to resign his province, if it should be her majesty’s pleasure; and then makes these two requests, “(1.) That your majesty would refer ecclesiastical matters to the bishops and divines of the realm, according to the practice of the first Christian emperors. And, (2.)

¹ MS. p. 245.

That when your majesty deals in matters of faith and religion, you would not pronounce so peremptorily as you may do in civil matters; but remember that in God's cause, his will, and not the will of any earthly creature, is to take place. It is the antichristian voice of the pope, 'Sic volo sic jubeo, stet pro ratione voluntas.'" He then puts her in mind, that though she was a great and mighty princess, she was nevertheless a mortal creature, and accountable to God; and concludes with a declaration, that whereas before there were not three able preachers, now there were thirty fit to preach at Paul's-cross, and forty or fifty besides able to instruct their own cures. That therefore he could not, without offence of the majesty of God, send out injunctions for suppressing the exercises.

The queen was so inflamed with this letter, that she determined to make an example of the honest archbishop, as a terror to the whole bench: she would not suffer her commands to be disputed by the primate of all England, but by an order from the star-chamber confined him immediately to his house, and sequestered him from his archiepiscopal function for six months. This was a high display of the supremacy, when the head of the church, being a woman, without consulting the bishops, or any of the clergy in convocation assembled, shall pronounce so peremptorily in a matter purely respecting religion; and for noncompliance tie up the hands of her archbishop, who is the first mover under the prince in all ecclesiastical affairs.

Before the expiration of the six months, which was in December, Grindal was advised to make his submission, which he did so far as to acknowledge the queen's mildness and gentleness in his restraint, and to promise obedience for the future; but he could not be persuaded to retract his opinion, and confess his sorrow for what was past; there was therefore some talk of depriving him, which being thought too severe, his sequestration was still continued till about a year before his death; however, his grace never recovered the queen's favour. Thus ended the prophesyings, or religious exercises of the clergy, a useful institution for promoting Christian knowledge and piety, at a time when both were at a very low ebb in the nation. The queen put them down for no other reason, but chiefly because they enlightened the people's minds in the Scriptures, and encouraged their inquiries after truth; her majesty being always of opinion, that knowledge and learning in the laity would only endanger their peaceable submission to her absolute will and pleasure.

This year put an end to the life of that eminent divine, Mr. Thomas Lever, a great favourite of queen Elizabeth till he refused the habits. He was master of St. John's college, Cambridge, in the reign of king Edward

VI. and was reckoned one of the most eloquent preachers in those times. He had a true zeal for the Protestant religion, and was an exile for it all the reign of queen Mary. Upon queen Elizabeth's accession, he might have had the highest preferment in the church, but could not accept it upon the terms of subscription and wearing the habits; he was therefore suspended by the ecclesiastical commissioners; till his great name and singular merit, reflecting an odium upon those who had deprived the church of his labours, and exposed him a second time to poverty and want after his exile; he was at length dispensed with, and made archdeacon of Coe, and master of Sherburne-hospital near Durham, where he spent the remainder of his days in great reputation and usefulness. He was a resolute Nonconformist, and wrote letters to encourage the deprived ministers, to stand by their principles, and wait patiently for a farther reformation. He was buried in the chapel of his own hospital, having this plain inscription on a flat marble stone over his grave, "Thomas Lever, preacher to king Edward VI." Had he lived a little longer he had been persecuted by the new bishop, as his brother Whittingham was; but God took him away from the evil to come. He died in July 1577, and was succeeded in the hospital by his brother Ralph Lever.

Mr. Cartwright, upon his return from the isle of Guernsey, was chosen preacher to one of the English factories at Antwerp: these factories submitted to the discipline of the Dutch churches among whom they lived, and their ministers became members of their consistories. While Cartwright was here, many of the English, who were not satisfied with the terms of conformity, or the English manner of giving orders, went over thither, and were ordained by the presbyters of those churches; nay, some who had received deacons' orders in the church of England, chose to be made full ministers by the foreign consistories; among these were, Mr. Cartwright, Fenner, Ashton, and Travers.¹ Travers was bachelor of divinity in the university of Cambridge before he left England, and was ordained at Antwerp, May 14th, 1578. The copy of his testimonials² is to this effect:

"Forasmuch as it is just and reasonable, that such as are received into the number of the ministers of God's word, should have a testimonial of their vocation; we declare, that having called together a synod of twelve ministers of God's word, and almost the same number of elders, at Antwerp, on May 8th, 1578, our very learned, pious, and excellent brother, the

¹ Strype's Ann. vol. 2. p. 524.

² Fuller, b. 9. p. 214.

reverend doctor Gualter Travers was, by the unanimous votes and ardent desires of all present, received and instituted into the ministry of God's holy word, and confirmed according to our accustomed manner, with prayer and imposition of hands; and the next day after the sabbath, having preached before a full congregation of English, at the request of the ministers, he was acknowledged and received most affectionately by the whole church. That Almighty God would prosper the ministry of this our reverend brother among the English, and attend it with great success, is our most earnest prayer, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

“ Given at Antwerp, May 14, 1578, and signed .

“ JOANNAS TAFFINUS, V. D. M.

“ LOGELERIUS VILERIUS, V, D. M.

“ JOANNES HOCHLEUS, V. D. M.”

Pilkington, late bishop of Durham, was succeeded by Dr. Barnes, bishop of Carlisle, a prelate of severer principles than his predecessor; who having in vain attempted to reduce the clergy of his diocese to an absolute conformity, complained to his metropolitan of the lax government of his predecessor, and of the numbers of Nonconformists whom he could not reduce to the established orders of the church. Upon this Sandys, the new archbishop of York, resolved to visit his whole province, and to begin with Durham, where dean Whittingham was the principal man under the bishop; he was a divine of great learning, and of long standing in the church, but not ordained according to the form of the English service-book. The accusation against him was branched out into thirty-five articles, and forty-nine interrogatories, the chief whereof was his Geneva ordination.¹ The dean, instead of answering the charge, stood by the rights of the church of Durham, and denied the archbishop's power of visitation, upon which his grace was pleased to excommunicate him; but Whittingham appealed to the queen, who directed a commission to the archbishop, to the lord-president of the council in the north, and to the dean of York, to hear and determine the validity of his ordination, find to inquire into the other misdemeanours contained in the articles. The president of the north was a favourer of the Puritans, and Dr. Hutton dean of York was of Whittingham's principles, and boldly averred, “that the dean was ordained in a better sort than even the archbishop himself;” so that the commission came to nothing. But Sandys, vexed at the disappointment, and at the calling in question his right of visitation, obtained another commission directed to himself, the bishop of Durham,

¹ Strype's Ann. vol. 5. p. 481.

the lord-president, the chancellor of the diocese, and some others whom he could depend upon, to visit the church of Durham. The chief design was to deprive Whittingham as a layman; when the dean appeared before the commissioners, he produced a certificate under the hands of eight persons, for the manner of his ordination, in these words; "It pleased God, by the suffrages of the whole congregation [at Geneva], orderly to choose Mr. W. Whittingham, unto the office of preaching the word of God and ministering the sacraments; and he was admitted minister, and so published, with such other ceremonies as here are used and accustomed."¹ It was objected, that here was no mention of a bishop or superintendent, nor of any external solemnities, nor so much as of imposition of hands. The dean replied, there was mention in general of the ceremonies of that church, and that he was able to prove his vocation to be the same that all the ministers of Geneva had; upon which the lord-president rose up and said, that he could not in conscience agree to deprive him for that cause only, for (says he) it will be ill taken by all the godly and learned both at home and abroad, that we should allow of the Popish, massing priests, in our ministry, and disallow of ministers made in a reformed church; whereupon the commission was adjourned *fine die*. These proceedings of the archbishop against the dean were invidious, and lost him his esteem both in city and country. The calling his ordination in question was expressly contrary to the statute 13 Eliz. by which, says Mr. Strype, the ordination of foreign reformed churches was declared valid; and those that had no other orders were made of like capacity with others, to enjoy any place of ministry within England.

But the death of Mr. Whittingham, which happened about six months after, put an end to this and all his other troubles: he was born in the city of Chester 1524, and educated in Brazen-nose college, Oxon; he was afterward translated to Christ-church, when it was founded by king Henry VIII. being reckoned one of the best scholars in the university; in the year 1550, he travelled into France, Germany, and Italy, and returned about the latter end of king Edward VI. In the reign of queen Mary he was with the exiles at Frankfort, and upon the division there went with part of the congregation to Geneva, and became their minister. He had a great share in translating the Geneva Bible, and the Psalms in metre, as appears by the first letter of his name [W] over many of them. Upon his return home he was preferred to the deanery of Durham, 1563, by the interest of the earl of Leicester, where he spent the remainder of his life. He did good service,

¹ Strype's Ann. vol. 2. p. 523.

says the Oxford historian,¹ against the Popish rebels in the north, and in repelling the archbishop of York from visiting the church of Durham; but he was at best but a lukewarm Conformist, an enemy to the habits, and a promoter of the Geneva doctrine and discipline. However, he was a truly pious and religious man, an excellent preacher, and an ornament to religion. He died while the cause of his deprivation, for not being ordained according to the rites of the English church, was depending, June 10, 1579, in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

We have mentioned the bishop of Norwich's severity in his primary visitation; his lordship went on still in the same method, not without some marks of unfair designs;² for the incumbent of Sprowton being suspected to be of the Family of Love, his lordship deprived him, and immediately begged the living for his son-in-law Mr. Maplesdon, who was already archdeacon of Suffolk.³ He showed no mercy to his suspended clergy, though they offered to subscribe as far as the laws of the realm required. At length they petitioned their metropolitan Grindal, who though in disgrace licensed them to preach throughout the whole diocese of Norwich, *durante bene placito*, provided they did not preach against the established orders of the church, nor move contentions about ceremonies; but still they were deprived of their livings.

The reverend Mr. Lawrence, an admired preacher, and incumbent of a parish in Suffolk, was suspended by the same bishop, for not complying with the rites and ceremonies of the church.⁴ Mr. Calthorp, a gentleman of quality in the county, applied to the lord-treasurer in his behalf; and the treasurer wrote to the bishop, requesting him to take off his sequestration; but his lordship replied, that what he had done was by virtue of the queen's letter to him, requiring him to allow of no ministers but such as were perfectly conformable. Mr. Calthorp replied, and urged the great want the church had of such good men as Mr. Lawrence, for whose fitness for his work he would undertake the chief gentlemen of credit in the county should certify; but his sequestration was still continued. The like severities were used in most other dioceses.

The bishop of London⁵ came not behind the chief of his brethren the

¹ Ath. Ox. vol. 1. p. 154.

² Strype's Ann. vol, 2. p. 284.

³ MS. p. 286.

⁴ Strype's Ann. p. 285.

⁵ This bishop Warburton censures as "an unfair charge which runs through the History. The exacting conformity of the ministry of any church by the governors of that church is no persecution." This is a strange sentiment to come from the pen of a Protestant prelate. There was no persecution then in the reign of queen Mary. It was no persecution, when the Jewish sanhedrin agreed, "that if any man did confess that Jesus

bishops, in his persecuting zeal against the Puritans: he gave out orders for apparitors and other officers to go from church to church in time of divine service, to observe the conformity of the minister, and to make report to her majesty's commissioners. As this prelate had no compassion in his nature, he had little or no regard to the laws of his country, or the cries of the people after the word of God.¹

Great was the scarcity of preachers about England at this time; in the large and populous town of Northampton there was not one, nor had been for a considerable time, though the people applied to the bishop of the diocese by most humble supplication for the bread of life. In the county of Cornwall there were one hundred and forty clergymen, not one of which was capable of preaching a sermon, and most of them were pluralists and nonresidents. Even the city of London was in a lamentable case, as appears by their petition to the parliament which met this winter, in which are these words: "—May it please you therefore, for the tender mercies of God, to understand the woeful estate of many thousands of souls dwelling in deep darkness, and in the shadow of death, in this famous and populous city of London; a place, in respect of others, accounted as the morning star, or rather as the sun in its brightness, because of the gospel, supposed to shine gloriously and abundantly in the same; but being near looked into, will be found sorely eclipsed and darkened through the dim cloud of unlearned ministers, whereof there be no small number. There are in this city a great number of churches, but the one half of them at the least are utterly unfurnished of preaching ministers, and are pestered with candlesticks not of gold, but of clay, unworthy to have the Lord's light set in them, with watchmen that have no eyes, and clouds that have no water;—in the other half, partly by means of nonresidents, which are very many; partly through the poverty of many meanly qualified, there is scarcely the tenth man that makes conscience to wait upon his charge, whereby the Lord's sabbath is oftentimes wholly neglected, and for the most part miserably mangled; ignorance increaseth, and wickedness comes upon us like an armed man.—As sheep therefore going astray, we humbly on our knees beseech this honourable assembly, in the bowels and blood of Jesus Christ, to become humble suitors to her majesty, that we may have guides; as hungry men bound to abide by our empty rackstaves, we do beg of you to be means, that the bread of life may be brought home to us; that the

was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue." It was no persecution, when the parliament imposed the Scots covenant.—ED.

¹ He declared, that he would surely and severely punish those who would not comply with the act of uniformity or "I will lie (said he) in the dust for it." Strype—ED.

sower may come into the fallow ground; that the pipes of water may be brought into our assemblies; that there may be food and refreshing for us, our poor wives and forlorn children: so shall the Lord have his due honour; you shall discharge good duty to her majesty; many languishing souls shall be comforted; atheism and heresy banished; her majesty have more faithful subjects; and you more hearty prayers for your prosperity in this life, and full happiness in the life to come, through Jesus Christ our alone Saviour. Amen.”¹

In the supplication of the people of Cornwall, it is said,² We are above the number of fourscore and ten thousand souls, which for want of the word of God are in extreme misery and ready to perish, and this neither for want of maintenance nor place; for besides the impropriations in our shire, we allow yearly above 9,200£. and have about one hundred and sixty churches, the greatest part of which are supplied by men who are guilty of the grossest sins; some fornicators, some adulterers, some felons, bearing the marks in their hands for the said offence; some drunkards, gamesters on the sabbath-day, &c. We have many nonresidents, who preach but once a quarter so that between meal and meal the silly sheep may starve. We have some ministers who labour painfully and faithfully in the Lord’s husbandry; but these men are not suffered to attend their callings, because the mouths of Papists, infidels, and filthy livers, are open against them, and the ears of those who are called lords over them, are sooner open to their accusations, though it be but for ceremonies, than to the others’ answers. Nor is it safe for us to go and hear them; for though our own fountains are dried up, yet if we seek for the waters of life elsewhere, we are cited into the spiritual courts, reviled, and threatened with excommunication. Therefore from far we come, beseeching this honourable house to dispossess these dumb dogs and ravenous wolves, and appoint us faithful ministers, who may peaceably preach the word of God, and not be disquieted by every apparitor, registrar, official, commissioner, chancellor, &c. upon every light occasion——.”

The ground of this scarcity was no other than the severity of the high-commission, and the narrow terms of conformity. Most of the old incumbents, says Dr. Keltridge,³ are disguised Papists, fitter to sport with the timbrel and pipe, than to take into their hands the book of the Lord; and yet there was a rising generation of valuable preachers ready for the ministry, if they might have been encouraged; for in a supplication of

¹ MS. p. 302.

² MS. p. 300.

³ Life of Aylmer, p. 32.

some of the students at Cambridge to the parliament about this time, they acknowledge, that there were plenty of able and well-furnished men among them, but that they could not get into places upon equal conditions; but unlearned men, nay the scum of the people, were preferred before them; so that in this great want of labourers, we (say they) stand idle in the market place all the day, being urged with subscriptions before the bishops, to approve the Romish hierarchy, and all the effects of that government to be agreeable to the word of God, which with no safety of conscience we can accord unto. They then offer a conference or disputation, as the queen and parliament shall agree, to put an amicable end to these differences, that the church may recover some discipline, that simony and perjury may be banished, and that all that are willing to promote the salvation of souls may be employed; but the queen and bishops were against it.

All the public conversation at this time ran upon the queen's marriage with the duke of Anjou, a French Papist, which was thought to be as good as concluded; the Protestant part of the nation were displeased with it, and some warm divines expressed their dark apprehensions in the pulpit.—The Puritans in general made a loud protest against the match, as dreading the consequences of a Protestant body being under a Popish head. Mr. John Stubbs, a student of Lincoln's-inn, whose sister Mr. Cartwright had married, a gentleman of excellent parts, published a treatise this summer, entitled, "The gaping gulph, wherein England will be swallowed up with the French marriage;" wherewith the queen was so incensed, that she immediately issued out a proclamation to suppress the book, and to apprehend the author and printer. At the same time the lords of the council wrote circular letters to the clergy, to remove all surmises about the danger of the Reformation, in case the match should take place, assuring them the queen would suffer no alterations in religion by any treaty with the duke, and forbidding them in their sermons or discourses to meddle with such high matters. Mr. Stubbs the author, Singleton the printer, and Page the disperser, of the above-mentioned book, were apprehended, and sentenced to have their right hands cut off, by virtue of a law made in queen Mary's reign against the authors and dispersers of seditious writings: the printer was pardoned, but Mr. Stubbs and Page were brought to a scaffold, erected in the market-place at Westminster, where with a terrible formality their right hands were cut off, by driving a cleaver through the wrist with a mallet;¹ but I remember (says Camden, being present) that as soon as

¹ "This (says bishop Warburton) was infinitely more cruel than all the years under Charles I. whether we consider the punishment, the crime, or the man."—ED.

Stubbs's right hand was cut off, he pulled off his hat with his left, and said with a loud voice, God save the queen, to the amazement of the spectators, who stood silent, either out of horror of the punishment, or pity to the man, or hatred to the match. Mr. Stubbs proved afterward a faithful subject to her majesty, and a valiant commander in the wars of Ireland.

At the beginning of the next sessions of parliament, which was January 10, 1580, the commons voted, "that as many of their members as conveniently could, should, on the Sunday fortnight, assemble and meet together in the Temple-church, there to have preaching, and to join together in prayer, with humiliation and fasting, for the assistance of God's Spirit in all their consultations, during this parliament; and for the preservation of the queen's majesty, and her realms"¹ The house was so cautious as not to name their preachers, for fear they might be thought Puritanical, but referred it to such of her majesty's privy-council as were members of the house. There was nothing in this vote contrary to law, or unbecoming the wisdom of parliament; but the queen was no sooner acquainted with it, than she sent word by sir Christopher Hatton, her vice-chamberlain, that she did much admire at so great a rashness in that house, as to put in execution "such an innovation, without her privity and pleasure first made known to them." Upon which it was moved by the courtiers, that "the house should acknowledge their offence and contempt, and humbly crave forgiveness, with a full purpose to forbear committing the like for the future; which was voted accordingly. A mean and abject spirit in the representative body of the nation!

Her majesty having forbid her parliament to appoint times for fasting and prayer, took hold of the opportunity, and gave the like injunctions to her clergy; some of whom, after the putting down of the prophesyings, had ventured to agree upon days of private fasting and prayer for the queen and church, and for exhorting the people to repentance and reformation of life, at such times and places where they could obtain a pulpit. All the Puritans, and the more devout part of the conforming clergy, fell in with these appointments; sometimes there was one at Leicester; sometimes at Coventry and at Stamford, and in other places; where six or seven neighbouring ministers joined together in these exercises; but as soon as the queen was acquainted with them, she sent a warm message to the archbishop to suppress them, as being set up by private persons, without authority, in defiance of the laws, and of her prerogative.²

Mr. Prowd, the Puritan minister of Burton upon Dunmore, complains,

¹ Heylin, p. 287.

² Heylin's *Aerius Redivivus*, p. 286.

in a melancholy letter to lord Burleigh, of the sad state of religion, by suppressing the exercises; and by forbidding the meeting of a few ministers and Christians, to pray for the preservation of the Protestant religion, in this dangerous crisis of the queen's marrying with a Papist. He doubted whether his lordship dealt so plainly with her majesty as his knowledge of these things required, and begs him to interpose. But the queen was determined against all prayers, except what herself should appoint.

We have already taken notice of the petitions and supplications to parliament from London, Cornwall, and some other places, for redress of grievances; but the house was so intimidated by the queen's spirited behaviour, that they durst not interpose, any farther than in conjunction with some of the bishops, to petition her majesty as head of the church, to redress them. The queen promised to take order about it, with all convenient speed; putting them in mind at the same time, that all motions for reformation in religion ought to arise from none but herself.

But her majesty's sentiments differed from the parliament's; her greatest grief was the increase of Puritans and Nonconformists, and therefore, instead of easing them, she girt the laws closer about them, in order to bring them to an exact conformity. Information being given, that some who had livings in the church, and preached weekly, did not administer the sacrament to their parishioners in their own persons, her majesty commanded her bishops in their visitations, to inquire after such half-conformists as disjoined one part of their function from the other, and to compel them by ecclesiastical censures to perform the whole at least twice a year. The Puritan ministers being dissatisfied with the promiscuous access of all persons to the communion, and with several passages in the office for the Lord's supper, some of them used to provide qualified clergyman to administer the ordinance in their room; but this was now made a handle for their ejection: inquisition was made, and those who after admonition would not conform to the queen's pleasure were sent for before the commissioners, and deprived.

Though the springs of discipline moved but slowly in the diocese of Canterbury, because the metropolitan, who is the first mover in ecclesiastical causes under the queen, was suspended and in disgrace; yet the sufferings of the Puritans were not lessened; the other bishops, who were in the high commission, doubled their diligence; the reverend Mr. Nash was in the Marshalsea, Mr. Drewet in Newgate, and several others were shut up in the prisons in and about London.—Those that were at liberty had nothing to do, for they might not preach in public without full

conformity; nor assemble in private to mourn over their own and the nation's sins, without the danger of a prison.

This exasperated their spirits, and put them upon writing satirical pamphlets¹ against their adversaries; in some of which there are severe expressions against the unpreaching clergy, calling them (in the language of Scripture) dumb dogs, because they took no pains for the instruction of their parishioners; the authors glanced at the severity of the laws, at the pride and ambition of the bishops, at the illegal proceedings of the high-commission, and at the unjustifiable rigours of the queen's government; which her majesty being informed of, procured a statute this very parliament² [1580], by which it is enacted, that "if any person or persons, forty days after the end of this session, shall devise, or write, or print, or set forth, any manner of book, rhyme, ballad, letter, or writing, containing any false, seditious, or slanderous matter, to the defamation, of the queen's majesty, or to the encouraging, stirring, or moving of, any insurrection or rebellion within this realm, or any of the dominions to the same belonging; or if any person or persons shall procure such books, rhymes, or ballads, to be written, printed, or published (the said offence not being within the compass of treason, by virtue of any former statute), that then the said offenders, upon sufficient proof by two witnesses, shall suffer death and loss of goods, as in case of felony." This statute was to continue in force only during the life of the present queen; but within that compass of time, sundry of the Puritans were put to death by virtue of it.

In the same session of parliament, another severe law was made, which like a two-edged sword cut down both Papists and Puritans; it was entitled, An act to retain the queen's subjects in their due obedience:³ "by which it is made treason, for any priest or Jesuit to seduce any of the queen's subjects, from the established to the Romish religion. If any shall reconcile themselves to that religion they shall be guilty of treason: and to harbour such above twenty days, is misprision of treason. If any one shall say mass, he shall forfeit two hundred marks and suffer a year's imprisonment; and they that are present at hearing mass shall forfeit one hundred marks, and a year's imprisonment."³ But that the act might be more extensive, and comprehend Protestant Nonconformists as well as Papists, it is farther enacted, "that all persons that do not come to church

¹ 'Bishop Warburton censures Mr. Neal for not speaking in much severer terms of these pamphlets. But he should have adverted to our author's grave censure of them, in chap. viii. and have recollected that "the writers on the church-side came not behind their adversaries in buffoonery and ridicule." These were the weapons of the age.

² 23 Eliz. cap. 2.

³ 23 Eliz. cap. 1.

or chapel, or other place where common prayer is said, according to the act of uniformity, shall forfeit twenty pounds per month to the queen, being thereof lawfully convicted, and suffer imprisonment till paid. Those that are absent for twelve months shall, upon certificate made thereof into the King's-bench, besides their former fine, be bound with two sufficient sureties in a bond of two hundred pounds, for their good behaviour. Every schoolmaster that does not come to common prayer, shall forfeit ten pounds a month, be disabled from teaching school, and suffer a year's imprisonment." This was making merchandise of the souls of men, says a reverend author;¹ for it is a sad case to sell men a licence to do that which the receivers of their money conceive to be unlawful. Besides, the fine was unmerciful; by the act of uniformity, it was twelve pence a Sunday for not coming to church, but now 20£. a month; so that the meaner people had nothing to expect but to rot in jails, which made the officers unwilling to apprehend them. Thus the queen and her parliament tacked the Puritans to the Papists, and subjected them to the same penal laws, as if they had been equal enemies to her person and government, and to the Protestant religion. A precedent followed by several parliaments in the succeeding reigns.

The convocation did nothing but present a humble petition to the queen, to take off the archbishop's sequestration, which her majesty was not pleased to grant.

This summer Aylmer bishop of London, held a visitation of his clergy, at the convocation-house of St. Paul's, and obliged them to subscribe the following articles; 1. Exactly to keep to the Book of Common Prayer and sacraments; 2. To wear the surplice in all their ministrations. 3. Not add or diminish anything in reading divine service.—He then made the following inquiries, 1. Whether all that had cure of souls administered the sacraments in person? 2. Whether they observed the ceremonies to be used in baptism and marriage? 3. Whether the youth were catechised? 4. Whether their ministers read the homilies? 5. Whether any of them called others that did not preach by ill names, as dumb dogs? Those who did not subscribe, and answer the interrogatories to his lordship's satisfaction, were immediately suspended and silenced.

But these violent measures, instead of reconciling the Puritans to the church, drove them farther from it. Men who act upon principles² will not

¹ Fuller, b. 9. p. 131.

² To do so is highly virtuous and praiseworthy. It is the support of integrity, and constitutes excellence of character: yet, in this instance, bishop Warburton could allow himself to degrade and make a jest of it. "It is just the same (says he) with men who act upon passion and prejudice, for the poet says truly,

easily be beaten from them with the artillery of canons, injunctions, subscriptions, fines, imprisonments, &c. much less will they esteem a church that fights with such weapons. Multitudes were by these methods carried off to a total separation, and so far prejudiced, as not to allow the church of England to be a true church, nor her ministers true ministers; they renounced all communion with her, not only in the prayers and ceremonies, but in hearing the word and the sacraments. These were the people called Brownists,¹ from one Robert Brown, a preacher in the diocese of Norwich, descended of an ancient and honourable family in Rutlandshire, and nearly related to the lord-treasurer Cecil; he was educated in Corpus Christi college, Cambridge, and preached sometimes in Bene't-church, where the vehemence of his delivery gained him reputation with the people. He was first a schoolmaster, then a lecturer at Islington; but being a fiery, hotheaded young man, he went about the countries, inveighing against the discipline and ceremonies of the church, and exhorting the people by no means to comply with them. He was first taken notice of by the bishop of Norwich, who committed him to the custody of the sheriff of the county in the year 1580, but upon acknowledgment of his offence he was released. In the year 1582, he published a book called "The life and manners of true Christians; to which is prefixed, a treatise of reformation without tarrying for any; and of the wickedness of those preachers who will not reform themselves and their charge, because they will tarry till the magistrate command and compel them." For this he was sent for again into custody, and upon examination confessed himself the author, but denied that he was acquainted with the publication of the book; whereupon he was dismissed a second time at the intercession of the lord-treasurer, and sent home to his father, with whom he continued four years; after which he travelled up and down the countries in company with his assistant Richard Harrison, preaching against bishops, ceremonies, ecclesiastical courts, ordaining of ministers, &c. for which, as he afterward boasted, he had been committed to thirty-two prisons, in some of which he could not see his hand at noonday. At length he gathered a separate congregation of his own principles; but the queen and her bishops watching them narrowly, they were quickly forced to leave the kingdom. Several of his friends embarked with their effects for Holland; and having obtained leave of the magistrates to worship God

Obstinacy's ne'er so stiff

As when 'tis in a wrong belief."—ED.

¹ With them commenced the third period of Puritanism. The increasing severity of the bishops inflamed, instead of subduing, the spirits of the Nonconformists, and drove them to a greater distance from the establishment.—Ed.

in their own way, settled at Middleburgh in Zeeland. Here Mr. Brown formed a church according to his own model: but when this handful of people were delivered from the bishops their oppressors, they crumbled into parties among themselves, insomuch that Brown, being weary of his office, returned into England in the year 1589, and having renounced his principles of separation, became rector of Achurch in Northamptonshire: here he lived an idle and dissolute life, according to Fuller,¹ far from that Sabbatarian strictness that his followers aspired after. He had a wife, with whom he did not live for many years, and a church in which he never preached; at length, being poor and proud, and very passionate, he struck the constable of his parish for demanding a rate of him; and being beloved by nobody, the officer summoned him before sir Roland St. John, a neighbouring justice of peace, who committed him to Northampton-jail; the decrepit old man, not being able to walk, was carried thither upon a feather-bed in a cart, where he fell sick and died, in the year 1630, and in the eighty-first year of his age.

The revolt of Mr. Brown broke up his congregation at Middleburgh, but was far from destroying the seeds of separation that he had sown in several parts of England; his followers increased, and made a considerable figure towards the latter end of this reign; and because some of his principles were adopted and improved by a considerable body of Puritans in the next age, I shall here give an account of them.

The Brownists did not differ from the church of England in any articles of faith; but were very rigid and narrow in points of discipline. They denied the church of England to be a true church, and her ministers to be rightly ordained. They maintained the discipline of the church of England to be Popish and antichristian, and all her ordinances and sacraments invalid. Hence they forbade their people to join with them in prayer, in hearing, or in any part of public worship; nay, they not only renounced communion with the church of England, but with all other reformed churches, except such as should be of their own model.

They apprehended, according to Scripture, that every church ought to be confined within the limits of a single congregation; and that the government should be democratical. When a church was to be gathered, such as desired to be members made a confession of their faith in the presence of each other, and signed a covenant, obliging themselves to walk together in the order of the gospel, according to certain rules and

¹ B. 10. p. 263.

agreements therein contained.

The whole power of admitting and excluding members, with the deciding of all controversies, was in the brotherhood. Their church-officers, for preaching the word and taking care of the poor, were chosen from among themselves, and separated to their several offices by fasting and prayer, and imposition of the hands of some of the brethren. They did not allow the priesthood to be a distinct order, or to give a man an indelible character; but as the vote of the brotherhood made him an officer, and gave him authority to preach and administer the sacraments among them; so the same power could discharge him from his office, and reduce him to the state of a private member.

When the number of communicants was larger than could meet in one place, the church divided, and chose new officers from among themselves as before, living together as sister-churches, and giving each other the right hand of fellowship, or the privilege of communion with either. One church might not exercise jurisdiction or authority over another, but each might give the other counsel, advice, or admonition, if they walked disorderly, or abandoned the capital truths of religion; and if the offending church did not receive the admonition, the others were to withdraw, and publicly disown them as a church of Christ. The powers of their church-officers were confined within the narrow limits of their own society; the pastor of one church might not administer the sacrament of baptism or the Lord's supper to any but those of his own communion and their immediate children. They declared against all prescribed forms of prayer. Any lay-brother had the liberty of prophesying, or giving a word of exhortation, in their church-assemblies; and it was usual after sermon, for some of the members to ask questions, and confer with each other upon the doctrines that had been delivered; but as for church censures, they were for an entire separation of the ecclesiastical and civil sword. In short, every church, or society of Christians meeting in one place, was, according to the brownists, a body corporate, having full power within itself to admit and exclude members, to choose and ordain officers; and, when the good of the society required it, to depose them, without being accountable to classes, convocations, synods, councils, or any jurisdiction whatsoever.

Some of their reasons for withdrawing from the church are not easily answered: they alleged, that the laws of the realm, and the queen's injunctions, had made several unwarrantable additions to the institutions of Christ. That there were several gross errors in the church-service. That these additions and errors were imposed and made necessary to communion. That if persecution for conscience' sake was the mark of a

false church, they could not believe the church of England to be a true one. They apprehended farther, that the constitution of the hierarchy was too bad to be mended; that the very pillars of it were rotten, and that the structure must be begun anew. Since therefore all Christians are obliged to preserve the ordinances of Christ pure and undefiled, they resolved to lay a new foundation, and keep as near as they could to the primitive pattern, though it were with the hazard of all that was dear to them in the world.

This scheme of the Brownists seems to be formed upon the practice of the apostolical churches, before the gifts of inspiration and prophecy were ceased, and is therefore hardly practicable in these latter ages, wherein the infirmities and passions of private persons too often take place of their gifts and graces. Accordingly they were involved in frequent quarrels and divisions; but their chief crime was their uncharitableness, in unchurching the whole Christian world, and breaking off all manner of communion in hearing the word, in public prayer, and in the administration of the sacraments, not only with the church of England, but with all foreign reformed churches, which, though less pure, ought certainly to be owned as churches of Christ.

The heads of the Brownists were, Mr. Brown himself, and his companion Mr. Harrison, together with Mr. Tyler, Copping, Thacker, and others, who were now in prison for spreading his books; the two last being afterward put to death for it. The bishop of Norwich used them cruelly, and was highly displeas'd with those that showed them any countenance. When the prisoner above mentioned, with Mr. Handson and some others, complained to the justices at their quarter-sessions of their long and illegal imprisonment, their worships were pleas'd to move the bishops in their favour; with which his lordship was so dissatisfied, that he drew up twelve articles of impeachment against the justices themselves, and caused them to be summoned before the queen and council to answer for their misdemeanours.¹ In the articles they are charged with countenancing Copping, Tyler, and other disorderly clergymen. They are accus'd of contempt of his lordship's jurisdiction, in refusing to admit divers ministers whom he had ordain'd, because they were ignorant, and could only read; and for removing one Wood from his living on the same account. Sir Robert Jennin and sir John Higham, knights, and Robert Ashfield and Thomas Badley, esquires, gentlemen of Suffolk and Norfolk, and of the number of the aforesaid justices, gave in their answer to the bishop's articles in the name of the rest; in which, after asserting their own conformity to the rites and ceremonies of the church, they very justly tax his lordship with

¹ Ann.

cruelty, in keeping men so many years in prison, without bringing them to a trial, according to law; and are ashamed that a bishop of the church of England should be a patron of ignorance, and an enemy to the preaching the word of God. Upon this the justices were dismissed. But though the lord-treasurer, lord North, sir Robert Jermin, and others, wrote to the bishop, that Mr. Handson, who was a learned and useful preacher, might have a licence granted him, the angry prelate declared peremptorily, that he never should have one, unless he would acknowledge his fault, and enter into bonds for his good behaviour for the future.

While the bishops were driving the Puritans out of the pulpits, the nobility and gentry received them into their houses as chaplains and tutors to their children, not merely out of compassion, but from a sense of their real worth and usefulness; for they were men of undissembled piety and devotion; mighty in the Scriptures; zealous for the Protestant religion; of exemplary lives; far remote from the liberties and fashionable vices of the times; and indefatigably diligent in instructing those committed to their care. Here they were covered from their oppressors; they preached in the family, and catechised the children; which, without all question, had a considerable influence upon the next generation .

The Papists were now very active all over the country; swarms of Jesuits came over from the seminaries abroad, in defiance of the law;¹ and spread their books of devotion and controversy among the common people; they had their private conventicles almost in every market-town in England; in the northern counties they were more numerous than the Protestants. This put the government upon inquiring after the priests; many of whom were apprehended, and three were executed, viz. Edmund Campion, a learned and subtle Jesuit, educated in Cambridge, where he continued till the year 1569, when he travelled to Rome, and entered himself into the society of Jesus, 1573. Some years after he came into England, and travelled the countries to propagate the Catholic faith. Being apprehended he was put on the rack to discover the gentlemen who harboured him, and afterward was hanged, drawn, and quartered, when he was but forty-one years of age. The other two that suffered with him, were, Ralph Sherwin and Alexander Bryant. These were executed for an

¹ Bishop Warburton asks here, "Were the Jesuits more faulty in acting in defiance of the laws, than the Puritans?" and replies, "I think not—They had both the same plea, conscience, and both the same provocation, persecution." This is candid and pertinent, as far as it applies to the religious principles of each: but certainly the spirit and views of these parties were very different; the former was engaged, once and again, in plots against the life and government of the queen; the loyalty of the other was, notwithstanding all their sufferings, unimpeached,—ED.

example, but the rest were spared, because the queen's match with the duke of Anjou was still depending. However, the Protestants in the Netherlands being in distress, the queen assisted them with men and money, for which they delivered into her majesty's hands the most important fortresses of their country, which she garrisoned with English. She also sent relief to the French Protestants who were at war with their natural prince; and ordered a collection all over England for the relief of the city of Geneva, besieged by the duke of Savoy:—measures which were hardly consistent with her own principles of government; but, as Rapin observes,¹ queen Elizabeth's zeal for the Protestant religion was always subordinate to her private interest.

About this time [1582] the queen granted a commission of concealments to some of her hungry courtiers, by which they were empowered to inquire into the titles of church lands and livings; all forfeitures, concealments, or lands for which the parish could not produce a legal title, were given to them: the articles of inquiry seem to be levelled against the Puritans, but, through their sides, they must have made sad havoc with the patrimony of the church.² They were such as these, What right have you to your parsonage? How came you into it? Who ordained you? and at what age were you ordained? Have you a licence? Were you married under the hands of two justices of the peace? Do you read the whole service? Do you use all the rites, ceremonies, and ornaments, appointed by the queen's injunctions? Have you publicly read the articles and subscribed them? The churchwardens of every parish had also twenty-four interrogatories administered to them upon oath, concerning their parson, and their church-lands; all with a design to sequester them into the hands of the queen's gentlemen- pensioners. This awakened the bishops, who fell upon their knees before the queen, and entreated her majesty, if she had any regard for the church, to supersede the commission; which she did, though, it is well enough known, the queen had no scruple of conscience about plundering the church of its revenues.

To return to the Puritans. The Rev. Robert Wright, domestic chaplain to the late lord Rich, of Rochford in Essex, fell into the hands of the bishop of London last year³ [1581]; he was a learned man, and had lived fourteen years in the university of Cambridge; but being dissatisfied with episcopal ordination, went over to Antwerp, and was ordained by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery of that place. Upon his return

¹ Vol. 8. p. 475.

² Strype's Ann. vol. 3. p. 114.

³ Strype's Ann. p. 123.

home, lord Rich took him into his family, at Rochford in the hundreds of Essex, where he preached constantly in his lordship's chapel, and nowhere else, because he could obtain no licence from the bishop. He was an admired preacher, and universally beloved by the clergy of the county, for his great seriousness and piety. While his lordship was alive he protected him from danger, but his noble patron was no sooner dead, than the bishop of London laid hands on him, and confined him in the Gate-house, for saying, that to keep the queen's birthday as a holiday was to make her an idol. When the good man had been shut up from his family and friends several months, he petitioned the bishop to be brought to his trial, or admitted to bail. But all the answer his lordship returned was, that "he deserved to lie in prison seven years," This usage, together with Mr. Wright's open and undisguised honesty and piety, moved the compassion of his keeper, insomuch that his poor wife being in child-bed and distress, he gave him leave, with the private allowance of the secretary of state, to make her a visit at Rochford upon his parole; but it happened that Dr. Ford the civilian, meeting him upon the road, acquainted the bishop with his escape, who thereupon fell into a violent passion, and sending immediately for the keeper, demanded to see his prisoner. The keeper pleaded the great compassion of the case; but the bishop threatened to complain of him to the queen, and have him turned out. Mr. Wright being informed of the keeper's danger, returned immediately to his prison, and wrote to the lord-treasurer on his behalf. "Oh! my lord (says he), I most humbly crave your lordship's favour, that I may be delivered from such unpitiful minds; and especially that your lordship will stand a good lord to my keeper, that he may not be discouraged from favouring those that profess true religion." Upon this the keeper was pardoned.

But the bishop resolved to take full satisfaction of the prisoner; accordingly he sent for him before the commissioners, and examined him upon articles concerning the Book of Common Prayer; concerning rites and ceremonies; concerning praying for the queen and the church; and concerning the established form of ordaining ministers. He was charged with preaching without a licence, and with being no better than a mere layman. To which he made the following answers; "that he thought the Book of Common Prayer, in the main, good and godly, but could not answer for every particular. That as to rites and ceremonies, he thought his resorting to churches where they were used, was a sufficient proof that he allowed them. That he prayed for the queen, and for all ministers of God's word, and consequently for archbishops and bishops, &c. That he was but a private chaplain, and knew no law that required a licence for such a

place. But he could not yield himself to be a mere layman, having preached seven years in the university with licence; and since that time having been regularly ordained, by the laying on of the hands of the presbyters at Antwerp. The bishop having charged him with saying, that the election of ministers ought to be by their flocks, he owned it, and supposed it not to be an error; and added farther, that in his opinion, every minister was a bishop, though not a lord-bishop; and that his lordship of London must be of the same opinion, because when he rebuked Mr. White for striking one of his parishioners, he alleged that text, that a "bishop must be no striker:" which had been impertinent, if Mr. White, being only a minister, had not been a bishop. When his lordship charged him with saying, there were no lawful ministers in the church of England, he replied, "I will be content to be condemned, if I bring not two hundred witnesses for my discharge of this accusation. I do as certainly believe, that there are lawful ministers in England, as that there is a sun in the sky. In Essex, I can bring twenty godly ministers, all preachers, who will testify that they love me, and have cause to think that I love and reverence them.¹ I preached seven years in the university of Cambridge with approbation, and have a testimonial to produce under the hands and seals of the master and fellows of Christ-college, being all ministers at that time, of my good behaviour." However, all he could say was to no purpose, the bishop would not allow his orders, and therefore pronounced him a layman, and incapable of holding any living in the church.

The lord Rich and divers honourable knights and gentlemen in Essex, had petitioned the bishop of London for a licence, that Mr. Wright might preach publicly in any place, within his diocese; but his lordship always refused it, because he was no minister, that is, had only been ordained among the foreign churches. But this was certainly contrary to law; for the statute 13 Eliz. cap. 12. admits the ministrations of those who had only been ordained according to the manner of the Scots, or other foreign churches: there were some scores, if not hundreds of them, now in the church; and the archbishop of Canterbury at this very time commanded Dr. Aubrey, his vicar-general, to license Mr. John Morrison, a Scots divine, who had had no other ordination than what he received from a Scots presbytery, to preach over his whole province. The words of the licence are as follow: "Since you the aforesaid John Morrison, about five years past, in the town of Garrat, in the county of Lothian, of the kingdom of Scotland, were admitted and ordained to sacred orders and the holy ministry by the imposition of hands, according to the laudable form and

¹ Strype's Ann. vol. 3. Appendix, HO. 23, 24.

rite of the reformed church of Scotland: and since the congregation of that county of Lothian is conformable to the orthodox faith, and sincere religion now received in this realm of England, and established by public authority: we therefore, as much as lies in us, and as by right we may,, approving and ratifying the form of your ordination and preferment done in such manner aforesaid, grant unto you a licence and faculty, with the consent and express command of the most reverend father in Christ, the lord Edmund by the Divine Providence archbishop of Canterbury, to us signified, that in such orders by you taken, you may, and have power in any convenient places in and throughout the whole province of Canterbury, to celebrate divine offices, to minister the sacraments, &c. as much as in us lies; and we may *de jure*, and as far as the laws of the kingdom do allow.” This licence was dated April 6, 1582, and is as full a testimonial to the validity of presbyterian ordination, as can be desired. But the other notion was growing into fashion; all orders of men are for assuming some peculiar characters and powers to themselves; the bishops will be a distinct and superior order to presbyters; and no man must be a minister of Christ, but on whom they lay their hands.¹

The behaviour of the bishop of London towards the Puritans, moved the compassion of some of the conforming clergy; the reverend Mr. Wilkin, rector of Danbury in Essex, in a letter to the lord-treasurer, writes thus:—“As some might be thought over-earnest about trifles, so on the other hand, there had been too severe and sharp punishment for the same. Though I myself think reverently of the Book of Common Prayer, yet surely it is a reverence due only to the sacred writings of Holy Scripture, to say the authors of them erred in nothing, and to none other books of men, of what learning soever. I have seen the letters of the bishops to Bullinger and Gualter, when I was at Zurich in the year 1567, in which they declare, that they had no hand in passing the book, and had no other choice, but to leave their places to Papists or accept them as they were; but they professed and promised never to urge their brethren to those things; and also, when opportunity should serve, to seek reformation.” How different was the practice of these prelates from their former professions!

But not only the clergy, but the whole country also, exclaimed against

¹ Here bishop Warburton remarks, “the Puritans were even with them; and to the *jus divinum* of episcopacy, opposed the *jus divinum* of presbytery, which was the making each other antichristian.” His lordship goes into this conclusion too hastily, and applies it without, nay against, authority, to the Puritans: they never required such as had been episcopally ordained to be reordained; but, in the height of their power, declared, “We hold ordination by a bishop to be for substance valid, and not to be disclaimed by any that have received it.” See our author, vol. 3.—Ed.

the bishops for their high proceedings; the justices of peace of the county of Suffolk were so moved, that, notwithstanding his lordship's late citation of them before the council, they wrote again to their honours, praying them to interpose in behalf of the injuries that were offered to divers godly ministers. The words of their supplication are worth remembering, because they discover the cruelty of the commissioners, who made no distinction between the vilest of criminals, and conscientious ministers. "The painful ministers of the word (say they) are marshalled with the worst malefactors, presented, indicted, arraigned, and condemned, for matters, as we presume, of very slender moment: some for leaving the holidays unhidden; some for singing the psalm *Nunc Dimittis* in the morning; some for turning the questions in baptism concerning faith, from the infants to the godfathers, which is but *you* for *thou*; some for leaving out the cross in baptism; some for leaving out the ring in marriage. A most pitiful thing it is, to see the back of the law turned to the adversary [the Papists], and the edge with all sharpness laid upon the sound and true-hearted subject.—¹

"We grant order to be the rule of the Spirit of God, and desire uniformity in all the duties of the church, according to the proportion of faith; but if these weak ceremonies are so indifferent, as to be left to the discretion of ministers, we think it (under correction) very hard to have them go under so hard handling, to the utter discredit of their whole ministry, and the profession of truth."

"We serve her majesty and the country [as magistrates and justices of the peace] according to law; we reverence the law and lawmaker; when the law speaks, we keep silence; when it commandeth, we obey. By law we proceed against all offenders; we touch none that the law spareth, and spare none that the law toucheth; we allow not of Papists; of the Family of Love; of Anabaptists, or Brownists. No, we punish all these.²

"And yet we are christened with the odious name of Puritans; a term compounded of the heresies above mentioned, which we disclaim. The Papists pretend to be pure and immaculate; the Family of Love cannot sin, they being deified (as they say) in God. But we groan under the burden of our sins, and confess them to God; and at the same time we labour to keep

¹ Strype's Annals, vol. 3. p. 183, 164.

² Bishop Maddox observes, the expressions in Strype are stronger. "We allow not of the Papists their subtilties and hypocrisies: we allow not of the Family of Love, an egg of the same nest: we allow not of the Anabaptists, and their communion: we allow not of Brown, the overthrower of church and commonwealth: we abhor all these; no (we) punish all these." This, we must own with his lordship, was not the language of real and consistent friends to liberty of conscience.—ED.

ourselves and our profession unblameable; this is our Puritanism; a name given to such magistrates and ministers and others that have a strict eye upon their juggling.

“We think ourselves bound in duty to unfold these matters to your lordships; and if you shall please to call us to the proof of them, it is the thing we most desire.”

This supplication produced a letter from the council to the judges of the assize, commanding them not to give ear to malicious informers against peaceful and faithful ministers, nor to match them at the bar with rogues, felons, or Papists; but to put a difference in the face of the world, between those of another faith, and they who differ only about ceremonies, and yet diligently and soundly preach true religion. The judges were struck with this letter, and the bishop of London, with his attendants, returned from his visitation full of discontent. Indeed his lordship had made himself so many enemies, that he grew weary of his bishopric, and petitioned the queen to exchange it for that of Ely, that he might retire and be out of the way; or rather, that he might kindle a new flame in those parts; but her majesty refused his request.

Notwithstanding these slight appearances in favour of the Puritans, two ministers of the Brownist persuasion were condemned, and put to death this summer for nonconformity, viz. Mr. Elias Thacker hanged at St. Edmunds-bury, June 4th, and Mr. John Copping two days after, June 6th, 1583. Their indictments were for spreading certain books seditiously penned by Robert Brown against the Book of Common Prayer established by the laws of this realm. The sedition charged upon Brown's book was, that it subverted the constitution of the church, and acknowledged her majesty's supremacy civilly, but not otherwise, as appears by the report which the judges sent to court, viz. That the prisoners, instead of acknowledging her majesty's supremacy in all causes, would allow it only in civil.¹ This the Judges took hold of to aggravate their offence to the queen, after they had passed sentence upon them, on the late statute of the 23d Eliz. against spreading seditious libels, and for refusing the oath of supremacy. Mr. Copping had suffered a long and illegal imprisonment from the bishop of his diocese; his wife being brought to bed while he was under confinement, he was charged with not suffering his child to be baptized; to which he answered, that his conscience could not admit it to be done with godfathers and godmothers, and he could get no preacher to do it without. He was accused farther with saying the queen was perjured, because she had sworn to set forth God's glory directly as by the

¹ Strype's Annals. vol. 3. p. 186.

Scriptures are appointed, and did not; but these were only circumstances, to support the grand charge of sedition in spreading Brown's book. However, it seemed a little hard¹ to hang men for spreading a seditious book, at a time when the author of that very book [Brown], was pardoned and set at liberty. Both the prisoners died by their principles; for though Dr. Still the archbishop's chaplain, and others, travelled and conferred with them, yet at the very hour of their death they remained immovable: they were both sound in the doctrinal articles of the church of England, and of unblemished lives.² One Wilsford a layman should have suffered with them, but upon conference with secretary Wilson, who told him the queen's supremacy might be understood only of her majesty's civil power over ecclesiastical persons, he took the oath and was discharged.

While the bishops were thus harassing honest and conscientious ministers, for scrupling the ceremonies of the church, practical religion was at a very low ebb; the fashionable vices of the times were, profane swearing, drunkenness, revelling, gaming, and profanation of the Lord's day; yet there was no discipline for these offenders, nor do I find any such, cited into the spiritual courts, or shut up in prisons. If men came to their parish-churches, and approved of the habits and ceremonies, other offences were overlooked, and the court was easy. At Paris-gardens in Southwark, there were public sports, on the Lord's day for the entertainment of great numbers of people who resorted thither; but on the 13th of January, being Sunday, it happened that one of the scaffolds, being crowded with people, fell down, by which accident some were killed, and a great many wounded. This was thought to be a judgment from heaven; for the lord-mayor, in the account he gives of it to the treasurer, says, "that it gives great occasion to acknowledge the hand of God for such abuse of his sabbath-day, and moveth me in conscience to give order for redress of such contempt of God's service; adding, that for this purpose he had treated with some justices of peace in Surrey, who expressed a very good zeal, but alleged want of commission, which he referred to the

¹ Bishop Warburton, imputes it to party and prejudice in Mr. Neal, that he doth not point out the difference in this case; which his lordship states to be the same as between "the dispensers of poison hanged for going on obstinately in mischief, and of him who compounded the poison, but was on his repentance pardoned." But no such distinction existed, and his lordship lost sight of the real state of the case. Brown did not renounce his principles till seven years after he was committed to prison for publishing his book, and was dismissed not on his repentance, but at the intercession of the lord-treasurer. So far from repenting, he went up and down inveighing against bishops, &c. and gathered a separate congregation on his own principles. See our author, p. 329, 530.—Ed.

² Strype's Ann. vol, 2. p. 532, 533.

consideration of his lordship.”¹ But the court paid no regard to such remonstrances, and the queen had her ends, in encouraging the sports, pastimes, and revellings, of the people on Sundays and holidays.

This year died the famous northern apostle Mr. Bernard Gilpin, minister of Houghton in the bishopric of Durham. He was born at Kentmire in Westmoreland, 1517, of an ancient and honourable family, and was entered into Queen’s college, Oxford, in the year 1533. He continued a Papist all the reign of king Henry VIII. but was converted by the lectures of Peter Martyr, in the beginning of the reign of Edward VI. He was remarkably honest, and open to conviction, but did not separate from the Romish communion till he was persuaded the pope was antichrist. Cuthbert Tonsal, bishop of Durham, was his uncle by the mother’s side, by whose encouragement he travelled to Paris, Louvaine, and other parts, being still for the real presence of Christ in the sacrament, though not for transubstantiation. Returning home in the days of queen Mary, his uncle placed him first in the rectory of Essington, and afterward at Houghton, a large parish containing fourteen villages; here he laboured in the work of the ministry, and was often exposed to danger, but constantly preserved by his uncle bishop Tonsal, who was averse to burning men for religion. Miserable and heathenish was the condition of these northern counties at this time, with respect to religion! Mr. Gilpin beheld it with tears of compassion, and resolved at his own expense to visit the desolate churches of Northumberland, and the parts adjoining, called Riddesdale and Tindale, once every year, to preach the gospel, and distribute to the necessities of the poor, which he continued till his death; this gained him the veneration of all ranks of people in those parts; but though he had such a powerful screen as bishop Tonsal, yet the fame of his doctrine, which was Lutheran, reaching the ears of Bonner, he sent for him to London; the reverend man ordered his servant to prepare him a long shirt, expecting to be burnt, but before he came to London queen Mary died. Upon the accession of queen Elizabeth, Mr. Gilpin, having a fair estate of his own, erected a grammar-school, and allowed maintenance for a master and usher; himself choosing out of the school such as he liked best for his own private instruction. Many learned men, who afterward adorned the church by their labours and uprightness of life, were educated by him in his domestic academy. Many gentlemen’s sons resorted to him, some of whom were boarded in the town, and others in his own house; besides, he took many poor men’s sons under his care, giving them meat, drink, clothes, and education.

¹ Strype’s Annals, vol. 2. p. 532, 533.

In the year 1560, he was offered the bishopric of Carlisle, and was urged to accept it by the earl of Bedford, bishop Sandys, and others, with the most powerful motives; but he desired to be excused, and in that resolution remained immovable: his reasons were taken from the largeness of the dioceses, which were too great for the inspection of one person; for he was so strongly possessed of the duty of bishops, and of the charge of souls that was committed to them, that he could never be persuaded to keep two livings, over both of which he could not have a personal inspection, and perform all the offices of a pastor; he added farther, that he had so many friends and relations in those parts to gratify or connive at, that he could not continue an honest man and be their bishop. But though Mr. Gilpin would not be a bishop, he supplied the place of one, by preaching, by hospitality, by erecting schools, by taking care of the poor, and providing for destitute churches; in all which he was countenanced and encouraged, by the learned and reverend James Pilkington, then bishop of Durham, by whom he was excused from subscriptions, habits, and a strict observance of ceremonies, it being his fixed opinion, that no human invention should take place in the church, instead of a divine institution. After bishop Pilkington's death Dr. Barnes was chosen his successor, who was disgusted at Mr. Gilpin's popularity, and gave him trouble: once when he was setting out upon his annual visitation to Riddesdale and Tindale, the bishop summoned him to preach before him, which he excused in the handsomest manner he could, and went his progress; but upon his return, he found himself suspended for contempt, from all ecclesiastical employments. The bishop afterward sent for him again on a sudden, and commanded him to preach, but then he pleaded his suspension, and his not being provided; the bishop immediately took off his suspension, and would not excuse his preaching, upon which he went into the pulpit, and discoursed upon the high charge of a Christian bishop; and having exposed the corruptions of the clergy, he boldly addressed himself to his lordship in these words; "Let not your lordship say, These crimes have been committed without my knowledge, for whatsoever you yourself do in person, or suffer through your connivance to be done by others, it is wholly your own; therefore, in the presence of God, angels, and men, I pronounce your fatherhood to be the author of all these evils; and I and this whole congregation will be a witness in the day of judgment, that these things have come to your ears." All men thought the bishop would have deprived Mr. Gilpin for his freedom, as soon as he came out of the pulpit, but by the good providence of God, it had quite a different effect; the bishop thanked him for his faithful reproof, and after

this suffered him to go on with his annual progress, giving him no farther disturbance. At length his lean body being quite worn out with labour and travail, and feeling the approaches of death, he commanded the poor to be called together, and took a solemn leave of them; afterward he did the like by his relations and friends; then giving himself up to God, he took his bed about the end of February, and died March 4, 1583, in the sixty-sixth year of his age. He was a heavenly man, endued with a large and generous soul, of a tall stature of body, with a Roman nose; his clothes were neat and plain; for he was frugal in his own dress, though very bountiful to others. His doors were always open for the entertainment of strangers. He boarded in his own house twenty-four scholars, most of whom were upon charity. He kept a table for the poor every Lord's day; from Michaelmas to Easter, and expended 500£. for a free school for their children. Upon the whole, he was a pious, devout, and open-hearted divine; a conscientious Nonconformist, but against separation. He was accounted a saint by his very enemies, if he had any such, being full of faith and good works; and was at last put into his grave as a shock of corn fully ripe.¹

The same year died Edmund Grindal, archbishop of Canterbury, born at Copland in the county of Cumberland, in the year. 1519, and educated in Cambridge. He was a famous preacher in king Edward's days, and was nominated by him to a bishopric, when he was only thirty-three years of age; but that king dying soon after, he went into exile, and imbibed the principles of a farther reformation than had as yet obtained in England. Upon queen Elizabeth's accession he returned to England, and was advanced first to the see of London, and then to York and Canterbury, though he could hardly persuade himself for some time to wear the habits, and comply with the ceremonies of the church; nor did he ever heartily approve them, yet thought it better to support the Reformation on that foot, than hazard it back into the hands of the Papists.² He was of a mild and moderate temper, easy of access, and affable even in his highest exaltation. He is blamed by some, for his gentle usage of the Puritans, though he used them worse than he would have done, if he had been left to himself. About a year or two after his promotion to the see of Canterbury, he lost the queen's favour on the account of the prophesyings, and was suspended for some years, during which time many Puritan ministers took shelter in the counties of Kent and Surrey, &c. which made more work for

¹ "The worth and labours of this excellent man (it was observed in the New Annual Register for 1789,) have been amply displayed in the present century, by the elegant pen of one of his own name and family."—ED.

² Grindal's Life, p. ^95.

his successor. The good old archbishop being blind and broken-hearted, the queen took off his sequestration about a year before his death, and sent to acquaint him, that if he would resign, he should have her favour, and an honourable pension; which he promised to accept within six months; but Whitgift, who was designed for his successor, refusing to enter upon the see while Grindal lived, he made a shift to hold it till his death, which happened July 6th, 1583, in the sixty-third year of his age. Camden calls him a religious and grave divine. Hollingshead says, he was so studious that his book was his bride, and his study his bride-chamber, in which he spent his eyesight, his strength, and his health. He was certainly a learned and venerable prelate, and had a high esteem for the name and doctrines of Calvin, with whom, and with the German divines, beheld a constant correspondence. His high stations did not make him proud; but if we may believe his successor in the see of York, archbishop Sandys, he must be tainted with avarice (as most of the queen's bishops were), because, within two months after he was translated to Canterbury, he gave to his kinsmen and servants, and sold for round sums of money to himself, six-score leases and patents, even then when they were thought not to be good in law.¹ But upon the whole, he was one of the best of queen Elizabeth's bishops. He lies buried in the chancel of the church at Croydon, where his effigies is to be seen at length in his doctor's robes, and in a praying posture.²

¹ Strype's Ann. vol. hit. Suppl. p. 21.

² This prelate is the Algrind of Spencer, which is the anagram of his name. The French Protestants were very much indebted to his influence and activity in obtaining for them a settlement in England, in their own method of worship. This was the beginning of the Walloon church, situated in Threadneedle-street, London; which has ever since been appropriated to the use of the French nation. British Biography, vol. 3. p. 161, Granger's Biographical History, vol. 2. p. 204, note, 8vo.—ED.