

truth of the doctrines held by the Church of England. It is quite true that the Bishops and Convocation adhered to the Church of Rome, while a majority in Parliament, together with the great body of the Laity and inferior Clergy, supported the Reformation. There were, however, twelve Bishoprics vacant at that time; and what other course could be expected from the remaining fourteen Prelates, who were almost all appointed by Queen Mary, and strongly attached to the See of Rome? These men, together with the Clergy in Convocation, were not properly the representatives of the *national Church* of England, but only of the *Roman branch* of it; and being themselves interested parties in the discussion, their votes cannot be regarded as possessing much weight in matters of controversy. No reformation of doctrine could be effected under the hierarchy of a Church, whose very existence is founded on the impossibility of any such reformation; and therefore, if the Church of England were to be reformed at all, it must be effected, independently of Roman influence, by her own members of the Clergy and Laity, assembled in free deliberation for this purpose; while the external impediments to its progress could only be successfully removed by Parliamentary legislation. And it was certainly accomplished with much wisdom and moderation—first, by the Act of Supremacy, which professed to “restore to the Crown the ancient jurisdiction over the State Ecclesiastical”: then by the Act of Uniformity, which enforced the use of the English Liturgy; and finally, by the proceedings of Convocation, which adopted the Thirty-nine Articles as a standard of doctrine. After all, however, the cause of the Reformation must be decided by the truth of its doctrines, and not by the votes of a national Assembly, whether in Parliament or Convocation, which has frequently rescinded its