

tanical rule, must have affected seriously the minds of many persons, both as to their political and religious principles. It was so at all events with John Tillotson. When the Act of Uniformity of Charles II. was passed, in 1662, Tillotson abandoned nonconformity and became a member of the Church of England. Yet there was much to tie him to his early predilections. He married a niece of Oliver Cromwell, and many of the leading dissenters of the day were his most intimate friends, among them William Penn, the Quaker.

But Tillotson was of a kind and genial nature, and soon procured the friendship of some of the leading Churchmen of the day. He is always spoken of as an eloquent and powerful preacher, yet we are told that in the little living of Keddington, which he held for a short time, the villagers were dissatisfied with him because he did not preach the Gospel! It is a fact that in the best of his published sermons the definite message of the Gospel is singularly wanting, but he certainly survived this adverse verdict, and was subsequently appointed preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and Tuesday lecturer at St. Lawrence, Jewry. Here he attracted large congregations from all parts of London, and his reputation as a great preacher was established. Learned divines and people of quality and distinction were continually found among the delighted people who flocked to hear him. It was said of him more than once that he had brought the art of preaching well nigh to perfection. After his death the copyright of his sermons brought the enormous sum of £2,500, a handsome dowry for his widow. These published sermons have long since ceased to attract any attention, nor would they now be regarded as an authority on divinity, or as a model in any respect whatever. He had improved upon the style of sermon of his own day, which was long, wearisome, and heavy. He had also paid great attention to delivery, every word being carefully written out and learned by heart. This, with the natural charm of the man, who was kind and gentle to every one, no doubt built up his fame.

Tillotson became Dean of Canterbury, and was utterly opposed to the Romanizing policy of James II. He was among the first to favor the bringing over of William Prince of Orange as the defender of the Protestantism of England, and on the arrival of that prince was one of his most zealous supporters. On his accession to the throne of England, Tillotson was made Dean of St. Paul's. Sancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, refused to give allegiance to William and Mary, and was therefore deprived of his high position. As the king could not lean upon the Archbishop, he selected the Dean of St. Paul's as his spiritual guide. We have seen the form of advice that Tillotson gave his sovereign. It was due largely to his early

instincts and education; and his desire to form a large, comprehensive Protestant Church, that should embrace all dissenters, was formed no doubt of an honest, loving heart; but he found that in it he did not receive the support of the great bulk of the Churchmen, clerical and lay, of the day. On the particulars of this we have already dwelt.

Tillotson was not an ambitious man. He earnestly desired that he should never be made a bishop, but when Sancroft was deprived King William urged the Dean of St. Paul's to accept the vacant post. He delayed long and anxiously. There were great difficulties connected with it. Many held that the state had no power to declare bishoprics vacant, and for this reason it was found a difficult matter to fill the vacant sees. Tillotson knew that the hearts of the great bulk of the clergy were with Sancroft in his exile from power at Fressingfield, and that he was not likely ever to win them over to himself.

However, in the end he accepted the position, and was no sooner enthroned than he was assailed with innumerable invectives, in pamphlets and squibs of all kinds, some of them libelous and coarse. His views were broad (Latitudinarian) and at times somewhat loose and alarming in the ears of strict Church people, but he certainly did not deserve the names "free-thinker," "Deist," "rank Socinian," "heretic," and others of a like kind which, in the heat of controversy, were hurled at him, for he does not seem to have held any opinion which would not in the present day be considered perfectly legitimate. To this treatment he showed no resentment, but prayed earnestly that he might learn how to forgive his enemies as his Master had done. He was a popular preacher, but not a popular archbishop. The Church, however, continued to show vitality and strength. The societies that had been formed in the reign of Charles II. (in 1678) continued their work. They were checked during the troublesome days of James II., because everything in the form of a society was suspected. The name was then changed to clubs. But when the troubles of the nation to some extent were settled by the accession of William and Mary the societies continued their work. They had an able friend in Archbishop Tillotson. In 1692 a few gentlemen of the Church of England, shocked at the general immorality rampant in their midst, formed "The Societies for the Reformation of Manners." These were divided into different branches, all having the same object in view, and soon began to have the desired effect of putting a check upon open and flagrant wickedness.

It would have been well if the Archbishop could have devoted himself to works of this kind. But the political portion of his work pressed heavily upon him.