

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.

REPRINTED FROM

THE TEXT OF DR. TOULMIN'S EDITION;

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

REVISED, CORRECTED, AND ENLARGED.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THOMAS TEGG AND SON, 73, CHEAPSIDE ;

R. GRIFFIN AND CO., GLASGOW; T. T. AND H. TEGG, DUBLIN;

ALSO J. AND S. A. TEGG, SYDNEY AND HOBART TOWN.

1837.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR. DEBATES IN THE ASSEMBLY ABOUT ORDINATION. THE POWER OF THE KEYS. THE DIVINE RIGHT OF PRESBYTERIAN GOVERNMENT. COMMITTEES FOR COMPREHENSION AND TOLERATION OF THE INDEPENDENTS.

THE king's commissioners had been told at the treaty of Uxbridge, that the fate of the English monarchy depended upon its success; that if the treaty was broken off abruptly, there were a set of men in the house, who would remove the earl of Essex, and constitute such an army, as might force the parliament and king to consent to everything they demanded, or change the government into a commonwealth; whereas, if the king would yield to the necessity of the times, they might preserve the general, and not only disappoint the designs of the enemies to monarchy, but soon be in circumstances to enable his majesty to recover all he should resign. However the commissioners looked upon this as the language of despair, and made his majesty believe the divisions at Westminster would soon replace the sceptre in his own hands.¹

The house of commons had been dissatisfied with the conduct of the earls of Essex and Manchester last summer, as tending to protract the war, lest one party should establish itself upon the ruins of the other; but the warmer spirits in the house, seeing no period of their calamities this way, apprehended a decisive battle ought to be fought as soon as possible, for which purpose, after a solemn fast, it was moved that all the present officers should be discharged, and the army intrusted in such hands as they could confide in. December 9, it was resolved, that no member of either house should execute any office civil or military, during the present war; accordingly the ordinance, commonly called the self-denying ordinance, was brought in, and passed the commons ten days after, but was laid aside by the lords till after the treaty of Uxbridge, when it was revived and carried with some little opposition. The earls of Essex, Manchester, Warwick, and Denbigh, the lord Roberts, Willoughby, and others, were dismissed by this ordinance,² and all members of the house of commons, except lieutenant-general Cromwell, who after a few months was dispensed with, at the request of the new general. All the regiments were disbanded, and such only listed under the new commanders as were determined to conquer or die.

¹ Clarendon, vol. 2. p. 595.

² "Thus almost all those men, by whose interest, power, and authority, the war with the king had been undertaken, and without whom no opposition, of any weight, could possibly have been raised, were in a short time deprived of their power and influence over their own army, and obliged, as we shall soon see, to truckle before them. So little can men see into futurity! so different are the turns things take, from what men are apt to expect and depend on." Dr. Harris's Life of Oliver Cromwell, p. 118.

Sir Thomas Fairfax was appointed general,¹ and Oliver Cromwell, after some time, lieutenant-general; the clause for preservation of the king's person was left out of sir Thomas's commission; nor did it run in the name of the king and parliament, but of the parliament only. The army consisted of twenty-one thousand resolute soldiers, and was called in contempt by the royalists the new-modelled army; but their courage quickly revenged the contempt.

Sir Thomas Fairfax was a gentleman of no quick parts or elocution; but religious, faithful, valiant, and of a grave, sober, resolved disposition; neither too great nor too cunning to be directed by the parliament.² Oliver Cromwell was more bold and aspiring; and being a soldier of undaunted courage and intrepidity, proved at length too powerful for his masters. The army was more at his disposal than at Fairfax's, and the wonders they wrought sprung chiefly from his counsels.

When the old regiments were broken, the chaplains, being discharged of course, returned to their cures; and as new ones were formed, the officers applied to the parliament and assembly for a fresh recruit; but the Presbyterian ministers being possessed of warm benefices, were unwilling to undergo the fatigues of another campaign, or, it may be, to serve with men of such desperate measures. This fatal accident proved the ruin of the cause in which the parliament were engaged; for the army being destitute of chaplains, who might have restrained the irregularities of their zeal, the officers set up for preachers in their several regiments, depending upon a kind of miraculous assistance of the divine Spirit, without any study or preparation: and when their imaginations were heated, they gave vent to the most crude and undigested absurdities; nor did the evil rest there, for from preaching at the head of their regiments, they took possession of the country-pulpits where they were quartered, till at length they spread the infection over the whole nation, and brought the regular ministry into contempt. Most of the common soldiers were religious and orderly, and when released from duty spent their time in prayer and religious conferences, like men who carried their lives in their hands; but for want of prudent and regular instruction, were swallowed up in the depths of enthusiasm. Mr. Baxter therefore observes very justly, "It was the ministers that lost all by forsaking the army, and betaking themselves to an easier and quieter way of life. When the earl of Essex's army went out, each regiment had an able chaplain, but after Edgehill fight most of them went home, and left the army to their own con-

¹ Sir Thomas Fairfax's power extended to the execution of martial law and the nomination of the officers under him. The army was put solely under the command of one man. "What was this (it has been properly asked), but to put it into his power to give law to the parliament, whenever he thought fit?" Dr. Harris, *ut supra*.—ED.

² Baxter's Life, p, 48.

duct.” But, even after the decisive battle of Naseby, he admits, great numbers of the officers and soldiers were sober and orthodox; and from the little good which he did whilst among them, concludes, that if their ministers would have followed his measures, the king, the parliament, and religion, might have been saved.¹

The new-modelled troops were kept under the severest discipline, commissioners being appointed to take care that the country was not oppressed; that no soldiers were quartered in any place but by appointment of the quarter-master; that ready money be paid for all provisions and ammunition; every soldier had sixpence a day for his diet, and every trooper eightpence. No inhabitants were compelled to furnish more provisions than they were able and willing to spare, under the severest penalties; whereas the royal army, having no regular pay, lived upon the plunder of those places that had the misfortune to receive them.

May 30, the king took the town of Leicester by storm, with a very great treasure, which the country people had brought thither for security, his soldiers dividing the spoil, and treating the inhabitants in a most cruel and unmerciful manner; after this conquest, his majesty wrote to the queen, that his affairs were never in so hopeful a posture since the Rebellion.² The parliament-army were preparing to lay siege to the city of Oxford, but upon news of this disaster, had orders to follow the king, and hazard a battle at all events; whereupon sir Thomas Fairfax petitioned the two houses, to dispense with their self-denying ordinance with respect to lieutenant-general Cromwell, whose courage and counsels would be of great service in the present crisis: Cromwell was accordingly dispensed with during pleasure, and having joined the army with six hundred horse and dragoons, they overtook the king, and gave him battle June 14, at Naseby, about three miles from Harborough in Leicestershire.

The action began about ten in the morning, and ended about three or four in the afternoon, in an absolute defeat of the king’s forces, which was owing, in a great measure, to the wise conduct and resolution of lieutenant-general Cromwell on the one hand, and to the indiscreet fury and violence of prince Rupert on the other. The armies were pretty equal in number, about twelve or fourteen thousand on a side, but the parliament-soldiers were better disciplined, and fought with all the bravery and magnanimity that an enthusiastic zeal could inspire. General Fairfax, having his helmet beat off, rode up and down the field bareheaded; major-general Skippon received a wound in the beginning of the engagement, upon which being desired to go off, he answered, he would not stir as long as a man would

¹ Baxter’s Life, p. 51,56.

² Whitelocke’s Memoirs, p. 143, 144.

stand. Ireton was run through the thigh with a pike, had his horse killed under him, and was made a prisoner, but found means to escape upon the turn of the battle. The king showed himself a courageous commander, but his soldiers were struck with such a panic, that when they were once disordered they would never rally, whereas if their enemies were beaten from their ground they presently returned, and kept their ranks till they received fresh instructions.¹ When prince Rupert had routed Ireton's left wing, he lost his advantage, first, by following the chase almost three miles, and then by trying to become master of the train of artillery, before he knew the success of the main body; whereas, when Cromwell had broke the right wing of the enemy, he pursued them only a quarter of a mile, and leaving a small party of horse to prevent their rallying, returned immediately to the battle, and with his victorious troops charged the royal infantry in flank. The parliament-army took above five thousand prisoners; all the king's train of artillery, bag and baggage, with his cabinet of letters, some of which were afterward published to the world; not above six or seven hundred of his men being killed, with about one hundred and fifty officers. The king, with a party of horse, fled into Wales, and prince Rupert to Bristol; but the parliament forces pursued their victory with such eagerness, and marched with that rapidity over the whole west of England, to the very land's end, that in a few months all the royal forces were dispersed, and his majesty's garrisons surrendered almost before they were summoned.² The city of Bristol, into which prince Rupert had thrown himself, capitulated before the besiegers approached the walls, which provoked the king to that degree, that he commanded him by letter to depart the land, as did also the prince of Wales, for the security of his person; so that by the end of this campaign, the unhappy king was exposed to the mercy of his enemies, and shut up all the winter little better than a prisoner in his garrison at Oxford.

To return to the affairs of the church. When it is recollected what great numbers of clergymen had deserted to the king, or were otherwise dissatisfied with the new terms of conformity, we must conclude it very difficult to supply the vacant pulpits in the country with a learned and regular clergy: one of the universities was entirely useless, and the young students who adhered to the parliament could not obtain ordination in a legal way, because all the bishops were in the opposition, and would ordain none but those of their own principles, which was another cause of the increase of unqualified preachers. To put some stop to the clamours of the royalists, and to the mischiefs of lay-preaching, which began to appear in the army, the parliament ordained, April 26, "that no person shall be permitted to

¹ Whitelocke, p. 145. Clarendon, vol. 2. p. 658.

² Rapin, vol. 2. p. 517, 518, folio

preach who is not ordained a minister in this or some other reformed church, except such as intend the ministry, who shall be allowed for the trial of their gifts, by those that shall be appointed thereunto by both houses of parliament; and it is earnestly desired, that sir Thomas Fairfax take care, that this ordinance be put in execution in the army. It is farther ordered to be sent to the lord-mayor, and committee of the militia in London; to the governors and commanders of all forts, garrisons, forces, cities, and towns, with the like injunction; and the mayor, sheriffs, and justices of the peace, are to commit all offenders to safe custody, and give notice to the parliament, who will take a speedy course for their punishment.”¹

At the same time the lords sent to the assembly, to prepare a new directory for the ordination of ministers of the church in England, without the presence of a diocesan bishop. This took them up a great deal of time, by reason of the opposition it met with from the Erastians and Independents, but was at last accomplished, and passed into an ordinance, bearing date November 8, 1645, and was to continue in force by way of trial for twelve months; on the 28th of August following, it was prolonged for three years, at the expiration of which term it was made perpetual.

The ordinance sets forth, “That whereas the words presbyter and bishop do in Scripture signify the same function, though the title of bishop has been, by corrupt custom, appropriated to one, who has assumed to himself, in the matter of ordination, that which was not meet; which ordination, notwithstanding being performed by him, we hold for substance to be valid, and not to be disclaimed by any that have received it; and whereas it is manifest, that ordination, that is, an outward, solemn setting apart of persons for the office of the ministry in the church by preaching presbyters, is an institution of Christ, it is therefore ordained by the lords and commons, with the advice of the assembly of divines at Westminster, that the several and respective classical presbyters, within their respective bounds, may examine, approve, and ordain presbyters, according to the following Directory,”² which I have placed in the Appendix,³ and is in substance as follows:

First, “The person to be ordained must apply to the presbytery, with a testimonial of his taking the covenant, of his proficiency in his studies,” &c.

Secondly, “He is then to pass under an examination as to his religion and learning, and call to the ministry.”

Then follow rules for examination, as in the Appendix.

“After examination he shall receive a public testimonial from his examiners, which shall be read publicly before the people, and then fixed to the

¹ Husband’s Collections, p. 645.

² Rashworth, part 4. vol. 1. p, 212.

³ Appendix, No. 9.

door of the church where he preaches for approbation, with liberty to any person or persons to make exceptions.

“Upon the day of ordination a solemn fast shall be kept by the congregation, when, after a sermon, the person to be ordained shall make a public confession of his faith,¹ and declare his resolutions to be diligent and constant in the discharge of his pastoral duty. After which he shall be separated, or set apart, to the pastoral office with a short prayer, and the laying on of the hands of the ministers present. After the ordination, there is to be an exhortation to minister and people, and the whole solemnity to conclude with a psalm and a prayer.

It is farther declared, “that all ordinations, according to the former usage of the church of England, as well as those of Scotland, and other reformed churches, shall be esteemed valid.

“A register is to be kept by every presbytery of the names of the persons ordained by them, of the ministers concerned, and of the time and place where they were settled. No money or gift whatsoever shall be received from the person ordained, or from any on his behalf, for his ordination, or any thing relating to it, except for the instruments or testimonials, which shall not exceed ten shillings.

Lastly, It is resolved, “that all persons ordained according to this Directory, shall be for ever reputed and taken, to all intents and purposes, for lawfully and sufficiently authorized ministers of the church of England, and as capable of any ministerial employment in the church, as any other presbyter already ordained, or hereafter to be ordained.”

To give a short specimen of the debates upon this ordinance; when the passage in Timothy, of “laying on of the hands of the presbytery” was voted a full warrant for presbyters ordaining without a bishop, Mr. Selden, Lightfoot, and some others, entered their dissent, declaring that the imposition of hands there spoken of was only upon ordination of an elder; and though elders might ordain elders, it did not necessarily follow they might ordain bishops.

The Independents maintained the right of every particular congregation to ordain its own officers; this was debated ten days; and the arguments on both sides were afterward published by consent of the several parties, in a

¹ It deserves to be noticed here, that the advice and orders of the Westminster assembly are, on this point, very general; namely, “that the person to be ordained be asked of his faith in Jesus Christ, of his persuasion of the truth of the reformed religion according to the Scriptures, and of his zeal for the truth of the gospel and unity of the church, against error and schism.” “This, I think, is an evident presumption (observes a late writer) that the majority of the assembly were against imposing human tests, and making subscription to their confession a necessary term of communion, either to ministers or other Christians.” “The religious establishment of Scotland examined, &c.” printed for Cadell, 1771, p. 105. This is the more remarkable, as, in other instances, this synod showed themselves dogmatical and intolerant.—Ed.

book entitled, “The Grand Debate between Presbytery and Independency.”¹ At length the question being put, that it is requisite no single congregation, that can conveniently associate with others, should assume to itself the sole right of ordination, it was carried in the affirmative, the following Independent ministers entering their dissent:

Tho. Goodwin, Sidrach Simpson, Will. Greenhill, Phil. Nye, William Bridge, William Carter. Jer. Burroughs,

It was next debated, whether ordination might precede election to a particular cure or charge; Dr. Temple, Mr. Herle, Vines, Palmer, Whitaker, and Calamy, argued for the affirmative. 1. From the ordination of Timothy, Titus, and Apollos, without any particular charge. 2. Because it is a different thing to ordain to an office, and to appropriate the exercise of that office to any particular place. 3. If election must precede ordination, then there must be a new ordination upon every new election. 4. It would then follow, that a minister was no minister out of his own church or congregation. And, 5. Then a minister could not gather or plant churches, or baptize new converts, because, according to the Independents, there must first be a church before there can be a minister.²

Mr. Goodwin, Nye, Bridge, and the rest of the Independents, replied to the foregoing reasons, that Timothy and Titus were extraordinary officers—that it appeared to them absurd, to ordain an officer without a province to exercise the office in—that they saw no great inconvenience in re-ordinations, though they did not admit the consequence, that a person regularly ordained to one church, must be re-ordained upon every removal; but they asserted, that a pastor of one particular church might preserve his character in all places; and if there was extraordinary service to be done in planting new churches, or baptizing converts, the churches might send out their officers, or create new ones for that purpose. The grand difficulty with the Independents lay here, that ordination without election to a particular charge seemed to imply a conveyance of office-power, which, in their opinion, was attended with all the difficulties of a lineal succession. The debates upon this article continued several days, and issued at last in a compromise in these words: “It is agreeable to the word of God, and very expedient, that those who are to be ordained ministers, be designed to some particular church, or other ministerial charge.” And with regard to the ceremony of imposition of hands, the Independents acquiesced in the practice, provided it was attended with an open declaration, that it was not intended as a conveyance of office-power.

¹ Grand Debate, p. 185.

² MS. *penes me*.

It may seem absurd to begin the reformation of the church, with an ordinance appointing classical presbyters to ordain ministers within their several districts, when there was not as yet one classical presbytery in all England; but the urgency of affairs required it; the scarcity of ministers would not suffer a delay till the whole fabric of presbytery was erected;¹ therefore, to supply this defect for the present, the whole business was intrusted with the assembly, who voted, December 24, 1645, that a committee for examination of ministers should sit every Tuesday and Thursday in the afternoon at two o'clock, and the members of the assembly should attend in their turns, as they shall be nominated and appointed by the scribe, according to the order of their names in the register-book, five at a time, and each to attend a week.

While the point of ordination was depending, committees were chosen to prepare materials for a new form of discipline and church-government; a measure of the greater consequence, because the old form was dissolved, and no other as yet established in its room.² Here the Independents agreed with the Presbyterians, that there was a certain form of church-government laid down in the New Testament, which was of divine institution; but when they came to the question, what was that government? and, whether it was binding in all ages of the church? both the Erastians and Independents divided against them. The proposition was this, that the Scripture holds forth, that many particular congregations may, and by divine institution ought, to be under one presbyterial government. The debate lasted thirty days; the Erastians did not except against the presbyterial government as a political institution, proper to be established by the civil magistrate, but they were against the claim of a divine right. Upon this occasion Bulstrode Whitelocke, esq. one of the lay-commissioners, stood up, and made the following speech.³

“Mr. Prolocutor,

“I might blush to speak in this reverend assembly, upon the question now in debate before you, had I not, by the honour of being one of your members, seen your candour to others, and observed you to be most capable to give satisfaction to any scruple here, and to enable such as I am to satisfy objections abroad, whereof I have met with some, your question not being under secrecy.

“By government all men understand the prudent and well-ordering of persons and affairs, that men may live well and happily; and by the government of the church, the ordering and ruling of persons and matters having relation to the worship of God, in spiritual matters.

¹ Vide Appendix, No. 9.

² Vide Appendix, No. 9.

³ Whitelocke's Memorials, p. 95.

“The word presbyter was in great honour among the Jews, being given to the members of their great sanhedrin, and therefore is not now so properly to be attributed to the rulers of every small congregation. I am none of those, Mr. Prolocutor, who except against the Presbyterian government; I think it has a good foundation, and has done much good in the church of Christ.

“But, sir, whether this form of government be *jure divino* or not, may admit of some dispute; and, whether it be now requisite for you to declare, that it is so.

“If the meaning be, that it is *jure divino ecclesiastico*, then the question will be raised, of the magistrates imposing forms upon men’s consciences, for then they will be only the magistrates’ imposition. But if the meaning be *jure divino absolute*, it must then be the precept of God, and they are in a sad condition who are not under this government.

“But it is objected, that no form of government is *jure divino*, but that, in general, all things must be done decently, and in order. A government is certainly *jure divino*, but whether presbytery, episcopacy, independency, or any other form of government, be *jure divino*, or not; that is, whether there be a prescript, rule, or command, of Scripture, for any of those forms, will not be admitted by many as a clear thing.

“It may therefore not be unworthy your consideration, whether it be not more prudent at this time to forbear to declare your judgments in this point; the truth will nevertheless continue the same.

“If this government be not *jure divino*, no opinion of any council can make it so; and if it be *jure divino*, it continues so still, though you do not declare it to be so.

“I therefore humbly submit it to your judgments, whether it be not better at this time to avoid giving occasion to disputes of this nature, and only to present your judgment to the parliament, that the government of the church by presbyteries is most agreeable to the word of God, and most fit to be settled in this kingdom; or in what other expressions you may think fit to clothe your question; and I hope you may soon have a desired issue.”

Mr. Selden and St. John were of this mind: and the reverend Mr. Colman was so zealous on this side, that he declaimed against the divine right, not only in the assembly but in the pulpit, apprehending presbytery would prove as arbitrary and tyrannical as prelacy, if it came in on the foot of a divine claim. He therefore proposed, that the civil magistrate should have the sole power of the keys by way of interim, till the nation was settled.

But the Independents opposed the proposition of the divine right of presbytery, by advancing a counter divine right, of their own scheme; fifteen days they took the part of opponents, and fifteen days they were upon the defensive. To give a short specimen of their debates:

The chief inquiries were, concerning the constitution and form of the first church of Jerusalem; the subordination of synods, and of lay-elders.¹ Upon the first question the Independents maintained, that the first church at Jerusalem was not larger than could meet in one place. In support of which allegation they produced several passages from the New Testament; as, Acts i. 15, The whole number of disciples being about one hundred and twenty, met together with one accord. And Acts ii. 1, They were all with one accord in one place. When they were multiplied to three thousand, it is still said, they met together with one accord, and in one place, Acts ii. 46. When they were farther increased, multitudes being added to them, both men and women, they still met together with one accord, and in one place, Acts v. 12. 14. When the number of disciples had received yet farther addition, so that it became necessary to choose deacons to take care of the poor, the whole multitude were called together, and chose out seven men from among themselves, and set them before the apostles, Acts vi. 2. 5. And even after the general dispersion of the disciples mentioned Acts viii. it is recorded, that those who remained met together in one place as a church. Acts xv. 4. 22. “Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch.” They allowed, that there was a mention of a presbytery in Scripture, but that it was no other than the presbytery or elders of one particular church or congregation; it being no where expressed, that God has set in the church distinct sorts of presbyteries, such as, consistories, classes, provincial synods, and general assemblies, one above another. They objected also to the high powers claimed by the presbyteries, as the right of admission and exclusion from the Christian church with pains and penalties, which, as they had no foundation in Scripture, were not very consistent with the powers of the civil magistrate.

By way of reply, the Presbyterians maintained, that the church of Jerusalem was made up of more congregations than one, as appeared from the multitude of disciples mentioned in divers places;²—from the many apostles and teachers in the church of Jerusalem, who could not exercise their gifts in one assembly;—and from the diversity of languages mentioned Acts ii. and vi. Now it being granted, that the disciples were too numerous to assemble in one place, it must follow, that they were under one presbyterial government, because they are still called one church, Acts viii. 1, the elders of which are often mentioned in the same history. The ablest critics in the assembly were divided upon this head, as, Dr. Temple, Lightfoot, Selden, Colman, Vines, and others; but it was carried for the Presbyterians.

¹ Grand Debate, p. 13, &c.

² Grand Debate, p. 41.

It was alleged, in favour of the subordination of synods, that the Scripture speaks of an appeal from one or two brethren to the whole church, Matt, xviii. 15; and of the appeal of the church at Antioch to the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, Acts xv. 2.¹ But the Independents affirmed, that a synod of presbyters is no where called a church; and that the appeal of the church of Antioch was only for advice, not for a judicial determination: but that, supposing the assembly of the apostles at Jerusalem had been a synod, it could neither be provincial nor national in respect of the church at Antioch, and consequently no proof of a subordination. The masters of Jewish antiquities displayed all their learning upon this subject, for the Jewish sanhedrin being proposed as the model of their Christian presbytery, it was necessary to inquire, what were the respective powers of the ecclesiastical and civil courts under the law.² Moses having appointed, that he that would not hearken to the priest or the judge, should die, Deut. xvii. 12,—it was inferred, in favour of church-power, that the priest held one court, and the civil magistrate another; but Mr. Selden observed, that the Vulgar Latin till within these forty years reads thus, “Qui non obediverit sacerdoti ex decreto judicis morietur.” “He that will not obey the priest shall die by the sentence of the judge:” and Mr. Lightfoot added, that when the judges of inferior courts went up to Jerusalem by way of appeal, it was only for advice and consultation; but when the question was put, December 12, for a subordination of synods with lay-elders, as so many courts of judicature, with power to dispense church-censures, it was carried in the affirmative, and inserted in their humble advice, with this addition, “So Christ has furnished some in his church, besides ministers of the word, with gifts for government, and with commission to execute the same when called thereunto, who are to join with the minister in the government of the church, which officers the reformed churches generally call elders.”³

Thus the main foundations of the presbyterial government were voted of divine appointment by a very great majority; but the Independents entered their dissent in writing, and complained to the world “of the unkind usage they met with in the assembly; that the papers they offered were not read; that they were not allowed to state their own questions, being told they set themselves industriously to puzzle the cause, and render the clearest propositions obscure, rather than argue the truth or falseness of them—that it was not worth the assembly’s while to spend so much time in debating with so inconsiderable a number of men;⁴ they also declared, that the

¹ Ibid. p. 115. 128, &c.

² Lightfoot's Remarks, p. 17.

³ Vide Appendix, No. 9.

⁴ This is a specimen of that insolence of spirit, that pride and haughtiness in numbers, which a conviction of acting with the majority begets. These men did not recollect, that the

assembly refused to debate their main proposition, viz. whether a divine right of church-government did not remain with every particular congregation.”—To all which it was replied, that the assembly were not conscious they had done them any injustice, and as for the rest, they were the proper judges of their own methods of proceeding.

The Erastians, seeing how things were carried, reserved themselves for the house of commons, where they were sure to be joined by all the patrons of the Independents. The English and Scots commissioners being no less solicitous about the event, gave their friends notice to be early in their places, hoping to carry the question before the house should be full; but Mr. Glyn, perceiving their intention, spoke an hour to the point of *jus divinum*; and after him Mr. Whitelocke stood up and enlarged upon the same argument, till the house was full, when the question being put, it was carried in the negative; and that the proposition of the assembly should stand thus, “That it is lawful and agreeable to the word of God, that the church be governed by congregational, classical, and synodical assemblies.”¹

The disappointment of the Scots commissioners and their friends at the loss of this question in the house, is not to be expressed; they alarmed the citizens with the danger of the church, and prevailed with the common-council to petition the parliament [November 15,] that the Presbyterian discipline might be established, as the discipline of Jesus Christ; but the commons answered with a frown, “that the citizens must have been misinformed of the proceedings of the house, or else they would not have precipitated the judgment of parliament.” Not discouraged at this rebuke, they prevailed with the city-ministers to petition, who, when they came to the house, were told by the speaker, “they need not wait for an answer, but go home and look to the charges of their several congregations;” and immediately appointed a committee to inquire into the rise of these petitions.

The Presbyterian ministers, despairing of success with the commons, instead of yielding to the times, resolved to apply to the house of lords, who received them civilly, and promised to take their request into consideration; but no advances being made in two months, they were out of all patience, and determined to renew their application; and to give it the greater weight, prevailed with the lord-mayor and court of aldermen to join with them in presenting an address, which they did January 16, “for a speedy settlement of church-government, according to the covenant, and that no toleration might be given to Popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, profaneness, or any thing contrary to sound doctrine, and that all private assemblies might be

Christians themselves at the beginning, were an inconsiderable number of men, and the disciples of the true and faithful witness a “little flock.” They had forgotten the gracious promise made to “two or three” only, gathered together in the name of Christ.—ED.

¹ Whitelocke’s Memoirs, p. 106.

restrained.”¹ The lords thanked them for their zeal, and recommended it to the city-magistrates to suppress all such unlawful assemblies; but the houses were not to be moved as yet by such disagreeable importunity; however, this laid the foundation of those jealousies and misunderstandings between the city and parliament, which in the end proved the ruin of the Presbyterian cause.

But the fiercest contention between the assembly and parliament arose upon the power of the keys, which the former had voted to be in the eldership or presbytery, in these words, “The keys of the kingdom of heaven were committed to the officers of the church, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins, to shut the kingdom of heaven against the impenitent both by the word and censures, and to open it to the penitent by absolution; and to prevent the profanation of the holy sacrament by notorious and obstinate offenders, the said officers are to proceed by admonition, suspension from the sacrament of the Lord’s supper for a season, and by Excommunication from the church, according to the nature of the crime, and demerit of the person;”² all which power they claimed not by the laws of the land, but *Jure divino*, or by divine appointment.

The Independents claimed a like power for the brotherhood of every particular congregation, but without any civil sanctions or penalties annexed; the Erastians were for laying the communion open, and referring all crimes to the civil magistrate. When the question therefore came under consideration in the house of commons, the learned Mr. Selden delivered his opinion against all suspensions and excommunications, to this effect, “that for four thousand years there was no law to suspend persons from religious exercises. Strangers indeed were kept from the Passover, but they were Pagans, and not of the Jewish religion. The question is not now for keeping away Pagans in times of Christianity, but Protestants from Protestant worship. No divine can show, that there is any such command as this to suspend from the sacrament. No man is kept from the sacrament, *eo nomine*, because he is guilty of any sin, by the constitution of the reformed churches, or because he has not made satisfaction. Every man is a sinner; the difference is only, that one is in private, and the other in public. *Die ecclesiae* in St. Matthew were the courts of law which then sat at Jerusalem. No man can show any excommunication till the popes Victor and Zephorinus, two hundred years after Christ, first began to use them upon private quarrels, whereby it appears, that excommunication is a human invention taken from the heathens.”³

¹ Vol. Pamp. no. 34. p. 3.

² Vide Appendix, No. 9.

³ Rushworth, p. 203.

Mr. Whitelocke spoke on the same side of the question, and said, “The assembly of divines have petitioned and advised this house, that in every presbytery, or presbyterian congregation, the pastors and ruling elders may have the power of excommunication, and of suspending such as they shall judge ignorant or scandalous.¹ By pastors, I suppose, they mean themselves, and others who are or may be preachers, and would be bishops or overseers of their congregations. By ruling elders they mean, a select number of such in every congregation as shall be chosen for the execution of government and discipline therein. A pastor is one who is to feed his sheep; and if so, how improper must it be for such to desire to excommunicate any, or keep them from food; to forbid any to eat, or whomsoever they shall judge unworthy, when Christ has said, ‘Take eat, and drink, ye all of it,’ though Judas was one of them. But some have said, it is the duty of a shepherd, when he sees a sheep feeding upon that which will do him hurt, to chase him away from that pasture; and they apply this to suspending those from the sacrament whom they fear, by eating and drinking unworthily, may eat and drink their own damnation. But it ought to be observed, that it is not receiving the sacrament, but the unworthiness of the receiver, that brings destruction; and this cannot be within the judgment of any but the person himself, who alone can examine his own heart; nor can any one produce a commission for another to be judge thereof. But it is said, that ruling elders are to be joined with the pastors; now, in some country villages and congregations, perhaps, they may not be very learned, and yet the authority given them is very great: the word elders, amongst the Hebrews, signified men of the greatest power and dignity; so it was among the Romans, whose senate was so called, from *senes*, elders. The highest title among the French, Spaniards, and Italians, *seigneur*, and *signiori*, is but a corruption of the Latin word *senior*, elder. The same may be observed in our English corporations, where the best and most substantial persons are called aldermen or elder-men. Thus the title of elders maybe given to the chief men of every presbytery; but if the power of excommunication be given them, they may challenge the title of elders in the highest signification.

“Power is desired to be given to suspend from the sacrament two sorts of persons, the ignorant and scandalous; now it is possible, that they who are judged to be competent in one place may be deemed ignorant in another; however, to keep them from the ordinances is no way to improve their knowledge. Scandalous persons are likewise to be suspended, and this is to be left to the discretion of the pastors and ruling elders; but where have they such a commission? Scandalous sinners should be admonished to for-

¹ Whitelocke, p. 163, 164.

sake their evil ways, and amend their lives; and how can this be done better, than by allowing them to hear good sermons, and partake of the holy ordinances? A man may be a good physician, though he never cuts off a member from his patient; and a church may be a good church, though no member of it has ever been cut off. I have heard many complaints of the jurisdiction of the prelates, who were but few; now in this ordinance there will be a great multiplication of spiritual men in government, but I am of opinion, that where the temporal sword is sufficient for punishment of offences, there will be no need of this new discipline.”

Though the parliament did not deem it prudent wholly to reject the ordinance for excommunication, because it had been the popular complaint in the late times, that pastors of churches had not power to keep unworthy communicants from the Lord’s table; yet the speeches of these learned gentlemen made such an impression, that they resolved to render it ineffectual to all the purposes of church-tyranny; accordingly they sent to the assembly, to specify in writing what degrees of knowledge in the Christian religion were necessary to qualify persons for the communion; and, what sorts of scandal deserved suspension or excommunication. Which, after much controversy, they presented to the houses, who inserted them in the body of their ordinance for suspension from the Lord’s supper, dated October 20, 1645, together with certain provisoes of their own.

The ordinance sets forth, that the several elderships within their respective limits, shall have power to suspend, from the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, all ignorant and scandalous persons, within the rules and directions hereafter mentioned, and no others.¹

Rules for suspending from the sacrament in case of ignorance.

“All that do not know and believe the being of a God, and the holy Trinity:—They that are not acquainted with original sin, and the fall of man:—They that do not believe Christ to be God and man, and our only mediator and redeemer;—that Christ and his benefits are applied only by faith; which faith is the gift of God, and implies a trusting in him, for the remission of sins, and life everlasting;—the necessity of sincere repentance, and a holy life, in order to salvation;—the nature and importance of the two sacraments, especially of the Lord’s Supper;—that the souls of the faithful do immediately live with Christ after death; and the souls of the wicked immediately go to hell;—the resurrection of the body, and a final judgment.”

Rules for suspension in case of scandal.

¹ Rushworth, part 4. vol. 1. p. 211.

“The elderships shall have power to suspend from the sacrament all scandalous persons hereafter mentioned, and no others, being duly convicted by the oaths of two witnesses, or their own confession; that is to say,

“All blasphemers against God, his holy word, or sacraments.

“Incestuous persons; adulterers; fornicators; drunkards; profane swearers and cursers; murderers.

“Worshippers of images, crosses, crucifixes, or relics.

“All that make images of the Trinity, or of any person thereof.

“All religious worshippers of saints, angels, or any mere creature.

“Such as declare themselves not to be in charity with their neighbours.

“Such as shall challenge others to a duel, or that shall accept such challenge.

“Such as knowingly shall carry a challenge either by word, message, or writing.

“Such as profane the Lord’s day by dancing, playing at cards or dice, or any other game; or that shall on the Lord’s day use masking, wakes, shooting, bowling, playing at football or stool-ball, wrestling; or that shall resort to plays, interludes, fencing, bull-baiting, or bear-baiting; or that shall use hawking, hunting, coursing, fishing, or fowling; or that shall publicly expose any wares to sale, otherwise than is provided by the ordinance of April 6, 1644; or, that shall travel on the Lord’s day without reasonable cause.

“Such as keep known stews, or brothel-houses; or that shall solicit the chastity of any person for himself, or another.

“Such parents as give their consent to marry their children to Papists; and such as do themselves marry a Papist.

“Such as consult for advice, witches, wizards, or fortune-tellers.

“Such as assault their parents, or any magistrate, minister, or elder, in the execution of his office.

“Such as shall be legally attainted of barratry, forgery, extortion, or bribery.

“And the several elderships shall have power to suspend all ministers who shall be duly convicted of any of the crimes above mentioned, from giving or receiving the Lord’s supper.

“Persons suspended by one congregation shall not be admitted to the sacrament by another, without certificate from that congregation of which he was a member. But in all cases of suspension, if the party suspended shall manifest his repentance before the eldership by whom he was suspended, he shall be re-admitted to the Lord’s supper, and the suspension taken off.”

But then follow the provisoes, which stripped the presbyteries of that power of the keys which they were reaching at.

“Provided always, that if any person find himself aggrieved with the proceedings of the presbytery to which he belongs, he may appeal to the classical eldership; from them to the provincial assembly; from them to the national; and from them to the parliament.

It is farther provided, “that the cognizance and examination of all capital offences shall be reserved entire to the magistrate appointed by the laws of the kingdom, who, upon his committing the party to prison, shall make a certificate to the eldership of the Congregation to which they belonged, who may thereupon suspend them from the sacrament.

“The presbytery or eldership shall not have cognizance of anything relating to contracts, payments, or demands: or of any matter of conveyance, title, interest, or property, in lands or goods.

“No use shall be made of any confession, or proof made before an eldership, at any trial at law of any person for any offence.

“And it is farther ordained, that those members of parliament who are members of the assembly of divines, or any seven of them, shall be a standing committee, to consider of such other offences or scandals, not mentioned in this ordinance, which may be conceived to be a sufficient cause of suspension from the sacrament, and shall lay them before the parliament.”

By an ordinance of June 5, 1646, a discretionary power was lodged in a committee of lords and commons, not less than nine, to adjudge and determine scandalous offences, not formerly enumerated, and report them to the two houses, that if they concurred with the committee they might be added to the catalogue.

By these provisos it is evident the parliament were determined not to part with the spiritual sword, or subject their civil properties to the power of the church, which gave great offence to the Scots commissioners, and to most of the English Presbyterians, who declaimed against the ordinance, as built upon Erastian principles, and depriving the church of that which it claimed by a divine institution. They allowed of appeals from one spiritual court to another, but declared openly from the pulpit and press, that appeals to the parliament or civil magistrate, as the dernier resort, were insufferable. The parliament, observing their ambition of making the church independent of the state, girt the laws closer about them, and subjected their determinations more immediately to the civil magistrate, by an ordinance dated March 14, 1645–6, which enacts, “that an appeal shall lie from the decisions of every classis, to the commissioners chosen by parliament out of every province, and from them to the parliament itself. That if any person commit any scandalous offences not mentioned in the ordinance, the minister may forbear to administer the sacrament to him for that time; but then he shall, within eight days, certify the same to the commissioners, who

shall send up the case, with their opinions, to the parliament, by whose determination the eldership shall abide.”

This ordinance of suspension from the sacrament was extorted from the two houses before the time, by the importunate solicitations of the city-clergy; for as yet there were no classes or presbyteries in any part of England, which ought to have been erected before they had determined their powers. The houses had voted, that there should be a choice of lay-elders throughout England and Wales, and had laid down some rules for this purpose August 19, 1645; but it was the 14th of March following before it passed into a law.

It was then ordained, 1. “That there be forthwith a choice of [ruling] elders throughout the kingdom of England and dominion of Wales.

2. “That public notice be given of such election in every parish, by the minister of the church, a fortnight before; and that on the Lord’s day on which the choice is to be made, a sermon be preached suitable to the occasion.

3. “Elections shall be made by the congregation, or the major part of them then assembled, being heads of families, and such as have taken the covenant.

4. “That certain persons be appointed triers in every classis, viz. six ministers and three laymen, whereof seven to be a quorum, to determine the validity of elections. All members of parliament, and peers of the realm, to be triers in the parishes wherein they live.

5. No man to be a ruling elder but for one congregation, and that in the parish where he lives.

6. “The qualifications of a ruling elder are, that he be of good understanding in religion, sound in the faith, prudent, discreet, grave, of unblameable conversation, willing to undergo the office, and in communion with the church.

7. “All parishes, privileged places, exempt jurisdictions, and all other places whatsoever, shall be brought under the exercise of congregational, classical, provincial, and national assemblies, except chapels within any of the king’s houses, or the house of peers, which shall continue free for the exercise of religion, according to the Directory, but not otherwise.

8. “The province of London shall be divided into twelve classical elderships, each to contain about twelve parishes of the city, and parts adjacent, and these to be the boundaries of the province of London.

9. “The several counties of England and Wales shall be divided into classical presbyteries, by persons to be appointed by parliament for this purpose, who shall settle the boundaries of each classis, and certify the same to the parliament for their approbation.

10. “The presbytery or eldership of every parish shall meet once a week; the classical assemblies of each province once a month, by adjournment, in such places as may be most convenient; provincial assemblies shall meet twice a year; national assemblies as often as they shall be summoned by parliament, and shall continue sitting as long as the parliament shall direct and appoint, and not otherwise.

11. “Every congregational or parochial eldership shall send two elders, or more, not exceeding four, and one minister, to the classical assembly; every classical assembly within the province shall send two ministers, and four ruling elders at least, but not to exceed nine, to the provincial assembly. Every provincial assembly shall appoint two ministers, and four ruling elders, which shall constitute a national assembly, when such a one shall be summoned by parliament.”¹

When this ordinance had passed the commons, it stuck a considerable time with the lords, insomuch that the Presbyterian clergy thought it necessary to quicken them by a petition, May 29, under the hands of three hundred ministers, of Suffolk and Essex, lamenting the decay of religion, and the want of church-discipline, and beseeching their lordships to put the finishing hand to the bill so long depending; which they did accordingly June 6, 1646.

Thus the Presbyterian form of church-government became the national establishment, by way of probation, as far as an ordinance of parliament could make it; for the preamble sets forth, “that if upon trial it was not found acceptable, it should be reversed or amended. It declares farther, that the two houses found it very difficult to make their new settlement agree with the laws and government of the kingdom; that therefore it could not be expected, that a present rule in every particular should be settled at once, but that there will be need of supplements and additions, and perhaps alterations, as experience shall bring to light the necessity thereof.”

The parliament apprehended they had now established the plan of the Presbyterian discipline, though it proved not to the satisfaction of any one party of Christians; so hard is it to make a good settlement when men dig up all at once old foundations. The Presbyterian hierarchy was as narrow as the prelatical: and as it did not allow a liberty of conscience, claiming a civil as well as ecclesiastical authority over men’s persons and properties, it was equally, if not more, insufferable. Bishop Kennet observes, that the settling presbytery was supported by the fear and love of the Scots army, and that when they were gone home it was better managed by the English army, who were for independency and a principle of toleration; but as things stood nobody was pleased; the Episcopalians and Independents were ex-

¹ Rushworth, p. 226.

cluded; and because the parliament would not give the several presbyteries an absolute power over their communicants, but reserved the last appeal to themselves, neither the Scots nor English Presbyterians would accept it.

When the scheme was laid before the Scots parliament and general assembly, as a plan of uniformity between the two nations, they insisted upon the following amendments:—

(1) “That no godly minister be excluded from being a member of classical, provincial, or national assemblies.

(2.) “That the ordinary time for the meeting of the national assembly may be fixed; with a reserve of power to the parliament to convene them when they please, and a liberty to the church to meet oftener on necessary occasions.

(3.) “That the congregational eldership may have power to judge in cases of scandal not expressed. This they conceive cannot be construed lodging an arbitrary power in the church; whereas on the other hand the appointing such provincial commissioners as are settled in the ordinance, will occasion disputes, create a disconformity between this and other churches, and is a mixture in church-government altogether without precedent. This business therefore they conceive may be better managed by assemblies of ministers and ruling elders.

(4.) “That the ordinance for ordination of ministers may be perpetual.

(5.) “The manner of subjecting church-assemblies to the control and decision of parliament, being very liable to mistakes; the exemption likewise of persons of distinction from ecclesiastical censures; and the administering the sacrament to some persons, against the conscience of the ministry and elderships; these and some other particulars, being more than they can admit, they desire may be altered to general satisfaction.

(6.) “As to the articles relating to the perpetual officers of the church, with their respective functions; the order and power of church-assemblies; the directions for public repentance or penance; the rules for excommunication and absolution;”¹ all these they desire may be fixed and settled pursuant to the covenant, and with the joint advice of the divines of both kingdoms [i. e. the assembly at Westminster] long since offered to both houses.

After the delivery of these papers by the Scots commissioners, and before the houses had returned an answer, they were published with a preface by a private hand, which provoked the houses to such a degree, that, April 14, they voted it to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman, which was done accordingly. April 17, the commons published their answer to the commissioners’ papers, in which they declare to the world, “that their real intentions are to settle religion according to the covenant, and to maintain

¹ Rushworth, p. 253.

the ancient and fundamental government of this kingdom. They think it strange that any sober and modest men should imagine, they are unwilling to settle any government in the church, after they have declared so fully for the Presbyterian; have taken so much pains for the settling it; have passed most of the particulars brought to them by the assembly of divines, without any material alteration, save in the point of commissioners; and have published so many ordinances for putting the same in execution; only because they cannot consent to the granting an arbitrary and unlimited power and jurisdiction to near ten thousand judicatories to be erected within this kingdom, and this demanded in such a way as is not consistent with the fundamental laws and government of the same, and by necessary consequence excluding the parliament of England from the exercise of all ecclesiastical jurisdiction. This, say they, has been the great cause that church-government has not been long since settled; and we have the more reason not to part with this power out of the hands of the civil magistrate, since the experience of all ages will manifest, that the reformation and purity of religion, and the preservation and protection of the people of God in this kingdom, have, under God, been owing to the parliament's exercise of this power. If then the minds of any are disturbed for want of the present settling of church-government, let them apply to those [ministers] who, having sufficient power and direction from the houses on that behalf, have not as yet put the same in execution."

The English Presbyterians, having resolved to stand and fall with the Scots, refused peremptorily to comply with the ordinance, relying upon the assistance and support of that nation. Mr. Marshal stood up in the assembly, March 20, and said, that since an ordinance of parliament for church-government was now published, and speedily to be put in execution; and since there were some things in that ordinance which lay very hard upon his conscience, and upon the consciences of many of his brethren (though he blessed God for the zeal of the two houses in settling the government of the church thus far), yet being much pressed in spirit with some things contained therein, he moved, that a committee might be appointed to examine what things in the ordinance were contrary to their consciences, and to prepare a petition to present them to the two houses.¹

A petition was accordingly drawn up, and presented March 23, by the whole assembly, with Mr. Marshal at their head. In this petition they assert the divine right of the Presbyterian government, and complain of a clause in the late ordinance, which establishes an appeal from the censures of the church to a committee of parliament. It was a sanguine and daring attempt of these divines, who were called together only for their advice, to examine

¹ MS. *penes me*, sess. 608.

and censure the ordinances of parliament, and dispute in this manner with their superiors; the commons, alarmed at this petition, appointed a committee to take into consideration the matter and manner of it, who, after some time, reported it as their opinion, that the assembly of divines in their late petition had broken the privileges of parliament, and were guilty of a pre-munire; and whereas they insisted so peremptorily on the *jus divinum* of the Presbyterian government, the committee had drawn up certain queries, which they desired the assembly might resolve for their satisfaction; the house agreed to the report of the committee, and on the 30th of April sent sir John Evelin, Mr. Nathaniel Fiennes, and Mr. Browne, to the assembly, to acquaint them with their resolutions. These gentlemen set before them their rash and imprudent conduct, and in several speeches showed wherein they had exceeded their province, which was to advise the houses in such points as they should lay before them, but not to dictate to those to whom they owed their being an assembly. Then they read the votes above mentioned, and delivered in the following questions, with the orders of the house thereupon:—

Questions propounded to the assembly of divines by the house of commons, touching the point of jus divinum in the matters of church-government,

1. “Whether the congregational and presbyterial elderships appointed by ordinance of parliament, or any other congregational or presbyterial elderships, are *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ? and whether any particular church-government be *jure divino*? and, what that government is?¹

2. “Whether all the members of the said elderships, as members thereof, or which of them, are *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ?

3. “Whether the classical, provincial, and national assemblies, all or any of them, and which of them, are *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ?

4. “Whether appeals from congregational elderships to classical, provincial, and national assemblies, or any of them, and to which of them, are *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ? and whether their powers upon such appeals are *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ?

5. “Whether oecumenical assemblies are *jure divino*? and whether there be appeals from any of the former assemblies to the said oecumenical *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ?

¹ Rushworth, p., 260.

6. “Whether by the word of God, the power of judging and declaring what are such notorious and scandalous offences, for which persons guilty thereof are to be kept from the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, and of convening before them, trying, and actually suspending from the sacrament of the Lord’s supper such offenders, is either in the congregational eldership, presbytery, or in any other eldership, congregation, or persons? and whether such powers are in them only, or any of them, and in which of them, *jure divino*, and by the will and appointment of Jesus Christ?

7. “Whether there be any certain and particular rules expressed in the word of God to direct the elderships or presbyteries, congregations or persons, or any of them, in the exercise and execution of the powers aforesaid, and what are those rules?

8. “Is there anything contained in the word of God, that the supreme magistracy in a Christian state may not judge and determine what are the aforesaid notorious and scandalous offences, and the manner of suspension for the same; and in what particulars concerning the premises is the said supreme magistracy by the word of God excluded?

9. “Whether the provision of commissioners to judge of scandals not enumerated (as they are authorised by the ordinance of parliament) be contrary to that way of government which Christ has appointed in his church? and, wherein are they so contrary?”

In the assembly’s answer to these propositions the house of commons ordered the proofs from Scripture to be set down, with the several texts at large, in the express words of the same; and that every minister of the assembly, who should be present at the debate of any of these questions, should subscribe his respective name in the affirmative or negative, according as he gave his vote; and that those who dissented from the major part should set down their positive opinions, with the express texts of Scripture upon which their opinions are grounded.

It is easy to discover the masterly hands of Mr. Selden and Whitelocke in these questions; which were sent to the assembly not with any prospect of a satisfactory answer, but to employ, and, it may be, to divide them, till they saw how they were like to settle with the king. The houses were afraid of being fettered with the Scots discipline, and yet the Scots were not to be disgusted, because they had an army in the north, to whom the king had committed the custody of his person.

As soon as the assembly had heard the resolutions of the house of commons above mentioned, and the questions read, first by sir J. Evelin, and then by their scribe, they adjourned in a very great fright till next morning, in order to consult their brethren in the city, and then appointed a day of fasting and humiliation for themselves, in reference to their present circumstances, and sent letters to all the members to give their attendance.

The fast was observed within their own walls on Wednesday May 6, from nine in the morning till four in the afternoon; and committees were appointed to consider of an answer to the questions, whose report we shall consider under the next year.

In the meantime, we must go back a little, to take a view of the attempts which were making to comprehend the Independents, or dissenting brethren in the assembly within the new establishment, or at least to obtain a toleration for them;¹ the parliament had ordered, September 13, 1644, that the “committee of lords and commons appointed to treat with the Scots commissioners, and the committee of divines, do take into consideration the differences of the opinions of the members of the assembly in point of church-government, and endeavour a union if possible; and if that cannot be accomplished, endeavour to find out some way how far tender consciences, who cannot in all things submit to the same rule, may be borne with, according to the word of God, and consistent with the public peace.” This was called the grand committee of accommodation, which met, the first time, September 20, and chose a sub-committee of six divines of the assembly, to consider the points of difference, and to prepare materials for the consideration of the grand committee: the names of these divines were, the reverend Mr. Marshal, Mr. Herle, Mr. Vines, Dr. Temple, Mr. Goodwin, and Mr. Nye, who, after several consultations among themselves, delivered to the committee certain propositions [October 15, 1644], which were read by Mr. Vines, their chairman: the Independents would have stated the points in variance between the two parties, and endeavoured a compromise while the discipline of the church was depending; but the Presbyterians insisted, that the new form of government should first pass into a law as a standard, before the exceptions of the Independents be considered; upon which they were adjourned by order of the house of commons, till the affair should be determined in the assembly, who agreed April 4, 1645, that the brethren who had entered their dissent against the Presbyterian government should be a committee to bring in the whole frame of their government in a body, with their grounds and reasons.² The Independents desired liberty to bring in their objections by parts, as the Presbyterians had done their advices; but this not being admitted, they desired time to perfect their plan before any other scheme passed into a law; but the Presbyterians, without any regard to the compromise, by the assistance of their Scots friends, pushed the affair to a conclusion in parliament; upon which the Independents laid aside their own model, and published a remonstrance, complaining of the artful conduct of the assembly, and that the discipline of

¹ Papers for Accommodation, p. 1.

² Remonstrance, p. 3.

the church being fixed, it was too late to think any more of a comprehension. The house of commons having seen their mistake, resumed this affair with their own hands, and by an order dated November 6, 1645, revived the committee of accommodation, which besides the Scots commissioners, consisted of the following peers, viz.

Earl of Northumberland, Lord Visc. Say and Seale, Lord Howard.
Earl of Manchester, Lord Wharton,

These were to be met by the following members of the assembly, viz.

Dr. Burgess, Mr. Marshal, Mr. Herle, Mr. Reynolds,
Dr. Hoyle, Mr. White, Mr. Vines, Mr. Hill,
Dr. Temple, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Tuckney, Mr. Arrowsmith,
Dr. Smith, Mr. Seaman, Mr. Newcomen, Mr. Young;

with the dissenting brethren of the assembly,

Mr. T. Goodwin, Mr. Nye, Mr. Bridge,
Mr. Simpson, Mr. Burroughs, Mr. Drury.

The committee met in the Jerusalem-chamber November 17, and would have entered upon a scheme for comprehension, but the Independents moved only for an indulgence or toleration, observing, that, as they had already moved in the assembly and elsewhere, that their scheme of government might be debated before the Presbyterian had passed into a law, and for this purpose had offered to prepare a complete model, if they might have been indulged a few days,¹ and that having been overruled, and another form of government settled; they apprehended themselves shut out from the establishment, and precluded from any farther attempts toward a union or comprehension; but still they were willing to enter upon the second part of the parliament's order, which was to consider, how far tender consciences, who cannot in all things submit to the established rule, may be indulged, consistent with the word of God and the public peace. Accordingly in their next meeting, December 4, they offered the following proposals:

Taking for granted that both sides shall agree in one confession of faith, they humbly crave,

1. That their congregations may have the power of ordination within themselves.

2. That they may not be brought under the power of classes, nor forced to communicate in those parish-churches where they dwell, but that they may have liberty to join with such congregations as they prefer, and that such congregations may have power of all church censures within them-

¹ Papers for Accommodation, p. 11. 21.

selves, subject only to parliament; and be as so many exempt or privileged places.

To the preamble the Presbyterians replied, that only such as agreed to their confession of faith and Directory should have the benefit of the forbearance to be agreed on, with which the committee concurred; but the Independents would admit only of the affirmative, that such as agree with them should be tolerated; and would not consent to the negative, so as to set bounds or limits of forbearance to tender consciences, nor make such an agreement a necessary qualification for receiving the sacrament.¹

To the request of the Independents, of being exempted from the jurisdiction of their classes, and having a liberty of erecting separate congregations, the Presbyterians replied,

1. That this implied a total separation from the established rule.
2. The lawfulness of gathering churches out of other true churches.
3. That the parliament would then destroy what they had set up.
4. That the members of Independent churches would then have greater privilege than those of the establishment.
5. That this would countenance a perpetual schism. And,
6. Introduce all manner of confusion in families.²

They therefore proposed, that such as, after conference with their parish-minister, were not satisfied with the establishment, should not be compelled to communicate in the Lord's supper, nor be liable to censures from classes or synods, provided they joined with the parish-congregation where they lived, and were under the government of it in other respects.

The Independents replied, that they did not intend a total separation, but should agree with their brethren in the most essential points; as in worshipping according to the Directory, in choosing the same officers, pastors, teachers, ruling elders, with the same qualifications as in the rule. That they should require the same qualifications in their members as the assembly had advised, that is, visible saints, professing faith in Christ, and obedience to the rules of faith and life taught by Christ and his apostles;³ that they should practise the same church-censures, being accountable for their conduct to their civil superiors. They would also hold occasional communion with the Presbyterian churches, in baptism and the Lord's supper, communicating occasionally with them, and receiving their members to communion as occasion required. Their ministers should preach for each other, and in cases of difficulty they would call in their assistance and advice; and when an ordination falls out, they would desire the presence and approbation of their ministers with their own. Now surely, say they, this does not

¹ Ibid. p. 18, 19, 26, 27.

² Papers of Accommodation, p. 20, 21.

³ Ibid. p. 29, 30.

imply a total separation; but if in some things men cannot comply with the established rule without sin, we think such persons ought not to live without communicating in the Lord's supper all their days, rather than gather into churches where they may enjoy all ordinances without offence to their consciences—nor ought such separation to be accounted schism, which is a name of reproach we desire not to be branded with, when we are willing to maintain Christian love and communion with our neighbours, as far as our consciences will permit.¹—They add farther, that if the state is pleased to grant them this liberty, they will refer themselves to the wisdom of the legislature to consider of limiting their congregations to a certain number, to be as so many receptacles for pious persons of tender consciences.²

The Presbyterians in their next reply, December 23, after having blamed the Independents for not going upon a comprehension, argue against the lawfulness of a separation after this manner: “that if a pretence of conscience be a sufficient ground of separation, men may gather impure and corrupt churches out of purer, because upon the dictates of an erring conscience they may disallow that which is pure, and set up that which is agreeable to their erring consciences; and we very much doubt, say they, whether tenderness of conscience in doubtful points will justify a separation; it may oblige men to forbear communion, but not to set up a contrary practice. If a church impose anything that is sinful, we must forbear to comply, yet without separation, as was the practice of the Puritans in the late times.”³—They then argue, from the concessions of the Independents, that because they agree with them in so many material points, therefore they should not separate. “If (say they) you can communicate with our church occasionally, once, or a second and third time without sin, we know no reason why you may not do it constantly, and then separation will be needless—as for such a toleration as our brethren desire, we apprehend it will open a door to all sects; and though the Independents now plead for it, their brethren in New England do not allow it.”⁴

As to the charge of schism, they admit, that difference in judgment in some particular points is not schism; nor does an inconformity to some things enjoined deserve that name; but our brethren desire farther to set up separate communions, which is a manifest rupture of our societies into others, and is therefore a schism in the body.⁵ This is setting up altar against altar, allowing our churches (as the Independents do) to be true churches; for St. Austin says, “Schismaticos facit non di versa fides, sed commun-

¹ Ibid. p. 35, 36.

² Papers of Accommodation, p. 40.

³ Ibid. p. 51.

⁴ Ibid. p. 56.

⁵ Ibid. p. 65, 73, 71.

ionis disrupta societas.”¹ And we conceive, it is the cause of the separation that makes schism, and not the separation itself; if then the cause of our brethren’s separation be not sufficient, by what other name can it be called? To all which they add, that this indulgence, if granted, will be the mother of all contentions, strifes, heresies, and confusions, in the church; and contrary to their covenant, which obliges them to endeavour to their utmost a uniformity.

When the committee met the next time, February 2, 1645–6, the Independents replied chiefly to the point of uniformity, and argued, that it was not necessary to the peace of the churches; and ought not to extend beyond people’s light and measure of understanding, according to the apostolical canon, “As far as we have attained let us walk by the same rule,” Phil. iii. 15).² As for a mere exemption from the censures of the classes, they declared frankly they could not acquiesce in it, because it would deprive them of the enjoyment of the Lord’s supper; and that it was very hard to urge, that because they came so near the brethren, therefore they should be obliged to a total and constant conformity.

The committee met the last time, March 9, when the sub-committee of Presbyterian divines answered the last paper of the Independents, maintaining all their former positions, and concluding in this strange and wonderful manner; “that whereas their brethren say, that uniformity ought to be urged no farther than is agreeable to all men’s consciences, and to their edification; it seems to them, as if their brethren not only desired liberty of conscience for themselves, but for all men, and would have us think, that we are bound by our covenant to bring the churches in the three kingdoms to no nearer a conjunction and uniformity than is consistent with the liberty of all men’s consciences; which, whether it be the sense of the covenant, we leave with the honourable committee.”³

Hereupon the reverend Mr. Jer. Burroughs, a divine of great candour and moderation, declared in the name of the Independents, “that if their congregations might not be exempted from that coercive power of the classes; if they might not have liberty to govern themselves in their own way, as long as they behaved peaceably towards the civil magistrate; they were resolved to suffer, or go to some other place of the world, where they might enjoy their liberty. But while men think there is no way of peace but by forcing all to be of the same mind (says he), while they think the civil sword is an ordinance of God to determine all controversies of divinity, and that it must needs be attended with fines and imprisonment to the disobedient; while they apprehend there is no medium between a strict uniformity,

¹ [It is not a perverse faith that makes schismatics, but a broken society of communion.]

² Ibid. p. 86.

³ Papers for Accommodation, p. 123.

and a general confusion of all things; while these sentiments prevail, there must be a base subjection of men's consciences to slavery, a suppression of much truth, and great disturbances in the Christian world."

Thus ended the last committee of lords and commons, and assembly of divines, for accommodation, which adjourned to a certain day, but being then diverted by other affairs never met again. Little did the Presbyterian divines imagine, that in less than twenty years all their artillery would be turned against themselves; that they should be excluded the establishment by an act of prelatical uniformity; that they should be reduced to the necessity of pleading for that indulgence which they now denied their brethren; and esteem it their duty to gather churches for separate worship out of others, which they allowed to be true ones. If the leading Presbyterians in the assembly and city had carried it with temper towards the Independents, on the foot of a limited toleration, they had, in all likelihood, prevented the disputes between the army and parliament, which were the ruin of both; they might then have saved the constitution, and made their own terms with the king, who was now their prisoner; but they were enamoured with the charms of covenant-uniformity, and the divine right of their presbytery, which, after all, the parliament would not admit in its full extent. Mr. Baxter, who was no friend of the Independents, says, "that the Presbyterian ministers were so little sensible of their own infirmities, that they would not agree to tolerate those who were not only tolerable, but worthy instruments and members in the churches, prudent men, who were for union in things necessary, for liberty in things unnecessary, and for charity in all; but they could not be heard."¹

Great was the resort of the city-divines to Sion college at this time, where there was a kind of synod every Monday, to consult proper methods to propagate religion, and support the assembly at Westminster in their opposition to the toleration of sectaries; for this purpose they wrote them a letter, dated January 15, 1645-6, in which they recite the arguments of the committee, and beseech them to oppose with all their might the great Diana of the Independents,² and not suffer their new establishment to be strangled in the birth by a lawless toleration.

¹ Baxter's Life, p. 103.

² Their Diana was toleration, of which the ministers at Sion-college expressed their detestation and abhorrence; and the design of their letter was to show the unreasonableness, the sin, and the mischievous consequences, of it. "Not (said they) that we can harbour the least jealousy of your zeal, fidelity, or industry, in the opposing and extirpating of such a root of gall and bitterness as toleration is, and will be, both in present and future ages." Another instance of the same bitter spirit appeared in a piece published by the ministers and elders of London, met together in a provincial assembly November 2, 1749, entitled "A vindication of the presbyterial government and ministry:" in which they represent the doctrine of universal toleration, as contrary to godliness, opening a door to libertinism and profaneness, and a tenet to be rejected as soul poison. The ministers of Lancashire pub-

The whole Scots nation was also commanded into the service; the parliament of that kingdom wrote to the two houses at Westminster, February 3, telling them, that “it was expected the honourable houses would add the civil sanction to what the pious and learned assembly have advised; and I am commanded by the parliament of this kingdom (says the president) to demand it, and I do in their names demand it. And the parliament of this kingdom is persuaded, that the piety and wisdom of the honourable houses will never admit toleration of any sects or schisms contrary to our solemn league and covenant.”¹ At the same time they appealed to the people, and published a declaration against toleration of sectaries and liberty of conscience; in which, after having taken notice of their great services, they observe, that there is a party in England who are endeavouring to supplant the true religion by pleading for liberty of conscience, which (say they) is the nourisher of all heresies and schisms. They then declare against all such notions as are inconsistent with the truth of religion, and against opening a door to licentiousness, which, to the utmost of their power, they will endeavour to oppose; and as they have all entered into one covenant, so to the last man in the kingdom they will go on in the preservation of it. And however the parliament of England may determine in point of toleration and liberty of conscience, they are resolved not to make the least start, but to live and die, for the glory of God, in the entire preservation of the truth.

Most of the sermons before the house of commons, at their monthly fasts, spoke the language of severity, and called upon the magistrate to draw his sword against the sectaries. The press teemed with pamphlets of the same nature; Mr. Prynne against J. Goodwin says, that if the parliament and synod establish presbytery, the Independents and all others are bound to submit, under pain of obstinacy. Another writes, that to let men serve God according to the persuasion of their own consciences, is to cast out one devil that seven worse may enter.

But the cause of liberty was not destitute of advocates at this time; the Independents pleaded for a toleration so far as to include themselves and the sober Anabaptists, but did not put the controversy on the most generous foundation; they were for tolerating all who agreed in the fundamentals of Christianity, but when they came to enumerate fundamentals they were sad-

lished a paper in 1648, expressing their harmonious consent with their brethren in London; and remonstrate against toleration, as putting a cup of poison into the hand of a child, and a sword into that of a madman; as letting loose madmen with firebrands in their hands, and appointing a city of refuge in men’s consciences, for the devil to fly to; and instead of providing for tender consciences, taking away all conscience. In the same year, another paper was published in Warwickshire by forty-three ministers, breathing the same spirit, and expressing the like sentiments. Crosby’s *History of the English Baptists*, vol. 1. p. 188. 192.—ED.

¹ Rushworth, p. 234.

ly embarrassed, as all must be who plead the cause of liberty, and yet do not place the religious and civil rights of mankind on a separate basis: a man may be an orthodox believer, and yet deserve death as a traitor to his king and country; and on the other hand, a heretic or errant nonconformist to the established religion may be a loyal and dutiful subject, and deserve the highest preferment his prince can bestow.

The letter of the city-divines to the assembly received a quick reply from a writer of more generous principles, who complains, “that the Presbyterians, not content with their own freedom and liberty, nor with having their form of government made the national establishment, were grasping at as much power as the prelates before them had usurped; for this purpose they had obtained the privilege of licensing the press, that nothing might be written against them but what they should please to approve;¹ they were continually soliciting the parliament to establish their church-government, which they called the government of Christ, with a coercive powder; they were always busy in framing petitions, and engaging the magistrates of the city to present them to the houses; and not content with this, they were now moving the assembly of divines, of whom themselves are a considerable part, to become the patrons of oppression.” Our author maintains, that, “liberty of conscience is the natural right of every man, though of all parties of men those deserve least the countenance of the state, who would persecute others, if it were in their power, because they are enemies of the society in which they live. He that will look back on past times, and examine into the true causes of the subversion and devastation of states and countries, will find it owing to the tyranny of princes, and the persecution of priests. All governments therefore which understand their true interests, will endeavour to suppress in every sect, or division of men, whether Papist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent, or Anabaptist, the spirit of dominion and persecution, which is the disturber of mankind, and the offspring of the devil. But the ministers say, if we tolerate one sect we must tolerate all; which our author admits, and adds, that they have as good a right to the liberty of their consciences as to their clothes or estates; no opinions or sentiments of religion being cognizable by the magistrate, any farther than they are inconsistent with the peace of the civil government. The way to put an end to diversity of opinions is not by fines and imprisonments; can Bedlam, or the Fleet, open men’s understandings, and reduce them from error? No certainly, nothing but sound reason and argument can do it, which, it is to be feared, they are not furnished with, who have recourse to any other weapons. Schism and heresy are to be rooted out, not by oppression, but by reason and debate; by the sword of the Spirit, not of the flesh; by argument,

¹ Vol. Pamphlets, No. 52.

not by blows, to which men have recourse when they are beat out of the other. Schism and heresy are words of terror thrown upon the adversary by all parties of men; and perhaps, there may need an infallible judge to determine where the schism lies, before we venture upon extraordinary methods to extirpate it." He adds, "that persecution will breed more confusion and disturbance than toleration; and that their solemn league and covenant ought to bind them no farther than it is consistent with the word of God. Now, that toleration, or liberty of conscience, is the doctrine of Scripture, is evident, 1. From the parable of the tares and wheat growing together till the harvest. 2. From the apostle's direction, "Let every man be persuaded in his own mind." 3. That "of whatsoever is not faith, is sin." 4. From our Saviour's golden rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, that do ye to them."—

This pamphlet was answered by another, entitled, *Anti-Toleration*, in which the author endeavours to vindicate the most unbounded licence of persecution; but neither the assembly, nor the city-divines, nor the whole Scots nation, could prevail with the parliament to deliver the sword into their hands. The high behaviour of the Presbyterians lost them the affections of great numbers of people, who began to discover that the contention between them and the prelates was not for liberty but power, and that all the spiritual advantage they were like to reap from the war was to shift hands, and instead of episcopal government to submit to the yoke of presbyterial uniformity.

Lord Clarendon admits,¹ that the king endeavoured to make his advantage of these divisions, by courting the Independents, and promising some of them very valuable compensations for any services they should do him; intimating, that it was impossible for them to expect relief in their scruples from persons who pretended they were erecting the kingdom of Christ; but though the Independents were enemies to the Presbyterian discipline, they had no confidence in the king's promises. Mr. Whitelocke² agrees with the noble historian, that the king was watchful to take advantage of these divisions, and commanded one Ogle to write to Mr. Tho. Goodwin, and Phil. Nye, two of the Independent ministers, and make them large overtures, if they would oppose the Presbyterian government intended to be imposed upon England by the Scots; but these two gentlemen very honestly acquainted their friends with the proposal, which put an end to the correspondence; all which might have convinced the Presbyterians of the necessity of coming to some terms with the dissenters; but the king's affairs

¹ Vol. 2. p. 746.

² Ibid. p. 76.

were so low, that they were under no apprehensions of disturbance from that quarter at present.

The assembly perfected nothing farther this year; however, complaint being made of the obsolete version of the Psalms by Sternhold and Hopkins, the parliament desired them to recommend some other to be used in churches; accordingly they read over Mr. Rouse's version, and after several amendments, sent it up to the house November 14, 1645, with the following recommendation: "Whereas the honourable house of commons, by an order bearing date November 20, 1643, have recommended the Psalms published by Mr. Rouse to the consideration of the assembly of divines, the assembly has caused them to be carefully perused, and as they are now altered and amended do approve them, and humbly conceive they may be useful and profitable to the church, if they be permitted to be publicly sung;"¹ accordingly they were authorized by the houses. Care was also taken to prevent the importation of incorrect Bibles printed in Holland.²

To return to the proceedings of parliament. The committee for plundered ministers having reported to the house of commons, January 28, 1645, certain blasphemies of Paul Best, who denied the holy Trinity, the house ordered an ordinance to be brought in [March 28], to punish him with death;³ but several divines being appointed to confer with him, in order to convince him of his error, he confessed his belief of that doctrine in general terms before he was brought to his trial, and that he hoped to be saved thereby, but persisted in denying the personality, as a Jesuitical tenet; upon this confession his trial was put off, and he was at length discharged.

The government of the church being now changed into a Presbyterian form, and the war almost at an end, the parliament resolved to apply the revenues of the cathedrals to other public uses, and accordingly, November 18, it was ordained, "That whereas the present dean and prebendaries of Westminster have deserted their charge, and were become delinquents to the parliament, they did therefore ordain, that the earl of Northumberland, with about ten other lords, and twenty-two commoners, should be a committee: and that any person or more of them should have authority to order, direct, and dispose, of the rents, issues, and profits, belonging to the college, or collegiate-church, and to do and execute all other acts that did any way concern either of them."⁴ They ordained farther, "that the dean, prebendaries, and all other officers belonging either to the college or church, who had absented themselves, and were become delinquents, or had not taken the covenant, should be suspended from their several offices and pal-

¹ MS. sess. 535.

² Parl. Chr. p. 319.

³ Whitelocke, p. 196.

⁴ Husband's Collections, p. 758.

aces, and from all manner of benefit and profit arising from them, or from the arrears of them, Mr. Osbaldeston only excepted.

When the cathedral of Hereford fell into the parliament's hands, the dignitaries of that church were dispossessed, and their lands and revenues seized into the hands of the committee of that county. The dignitaries of the cathedral churches of Winchester and Carlisle were served in the same manner the latter end of this year, when the whole frame of the hierarchy was dissolved.

The parliament, at the request of the assembly of divines, gave some marks of their favour to the university of Cambridge, which was reduced to such necessitous circumstances, by reason of the failure of their college-rents, that they could not support their students; it was therefore ordained, April 11, 1645, "that nothing contained in any ordinance of parliament concerning levying or paying of taxes should extend to the university of Cambridge, or any of the colleges or halls within the said university, nor to any of the rents or revenues belonging to the said university, or colleges, or any of them, nor to charge any master, fellow, or scholar, of any of the said colleges, nor any reader, officer, or minister, of the said university or colleges, for any stipend, wages, or profit, arising or growing due to them, in respect of their places and employments in the said university."¹ They likewise confirmed all their ancient rights and privileges, and ordered the differences between the university and town to be determined according to law. On the same day the ordinance for regulating the university, and removing scandalous ministers in the associated counties by the earl of Manchester, mentioned in the beginning of the last year, was revived and continued.

On the 17th of April this year died Dr. Dan. Featly; he was born at Charlton in Oxfordshire, 1581, and educated at Corpus-Christi college, of which he was fellow; upon his leaving the university he went chaplain to sir Thomas Symmonds, the king's ambassador to the French court, where he gained reputation by his sermons and disputations with the Papists.²

¹ Ibid. P- 636, 637.

² There was also a celebrated piece from his pen, levelled against the Baptists. It originated from a disputation which he held with four of that persuasion in Southwark, in the month of October 1641. About two years afterward he published an account of this debate in a book entitled, "The Dippers dipped; or, the Anabaptists ducked, and plunged over head and ears, at a disputation in Southwark." This title savoured of the taste and spirit of the times, and is no favourable omen of the strain of the work. In his dedication, he tells the reader, "that he could hardly dip his pen in anything but gall." The doctor wrote indeed under an irritation of spirits from being deprived of two livings, which he enjoyed before the unhappy differences between the king and parliament. He had the character, however, of an acute as well as vehement disputant. He had for his fellow-prisoner Mr. Henry Denne, educated at the university of Cambridge, and ordained in 1630, by the bishop of St. David, who signalized himself by his preaching, writing, disputing, and suffering, for the baptistical opinion. As soon as he came into prison, Dr. Featly's book was laid before him in his apartment; when he had read it, he offered to dispute with the author on the argu-

When he returned home he became domestic chaplain to archbishop Abbot, and was presented by him to the rectory of Lambeth, and in the year 1627, to that of Acton. In 1643, he was nominated of the assembly of divines, and sat among them till his correspondence with the court was discovered, by an intercepted letter to archbishop Usher relating to their proceedings; upon which he was committed to lord Peters's house for a spy, both his livings were sequestered, and himself expelled the assembly.¹ The doctor was a thorough Calvinist, but very zealous for the hierarchy of the church; so that when in prison he published the following challenge:

“Whereas I am certainly informed, that divers lecturers and preachers in London do in their pulpits, in a most insolent manner, demand where they are now, that dare stand up in defence of the church-hierarchy, or Book of Common Prayer, or any ways oppose or impugn the new-intended reformation both in doctrine and discipline of the church of England; I do, and will maintain, by disputation or writing, against any of them, these three conclusions:

1. “That the articles of religion agreed upon in the year 1562, by both houses of convocation, and ratified by queen Elizabeth, need no alteration at all, but only an orthodox explication of some ambiguous phrases, and a vindication against false aspersions.

2. “That the discipline of the church of England, established by many laws and acts of parliament, that is, the government by bishops (removing all innovations and abuses in the execution thereof) is agreeable to God's word, and a truly ancient and apostolical institution.

3. “That there ought to be a set form of public prayer; and that the Book of Common Prayer (the calendar being reformed in point of apocryphal saints and chapters, some rubrics explained, and some expressions revised, and the whole correctly printed with the Psalms, chapters, and allegations, out of the Old and New Testament, according to the last translation) is the most complete, perfect, and exact liturgy now extant in the Christian world.”

The doctor was a little man, of warm passions, and exceedingly inflamed against the parliament for his imprisonment, as appears by his last

ments of it. The challenge was accepted, and they debated on the first ten arguments, when the doctor declined proceeding, urging that it was not safe for them to dispute on the subject without licence from government; but he bid Mr. Denne write, and said he would defend his own arguments. Mr. Denne, on this, drew up a learned and ingenious answer; but it does not appear that the doctor ever replied. He was esteemed one of the greatest ornaments of the Corpus-Christi college: and acquitted himself with great applause in a funeral oration on the death of its celebrated master Dr. Rainolds; and in a public exercise with which he entertained the archbishop of Spalato. Unwholesome air, bad diet, and worse treatment, hastened his death. Crosby's History of the English Baptists, vol. 1. p. 152 and 303; and Granger's History of England, vol. 2. p. 176, 177, 8vo.—ED.

¹ See before, chap. 2.

prayer a few hours before his death, which happened at Chelsea, whither he had been removed for the benefit of the air, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. His prayer had these words in it,—“Lord, strike through the reins of them that rise against the church and king, and let them be as chaff before the wind, and as stubble before the fire; let them be scattered as partridges on the mountains, and let the breath of the Lord consume them; but upon our gracious sovereign and his posterity let the crown flourish.”—A prayer not formed after the model of St. Stephen’s, or that of our blessed Saviour upon the cross.

The writer of the life of archbishop Usher says, the doctor was both orthodox and loyal; but lord Clarendon and Dr. Heylin cannot forgive his sitting in the assembly, and being a witness against archbishop Laud at his trial. “Whether he sat in the assembly (says Heylin) to show his parts, or to head a party, or out of his old love to Calvinism, may best be gathered from some speeches which he made and printed; but he was there in heart before, and therefore might afford them his body now, though possibly he might be excused from taking the covenant as others did.”¹

Soon after died famous old Mr. John Dod, whose pious and remarkable sayings are remembered to this day; he was born at Shotlidge in Cheshire in the year 1550, and educated in Jesus-college, Cambridge, of which he was fellow.² At thirty years of age he removed to Hanwell in Oxfordshire, where he continued preaching twice on the Lord’s day, and once on the week-days for above twenty years; at the end of which he was suspended for nonconformity by Dr. Bridges, bishop of the diocese. Being driven from Hanwell he removed to Canons-Ashby in Northamptonshire, and lived quietly several years, till upon complaint made by bishop Neal to king James he commanded archbishop Abbot to silence him. After the death of king James, Mr. Dod was allowed to preach publicly again, and settled at Faustly in the same county, where he remained till his death. He was a most humble, pious, and devout man, and universally beloved; an excellent Hebrician, a plain, practical, fervent preacher, a noted casuist, and charitable almost to a fault; his conversation was heavenly; but being a noted Puritan, though he never meddled with state-affairs, he was severely used by the king’s cavaliers, who plundered his house, and would have taken away his very sheets, if the good old man, hardly able to rise out of his chair, had not put them under him for a cushion; all which he endured patiently, calling to mind one of his own maxims,³ Sanctified afflictions are spiritual promo-

¹ Hist. Presb. p. 464.

² Clarke’s Martyrol. p. 168 of the annexed lives.

³ His name has derived celebrity from his maxims, usually called Dod’s Sayings: they having been printed in various forms; many of them, on two sheets of paper, are still to be seen parted on the walls of cottages. “An old woman in my neighbourhood told me,” says

tions.¹ He died of the strangury in the ninety-sixth year of his age, and lies buried in his parish-church at Faustly.

Mr. Granger, "that she should have gone distracted for the loss of her husband, if she had been without Mr. Dod's Sayings in the house." History of England, vol. 1. p. 370, 8vo.—ED.

¹ Fuller's Ch. Hist. p. 220.