

longing to it, from its first being named amongst men, until the present hour.

It is not, by any means, when we are examining into the origin, and the pretended unalienable rights of this Church; it is not, by any means, unnecessary to look well at the conduct and character of those parliaments, who passed the several Acts, by which the Church was made. It was manifestly not made by Christ and his apostles. It is certain that it was made by Acts of Parliament; but, if those who composed those parliaments, had been men resembling the fathers of the Church; if they had been men of acknowledged piety and disinterestedness, their character would have thrown a sort of lustre over the thing that they had made; but when we find them begin by an act of plunder, so great as to be almost incredible; when we see them remain Catholics till this plunder became in danger, by the existence of that religion; when we see them turn Protestants, and make the Church and its Prayer-book, and ascribe the success of the undertaking to the aid given them by the Holy Ghost; when we afterwards see them abolishing this Prayer-book, declaring it to have been schismatical, supplicating a Catholic queen to interfere with the Pope for pardon for having made it; when we see them actually receiving absolution from the Pope's legate, for having made this book, the making of which they had ascribed to the aid of the Holy Ghost; when we see them afterwards re-recant and re-apostatize; when we see them re-enact the Common Prayer-book, re-enforce it upon the people; and, especially, when we see this remarkable circumstance; that, when they had to suffer the Catholic religion to take its course; when the object of their enactments was, to restore that religion, they had no penalties to inflict; no compulsion to exercise; no fines to impose, in order to drag the people to the Church; but that, when they had their Prayer-book Church established; then they had fines, forfeitures, imprisonment for life, to inflict; and everything short of immediate death, in order to secure any thing like compliance on the part of the people.

This was this Church established, not, as her defenders pretend, by the reasonableness of the institution itself; not by its own "inherent beauty and simplicity," as the fat and impudent pluralists tells us; not by the pretended "reform of abuses" which its institution effected; but solely by Acts of Parliament, of the most severe and cruel character; and executed with the most savage barbarity. The authors of these Acts were triple apostates; by far the most shameful apostates, the most barefaced, the most unblushing, that the world has ever seen. The origin of this Church, then, is not only to be found in mere Acts of Parliament, but in Acts of Parliament causing sheer force, bodily coercion, pains and penalties, at every step, to be used; this is the main thing to keep in view, when the end of our inquiry is to be, whether it be not now proper to take from this Church the protection of the State.

These are the Acts of Parliament to be attended to in a particular manner; First, 2nd and 3rd Edward the Sixth, chapter 1, second, 1st of Elizabeth, chapter 2; third, 13th of Elizabeth, chapter 12. The first relates to the making of the Common Prayer Book, by Cranmer and his associates; and here we must stop a moment to inquire a little what this Cranmer was. We know that he was Archbishop of Canterbury, at the time when he made this Prayer Book. The whole of the history of this man; of all his horrid deeds, and those of his associates, is to be found in my "History of the Protestant Reformation;" but as we are now speaking of that famous Church, of which he was the founder, and of that Prayer Book, of which he was the principle author, I must give, respecting him, an extract from that book; for, without knowing who and what he was, we shall not have all the merits of this Church fairly before us.\*

Now, not one of those facts can be denied; but, at the very least, we know that he was an apostate, a perjurer, and a murderer; and we know that the Act which enacted the Prayer Book, tells us that he was at the head of those persons who, "with the aid of the Holy Ghost;" composed that Prayer Book.

\*We omit this extract on Cranmer, having given it in a recent number.

The 2nd of these Acts of Parliament, is 1st Elizabeth, chapter 2, which re-enacts the former act, and adds to the severity of its provisions. The 3rd is 13th Elizabeth, chapter 12, relating to the articles of religion; and excluding (from all share in the tithes, or any other Church property, all persons who will not swear to, and subscribe, those articles.

These Acts of Parliament having been read with due care, you see clearly 'how there came to be an Established Church,' and you are able to answer at once the question, whether this have any rights or can have any rights, other than those which it derives from Acts of Parliament. This is now a matter of the greatest possible importance, for now, at the distance of two hundred and eighty seven years from the time of passing the Act of Edward the Sixth, which first made the Church and the Prayer Book, the Parliament, (still sitting at Westminster) has to discuss the question, and is now actually, indeed, engaged in the discussion of the question whether the Church stands on prescription or on Acts of Parliament. I have laid before you the Acts by which it was made; by which it was created; from which it entirely sprung, and had its being; and I defy any man to discover any circumstance which can give it a pretence for claiming any right not founded on these Acts of Parliament.

What a Parliament can do, a Parliament can undo. If there be property of any sort that a parliament can take from one sort of persons, and give it to another sort of persons, a parliament can take that same property again, and dispose of it in a similar or in any other manner. This, PARSONS is what you are so much afraid of now! I, for instance, would take away the whole of the property from you, and dispose of it in another manner; others would not go so far, but you have cunning enough to perceive, that, if once a beginning is made, no one can tell where we are to end. Therefore, it is, that you and your partizans contend that you have a right of prescription, such as a man has to an estate, purely private; that your right of possession is beyond all the inquiries of law, and that a Parliament must be a tyrant and guilty of rapine, if by its acts it alienate any part of your property.

Those who hold this doctrine, forget its inevitable effect on the titles of all the holders of abbey lands, and all the lay holders of tithes. There are very frequently, lay holders of oblations, too, but for clearness and simplicity's sake, I will confine myself for the present to the lay tithes. These tithes which are now deemed private property, were taken from the Church, were taken from the parochial clergy, and granted to the king, and by him granted to private persons; and thus were totally alienated from the Church. Do you say that this was not an act of rapine? Do you say that the Parliament had no rightful power to do this? Do you say that this law was contrary to the rights of prescription, and the law of God; and that therefore, according to the maxims of our law, it was no law at all but an act of rapine? So said the people of England at the time; and the people actually refused to yield their tithes to laymen, pleading the law of God; denying that any Parliament had a right to pass a law, authorising laymen to receive tithes.

But those who had passed the laws which took the tithes from the Church and the poor, and put them into their own hands, soon found the means of compelling the people to submit to it, whether it were rapine, or not. The Act 27th Henry the Eighth, chapter 20; after stating, that, "divers numbers of evil disposed persons inhabited in sundry counties, having no respect to their duties to Almighty God," &c., had "subtracted, or withheld parts or the whole, of their tithes, under pretence of their tithes being demanded by lay-persons, proceeds to enact various punishments for such subtracting, or withholding. Five years afterwards, when the second great Act of plundering the monasteries had taken place, another Act was passed, still more strictly enforcing the yielding of tithes to lay-persons. The accusation against the people was stated thus, in the preamble to this Act: "That the people, not regarding their duties to Almighty God, subtracted and withdrew the lawful and accustomed tithes of corn, hay, pasturage and other sorts of tithes and oblations, due to the owners, proprietors, and possessors of parsonages, vicarages, and other ecclesiastical places;