FACTS AND MEN

BEING PAGES FROM

ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY,

BETWEEN 1553 AND 1683.

WITH A PREFACE FOR THE TIMES.

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IX.

ARCHBISHOP LAUD AND HIS TIMES.

WILLIAM LAUD, Archbishop of Canterbury, was beheaded on Tower Hill, London, in the year 1645. He was one of five Archbishops in historical times who died violent deaths. Alphege was killed by the Danes in 1009, in Ethelred's reign. Thomas à Becket was suddenly murdered in Canterbury Cathedral, in the reign of Henry II. Simon Sudbury was beheaded by Wat Tyler, in the reign of Richard II. Cranmer was burned by Papists at Oxford, in the days of Queen Mary. Laud alone died by Protestant hands, in Charles the First's time, at the beginning of the Long Parliament.

Now what have we got to do with Archbishop Laud in the nineteenth century? Many, I venture to suspect, are ready to ask that question. Two centuries have passed away since Laud died. Steam, electricity, railways, free trade, reform, education, science, have changed everything in England. Why rake up the melancholy story of a barbarous deed done in semi-barbarous times? What is Laud to us, or we to Laud, that we need trouble ourselves with him and his history?

Questions like these, I make bold to say, are rather short-sighted and inconsiderate. History, it has been wisely said, is "philosophy teaching by examples," and of no history is that saying so true as of the history of the Church. History, it has again been said, "has a strange tendency to repeat itself," and a close study of the history of the past will help us greatly to conjecture what will happen in the future. It is my firm belief that we have a great deal to do with Laud, and that a knowledge of Laud's times is of great importance in the present day. I will go further. I believe that the history of Laud throws broad and clear light on the present position of the Church of England.

I must begin by throwing myself on the kind indulgence of my readers, and soliciting a large measure of patience and consideration. My subject is an historical one. Few men, except Froude and Macaulay, can make history anything but dry and dull. When king Ahasuerus could not sleep, the Chronicles, or history of his own times, were read to him.—My subject, moreover, is peculiarly surrounded with difficulties. Never was there a character so differently estimated as that of Laud. According to some, he was a Papist and a monster of iniquity; according to others, he was a blessed martyr and an angel of light. Between the violent abuse of Prynne, on the one hand, and the preposterous admiration of Heylin, Wharton, Lawson, and even Le Bas, on the other, it is extremely hard to find out the truth. In short, the subject is a tangled skein, and at this distance of time it is difficult to unravel it.—Nevertheless, I shall boldly try to set before my

readers “the thing as it is.” After careful investigation my own mind is thoroughly made up. I hold that, wittingly or unwittingly, meaningly or unmeaningly, intentionally or unintentionally, Laud did more harm to the Church of England than any Churchman that ever lived. He inflicted a wound that will never be sealed. He worked mischief that will never be repaired.

Laud was born in the year 1573, about thirty-five years after the beginning of the Reformation, in the middle of Queen Elizabeth’s reign, and came forward as a public man about the time of James the First’s accession, in 1603. I ask particular attention to these dates. A moment’s lection will show that he appeared on the stage of English Church history at a most critical period: that is to say, within the first seventy-five years after the commencement of the glorious English Reformation.

Seventy-five years only! How short a time that seems! Yet how many events of deepest interest to us all were crowded into that period. Within those seventy-five years the seed of Protestantism was first sown by Henry the Eighth, though I fully admit from low, carnal, and worldly motives.—Then came the short but glorious reign of Edward the Sixth, when the tender plant grew with hot-bed rapidity under the fostering care of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and Hooper.—Then came the bloody reign of Mary, when it was cut down to the very ground by the ferocious proceedings of Bonner and Gardiner.—Then came the happy reaction, on Elizabeth’s accession to the throne, and the final re-establishment of the Church of England on the basis which it now occupies.

But even Elizabethan times, I am sorry to say, were not times of unmixed good to the Church of England. The truth must be spoken on this point. In our thankfulness for the good Elizabeth did we are rather apt to overlook the harm which was done in her reign. Things were left undone that ought to have been done, and done that ought not to have been done. Partly from the Queen’s characteristic Tudor love of power, and jealousy of the Bishops, and partly from her anxious desire to conciliate and win over the Papists, the work of the Reformation was not carried forward so energetically as it might have been. The Zurich letters, published by the Parker Society, contain many hints about this. If Jewel and his companions had not been incessantly thwarted and hampered by royal interference, our Church’s worship and organization would probably have been made far better than it is. If Grindal had not been snubbed and stopped in the matter of the “prophesyings,” the English clergy would have been a far better body than they were. His letter to the Queen on that painful occasion deserves unmixed admiration. Partly again, from the universal ignorance of toleration which prevailed among all parties, conscientious men were often persecuted for trifling offences, and the ground was prepared for an abundant

crop of dissent in after times. Fuller, the historian, records some curious correspondence between Cecil, and other Privy Councillors and Archbishop Whitgift, on this subject. I am sorry to appear to depreciate Elizabeth. But truth is truth, and ought to be known; and we cannot properly understand Laud, unless we understand the times which immediately preceded him.[1]

One bright point, however, should never be forgotten in estimating the reign of Elizabeth. The standard of doctrine in the Church of England was sound, clear, Scriptural, and unmistakable. Rightly or wrongly, nothing was tolerated in pulpits which was not thoroughly Protestant, and thoroughly agreeable to all the Thirty-nine Articles. A clergyman who preached up the real presence of Christ's body and blood, under the form of bread and wine in the sacrament,—or recommended the practice of private confession to a priest,—or advocated prayer to the Virgin Mary,—or elevated the consecrated elements over his head in the Lord's Supper and adored them,—or taught a gross, "*opus operatum*" view of baptismal regeneration,—or publicly denied the doctrine of predestination, or imputed righteousness, or justification by faith,—or reviled the memory of Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, or called Edward the Sixth "a young tiger-cub,"—or sneered at the Articles as forty stripes save one,—or recommended reunion with the Church of Rome,—or hesitated to call the Pope Antichrist,—such a man, I say boldly, unless he had been a very insignificant person, would have had a very hard time of it in the days of Good Queen Bess! The "powers that be" would have come down upon him like a thunderbolt. These were subjects which were hardly even allowed to be controverted. You must either hold strong Protestant views about them, or hold your tongue. In short, however faulty and deficient in many things, the Church of England in Queen Elizabeth's time was in theory downright Protestant and Evangelical. Weak, by reason of her infancy, the Church may have been; defective in many points, judged by our light, no doubt she was; marred and damaged by stupid intolerance she certainly was; but at no period was her general standard of doctrine so Scriptural and so Protestant as in the days of Elizabeth. Men and women were yet alive who had seen Rogers and Bradford burned in Smithfield,—who had heard old Latimer say to Ridley at the stake, "Courage, we shall light a candle which shall never be extinguished,"—who had watched gallant Hooper patiently agonizing in the fire for three quarters of an hour under the shadow of Gloucester Cathedral. Men and women in England had not yet forgotten these things. There was a wide-spread feeling that Popery was a false religion, and Protestantism was

[1] The reader who cares to look into this subject will find a remarkable letter to Whitgift in favour of the persecuted Nonconformists, dated 1583, and signed by Burleigh, Warwick, Howard, Hatton, Shrewsbury, Leicester, Croft, Walsingham—eight leading privy councillors.—See Fuller's "Church History," vol. iii. p. 37. Tegg's Edition.

God's truth; that Popish doctrine in every shape was to be held in abhorrence, and that Reformation doctrines ought never to be given up. All classes held this, with very few exceptions, from the statesman in the Council Chamber down to the apprentice-boy in the shop. In short, the days of Elizabeth, with all their faults, were Protestant days. The nation was professedly a Protestant nation, and gloried in the name. This is a point which ought never to be forgotten. Well would it have been for our country if Elizabethan Protestantism had been as real and deep as it seemed.

Such were the critical times in which William Laud was allowed by God to come forward, and become a power in England. Such was the state of things which he found in our Church. How he deliberately set himself to oppose the current theology of his day,—how he "practised and prospered" for forty years,—how he worked night and day to compass his ends, as "thorough" as Lord Strafford in driving on toward his mark,—how he rallied round him in an Arminian cave of Adullam every Churchman who was discontented with the doctrines of the Reformation,—how he gradually leavened our Church with a distaste for true Protestantism, and a dislike for what he was pleased to call Calvinism,—how, even after ruining Church and State by his policy, he left behind him a school of Churchmen which has done immense harm to our Church,—all these are historical facts, which would fill a volume if fully described. In a paper like the present they can only be briefly pointed out. The utmost that I shall attempt to do is to supply a bare outline of Laud's life, and a brief estimate of his character, and to show the policy he had in view, the manner in which he carried it out, and the consequences to which it led. A few practical lessons for ourselves will then form a fitting conclusion to the whole.

(*a*) William Laud was born at Reading in the year 1573, and was the son of respectable parents of the middle class. He received his early education at the Grammar School of his native town, and in the year 1589 entered St. John's College, Oxford. Little is known of his boyhood and youth, except that he was physically weak and puny, but intellectually vigorous, and a young man of untiring industry and application. His master at Reading School was so convinced from observation that he was one of those boys who are sure to rise in the world, that he used to say, "When you are a little great man, remember Reading School."

At Oxford he gradually, though slowly, made himself known and felt. In 1593 he was elected Fellow of his College, and after losing two years from illness was made Master of Arts in 1598, and ordained Deacon by Young, Bishop of Rochester, in 1600, and Priest in 1601.

Of his ways and pursuits during the first ten years of his Oxford life very little is known, except the suspicious fact that Buckeridge, a notoriously unsound divine, was his tutor. It is evident that he was a careful ob-

server of the times, and one who thought for himself. Even at the period of his ordination he had already taken up a theological line of his own. Bishop Young is said to have observed that his studies had not been confined to the ordinary system of Geneva, but that his divinity was built “on the noble foundation of the fathers, the councils, and the ecclesiastical historians.” Praise like this is suspicious. When a man makes an idol of Fathers and councils, and disparages the theology of the Reformation, we may be sure there is a screw loose in his theology. Wood, the author of “Athense Oxonienses,” says that, even in his first ten years at Oxford, he was esteemed “a very forward, confident, and zealous man.” Put together Bishop Young’s and Wood’s remarks, and you have the first ingredients of a very dangerous Churchman. I venture the conjecture, that these eleven quiet years at St. John’s, Oxford, were the seed-time of all the mischief that Laud ever did, and fixed the unhappy bias which characterized his whole career.

His appointment to read a divinity lecture at St John’s in 1602 was the first occasion when Laud came forward as the opponent of popular Protestantism, and the avowed advocate of a new style of theology. The precise nature of the opinions he propounded is not recorded, but according to Heylin it was something like “the perpetual visibility of the Church of Christ, derived from the Apostles to the Church of Rome, and continued in that Church until the Reformation.” What it was that he said exactly we do not know; but it is pretty clear that he took up ground about the Church of Rome which was quite opposed to the views of the Homilies, Jewel, and the Reformers, and most distasteful to the thorough Protestants of the University. The immediate result was, that the lecturer came into collision with no less a person than Dr. George Abbot, then Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, Head of University College, and afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury,—a man of great ability and deservedly high character. The after-consequences were, that from that day forward Abbot regarded Laud as a dangerous man, and Laud became marked and known as a very lukewarm Protestant, if not a friend of Popery, and an open enemy to the pure Gospel of Christ.

After serving the office of Proctor in 1603, Laud took his degree as Bachelor of Divinity in 1604. The propositions he undertook to defend in his exercises for that degree, supplied additional proof of his theological tendencies, and increased the suspicion with which he was regarded. According to his biographers he maintained, first, the "necessity of baptism;” and secondly, that there could be no true Church without diocesan Bishops.” The precise nature of his statements, again, is not known; but it is evident, from the stir which the exercises made, that they were thought unscriptural and unsound hitherto by Protestant Churchmen. It seems most probable that, like the promoters of the “Tracts for the Times,” he maintained apostolical succession and baptismal regeneration. Whatever it was

that he said, it is a fact that he was severely attacked by Dr. Holland, rector of Exeter, who was at that time Regius Professor of Divinity. As usual, nothing came of the attack, and Laud held his ground. Moral evidence of a man's theological unsoundness, and legal proof of it, are totally different things.

After damaging himself seriously, in 1605, by countenancing and solemnizing a most discreditable marriage between the earl of Essex and Lady Rich, Laud got into another theological difficulty at Oxford in 1606. He delivered a sermon in St. Mary's of such a Romish tendency, that he was called in question for it by Dr. Airay, provost of Queen's, at that time Vice-Chancellor. Again, we are left in ignorance of the nature of the sermon, and again we only know that, as usual, Laud contrived to escape public censure. But, like many others in a similar position, though not legally condemned, he established a strong impression in many minds that he was a thoroughly unsound divine, and deeply tainted with Romanizing opinions. Such, in short, was the scandal raised by this discourse, that the famous Joseph Hall, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, took occasion to address a remarkable letter of expostulation to the preacher, which, as an indication of the estimate then made of Laud's character, deserves quoting at length. He says:—

"I would I knew where to find you; then I could tell how to take direct aim. Whereas now I must pore and conjecture. Today you are in the tents of the Romanists, tomorrow in ours, the next day between both and against both. Our adversaries think you ours. We think you theirs. Your conscience finds you with both and neither. I flatter you not. This, of course, is the worst of all tempers. Heat and cold have their uses. Lukewarmness is good for nothing, but to trouble the stomach. Those that are spiritually hot find acceptation. Those that are stark cold have lesser reckoning. The mean between both is much worse, as it comes nearer to good and yet attains it not. How long will you be in this indifferency? Resolve one way, and know at last what you do hold, what you should. Cast off either your wings or your teeth; and, casting off this bat-like nature, be either a bird or a beast. To die wavering or uncertain, yourself will grant fearful. If you must settle, when begin you? If you must begin, why not now? It is dangerous deferring that whose want is deadly, and whose opportunity is doubtful. God crieth with Jehu, 'Who is on my side? who?' Look at last out of your window to Him, and in a resolute courage cast down the Jezebel that hath bewitched you. Is there any impediment which delay will abate? Is there any which a just answer cannot remove? If you would rather waver, who can settle you? But if you love not inconstancy, tell us why you stagger? Be plain, or else you will never be firm."[1]

[1] Hall's "Letters:;" Decade III. Epist. 5.

In 1607, in the thirty-fourth year of his age, Laud began at last to climb the ladder of ecclesiastical preferment. A man of his stamp, who had come forward as an opponent of Protestant and Evangelical theology, was sure not to lack patrons. Such men "speak of the world, and the world heareth them." (1 John iv. 5.) In fact from this date, until he became a Bishop, I can hardly find three years in which Laud did not obtain some piece of preferment. In 1607 he was made Vicar, of Stamford, in Northamptonshire; in 1608, Rector of North Kibworth, in Leicestershire, and Chaplain to Neile, Bishop of Rochester; in 1609, Rector of West Tilbury, Essex; in 1610, Rector of Cuckstone, Kent, and then of Norton in the same county; in 1611, President of St. John's College, Oxford, and Chaplain to the King; in 1614, Prebendary of Buckden, in the Diocese of Lincoln; in 1615, Archdeacon, of Huntingdon; in 1616, Dean of Gloucester; in 1618, Rector of Ibstock in. Leicestershire; in 1620, Canon of Westminster; and in 1622, Rector of Crick, in Northamptonshire.[1] Such a number of successive preferments probably were never heaped on one man in an equal space of time! How many of them he held at once I am unable to ascertain. What he did at his various livings, whether he resided much, whether he preached much, whether he left any spiritual marks for good, are all points about which no information remains. Except the fact, that in each parish he always assigned an annual pension to twelve poor persons, laid aside one-fifth of his income for charitable purposes, put the glebe house in repair, and saw that the church was supplied with becoming furniture, I can find nothing recorded. As to any evangelistic work, bearing fruit in men's souls, in Stamford, North Kibworth, West Tilbury, Cuckstone, Norton, Ibstock, or Crick, we are left entirely in the dark. In truth, there is no evidence that work of this kind was at any time much in Laud's line.

Two public incidents in Laud's life during the thirteen years between 1607 and 1620 deserve special notice. One throws strong light on the estimate which was formed of him in the place where he was best known,—the University of Oxford. The other supplies a striking example of the thorough unbending style in which he drove on his own schemes for unprotestantizing the Church of England, and thrust them down men's throats in the face of opposition.

The first of these incidents is the public rebuke which he received at Oxford, in consequence of a sermon which he preached before the University on Shrove Tuesday, 1614. This sermon contained matter so offensive to Protestant Churchmen, that the Vice-Chancellor, Robert Abbot, brother of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, a

[1] Laud appears to have taken the living of Crick after he became Bishop of St. David's.—See his "Diary."

man of great piety and learning, thought fit to give it a public answer the following Easter Sunday, in a sermon at St. Mary's.

The following passage from Abbot's sermon is highly important, as showing what Laud's theological opinions really were:—

"Some men," said Abbot in his sermon, "are partly Romish and partly English, as occasion serves them; so that a man may say unto them, 'Art thou for us or for our adversaries?' They are men who under pretence of truth, and preaching against the Puritans, strike at the heart and root of the faith and religion now established among us. This preaching against the Puritans was the practice of Parsons and Campian the Jesuits, when they came into England to seduce young students. When many of them were afraid to lose their places, if they should professedly be thus, the counsel they then gave them was, that they should speak freely against the Puritans, and that would suffice. These men cannot plead that they are only accounted Papists because they speak against the Puritans, but because they speak nothing against the Papists. If they do at any time speak anything against the Papists, they do but beat about the bush; and that but softly, for fear of awakening and disquieting the birds that are in it. They speak nothing but that wherein one Papist will speak against another, or against equivocations and the Pope's temporal authority, and the like; and perhaps against some of their blasphemous opinions. But on the points of free-will, justification, concupiscence being sin after baptism, inherent righteousness, and certainty of salvation, the Papists beyond the sea can say they are wholly theirs, and the recusants at home make their brags of them. And in all things they keep so near the brink, that upon any occasion they may step over to them."

I make no comment on this passage: it speaks for itself. My readers will probably agree with me, that it would have been well if Vice-Chancellors of Oxford had always spoken as plainly and faithfully as Robert Abbot, and that Laud is not the only person who has required such public rebuke to be given. I only ask you to mark carefully the charges against Laud which the passage contains. It shows clearly and unmistakably what was the Oxford estimate, and the real nature of Laud's theology.

The other incident to which I ask attention in this period of Laud's life is the collision which took place between him and the Bishop of Gloucester, immediately after his appointment to the Deanery of Gloucester, in the year 1616. His very first act, on taking office in the Cathedral, was to remove the communion table from the place where it had long stood, in the midst of the choir, to the wall at the east end, where he ordered it to stand altar-wise. The change may seem a trifling one to many now, accustomed, as we have been, for 200 years, to see the table in this position; but a right understanding of the old position of the table throws broad light on the famous expression, "On the north side." The change appeared a very serious

matter to all good Protestants in 1616, as tending to bring back the Papal notion of an altar, and to encourage the idea of a sacrifice, and a priest, and the Mass, in the Lord's Supper. The people of Gloucester were of all English citizens the least likely to approve the slightest appearance of a leaning towards Popery. They had not forgotten good Bishop Hooper, and the doctrine he had so often preached about the Lord's Supper before his martyrdom. Miles Smith, the Bishop of Gloucester, a holy and learned man, and one of the leading translators of the authorised version of the Bible, was more offended by the change than any one, and declared, if it was carried into effect, he would never enter the Cathedral again. But none of these things moved Laud; in spite of Bishop and people the table was moved. The Dean had his own way. The Bishop was publicly set at nought, and never entered his own Cathedral again, though living within fifty yards of it, until the day of his death, in 1624. The feelings of the Protestant people of Gloucester were deeply wounded. It is a striking and significant fact, that afterwards, when the Commonwealth wars began, no place resisted the Cavaliers and fought for Parliament so stubbornly as this very city of Gloucester!

This unhappy transaction requires little comment from me. Like the affair of Abbot's sermon, however, it gives another insight into Laud's character. It shows him determined to carry out his own views without regard to the offence they might give to the feelings of Protestant Churchmen. It shows him, like many in modern times, perfectly indifferent to his Bishop's wishes and opinions the very moment they ran counter to his own. Here is the very man who preached up Apostolical Succession at Oxford, flying in the face of a venerable Bishop, and trampling contemptuously on his conscientious scruples! It shows him, above all, beginning his official duties in a public position, by making a great and suspicious stir about the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and attaching an ominous importance to the precise position of the Lord's Table. Need I remind many of my readers, that the first step of the whole Tractarian movement was exactly in the same direction? To exalt the Lord's Supper into a position neither warranted by the Bible, the Articles, nor the Prayer-book, and to invest the Lord's Table and all around it with a superstitious sanctity, these were among the first lessons taught by that school of which so many scholars have passed over to the Church of Rome. "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say."[1]

[1] What Laud really thought about the Lord's Table may be seen in a very painful extract from a speech afterwards delivered by him in the Star Chamber, on the occasion of the prosecution of Prynne in 1637. He there says, "The altar" (a word, we must remember, never used in the Prayer-book), "the altar is the greatest place of God's residence upon earth. I say the greatest, yea, greater than the pulpit; for there it is, 'This is my body,' but in the pulpit it is, 'This is my word.' And a greater reverence, no doubt, is due to the body

In 1621, after five years at Gloucester Deanery, Laud's ambition was once more gratified, and his power of mischief greatly increased, by his elevation to the bench as Bishop of St. David's. To thrust upon the bench, once filled by Latimer and Jewel, a man who had been publicly opposed by three Vice-Chancellors and a Regius Professor of Divinity, required of course no small influence and exertion. Laud's friends were found equal to the occasion. For the appointment, he was mainly indebted to the Marquis of Buckingham, and to Williams, the well-known Bishop of Lincoln. King James, at any rate, seems to have given a very unwilling consent to his nomination. Partly, no doubt, from the character which Laud had notoriously obtained as a very lukewarm Protestant; partly from the open distrust with which Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, regarded him; and partly from a certain shrewdness in discerning unsound doctrine, the King raised serious objections to Laud being made a Bishop. The conversation on the subject between his majesty and Bishop Williams, preserved by Hackett in his life of Williams, is a very curious one, and shows plainly that the British Solomon (as people called James) was not quite such a fool as he was often thought to be.—"'I keep Laud back,' said the king, 'from all place of rule and authority, because I find that he hath a restless spirit, and cannot see when matters are well; but loves to toss and change, and bring matters to a pitch of reformation floating in his own brain, which may endanger the steadfastness of that which is at a good pass, God be praised. I speak not at random: he hath made himself known to me to be such an one.' To this Williams could only reply that Laud was 'of a great and tractable wit, and would presently see the way to come out of his error? At last, wearied out by Williams' importunity, the King said, 'Is there no way but you must carry it? Then take him to you: but on my soul, you will repent it;' and went away in a rage, using other words of fierce and ominous import."—How true a prophet the King was, and how bitterly Williams afterwards smarted under Laud's base ingratitude, are notorious historical facts. But this was the way, and this the ladder, by which Laud climbed to the episcopal bench in 1621, in the forty-eighth year of his age.[1]

We have now reached the period of Laud's life when his unhappy influence began to be felt most powerfully in every department of Church

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than to the word of our Lord. And so to the throne where His body is actually present, than to the seat where His word useth to be proclaimed."

[1] Hackett's story is corroborated by one told by Bishop Burnet. "I have heard," says Bishop Burnet, "my own father relate it from the mouth of old Sir William Armourer, who was of King James the First's court, being bred up from a page, that his Majesty, as Laud (then only Bishop of St. David's) walked by, but at some distance, took Prince Charles by the arm, and in his Scottish dialect said to him, 'Son, ken you yon knave Laud? He has a restless head: he'll ne'er ha' done till he has lost his own head and endangered yours.'"—*Memorials of Princess Sophia*, pp. 54, 55.

and State. For the next twenty years after 1621, his history is so intermixed with the history of every great movement in our country, that to go fully into it would be to overload my subject, and make a plain biographical paper a volume of history. I cannot pretend to do anything of the kind. The utmost I shall attempt to do is to supply the leading incidents of his story, and the dates at which they occurred.

In 1622 I find he was appointed “Confessor” to the Duke of Buckingham. In 1626 he was made Bishop of Bath and Wells, and Dean of the Chapel Royal. In 1628 he became Bishop of London. In 1630 he became Chancellor of Oxford. In 1633 he rose to be Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor of Dublin University. In 1640 he began at last to fall from his high estate, and in 1641 he was committed to the Tower.

How he conducted himself throughout these last twenty years of his life,—how he plunged into politics with as much energy as any layman,—how he became the intimate friend of such men as Buckingham, Strafford, Windebank, and others of doubtful character,—how he contrived to get the reputation of having a hand in everything that went on both in Church and State,—how he managed to make himself the most unpopular man in England, from the Isle of Wight to Berwick-on-Tweed, and from the Land’s End to the North Foreland,—how at last not a mistake could be made, either political or ecclesiastical, without the cry being raised, “Is not the hand of Laud in all this?”—all these things are duly recorded in the historians of the times. They are far too many, and would occupy too much time to be detailed here.

One general remark applies to all his career throughout these twenty years. He was always consistent, always the same, always in mischief, always playing the same game, always driving at the same end, always advocating the same theological principles, for which he had made himself notorious at Oxford. In 1622, before he had been a Bishop a year, I find him assisting in the issue of six royal injunctions to the Clergy, in which, among other things, it is ordered, “that no one, under the degree of a Bishop or Dean, shall preach on such deep points as predestination, or election, or the universality, efficacy, resistibility, or irresistibility of God’s grace.”—In 1621 I find him procuring the suppression of an admirable association for buying up presentations and appointing good clergymen, mainly got up by the famous Dr. Gouge. The association was broken up, and the money subscribed was confiscated.—In 1631 I find him consecrating the Church of St. Catherine Cree, London, with such superstitious ceremonies and idolatrous veneration of the Lord’s Table and the elements of bread and wine, that he made every one suppose he longed to re-introduce downright Popery.—In 1632 I find him prosecuting Sherfield, Recorder of Salisbury, for breaking a painted window in St. Edmund’s Church, Salisbury, which the

vestry had ordered to be removed, and this with such savage severity that the unfortunate man was fined £1,000 by the Star Chamber.—In 1633 I find him first offending the feelings of the nation about the Sabbath by reviving and republishing "The Book of Sports," and then ungratefully trampling on the feelings of Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, by visiting his diocese as metropolitan, and opposing his known opinion about the Lord's Table.—In 1634 I find him persecuting the French and Walloon congregations in London, and pressing the Irish Church only too successfully to give up its admirable Articles.—In 1636 I find him preparing and sending down to Scotland the notorious Scotch liturgy, in which the Real Presence is as plainly taught as any Papist could wish, and setting all Scotland in a flame by attempting to introduce it in public worship.—In 1637 I find him forbidding the migration to America of a large body of Puritans, among whom was the famous Oliver Cromwell, and compelling some of the very men, who afterwards upset Church and State, to remain in England against their will.—In the same year I find him prosecuting Prynne, Burton, and Bastwick, for publishing violent writings, and actually punishing them with a fine of £5,000 each, imprisonment for life, and the hideous penalty of having their ears out off.—In 1640 I find him transgressing one of the first principles of our constitution by getting canons passed in Convocation without the consent of Parliament.—This list of monstrous follies might easily be increased. To enter into the particulars of them is, of course, impossible. For twenty years a petty warfare was kept up by him and his allies on the Episcopal bench against some of the holiest and best ministers of the land. The catalogue of famous men, who, at one time or another, during Laud's day of power, were prosecuted, silenced, fined, imprisoned, or driven to retire to the Continent, is a melancholy roll, and of itself speaks volumes. John Rogers, Daniel Rogers, Thomas Hooker, Dod, Hildersham, Ward, Cotton, Bridge, Ames, Sheppard, Burroughs, Greenhill, Calamy, Whateley, Wilkinson, Goodwin, were all men who had more divinity in their little fingers than Laud had in his whole body. Yet every one of them was visited with Laud's displeasure, and, in one way or another, disgracefully treated. In short, the public came to the conclusion that Laud and his companions thought Puritanism a greater sin than open immorality, and trifling acts of nonconformity worse than breaking the ten commandments! It really came to this, that men said you might lie, or swear, or get drunk, and little notice would be taken; but to be a Puritan, or a Nonconformist, was to commit the unpardonable sin!

Never, I think, did mortal man labour so unceasingly to advance his own particular theological views as Laud, and never did any one seem so blind to the mischievous effects of his proceedings. Had half the zeal he displayed in snubbing Calvinists, persecuting Puritans, promoting Armini-

ans, and making advances towards Rome, been shown by Grindal, Whitgift, and Abbot, in propagating Evangelical religion, it would have been a great blessing to the Church of England. Unhappily, we see in his case, as in many others, how much "wiser in their generation" the children of this world are than the children of light. Besides, untiring activity is far more often the characteristic of the friends of error than of the friends of truth. Pharisees, Jesuits, heresiarchs, in every age, will compass sea and land, and leave no stone unturned, to accomplish their ends, while the so-called Protestant soldier slumbers and sleeps. It was so in the days of Laud. I fear it is too much the case in the present day.

The end came at last. The patience of the English people was at length fairly exhausted. After a long and unseemly endeavour to govern without a parliament, that unhappy monarch, Charles the First, was obliged to summon the famous Long Parliament in 1640. From the very first meeting of the House of Commons the Archbishop of Canterbury's doom was sealed. Hollis, Pym, Dering, and their companions, attacked Strafford and Laud without delay, and gave them no respite till they had brought them to the scaffold. The virulence of the attack made upon both these great officials, the singular unanimity with which the proceedings were carried on, the strong language which men of all parties, even quiet people like Lord Falkland, used in speaking of the Church of England, are all most curious facts, and should be studied in "Rushworth's Collections," May's "History of the Long Parliament," or "Stoughton's Church of the Civil Wars." They all help to show the deep dissatisfaction which Laud's policy had long created in the mind of the public, and the intensity of the dislike with which he was personally regarded. Englishmen are notoriously slow to move, and curiously backward to resist constituted authority. When, therefore, Englishmen moved with such tremendous violence as the House of Commons moved against Laud, it is impossible not to feel that a very strong sense of long-standing grievances must have existed.

Laud was kept a prisoner from the 18th December, 1640, to the 10th of January, 1645, and the greater part of that time he was confined to the Tower. The articles laid to his charge were fourteen in number. In substance they were as follows (I copy Le Bas):—

1. That he had traitorously endeavoured to subvert the fundamental laws of the realm, and to persuade the King that he might levy money without the consent of Parliament.
2. That he had encouraged sermons and publications tending to the establishment of arbitrary power.
3. That he had interrupted and prevented the course of justice at Westminster Hall.

4. That he had traitorously and corruptly sold justice, and advised the King to sell judicial and other offices.
5. That he had surreptitiously caused a book of canons to be published without lawful authority, and had unlawfully enforced subscription to it.
6. That he had assumed a Papal and tyrannical power, both in ecclesiastical and temporal matters.
7. That he had laboured to subvert God's true religion, and to introduce Papal superstition and idolatry.
8. That he had usurped the nomination to many ecclesiastical benefices, and promoted persons who were Popishly affected, or otherwise unsound in doctrine or corrupt in manners.
9. That he had committed the licensing of books to chaplains notoriously disaffected to the reformed religion.
10. That he had endeavoured to reconcile the Church of England to the Church of Rome, and held intelligence with priests and the Pope, and had permitted a Popish hierarchy to be established in this kingdom.
11. That he had silenced many godly ministers, hindered the preaching of God's Word, cherished profaneness and ignorance, and caused many of the King's subjects to forsake the country.
12. That he had endeavoured to raise discord between the Church of England and other Reformed Churches, and had oppressed the Dutch and French congregations in England.
13. That he had laboured to introduce innovations in religion and government into the kingdom of Scotland, and to stir up war between the two countries.
14. That to preserve himself from being questioned for these traitorous practices, he had laboured to divert the ancient course of parliamentary proceeding, and to incense the King against all Parliaments.

Such were the charges brought against the unfortunate Archbishop, and upon these, with the addition of ten minor articles, he was finally brought to trial in March, 1644. It will be seen, by comparison of dates, that he lingered in prison for four years. It must have been a bitter time for the fallen Prelate! The execution of his friend Strafford, the battles of the civil war, the King's ill-success, and the imposition of a fine of £20,000 on himself, no doubt were not the least part of his sorrows. At one time, in 1643, a motion was actually made in the House of Commons that Laud should be transported, untried and unheard, to New England, in America; and it is by no means quite clear that some of his enemies would not have been glad to

get rid of him in this fashion. But the motion fell to the ground, and at length, in the autumn of 1644, he was finally placed on his trial.

Of the trial itself I shall say but little. It was perhaps as unfair and discreditable to English history as any State trial that figures in our chronicles. The prosecution was committed to Prynne, who was the virulent and bigoted personal enemy of the prisoner. Laud's own private papers and diary were seized and relentlessly used, and he had to defend himself under immense disadvantages. As the case went on, the evidence on many points was manifestly insufficient, and would never have satisfied a really fair and impartial court. Those who wish to read up the subject should study Prynne's own narrative of this trial, in a folio called "Canterbury's Doom." But it is as clear as daylight that Laud's condemnation was a foregone conclusion with his judges. In spite of a defence which even Prynne admits was "full, gallant, and pithy," in spite of a conspicuous absence of legal proof that he had committed anything worthy of death, at length, after great delays, the Archbishop of Canterbury was found guilty and sentenced to die.

Of his execution at Tower Hill, on the 9th of January, 1645, I shall also say little. The only favour shown him on this occasion was, that he was beheaded and not hanged. His demeanour on the scaffold was courageous, dignified, calm, and in every way honourable to him. His address before death was worthy of a better cause. In fact, you may say of him, as it was said of another, "Nothing in all his life became him so much as the leaving of it." That his execution was as much a judicial murder as that of Sir Thomas More or Cranmer, I feel no doubt at all: but I cannot for a moment admit that he deserves to be called a "martyr." It is the cause, not the amount of suffering, which makes the martyr. That Laud met his death bravely and gallantly, I fully admit: but I never can admit that he had done nothing to exasperate men's minds against him, or that he was wholly innocent of everything laid to his charge, or that he died in support of a good cause.

We have now traced the life of Laud from his cradle to his grave. It only remains for me to point out the great and instructive lessons which his life appears to teach us, and the broad and clear light which it throws on the position of the Church of England at the present day. But before I do this, I wish to say a few words on three disputed points. These points are Laud's real character, his real policy and aims, and the real consequences of his policy. I am well aware that this is debateable ground. In walking over it I cannot expect that all will agree with me. But I give my opinion freely, and men must take it for what it is worth.

(*a*) His real *character,* then: What was it? What is the estimate that we ought to put on him? The answer, as is often the case, lies in my judgment

between two extremes. Laud was neither so good nor so bad a man as he is often represented. To call him a saint, a martyr, an English Cyprian, on one side, is simply ridiculous. I can discover no warrant for such extravagant praise. To paint him as a monster of iniquity, and a child of the devil, on the other side, is equally absurd. The charge falls to the ground as "not proven."—Let us give him his due. He was not an immoral or a covetous man. Few archbishops seem to have spent so little on themselves, and to have given so largely and liberally of their substance to promote learning and to strengthen the material part of the Church of England. He was a zealous and earnest Churchman. No one can deny that he spent himself and was spent in the promotion of what he thought sound "Church Views," and conscientiously believed he was doing right. But earnestness alone, if not rightly directed, is a very mischievous thing. Experience abundantly proves that, in every age of the Church, well-meaning and conscientious men, when they are narrow-minded, short-sighted, ignorant of human nature, and obstinate, are the greatest causes of trouble. Never did man prove it so thoroughly as Laud.

He was not, I believe, a Jesuit or a Papist. His conference with Fisher, and his successful dealings with Chillingworth, completely negative that supposition. But to call him a sound Protestant Churchman is simply absurd. He never disguised his dislike to thorough Protestant theology, and laboured all his life to discourage it. The mere fact that he was twice offered a cardinal's hat by the Pope, after he became Archbishop of Canterbury, of itself speaks volumes. It shows the general impression that he made on the minds of foreigners.

That he was a spiritually-minded man, and really received the Gospel of God's grace into his heart, is a point of which we have very scanty proofs. This is a delicate matter. God forbid that we should judge him. Yet it is vain to deny that there is an absence of anything like thoroughly Evangelical, experimental religion in his literary remains. There is a painful lack of anything really calculated to do good to hearts and souls. His seven sermons are poor things, and not worthy to be compared even with the discourses of men of his own school, like Andrews. His private "Diary" contains much superstition and weakness. His letters are not spiritual or striking. It is not too much to say that you will find more good divinity in ten pages of such men as his contemporaries, Usher, Davenant, Hall, and Sibbes, than in all the works of Laud. The plain truth must be spoken. Laud was much more a political Churchman, an ecclesiastical Ahithophel, a zealous champion of his party, his cause, and his orders, than a minister of Christ, a preacher of the Gospel, a shepherd of souls. For the work of the former character he laid himself out entirely, and laboured in it night and day. For the work of the latter character he had no vocation, and gave him-

self no time. It was not work in his line. What he really was, and what he really felt personally in his heart of hearts, is a question which I cannot pretend to solve. The last day alone will declare it. In hope and charity I leave it alone.

(*b*) Laud's real *policy* next demands our attention. What was it? What was he driving at all his life? What did he want to do? What was his object and aim? I do not believe, with some, that he really desired to Romanize the Church of England, or meant and intended, if possible, to reunite it with the Church of Rome. I think those who say this go too far, and have no sufficient ground for their assertions. But I decidedly think, that what he did labour to effect was just as dangerous, and would sooner or later have brought back downright Popery, no matter what Laud meant or intended. I believe that Laud's grand idea was to make the Church of England less Protestant, less Calvinistic, less Evangelical, than it was when he found it. I believe he thought that our excellent Reformers had gone too far—that the clock ought to be put back a good deal. I believe his favourite theory was, that we ought to occupy a medium position between the Reformation on the one side, and Rome on the other, and that we might combine the ceremonialism and sacramentalism of St. Peter's on the Tiber with the freedom from corruption and ecclesiastical independence of St. Paul's on the Thames. He did not, in short, want to go back to the Vatican, but he wanted to borrow some of its principles, and plant them in Lambeth Palace. I see in these ideas and theories a key to all his policy. His one aim from St. John's, Oxford, till he was sent to the Tower, was not to Romanize, but to un-Protestantize the Church of England. Some may think this a nice and too refined a distinction. I do not. A "Romanizer" is one thing, an "un-Protestantizer" is another.

This was the explanation of his always opposing what he called "Calvinism." He would fain have made popular Protestant theology odious by painting the doctrines of grace as inseparable from anti-Romanism and extreme views of election and reprobation. He knew too well that nothing so damages a theological cause as a cleverly chosen nickname.

This was the explanation of his making so much ado about the position of the Lord's Table. It was not merely to preserve the Table from irreverent and profane uses, but to exalt the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and make a slight approach to the sacrifice of the Mass.

This was the explanation of his advocating extravagant views of the Episcopal office, as if it were essential to a Church. It helped his favourite notion that the Church of England occupied a middle position between the Presbyterian Church of Geneva and the Church of Rome,—an idea, by the way, often brought forward now-a-days, and about as absurd as to say the Isle of Wight occupies a middle position between England and France!

This was the explanation of his incessantly persecuting and teasing lecturers, and discouraging doctrinal preaching all over the land. He wished to make people think that the Sacraments, and not the preaching of God's Word, were the principal part of Christianity.

This was the explanation of his introducing, as far as possible, such histrionic ceremonials as those with which he astonished London at the consecration of St Catherine Cree. He desired to show the public that Churchmen could have as much sensuous and showy religion as Papists; and that, if we did not have the Mass itself, the Communion Service of the Prayer-book might be so managed and manipulated as to make an excellent imitation of it.

This was the explanation of his discouraging and checking all attacks on Popery, whether in the pulpit or the press, and obliging whole passages in many good books of the time to be expurgated and suppressed. He wished to lower the tone of the country about the nature of Popery, and to make people less alive to its enormous evils and less awake to his own movements.

This, in the last place, but not least, was the explanation of his constantly promoting and bringing forward in the Church Arminian and semi-Protestant divines of his own school of theology. Wren, Montague, and Mainwaring, are specimens of the kind of men he delighted to honour. He never threw away an opportunity of this kind. He knew the importance of backing your friends, and of securing all the good things of place, power, and influence for your own party. One plan was always kept in view, and that was to fill up the Bench, as far as possible, with High Churchmen.

Such, I believe firmly, is the true account of Laud's Policy. He had always one aim before him. Of that aim he never lost sight for a day. And while we admire his consistency, his persistency, his dogged tenacity of purpose, we must never forget the real nature of his aim. It was to *un-Protestantize* the Church of England.

(*c*) One more question demands a few words. What were the *consequences* of Laud's policy? I shall say but little on this point. Some people, I believe, who regard him as a slandered person, and venerate him as the reviver of so-called Catholic principles, would tell you that he did a great deal of good. From such I take leave to differ entirely. I hold that he did more harm to the Reformed Church of England than any man that ever lived—more than Gardiner, Bonner, Cardinal Pole, and Bloody Mary, all put together. I have already said that he probably meant well, and acted conscientiously. I quite believe that he thought his policy was doing God and the Church of England good service. But the consequences of his policy, both direct and indirect, were disastrous, mischievous, and evil in the extreme. Let me show you what they were.

One direct consequence of Laud's policy was a wide-spread decline of sound Protestant feeling among the clergy, from which our Church has never recovered. The principles and opinions of a forward, pushing Archbishop like him, who practically had the key of all patronage in his pocket, were only too greedily swallowed by many. A school of divines was rapidly gathered and consolidated within our pale, which has weakened our Church most seriously from that period. How deep and wide-spread this decline was may be gathered from the Memoirs of Panzani, the Romish emissary to England in Laud's days, where he gives an account of the state of things in this country. He particularly mentions that Laud's great friend, Bishop Montague, told him privately, in 1636, that—"he and many of his brethren were prepared to conform themselves to the method and discipline of the Gallican Church;"—"that there were only three Bishops on the bench that could be counted violently bent against the Church of Rome: viz., Morton, Davenant, and Hall;"—and "as for the aversion to Popery which we discover in our sermons and printed books," said Montague, "they are things of form, chiefly to humour the populace and not to be much regarded." Pretty language this from an English Bishop! But what an idea it gives us of the rapid spread of Laud's theology.

But another direct consequence of Laud's policy was of a very different kind. There arose throughout the land a spirit of thorough alienation of the middle classes from the Church of England. The mass of English people gradually began to dislike a religious body which they saw principally occupied in persecuting Puritanism, silencing preachers, checking zeal, exalting forms, deifying sacraments, and complimenting Popery. The multitude seldom draws nice distinctions. It measures institutions chiefly by their working and administration, and cares little for theories and great principles. Little by little men's minds throughout the country began to connect episcopacy with tyranny, the liturgy with formality, and the Church of England with fines, imprisonments, and punishments. Baxter's autobiography gives a vivid picture of the universal feeling of the kind which prevailed. Hence, when the Long Parliament assembled, there was a most painful unanimity of ill-feeling towards the poor old Church of England. The members representing all the counties and boroughs in England, with few exceptions, were found thoroughly dissatisfied with the Establishment; and the assailants, both in number and influence, completely swamped and overwhelmed the defenders. And all this was the doing of Laud! He had disgusted the bulk of the laity, lost the middle classes, and turned the Church's friends into foes.

The last and worst direct consequence of Laud's policy was the temporary destruction of the Church of England. An ecclesiastical revolution took place, which swelled at length into a kind of reign of terror. The pent-up

feelings of the middle classes, once let loose, broke out into a hurricane, before which everything in the framework of the Church of England was clean swept away. Bishops, and deans, and clergy, and Liturgy, were all shovelled off the stage like so much rubbish. Good things as well as bad were involved in one common ruin. A bloody civil war broke out. Charles I. followed Strafford and Laud to the scaffold. Everything in Church and State was turned upside down. Order at last was only kept by the iron hand of a military dictator, Oliver Cromwell. The crown and the mitre were both alike proscribed, excommunicated, and rolled in the dust. And all this was the doing of Laud! He sowed the wind and this was the whirlwind.

Such were the direct consequences of Laud's policy. I wish they had been all the harm that he did. But, unhappily, there were other indirect consequences, of which we feel the bad effects to this very day. The whole balance of English feeling about the Church of England was completely disarranged and disturbed by his proceedings. Equilibrium has never been recovered.

A pendulum was set swinging by his mischievous folly, which has now oscillated violently for 200 years. First came a strong reaction in favour of the Church when the Stuarts returned to the throne at the Restoration, having learned nothing and forgotten nothing. Moderation and tolerance, you will remember, were then thrown to the winds. The wretched Act of Uniformity was passed, by which 2,000 of the best clergy of the age were turned out of our pale, and lost to our ranks for ever.—Then came a long and dreary time of exhaustion and stagnation, a time during which the Church of England, like a torpid sloth, existed indeed, and hung on the State tree, but scarcely lived, moved, or breathed.—Then came, after a century, the revival of true Protestant religion under the auspices of those glorious clergymen Wesley and Whitefield; but a revival which our Bishops could neither understand, appreciate, direct, manage, utilise, encourage, or retain.—Then came the permanent establishment of Methodism and a vast increase of nonconformity.—Finally, we see in our own days the spectacle of a pure Protestant Church in England which has allowed half the population to stray out of its fold and slip out of its fingers, and is neither liked, nor trusted, nor valued by the great majority of dissentients! And what was the first cause of all this? I answer again, in one sentence, the fatal policy of Archbishop Laud! He sowed the seed of which we reap the consequences. He made a whole generation of Englishmen hate the Church of England and feel no confidence in her; and the feeling survives and lingers down to the present day.

It only remains for me now to point out the leading lessons which Laud's history ought to teach us. I have done my best to show you the man, and his character, and his policy, and the consequences of it. On each of

these topics, you will readily believe, much more might be said. But I am obliged to skim the surface of things, and leave much to be filled up by my readers. If I can only set men thinking and reading, and send them to such books as Marsden's "History of the Puritans," and Stoughton's "Ecclesiastical History," I shall, even in this short sketch, have not laboured in vain. Let me now try to make some practical use of the whole subject.—

1. The first lesson that I draw from the subject is this. Laud's history shows us, that *any attempt to un-Protestantize the Church of England is fraught with peril and mischief to the Establishment.* Any man—no matter how high his rank—Archbishop, Bishop, Dean, or Archdeacon; no matter how high his character—earnest, zealous, conscientious, learned, devout, charitable, and self-denying;—any man who tries to reintroduce Romish doctrines and Romish ceremonies into the Church of England, is an enemy to the Establishment, and is damaging its best interests.

I am no more infallible than the Pope. I have no access to peculiar information more than other men. But it is my firm and decided conviction, that the bulk of Churchmen in our days will not have Romanism brought hack within our pale. Some, perhaps, of the aristocracy and the nobility may approve a sensuous, histrionic religion, and see no harm in a nearer approximation to the ways of Rome. But the majority of the middle classes, and the most intelligent of the lower orders, will not have Romanism in any shape, or at any price; and if you try to thrust it down their throats, they will just leave the Church to shift for itself, and walk away. There will be no more reign of terror, or ecclesiastical earthquakes. There will be no repetition of State trials. The Lauds and Montagues on our bench, if any, will not be taken to Tower Hill and beheaded. But the middle classes will just leave bishops, deans, and clergy alone in their glory, and forsake the Establishment. The cry will be raised,—"This is not our rest, for it is polluted with Romanism: we must depart hence. To your tents, O Israel!"

And what will happen then? Why, the Church will perish for want of Churchmen. Generals, and colonels, and band, alone, do not make up an army; and bishops, and deans, and choristers, and clergy, alone, do not make

up a Church. Disestablishment will come as a matter of course. The Church of a minority will not be long spared on this side of St. George's Channel any more than on the other. The tender mercies of liberal statesmen may perhaps leave the poor old Church, her cathedrals, and parish churches, and possibly some part of her endowments. But if the "multitude of people" is the glory of a church as well as of a prince, the glory of the Church of England will have passed away for ever. "Ichabod" will be written over empty names and choirs. The Establishment will split up, or become one of the sects, like the Scotch Episcopal Church, and the page of history will record

that she made shipwreck of all her greatness by the suicidal attempt to recede from Protestantism and reintroduce Popery.

No! If I know anything of the middle classes and intelligent lower orders, they wish to have a Protestant Establishment, or no Establishment at all. They may not be hard readers or deep thinkers. But they know what Romanism was 350 years ago, and they do not want it back. They know what priestly tyranny, and the sacrifice of the Mass, and the odious confessional, did before the Reformation. They have an innate, instinctive, wholesome dislike of the slightest symptom of any return to these things. They cannot draw nice distinctions. They are apt to call a spade a spade, and to give things their right names. And if they see any attempt to imitate Romanism in our churches, and to counterfeit Romish ceremonies, their suspicions are roused at once. The clergyman who rouses these suspicions, I say boldly, however earnest, conscientious, well-meaning, and charitable, is no friend to the Church of England, and is doing immense harm.

2. The second lesson of the subject is this. Laud's history shows us *what harm may be done to a Church by a very small party.* Great is the power of a minority when it acts together, and is united. Great is the influence of a few determined men when they combine for mischief, see their object clearly, and endeavour incessantly and unscrupulously to carry it out. Laud's beginnings at St John's, Oxford, were very small, but his latter end greatly increased.

This is a point, I venture to say, which is far too much overlooked. Nothing has injured the Church of England so much in the last thirty years as the habit of underrating and despising the Tractarian movement. How small it seemed, when it first began under Newman, Pusey, Keble, and Richard Froude. It was a cloud which looked no bigger than a man's hand! To what portentous proportions, comparatively, it has now grown. A black thunderstorm seems to overspread one half the heavens.

Well do I remember a valued Oxford friend, now dead, calling the attention of Bishop Sumner (of Chester) and Chancellor Raikes to this subject, thirty-two years ago, in a private conversation. Well do I remember the quiet smile of incredulity with which those venerable men listened, evidently thinking us young, short-sighted alarmists. "It was but a temporary delusion; it would soon pass away." *Nubecula est; transibit.* I thought, then, that they did not rightly estimate the extent of the danger. I suspect they both lived to change their minds.

Let us, then, not underrate the power of Ritualism because its adherents seem a small party, and the churches where they play at Popery are comparatively few in number. The party is not so small as it appears. It has many sympathisers throughout the country, who only wait for the time when they can show their colours, and at the first shift of wind will put to

sea. It must not be despised because it is small. Minorities often prove winners in the long run.

No! We ought to remember the great Duke of Wellington's maxim, that it is a cardinal mistake in war, and a cause of great disasters, to undervalue your enemy. We must make up our mind that the Ritualistic movement of this day is a very serious affair, and that it requires the utmost exertions of sound Churchmen to prevent it ruining the Church of England. When we can afford to despise a little spark in a powder magazine, a little crack in a sea-wall embankment, a little leak in a ship, a little flaw in a chain cable, a few traitors in the garrison of a citadel, then, and not till then, it will be time to pooh-pooh Ritualism, because its avowed adherents, like Laud's party at first, seem at present comparatively few.

3. The third lesson I draw from our subject is this. *Laud's history shows us the immense importance of the laity taking timely interest in the condition of the Church of England.* Nothing, it is clear to me, preserved the Church of England from returning bodily to Popery, two hundred years ago, but the active interference of the laity. I do not say it would have happened in Laud's time. I do not think he ever meant the Pope at Lambeth to be subject to the Pope at the Vatican. But I do believe that another twenty years of unopposed, systematic, persistent un-Protestantizing would have "educated" a generation of semi-Papists, and paved the way for downright Popery. From this we were not preserved by the bishops and clergy, but by the laity taking up the matter in the House of Commons. I grant their remedies were violent, and their surgery coarse and savage. They let blood profusely, and did great harm in some directions, if they did good in others. But one thing I always maintain was done by Hollis, Dering, Pym, Hampden, and their companions. They prevented the nation going back to Babylon. They stamped out Popery for the time in the Church of England. Even the civil war was better than the return of Popery.

I hope the laity of this day will never forget this. They are the real hope of the Church of England. Our future depends greatly on their conduct and line of action. If they sit still and let things take their own course, I see nothing but evil before us. If they arise in their might, like their forefathers, and demand that there shall be no Romish innovations, no un-Protestantizing practices allowed in our communion, there is yet ground for hope. It is not too late to win a battle. Once let the laity raise the old cry,—"*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari;* We will have a Protestant Establishment or none at all," —and I shall not despair of the Church of England.

One thing, in conclusion, is very clear. Whatever we may think about Laud, the Church of England is in a very critical position. Every one who reflects must confess this. Her rowers have brought her into troubled waters. Rent and torn by conflicting parties, her very existence is in peril.

Never was there a Church which had within her pale such totally opposite schools of theology. This state of things cannot last. The question may well rise in many minds, “What shall be the end? We cannot go on as we are. Will the sick man live, or will he die?”

As usual in such cases, advice is plentiful, the doctors are many, and the prescriptions abound—some homoeopathic and some allopathic. Every one has his “panacea” and his “Eirenicon.” “Only, use it,” he cries, “and the Church will be cured.” Wider terms of communion, relaxation of creeds and articles, liturgical revision, synodical action, increase of the Episcopate, union of the Western Churches, —all these are remedies gravely propounded and earnestly thrust on our attention. Each has its advocates, and each is warranted to cure. I have not the slightest faith in any of these healing measures. Two or three of them are downright mischievous. The best of them is not the medicine for the time. I regard them all as utterly beside the mark, and unable to touch the disease.

My own mind is thoroughly made up. I know of only one cure and remedy for the ailments of our beloved Church. That remedy is a revival among us of thorough Protestant principles and Protestant theology,—the principles of the glorious Reformation, the theology of Latimer, and Hooper, and Jewel. Whether God will grant us such a revival I cannot tell: perhaps our days are numbered. Without such a revival I have little hope for the future. We shall only fall lower and lower, and at last our candlestick will be removed, like that of Ephesus. Give us such a revival, and I hope everything. The laity would rally round us once more,—the Spirit of God would be poured on our congregations. God, even the Lord God of our fathers, would give us His blessing.

I said the laity would rally round us. I say it advisedly. At present a large number of the best of them ride at single anchor, and hold by the Church of England with a very loose hand. They are tired, wearied, and disgusted with the undisturbed growth and progress of semi-Popery. They see no use in Protestant Bishops and Articles, if Romanism is allowed to sit in the house of God. They may not be deep theologians, or very conversant with Catholic principles and primitive antiquity. But they are not hard to satisfy. They know and feel what does them good. They want plain Protestant worship, and plain Protestant preaching, and if they cannot have these in the Establishment they will soon migrate and swarm off elsewhere. The bulk of our middle classes and educated lower orders in the Church do not want chasubles, copes, dalmatics, birettas, banners, processions, incense, pastoral staffs, crucifixes, incessant bowings, turnings, and genuflexions, or any such pernicious trumpery. Such things are mere gaudy toys, which may please children, and satisfy idle young men and women, and the whole herd of the ignorant, the weak-minded, and the superstitious. But

they do not meet the wants of the middle-aged, the hard-headed, the hard-working men and women of the middle and lower orders. They want food,—food for heart, and food for conscience; and if they do not find it in the Established Church of England, they will walk off and seek it elsewhere. Give them plain, simple, hearty Bible worship,—plain, simple, hearty Bible preaching,—give them the old, old story of Christ upon the cross, the real work of the Holy Ghost, felt and experienced in the inner man,—give them the noble lessons of repentance, faith, holiness,—give them these, and they will never forsake the Church of England.[1] I repeat it emphatically. A return to downright Protestant principles and Protestant theology is the Church's want in the present day. It is the only medicine which will heal the Church's disease.

I now wind up my paper with a short passage from the pen of a great man, which deserves special attention, partly because of his name and character, and partly because he wrote it with death before his eyes. The man I speak of is Lord William Russell, who was beheaded in Lincoln's Inn Fields on a false charge of treason, in the reign of James the Second, 1683. The book I found it in was the life of Lord W. Russell, written by the present Earl Russell in 1820. The paper in which the passage occurs was given by the noble sufferer to his friends only a few moments before his execution. He says:—

"I did believe, and do still believe, that Popery is breaking in upon this nation, and that those who advance it will stop at nothing to carry on their designs. . . . I am heartily sorry that so many Protestants give their helping hand to it. But I hope God will preserve the Protestant religion and this nation, though I am afraid it will pass under very great trials and very great sufferings."

Solemn words these, and painfully prophetic! Well would it be for this country, in the nineteenth century, if English Peers and English Prelates, English Members of Parliament and English Clergymen, saw the danger of Popery "breaking in upon this nation" as clearly as it did, in the seventeenth century, to the dying patriot, Lord W. Russell.

NOTE.—The following extracts from Mr. Hallam's "Constitutional History of England" appear to me to deserve particular attention. I think so, because they contain the deliberate opinion of a well-read layman, of no extreme theological views, and of one who has justly obtained a world-wide reputation on account of his learning, his correct judgment, and his impartiality:—

[1] "The Times" of March 29, 1869, says most truly, "Ritualistic services may attract curious or admiring crowds, but they neither bring the poor to church nor bring religion into the homes of the poor."

"Laud's talents, though enabling him to acquire a large portion of theological learning, seem to have been by no means considerable. There cannot be a more contemptible work than this Diary; and his letters to Strafford display some smartness, but no great capacity. He managed, indeed, his own defence when impeached with some ability; but on such occasions ordinary men are apt to put forth a remarkable readiness and ability." . . . "Though not literally destitute of religion, it was so subordinate to worldly interest, and so blended in his mind with the impure alloy of temporal pride, that he became an intolerant persecutor of the Puritan clergy, not from bigotry, which in its usual sense he never displayed, but systematic policy. And being subject, as his friends call it, to some infirmities of temper—that is, choleric, vindictive, harsh, and even cruel to a great degree—he not only took a prominent share in the severities of the Star Chamber, but perpetually lamented that he was restrained from going further lengths."— HALLAM'S *Constit. Hist, of England,* vol. ii. p. 54.

"All the innovations of the school of Laud were so many approaches in the exterior worship of the Church to the Roman model. Pictures were set up or repaired; the Communion Table took the name of an altar; it was sometimes made of stone; obeisances were made to it; the crucifix was sometimes placed upon it; the dress of the officiating priests became more gaudy; churches were consecrated with strange and mystical pageantry. These petty superstitions, which would of themselves have disgusted a nation accustomed to despise as well as abhor the pompous rites of the Catholics, became more alarming from the evident bias of some leading Churchmen to parts of the Romish theology. The doctrine of a real presence, distinguishable only by vagueness of definition from that of the Church of Rome, was generally held. Montague, Bishop of Chichester, already conspicuous and justly reckoned the chief of the Romanizing faction, went a considerable length towards admitting the invocation of saints. Prayers for the dead, which lead at once to the tenet of purgatory, were vindicated by many. In fact, there was hardly any distinctive opinion of the Church of Rome which had not its abettors among the Bishops, or those who wrote under their patronage."—*Ibid,* p. 86, edit. 1832.