

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION.

THE CATHOLIC SIDE OF THE QUESTION.

The Establishment of Protestantism—Persecution Forbidden by the Church—Denmark, Geneva, the Whole Continent, and Great Britain, Perverted from Catholicity by means of Unjustifiable Persecution.

We had intended concluding this article in our present issue, but owing to the lengthy Encyclical that we publish we are forced to continue it to next week.

The father of the Church of England, under the authority of the Protector Seymour, the Duke of Somerset, was confessedly Thomas Cranmer, whom Henry VIII. raised to the Archbishopric of Canterbury; of whom it is difficult to say whether his obsequiousness to the passions of his successive masters, Henry, Seymour, and Dudley, or his barbarity to the sectaries who were in his power, was the more odious; there is this circumstance, which distinguishes him from almost every other persecutor, that he actively promoted the capital punishment, not only of those who differed from him in religion, but also those who agreed with him in it. It is admitted by his advocates, (Fox, Acts and Monum. Fuller's Church Hist. B.V.) that he was instrumental during the reign of Henry, in bringing to the stake the Protestants Lambert, Askew, Frith, and Allen; besides condemning a great many others to it for denying the corporal presence of Christ in the Sacrament, which he disbelieved himself; (see Letters to a Preb., p. 206) and it is equally certain that during the reign of the child Edward he continued to convict Arians and Anabaptists capitally, and to press for their execution. Two of these Joan Knell and George Van Par, he got actually burnt; preventing the young King Edward from pardoning them, by telling him that "Princes being God's deputies, ought to punish impieties against him." Burnet's Church History, p. ii. b. 1. The two next most eminent fathers of the English Church were unquestionably Bishop Ridley and Bishop Latimer, both of them noted persecutors, and persecutors of Protestants to the extremity of death, no less than of Anabaptists and other sectaries. (See the proofs of these facts collected from Fox, Burnet, Haylin and Collier, in Letters to a Preb. Letter V.)

Upon the second establishment of the Protestant religion in England, when Elizabeth ascended the throne, it was again buttressed up there, as in every other country where it prevailed, by the most severe persecuting laws. It can be shown from the most authentic sources, that above 2,000 Catholics were hanged, drawn and quartered during this "she tiger's" reign, in England alone, for the mere profession or exercise of the religion of their ancestors for almost 1,000 years. Of this number 15 were condemned for denying the virgin (?) queen's spiritual supremacy, 126 for the exercise of their priestly functions, and the rest for being reconciled to the Catholic Church, for hearing Mass, or aiding and abetting Catholic priests. (Opponents have objected that these Catholics suffered for high treason. True, the laws of persecution declared so; but their only treason consisted in their religion. Thus the Apostles, and other Christian martyrs were traitors in the Pagan law; and the chief priests declared, with respect to Christ himself, we have a law, and according to that he ought to die.) When to these sanguinary scenes are added those of many thousands of other Catholics, who perished in dungeons, who were driven into exile, or who were stripped of their property, it will appear that the persecution of Elizabeth's reign was immeasurably greater than that of her sister Mary, especially when the deductions are made from the sufferers under the latter. See letters to a Prebendary, pp. 149, 150; also Cobbett's Hist. of the Reformation. Nor was persecution confined to Catholics; for, when great numbers of foreign Anabaptists, and other sectaries had fled into England, from the fires and gibbets of their Protestant brethren in Holland, they found their situation much worse there, as they complained, than it had been in their own country. To silence these com-

plaints, the Bishop of London, Edwin Sandys, published a book in vindication of religious persecution.—Ger. Brandt, Hist. Reform. Abreg. vol. 1, p. 234.

In short, the Protestant Church and state concurred in their extirpation. An assembly of them, to the number of 27, having been seized upon in the year 1575; some of them were so intimidated as to recant their opinions; some were scourged; two of them, Paterson and Terwort, were burnt to death in Smithfield, and the rest banished. (See Brandt, vol. 1, p. 234; Hist. of Churches of Eng. and Scot., vol. 11, p. 199) Besides these foreigners, the English dissenters were also grievously persecuted. Several of them, such as Thacker, Copping, Greenwood, Barrow, Penry, &c., were put to death, which rigors they ascribed principally to the bishops, particularly to Parker, Aylmer, Sandys, and Whitgift. (See Brandt, &c., as above quoted.) The doctrines and practices of persecution, in England, did not end with the race of Tudor. James I, though he was reproached with being favorable to the Catholics, nevertheless signed warrants for 25 of them to be hanged and quartered, and sent 128 of them into banishment, barely on account of their religion, besides exacting the fine (legalized in the previous reign) of £20 per month from those who did not attend the church service. (Mosheim, vol. IV, p. 40.) Still he was repeatedly called upon by Parliament to put the penal laws in force with greater rigor, in order, say they "to advance the glory of Almighty God, and the everlasting honor of your majesty;" (Rushworth's Collect., vol. I, p. 1), and he was warned by Archbishop Abbott, against tolerating Catholics, in the following terms: "Your majesty hath propounded a toleration of religion. By your act, you labor to set up that most damnable and heretical doctrine of the Church of Rome, the whore of Babylon, and thereby draw down upon the kingdom and yourself God's heavy wrath and indignation." (See Rushworth's Collection on the vile hypocrisy of those vile scoundrels.) In the meantime the Puritans complained loudly of the persecution which they endured from the Court of High Commission, and particularly from Archbishop Bancroft, and the bishops, Neale of Litchfield, and King of London. They charged the former of these with not only condemning Edward Wightman, for his opinions, but also with getting the King's warrant for his execution, who was accordingly burnt at Litchfield; and the latter, with treating in the same way, Bartholomew Legat, who was consumed in Smithfield.—See Chandler's Introduction to Limbroche's Hist. of the Inquisition, p. 80. Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, vol. II. The same unrelenting spirit of persecution, which had disgraced the addresses presented to James, prevailed in those of Parliament, and of many Bishops, to his son Charles. One of these, signed by the renowned Archbishop Usher, and eleven other Irish Bishops of the establishment, declares, that "to give toleration to Papists, is to become accessory to superstition, idolatry, and the perdition of souls: and that, therefore, it is a grievous sin."—See Leland's Hist. of Ireland, vol. II., p. 482; and Neal's Hist. of Pur., vol. II., p. 469. At length, the Presbyterians and Independents, getting the upper hand, had an opportunity of giving full scope to their characteristic intolerance. Their divines, being assembled at Sion College, condemned as an error, the doctrine of toleration, "under the absurd term," as they expressed it, "of liberty of conscience."—Hist. of Churches of Eng. and Scot., vol. III. Conformably with this doctrine, they procured from their Parliament a number of persecuting Acts, from those of fining, up to those of capital punishment. The objects of them were not only Catholics, but also Church of England men, Quakers, Shakers, Arians.—Ibid. In the meantime, they frequently appointed national fasts to atone for their pretended guilt in being too tolerant.—Ibid. Neal's Hist. Warrants for the execution of four English Catholics were extorted from the King, while he was in power, and twenty others were publicly executed under the Parliament and the Protector. This hypocritical tyrant, afterwards invading Ireland, and being bent on exterminating the Catholic population there, persuaded his soldiers that they had a divine commission for this purpose, as the Israelites had to exterminate the Canaanites.—See Anderson's Royal General, quoted

by Curry, Vol. II., p. 11. To make an end of the clergy, he put the same price upon a priest's as upon a wolf's head.—Ibid. p. 63. And he had hundreds of perjured villains too eager to earn the bribe of their master, Nero.—Ibid. p. 65, and Neal's Hist. of Churches. It would be impossible to enumerate the number of martyrs Ireland gave to the Church during a continuous persecution of nearly 300 years. "The persecution endured by the Irish Catholics for conscience sake, is without a parallel in the history of Christianity . . . its duration and unexampled refinement and cruelty would put to shame the most expert practitioners of Diocletian's reign."—See Rev. M. Gordon's Hist. of Ireland. The persecuting Penal Laws against Irish Catholics were commenced during the reign of the "Harlot Queen Bess." (See McHenry's True State of Ireland,) and enlarged and made more severe during each successive reign to that of the Georges, is painful evidence of the spirit of Protestantism in these fair Isles.—Ibid. Edmund Burke has placed the seal of his classic language on those barbarous and inhuman laws. Montesquieu, in his "Spirit of the Laws," says "they emanated from the brains of devils; they were written in human gore, and registered in hell." During the active continuance of monstrous laws neither age nor reverence were proof against perjury and prejudice. In the legal murder of the venerable Archbishop Plunkett; the Earl of Essex interfered in his behalf, assuring King Charles that, to his own knowledge the charges on which he was convicted "were entirely false." "Well, my lord," said the King, "his blood be upon your conscience; you could have saved him if you pleased; I cannot pardon him, because I dare not."—See Rev. Mr. Godkin's Repeal "Prize Essay," page 57, quoted by McGeen in Gal. of Irish writers. Those Puritans who, previous to the Civil War, had sailed to this continent to avoid persecution, set up a far more cruel one on its virgin soil, particularly against the Quakers; whipping them, cropping their ears, boring their tongues with hot irons, hanging them, and burning others for witches. We have the names of four of these sufferers, one of them a woman, who was executed at Boston.—Neal's Hist. of Churches. Wherever those Puritans made a foothold on the virgin soil of the West, there they unfurled the standard of persecution. Their proscription of Catholics and even sect proscribing sect is too notorious to need comment. The charred walls of convents and of numerous Catholic churches throughout the States, bespeak the spirit the Mayflower pioneers handed down to their worthy descendants, the Know-nothings (Nonthings) of modern days. Those good people performed all their heroic actions under the tutelage of such patron saints as Rebecca Reed and Maria Monk. From the persecuting Know-nothings and their colleagues the Orange fraternity, have sprung up the no less cruel and persecuting Apa-ists of the western states. The antics, proscriptions and forgeries of these fanatics, have furnished matter that has made the editors of respectable Protestant journals blush for a religion that could shield and foster such reptiles within its fold. The blessed apostle and patroness of the Apa-ists in the Western States is Edith O'Gorman of unsavory memory. I believe they accept the patronage of all the fallen Sexes, as well as that of the chief fallen angels. It will be apropos the subject to introduce at this stage the P.P.A. of Western Canada, a foul bird, hatched in the same nest as the preceding, and introduced there by the disreputable Margaret L. Shepherd. To an ordinary observer it seems strange that those yellow-beaked, carrion twin birds, should both have more than "doubtful" women for their spiritual heads; but, to him who casts his spade beneath the surface the reason is simple.

During the whole of the war which the Puritans waged against the king and constitution, the Catholics behaved with unparalleled loyalty. It has been demonstrated (Lord Castlemain's Catholic Apology) that three-fifths of the noblemen and gentlemen who lost their lives on the side of royalty were Catholics, and that more than the half of the landed property confiscated by the rebels belonged to Catholics. Add to this that they were chiefly instrumental in saving Charles II. after his defeat at Worcester; they had, consequently, reason to expect that the restoration of the king and constitution would have brought an alleviation, if not an end, of their sufferings.

But the contrary proved to be the case; for then all parties seemed to have combined to make them the common object of their persecuting spirit and fury. Even the prose writings of the Secretary of the Long Parliament are as execrable for their regicide and anti-papal principles as his poetry is super-excellent for its sublimity and sweetness. See volume 4. His prose writings breathe the whole persecuting spirit of the sixteenth century, and calls for the fines and forfeitures, the dungeons, fines, halts, and knives of Elizabeth's reign against the devoted Catholics, since it is evident that the idolatry of Popery, as he terms it, exercised in private, cannot be removed without such persecuting and sanguinary measures. The Socinian Locke will not allow of Catholics being tolerated on the demonstrated false pretext that they cannot tolerate other Christians. The true cause of his intolerance was that his hands being stained with the blood of twenty innocent Catholics, who were immolated by the sanguinary policy of his master, Shaftesbury, in Oates' infamous plot, he was obliged to find a pretext for excluding them from the legal toleration which he stood in need of himself. Bishop Headley, who had no religion at all of his own, would not allow the Catholics to enjoy theirs, because, he says: "No oaths and solemn assurances, no regard to truth, justice or honor, can restrain them." This is the hypocritical plea for the intolerance of a man, who was in the constant habit of violating all his oaths and engagements to a Church which had raised him to rank and fortune, and who systematically pursued its degradation into his own anti-Christian Socinianism, by professed deceit and treachery, as will be seen in Letters to a Prebendary, Letter viii. Blackstone, being a crown lawyer, and writing when the Penal Laws were in force, could not but defend them; but, judge as he was, and writing at the above-mentioned time, he expressed a hope that the time "was not far distant, when the fears of the Pretender having vanished, and the influence of the Pope becoming feeble, the rigorous edicts against the Catholics would be revised," b. 4, c. 4; Burk, it is evident from his speech at Bristol, his letter to Lord Kenmare, and the whole tenor of his writings and conduct was not only a warm friend to the Catholics, but, in some degree, a martyr to their emancipation. In proof of the foregoing I need alledge nothing more than that two different Parliaments voted the reality of Oates' plot, and that eighteen innocent and loyal Catholics, one of them a peer, suffered the death of traitors on account of it; to say nothing of seven other priests, who, about that time, were hanged and quartered for the mere exercise of their priestly functions. Among the absurdities of that sanguinary plot, such as those of shooting the King with silver bullets, and invading the island with an army of pilgrims from Compostella, &c., (Echard's History) it was not the least, to pretend that the Catholics wished to kill the King at all, that King whom they had hitherto saved in Staffordshire, and whom they well knew to be secretly devoted to their religion. These purposes were to exclude Catholics not only from the throne, but also from the smallest degree of political power down to that of constable, and to shut the doors of both Houses of Parliament against them.—Com.

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