

From the Dublin Review.

DID THE ANGLICAN CHURCH REFORM HERSELF ?

[CONTINUED.]

We have not space to follow the Oxford theologians through the manifold changes [of the Liturgy,] nor time to exhibit to the admiration of the reader the ingenuity with which Mr. Palmer contrives to accommodate them to the favorite doctrine of his party,—that we have still the same Church of England reforming herself; with which view he sometimes appeals to an insulated passage, at others to a mutilated quotation: now he justifies the silent acquiescence of the Church, because she was not called upon to express an opinion: then he justifies the innovation itself, because the Church had either approved of it by her consent in convocation, or might be supposed to have approved by her silent acquiescence. One proceeding only does he condemn, the deprivation of the Bishops Bonner, Gardiner, Heath, Day and Tunstall, which he has the honesty to abandon as utterly indefensible.

It is no easy matter to discover what is requisite, in the opinion of the Oxford teachers, to constitute the identity of the Church. Locality is out of the question; if that were sufficient, the Presbyterian church of Scotland at the present day would be the same with the prelatic church of Scotland of Catholic times.—To us it appears, that, since a certain form of government, and of worship, and of doctrine, is essential to the existence of every church, sameness of government, and worship, and doctrine, are requisite to establish the identity of a local church at different periods. Certain we are, that when no such sameness in any one of these three branches has been suffered to remain, the so-much boasted identity will, in the judgment of every reasonable man, have also ceased to exist.

There remains another favorite doctrine of the Oxford school, which we must be allowed to notice—the paradoxical doctrine that we Catholics “went out from them,” not they from us; that we, who still preserve the faith and worship of the old church, are, in effect, separatists from the men whose very name of Protestants bears evidence that they are dissenters from that same faith and worship. Let the reader attend to Mr. Palmer.

“Finally, the Romish party in these countries committed schism in separating from the communion of the Church, and the obedience of their legitimate pastors in the reign of Elizabeth. It is certain that during the reigns of Henry VIII. and his successors, until the eleventh year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, there were not two separate communions and worships in England. All the people were subject to the same pastors, attended the same churches, and received the same sacraments. It was only about 1570, that the Romish party, at the instigation of foreign emissaries, separated itself, and fell from the Catholic church of England.”

If we understand this passage, it assumes as an indisputable fact, that the

moment the sentence of deprivation was pronounced against the Catholic bishops and clergy by the delegates appointed for that purpose by Elizabeth, they lost their commission, their spiritual authority, and all the rights which they derived from Christ; and that of course the church of which they were the ministers immediately ceased to exist. Now, this is certainly incompatible with the doctrine of the new school. “So entirely independent,” says Dr. Hook, “is the church (as the church) of the state, that were all connexion between the church and state to cease, the church, as the church, would continue precisely as she now is; that is, our bishops, though deprived of temporal rank, would still exercise all those spiritual functions, which, conferred by higher than human authority, no human authority can take away; and our liturgy, even though we were driven to the upper rooms of our towns, or to the very caves of the desert, would still be solemnized.” Now, the hypothetical case here put by Dr. Hook actually took place in the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. The connexion between the existing church and the state was severed by act of parliament, and by the execution of that act.—But the church still existed. The bishops though deprived of temporal rank, still possessed their spiritual powers; clergymen were still found to celebrate the Catholic liturgy; and the Catholic people were happy to attend at such celebration even “in upper rooms, and the caves of the deserts.”

But Mr. Palmer persuades himself that he has proof of his assertion. He appeals to Lord Coke in 1607, who said that “not any one Papist refused to come to church during the first ten years of Elizabeth;” to a speech of Sir Edward Coke in 1606, who said that “before the bull of Pius V. all came to church to the same divine service now in use;” and to the queen's instructions to Walsingham, in 1570, in which she was made to say that “they did ordinarily resort from the beginning of her reign in all open places to the churches, and to divine service in the church, without contradiction or shew of misliking.” But, it should be remembered that these instructions were the work of the astucious Cecil, and were drawn up to enable the ambassador to excuse or rebut the charge of persecution made against the queen in the court of France; and that it was to them that Lord Coke, or Sir Edward Coke, (for both are the same individual,) was indebted for the information which he details in his speeches. Now, as we naturally distrust the evidence of the accused in their own favor, let us try its truth by the test of facts. 1st. With respect to the Catholic Clergy, all the bishops living but one were deprived; the names of almost two hundred clergymen have descended to us, of prebendaries, heads of colleges, and dignitaries of the church, who were all deprived; besides these, it is plain that hundreds more must have undergone the same fate, from the long and numerous lists in Rymer of presentations by the queen to prebends, rectories, and vicarages, vacant by the deprivation of the last incumbent. Does

Mr. Palmer believe that the men, who refused the oath giving the supremacy to the queen, nevertheless renounced the Papal supremacy; that, notwithstanding their deprivation, they joined the communion of those by whom they had been deprived? The absurdity of the thing is its own refutation. There then existed at this time a numerous body of Catholic clergy. 2d. In the next place, with respect to the laity; we continually meet with complaints to the council during the period in question, of the boldness and disobedience of the Papists in different counties. Were Papists members of the Established church? Scarcely a year passed in which we do not find occasional mention of imprisonment and fine inflicted for the crime of attending at mass. Were the sufferers Protestants? It is, indeed, true that the great mass of the people attended the same churches as before; and the reason was, that the celebration of the Catholic liturgy had been put down by pain and penalties; and that absence from the parish church on any Sunday or holiday, was punished with a fine of one shilling, levied by the church warden for the use of the poor. But the question is, were all who attended, members of the new church? We learn from many papers of the time, that they were not; that the real object of numbers was only to escape the fine; that they sought to compromise the matter with their conscience, by arguing, that their presence was a civil, not a religious presence: an attendance in obedience to the law, not for the purpose of worship; that they joined not in prayer with the minister, but prayed after the old form, if they prayed at all: that, though their bodies were there, their hearts were yet far away. Certainly it cannot be pretended that such men were members of the parliamentary church; whence it will follow that, even during the first eleven years of the queen, there existed in the realm a numerous body of Catholic clergy, and multitudes of Catholic laymen, the same who professed the Catholic faith during the reign of Mary, and continued in the profession of the same faith, and the exercise of the same worship, though with caution and secrecy, “in upper rooms, and the caves of the desert,” under her Protestant successor.*

The fact is, that the government felt little anxiety at occasional manifestations of Catholic feeling on the part of the people. They had the Catholic bishops in safe custody; so that these prelates might secretly perform certain acts of spiritual authority, they could not confer orders; whence it was plain that in the course of a few years the Catholic worship must expire with the Catholic clergy. But of this pleasing anticipation they were deprived by the promptitude and foresight of Dr. Allen, who opened an English college at Douai, and was followed by zealous imi-

* According to an old MS. the number of Catholic clergymen, who during this period officiated privately, some in the larger towns, most in the houses of the gentry in the country, amounted to one thousand.—Bailler, Hist. Mem. i. 306.

tators in several other places.† Thither the Catholic youth resorted for education; there many received holy orders: and thence they returned to their native country, to replace the priests of queen Mary's reign. To defeat this plan for the perpetuation of Catholicity among us, it was made the crime of high-treason to take orders in a foreign country, and felony without benefit of clergy, to harbor a person so ordained; and then it was pretended, in justification of these bloody enactments, that such missionaries were the disturbers of the peace of the church, the revivers of a sect which was previously extinct.

Honor, however, be to their memory, much as they were persecuted then, and mis-called as they are now, by the name of “foreign emissaries.” They were not foreigners, but natives, canonically ordained and commissioned to bring the consolations of religion to their desolate countrymen, to the seven thousand Israelites, “who had refused to bend the knee to Baal.” In the face of the rack, the halter, and the knife, they boldly performed this charitable duty, saved from utter destruction the ruins of that church, which had been founded by Augustine and his companions, and preserved for us, “the deposit of faith,” the first of blessings in this life, the best inheritance transmitted to us by our fathers. It is with gratitude and triumph that we look back to the labors and the sufferings of these men, whilst we pity the workings of that spiritual pride, which feels a gratification in painting them, the successors of our ancient clergy, as schismatics and separatists from a church of the date of yesterday.

From the Philadelphia Catholic Tracts, No. 1.

THE TRUE PRINCIPLES OF A CATHOLIC.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR 1780.

1. We believe in one only true and living God, the Lord and Creator of all things; subsisting in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. To this God alone we give divine honour and adoration; and we detest, with our whole souls, all kinds of idolatry; that is, all such wickedness, by which divine worship is given to any false God, or idol, or any person or thing whatsoever, besides the one true and living God. We honour indeed the Blessed Virgin, the mother of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, but not as a goddess, nor with any part of divine worship. We honour the angels and saints of God as His servants. We honour His priests—His churches—His altars—His word—and, in a word, whatever else has relation to Him; but all for His sake, and by an honour that is referred to Him, but not with that honour, which he has appropriated to Himself.—Such also is the veneration we have for the cross—for relics—for the pictures of

† “Doubting the time of our chastisement might be so long as to wear out either by age, imprisonment, or other miseries, the elder sort of the learned Catholics, both at home and abroad, it was thought a necessary duty for posterity to provide for a perpetual seed and supply of Catholics, namely of the clergy.”—Allen, Apology for the Seminars, 21.