

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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CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE ACT OF UNIFORMITY TO THE BANISHMENT OF THE EARL OF CLARENDON IN THE YEAR 1667.

1662.

AT this time, says bishop Burnet, the name of Puritans was changed into that of Protestant Nonconformists, who were subdivided into Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers; these being shut out of the establishment, had nothing now in view but a toleration, which the credulous Presbyterians said they had strong assurances of, before the act of uniformity passed into a law; but in this they were disappointed, as well as in every thing else; for which the Independents told them they might thank themselves, because their managers had protested against including the Papists; whereas the legislature and the bishops were concerned to prevent any mischief from that quarter, and to their care the Presbyterians should have left it.¹ Some observing how much the court and parliament were set against them, were for removing with their ministers to Holland; and others proposed New-England; but the Papists, at a meeting at the earl of Bristol's house, agreed to do whatever they could to keep the Nonconformists in England, and buoy them up with hopes of a toleration.

The king was a concealed Roman Catholic, and had swarms of that persuasion about his person and court, who had fought for his father in the wars, or been civil to him in his exile; their design was to introduce a toleration of their religion, by the royal indulgence, in common with other dissenters from the establishment; and the king was so far in their measures, that he declared openly he would give liberty to all or none. The court was therefore content that the act of uniformity should pass in the severest terms, on purpose to make the number of dissenters more considerable; and when this was objected, it was replied, the more dissenters the better, because it will make a toleration more needful, in which the Papists will be included.² The Papists had two maxims from which they never departed; one was, to keep themselves united, and promote a general toleration, or a general prosecution. The other, to divide the Protestants as much as possible among themselves. For this reason the sword was put into the hands of such magistrates as would inflame the differences, and exasperate their spirits one against the other. Nor were there wanting some hot-headed young clergymen, who ran greedily into the snare, and became the tools of Popery and arbitrary power, till the Protestant religion was expiring, and must inevitably have been lost, had it not been revived almost by a miracle.

¹ Burnet, vol. 1. p. 282.

² Burnet, vol. 1. p. 285.

With a like view the laws against profaneness and immorality were relaxed, men's morals were neglected, interludes, masquerades, promiscuous dancing, profane swearing, drunkenness, and a universal dissolution of manners, were connived at, and the very name of godliness became a reproach.

The parliament, being made up of a set of pensioners and mercenaries, went into all the court measures, and enacted more penal laws for religion, than it may be all the parliaments put together since the Reformation. They pressed the act of uniformity with inflexible rigour, and enforced it with so many other penal laws, that under their wing Popery grew to such a height, as to threaten the extirpation of the northern heresy. At length many of the members being dead, and others grown fat with the spoils of the public, they would have retrieved their errors, and distinguished between Protestant Nonconformists and Popish recusants, but it was too late; and the king having found ways and means to subsist without parliaments, resolved to adhere by his standing maxim, to give ease to all dissenters or to none.

It is impossible to excuse the clergy from their share in the troubles of this reign. If the convocation of 1662, in their review of the liturgy, had made any amendments for the satisfaction of the Presbyterians, they would undoubtedly have passed both houses of parliament, and healed in some measure the divisions of the church; but they were actuated by a spirit of revenge, and not only promoted such laws as might deprive the Presbyterians of the power of hurting them for the future; but assisted in putting them in execution. None had a greater share in inflaming the minds of the people, and in sounding the trumpet to persecution. But here the reader must distinguish between those zealots, who, from resentment, bigotry, or sinister views, set themselves to encourage and promote all the methods of oppression and tyranny; and those, who, though they complied with the terms of conformity themselves, were disposed to an accommodation with the Protestant Nonconformists upon moderate terms.

The bishops were generally of the former sort; they were old and exasperated, fond of their persecuting principles, and fearful of everything that tended to relieve the Presbyterians. They went with zeal into all the slavish doctrines of the prerogative, and voted with the court in everything they required. But even some of these bishops, who at first were very zealous to throw the Presbyterians out of the church, afterward grew more temperate. Dr. Laney, bishop of Peterborough, who made a great bustle in the Savoy conference, was willing at length to wipe his hands of the dirty work, and, to use his own expression, could look through his fingers and suffer a worthy Nonconformist to preach publicly near him for years together.—Bishop Saunderson had a roll of Nonconformist ministers under his angry eye, designed for discipline, but when he was near his end, he ordered the roll to be burnt, and said he would die in peace.—And most remarkable is the pas-

sage in the last will and testament of Dr. Cosins, bishop of Durham, a zealous enemy of the Presbyterians, and who had met with ill usage in the late times:—"I take it to be my duty (says he), and that of all the bishops and ministers of the church, to do our utmost endeavour, that at last an end may be put to the differences of religion, or at least that they maybe lessened." Such was the different temper of this learned prelate in the vigour of life, and when he came to review things calmly on his dying bed. To these may be added bishop Gauden, Wilkins, Reynolds, and a few others, who were always moderate, and are said to carry the wounds of the church in their hearts to the grave; but the far greater majority of the bench, especially those who frequented the court, were of different principles.

The like may be observed of the inferior clergy, who were divided, a few years after, into those of the court and the country; the former were of an angry superstitious spirit, and far more strenuous for a few indifferent ceremonies, than for the peace of the church, or its more important articles; their sermons were filled with reverence due to their holy mother, with the sacred dignity of their own indelible characters, with the slavish doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, and with the most bitter raillery and invectives against the routed Presbyterians; they encouraged the enacting severe laws, and carried them into execution as long as their superiors would permit, without any regard to mercy or merit; but took comparatively little or no care, by their doctrine or example, of the morals of the people, which were shamefully neglected throughout the nation. The clergy of this character were by far the more numerous for twenty years after the Restoration; the tide of church-preferments running in this channel, and their doctrines being the most fashionable.

The country clergy were of a quite different spirit; they were determined Protestants and true churchmen, but more disposed to a coalition with Protestant dissenters than with Papists: among these were the Tillotsons, Stillingfleets, Whichcotes, Wilkins, Cudworths, &c. men of the first rank for learning, sobriety, and virtue; they were the most eminent preachers of the age, whose sermons and writings did honour to the church of England, and supported its character in the worst of times. They lamented the corruptions and vices of the people, and stood in the gap against an inundation of Popery and tyranny; but their numbers were small, because the road to preferment lay another way; and when the high-church clergy had betrayed the liberties of their country, and the cause of the Protestant religion, into the hands of the Papists, these appeared boldly in their defence, disarmed their adversaries, and saved the nation.

When therefore we speak of the furious proceedings of the bishops and clergy, it must not be understood of the whole body, but only of those who were tools of a corrupt court and ministry, and who, out of ignorance or

other private and personal motives, went blindfold into all their destructive measures.

Bishop Burnet, in his book against the author of *Parliamentum Pacificum*, has the following remarkable passage: "It is well known, that those who were secretly Papists, and disguised their religion, as the king himself did, animated the chief men of the church to carry the points of uniformity as high as possible,—that there might be many Nonconformists, and great occasion for a toleration, under which Popery might creep in; for if the king's declaration from Breda had taken place, of two thousand ministers that were turned out, about seventeen hundred had stayed in; but the practice of the Papists had too great an influence on the churchmen, whose spirits were too much soured by their ill usage during the war; nor were they without success on the dissenters, who were secretly encouraged to stand out, and were told, that the king's temper and principles, and the consideration of trade, would certainly procure them a toleration. Thus they tampered with both parties; liberty of conscience was their profession; but when a session of parliament came, and the king wanted money, then a new severe law against the dissenters was offered to the angry men of the church-party as the price of it; and this seldom failed to have its effect: so that they were like the jewels of the crown, pawned when the king needed money, but redeemed at the next prorogation."

The same prelate observes in another performance, "that the first spirit of severity was heightened by the practices of the Papists. That many churchmen, who understood not the principles of human society, and the rules of the English government, wrote several extravagant treatises about the measures of submission; that the dissenters were put to great hardships in many parts of England." But concludes, that "he must have the brow of a Jesuit that can cast this wholly upon the church of England, and free the court of it. Upon the whole matter (says his lordship) it is evident, that the passions and infirmities of some of the church of England being unhappily stirred up by the dissenters, they were fatally conducted by the Popish party to be the instruments of doing a great deal of mischief."

But to go on with the history: three days after the act of uniformity took place, the silenced ministers presented a petition to his majesty for a toleration, by the hands of Dr. Manton, Dr. Bates, and Mr. Calamy, to this effect; "that having had former experience of his majesty's clemency and indulgence, some of the London ministers, who are like to be deprived of all future usefulness by the late act of uniformity, humbly cast themselves at his majesty's feet, desiring him of his princely wisdom to take some effectual course, that they may be continued in their ministry, to teach his people obedience to God and his majesty; and they doubt not, but by their dutiful and peaceable behaviour, they shall render themselves not altogether un-

worthy of so great a favour.”¹ The matter being debated next day in council, his majesty gave his opinion for an indulgence if it was feasible. Others were for conniving at the more eminent divines, and putting curates into their churches to read the service till they should die off:² this was the opinion of the Earl of Manchester, who urged it with a great deal of earnestness; but Lord Clarendon was for the strict execution of the law: “Surely (says he) there cannot be too intent a care in kings and princes to preserve and maintain all decent forms and ceremonies both in church and state, which keeps up the reverence due to religion, as well as the duty and dignity due to the government and the majesty of kings.”³ Bishop Sheldon was of the same side, and declared that, if the act was suspended, he could not maintain his episcopal authority: that this would render the legislature ridiculous, and be the occasion of endless distractions.⁴ England is accustomed to obey laws (says he), so that while we stand on that ground we are safe; and, to answer all objections, he undertook to fill the vacant pulpits more to the people’s satisfaction. By such arguments, delivered with great earnestness and zeal, they prevailed with the council to let the law take place for the present.

Nevertheless, about four months after, his majesty published a declaration to all his loving subjects, by advice of his privy council, dated December 26, 1662, in which, after reciting those words of his declaration from Breda, relating to his giving liberty to tender consciences, and his readiness to consent to an act of parliament for that purpose, his majesty adds, “As all these things are fresh in our memory, so are we still firm in the resolution of performing them to the full. But it must not be wondered at, since that parliament to which those promises were made, never thought fit to offer us an act for that purpose, that we, being so zealous as we are (and by the grace of God shall ever be) for the maintenance of the true Protestant religion, should give its establishment the precedency before matters of indulgence to dissenters from it; but that being done, we are glad to renew to all our subjects concerned in those promises of indulgence, this assurance, That, as for what concerns the penalties upon those, who, living peaceably, do not conform to the church of England through scruple, or tenderness of misguided conscience, but modestly, and without scandal, perform their devotions in their own way, we shall make it our special care, as far as in us lies, without invading the freedom of parliament, to incline their wisdom at the next approaching sessions, to concur with us in making some act for that purpose, as may enable us to exercise with a more universal satisfac-

¹ Kennet’s Chron. p. 753.

² Ibid. p. 730. 742.

³ Parker’s History, p. 29.

⁴ Burnet, vol. 1. p. 279.

tion, that power of dispensing which we conceive to be inherent in us; nor can we doubt of their cheerful co-operating with us in a thing wherein we conceive ourselves so far engaged, both in honour, and in what we owe to the peace of our dominions, which we profess we can never think secure whilst there shall be a colour left to disaffected persons to inflame the minds of so many multitudes upon the score of conscience, with despair of ever obtaining any effect of our promises for their ease.”

His majesty then proceeds to obviate the objection of his favouring Papists; and, after having avowed to the world the due sense he had of their having deserved well from his royal father, and from himself, and even from the Protestant religion, in adhering to them with their lives and fortunes, for the maintenance of their crown in the religion established, he declares, that “it is not in his intention to exclude them from all benefit from such an act of indulgence, but that they are not to expect an open toleration; but refers the manner to the approaching sessions of parliament, which he doubts not will concur with him in the performance of his promises.” He concludes “with hoping that all his subjects, with minds happily composed by his clemency and indulgence (instead of taking up thoughts of deserting their professions, or transplanting), will apply themselves comfortably, and with redoubled industry, to their several vocations, in such manner as the private interest of every one in particular may encourage him to contribute cheerfully to the general prosperity.

“Given at our court at Whitehall, this 26th December, in the fourteenth year of our reign.”

This declaration was thought to be framed at Somerset-house, where the queen-mother kept her court, without the knowledge of lord Clarendon or bishop Sheldon; and, according to Burnet, was the result of a council of Papists at the earl of Bristol’s (who were under an oath of secrecy), and of the king himself.¹ It is modestly expressed; and, though it carries in it a claim of the dispensing power, and of good will to Popery, yet it refers all to the parliament. Accordingly his majesty, in his speech at the opening the next sessions, February 28, 1663, supported his declaration in the following words, “that though he was in his nature an enemy to all severity in religion, he would not have them infer from thence that he meant to favour Popery, though several of that profession, who had served him and his father well, might justly claim a share in that indulgence he would willingly afford to other dissenters; not that I intend them to hold any place in the government,” says his majesty, “for I will not yield to any, no, not to the bishops themselves, in my zeal for the Protestant religion, and my liking the act of uniformity; and yet if the dissenters will behave themselves

¹ Burnet, vol. 1. p. 282, 283.

peaceably and modestly under the government, I could heartily wish I had such a power of indulgence to use upon all occasions, as might not needlessly force them out of the kingdom, or staying here, give them cause to conspire against the peace of it.” This was the first open claim of a dispensing power, which the reader will observe did not propose a law for liberty of conscience, but that his majesty might have a legal power of indulgence vested in himself, which he might use or recall as he thought fit. This alarmed the house of commons, who voted the thanks of the house for his majesty’s resolution to maintain the act of uniformity; but, that it was the opinion of the house that no indulgence be granted to dissenters from it; and an address was appointed to be drawn up, and presented to his majesty, with the following reasons:

“We have considered,” say they, “your majesty’s declaration from Breda, and are of opinion that it was not a promise, but a gracious declaration to comply with the advice of your parliament, whereas no such advice has been given.¹ They who pretend a right to the supposed promise, put the right into the hands of their representatives, who have passed the act of uniformity.² If any shall say, a right to the benefit of the declaration still remains, it tends to dissolve the very bond of government, and to suppose a disability in the whole legislature to make a law contrary to your majesty’s declaration. We have also considered the nature of the indulgence proposed, and are of opinion, 1. That it will establish schism by a law, and make the censures of the church of no consideration. 2. That it is unbecoming the wisdom of parliament to pass a law in one session for uniformity, and in another session to pass a law to frustrate or weaken it, the reasons continuing the same. 3. That it will expose your majesty to the restless importunities of every sect who shall dissent from the established church. 4. That it will increase sectaries, which will weaken the Protestant profession, and be troublesome to the government; and in time some prevalent sect may contend for an establishment which may end in Popery. 5. That it is unprecedented, and may take away the means of convicting recusants. 6. That the indulgence proposed will not tend to the peace, but to the disturbance of the kingdom; the best way, therefore, to produce a settled peace is to press vigorously the act of uniformity.”

The reader will judge of the force of these reasons, which, in my opinion, would justify the severest persecution in the world; however, the king

¹ Rapin, vol. 2. p. 634.

² According to this curious mode of reasoning, the authority of a trust justifies the abuse of it, and persons elected for the general welfare are not accountable for acting contrary to the interest of their constituents. Such a position is just as absurd, to use the simile of a late writer, as to imagine “that physicians, chosen to superintend and cure the sick in hospitals, have a right to kill their patients if they please.” Secret History of the Reign of Charles II. vol. 2. p. 7, note.—Ed.

was convinced with a sum of money, and therefore made no other reply, but that he had been ill understood. The house then addressed him to put the laws in execution against Papists; and a proclamation was issued out for that purpose, but little regarded. However, this opposition to the king and the Roman Catholics by lord Clarendon, and his friends in the house of commons, laid the foundation of his impeachment the next year, and of his ruin some time after. Bishop Kennet admits, that the king was inclined to a general indulgence,¹ “though whether it was from his good nature, or a secret inclination to introduce Popery, is not very decent to determine;” but both he and Echard are of opinion,² “that the king’s clemency hardened the dissenters against the church; whereas, if they had lost all dependence on a court-interest, and had found the king and his ministry intent upon the strict execution of the act of uniformity, most of them,” say they, “would at this juncture have conformed.” A notorious mistake! the contrary to this being evident to a demonstration throughout the course of this reign. The conformity of honest men does not depend upon the will, but the understanding, and it is very ungenerous at this distance to impeach men’s integrity, who underwent a long course of the severest trials to retain it.

Some of the ejected Presbyterians, who were men of piety and learning, complied as far as they could, and made a distinction between lay-conformity and ministerial: they practised the former, and went sometimes to their parish-churches before or after the exercise of their ministry in some private houses; and this they did, not for interest or advantage, but to all appearance to express their Catholicism and brotherly love.³ Here was the rise of occasional conformity, practised by Dr. Bates, Mr. Baxter, and others, to their death; but this, instead of being well taken, was the occasion of bringing some of them into trouble; for Mr. Calamy, late minister of Aldermanbury, being at his parish-church December 28, the preacher happened to disappoint them; upon which, at the importunity of the parishioners, Mr. Calamy went up into the pulpit, and preached a sermon upon “Eli’s concern for the ark of God;” a subject much upon their thoughts at that time: but this was so highly resented at court, that he was sent to Newgate next week for sedition, in breaking the king’s laws.⁴ It was done *in terrorem*, says my author, but there was such a clamour among the people, and such a resort of persons of distinction to visit the prisoner, that his majesty thought fit to release him in a few days; which not being done by due course of law, the commons resented it, and presented an address, that the laws for the future might have their free course. This disgusted the king,

¹ Page 258.

² Echard, p. 806.

³ Baxter’s Life, part 2. p. 436. Compl. Hist. p. 267.

⁴ Calamy, vol. 2. p. 6.

who was willing to assert his prerogative, and show some favour to the Presbyterians, that he might cover the Papists; but lord Clarendon, who was their implacable enemy, and at the head of that party which meditated their ruin, opposed the court measures, and encouraged his friends in both houses to abide by the laws.¹

The following summer [1663] there was a fresh discourse of liberty for the silenced ministers; and the court was so far in the design as to encourage them to petition for a general toleration, insinuating this to be the only way of relief, and that the legislature would go on to increase their burdens, and lay them in jails till they complied. The Independents went up to court to speak for themselves, but the Presbyterians refused; upon which Mr. Baxter says, the Independent brethren thought it owing to them that they missed of their intended liberty.² The court being displeased, lord Clarendon and his friends took the opportunity to awaken their resentments, by fathering upon the Nonconformists some new plots against the government. There was said to be a conspiracy in the north among the Republicans and Separatists, to restore the long-parliament, and put Lambert and Ludlow at their head, though the former was shut up in prison in a remote island, and the other gone into banishment. There had been some unadvised and angry conversation among the meaner sort of people of republican principles, but it was not pretended that any gentleman of character, much less that the body of the English Nonconformists, were acquainted with it; however, about twenty were tried and condemned at York and Leeds, and several executed. Some very mean persons were indicted at the Old-Bailey for a branch of the same design, as, Tongue, Phillips, Stubbes, Hind, Sellars, and Gibbes: they were not tried separately, but set at the bar together, and condemned in the lump. It was pretended that the fifth-monarchy men, Anabaptists, Independents, and some Quakers, were consenting to some desperate designs, but the authors were never discovered; however, four of these pretended conspirators were executed, who confessed, at the place of execution, that they had heard some treasonable expressions in company, but denied to the last that they were acquainted with any conspiracy against the king; and whoever reads their trials will be inclined to think, that it was a design of those who were at the head of affairs, to inflame the populace against the Nonconformists, in order to bring on them greater severities.³

An act was passed this summer “for the relief of such persons as by sickness, or other impediments, were disabled from subscribing the declaration in the act of uniformity, and explanation of the said act.” The preamble sets forth, “that divers persons of eminent loyalty, and known affection to

¹ Rapin, p. 312, 313.

² Baxter's Life, part 2. p. 430. 133.

³ Kennet's Chron. p. 840, 841. Calamy, vol. I. p. 305. Rapin, p. 635.

the liturgy of the church of England, were out of the kingdom; and others by reason of sickness, disability of body, or otherwise, could not subscribe within the time limited, and were therefore disabled, and *ipsa facto* deprived of their prebendaries, or other livings, therefore farther time is given them to the feast of the Nativity of our Lord next ensuing; or if out of England, forty days after their return.”¹ which shows, that the time limited by the act of uniformity was not sufficient. The journal of the house of lords mentions a clause inserted by their lordships, explaining the subscription and declaration to relate only to practice and obedience to the law, which passed the upper house, though several temporal lords protested against it, as destructive to the church of England; however, when it came down to the commons, the clause was rejected, and the lords did not think fit to insist upon its being restored.²

While the parliament were relieving the loyalists, they increased the burdens of the Nonconformists; for under colour of the late pretended plots, they passed an act for suppressing seditious conventicles; the preamble to which having set forth, that the sectaries, under pretence of tender consciences, at their meetings had contrived insurrections, the act declares the 35th of queen Elizabeth to be in full force, which condemns all persons refusing peremptorily to come to church, after conviction, to banishment, and in case of return to death, without benefit of clergy. It enacts farther,³ “that if any person above the age of sixteen, after the first of July 1664, shall be present at any meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion, in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or practice of the church of England, where shall be five or more persons than the household, shall for the first offence suffer three months’ imprisonment, upon record made upon oath under the hand and seal of a justice of peace, or pay a sum not exceeding five pounds; for the second offence six months’ imprisonment, or ten pounds; and for the third offence the offender to be banished to some of the American plantations for seven years, excepting New-England and Virginia, or pay one hundred pounds; and in case they return, or make their escape, such persons are to be adjudged felons, and suffer death without benefit of clergy. Sheriffs, or justices of peace, or others commissioned by them, are empowered to dissolve, dissipate, and break up, all unlawful conventicles, and to take into custody such of their number as they think fit. They who suffer such conventicles in their houses or barns are liable to the same forfeitures as other offenders. The prosecution is to be within three

¹ 15 Car. II. cap. 6.

² “Thus it is the declared sense of the legislature, that the unfeigned assent and consent relates not only to the use, but to the inward and entire approbation of all and everything as expressed in the subscription.” Fowler’s French Constitution, p. 352, note.

³ 16 Car. II. cap. 4.

months. Married women taken at conventicles are to be imprisoned for twelve months, unless their husbands pay forty shillings for their redemption. This act to continue in force for three years after the next session of parliament.”

This was a terrible scourge over the laity, put into the hands of a single justice of peace, without the verdict of a jury, the oath of the informer being sufficient. The design of the parliament (says Rapin) was to drive them to despair, and to force them into real crimes against the government. By virtue of this act the jails in the several counties were quickly filled with dissenting Protestants, while the Papists had the good fortune to be covered under the wing of the prerogative. Some of the ministers who went to church in sermon-time, were disturbed for preaching to a few of their parishioners after the public service was over; their houses were broke open, and their hearers taken into custody; warrants were issued out for levying £20 on the minister, £20 upon the house, and 5s upon each hearer. If the money was not immediately paid, there was a seizure of their effects, the goods and wares were taken out of the shops; and in the country, cattle were driven away and sold for half their value. If the seizure did not answer the fine, the minister and people were hurried to prison, and held under close confinement for three or six months. The trade of an informer began to be very gainful, by the encouragement of the spiritual courts.¹ At every quarter-sessions several were fined for not coming to church, and others excommunicated: nay, some have been sentenced to abjure the realm, and fined in a sum much larger than all they were worth in the world.

Before the conventicle-act took place the laity were courageous,² and exhorted their ministers to preach till they went to prison; but when it came home to themselves, and they had been once in jail, they began to be more cautious, and consulted among themselves, how to avoid the edge of the law in the best manner they could; for this purpose their assemblies were frequently held at midnight, and in the most private places; and yet, notwithstanding all their caution, they were frequently disturbed; but it is remarkable, that under all their hardships they never made the least resistance, but went quietly along with the soldiers or officers, when they could not fly from them. The distress of so many families made some confine themselves within their own houses, some remove to the plantations, and others have recourse to occasional conformity, to avoid the penalty for not coming to church; but the Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers, declined the practice, for they said, If persecution was the mark of a false

¹ Baxter's Life, part 2. p. 136.

² Sewel, p. 445.

church, it must be absolutely unlawful to join with one that was so notoriously guilty.

Indeed the Quakers gloried in their sufferings, and were so resolute as to assemble openly at the Bull-and-Mouth near Aldersgate,¹ from whence the soldiers and other officers dragged them to prison, till Newgate was filled, and multitudes died by close confinement in the several jails. The account published about this time says, there were six hundred of them in prison, merely for religion's sake, of whom several were banished to the plantations. Sometimes the Quakers met and continued silent, upon which it was questioned, whether such an assembly was a conventicle for religious exercise; and when some were tried for it in order to banishment, they were acquitted of the banishment, and came off with a fine, which they seldom paid, and were therefore continued in prison.² In short the Quakers about London gave such full employment to the informers, that they had less leisure to attend the meetings of other dissenters.

So great was the severity of these times, and the arbitrary proceedings of the justices, that many were afraid to pray in their families, if above four of their acquaintance who came only to visit them were present. Some families scrupled asking a blessing on their meat, if five strangers were at table. In London, where the houses join, it was thought the law might be evaded if the people met in several houses, and heard the minister through a window or hole in the wall; but it seems this was overruled, the determination being (as has been observed) in the breast of a single mercenary justice of the peace. And while conscientious people were thus oppressed, the common people gave themselves up to drunkenness, profane swearing, gaming, lewdness, and all kinds of debauchery, which brought down the judgments of Heaven upon the nation.

The first general calamity that befell the kingdom, was a war with the Dutch, which the king entered into this winter by the instigation of the young French monarch Lewis XIV., who, being grown rich by a long peace, sought for an opportunity to make new conquests in the Spanish Flanders; for this purpose he engaged the maritime powers in a war, that by weakening each other's hands they might not be at leisure to assist the Spaniards whom he intended to attack. The English made complaints of the encroachments of the Dutch upon their trade, and indignities offered to his majesty's subjects in India, Africa, and elsewhere; the French promoted these misunderstandings, and promised to supply the king with what sums of money he wanted; till at length war was proclaimed February 22, 1664–5, in the course of which sundry bloody engagements happened at sea; the

¹ Sewel, p. 445.

² Baxter's Life, part 2. p. 136.

two nations were drained of their blood and their treasure, and the Protestant interest almost ruined, while the French were little more than spectators. The war continued about two years and a half, and then ended with no manner of advantage to either nation.

[In the year 1663 there was obtained, by the interest of Mr. Baxter and Mr. Ashurst with the lord-chancellor Hyde, a charter for the incorporating “A society or company for propagation of the gospel in New-England, and the parts adjacent in America.” Such a society had been formed under the sanction of an act of parliament in 1646: and, by a collection made in all the parishes in England, there had been raised a sum sufficient to purchase an estate in land of between £500 and £600 a year. Upon the restoration of king Charles II. the charter became void, and colonel Beddingfield, a Roman-Catholic officer in the army, of whom a considerable part of the land was bought, seized it for his own use; pretending he had sold it under the value, in hopes of recovering it upon the king’s return. The society, being re-established, at great trouble and expense, were again put in possession of the estate by a decree of chancery, which the honourable Mr. Boyle was very instrumental in obtaining. He was appointed the first governor of the company.¹

On the 4th of June this year died, aged eighty-one, Dr. William Juxon, archbishop of Canterbury, whose elevation to the post of lord-high-treasurer of England and other early preferments have been mentioned before, vol. 1. p. 588. He was born in Chichester, received his grammar-learning at Merchant Tailors’-school, became fellow of St. John’s college Oxford in 1598, and bachelor of the civil law in 1603, being about that time a student in Grey’s-inn. Soon after he entered into holy orders, and in 1609 was made vicar of St. Giles, Oxford. In 1626 he executed the office of vice-chancellor. After the death of Charles I. he retired to his paternal manor of Little-Compton in Gloucestershire, and devoted himself to liberal studies. On the Restoration, he was advanced, September 4, 1660, to the see of Canterbury. He was buried with great funeral pomp in St. John’s college, Oxon. He is said to have acted, at a very critical time, with a prudence, moderation, and integrity, which enmity could not impeach in his arduous office as high-treasurer. He left many monuments of his munificence and liberality. “The mildness of his temper, the gentleness of his manners, and the integrity of his life (says Mr. Granger) gained him universal esteem; and even the haters of prelacy could never hate Juxon.”²

Mr. Henry Jessey, an eminent divine among the Puritans, died also on the 4th of September this year. He was born on the 3d of September 1601,

¹ Neal’s History of New-England, vol. 1. p. 262.

² Granger’s History of England, vol. 2. p. 109. 154. Wood’s Athen. Oxon. vol. 2. p. 662, 663: and Richardson de Præsulibus, p. 162.

at West-Rowton, near Cleveland in Yorkshire, where his father was minister. At seventeen years of age he was sent to St. John's college in Cambridge; he continued six years at the university, where he commenced first bachelor, then master of arts. In 1623 died his father, who had hitherto supplied him according to his ability; which event left him in such strait circumstances, that he had not above threepence a day for his maintenance, yet he so economically managed this small pittance, as to spare some of it for hiring books. He pursued his studies with diligence, and, not contenting himself with the *ipse dixit* of authority, he investigated science freely. He left the university well versed in the Hebrew and the writings of the rabbis, with a knowledge of Syriac and Chaldee. During this period his mind imbibed a strong sense of religion, and he determined to devote himself to the ministry. He spent nine years, after leaving the university, as chaplain in the family of Mr. Brampton Gurdon, at Assington in Suffolk, improving his time, and, among other studies, giving his attention to physic. In 1627 he received episcopal ordination, but could not be prevailed upon to accept any promotion until 1633, when the living of Aughton, in Yorkshire, was given to him. But he was removed the very next year for not using the ceremonies, and for taking down a crucifix. On this he was received into the family of sir Matthew Bointon in the same county, and preached frequently at two parishes in the neighbourhood. In 1635, accompanying his patron to London, he was invited to be pastor of the congregation formed in 1616 by Mr. Henry Jacob; this his modesty led him to decline for some time, but, after many prayers and much consideration, he accepted the invitation, and continued in this post until his death. Soon after, the sentiments of the Baptists were embraced by many of this society. This put him upon studying the controversy; and the result was, that after great deliberation, many prayers, and frequent conferences with pious and learned friends, he altered his sentiments, first concerning the mode, and then the subjects, of baptism. But he maintained the same temper of friendship and charity towards other Christians, not only as to conversation, but church-communion. When he visited the churches in the north and west of England, he laboured to promote the spirit of love and union among them, and was a principal person in setting up and maintaining, for some time, a meeting of some eminent men of each denomination in London. He divided his labours according to the liberality of his temper. In the afternoon of every Lord's day he was among his own people. In the morning he usually preached at St. George's church, Southwark, and once in the week at Ely-house, and at the Savoy to the maimed soldiers. The master study of his life was a new translation of the Bible; in this design he engaged the assistance of many persons of note. It was almost completed, when the great turn given to public affairs at the Restoration rendered it abortive. The benevolence of his exertions formed a

most distinguishing trait in his character. He chose a single life, that he might be more at liberty for such labours. Besides his own alms, he was a constant solicitor and agent for the poor, and carried about with him a list and description of the most peculiar objects of charity which he knew. Thirty families had all their subsistence from him. But his charity was not limited to his own congregation: and where he thought it no charity to give, he would often lend without interest or security. One of the most remarkable instances of his charity which had scarcely a precedent, was what he showed to the poor Jews at Jerusalem, who by a war between the Swedes and Poles, which cut off their subsistence from their rich brethren in other countries, were reduced to great extremities. Mr. Jessey collected for them £300 and sent with it letters with a view to their conversion to Christianity. In the year 1650 he had written a treatise to remove their prejudices, and convince them of the Messiahship of Jesus, recommended by several of the assembly of divines, and afterward translated into Hebrew to be dispersed among the Jews of all nations. He was exposed to a great number of visitors; which occasioned him to have it written over his study-door—

AMICE, QUISQUIS HUC ADES;
AUT AGITO PAUCIS, AUT ABI,
AUT ME LABORANTEM ADJUVA.

WHATEVER FRIEND COMES HITHER,
DISPATCH IN BRIEF, OR GO,
OR HELP ME BUSIED TOO. H. J.

When he went long journeys, he laid down rules to regulate the conversation for his fellow-travellers, which were enforced by small pecuniary mulcts on the violation of them. He was meek and humble, and very plain in speech, dress, and demeanour. He was so great a scripturist, that if one began to rehearse any passage, he could go on with it, and name the book, chapter, and verse, where it might be found. The original languages of the Old and New Testament were as familiar to him as his mother-tongue. He was several times apprehended at meetings for religious worship. Upon the Restoration he was ejected from his living at St. George's, silenced from his ministry, and committed to prison. About five or six months after his last release, he died full of peace and joy; lamented by persons of different persuasions, several thousands of whom attended his funeral. Crosby's History of the Baptists, vol. 1. p. 307–321. Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial, vol. 1. p. 108–113. The Life and Death of Mr. Jessey, 1671; where are, the letters written to the Jews, remarks on our translation of the Bible, and rules for a new version.—ED.]

The next judgment which befell the nation was the most dreadful plague that had been known within the memory of man. This was preceded by an unusual drought; the meadows were parched and burnt up like the highways, insomuch that there was no food for the cattle, which occasioned first a murrain among them, and then a general contagion among the human species, which increased in the city and suburbs of London until eight or ten thousand died in a week.¹ The richer inhabitants fled into the remoter counties; but the calamities of those who stayed behind, and of the poorer sort, are not to be expressed. Trade was at a full stand; all commerce between London and the country was entirely cut off, lest the infection should be propagated thereby. Nay, the country house-keepers and farmers durst not entertain their city friends or relations till they had performed quarantine in the fields or out-houses. If a stranger passed through the neighbourhood, they fled from him as an enemy. In London the shops and houses were quite shut up, and many of them marked with a red cross, and an inscription over the door, Lord, have mercy upon us! Grass grew in the streets; and every night the bellman went his rounds with a cart, crying, Bring out your dead. From London the plague spread into the neighbouring towns and villages, and continued near three quarters of a year, till it had swept away almost one hundred thousand of the inhabitants.

Some of the established clergy, with a commendable zeal, ventured to continue in their stations, and preach to their parishioners throughout the course of the plague, as Dr. Walker, Dr. Horton, Dr. Meriton, and a few others;² but most of them fled, and deserted their parishes at a time when their assistance was most wanted; upon this some of the ejected ministers ventured to preach in the vacant pulpits, imagining that so extraordinary a case would justify their disregard to the laws. The ministers who embarked in this service were, the reverend Mr. Thomas Vincent, Mr. Chester, Mr. Janeway, Mr. Turner, Grimes, Franklin, and others. The face of death, and the arrows that fled among the people in darkness at noon-day, awakened both preachers and hearers: many who were at church one day were thrown into their graves the next; the cry of great numbers was, "What shall we do to be saved?" A more awful time England had never seen.

¹ Dr. Grey has introduced here a full and affecting narrative of the progress of this calamity, and of the mortality it produced; drawn up by the pen of Mr. Vincent, one who charitably gave his assistance at that time, as copied by Dr. Calamy, in his Continuation, p. 33. It was usual for people, as they went about their business, to drop down in the street. A bagpiper, who, excessively overcome with liquor, had fallen down and lay asleep in the street, was taken up, and thrown into a cart, and betimes the next morning carried away with some dead bodies. At daybreak he awoke, and rising began to play a tune: which so surprised those who drove the cart, and could see nothing distinctly, that in a fright they betook them to their heels, and would have it they had taken up the devil in the disguise of a dead man. Sir John Reresby's Memoirs, p. 10, 11.—ED.

² Baxter's Life, part 3. p. 2.

But it will amaze all posterity, that in a time both of war and pestilence, and when the Nonconformist ministers were hazarding their lives in the service of the souls of the distressed and dying citizens of London, that the prime-minister and his creatures,¹ instead of mourning for the nation's sins, and meditating a reformation of manners, should pour out all their vengeance upon the Nonconformists, in order to make their condition more insupportable. One would have thought such a judgment from Heaven, and such a generous compassion in the ejected ministers, should have softened the hearts of their most cruel enemies; but the Presbyterians must be crushed, in defiance of the rebukes of Providence. Bishop Kennet and Mr. Echard would excuse the ministry, by alleging, that some of the old Oliverian officers were enlisted in the Dutch service;² which, if true, was nothing to the body of the Presbyterians, though lord Clarendon did what he could to incense the parliament, and make them believe they were in confederacy with the enemies of the government. In his harangue to the house, he says, "their countenances were more erect, and more insolent, since the beginning of the war than before; that they were ready, if any misfortune had befallen the king's fleet, to have brought the war into our fields and houses. The horrid murderers of our late royal master have been received into the most sacred councils in Holland; and other infamous persons of our nation are admitted to a share in the conduct of their affairs, with liberal pensions. Too many of his majesty's subjects have been enlisted in their service for a maintenance. Their friends at home made no doubt of doing the business themselves, if they could pitch upon a lucky day to begin the work. If you carefully provide for suppressing your enemies at home, you will find your enemies abroad more inclined to peace."—Is it possible that such a speech could proceed from the lips of a wise and faithful counsellor, who was to ask for money to carry on the war? Could the chancellor think, that the way to conquer abroad was to divide and harass the king's subjects at home, in the midst of the distress of a terrible plague? He confessed afterward, that he was most averse to this war, and abhorred it from his very soul; and yet he makes a handle of it to rain down vengeance on the Presbyterians, who had no concern in it; but it happened to them as in Popish countries; when any general calamity befalls the people, it is imputed to too great an indulgence to heretics, and the vengeance is returned upon their heads.³ Bishop Burnet is of opinion that the Oxford act was rather owing to the liberty the Nonconformists took in their sermons to complain of their own hardships, and to lament the vices of the court, as the

¹ Baxter's Life, part 3. p. 3.

² Echard, p. 824.

³ Echard, p. 846.

causes of the present calamities. And supposing this to be true, their complaints were not without reason.

However, the load was to lie on the dissenting ministers, and therefore an act was brought into the house to banish them from their friends, which had the royal assent, October 31, 1665. It was entitled, "An act to restrain Nonconformists from inhabiting corporations;" the preamble to which sets forth, "that divers parsons, and others in holy orders, not having subscribed the act of uniformity, have taken upon them to preach in unlawful assemblies, and to instil the poisonous principles of schism and rebellion into the hearts of his majesty's subjects, to the great danger of the church and kingdom. Be it therefore enacted, that all such Nonconformist ministers shall take the following oath: I, A. B., do swear, that it is not lawful upon any pretence whatsoever, to take arms against the king;"¹ and that I do abhor that traitorous position of taking arms by his authority, against his person, or against those that are commissioned by him, in pursuance of such commissions; and that I will not at any time endeavour any alteration of government either in church or state. And all such Nonconformist ministers shall not after the 24th of March, 1665, unless in passing the road, come, or be within five miles of any city, town corporate, or borough, that sends burgesses to parliament; or within five miles of any parish, town, or place, wherein they have since the act of oblivion been parson, vicar, or lecturer, &c. or where they have preached in any conventicle on any pretence whatsoever, before they have taken and subscribed the aforesaid oath before the justices of peace at their quarter-sessions for the county, in open court; upon forfeiture for every such offence of the sum of forty pounds, one third to the king, another third to the poor, and a third to him that shall sue for it. And it is further enacted, that such as shall refuse the oath aforesaid shall be incapable of teaching any public or private schools, or of taking any boarders² or tablers to be taught or instructed, under pain of forty pounds, to be distributed as above. Any two justices of peace, upon oath made before them of any offence committed against this act, are empowered to commit the offender to prison for six months, without bail or mainprize."

The earl of Southampton, lord Wharton, Ashley, Dr. Earl, bishop of Salisbury, and others, vehemently opposed this bill, out of compassion to the Nonconformists, and as it enforced an unlawful and unjustifiable oath,

¹ A project was formed of imposing this clause on the whole nation, by requiring this oath of every subject. The point was so near carried, that the bill brought in for the purpose was rejected by three voices only. Secret History of the Reign of Charles II. vol. 2. p. 172, note.—ED.

² "This act seemed (it is justly observed) to be the last step in the climax of intolerance; for to deprive men of the means of subsistence implies more deliberate cruelty, though it does not excite so much horror as fire and fagots." Secret History of the Reign of Charles II. vol. 2. p. 171, note.—ED.

which (as the earl of Southampton observed) no honest man could take; but the madness of the times prevailed against all reason and humanity.¹ The promoters of the act were, lord chancellor Clarendon, archbishop Sheldon, Ward, the new bishop of Salisbury, and their creatures, with all that were secret favourers of Popery, says bishop Burnet. It was moved that the word *legally* might be inserted in the oath, before the word “commissioned;” and that before the words “endeavoured to change the government,” might be inserted the word *unlawfully*; but all amendments were rejected;² however, Bridgman, chief-justice of the common-pleas, declaring that the oath must be so understood, Dr. Bates and about twenty others took it, to avoid the imputation of sedition; but they had such a lecture afterward from the bench for their scruples, that they repented of what they had done before they went out of court. Mr. Howe, and about twelve in Devonshire, and a few in Dorsetshire, took the oath, with a declaration in what sense and with what limitations they understood it.”³

But the body of the Nonconformist ministers refused the oath, choosing rather to forsake their habitations, their relations, and friends, and all visible support, than destroy the peace of their consciences. Those ministers who had some little estate or substance of their own, retired to some remote and obscure villages, or such little market-towns as were not corporations, and more than five miles from the places where they had preached; but in many counties it was difficult to find such places of retirement; for either there were no houses untenanted, or they were annexed to farms which the ministers were not capable of using; or the people were afraid to admit the ministers into their houses, lest they should be suspected as favourers of nonconformity.⁴ Some took advantage of the ministers’ necessities, and raised their rents beyond what they could afford to give. Great numbers were thus buried in obscurity, while others, who had neither money nor friends, went on preaching as they could, till they were sent to prison, thinking it more eligible to perish in a jail than to starve out of one; especially when by this means they had some occasional relief from their hearers, and hopes that their wives and children might be supported after their death.⁵ Many who lay concealed in distant places from their flocks in the daytime, rode thirty or forty miles to preach to them in the night, and retired again before daylight. These hardships tempted some few to conform (says Mr. Baxter), contrary to their former judgments; but the body of dissenters remained steadfast to their principles, and the church gained neither reputation nor

¹ Baxter, part 3. p. 3. Burnet, vol. 1. p. 329.

² Baxter’s Life, part 3. p. 15.

³ Howe’s Life, p. 41.

⁴ Baxter, part 3. p. 4. Burnet, p. 331.

⁵ Baxter’s Life, part 3. p. 15.

numbers. The informers were very diligent in hunting after their game; and the soldiers and officers behaved with great rudeness and violence. When they missed of the ministers, they went into the barns and out-houses, and sometimes thrust their swords up to the hilts in the hay and straw, where they supposed they might lie concealed; they made havoc of their goods, and terrified the women and children almost out of their lives. These methods of cruelty reduced many ministers, with their families, to the necessity of living upon brown rye-bread and water; but few were reduced to public beggary, says Mr. Baxter,¹ the providence of God appearing wonderfully for their relief, in their greatest extremities.

And as if the judgments of Heaven upon this nation were not heavy enough, nor the legislature sufficiently severe, the bishops must throw their weight into the scale; for in the very midst of the plague, July 7, 1665, archbishop Sheldon sent orders to the several bishops of his province to return the names of all ejected Nonconformist ministers, with their places of abode, and manner of life; and the returns of the several bishops are still preserved in the Lambeth library.² The design of this inquiry was to gird the laws closer upon the dissenters, and to know by what means they earned their bread; and if this tender-hearted archbishop could have had his will, they must have starved, or sought a livelihood in foreign countries.

This year put an end to the life of Dr. Cornelius Burgess, a divine of the Puritan stamp,³ educated at Oxford, and chaplain to king Charles I. He suf-

¹ Page 4.

² Comp. Hist. vol. 3. p. 279.

³ "If all the Puritans (says Dr. Grey) had been of his rebellious stamp, they had certainly been a wicked crew, but there was a great difference in Puritans, some very good, and some very bad, as is justly observed by Mr. Fuller." In his first volume also, p. 268, the doctor impeaches the character of this divine, in the words of Echard; who calls him "the seditious Dr. Burgess, and one of the greatest boufeus [firebrands] of the whole party, being the perpetual trumpeter to the most violent proceedings, a great instrument in bringing on the miseries of the nation; who died in great want and poverty, tormented and eaten up by a cancer in his neck and cheek—a fearful instance of rebellion and sacrilege." To these and other invectives of the archdeacon Echard against Dr. Burgess, Dr. Calamy replied; but the reply goes chiefly to show the archdeacon's partiality, by inveighing in this manner against Burgess, when the characters of some on the other side were open to similar charges. The fact, which seems to bear hard on the name of this divine, is that though he declared it "by no means lawful to alienate the bishops' lands from public and pious uses, or to convert them to any private person's property;" yet he gained so much as to grow rich by the purchase of them. After the Restoration he lost all. This, Dr. Calamy thinks, might be allowed a sufficient punishment without branding his memory. What inconsistency or faults soever might be chargeable on Dr. Burgess, the interpretation which the archdeacon puts on his death deserves severe censure, as "rash and presuming." This method gives a particular and invidious construction to events that arise from general laws, and equally befall the righteous and the wicked: and it shows, how they who use it would direct, if it were in their power, the evils and calamities of life. It indicates as much a want of candour and generosity as of sound judgment—It appears from a MS. history drawn up by Dr. Henry Sampson, a noted physician, that Dr. Burgess was deemed a man of solid parts and great learning; that no temptations could induce him to return to the episcopal

ferred much by the high-commission court; but, taking part with the parliament, was chosen one of the pacific divines, who met at the Jerusalem-chamber, to accommodate differences in the church: he often preached before the house of commons, and was one of the assembly of divines, but refused to take the covenant till he was suspended. He was ejected at the Restoration from St. Andrew's, in the city of Wells, in Somersetshire, and having laid out all his money in the purchase of bishops' lands, he was reduced to absolute poverty.¹ He appeared at the head of the London divines, against bringing the king to his trial, and was esteemed a very learned and able divine. He died at his house at Watford, June, 1665.

We have already remembered Dr. Cheynel among the Oxford professors, a man of great abilities, and a member of the assembly of divines. He quitted his preferments in the university for refusing to take the engagement, and was ejected from the living of Petworth at the Restoration, without having enriched himself by any of his preferments.² It is reported that he was sometimes disordered in his head, but he was perfectly recovered some years before his death, which happened at his house near Brighthelmstone, in Sussex, September, 1665.³

[There died in prison this year, Mr. Saipuel Fisher, a man of great parts and literature, of eminent piety and virtue, who reflected honour on each denomination of Christians, with which, through the change of his sentiments, he became successively connected. His father was a haberdasher of hats, and mayor of Northampton. In 1623, at the age of eighteen, he became a student in Trinity-college, Oxford; where he took the degree of master of arts, and then removed to New-Inn. At the university, he distinguished himself, by his application and proficiency gained an accurate knowledge of Greek and Roman antiquities, and was particularly given to the study of rhetoric and poetry. When he had finished his academic course, he became

side; that in the year 1648, he preached a sermon fuller of loyalty than the boldest at that time would dare to express; that he was against imposing the covenant, and refused to take it till he was suspended. He was excellently skilled in the liturgical controversies, and those of church government: and was possessed of all the books of Common Prayer that were ever printed in England, and bestowed them upon Oxford library. Dr. Calamy's Letter to Mr. Archdeacon Echard, p. 107—111.—ED.

¹ Wood's 'Athen. Oxon. vol. 2. p. 235; Calamy, vol. 2. p. 586; or Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial, vol. 2. p. 384.

² For he was remarkable throughout his life for hospitality and contempt of money. Dr. Johnson published an account of this extraordinary man, that appeared first in the Gentleman's Magazine for March and April 1775; which, Mr. Palmer remarks, is a satire both upon Dr. Cheynel and the times. Dr. Cheynel, this narrative says, "had an intrepidity which was never to be shaken by any danger, and a spirit of enterprise not to be discouraged by difficulty; which were supported by an unusual degree of bodily strength. Whatever he believed he thought himself obliged to profess, and what he professed he was ready to defend." —ED.

³ Wood's Athen. Oxon. vol. 2. p. 245; Calamy, vol. 2. p. 675; and Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial, vol. 2. p. 467.

chaplain to Sir Arthur Haslerigge. In 1632, he was presented to the vicarage of Lidd in Kent, a living of £500 a-year. Here he had the character of a very powerful preacher, united with humility and affability of carriage. While in this situation, in consequence of frequent conversation with a Baptist minister, he was led into an examination of the questions concerning baptism, which ended in his embracing the opinions of the Baptists, being baptized by immersion, and taking the pastoral care of a congregation of that people, having freely resigned his living and returned his diploma to the bishop; which those who differ from him must applaud as a singular instance of sincerity and self-denial. On this he rented a farm and commenced grazier; “by which he procured a decent competency, enhanced (says Mr. Gough) by the consolation of solid content, and the internal testimony of an approving heart.” During his connexion with the Baptists, he baptized some hundreds, and was frequently engaged in public disputes in vindication of their sentiments, to the number of nine, in the course of three years, with several noted ministers, sometimes in the presence of two thousand auditors, and once with Dr. Cheynel. He published also a treatise, entitled “Baby-baptism mere babism;” which is represented as containing the whole state of the controversy as it was then managed. He was deemed an ornament to the sect, and was one of the chief defenders of their doctrine. In 1665, he embraced the principles of the Quakers, and became an active and laborious minister among them. He preached at Dunkirk against the idolatry of the priests and friars: and, in company with another friend, travelled on foot over the Alps to Rome; where they testified against the superstitions of the place, and distributed some books among the ecclesiastics: and left it without molestation. After his return, he suffered among Protestants the persecution he escaped among the Romanists. The great part of the four last years of his life was spent in prison; and, after two years’ confinement in the White-Lion prison in Southwark, he died “in perfect peace with God; in good esteem both with his friends and many others, on account of the eminence of his natural parts and acquired abilities as a scholar, and of his exemplary humility, social virtues, and circumspect conversation as a Christian; in meekness instructing those who opposed him, and labouring incessantly, by his discourses and by his writings, to propagate and promote true Christian practice and piety.” Wood’s *Athen. Oxon.* vol. 2, p. 243. Crosby’s *History of the Baptists*, vol. 1, p. 361, &c. and Gough’s *History of the Quakers*, vol. 1, p. 163; and vol. 2, p. 141.—ED.]

The vices of the nation not being sufficiently punished by pestilence and war, it pleased Almighty God this year to suffer the city of London to be laid in ashes by a dreadful conflagration, which broke out in Pudding-lane behind the Monument, September 2, 1666, and within three or four days consumed thirteen thousand two hundred dwelling-houses, eighty-

nine churches, among which was the cathedral of St. Paul's; many public structures, schools, libraries, and stately edifices. Multitudes lost their goods and merchandise, and the greatest part of their substance, and some few their lives; the king, the duke of York, and many of the nobility, were spectators of the desolation, but had not the power to stop its progress, till at length it ceased almost as wonderfully as it began. Moorfields was filled with household goods, and the people were forced to lodge in huts and tents: many families who were last week in prosperity, were now reduced to beggary, and obliged to begin the world again. The authors of this fire were said to be the Papists, as appears by the inscription upon the Monument. The parliament being of this opinion, petitioned the king to issue out a proclamation, requiring all Popish priests and Jesuits to depart the kingdom within a month, and appointed a committee who received evidence of some Papists who were seen to throw fire-balls into houses, and of others who had materials for it in their pockets; but the men were fled, and none suffered but one Hubert, a Frenchman, by his own confession.¹

In this general confusion, the churches being burnt, and many of the parish-ministers withdrawn for want of habitations or places of worship, the Nonconformists resolved again to supply the necessities of the people, depending upon it, that in such an extremity, they should escape persecution. Some churches were erected of boards, which they called tabernacles, and the dissenters fitted up large rooms with pulpits, seats and galleries, for the reception of all who would come. Dr. Manton had his rooms full in Covent-Garden; Mr. Tho. Vincent, Mr. Doolittle, Dr. Turner, Mr. Grimes, Mr. Jenkyns, Mr. Nath. Vincent, Dr. Jacomb, Mr. Watson, had their separate meetings in other places.. The Independents also, as, Dr. Owen, Dr. Goodwin, Mr. Griffiths, Brooks, Caryl, Barker, Nye, and others, began the same practice; many citizens frequented the meetings, where the liturgy was not read; though the few parish-pulpits that remained were filled with very able preachers; as, Dr. Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Patrick, White, Gifford, Whichcote, Horton, Meriton, &c. But none of these calamities had any farther influence upon the court prelates, than that they durst not prosecute the preachers so severely for the present.²

Among the Nonconformist ministers who died this year, were the reverend Mr. Edward Calamy, B. D.³ the ejected minister of Aldermanbury, born in London 1600, and bred in Pembroke-hall, Cambridge; he was first chaplain to Dr. Felton, bishop of Ely; and afterward settled at St. Ed-

¹ Hubert was a French Huguenot, of Rouen in Normandy. Though he confessed the fact, yet according to Echard, he suffered unjustly; for he was a sort of lunatic, and had not landed in England till two days after the fire, as appeared by the evidence of the master of the ship who had him on board. Grey's Examination, vol. 3. p. 439.—ED.

² Baxter's Life, part 3. p. 19.

³ Calamy's Abridg. vol. 2. p. 4.

mundsbury, from whence, after ten years, he with thirty other ministers, were driven out of the diocese by bishop Wren's visitation-articles and the book of sports. Upon the death of Dr. Stoughton, 1639, he was chosen to Aldermanbury, where he soon gained a vast reputation. He was one of the divines who met in the Jerusalem-chamber for accommodating ecclesiastical matters in the year 1641. He was afterward a member of the assembly at Westminster, and an active man in all their proceedings. He was one of the most popular preachers in the city,¹ and had a great hand in the king's restoration, but soon repented having done it without a previous treaty. He refused a bishopric, because he could not have it upon the terms of the king's declaration; and soon after the Bartholomew-act, was imprisoned in Newgate for preaching an occasional sermon to his parishioners.² He afterward lived pretty much retired till this year, when being driven in a coach through the ruins of the city of London, it so affected him, that he went home and never came out of his chamber more, dying within a month, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.³

Mr. Arthur Jackson, M. A., the ejected minister of St. Faith's, was born about the year 1593, and educated in Cambridge. He became minister of St. Michael's Wood-street, in the year 1625, when the pestilence raged in the city; and continued with his parish throughout the whole course of the distemper.⁴ He was fined £500 for refusing to give evidence against Mr. Love,

¹ His week-day lecture was constantly attended for twenty years together by persons of the greatest quality, there being seldom so few as twenty coaches. He was president in meetings of the city-ministers, and qualified, by natural and acquired abilities, to be the leader of the Presbyterians. He dared to censure the conduct of Cromwell to his face, and was never known to be intimidated, where he thought his duty was concerned; of which his grandson gives a remarkable proof.* He was one of the writers against the liturgy. The title of one of the answers to him and his brethren is a curious specimen of the taste and spirit of the times. It was called "A Throat Hapse for the Frogs and Toads that crept abroad croaking against the Common Prayer-book." Granger's History of England, vol. 2. p. 184, octavo, and note—ED.

* Preaching before general Monk, soon after the Restoration, having occasion to speak of filthy lucre, he said, "Some men will betray three kingdoms for filthy lucre's sake:" and immediately threw his handkerchief, which he usually waved up and down while he was preaching, towards the general's pew. Palmer and Granger, *ut supra*.—ED.

² This confinement made no small noise; Mr. Calamy was a man so generally beloved and respected. Dr. Wilde published a copy of verses on the occasion, which was spread through all parts of the kingdom. And the passage through Newgate-street was obstructed by the coaches of those who visited him in his imprisonment. A Popish lady, who had been stopped by them, finding what alarm and disturbance this proceeding against Mr. Calamy had produced, took the first opportunity to wait upon the king at Whitehall, and communicate the whole matter to him, expressing her fear, that if such steps as these were taken, he would lose the affections of the city, which might be of very ill consequence. On this remonstrance, and for some other reasons, Mr. Calamy was in a little time discharged by the express order of his majesty. Memoirs of Dr. Edmund Calamy, MS.—ED.

³ Nonconformists' Memorial, vol. 1. p. 73.

⁴ Calamy's Abridgment, vol. 2. p. 3; or, Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial, vol. 1. p. 104.

and committed prisoner to the Fleet, where he remained seventeen weeks. At the Restoration he was chosen, by the provincial assembly of London, to present a Bible to the king at his public entrance.¹ He was afterward one of the commissioners of the Savoy; and when the uniformity-act took place, being old, he retired to a private life, and died with great satisfaction in his nonconformity, August 5, 1665, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

Dr. William Spurstow, the ejected minister of Hackney, was sometime master of Katherine-hall, Cambridge, but ejected for refusing the engagement. He was one of the authors of *Smectymnuus*, a member of the assembly of divines, and afterward one of the commissioners of the Savoy; a man of great learning, humility, and charity, and of a cheerful conversation: he lived through the sickness-year, but died the following in an advanced age.²

This year was memorable for the fall of the great earl of Clarendon, lord-high-chancellor of England, who attended the king in his exile, and upon his majesty's restoration, was created a peer, and advanced to the high dignity of chancellor of England. He governed with a sovereign and absolute sway as prime-minister for about two years; but in the year 1663, he was impeached of high-treason by the earl of Bristol; and though the impeachment was dropped for want of form, his interest at court declined from that time, and after the Oxford parliament of 1665, his lordship was out of all credit. This summer the king took the seals from him, and on the 12th of November sir Edward Seymour impeached him of high-treason, at the bar of the house of peers, in the name of all the commons of England, for sundry arbitrary and tyrannical proceedings contrary to law, by which he had acquired a greater estate than could be honestly gotten in that time.—For procuring grants of the king's lands to his relations, contrary to law—for corresponding with Cromwell in his exile³—for advising and effecting the sale of Dunkirk—for issuing out *quo warrantos* to obtain great sums of money from the corporations—for determining people's title to their lands at the council-table, and stopping proceedings at law, &c. The earl had made himself obnoxious at court by his magisterial carriage to the king,⁴ and was grown very unpopular by his superb and magnificent palace

¹ "There was (Mr. Granger observes) a particular propriety in assigning this office to him, as he had written a commentary on several parts of the Bible." He was a man of prodigious application; at the university he studied fourteen or sixteen hours a day, and to the day of his death constantly rose, summer and winter, at three or four o'clock in the morning. Granger's History of England, vol. 3. p. 43, octavo—ED.

² Calamy, vol. 2. p. 471; or, Palmer's Nonconformists' Memorial, vol. 2. p. 173.

³ Dr. Grey supposes that Mr. Neal could not but know that lord Clarendon had cleared himself from this charge to the king's satisfaction during his exile; who declared "that he was sorry that he was not in a condition to do him more justice than to declare him innocent, which he did, and commanded the clerk of the council to draw up a full order for his justification: which his majesty himself would sign."—ED.

⁴ Burnet, p. 365. 369, 370.

at St. James's, erected in the time of war and pestilence, which cost him £50,000.¹ Some called it Dunkirk-house, as being built with his share of the price of that fortress; and others Holland-house, as if he had received money from the king's enemies in time of war. The king's second marriage, which proved barren, was laid to his charge, and said to be contrived for the advancement of his grandchildren by the duchess of York, who was the earl's daughter. When his majesty inclined to part with his queen, and if possible to legitimate his addresses to Miss Steward, the chancellor got her married privately to the duke of Richmond, without the king's knowledge, which his majesty was told was to secure the succession of the crown to his own family. This intriguing, together with his high opposition to the Roman Catholics, and to all who were not of his principles, procured him many enemies, and struck him quite out of the king's favour. The earl did not think fit to abide the storm, but withdrew to France, leaving a paper behind him, in which he denies almost every article of his charge;² but the parliament voted his defence scandalous, and ordered it to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman. December 18, his lordship was banished the king's dominions for life by act of parliament; he spent the remaining seven years of his life at Rouen in Normandy, among Papists and Presbyterians, whom he would hardly suffer to live in his own country, and employed the chief of his time in writing the History of the Grand Rebellion,³ which is in every one's hands.

The earl of Clarendon was a Protestant of Laudean principles in church and state, and at the head of all the penal laws against the Nonconformists

¹ Mr. Echard says, that this palace was built in the absence of the chancellor, principally at the expense of the Vintner's company; and that when he came to see the case of it, he rather submitted than consented, and with a sigh said, "This house will one day be my ruin." Grey's Examination, vol. 3. p. 352, note. The doctor fills two pages here, with quoting lord Clarendon's vindication of himself. —ED.

² The articles of the charge stated by Mr. Neal were, if you credit Dr. Welwood, the ostensible causes only of the chancellor's fall. The true reason why he was abandoned to his enemies was, that he secretly opposed the design of the parliament to settle such a revenue upon the king during life as would place him beyond the necessity of asking more, except on some extraordinary occasion: and he drew the earl of Southampton into his views, urging that he knew the king so well, that if such a revenue were once settled upon him for life, neither of them two would be of any farther use; and there would be no probability of seeing many more sessions of parliament during that reign. This came to the king's ears. Memoirs, p. 109, 110, sixth edition. Lord Cornbury, in a letter to the Duke of Ormond preserved by Carte, said that his father never stirred as long as he saw any probability of being brought to his trial in parliament, though all his friends persuaded him to leave the kingdom, fearing that his innocence would not protect him against the malice of his enemies. When he found that there was a design to prorogue the parliament on purpose to try him by a jury of peers, by which means he might fall into the hands of the protesting lords, he resolved to avail himself of an opportunity of going over to Calais. Grey's Examination, vol. 3. p. 355, 356. —ED.

³ He also read over Livy and Tacitus, and almost all Tully's works; and "was a much greater, perhaps a happier, man alone and in exile (says Mr. Granger), than Charles II. upon his throne." History of England, vol. 3. p. 360; and vol. 4. p. 64, note.—ED.

to this time. Bishop Burnet says,¹ “He was a good chancellor,² but a little too rough; that he meddled too much in foreign affairs, which he never understood well: that he had too much levity in his wit, and did not observe the decorum of his post.” Mr. Rapin adds,³ “that from him came all the blows aimed at the Nonconformists since the beginning of this reign. His immoderate passion against Presbyterianism was this great man’s foible. He gloried in his hatred of that people; and, perhaps, contributed more than any other person to that excess of animosity which subsists against them at this day among the followers of his maxims and principles.” Mr. Echard says, “His removal was a great satisfaction to the dissenters (directly contrary to Mr. Baxter); who observes a remarkable providence of God, that he who had dealt so cruelly by the Nonconformists should be banished by his own friends, while the others, whom he had persecuted, were most moderate in his case, and many of them for him. It was a great ease that befell good men by his fall (says he), for his way was to decoy men into conspiracies, or pretended plots, and upon those rumours innocent people were laid in prison, so that no man knew when he was safe; whereas since his time, though the laws have been made more severe, yet men are more safe.”⁴ His lordship was undoubtedly a person of very considerable abilities, which have been sufficiently celebrated by his admirers, but I have not been able to discover any great or generous exploits for the service of the public; and how far his conduct with regard to the Nonconformists was consistent with humanity, religion, or honour, must be left with the reader.

¹ Page 33.

Dr. Grey gives bishop Burnet’s character of the lord-chancellor more at length; and prefixes another character of his lordship drawn by the pen of Mr. Carte, to “obviate (as he expresses himself) the ill-natured reflection cast upon him by Mr. Neal; because he adhered to the interest of his king and country, and would not give up the church established into the hands of unreasonable fanatics.”—ED.

² A domestic incident, related by bishop Burnet, is supposed to have fixed and heightened the chancellor’s zeal for the constitutional liberties of his country, in civil matters. On a visit which he paid to his father, a gentleman of Wiltshire, when he began to grow eminent in his profession, as they were walking one day in a field, his father observed to him, “that men of his profession did often stretch law and prerogative to the prejudice of the liberty of the subject, to recommend and advance themselves;” and charged him, that he should “never sacrifice the laws and liberties of his country to his own interest, or to the will of a prince.” He repeated this twice; and immediately fell into a fit of apoplexy, of which he died in a few hours. Burnet’s *History of his Own Times*, vol. 1. p. 231.

³ Vol. 2. p. 650, folio ed.

⁴ Baxter, part 3. p. 20, 21.