

THE SEIGE OF LICHFIELD.

CHAPTER IV, *Continued.*

THE BATTLE. (EDGEHILL.)

THEY were immediately put under the command of Prince Rupert, whose reputation for courage was high, and whose dashing affair at Worcester had as much inspired the King's troops, as it had disheartened his adversaries. Many deserters had come over to the King's side; and they brought word that, as soon as the armies approached nearer to each other, many more would join the royal cause.

Shortly afterwards the whole army was put in motion, the King having determined to give the enemy battle when he could find him, and the army being in good courage, and well prepared, with the exception of the defective appointment of their arms; a good many of the infantry, in fact, had no better weapons than cudgels and pitchforks,—a circumstance which made a great difference when they came into action. Had the Conservatives of the seventeenth century (men who loved their property, like Mr. Froggat, I mean) done their duty in equipping the King's troops, the civil war might have been terminated in a single battle.

The movements of the two armies were neither very ably concerted nor very skilfully executed. England had long been at peace; her arms had rusted for want of use; and her military skill was not of the highest order. Happily she was left to fight out her own battles.

The army under Lord Essex left Worcester soon after the King marched from Shrewsbury; and it is remarkable that—so little were the usual modes of gaining intelligence known or practised—the two armies marched in parallel lines within six miles of each other, without either of them being aware of the vicinity of the other.

It was on the afternoon of October 23rd when they met at Edgehill, near Banbury. The day was as fair as the season of the year could yield; the sun was clear, not a cloud appearing, and a sharp wind blowing from the north. The King immediately resolved on an engagement. Prince Rupert at the head of the right wing made a gallant charge on the enemy's cavalry, who discharged their carbines and fled; and some, it is said, never drew rein till they got to London. The same success attended Mr. Wilmot on the left. The King's body of reserve, under Sir John Biron, judging, like raw soldiers, that the battle was won, and impatient to have some share in the action, heedlessly followed in the chase; and finding no opposition, joined the others in plundering the enemy's baggage-wagons, which were in the rear; whereupon Sir William Balfour, who commanded the reserve of the Parliamentary horse wheeled about upon the King's main body of infantry, and, after encountering a stout resistance, at last broke it, and made great havoc amongst the ill-armed troops, and mortally wounded Lord Lindsay, the King's general. The King himself, with his two sons, was nearly made prisoner: the royal standard was taken, but afterwards recovered. Such was the posture of affairs in which Prince Rupert found the main body of the army, on returning from the pursuit with his straggling squadrons. Every thing bore the appearance of a defeat, instead of the victory which he had promised to himself.

Many advised the King to leave the field, and provide for his safety; but he refused to desert his troops. The remains of the two armies faced each other for some time: but neither renewed the attack.

"In the doubt of all sides," says Clarendon, "the night,—the common friend to weary and dismayed armies,—separated them." It was a chill frosty night: a sharp northerly wind swept over the hills; and there was not a hedge to shelter the miserable remains of the hostile bodies. Both parties were very wretched and dispirited, and began, for the first time, to feel what war really was. All night they lay under arms, very ill supplied with what they most required, many of them not having tasted food for eight-and-forty hours. Others being clad in cold iron armour, felt a death-like chill curdling their blood, and where obliged to walk about all night to keep up the circulation in their veins. The next morning found them still on the same ground, in sight of each other. General as well as soldier, on both sides, seemed unwilling to renew the attack. At length, late in the day, they drew off simultaneously; Essex retiring with his army to Warwick; the King taking up his former quarters at Edgcote. Five thousand men, it is said, were left dead or dying on the field of battle; and the loss of each army, as far as could be judged by the opposite accounts, was about equal. It was observed, that the greatest slaughter on the rebel side was of such as ran away, and on the King's side of those who stood to their ranks.

But what, in this sad conflict, was the conduct and

what the fate of our hero? Let any one conceive what must have been the feelings of a high-minded, humane, religious man, like Henry Archbold, when he found himself, for the first time, about to engage in mortal strife with his own countrymen. Being perfectly free from fear, he had little apprehension on his own account. He placed his life in God's hands, mentally offering up a silent prayer. "Lord if I forget Thee in the hour of battle, do Thou not forget me." Yet it was with a feeling of strong reluctance that he unsheathed his sword, which was to be imbrued in the blood of those whom he regarded as brethren.

However, the shock of actual conflict soon dispelled into the air all such feelings as these. Archbold and his comrades charged gallantly with Prince Rupert. Three or four of them were unhorsed by the discharge of the enemies' carbines. Archbold and the rest, their blood up and their spirit roused, galloped on, hacking and hewing their discomfited opponents right and left, until the trumpet sounded to summon them back, when, to their disappointment, they found the King's army in the condition which we have described. Four only of the Lichfield troop were missing at the muster. John Fradly had been shot through the head in the first charge. Richard Quinton had his horse killed under him, and was galloped over several times by friend as well as foe, until at last his brains were knocked out. William Brocton being mounted unfortunately on a runaway horse, soon found himself in the midst of the enemy; one of whom, seeing a King's trooper close before him, drew a pistol and shot him dead through the back. The fate of poor Phil Holliday was the most remarkable. He was a fine, cheerful, jovial fellow—the life and spirit of the troop, and liked by every one. In the first charge he was laid low by a shot which broke his jaw, and inflicted a ghastly wound in his face; and, as he lay on the ground, he was stabbed by one of the enemy's foot-soldiers, whom he in vain resisted in his attempt to plunder and strip him. Naked and wounded, he lay all night in anguish, his life-blood gradually ebbing away, and must have infallibly have perished, had not the chill frost stanchied his wounds, which were otherwise beyond the surgeon's skill.

Many lives are said to have been saved on that night in the same manner. About a month afterwards poor Halliday crawled back to Lichfield with scarcely a rag to cover him, reduced to a skeleton, and so utterly changed in appearance, his features so altered and disfigured, that his former friends would scarcely believe him to be the same man, who, a few weeks before, had left the town in the exuberance of health and spirits.

Such is civil war, and such was the result of the first battle between the contending parties,—five thousand Englishmen stretched by each other's hand on the field of battle! Alas, the day! Five thousand once peaceful families deprived of fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons. The voice of woe and lamentations heard throughout the land; nor were there wanting instances of sons and fathers fighting on different sides; for friends and families were continually divided in opinions and interests during those fearful times. And for what was all this most unnatural strife? It was because selfish and ambitious men would not obey their lawful sovereign, and because ungodly fanatics would not hear the mild voice of God's most holy Church.

The battle of Edgehill was a type of the whole war. For four long years the sturdy English fought with each other, contesting the ground inch by inch. Sometimes the one party prevailed, and sometimes the other. Besides the military operations between the principal armies, each county, each town, nay almost each family, was divided against itself. The demon of strife was every where at work.

We must not forget to mention the fate of that worthy knight Sir Richard Dyott. Once mounted in his saddle, he could not forbear accompanying his son's troop to Edgehill. During the battle he kept near the King's person; and when it was over, not considering that he could be of further service, he rode very coolly homeward, and put up at the Black Bull at Southam; when, just as he was going very comfortably to bed, a troop of the enemy's horse, who were on their route, marched into the inn, and making him prisoner, carried him with them to Coventry, and lodged him in the Marshalsea. Here, to his surprise, he was soon after found by his old friend the Precentor, who, by some chance of war, had fallen into the enemy's hands after the battle of Edgehill.

Archbold marched with the King's army to Oxford: he was afterwards at the siege of Reading, and was amongst the troops which were pushed on to Brentford, the nearest point to London to which the King approached.

He soon became accustomed to his new duties, and distinguished himself on several occasions. In truth, Henry was just the man to make a good soldier, being brave as a lion, and at the same time prompt and sagacious: his merits were marked by his superiors

in command, and pointed him out as a fit man to be employed on services when a good head and a strong arm was required.

* A similar prayer is recorded to have been uttered by Sir Jacob (afterwards Lord) Aspley, who served under the King at Edgehill.

† This is the general supposed number. Some writers, however, from inquiries made on the spot, calculate it as lower.

(To be continued.)

EARLY CHRISTIANS.

Two great Sacraments are named in the questions and answers at the end of the Church Catechism—"Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord."

Mark three things that are said about them. They are "ordained by Christ Himself;" they are "generally necessary unto salvation;" and they are "in His Church," the Church of Christ.

Now let us test all these statements by turning to the Word of God.

I. First as to the "ordaining" of these two Sacraments. Did Christ ordain them Himself?

He ordained Holy Baptism, when He was going to leave the world to go to His Father. He said to His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."—St. Mark xvi. 15, 16. "All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."—St. Matthew xxviii. 18—20. In the former passage the Lord speaks of "believing" as leading to baptism; those who "believe not" will of course show their unbelief in Christ, by rejecting His ordinance and refusing to be baptized. In the other passage from St. Matthew, the first word "teach" means "make disciples of;" the second word "teach" means "instruct." In the Bible, as it was first written, they are two quite different words. The way the Lord Jesus has directed is, to admit disciples by Baptism and instruct them more fully afterwards.

I need not remind you that the Lord Jesus ordained Holy Communion. It was the same night in which He was betrayed, that first saw this Holy Sacrament administered. Then He took the bread and the wine, and prepared them, and blessed them, and said, "This is My Body," "This is My Blood." You will find the whole account of it in St. Matthew xxvi.; St. Mark xiv.; St. Luke xxii.; 1 Cor. xi.

II. These two Sacraments are declared to be "generally necessary unto salvation." How "general" the necessity is, and how great the "salvation" conveyed we may best learn from the words of the Lord Jesus Himself. He Who ordained the Sacraments can tell us, plainly and with authority, all that we ought to know. And He has spoken very clearly about both.

Of Holy Baptism He declares, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." St. John iii. 5.

And of Holy Communion he declares, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye have no life in you."—St. John vi. 53.

III. It only remains for me to show you, that the Lord has ordained these necessary Sacraments "in His Church." In the latter part of the second chapter of the Acts of the Holy Apostles you find the story of the first planting of the Church.

When the excited multitude "said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the Name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." This was the result, "Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." The next words of the story tell us of the other great Sacrament, "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayer." The last two verses of the chapter describe the first Christians thus: "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house (the margin of the Bible says, "at home"), did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved"—those that were being saved is the meaning of the words.

Think of these three things. Christ ordained the Sacraments Himself. He says that they are necessary for our salvation. He gives these necessary things in His Church. Do you believe in Christ and His ordi-