

## THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND 1640-1662.

BY THE REV. HAROLD SMITH, D.D.

ABOUT 1655 Thomas Fuller, then Perpetual Curate of Waltham Abbey, thus introduced his *Church History of Britain*: "An ingenious gentleman, some months since, in jest-earnest, advised me to make haste with my History of the Church of England; for fear, said he, lest the Church of England be ended before the History thereof. This History is now, though late (all Church-work is slow) brought with much difficulty to an end. And, blessed be God, the Church of England is still (and long may it be) in being, though disturbed, distempered, distracted. God help and heal her most sad condition."

There is much misapprehension about the condition of the Church during this period. There is a widespread view that all the episcopal clergy were ejected, and Presbyterians and Independents, often of no education, put in their place. Also the extent of the spoliation of church property is often exaggerated. Again, the distinction of the ground of ejection of the ministers deprived in 1660 from that of those deprived in 1662 is commonly ignored, both by Churchmen and Nonconformists, the former regarding both sets as alike intruders, while the latter often consider both to have lost their livings for conscience' sake. Actually, those ejected in 1660 were all in some degree intruders and ejected simply as such; those ejected in 1662 were not intruders, but as legally appointed to their livings as those who conformed.

The standard book on the subject is Shaw, *The English Church under the Long Parliament and Commonwealth*. The present article deals simply with the personnel and the finance of the Church—passing over e.g. the Westminster Assembly, the supersession of the Prayer Book by the Directory and the establishment of the Presbyterian system. Also lack of space necessitates passing over the work of the Triers.

The Long Parliament soon began to deal with clergy who had given offence by supporting Archbishop Laud's innovations, or by defending arbitrary government. Later on, the "Committee

for Plundered Ministers" was set up, to provide for Puritan ministers expelled from parishes under the control of the King's forces; this committee was given power to sequester the livings of 'scandalous and malignant priests' subject to the ratification of parliament. Thus it might as well have been termed "The Committee for *Plundering Ministers*." Later on (early in 1644) County Committees were in many cases set up to deal with these cases, consisting of some of the members of the Parliamentary Committee for the county. Any five of these might meet in any one place and hear charges against local clergy. The instructions given to these committees in the counties of the Eastern Association do not seem to have given fair play to the accused; but no doubt local knowledge on the part of the members of the committee went a long way. The sequestrations were much more numerous in the case of counties under the control of Parliament from the first—as all those in the south-east of the country—than in those where they only acquired full possession later on. In many of these latter it would seem that only pronounced royalists and Laudians were ejected; men who had given no special offence were likely to escape, especially if the living were a poor one.

Our great source of information is Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*. Like Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, it is confessedly a one-sided work, requiring to be used with discrimination; but like it, contains valuable information. Many original documents are still preserved, and have been used by Shaw and other writers, such as Davids, *Nonconformity in Essex*, and Kingston, *East Anglia and the Civil War*.

There are several marked classes among the sequestered clergy.

(1) Pluralists were deprived at least of their extra livings, being usually left with the poorest. The Presbyterian position was not very consistent; they did not hold two livings, but might hold a living with a preachingship, or mastership of a college, equally involving non-residence.

(2) A comparatively small proportion were ejected on clear grounds of immorality, drunkenness, or the like.

(3) Much the greater number were ejected on political or ecclesiastical grounds—for having read the Book of Sports, adopted Laudian innovations, spoken in favour of the divine right of bishops, or disrespectfully of the Parliament, or the like. Thus Mr. W. M.

Palmer says (Kingston, *East Anglia and the Civil War*, p. 392) that the greater part of the informations given before the Earl of Manchester's Committee sitting at Cambridge refer "to 'popish practices' which the unfortunate minister had been guilty of, and to his expressions of friendliness towards the King and unfriendliness to Parliament. In only a few cases is immorality alleged." Cases where the great bulk of the charges are of this character, but one of drunkenness is thrown in, really belong to this class.

(4) There are however cases where it is not easy to decide whether there was some ground for such charges as well as for the political. A typical case is that of Lawrence Washington of Purleigh near Maldon (his two sons emigrated to Virginia, and from one of these George Washington was descended). The ground for his sequestration was, "He is a common frequenter of alehouses, not only himself sitting daily tipping there, but also encouraging others in that beastly vice, and hath been often drunk, and hath said that the Parliament have more papists belonging to their armies than the King had about him or in his army, and that the Parliament army did more hurt than the Cavaliers, and that they did none at all; and hath published them to be traitors that lent to or assisted the Parliament." Here the moral and the political charges seem equal. But Walker quotes a Justice of the Peace in the county, who personally knew Washington, who took him to be a very worthy, pious man; as often as he was in his company, he always appeared a very modest sober person; and he was recommended as such by several gentlemen who were acquainted with him before he himself was; adding that "he was a loyal person, and had one of the best benefices in these parts."

(5) Later on, a number were sequestered for refusing to take the "Solemn League and Covenant." These form the only class who could have saved themselves by submission. It is not, however, clear how far all those who kept their livings, in the districts under the control of Parliament at the time the Covenant was imposed, actually took the Covenant; some certainly escaped it in various ways. In defence of those who took it without being convinced Presbyterians, it may be pointed out that at the present time people have different principles as regards signing petitions. Some will sign nearly anything they are asked to sign; others will only sign what they thoroughly and entirely agree with; others will sign a decla-

ration or petition with which they are in general sympathy, though they may disagree with some of its arguments or alleged facts. So men might have taken the Covenant simply as a statement that they were willing to accept Presbyterianism—they did not regard the method of Church government to be very essential.

The number of sequestrations was very variously estimated. Walker's estimate (7,000) is far too high; but on the other hand, wherever we have additional information, the actual number of cases is decidedly higher than those reported by him. Mr. G. B. Tatham thinks parochial sequestrations may amount to 3,500. As regard Cambridgeshire, Mr. Palmer says that we have direct evidence that, out of 155 livings, there were ejections in sixty-eight cases, sixty-five accepted the Solemn League and Covenant, or at least conformed to Puritan forms; of these more than one third lived to see and to participate in the restoration of monarchy and episcopacy. We have no knowledge of twenty-two livings, and in ten it is impossible to decide whether there was a sequestration or not. Thus, omitting unknown and doubtful cases, quite half the clergy in Cambridgeshire were ejected; in Hertfordshire the proportion was nearly as high. In Essex it was only about one third; but some districts were swept pretty clear; in that reaching from the Thames at Dagenham up to Ongar and Epping, only three or four clergy were left out of nearly twenty.

In a case of a sequestered clergyman having a wife and family, and no substantial private means, they were commonly allowed one fifth of the income; but according to Fuller, the parliamentary intruder frequently refused to pay, on some ground or other.

There is much misconception about the position and the character of these intruders. First, in regard to their legal position—they were not strictly incumbents—rather in the position of a *locum tenens*. If the sequestered incumbent died, the patron would formally fill up the vacancy; if, as was common, he appointed the minister already there, this minister would now acquire a permanent status which he had not had before. These ministers were at first supposed to be Puritan ministers driven out from parishes under the control of the King's army; but it must have been a good time for unbeneficed clergy generally, if sufficiently Puritan. But in the early years all of these would have been in episcopal orders, and they were commonly of as good education as those they replaced.

Let me take another illustration from Essex. The living of Stapleford Tawney was sequestrated from Richard Nicholson, on grounds, mainly at least, political: "For that he is a common drunkard and hath expressed great malignancy against the Parliament, saying they were a company of factious fellows, and that this Parliament is no Parliament; and that the main part of the Lords and Commons being with the King, they were the Parliament; and used divers other wicked speeches against the Parliament and against several Lords in the House of Peers, and had three wicked and scandalous libels against the Parliament found in his study, and did sing one of them in an alehouse." He was heard before the House of Lords, in April, 1643, his defence being that the evidence against him was false. Four witnesses appeared, one of them the rector of an adjacent parish. The House held the charges proved, and ordered the living to be sequestrated and himself committed to Newgate till the pleasure of the House be further known. In January, 1675, his wife petitioned for the fifts, which were granted. The living had been sequestered to Daniel Jennour or Joyner, M.A., apparently the Vicar of Chipping Ongar, a much poorer living. On his death, probably early in 1646, Thomas Horrocks, M.A., was appointed to succeed. He was of St. John's College, Cambridge, ordained by Bishop Morton of Durham; he had been a schoolmaster at Romford. Calamy has a strange story that he was presented to a considerable living in Norfolk, "but as he was travelling with letters of institution and induction, a false brother who was in his company robbed him of them and supplanted him in his parsonage, to which he submitted, without offering to recover his right by law."

In August, 1647, when the quarrel had arisen between the Army and the Parliament, there was a report that the Army would restore the sequestered clergy. Nicholson, who probably belonged to a local family, demanded from Horrocks the parsonage house and glebe, usurped his pulpit, and though shown Fairfax's declaration, contemningly kept the key of the church door, and called the people to witness that Horrocks refused to give way to him to officiate in the afternoon. Horrocks complained to the Lords, who ordered Nicholson to keep quiet under heavy penalties.

In 1650 Horrocks was presented by the patron to the living of Maldon, where he did good work, his preaching being much valued by

some of the leading county gentry. He was ejected in 1662. I do not know who succeeded him at Tawney, where Nicholson was restored in 1660.

There were throughout the Commonwealth period many parochial clergy in episcopal orders, though the normal ordination was Presbyterian. On the one hand we find a large number who managed in some way to retain their livings, *e.g.*, Sanderson and Hacket; or to get appointed to new livings, like Fuller. To give two Essex examples: the vicar of Braintree from 1610 to 1657 was Samuel Collins, a man who had the respect alike of Archbishop Laud and of Matthew Newcomen. The adjoining parish of Bocking was held by John Gauden, appointed by Laud in 1642 under pressure from the Earl of Warwick; he held this till 1660 when he became bishop, first of Exeter and then of Worcester. He claimed the authorship of *Eikon Basilike*. He could preach a sermon with any Puritan, as far as length went; he once preached for three hours and then offered prayer for another hour.

Again there were younger men who had been privately ordained by some deprived bishop. We usually hear only of cases where those so ordained subsequently became bishops or the like—as Bull, Dolben, Lloyd, Patrick, Tenison; but by all analogy there must have been a larger number not attaining distinction.

There is often also misconception about the Church endowments.

The lands of Bishops and of Deans and Chapters were sold; but parochial endowments were not touched. In fact in a number of cases the parochial clergy were the gainers. Frequently a royalist had his fine reduced on undertaking to settle an annual sum on some church or churches, *e.g.*, Sir Richard Grosvenor of Eaton, Chester, had his fine of £2,590 reduced to £1,290 on undertaking to settle £130 per annum for ever upon the ministers for such places as the Committee for Compounding should appoint. Sir Richard Leveson of Trentham, Staffordshire, ancestor of the Duke of Sutherland, had his fine of £9,846 reduced to £6,000 on condition of settling £380 per annum on the ministers of certain specified parishes in Staffordshire and Shropshire.

Furthermore, when the Bishops' and Chapters' lands were sold, their impropriations and tithes were reserved for the better maintenance of preaching ministers and schoolmasters. A body of trustees

for the maintenance of ministers was appointed, to whom these tithes were paid, as well as the tenths. They seem to have handled an income of nearly £40,000 from tithes and over £10,000 from tenths—total, not quite £50,000; about four-fifths of this went in grants the rest in expenses. The augmentations naturally varied greatly; many were from £10 to £30, but there were not a few of £40 to £60, and some even higher. We must always remember that money was much more valuable then, perhaps more than four times its pre-war level. Near London, according to the report of November, 1655, the ministers of Uxbridge and of Bow received augmentations of £72 each; Kingsbury, Hornsey and Staines, £20 each; Hampton and Edgware, £10 each.

It was in connection with these augmentations that the well-known parochial surveys of 1650 were made; not unfrequently these reports recommend the union of small parishes or the division of large ones. A number of ordinances or acts were passed for this purpose from 1654 onwards, after fresh surveys in many cases (1655-8). But the Restoration practically everywhere brought these proposals to an end.

It will be seen that in many cases the parochial clergy, if of approved Puritanism, were better off than before; and that proposals for redistribution of endowments according to need, and of sacrificing cathedral interests to parochial, have precedent behind them.

To conclude with the ejections at the Restoration. In 1660 an Act was passed to restore the sequestrated clergy, so turning out all intruders. As has been said, these intruders were legally in the position not of an incumbent but of a *locum tenens* or curate-in-charge put into a parish where the incumbent is suspended; though as time went on this distinction had become ignored or obliterated. It made no difference whether the intruder was or was not prepared to conform. It was a question of intrusion—not of orders or of conformity.

The case of those ejected in 1662 differs greatly. None of these were intruders; they held their livings by as legal a title as any who conformed. Calamy gives the document whereby his father, the second Edmund Calamy, was presented to the living of Moreton near Ongar by the trustees of Robert Earl of Warwick, 1659. Nor was the question of orders the main one—those ejected might be in unquestioned episcopal orders. The main point was conformity—would they use the Book of Common Prayer and declare their unfeigned

assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by it? One would think that, both then and since, many who made this declaration must have interpreted it rather freely, just as many who took the "League and Covenant." In most promises common sense allows reservation. They were also called upon to declare that it was unlawful under any pretence whatever to take up arms against the King—a pronounced Church of England doctrine in the Restoration period, till the King began to oppress the Church; then, as I once heard Prof. Gwatkin put it, "Common sense gained the day, and the Church joined with her enemies—the Dissenters, to cast out the Lord's Anointed!"

Thus the Nonconformists ejected in 1662 suffered much more obviously for conscience' sake than the Anglicans ejected under the Long Parliament—except for the probably comparatively small number who refused to take the Covenant. In the case of the rest no promise or subscription was asked for or would avail. The same applies on the other side to the ejections of 1660. Yet a large proportion of Anglicans clearly suffered for their religious and political convictions as surely as the Nonconformists did.

To close with a narrative creditable to all parties, Francis Chandler was at the Restoration minister of Theydon Garnon, near Epping, where a sequestration had taken place long before he came. "He was very desirous of King Charles' restoration, and prayed for him as rightful king some time before. On May 29, 1660, he went to London with great joy to see his pompous entrance." But he was turned out under the Act of 1660. The old Rector not living to return, the living was given to John Meggs, Rector of St Margaret Pattens, who had during the Long Parliament lost this living and been imprisoned. He had such an esteem for Chandler that the next day after his induction he desired him to be his assistant, and allowed him twenty shillings per week for his services. In 1662 Dr. Meggs very much pressed him to conform; and though he could not be satisfied to comply with the terms that were fixed, he continued very kind to him after he was obliged to part with him as his assistant. He afterwards commonly attended the public service of the Church of England and preached between the morning and afternoon service, and in the evening, privately, in his own house or at other places as he had opportunity. On the other days of the week he also frequently preached, and was often called in to

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assist on private days of fasting and prayer; and yet it does not appear he ever met with any disturbance. Once, after being silenced by the Uniformity Act, he preached at Theydon Church with Dr. Meggs' leave; and he kept a good correspondence with the neighbouring clergy so long as he lived there.

He used to set God always before him, and took care to keep up constant intercourse with Him. He would often say *Incipienti, progredienti, et proficenti, Deus mihi sit propitius.*

HAROLD SMITH.

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### A TIME OF GRAVE AND INSISTENT APPEAL

"The time is indeed a time of grave and insistent appeal to the Christian, calling him to the secret place of thought and prayer. There first he will set himself to grasp afresh for his own soul the eternal certainties. He will take pains there to feel again beneath his own feet the everlasting rock of revealed salvation in Christ, the immovable facts of the holy history, glorified all over by the Shechinah cloud of the heavenly mystery, the open 'mystery of godliness,' the wonder-truth of God incarnate and sacrificed for the believer's pardon, and holiness, and heaven. There he will set himself to ponder afresh the sure words of promise for Church and world, given us to shine only the brighter amidst the shadows of time. Perhaps he will especially, there and then, read again, and yet again, as I for one have come to do more than ever, those articulate predictions of the written Word which may well make us deem it at least possible, in view of the vast motions of recent history, that the æon is hastening to its consummation, that the Times of the Gentiles are running out apace over Jerusalem, that the glorious personal Return of the Lord our Hope is to be looked for with an ever-kindling expectation. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

"But if these meditations take their just line and keep their true proportion, they will only make the man who goes apart with God in his chamber more alert, more prompt, as with the vigour of a radiant anticipation, to ask what he can do, what he can pray for, in order to the reviving of the Church for her commissioned work of bringing the world to know that the Father sent the Son. The only hope, 'that blissful hope,' ἡ μαχαρι ελπις, is never for a moment meant to leave the man who hails and holds it indifferent to duty and opportunity around him. The more assured he is that his Lord may not much longer now delay His Coming, the more will he desire to help to the uttermost to prepare His way. That transcendent expectation, while it lifts him, in a wonderful manner of its own, out of entanglement in the world's worldliness, will only deepen his sympathies and animate his ambitions to work in the world for the world's revival Godward. He will address himself to the humblest personal duty, and devote himself, if the call comes, to large and far-reaching enterprise for God and for good, with as much entirety of purpose as if he knew that the present order was to last for ever; only he will do it also with an elevation of spirit born of the assurance that he is building, in his little measure, a high road over which ere long shall pass not only the tired procession of mortal life but the returning footsteps of the King in His beauty, and of all His saints with him."—THE BISHOP OF DURHAM at the Church Congress.

