

well passed away. The Protectorate came to an end. England decided that it had had enough of Puritans and republicans, and would give the Stuarts and the Established Church another trial. A necessary consequence was the revival of the Act of Uniformity. The Independents were not meek like the Baptists, using no weapons to oppose what they disapproved but passive resistance. The same motives which had determined the original constitution of a Church combining the characters of Protestant and Catholic, instead of leaving religion free, were even more powerful at the Restoration than they had been at the accession of Elizabeth. Before toleration is possible, men must have learnt to tolerate toleration itself; and in times of violent convictions, toleration is looked on as indifference, and indifference as Atheism in disguise. Catholics and Protestants, Churchmen and Dissenters, regarded one another as enemies of God and the State, with whom no peace was possible. Toleration had been tried by the Valois princes in France. Church and chapel had been the rendezvous of armed fanatics. The preachers blew the war-trumpet, and every town and village had been the scene of furious conflicts, which culminated in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. The same result would have followed in England if the same experiment had been ventured. The different communities were forbidden to have their separate places of worship, and services were contrived which moderate men of all sorts could use and interpret after their own convictions. The instrument required to be delicately handled. It succeeded tolerably as long as Elizabeth lived. When Elizabeth died, the balance was no longer fairly kept. The High-Church party obtained the ascendancy, and abused their power. Tyranny brought revolution, and the Catholic element in turn disappeared.

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