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# FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

## WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO AN UNDERSTANDING

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CHAPTER ONE

A. The Subject and its Importance

INTRODUCTION

B. The Scope of the Subject

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"Now England's horrid civil wars began,  
When God a sinful nation meant to fan.

When they that sought their good things in  
this life  
Had banished love, and fill'd the church  
with strife!

Where striving factions charity defied,  
And carnal councils did the church divide!"

-Baxter-

Poetical Fragments, p. 26.



FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH  
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OF RICHARD BAXTER

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject and its Importance

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B. The Scope of the Subject logical writings, Richard

C. Method of Treatment his unquestioned belief in the

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three words are these:

"The great usefulness of history needs not many  
words to prove it, seeing natural inclination it  
self is so much for it, and reason and experience  
tell men, that they cannot spare it, as to Natu-  
al, Civil, or Religious use."

Baxter here expressed in his own way what Lynn Harold Hough  
has spoken in the language of our modern day. After remind-  
ing us of Alexander Dumas's Count of Monte Cristo, who, upon  
discovering a great treasure, climbed to a high elevation  
and cried, "The world is mine," Hough draws this lesson:

"In a deeper and more far-reaching sense the man  
who enters into the meaning of the experience of  
humanity in centuries gone can cry, 'The past is  
mine', and in that cry will be involved two others:

1. Church History of the Government of Bishops, Preface.

FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH  
WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO AN UNDERSTANDING  
OF RICHARD BAXTER

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

A. The Subject and its Importance

In writing his Church History of the Government of Bishops, and in the frequent historical allusions throughout his voluminous output of theological writings, Richard Baxter clearly testifies to his unquestioned belief in the value of the study of history to a proper understanding of the present. In the preface to the work just named, his first words are these:

"The great usefulness of History needs not many words to prove it, seeing natural inclination itself is so much for it, and reason and experience tell men, that they cannot spare it, as to Natural, Civil, or Religious use."<sup>1</sup>

Baxter here expressed in his own way what Lynn Harold Hough has spoken in the language of our modern day. After reminding us of Alexander Dumas's Count of Monte Cristo, who, upon discovering a great treasure, climbed to a high elevation and cried, "The world is mind," Hough draws this lesson:

"In a deeper and more far-reaching sense the man who enters into the meaning of the experience of humanity in centuries gone can cry, 'The past is mine', and in that cry will be involved two others:

. . . . .

1. Church History of the Government of Bishops, Preface.

'The present is mine', 'The future is mine'.<sup>1</sup>  
Hence, to understand any one person, event, or particular period of former days properly, or to have any real understanding of the present, or to be adequately equipped to face the future, a knowledge of history is vitally necessary.

In dealing with an individual, a knowledge of the history preceding his time is particularly vital. And not only is the knowledge of previous history necessary, but the historic events contemporary to the time of that individual must constantly be kept in mind. Man is the product both of heredity and environment. He has an intrinsic nature and inherent capacities, but these are necessarily moulded by environmental forces from the outside. Man develops, but he is developed. He acts, but he is acted upon. So to appreciate any historic character truly, one must take cognizance of the outstanding events and movements of the day in which he lived.

It is the purpose of this study to apply these two principles to one of the outstanding characters of the seventeenth century in England, Richard Baxter, whose life-span covers practically the whole of that century, from 1615 to 1691. To understand him properly, the forces operating in the preceding century of English history must be kept in

. . . . .

1. Hough, Life and History, p. 38.

mind. In addition to this, the exciting events which took place during his life-time must be clearly understood. He was a flint-faced man, not easily swayed, yet he was inextricably bound up with the events of his day, and could not but be affected by the interaction of historic forces which were at work in that period. One who has written on Baxter has said:

"Throughout his extraordinary career, all the dramatic issues of that turbulent era are seen energetically alive and struggling for mastery. To understand him in the range and subtlety of his rich and powerful mind, were to understand also the political and religious forces that incessantly clashed in fateful conflict all around him."<sup>1</sup>

True though this may be, it would seem legitimate to reverse the statement, making it read thus:

"To understand the political and religious forces that incessantly clashed in fateful conflict all around Baxter, were to understand him better."

Hence, this study will comprise a survey of the history of England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with the particular aim of presenting a picture which will aid in an understanding of this great man. What were the religious forces which were at play? What religious groups were clamoring for recognition, and what were their tenets? To which of these did Baxter adhere? This study proposes to answer such questions as these.

. . . . .

1. Thomas, The Autobiography of Richard Baxter, Introductory Essay, p. xvi.

B. The Scope of the Subject

Though it is the history of the English Church which is particularly significant in relation to Baxter, for he was an ecclesiastic and felt that "the History of the Church, of the propagation of the Christian faith"<sup>1</sup> was the most important part of history, yet a goodly amount of secular and political history must necessarily be dealt with. Harnack, in speaking of the attitude of the Church prior to the seventeenth century as to the relation between ecclesiastical and general history, says this:

"The Church and its affairs are thus sharply separated from the rest of history; and while the rest of history, of course, exercises an effect on the Church, the effect is only on the circumference and does not reach the centre."<sup>2</sup>

He then records several arguments against this attempted separation of ecclesiastical and secular history, and concludes as follows:

"We can now say: The History of the Church is part and parcel of universal history, and can be understood only in connection with it."<sup>3</sup>

In sixteenth and seventeenth century England the interplay between ecclesiastical and secular history was particularly evident.<sup>4</sup> In the struggle for freedom from Rome,

. . . . .

1. Baxter, Church History of Bishops, Preface.
2. "The Relation Between Ecclesiastical and General History", in The Living Age, Jan. 14, 1905, p. 75.
3. Ibid., p. 76.
4. Cf. Macauley, History of England, Vol. I, p. 57, where he says of this period: ". . . nor can the secular history of England be at all understood by us, unless we study it in constant connection with the history of her ecclesiastical polity."

in the struggle between King and Parliament, and in the strife between Conformists and Nonconformists, in all of which great political, social and economic issues were at stake, religion formed a deep undercurrent which had a great influence in settling these other issues. Hence, since ecclesiastical and general history cannot be isolated or dissociated, each will be given due recognition in this study.

### C. Method of Treatment

In treating this subject, the period involved will be divided into three main sections. The first section will deal with the factors in the Reformation of the English Church which were of significance. Both the causes leading up to the Reformation, and the Reformation itself will be dealt with. The significance of the influences here at work in their relation to Baxter's furtherance of the reforming principles later on will be brought out. The second section of the study will deal with the important factors in the history of the English Church from the Reformation to the time of Baxter. Here the furtherance of the Reformation under Edward, its set-back under Queen Mary, its rehabilitation under Queen Elizabeth along with the rise of Separatism, and the status of the Church under James I will be traced. This period particularly shows the rise and development of the various parties in the Church with which Baxter was confronted when he appeared

on the scene. The last section of the study will deal with the English Church situation during Baxter's lifetime, revealing the rising tide of strife between the King and the Parliament which represented the people, the final overthrow of the King and the temporary triumph of Independency along with the increase of the religious sects, the restoration of the King, and the fortunes of the Church thereafter until Baxter's death. The material for this section will be taken entirely from his own Narrative of the Most Memorable Passages of his Life and Times, which will make it doubly valuable in its relationship to him. A summary and conclusion will bring the study to its close.

"I am perceptive,  
These cardinals' tricks with me I abhor  
This dilatory sick, and tricks of Rome."

-Shakespeare-

Henry VIII, Act II, Scene IV

## II. FACTORS IN THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

### A. The Causes of the Reformation in England

1. The Influence of Wyclif and the Lollards
2. The Corruption of the Church
3. The Reformation on the Continent
4. The Renaissance
5. Nationalism in England

### CHAPTER TWO

### B. The Reformation of Henry VIII

#### FACTORS IN THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

1. The Personal Reasons
2. The Social and Political Causes
3. The Extent of Henry's Reformation
4. The Peculiar Character of the English Reformation

"I may perceive,  
These cardinals trifle with me: I abhor  
This dilatory sloth, and tricks of Rome."

-Shakespeare-

Henry VIII, Act II, Scene IV



## CHAPTER TWO

### FACTORS IN THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

#### II FACTORS IN THE REFORMATION OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

##### A. The Causes of the Reformation in England

1. The Influence of Wyclif and the Lollards
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##### B. The Reformation under Henry VIII

1. The Immediate Occasion
2. The Break with Rome
3. The Extent of Henry's Reformation
4. The Peculiar Character of the English Reformation
5. The Royal Family at the Death of Henry
6. Church Parties at Henry's Death

1. Wakeham, Introduction to the History of the Church of England, p. 3.
2. Cf. Tertullian, "An Answer to the Jews," A. N. F., Vol. III, p. 153, where he speaks of "the haunts of the Britons inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ." Cf. Bright, Chapters of Early English Church History, p. 1 ff. for discussion of the authenticity of this and other early references to the establishment of Christianity in Britain.
3. Cf. Origen, Homily 8 in Lev., "The power of our Lord and Saviour is both with those who in Britain are divided from our world," etc., quoted by Bright, p. 5 note.
4. Wakeham, p. 3.

CHAPTER TWO

FACTORS IN THE REFORMATION  
OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH

"No one knows when the Church was first planted in Britain",<sup>1</sup> writes an eminent English Church historian. He establishes beyond question, however, from references in Tertullian<sup>2</sup> and Origen<sup>3</sup> and other scant memorials, the fact that the English Church had its beginnings in the Roman Province of Britain some time before the year 200 A.D. Little is known of its development at this early stage, but it is quite certain that Christianity enjoyed a fair degree of prosperity and exerted a vigorous influence over the lives of the people of primitive Britain. After the year 449, however, due to the invasion of the Angles and the Saxons, Christianity was "driven out of sight and almost out of mind over five-sixths of the country."<sup>4</sup> They were barbaric peoples, who pushed Christianity into the remotest corners of Britain, and fairly extinguished it.

. . . . .

1. Wakeman, Introduction to the History of the Church of England, p. 1.
2. Cf. Tertullian, "An Answer to the Jews", A N F, Vol. III, p. 158, where he speaks of "the haunts of the Britons-- inaccessible to the Romans, but subjugated to Christ." Cf. Bright, Chapters of Early English Church History, p. 1 ff. for discussion of the authenticity of this and other early references to the establishment of Christianity in Britain.
3. Cf. Origen, Homily 6 in Luc., "The power of our Lord and Saviour is both with those who in Britain are divided from our world," etc. Quoted by Bright, p. 5 note.
4. Wakeman, p. 8.

Near the close of the sixth century, a monastery abbot named Gregory was greatly attracted by some bright, fair-haired English youths who were being sold in the slave-market of Rome. His traditional exclamation that they looked more like "Angels" than "Angles"<sup>1</sup> has become almost proverbial. Though unable to obtain leave to carry the Gospel to the heathen English himself, he bided his time until he came into power as Pope. Choosing the monk Augustine as the appropriate one to carry the evangel to these needy people, he sent him with several assistants to do the work of Christianizing England.

Here we must leave the development of the English Church, though its story is inviting, and leap rather abruptly a span of about nine hundred years to the sixteenth century. Up until this time the Church remained, though often with great protest,<sup>2</sup> under the domination of the Roman Pope. During the reign of Henry VIII, however, from 1509 to 1547, the protest grew louder and more distinct, until there was finally a complete break with the Church of Rome and there occurred what is known as the English Reformation. Taine traces briefly the elements of that Reformation as

. . . . .

1. Cf. Fisher, History of the Christian Church, p. 146.
2. Cf. Hulbert, The English Reformation and Puritanism, p. 88, "English patriotism was never crushed out of English hearts, and there was never a time when English subjects were not ready to sustain their lawful princes in lawful independent rulership; and there was never a time when the more intelligent and nobles did not cry out against the usurpations of Rome."

"the intrigues in high places, the scruples and passions of Henry VIII, the pliability and plausibility of Cranmer, the vacillations and basenesses of Parliament, the oscillation and tardiness of the Reformation, begun, then arrested, then pushed forward, then with one blow violently pushed back, then spread over the whole nation, and hedged in by a legal establishment, a singular establishment, built up from discordant materials, but yet solid and durable."<sup>1</sup>

It is proposed in this chapter, to indicate the various forces which lead up to the Reformation in England, to describe in some detail the Reformation itself, to indicate the extent of the Reformation under Henry, to point out the peculiar character of the English Reformation, and to point out the various Church parties which were clearly distinguishable at the close of his reign. Along with this will be included a brief word concerning the successors of Henry who were to figure largely in the future role of the Church in England.

#### A. The Causes of the Reformation in England

"The suit for a divorce by Henry VIII from Catherine of Aragon was not the cause but merely the occasion of the break between England and Rome,"<sup>2</sup> says Wakeman. Throughout the middle ages there had been a long and bitter struggle between England and Rome which was quietly gaining in force each time it was renewed. It was like the waves of a

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1. Taine, History of English Literature, Vol. II, p. 14 f.
2. Wakeman, p. 202.

stormy sea which leap higher and higher until they finally clear the sea-walls and flood the shore. Even as early as the eleventh century, William the Conqueror had said,

"I have a great respect for the Pope's legates in things which concern religion, but if any monk in my dominions dare to raise a complaint against me, I will have him hanged on the highest tree of the forest."<sup>1</sup>

This lengthy struggle between rival claims cannot here be dealt with, but the more immediate causes of the consummation of the struggle will here be discussed.

#### 1. The Influence of Wyclif and the Lollards

John Wyclif, commonly termed the "morning star of the Reformation",<sup>2</sup> set ablaze a flame which, though at times apparently extinguished, kept smouldering until its sparks lent their aid in starting the great conflagration of the English Reformation. Though preceding Luther about a century and a half, Wyclif was in most respects as genuine a Protestant as his Wittenberg successor.<sup>3</sup> He risked everything on the Scriptures, and believed in a personal, evangelical experience of saving faith in Christian believers.

1. Quoted by Hulbert, p. 88.
2. Cf. Neal, History of the Puritans, Vol. I, p. 2.
3. Cf., Ibid., p. 4, "He preached and published the very same doctrines, for substance, that afterwards obtained at the Reformation." Cf. also Hallam, The Constitutional History of England, Vol. I, p. 42, "Almost a hundred and fifty years before Luther, nearly the same doctrines as he taught had been maintained by Wicliffe."

One statement from him will suffice to show what a thunderbolt he threw into the Romanism of his day:

"If there were one hundred popes, and all the friars were turned into cardinals, their opinion ought not to be acceded to in matters of faith, except in so far as they base themselves on Scripture."<sup>1</sup>

Wyclif gathered about him many pious monks who were termed Lollards. They went singing and preaching to the remotest corners of England, carrying the seeds which were to fall into the ground and die in many instances, only to bear greater fruit in furthering the cause of evangelicalism in later years. After Wyclif's death, his remains were disinterred and burned, and the ashes thrown into the brook Swift, which ran into the Avon river. The Lollard writings were condemned, and they were martyred clear down into the reign of Henry VIII.<sup>2</sup> Clark even finds significant traces

1. Quoted by Hulbert, p. 43.
2. Cf. Burnet, History of the Reformation of the Church of England, Vol. I, p. 27 f., where he describes the trial and death of Richard Hunne, whose body was burned after his death for being an adherent to Wyclif's doctrines. Burnet writes, "But as the inquest proceeded in this trial, the bishop began a new process against the dead body of Richard Hunne, for other points of heresy; and several articles were gathered out of Wickliff's preface to the Bible, with which he was charged. And his having the book in his possession being taken for good evidence, he was judged an heretic, and his body delivered to the secular power. . . . On the twentieth of December his body was burnt at Smithfield." Cf. also Hallam, Vol. I, p. 42, where he writes, "We hear indeed little of them during some part of the fifteenth century; for they generally shunned persecution; and it is chiefly through records of persecution that we learn the existence of heretics. But immediately before the name of Luther was known, they seem to have become more numerous, or to have attracted more attention; since several persons were burned for heresy, and others abjured their errors, in the first years of Henry VIII's reign."

of Lollardism clear down into the reigns of Edward VI and Mary.<sup>1</sup> Wyclif, no doubt, had a greater influence through Huss and the Bohemians than in England, and there is some difference of opinion among historians as to the extent of his influence in his native country. Yet it seems impossible to deny that he and his followers formed one of the contributory causes of the English Reformation.<sup>2</sup> One has written concerning him,

"The Avon to the Severn runs,  
The Severn to the Sea;  
And Wiclif's dust shall spread abroad  
Wide as the waters be."

Surely some of this dust must have found its way back to the shores of Britain, where it was cast as sediment to

. . . . .

1. History of English Nonconformity, Vol. I, p. 74, "It is established, besides, that a large proportion of those who suffered martyrdom under Mary came from districts where Lollardy had been strong. And perhaps (though it can be no more than a vague guess) the isolated congregations with which we meet later on in the time of Edward the Sixth and Mary . . . may have been connected in some real way with the Lollardy of earlier years, and may have represented the new uprising of some Lollard tradition, which had never wholly died, and which was ready, on occasion, to embody itself once more."
2. Cf. Hulbert, p. 48 f., "John Wiclif is the fountain-head of two streams of influence which have blessed the world. We trace the one through John Huss, the Taborites, the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren, the Wesleys and Wesleyanism, the evangelical revival of the eighteenth century, and the great missionary movement of modern times. . . . The other flowed between English banks and lost itself at last in that larger stream which we call the English Reformation." Cf. also Hallam, Vol. I, p. 42, where he speaks of the Lollards lasting "as a numerous, though obscure and proscribed sect, till, aided by the confluence of foreign streams, they swelled into the protestant church of England."



help support the rock on which the English Reformation was founded. Baxter, who succeeded Wyclif over two centuries, gives evidence that Wyclif's influence had not even then been entirely depleted. He cites in his Narrative a strong invective that was hurled at him for including Wyclif among the great saints with whom he expected to have fellowship in heaven.<sup>1</sup> In his Church History of Bishops, he gives an account of the burning of Wyclif's bones at the Council of Constance, along with "45 Articles, instead of 260 which they had gathered",<sup>2</sup> by which Wyclif's writings were condemned. In giving his judgment as to the validity of this condemnation, Baxter drops the informing words, "I see in Wickliff's Books",<sup>3</sup> revealing a familiarity with the works of the noted Reformer, which must surely have influenced him in his strong aversion for anything that savored of popery. The spirit of Wyclif became to a certain extent reincarnate in Baxter, who, in his day, under different circumstances and in a different way, furthered the work which Wyclif had begun.

## 2. The Corruption of the Church

Reforms are usually preceded by decline. Such was the case in the period directly preceding the Reformation.

1. Op. cit., p. 198. . . . .

2. p. 431.

3. Ibid., p. 433.



Wakeman writes, "It is hardly too much to say, that in the popes of the period preceding the Reformation nearly every quality is represented except that of religion."<sup>1</sup> Since the English Church was under the domination of the Popes, it could not escape papal abuse. Many of the political offices in the realm were held by ecclesiastics who received benefices without giving any service in return. These clergy were subject, not to the courts of the State, but to the Church courts. In these, they could escape punishment for practically any crime. They did not preach good tidings, but spent their time in immorality, while squeezing all the money possible from the people to support them in their wild careers. England was full of superstition and darkness. Could this last forever? Not so! For God has put eternity in men's hearts, and they cannot forever acquiesce in such mundane and human abuses. It is usually a slow and painful metamorphosis when men arouse from their long stillness to throw off the outworn shell of superstition and darkness.<sup>2</sup> Yet, it is an inevitable process, and this degraded Church suffered the unavoidable consequences in the English Reformation.

The Reformation, however, did not entirely eliminate

1. Op. Cit., p. 192.

2. Cf. Hallam, Vol. I, p. 42, "No revolution has ever been more gradually prepared than that which separated almost one half of Europe from the communion of the Roman see."

this corruption in the Church. The inevitable result did not fully remove the cause. Even as late as Baxter's day, the evils of the Church and clergy were notorious. He writes concerning the ministry in his boyhood days:

"We lived in a Country that had but little Preaching at all: In the Village where I was born there was four Readers successively in Six years time, ignorant Men, and two of them immoral in their lives; who were all my School-masters. In the Village where my Father lived, there was a Reader of about Eighty years of Age that never preached, and had two Churches about Twenty miles distant: His Eye-sight failing him, he said Common-Prayer without Book; but for the Reading of the Psalms and Chapters, he got a Common Thresher and Day-Labourer one year, and a Taylor another year: (for the Clerk could not read well): And at last he had a Kinsman of his own, (the excellentest Stage-player in all the Country, and a good Gamester and good Fellow) that got Orders and supplied one of his Places! After him another younger Kinsman, that could write and read, got Orders: And at the same time another Neighbour's Son that had been a while at School turn'd Minister, and who would needs go further than the rest, ventur'd to preach (and after got a Living in Staffordshire,) and when he had been a Preacher about Twelve or Sixteen years, he was fain to give over, it being discovered that his Orders were forged by the first ingenious Stage-Player. After him another Neighbour's Son took Orders, when he had been a while an Attorney's Clerk, and a common Drunkard, and tiple'd himself into so great Poverty that he had no other way to live: It was feared that he and more of them came by their Orders the same way with the forementioned Person."<sup>1</sup>

Baxter gives us another vivid picture of the degradation of the ministry of the Church of his day, when he describes the situation at Kidderminster prior to his arrival there:

"The Vicar of the place . . . was utterly insufficient for the Ministry, presented by a Papist,

. . . . .

1. R.B., I, p. 1.

the unlearned, preached but once a quarter, which was so weakly, as exposed him to laughter, and persuaded them that he understood not the very Substantial Articles of Christianity; . . . he frequented Alehouses, and had sometimes been drunk; . . . (There was a)l Curate at a Chappel in the Parish, a common Tippler and a Drunkard, a railing Quarreller, an ignorant insufficient Man, who (as I found by Examining him) understood not the common Points of the Children's Catechism, . . . and his Trade in the Week-days was unlawful Marriages."2

Thus, this evil and corruption in the Church which was one of the contributory factors in bringing to a head the Reformation, continued to be so disgraceful that it widened the breach between the Nonconformists and the Established Church in the time of Baxter. This same cause operating in his day produced a like result, in the furtherance of the reformation principles under his efforts and those of his Puritan contemporaries.

### 3. The Reformation on the Continent

When Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the Cathedral of Wittenberg, he began not a movement of any local dimensions, but he "fired a shot heard round the world". During the Middle Ages, the Roman Church had been truly a universal Church. All racial and national distinctions were erased, and an all-inclusive Church, growing out of an ideal of "making of one all nations", was established. This universalism centered in the supreme head of

1. Expression in parenthesis by author of this study.
2. R.E., I, p. 19 f.

the Church, the Pope.

Thus, for three reasons, Luther's influence was felt in England. First, the world was so tied together by its catholicity of religion, that no movement of proportions as great as that of Luther's could be prevented from shaking the entire world. It was not long until England knew of the revolt of Luther, and literature began making its way across the Channel to the British Isles.<sup>1</sup> This literature was condemned and publicly burned. Yet, it could not all be destroyed, and the light which it shed helped point the

- ... .. These sentiments.
1. Cf. Clark, History of English Nonconformity, Vol. I, p. 73, "And now came the hour when whatever of purer doctrine existed in England was to be reinforced by the coming of purer doctrine from Germany." Cf. also p. 93, where, in speaking of Henry's reign previous to his break with the Pope, he says, "There was considerable circulation of heretical books, Wiclif's tracts and Luther's." Cf. also Gasquet, The Eve of the Reformation, p. 16, where he quotes Roger Edgeworth, a preacher during the reigns of Henry VIII and Mary, who speaks of "these seditious English books that have been sent over from our English runagates now abiding with Luther in Saxony". Further, p. 212 f., he quotes Edgeworth, "Whilst I was a young student in divinity, Luther's heresies rose and were scattered here in this realm, which, in less space than a man would think, had so sore infected the Christian folk, first the youth and then the elders, where the children could set their fathers to school, that the king's Majesty and all Christian clerks in the realm had much ado to extinguish them. This they could not so perfectly quench, but that ever since, when they might have any maintenance by man or woman of great power, they burst forth afresh, even like fire hid under chaff." Cf. also Smith, The Age of the Reformation, p. 281, "Luther's Theses on Indulgences were sent by Erasmus to his English friends Thomas More and John Colet little more than four months after their promulgation. By February, 1519, Froben had exported to England a number of volumes of Luther's works. . . . Many others were sold by a bookseller at Oxford throughout 1520." Cf. also Lindsay, A History of the Reformation, Vol. I, p. 320.

way to a new day for England. Second, Luther was not alone in his views, but was but expressing what men of kindred spirit were thinking in many places. The English were as tired of papal and ecclesiastical abuse as was Luther.<sup>1</sup> The English worshippers were also hungering and thirsting for spiritual food and drink which they did not find. Hence, when Luther was bold enough to assert himself in line with these displeasures and these desires, a chord was struck in fraternal spirits in England which gave them an increased longing for the spiritual freedom they craved, and lent impetus to the efforts toward reform. "These sentiments," says Hulbert, "were there before, and his bold utterances only confirmed and fastened them."<sup>2</sup> Third, Luther's action split the power of the papacy to an extent which made it easier for Henry to successfully resist the Pope and declare his independence.

As to how far Baxter was influenced by Luther would be difficult to prognosticate. Yet, he gives evidence of a

- works of Luther. Cf. . . . .
1. Cf. Smith, p. 21 ff., for list of abuses, such as tithes, taxes, annates, simony, indulgences, etc., all of which were burdensome in England as elsewhere. Cf. also Lindsay, p. 316, "There was a good deal of heresy, so called, in England long before Luther's voice had been heard in Germany. Men maintained that the tithes were exactions of covetous priests, and were not sanctioned by the law of God; they protested against the hierarchical constitution of the mediaeval Church, they heard the Scriptures, and attended services in the vernacular; and they scoffed at the authority of the Church and attacked some of its doctrines."
  2. Hulbert, p. 84.

3. A Christian Directory, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, Obed, Vol. V, p. 507 ff.
4. R.B., I, p. 125.

thorough familiarity with him and his works, along with those of the other Continental Reformers, by references which he makes to them in his writings. Regarding the influence of the Reformers on civil liberty from the papacy, Baxter writes:

"And all Christian Princes have cause to be thankful to the Reformers, and to acknowledge that from them they have now the safety of their Crowns and Dignities, and their peace; and by them, of Subjects, they are restored to a great degree of freedom, I mean even those that yet are Papists, the Pope dare not now damn them as Henrician Hereticks, as he long had done; he dare not be so bold in taking away, and giving Kingdomes; he dare not execute his Laws against Princes Investitures, nor excommunicate them, and depose them, and absolve their Subjects, nor interdict whole Kingdomes, and shut up Church doors, nor so much as openly profess that he hath power from God, and S. Peter, to depose Kings according to their Merits, and to set up others in their stead."<sup>1</sup>

This statement reinforces the judgment previously set down that the Reformation on the Continent aided Henry in breaking away from the tyranny of the Pope.

Further reference to the Continental Reformers is made by Baxter when he attempts to draw up a list of books suitable for a poor man's library. In this list, he includes works of Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Erasmus and Beza.<sup>2</sup> In still another way, Baxter reveals his knowledge and interest in these Reformers by defending them against what he thought was papal falsehood. He says that "Lies of the Papists, of Luther, Zwinglius, Calvin, and Beza, are visibly malicious and impudent."<sup>3</sup> In another work he attempts to expose

1. Church History of Bishops, p. 454 f.
2. A Christian Directory, The Practical Works of the Rev. Richard Baxter, Orme, Vol. V, p. 537 ff.
3. R.B., I, p. 135.



these falsehoods,<sup>1</sup> and vindicate those against whom they were coined. Though we are unable to definitely determine the extent of the influence of these Continental Reformers on Baxter, these references amply attest the fact that he was thoroughly familiar with their writings and revered their memory. The spirit of these men who assisted the Reformation movement in sixteenth century England was still alive in the breast of this great seventeenth century Divine who was giving the last ounce of energy that was his to further the work of Reformation to a point not yet attained.

could not but have an influence on the spiritual Reformation which split the Church.

#### 4. The Renaissance

As the Reformation broke the spiritual bondage of the

1. Cf. Jesuit Juggling, p. 188 ff., "In a manuscript of the Papists which I lately received there are these words; 'Luther having richly supped, and made his friends merry with his facetious conceits, died the same night. . . . John Calvin, a branded sodomite, consumed with lice and worms, died blaspheming and calling upon the devil. . . . These were the ends of the parents of the Protestant and Presbyterian pretended religions.' . . . Thyraeus the Jesuit in his book de Daemoniacis, part. 1. cap. 8. p. 21, tells us; 'the same day that Luther died, there was at Gheola a town in Brabant, many persons possessed of devils, that waited on their Saint Dymna for deliverance, and were all that day delivered: but the next day they were all possessed again; whereupon the exorcist or some body asked the devils where they had been the day before; and they answered, that they were commanded by their prince to be at the funeral of their fellow laborer Luther!'" Following this, Baxter says, "I will tell the case of these two servants of Christ that are thus reviled, even as their Master was before them, who was said to do miracles by the power of the devil." He then goes on to state the true story of the death of these great Protestants.

Middle Ages, so the Renaissance liberated men from the intellectual shackles with which their minds had been bound. It had been the policy of the Catholic Church to do man's thinking for him, for it was thought that the average man was not capable of reasoning for himself. When the Eastern Roman Empire collapsed, however, Greek scholars began to flock westward to Italy, and soon conditions began to change.<sup>1</sup> The revival of Greek scholarship and culture and knowledge, which had been subdued during the Middle Ages, sprang up with unabated force. This intellectual re-birth could not but have an influence on the spiritual Reformation which split the Church from Romanism. Gwatkin writes of this:

"In three directions the study of Greek implied an intellectual revolution. In the first place, the rejection of Latin ideals for others threw doubts on all distinctively Latin forms of thought and doctrine. Again, the Greek teaching of the beauty of the world and the enjoyment of life directly contradicted the ascetic theory on which the system of the Latin church was based. More than this: if the Classics were to be interpreted by scholarship and not by tradition, must not the New Testament be dealt with in the same way? And it was very clear that the current doctrines of the Church could not bear the test of reason. Given the Renaissance, the Reformation was its necessary sequel."<sup>2</sup>

Gwatkin then shows how Colet gave the Renaissance in England a religious turn.<sup>3</sup> In 1497, he began to lecture on

1. Cf. Gwatkin, Church and State in England to the Death of Queen Anne, p. 137.
2. Ibid., p. 137 f.
3. Ibid., p. 138.



St. Paul's epistles based on the new learning, discarding "allegory for scholarship".<sup>1</sup> He was given an influential position by his appointment as Dean of St. Paul's in 1504, and finally, by means of some wealth to which he fell heir, he founded St. Paul's School. He was a bold critic of the Church, and the Lollards were greatly gratified when hearing him.<sup>2</sup> He, however, did not attack the institution as a whole, but merely the scandalous practices of some individuals in the institution.

"His eyes were quite open to the practical scandals, but he never fairly faced the fact that they were not simply the sins of individuals, but natural results of a church system which rested on false principles, and that it was not enough to put down abuses or even to teach true principles, without a drastic reform of the practical system. This indeed was the mistake of the Humanists generally, and of Erasmus in particular."<sup>3</sup>

Erasmus' new Greek Testament, which was the result of the Renaissance, had a marked influence in preparing the way for the English Reformation. It was his aim to prepare the New Testament in book form, and to give as pure a text as possible, based on what MSS he had and on the writings of the Fathers. Hulbert describes Erasmus' work and its results thus:

"Besides the text there was a new Latin translation in which the errors and obscurities and Hebraisms and barbarisms of Jerome's Vulgate were corrected. Notes were appended which

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1. Gwatkin, p. 138.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. Orms, Vol. V, p. 599, where Baxter includes Erasmus' Paraphrase in his list of books suitable to a poor

man's library.

2. Hulbert, p. 75.

justified these departures from the received version. In process of time four other editions found their way into print. Speedily the new Greek-Latin book made itself felt in London, Oxford, and Cambridge. It produced a profound sensation. The learned read it with the utmost eagerness. Forthwith it began its enlightening and regenerating work. . . . Thus did God make Erasmus, the precursor of the Reformation, and his Greek Testament the foundation stone of the new spiritual temple."<sup>1</sup>

One of the chief results of the work of Erasmus was the conversion of William Tyndale. He, in turn, conceived the idea of giving the Bible to the people in their native tongue. So, amidst great persecution, and finally at the cost of his life, he translated and published the New Testament and parts of the Old Testament in English. Much opposition to this was manifest, and all available copies were burned by the authorities. "But the word of God could not be bound, and wherever it went it set men free."<sup>2</sup> Soon the Word of God was intelligible to the masses in England, and men in possession of that instrument "sharper than any two-edged sword" could not fail to use it in the direction of reform. Thus did William Tyndale make his contribution to the Reformation in England.

Along with the Renaissance came several important inventions which assisted in the gradual but final and complete break from the Church of Rome. Fisher writes:

"The most important inventions of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were gunpowder,

. . . . .

1. Hulbert, p. 73 f. Cf. also Baxter, A Christian Directory, Orme, Vol. V, p. 599, where Baxter includes Erasmus' Paraphrase in his list of books suitable to a poor man's library.
2. Hulbert, p. 79.

the mariner's compass, and printing by movable types."<sup>1</sup>

The invention of printing, of course, made possible the publication and circulation of the Scriptures previously mentioned. The other two inventions gave a tremendous impetus to navigation and conquest. Navigation began to play a leading role. Soon America was discovered. The English people found "that as sailors, merchants, or manufacturers, they could find plenty to do which was as good as keeping sheep, and a good deal better than robbing and murdering"<sup>2</sup> for a living. This gave increased impetus to the Renaissance. With a vision of bettering the conditions of the people, More wrote his Utopia, advocating social and economic reforms. Men everywhere were beginning to re-discover themselves, and the intellectual darkness of the Middle Ages was fast disappearing. There was "an intellectual awakening; an absorbing passion for the ancient culture; a revival of letters; a new-birth of the human mind."<sup>3</sup>

This revival of learning and human progress was one of the preparatory factors contributing to the Reformation.

This passion for learning found a ready person in which to embody itself in Richard Baxter. Through him, over a hundred years later, the spirit of the Renaissance still cried out against ignorance and superstition, and sought

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1. Fisher, A Brief History of the Nations, p. 365.
2. Gardiner, Outline of English History, p. 141.
3. Hulbert, p. 52.

the complete emancipation of man's spirit from the darkness of uninformed intellects. The previous mention of his description of the ignorance of many of the parish ministers<sup>1</sup> reveals in a small way how his spirit loathed such darkness. His own knowledge of books and learning, though he worked constantly "under languishing Weakness, being seldom an hour free from pain",<sup>2</sup> was almost incredible. We may judge of the immensity of his personal library from an interesting incident which he relates in his Narrative.

"Another time, as I sat in my Study, the Weight of my greatest Folio Books brake down three or four of the highest Shelves, when I sat close under them, and they fell down on every side of me, and not one of them hit me, save one upon the Arm; whereas the Place, the Weight, and greatness of the Books was such, and my Head just under them, that it was a Wonder they had not beaten out my Brains, one of the Shelves right over my Head having the six Volumes of Dr. Walton's Oriental Bible, and all Austin's Works, and the Bibliotheca Patrum, and Marlorate, &c."<sup>3</sup>

From various references throughout his works, and especially from the list of books he suggests for a poor man's library, we receive further light on the wide range of his knowledge. He studied Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Arabic, theology, philosophy, physics, science, metaphysics, ethics, logic, rhetoric and oratory, politics, history, astronomy, geography, mathematics, music, and medicine. He lists histories of Rome, Greece, England, France, Belgium, Germany,

1. See above p. 19 f.

2. R.B., I, p. 80.

3. Ibid., I, p. 82.

Italy, Turkey, Abassia,<sup>1</sup> Judea, Armenia, Tartary, Africa, India, China, Siam, Japan, Indostan, Muscovy, Sweden, and Scotland.<sup>2</sup> He gives evidence of a familiarity with a large number of philosophers and philosophical systems, naming the "Peripatetics, the Stoics, the Pythagoreans and Platonists, . . . the Epicureans, the Lullianists, the Cartesians, Telesius, Campanella, Patricius, Gassendus",<sup>3</sup> Berigardus, Aristotle, Regius, Hobbes, the Cynics, Comenius, the Hermetical philosophers, Scaliger, Scheggius, Wendeline and Sennertus.<sup>4</sup> Surely Thomas is right when he says that

"No man of his day was so distinguished in so many spheres . . . no one rivalled him in the comprehensive grasp of his genius and the versatility of his learning."<sup>5</sup>

Stephen confirms this when he writes:

"If there be any defect or error of which he was unconscious, and which he therefore has not avowed, it was the combination in his mind of an undue reliance on his own powers of investigating truth, with an undue distrust in the result of his inquiries. He proposed to himself, and executed, the task of exploring the whole circle of the moral sciences, logic, ethics, divinity, politics, and metaphysics; and this toil he accomplished amidst public employments of ceaseless importunity, and bodily pains almost unintermitted. Intemperance never assumed a more venial form; but that this insatiate thirst for knowledge was indulged to a faulty excess, no reader of his life, or of his works, can doubt."<sup>6</sup>

. . . . .

1. He must mean Abyssinia here.
2. A Christian Directory, Orme, Vol. V, p. 575 ff.
3. Ibid., p. 553.
4. Cf. Ibid., p. 579 f.
5. Thomas, Introductory Essay, p. xvi.
6. Stephen, Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography, p. 61.

1. Thomas, Introductory Essay, p. xvi.
2. Poetical Fragments, Epistle to the Reader, p. ii f.
3. A Christian Directory, Orme, Vol. V, p. 553.
4. Orme, Vol. XVIII, p. 314.

Baxter "was a lover of poetry and of music, a defender of art and imagination".<sup>1</sup> He writes:

"I am an adversary to their philosophy that vilify sense, because it is in brutes. . . . human souls are not less sensitive for being rational, but are eminently sensitive. . . . For myself, I confess that harmony and melody are the pleasure and elevation of my soul."<sup>2</sup>

He wrote much poetry, which has been published in a book entitled *Poetical Fragments*. He decried the doctrine of the Middle Ages that nothing but religious knowledge should be studied. Of this, he says:

"We have more than heathens, but must not therefore have less, and cast away the good that is common to them and us; else we must not have souls, bodies, reason, health, time, meat, drink, clothes, &c., because heathens have them."<sup>3</sup>

Baxter was truly possessed with a love of learning and of the arts which was a true embodiment of the spirit of the Renaissance. In his *Dying Thoughts*, he attests this with a brief statement:

"I have little knowledge which I find not some way useful to my highest ends. And if wishing or money could procure more, I would wish and empty my purse for it."<sup>4</sup>

Finding himself amidst some of the darkness and ignorance against which the Renaissance revolted, and with this insatiable thirst for truth and knowledge, Baxter could not but continue to revolt and to cry out for a further emancipation of man from his intellectual shackles and a furtherance of the Reformation to which the Renaissance gave impetus.

1. Thomas, *Introductory Essay*, p. xvi.
2. *Poetical Fragments*, *Epistle to the Reader*, p. ii f.
3. *A Christian Directory*, Orme, Vol. V, p. 552.
4. Orme, Vol. XVIII, p. 314.

## 5. Nationalism in England

The universalism of the Holy Roman Empire finally began to crumble toward the close of the Middle Ages, and nationalism began to emerge. England did not escape this, and she began to demand recognition of her sovereignty in her own realm. She would no longer be dominated by foreigners.

Wakeman writes concerning this:

"Papal supremacy, however high in its sanction, proved practically to be foreign supremacy. Royal supremacy, however tyrannical in its exercise, was at least national."<sup>1</sup>

Hence, this emergence of nationalism and patriotism played its part in making the Reformation possible.

The break of Henry VIII with the papacy, however, did not entirely do away with the fear of papal domination in England. Throughout the reigns of several succeeding monarchs, there were Catholic plots which wrought much trepidation among the people in Britain. Baxter, in expostulating with the Papists who sought the persecution of the Puritans, reminds them of

"Queen Mary's flames, and the Spanish invasion, and the many treasons against Queen Elizabeth, and . . . the Powder Plot. . . . And how the murder of 200,000 in Ireland drove many thousands into the Parliament's army that else would not have gone."<sup>2</sup>

He further tells in his Narrative of several supposed plots and the fears they created. The historicity of these cannot

1. Wakeman, p. 208.

2. Cain and Abel Malignity, Orme, Vol. X, p. 558.

be vouched for, but they express what must have been a rather common feeling among the people of England towards the Papists.

He first tells of a supposed papal plot against the life of Charles I at the time he was beheaded.

"One Mr. Atkins of Glocestershire, Brother to Judge Atkins, being beyond Sea, with others that had served the late King, fell into intimate acquaintance with a Priest, that had been (or then was) Governour of one of their Colledges in Flanders: They agreed, not to meddle with each other about Religion, and so continued their Friendship long. A little after the King was beheaded, Mr. Atkins met this Priest in London, and going into a Tavern with him, said to him in his familiar way, 'What business have you here? I warrant you come about some Roguery or other.' Whereupon the Priest told it him as a great secret, 'That there were Thirty of them here in London, who by Instructions from Cardinal Mazarine, did take care of such Affairs, and had sate in Council, and debated the Question, Whether the King should be put to death or not? and that it was carried in the Affirmative, and there were but two Voices for the Negative, which was his own and anothers.'"

A great fear of the renewal of papal dominance in England was raised in the year 1673.

"The Parliament grew into great Jealousies of

near Maryland Park! It was plainly proved that he was married. . . . .

1. R.B., II, p. 373. He continues, "I would not print it without fuller Attestation, lest it should be a wrong to the Papists. But when the King was restored and settled in Peace, I told it occasionally to a Privy Counsellor, who not advising me to meddle any further in it, because the King knew enough of Mazarine's Designs already, I let it alone. But about this time I met with Dr. Thomas Goad, and occasionally mentioning such a thing, he told me he was familiarly acquainted with Mr. Atkins, and would know the certainty of him, whether it were true: And not long after meeting him again, he told me that he spoke with Mr. Atkins, and that he assured him that it was true: but he was loth to meddle in the publication of it."



the prevalency of Popery: There was an Army raised, which lay upon Black-Heath encamped, as for Service against the Dutch: They said that so many of the Commanders were Papists as made Men fear the design was worse. Men feared not to talk openly that the Papists having no hope of getting the Parliament to set up their Religion by Law, did design to take down Parliaments, and reduce the Government to the French Model, and Religion to their State, by a standing Army: These Thoughts put Men into dismal Expectations, and many wish that the Army, at any rate might be disbanded."<sup>1</sup>

A further scare was raised in 1678 by one Titus Oates, which Baxter seems to have believed, and which he recorded.<sup>2</sup>

"About Oct. 1678. Fell out the Murder of Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, which made a very great change in England. One Dr. Titus Oats had discovered a Plot of the Papists, of which he wrote out the particulars very largely; telling how they fired the City,<sup>3</sup> and contriving to bring the Kingdom to Popery, and in order thereto to kill the King: He named the Lords, Jesuits, Priests, and others, that were the chief contrivers; and said that he himself had delivered to several of the Lord's their Commissions. . . . He told who were to be ArchBishops, Bishops, &c. And at what Meetings, and by whom, and when all was contrived, and who were designed to kill the King. . . . But his confessions were received by some Justices of the Peace; and none more forward in the Search than Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, an Able, Honest, and diligent Justice. While he was following this Work, he was suddenly missing, and could not be heard of: Three or Four Days after he was found kill'd near Marybond-Park: it was plainly found that he was murdered."<sup>4</sup>

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1. R.B., III, p. 106.
2. Cf. Thomas, Introductory Essay, p. xx, who doubts the accuracy of this story, as most historians do. He says of Baxter, "He was credulous enough to accept seriously some of the perjuries of the infamous Titus Oates, but he was honest in his credulity."
3. He refers here to the great London fire of 1666. Cf. R.B., III, p. 16 for an account of it. Cf. also Orme, Vol. XI, p. 502 f.
4. R.B., III, p. 183.

Though these stories may not be altogether historically accurate, yet, as folk-lore expresses the feelings of a people, they bring to us something of the popular feeling in seventeenth century England against any signs of papal aggression. Throughout the Middle Ages, the English people had struggled to throw off the dominance of this foreign power. Now, since it was gone, they were determined that it should never return. This spirit of nationalistic patriotism was, of course, not the sole cause of the continued hatred of the Papists, but it had much to do with the extreme contempt in which they were held by many, and the persecution meted out to them at various times. Baxter, though animated largely by religious reasons, had an extreme aversion for the Papists, and for their desire to subjugate England to the Pope of Rome. He firmly believed that Kings ruled by the appointment of God<sup>1</sup> and that they were not to be subject to any religious rulers whatsoever, let alone that of Rome, in the administration of civil matters. Of his feeling that the Popes were plotters of treason, and desired to subject all Kings unto themselves, he writes the following:

"The most desperate of their practical frauds is this; Their treasons against the lives of princes, and the peace of nations, and their dissolving the bonds of oaths and covenants, and making perjury and rebellion duties and meritor-

. . . . .

1. Cf. A Second Sheet for the Ministry, in Church History of Bishops, p. 486 f.

ious works.

"Horrid treason and tyrannical usurpation over all the Christian Princes caused England, Denmark, Sweden, and many other princes to shake off the Roman yoke. Kings are not fully kings where the Pope is fully Pope.

"I need not tell the many treacheries since the reformation against our princes: or who it was that would have deposed as well as excommunicated Queen Elizabeth, and exposed her kingdoms to the will of others: or who were the actors of the hellish powder plot . . . ."

"Cardinal Ossatus in his 87. Epist. to Villeroy, tells us that Pope Clement VIII. pressed the King of France to join with Spain in the invasion of England, and the cardinal answered that the king was tied by an oath to the Queen of England: to which the pope replied, that 'The oath was made to a heretic, but he was bound in another oath to God and the pope; that kings and other princes do permit themselves all things which make for their commodity; and that the matter is gone so far, that it is not imputed to them, or taken for their fault: and he alleged the saying of Francis Duke of Urbin, that indeed every one doth blame a nobleman, or great man that is no sovereign, if he keep not his covenants, or fidelity, and they account him infamous; but supreme princes may without any danger of their reputation, make covenants and break them, lie, betray, and perpetrate other such like things.' That was Pope Clement VIII. Can we look for better from the rest?"<sup>1</sup>

He later quotes from a bull which a Papal historian says was to have been published by the invading Spaniards as soon as they landed in England.

"The pope, by the power given from God by lawful succession of the catholic church, for the defection of Henry VIII. who forcibly separated himself and his people from the communion of Christians, which was promoted by Edward VI. and Elizabeth, who being pertinacious and impenitent in the same rebellion and usurpation--therefore the pope incited by the continual persuasions of many, and by the suppliant prayers of the Englishmen them-

1. Jesuit Juggling, p. 303 . . . . .

1. Jesuit Juggling, p. 303 ff.

themselves, hath dealt with divers princes, and specially the most potent King of Spain--to depose that woman, and punish her pernicious adherents in their kingdom."<sup>1</sup>

He further quotes from this Catholic historian: "That Pope Sixtus before proscribed the Queen, and took from her all her dignities, titles, and rights to the Kingdom of England and Ireland, absolving her subjects from the oath of fidelity and obedience: he chargeth all men on pain of the wrath of God, that they afford her no favor, help, or aid, but use all their strength to bring her to punishment; and then that all the English join with the Spaniards as soon as he is landed: offering rewards and pardon for sin, to them that will lay hands on the Queen; and so shewing on what conditions he gave the Kingdom to Philip of Spain."<sup>2</sup>

These passages are amply sufficient to show that Baxter, though strongly averse to the Papists for religious reasons, embodied the spirit of nationalism which had chafed under Roman tyranny for so long, and did his best to expose what he considered their plots to be, in order to save England's freedom.

Catherine was sent to Charles V, Emperor of Germany, who had a B. The Reformation under Henry VIII. The Pope did not care to 1. The Immediate Occasion As mentioned above, the occasion for the break between England and the Church of Rome was the desire of Henry VIII to obtain a divorce from his wife Catherine of Aragon.<sup>3</sup>

She had been the widow of Henry's brother Arthur. Since to the Pope, and the Cardinals, could not but decide that

1. Jesuit Juggling, p. 305 f.

2. Ibid., p. 308.

3. See above p. 9. History of The Reformation, p. 318 f.

4. Protestantism, p. 41.

marriage to the widow of a deceased brother was contrary to canon law, a special dispensation had to be obtained from Pope Julius II in order to make the marriage valid. Whether because of the doubts of others as to the validity of the marriage, or because of his disappointment at having no male heir to the throne by Catherine, or because the death of his children made him wonder whether he had incurred the Divine displeasure because of this marriage, or solely because he fell in love with Anne Boleyn, Henry petitioned Pope Clement VII to annul the marriage.<sup>1</sup> The Pope had no scruples against granting him the annulment of this marriage, save that he would involve himself politically by so doing. Dean Inge says:

"Rome had quite lately granted royal divorces for reasons of State, and Clement VII. himself proposed that Henry should take a second wife, without taking the trouble to divorce the first. The Papal refusal to grant the divorce was due purely to political considerations."<sup>2</sup>

Catherine was aunt to Charles V, Emperor of Germany, who had an army in Italy, and whose displeasure the Pope did not care to incur. Neither was the Pope desirous of risking the allegiance of Henry by refusing the divorce. Hence, he was indecisive and vacillating, and rendered no decision at first. Finally, he ordered Cardinal Wolsey and another Cardinal to hear the case. Catherine appealed to the Pope, and the Cardinals could not but decide that

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1. Cf. Fisher, History of The Reformation, p. 318 f.
2. Protestantism, p. 41.

the trial would have to be finished at Rome. Henry knew what this meant, for when Catherine appealed to the Pope,

"he must hear the appeal or abdicate his office. As the political vassal of the emperor he must obey his master's will. If he heard the appeal at all he must decide in favour of Catherine. Both the spiritual claims of the papacy and the temporal interests of the papal state combined to render any other policy impossible."<sup>1</sup>

So, taking the situation into his own hands, he turned Wolsey out of office and confiscated his goods on the grounds of loyalty to Rome rather than to the King. Finally, he summoned the Cardinal to London to face charges of treason which had been trumped up against him. The Cardinal died en route to the trial.

The King's 2. The Break With Rome  
Henry determined to free himself completely from any domination by the Pope. Hence,

"a week before the Cardinal's death, he published a proclamation, forbidding all persons to purchase anything from Rome under the severest penalties; and resolved to annex the ecclesiastical supremacy to his own crown for the future."<sup>2</sup>

The Clergy, naturally, were aroused by the King's moves to attain supremacy over the Pope. They were helpless, however, to interfere, for by their former recognition of Wolsey, they could have their goods confiscated and be placed outside the King's protection, as he had been. So they submitted rather

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1. Wakeman, p. 206.

2. Neal, p. 8.

3. Given by Neal, p. 8 ff.

willingly. Following this, the Act of the reformation, Henry

"Acts of Parliament took away the first-fruits from the Pope, prohibited appeals from ecclesiastical courts to Rome, and, after the consecration of Cranmer, as Archbishop of Canterbury, ordained that henceforward the consecration of all bishops and archbishops should be consummated without application to the Pope."<sup>1</sup>

Cranmer immediately annulled the marriage between Henry and Catherine, and the King was wedded to Anne Boleyn, November 14, 1532. In 1534, the Pope gave Henry the alternative of taking back Catherine as his wife or suffering excommunication. He chose the latter. Whereupon he had Parliament pass what is known as the Act of Supremacy, making the King supreme head of the English Church. That Act, in substance, follows:

"The King is, and ought to be, the supreme head of the Church of England, and is so recognized by the clergy of this realm in their convocations, yet nevertheless, for confirmation and corroboration thereof, and for increase of virtue in Christ's religion, within the realm, &c. Be it enacted by the authority of this present parliament, that the King, his heirs and successors, shall be taken, accepted, and reputed, the only supreme head on earth of the Church of England; and shall have and enjoy, united to the imperial crown, as well the title and stile thereof, as all honours, dignities, immunities, &c. to the said dignity of supreme head of the said church belonging and appertaining; and that our Sovereign Lord, his heirs and successors, shall have full power and authority to visit, repress, redress, reform, &c. all such errors, heresies, abuses, contempts, and enormities, whatsoever they be, which, by any manner of spiritual authority or jurisdiction, may be lawfully reformed."<sup>2</sup>

1. Fisher, p. 320.
2. Shakespeare, King John, Act III, Scene I.
3. The Knowledge of God, p. 237.

1. Fisher, p. 320.
2. Given by Neal, p. 8 ff.

"Here," says Neal, "was the rise of the reformation."<sup>1</sup> Henry was really telling the Pope what Shakespeare put into the mouth of King John, who spoke to the Pope:

"Tell him this tale; and from the mouth of England,  
Add this much more,--that no Italian priest  
Shall tithe or toll in our dominions;  
But as we under Heaven are supreme head,  
So under him, that great supremacy,  
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,  
Without the assistance of a mortal hand.  
So tell the Pope: all reverence set apart,  
To him and his usurped authority."<sup>2</sup>

England was freed from Papal jurisdiction, and had now an independent Church of her own.

### 3. The Extent of Henry's Reformation

It must not be understood, however, that Henry VIII was a Protestant. England, says Gwatkin, "only became definitely Protestant during the long peace of Elizabeth."<sup>3</sup> His "dominating purpose was to maintain his ecclesiastical supremacy against the encroachments of the Pope."<sup>4</sup> He "attempted to establish an Anglican Church which should be neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic, but which should differ from the Roman Catholic system only in the article of the Royal Supremacy."<sup>5</sup> Catholic doctrine was still adhered to, Catholic worship was retained, and the hierarchy remained intact.

There were now two parties in the new Church. One desired

1. p. 9. Emperor Charles V. 1555. His (Duke) Viceroy.
2. Shakespeare, King John, Act III, Scene 1.
3. The Knowledge of God, p. 227.
4. Hulbert, p. 102.
5. Fisher, p. 325.



to go ahead with the reform movement in the direction of Protestantism, the other was intent on retaining the Catholic system with the King as the supreme head in place of the Pope. At first, Henry favored those with Protestant tendencies. He issued an English Bible, which was to be placed in every Church, and had the Ten Articles adopted by the Convocation in 1536. Copies of these were sent to all pastors.

Fisher describes the Protestant character of these:

"The Bible and the three ancient creeds were made the standard of doctrine. Salvation is by faith and without human merits. The sacrament of the altar is defined in terms to which Luther would not have objected. The use of images and various other ceremonies, auricular confession, and the invocation of saints, are approved, but cautions are given against abuses connected with these things. The admission that there is a Purgatory is coupled with the denial of any power in the Pope to deliver souls from it, and with the rejection of other superstitions connected with the old doctrine."

It is readily seen that these Ten Articles were remarkably Protestant in character to be issued at that time. Besides, Henry had confiscated the wealth of the Catholic Monasteries of England. This produced much disaffection among the Catholic group, and caused an insurrection in 1536. This insurrection was quelled successfully, but it heralded a change in the King's policy.

Earlier, the King needed the friendship of the Protestants, in order to secure himself against aggression by the Catholic Emperor Charles V. After 1538, his throne became

1. p. 324. . . . .

2. Word in parenthesis by author of this study.

1. p. 323.

more secure both from outside aggression and inward turmoil. From then on, his policy towards those who desired reform in the direction of Protestantism was one of hostility.<sup>1</sup> In spite of the opposition of the liberal party, the Six Articles were passed, insisting on celibacy, private masses and auricular confession. The most important Article of all was the one which declared in favor of transubstantiation, and carried with it the penalty of death by burning for all who refused to accept it. Thus, the liberals were severely persecuted, along with the extreme conservatives who still favored the supremacy of the Pope. Fisher writes, "Those who denied the King's supremacy and those who denied transubstantiation were dragged on the same hurdle to the place of execution."<sup>2</sup>

Several acts then followed in rather quick succession which were definitely in line with the persecution of the liberal party. Fisher describes these as follows:

"The execution of Anne Boleyn and the marriage of the King to Jane Seymour(1536); and still more, the fall of Cromwell(1540), the great support of the Protestant interest, which followed upon the marriage of Henry to a Protestant princess, Anna of Cleve, and his immediate divorce, increased the strength of the persecuting (Catholic)<sup>3</sup> faction."<sup>4</sup>

1. Henry was always hostile to those who openly avowed themselves Protestants and disavowed prelacy. Cf. Wakeman, p. 254 f., "Henry meted out the same treatment to all declared Protestants, whether Lutherans, Zwinglians, Calvinists, or Anabaptists."

2. p. 324.

3. Word in parenthesis by author of this study.

4. p. 324.

Thus, "upon the whole, the reformation very much declined the three or four last years of the King's life."<sup>1</sup> This reaction against those who leaned towards Protestantism was but a forerunner of various persecutions which lasted clear down into the latter years of Baxter's life. Even when he was on the verge of three score years and ten, he was unjustly and cruelly tried and condemned and spent two years in prison. He, too, was but a liberal Protestant and not an extremist. He suffered, however, patiently and quietly, helping to "fill up . . . that which is lacking of the afflictions of Christ", until the cause of Protestantism, made "perfect through sufferings", might attain complete religious freedom.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. The Peculiar Character of the English Reformation

A word about the peculiar character of the English Reformation might be in season here. In at least two respects, it differed greatly from the Reformation in Scotland and on the Continent. First, it involved a very slight departure from the old medieval Church. Instead of a complete break with the doctrine and worship of the old Church, there was practically no change at first. And when in the course of time, change gradually took place, the main Church of England remained in some respects as much Catholic as Pro-

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1. Neal, p. 24.
2. Cf. Powicke, The Rev. Richard Baxter Under the Cross, p. 143 ff., for an account of Baxter's trial and imprisonment.

testant, leaving it to the Separatist groups to break completely with Catholicism. Secondly, the outward manifestations of the English Reformation were of a political nature rather than religious. On the Continent, the political powers were subsidiary to the spiritual leaders. In England, it was just the reverse. Wakeman says:

"The English Reformation began as a matter of policy, an affair of kings and ministers and parliaments. It concerned itself with the assertion of national liberties, with the refusal of foreign claims, with questions of legal and constitutional history, not of theology or worship."<sup>1</sup>

True, it did take a political form outwardly. But did it begin as a matter of policy? Rather, from the time of Wyclif an undercurrent of reform had been moving among the people, and it was this largely unseen, but potent, stream of influence which made it possible for the political reform to consummate. We quote Dean Inge at length concerning this.

"It is often said that the Reformation in England was political, not religious. The same political philosophers who would have us believe that the German Reformation was caused by the wish of Martin Luther to marry a nun, try to persuade us that England became Protestant because Henry VIII. was tired of his wife, and fell in love with Anne Boleyn. The Tudors, we are told, were autocrats, and their subjects believed, or pretended to believe, what their sovereigns ordered them to believe. The fact is that Henry VIII. had no means whatever of compelling his subjects to obey him. We all know what the apparatus of autocracy is--a strong standing army, an organized bureaucracy, a secret police, a host of spies. Henry, as Dr. R.H. Murray has

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1. Protestantism, p. 40.  
1. p. 200, where he speaks of the Catholic plots during the reigns of Mary, Elizabeth and James. Cf. also p. 35.  
3. R.H. I, p. 44.

pointed out, had only one castle in London, defended by a hundred Yeomen of the Guard. He had no secret police, and no organised bureaucracy. He had no standing army, except the Yeomen of the Guard and a few gentlemen pensioners. He not only allowed his people to keep arms, but urged them to have them ready for use. He could not dictate to Parliament, which possessed and used the power of withholding his supplies. In breaking loose from the Roman obedience, and proclaiming himself Supreme Head of the Church of England, the King was acting in accordance with the wishes of his subjects, and he could not have done it if the people had been against him."<sup>1</sup>

That the religious element remained a significant one through all the vicissitudes through which the English nation passed clear down to the Cromwellian revolution is well attested by Baxter. His thought on this has been apparent earlier in this chapter.<sup>2</sup> One further passage from him will more clearly illustrate this.

"And here I must repeat the great Cause of the Parliaments strength and the King's ruine; and that was, That the debauched Rabble through the Land, emboldened by his Gentry, and seconded by the Common Soldiers of his Army, took all that were called Puritans for their Enemies. . . . So that if any one was noted for a strict and famous Preacher, or for a Man of a precise and pious Life, he was either plundered, or abused, and in danger of his Life: So that if a Man did but pray in his Family, or were but heard repeat a Sermon, or sing a Psalm, they presently cried out, Rebels, Round-heads, and all their Money and Goods that were portable proved guilty, how innocent soever they were themselves. I suppose this was kept from the knowledge of the King, and perhaps of many sober Lords of his Council. . . . But upon my certain knowledge, this was it that filled the Armies and Garrisons of the Parliament with sober, pious Men."<sup>3</sup>

1. Protestantism, p. 40.

2. Cf. p. 32, where he speaks of the Catholic plots during the reigns of Mary, Elizabeth and James. Cf. also p. 33.

3. R.B., I, p. 44.

Hence, though the outward features accompanying the rise of the English Reformation were of a political nature, yet a strong religious element was present both then and throughout the vicissitudes of the two succeeding centuries, which cannot be disregarded.

#### 5. The Royal Family at the Death of Henry

Just a brief look at the royal family might be pertinent at this point to freshen in our minds the children of Henry who were to figure largely in the future rule of the Kingdom. The only surviving daughter of Catherine was Mary, whose succession to the throne was declared unlawful by the annulment of her mother's marriage. Anne Boleyn gave birth to Elizabeth, who was to figure so largely in England's history. A male successor to the throne was born to Jane Seymour in the person of Edward, who succeeded Henry on the throne.

Following Jane Seymour's death, the King again desired to marry. Thomas Cromwell, being interested in advancing the cause of Protestantism, negotiated a marriage with Anne of Cleves, a German lady. In this way he thought he could more closely unite England with the Protestant German Princes. He forgot, however, that Henry desired a beautiful woman, and Anne was unattractive. The King immediately divorced her, but was so angered at Cromwell that he accused him of treason and had him beheaded. Henry then married a fifth wife, Catharine Howard, who was also executed. His sixth

and last wife was Catharine Parr, who outlived him. No children were born to these unions to figure in the future history of England. Regarding Henry's successor, Parliament gave him a power never held by any other English ruler. Namely, the power of fixing the line of succession in his will. Edward was sickly, and did not give promise of living long. Mary and Elizabeth were both illegitimate, the Scottish King was impossible, and in case of Edward's death, it looked as though there would be a great number of claimants to the throne. So Henry, in his will, fixed the succession in case of Edward's death. Mary was first in line, then Elizabeth, and then the Suffolk line of Mary, the younger sister of Henry.<sup>1</sup>

The death of Henry VIII is described by Neal on this wise:

"... this great and absolute monarch died of an ulcer in his leg, being so corpulent, that he was forced to be let up and down stairs with an engine. The humour in his leg made him so peevish, that scarce any body durst speak to him of the affairs of his kingdom or of a future life. He died Jan. 28, 1546, in the 38th year of his reign, and the 56th of his age. He ought to be ranked among the ill princes, but not among the worst."<sup>2</sup>

So ended the reign of the one who was successful in freeing England from Papal dominance of many hundred years duration.

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1. Cf. Gwatkin, Church and State in England to the Death of Queen Anne, p. 160.  
2. p. 25.

1. Cf. Macaulay, History of England, Vol. I, p. 54.  
2. Op. Cit., p. 148.

## 6. Church Parties at Henry's Death

What was the Church situation at the close of Henry's reign? The English had freed themselves from Roman and Papal bondage, and had made their King the Supreme Head of the Church. The Catholic Monasteries were dissolved, and some of the doctrines and superstitions of Roman Catholicism were done away with in the Ten Articles. Henry, however, finally reacted because of uprisings against his policy and because he had so strengthened himself that he needed to make no further concessions to the Protestants. His reign, after that, was largely a Catholic reaction.

At Henry's death, there were three religious parties in England.<sup>1</sup> Gwatkin has termed these the Papalists, the Catholics, and the Reforming party.<sup>2</sup> The Papalists desired to revert to Rome. The Catholics desired to retain the doctrine and worship of the Catholic Church, with the King as supreme in place of the Pope. The Reforming group desired to depart from the doctrine and worship of the Catholic Church, and to re-form the ecclesiastical situation in line with Protestantism. There were various views among this group as to the extent to which reforms should be adopted. We call them the Reforming party rather than Protestants, because they stayed in the Church and did not form dissenting Churches of their own. Protestant Churches were not formed until the time of Elizabeth. As we shall see later, the lines laid down by

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1. Cf. Macauley, History of England, Vol. I, p. 54.
2. Op. Cit., p. 149.



these three groups remain essentially the same right down to the time of Baxter.

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3. Church Parties at Elizabeth's Death

-Macaulay-

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## CHAPTER THREE

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### III FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE TIME OF BAXTER

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1. Cf. Hilbert, p. 128.

2. Cf. Fisher, p. 528.

set forth a reaction from the Catholic viewpoint of the latter years of Henry's reign, and for the advocacy of the principles of the Reform party in the Church.

### CHAPTER THREE

## FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH FROM THE REFORMATION TO THE TIME OF BAXTER

### A. The Reign of Edward VI

#### 1. The Setting at the Accession of Edward

Edward VI, though but a lad of less than ten years when he acceded to the throne, was a very brilliant and precocious lad, and strongly Protestant. His relatives were Protestant, he had received a Protestant education, and all his sympathies and influence were thrown on the side of Protestantism.<sup>1</sup> His father had appointed a Council of Regents to rule until Edward was old enough to assume the throne himself. In this Council, the Reforming Party had the prevailing voice. First Somerset, then Northumberland, were the Protectors, and they both leaned strongly in the direction of reform. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, etc., who were the leading Divines, were strong adherents to the Reform party. Their views were strengthened by the appearance in England of some Protestants who had to flee from the Continent when Charles V conquered some of the Protestant Princes there. Among these were Peter Martyr and Ochino, who were made Professors at Oxford in 1547, and Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius who went to Cambridge to teach in 1549.<sup>2</sup> Thus, the stage was well

1. Cf. Hulbert, p. 128.

2. Cf. Fisher, p. 326.

set for a reaction from the Catholic tendencies of the latter years of Henry's reign, and for the advance of the principles of the Reform party in the Church.

## 2. The Reforms under Edward

Immediately, the persecution under the Six Articles was brought to an end, the prisoners who had been confined during the Catholic reaction were released, and those who had fled the country were permitted to return. The Reform preachers began to inveigh vehemently against popery, images and masses. The Papal party remonstrated violently, and insisted to the Council of Regents that the religious status of the nation should remain as Henry left it until Edward was of age. The Reformers retorted that the power of the King through the Regency was as powerful as when he was of age, and that they had heard Henry declare that he intended making the mass into a communion. Hence, they continued their Reform projects.

After the coronation of the King, the Council decreed that all preaching by the clergy except in their parish Churches should be temporarily stopped, while a general visitation of all the Churches was made. Neal pictures this visitation thus:

1. "The kingdom was divided into six circuits;
2. two gentlemen, a civilian, a divine, and a
3. register being appointed for each. The di-
4. vines were, by their preaching, to instruct
5. the people in the doctrines of the reformation, and to bring them off from their old

The superstitions."<sup>1</sup> Sent with these men on their visitation was a Book of Homilies, "consisting of twelve discourses on the topics most important at the time, and containing a vindication of the doctrines of the Reformation."<sup>2</sup> These were left with each parish priest, with orders to read them to the people.

When the first Parliament met in 1547, they furthered the work begun by the Council. The laws against the Lollards were repealed, the Six Articles were done away with, and the law which made a proclamation of the King carry equal authority with an act of Parliament was wiped off the statute books. It was also ordered that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be administered in both kinds.<sup>3</sup> Following this, the Council made further regulations regarding worship. Hall writes:

"... candles were no longer to be carried on Candlemas day; nor ashes on Ash-Wednesday; nor palms on Palm Sunday. All images were ordered to be removed from the churches."<sup>4</sup>

At this time, both the people and the Clergy were greatly divided in their religious opinions. To quell this division and secure uniformity throughout the realm, the King ordered that all preaching cease, and he appointed a committee of clergymen to "examine and reform the offices of the church".<sup>5</sup>

1. Neal, p. 27.

2. Hall, The Puritans and Their Principles, p. 55.

3. Cf. Neal, p. 29.

4. p. 55.

5. Neal, p. 30.

The liturgy which they drew up was the first Book of Common Prayer. It changed the sacrament into a communion, being administered to the people in both kinds, without elevation. Confession was left to the discretion of the individual. The morning and evening services were compiled from several Romish liturgies previously used, and a litany was composed from the same materials. Hopkins describes this as follows:

"In this liturgy, the practices of adoring the wood of the cross and the host or sacramental bread, all masses, all prayers to saints, all blessing of inanimate things, as bells, candles, fire, water, salt, &c., were left out; the Mass was changed into the Communion; and both the bread and the wine were directed to be given to the people, who were still taught, however, that in each element they received the very body of Christ; confession to the priest was left to every man's discretion; and the sign of the cross in baptism, in confirmation, and in anointing the sick, was retained. This liturgy was in a great measure a translation of the Romish Manual."<sup>1</sup>

This was confirmed by Parliament in January, 1549, and was made obligatory upon all at the same time. Though the reign of Edward was comparatively lenient as compared with his father's treatment of the Reformers and Catholics, yet the note of leniency has disappeared in this act of Uniformity. The enactments of that act were to the effect that

"... all divine offices should be performed according to it; and that such of the clergy as refused to do it, or officiated in any other manner, should, upon the first conviction, suffer six months imprisonment, and forfeit a year's profits of their benefices; for the second of-

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1. The Puritans, p. 23 f.

fence to forfeit all their church preferments, and suffer a year's imprisonment; and for the third offence, to suffer imprisonment for life. Such as wrote or printed against the book, were to be fined ten pounds for the first offence, twenty pounds for the second, and to forfeit all their goods, and to be imprisoned for life, for the third."<sup>1</sup>

There were a couple of insurrections at Devonshire and Norfolk against this imposition, but they were successfully put down.

Following this, several other moves were made in the direction of reform. The Parliament which convened in November, 1549, ordered that all images, "except monumental figures",<sup>2</sup> and all the old Latin Service Books were to be destroyed. It further ordered the preparation of a new Ordinal, or ceremony which was used in ordination services. From this many of the old Romish ceremonies were expurgated, and it was greatly simplified. Not long after that, Ridley, who was Bishop of London, ordered the destruction of all altars and the substitution of wooden tables, which were to be placed in the body of the Church rather than at the east end as previously. This was the first step in the denunciation of the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist, and the denial of Transubstantiation, which Fisher calls "the second principal step, after the declaration of the Royal Supremacy, in the progress of the English Reformation."<sup>3</sup> A confession of faith, representing the position

2. Cf. Neal, p. 49. Cf. also Orig. vol. XI, p. 458, where Baxter writes concerning Edward's death, "But woe God

1. Given by Neal, p. 33. sing for a land, he useth to raise

2. Wakeman, p. 287. than the rest of the nations have: and

3. p. 326. provoketh him, he removeth them quickly from an

and Jewish in the Roman Empire."



of the Church of England in matters of belief, was drawn up in the form of forty-two Articles, in 1553. "Thus," says Fisher, by this time "the Anglican Church obtained a definite constitution and a ritual."<sup>1</sup>

### 3. The Character of Edward's Reforms

The character of Edward's reforms, however, was somewhat of the nature of compromise. He was dealing with people of widely divergent views. His Prayer Book and Forty-two Articles were so framed as to include as much of the old faith as possible, yet to satisfy those who insisted on reform. It is evident that both Cranmer and Edward were intent on perfecting the Reformation in the course of time, but Edward's untimely death put an end to this.<sup>2</sup> They had gone as fast as they could. To some their innovations were too radical, to others not radical enough. These innovations were about equally distant from the two extremes.

Wakeman says of the Revised Prayer Book:

"It was made unlike to the Latin mass to satisfy the extreme section. It retained the main features and teaching of the old services to reassure the moderate and conservative majority. It introduced carefully worded alterations of doctrine on the Eucharist to satisfy tender consciences. Thus it was a compromise. It marks the period when, for the

1. p. 326.

2. Cf. Neal, p. 49. Cf. also Orme, Vol. XI, p. 433, where Baxter writes concerning Edward's death, "But when God hath some great blessing for a land, he useth to raise up rulers better than the rest of the nations have: and when sin provoketh him, he removeth them quickly from an unworthy land, as he did Josiah, and our King Edward VI, and Jovian in the Roman Empire."

first time, it was possible for men to hold widely different views on the question of the Eucharist and yet maintain that they were justified by the Prayer-book."<sup>1</sup>

He says of the Forty-two Articles:

"They represent the minds of men who were anxious to include as much as possible of the newer Protestant spirit without departing from the historical faith of the Church, except in the matter of the sacrament of the Eucharist. They accordingly use Protestant, not mediaeval, phrases and definitions, but alter them so as to deprive them of distinctly Protestant meaning, except in the Article upon the Eucharist, where the doctrine of the Real Presence is denied."<sup>2</sup>

the last years of Henry's reign, and was there filled with enthusiasm for distinctly Protestant views. When chosen as

#### 4. Church Parties at Edward's Death

At the close of Edward's reign, we are still faced with three distinct religious groups. One group, dissatisfied with the reforms, would react to the papacy. Another, satisfied with moderate reform, were intent upon maintaining a belief and practice which was distinctly Catholic, but which headed up in the King instead of the Pope. The third group, to which Edward and the Council of Regents were parties, was in favor of quite drastic reform, doing away with all that savored of Catholicism as rapidly as possible.

In this third group, nevertheless, there were different opinions as to the extent to which reform should be carried.

There were some who desired to go further than Edward and

1. p. 295 f. of Pope.
2. p. 297. p. 343.
3. Cf. Hall, p. 68. Cf. also Fisher, p. 343. This Puritanism later led to the development of Nonconformity and Sectarianism.
4. Fisher, p. 343.

break entirely with all "the relics of popery",<sup>1</sup> as they called them.<sup>2</sup> Fisher says that they "wished to introduce more radical changes and to conform the English Reformation to the type which it had reached among the Reformed or Calvinistic Churches on the Continent."<sup>3</sup> Thus, did Puritanism, which was to play so large a part in history to the present day, arise.

The Father of English Puritanism<sup>4</sup> is usually conceded to be Bishop Hooper. He had been driven to Zurich during the last years of Henry's reign, and was there filled with enthusiasm for distinctly Protestant views. When chosen as Bishop of Gloucester, in 1550, "he refused to wear the vestments at his consecration."<sup>5</sup> After controversy and imprisonment, a compromise was finally reached, whereby Bishop Hooper would wear the vestments for the consecration, and preach in them once after the consecration. This controversy was practically silenced then, only to break out with renewed force later when the Marian exiles returned to England under Elizabeth, with Protestant ideas more distinct than ever.

1. Neal, p. 40.
2. It is evident that Edward himself desired to carry the Reformation further later, if he had lived. See above p. 32. Cf. also Stowell, the Puritans in England, p. 82 ff., where he speaks of "the evidence which exists of the desire, both of the King and some of the leaders of the Reformation, to depart much further than they did, from the Church of Rome."
3. Fisher, p. 342.
4. Cf. Hall, p. 65. Cf. also Fisher, p. 342. This Puritanism later lead to the development of Nonconformity and Sectarianism.
5. Fisher, p. 343.

Thus far, the causes, the occasion and the progress of the English Reformation, have been given in some detail. This has been done in order to give a true understanding of the parties which developed in the Church controversy, and the issues that were at stake. From this point, the succeeding history of the English Church<sup>1</sup> will be but briefly sketched, for these parties remain broadly the same until the time of Baxter. In the main, there were still three groups in his day, one reactionary, one conservative, and one liberal.<sup>2</sup> The Papalists still clung to their Roman allegiance; the Catholics were displaced by those who were satisfied with the moderate reforms of King Edward but still clung to prelacy, namely, the followers of the Church of England; and the Reform party was succeeded by the Puritans,<sup>3</sup> who desired to abolish prelacy altogether. Many of these Puritans stayed in the Church, endeavoring to reform it, while others separated, becoming Independents, Presbyterians, or members of the multitudinous sects of seventeenth century

- over, and four weeks after Richard's death, Mary had set up . . . . .
1. That is, the history of the English Church until the time of Baxter, during whose life-time it will be sketched more in detail.
  2. There were varying degrees of liberality in this group, many going so far as to be radicals. For the sake of classifying them under these three broad heads, we include the radicals under the title liberal, indicating that they all desired a change in the status of affairs, although the extent of the desired change varied.
  3. Puritan is here used in the broad sense, designating all "who sought for further change in the forms and discipline of the English church." Marsden, History of the Early Puritans, p. 3

England.<sup>1</sup>

## B. The Reign of Mary

### 1. The Setting at the Accession of Mary

The reign of Mary saw a strong Catholic reaction. She was Catholic in her sentiments, and was placed on the throne by the people who reacted gladly from some abuses of the reformation movement under Edward. Fisher says that the Reformation under Edward "was somewhat too rapid for the general sense of the nation",<sup>2</sup> and then adds as another reason for the reaction against the Reformation "The spoilation of Church property for the profit of individuals, in which Somerset was conspicuous."<sup>3</sup> In addition to this, the people were angered because Northumberland, who was the Protector when Edward died, had persuaded him to set aside the succession to the throne previously indicated by his father, and to declare Lady Jane Grey, a Protestant, and a cousin to Edward by marriage, as his successor. She reigned but a few days, however, and four weeks after Edward's death, Mary was set up by the people as Queen.

### 2. The Catholic Reaction and its Consequences

Mary quickly ousted the married clergy, and did away

1. Cf. Whiting, *Studies in English Puritanism 1680-1688*, p. 233, "Cominges, the French Ambassador, calculated that there were sixty different religious bodies in England in 1666, while Roger L'Estrange, in 1681, seemed to think there were 170 of them. Baxter mentions several, and frequent references are found to others."

2. p. 326.

3. Ibid.

with the Prayer Book. She married her cousin, Philip, son of Henry V, who was a Catholic. She persuaded Parliament to again acknowledge the Supremacy of the Pope over the English Church, and to pass a law requiring that all who refused allegiance to him should be burned.<sup>1</sup> Hooper, Latimer, Ridley, Cranmer, and hundreds of others went to their death at the stake. In this persecution Mary well earned the title "Bloody". Her cruelties were beyond mention.<sup>2</sup>

1. Cf. Gardiner, p. 163.

2. Cf. Hall, p. 71, "To obtain a just conception of these cruelties, one must read the simple narratives of the martyrologists. He must see the inhuman Bonner, tearing the hair, and lacerating the faces of the victims, who have been dragged from a long and dreary confinement in the prison which has received the name of Bonner's coal-house. He must see that bloodthirsty bishop holding the hand of the humble Tompkins in the flame of a lamp, till the sinews shrink and the blood spurts forth into the faces of those who stand by. He must read the details of Rogers' imprisonment; and see him led to the stake forbidden even to say farewell to his wife and numerous family of children, who have come out, if possible, to take their last view of him on his way to execution. He must see Hooper, with green faggots piled around him, in a lowering morning, while the high wind blows the scanty flame away from his body; and the fire, for a long time, reaches only his extremities, and when this nearly dies away, we must see him with his hand wiping the sweat of agony from his face, and mildly but earnestly entreating that more fire may be kindled; --and then continuing praying, till the operators see him 'black in the mouth', and his tongue so swollen that he cannot speak; yet his lips moving till they shrink from the gums; and he smiting his breast, till one of his arms falls off in the fire; and then continuing knocking with the other, while 'the fat, and water and blood, drop out at his finger ends'; we must stand by him till the fire has been replenished the third time; and that hand at last cleaves fast to the hot iron upon his breast;--and he falls over his chain, and expires."

3. Obedient Patience, Orme, Vol. 32, p. 508 f.

This could not endure without finally stirring the indignation of the people. Mary became unpopular at home, she had difficulty with the Pope, and her foreign affairs were in a bad condition. Of the close of her reign, Gwatkin writes:

"In the whole course of English History there is no more gloomy time than the end of Mary's reign. Domestic policy and foreign were alike failures, and worse than failures."<sup>1</sup>

Wakeman adds:

"The flames had scorched out of the heart of the people all remnant of love for their fanatical sovereign. Neglected by her husband, hated by her people, despised by Europe, Mary sank into the grave in bitter consciousness that her life had been sacrificed in vain, and her work had failed."<sup>2</sup>

The times were ripe for another reaction away from Catholicism. Baxter writes:

"Queen Mary's fires did but make Popery the more easily and commonly hated and extirpated in the days of her successor."<sup>3</sup>

This reaction did come in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

### 3. Church Parties at Mary's Death

At the close of Mary's reign, there are still three religious parties, whose distinguishing features, however, are somewhat different from the previous three-fold division at the close of the reigns of Henry and Edward. When Mary came

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1. p. 216.

2. p. 306.

3. Obedient Patience, Orme, Vol. XI, p. 508 f.

to the throne, the Catholic party was forced to unite with either the Papal or the Reforming Party, which under Edward had acquired very distinctive Protestant characteristics.

Concerning this, Wakeman writes:

"In all human probability it seemed certain that the via media of Henry VIII. was shattered to pieces. The choice for Gardiner and his supporters became a simple alternative: on the one side absolute submission to the pope, on the other the hearty acceptance of the Edwardine reformation."<sup>1</sup>

If those with non-Papal, yet Catholic, sentiments stayed in England, they were forced to declare their allegiance to the Pope. If they refused to do this, they had to flee for safety, as Protestants.

While this mixed group of Protestants was in exile, two very distinct groups of them were formed. Baxter relates this as follows:

"... it unhappily fell out that in the Days of Queen Mary... our Reformers, being Fugitives at Frankford, fell into a Division: One part of them were for Diocesans, and the English Liturgy and Ceremonies, that they might no more than needs depart from the Papists, nor seem unconstant by departing from what King Edward had begun. The other were for Calvin's Discipline and way of Worship; for the setting up of a Parochial Discipline instead of a Diocesan; and to have a Government in every particular Church, and not only One over a Thousand, or many Hundred Churches: and for a plain and serious way of Worship, suited as near as possible to God's Word."<sup>2</sup>

Upon the return of the Exiles at the close of Mary's

1. p. 303.

2. R.B., I, p. 32.



reign, then, the three main religious parties were the Papists, the Conservative Protestants, who later became the Anglicans, and the Puritans, who, though they then stayed in the Church, later developed into the Nonconformists and the various Sects which broke with the English Church.

### C. The Reign of Elizabeth

#### 1. The Policy of Elizabeth

Elizabeth, due to her education and her personal feeling, leaned towards "a highly conservative Protestantism".<sup>1</sup> When she came to the throne, the three religious parties were clamoring for recognition, the Papists, the Conservative Protestants or Anglicans, and the Puritans. She took the middle ground<sup>2</sup> and with a few changes, re-issued the Book of Common Prayer which had been used during Edward's reign. The Forty-two Articles formulated under Edward were reduced to thirty-nine. Elizabeth was insistent that the Sovereign should be supreme in the Church. Hence, the Act of Supremacy made her the ecclesiastical head of the nation,<sup>3</sup> and the Act of Uniformity made conformity to the worship of the Church of England compulsory. This was all done in 1559.

. . . . .

1. Fisher, p. 330.
2. Baxter, in speaking of the two Protestant parties who returned from the Marian exile (see above p. 65), says "When these two Parties returned into England, the Diocesan Party got Queen Elizabeth's Countenance and were preferred, and their way set up." R.B., I, p. 32.
3. Cf. Hulbert, p. 177, "In one brief half-year, the English church passed from the obedience of Pope Paul IV to the obedience of 'Pope Elizabeth I'."

## 2. The Rise of Separatism, Presbyterianism and Independency

Three years later, in 1563, Elizabeth's second Parliament met. The Puritans seemed to suffer more from the measures of the First Parliament than the Catholics,<sup>1</sup> so they turned out in full force at the Second Parliament to press their claims for the annulling of the offensive parts of the Prayer Book. They met with disappointment, however, and uniformity was still insisted upon. Some time later, Elizabeth, discovering that uniformity of worship was not very well enforced, determined to enforce it. London, a hot-bed of Puritanism, was the object of her attack, and all the ministers there were required to appear before Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury. He took a vote as to those who intended to conform. Thirty-seven refused to do so. They were then ousted from their parishes, March 26, 1566. After about eight weeks, this little group gathered to form the first Separatist group from the Church of England. We quote Brown on their agreement:

"That since they could not have the Word of God preached, nor the Sacraments administered without idolatrous gear; and since there had been a separate congregation in London, and another in

1. Cf. Hulbert, p. 181, "Of the 9,000 papal church officials, less than two hundred (189) made conscience of the matter and yielded their places. . . . The Puritans were made of sterner stuff. . . . The Puritan party thought it outrageous and spoke their minds." The Catholics did suffer much, however, and they retaliated by plotting against the Queen's life in what Baxter calls "the many treasons against Queen Elizabeth". Orme, Vol. X, p. 558.

<sup>1</sup> The little village of Gandersham, about five miles from London, November 20, 1570. Cf. Hulbert, p. 273.

Geneva in Mary's time, using a book and order of Service approved by Calvin, which was free from the superstitions of the English Service: therefore it was their duty, in their present circumstances, to break off from the public churches, and to assemble, as they had opportunity, in private houses or elsewhere to worship God in a manner that might not offend against the light of their consciences.' Commenting on the serious step thus taken, Strype, the English Church historian, writes thus: 'Here was the era or date of Separation: a most unhappy event whereby people of the same country, of the same religion, and of the same judgement in doctrine, parted communions; one part being obliged to go aside into secret houses and chambers, to serve God by themselves, which began strangeness between neighbours, Christians and Protestants.'<sup>1</sup>

Some of these were imprisoned for about a year, but were then released. The Separatist movement was begun, and nothing could now forestall it. Now there are two classes of Puritans. One remains in the Church, attempting to reform it from within, the other withdraws into separate congregations.

These Separatists, worshipping with Calvin's Geneva Service Book, soon were bolstered up by a party within the Church, headed by Thomas Cartwright, who began to advocate Presbyterianism within the Church. Cartwright and his followers argued that Presbyterianism, not Episcopacy, was sanctioned in Scripture. They wanted a national, established Church, to which conformity would be required, but it was to be a Presbyterian,<sup>2</sup> instead of an Episcopal, Church.

1. The Church and the Puritans, p. 48.

2. Hulbert, p. 244; Cf. John Foxe, The Early English

1. The English Puritans, p. 47 f. where he establishes

2. The first Presbyterian congregation was established at the little village of Wandsworth, about five miles from London, November 20, 1572. Cf. Hulbert, p. 208.

Wakeman writes of this:

"By rendering an outward conformity to the law in order to avoid persecution, under cover of that conformity they sought to establish a separate disciplinary machinery of their own which should supersede that of the Church."<sup>1</sup>

Robert Browne, in 1580 or 1581, conceiving the idea that both episcopacy and presbyterianism were wrong, set up the first Independent, or Congregational, Church, at Norwich. He believed that individual congregations should govern themselves, and should be subject only to Christ. This was the beginning of the great Independent movement which found its full maturity under Cromwell and the Commonwealth. Along with this group was another, with similar views, except going a step further, "restoring the ordinances of the church to their original simplicity, giving baptism only to professed believers, and rejecting infant baptism. They were Baptists."<sup>2</sup>

### 3. Church Parties at Elizabeth's Death

Throughout her reign, Queen Elizabeth did her best to enforce uniformity to the Anglican Church, both among Catholics and Protestants. Some were exiled, many imprisoned, and a few killed. But, in spite of all her efforts, she was unsuccessful in doing the impossible, in making all men

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1. The Church and the Puritans, p. 45.
2. Hulbert, p. 244. Cf. also Burrage, The Early English Dissenters, Vol. I, p. 221 ff., where he establishes the existence of English Anabaptist congregations before 1600.

of one stripe religiously, forever. Hence, at the close of her reign, there are Papists, Anglicans, and Puritans, or Protestants. The Protestants are beginning to split up now. Some are content to stay in the Church of England and to try to do away with all that savors of popery either in polity or worship, though retaining a national Episcopal Church. Others desire to stay in the Established Church, but to transform it into a national Presbyterian Church. Others contend that both episcopacy and presbyterianism are wrong, and desire to set up the congregational form of worship and polity. Still others, agreeing with the Congregationalists, or Independents, desire to go further and refuse baptism to infants. Soon other little sects, stressing peculiar ideas and doctrines of their own, will appear on the horizon, and instead of Elizabeth's desired uniformity, England becomes the victim of a jumbled conglomeration of varied beliefs and forms of worship.

#### D. The Reign of James I

##### 1. The Puritans under James

James I came to the throne at the death of Elizabeth in 1603. He was also the monarch of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> "The Puritans, remembering how he had been trained in the school of

.....

1. Cf. Gardiner, p. 195, "For the first time the same king ruled over Scotland as well as England; though each country, for a long time afterwards, kept its own laws and its own Parliament."

2. Ibid., p. 355.

3. Ibid., p. 356.

orthodox Protestantism looked forward to the realisation under him of the complete reformation which they had so long desired."<sup>1</sup> James met them at Hampton Court in 1604 and heard their desires. The Puritans sought not only toleration, but the "founding of a new Church".<sup>2</sup> They did not succeed in winning James to their point of view, however. Wakeman writes:

"While agreeing to the Puritan demand for a new translation of the Bible--which resulted in the present authorised version published in 1611--he threw the weight of the crown unreservedly on to the side of the Church on the question of discipline, and determined to force the Puritans to accept her teaching and conform to her laws."<sup>3</sup>

Shortly after this, all the Puritan clergy were put to the test, and were required to subscribe to "the royal supremacy, the Prayer-book, and the Articles".<sup>4</sup> Most of them, rather than submit to banishment, subscribed. But about three hundred refused to yield, and fled to Holland for safety, from whence they later came to America. The Puritans in the main, then, remained in the Church, awaiting their opportunity to again assert themselves. Their defeat in this instance, however, definitely determined that "The Church Catholic was to remain the religion of Englishmen, and, if the Puritans wished to supplant it, they must do so by force and by force alone."<sup>5</sup> This was done under Oliver

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1. Wakeman, The Church and the Puritans, p. 62.
2. Wakeman, Introduction to the History of the Church of England, p. 351.
3. Ibid., p. 352.
4. Ibid., p. 353.
5. Ibid., p. 354.

Cromwell, but was supplanted shortly after by the Anglican Church at the Restoration of Charles II, and England has to this day remained predominantly Anglican, clinging to the historical Church, and never fully accepting the tenets of the Protestant Reformation.

## 2. The Catholics under James

The Papists fared even worse than the Puritans during James' reign, and by the close of his life, the Papal question was pretty much a dead issue. James was at first rather tolerant to the Catholics, and promised to release them from paying their fines if they behaved in an orderly way.<sup>1</sup> He later broke his promise, however, and this so angered the Romanists that some of them attempted his assassination, along with the members of Parliament, in what is known as the famous "Gunpowder Plot", which aimed to dynamite the House of Parliament while the King was addressing the opening session.<sup>2</sup> This plot being discovered, things grew worse for the Catholics. From then on, "the policy of Church and State in England towards the Roman Catholics was that of the enforcement of conformity pure and simple."<sup>3</sup>

Hostility to them, however, finally abated. Wakeman

1. Cf. Gardiner, p. 198 f.
2. For papal plots during James reign, Cf. Baxter, Against the Revolt to a Foreign Jurisdiction, p. 64 ff.
3. Wakeman, The Church and the Puritans, p. 68 f.

accounts for this in the following way:

"The Roman Catholic problem ceased to be important, not because this policy of the enforcement of conformity was successful, but because, with the passing away of the spirit of the Counter-Reformation and of the religious wars, Roman Catholicism ceased to be aggressive."<sup>1</sup>

Hence, the persecution of the Romanists became more spasmodic and less severe, though it was not entirely done away with at this time. The Roman Catholics continue to this day as one of the significant Church parties in England.

### 3. Church Parties at James' Death

The landscape of the English Church at the close of James' reign remains essentially unchanged from that at the close of Elizabeth's regime. There are Papists, Anglicans, and Puritans of many varieties. Into this Church situation came Richard Baxter. With these three parties Baxter constantly had to deal. He was a Puritan, but he aligned himself with no particular Puritan group.<sup>2</sup> There were points

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1. The Church and the Puritans, p. 69.

2. Cf. Ladell, Richard Baxter, p. 66, "He is usually termed a Presbyterian, but with Presbyterianism he had very little sympathy; Independency he abhorred, and Anabaptism he denounced as heresy." Cf. also Dowden, Puritan and Anglican, p. 216, "He belonged to no party, in each he saw some things to applaud and some things to condemn. He was neither Episcopal . . . nor strictly a Presbyterian; he was too Arminian for the high Calvinists, and too Calvinistic for the Arminian." Cf. also Stephen, Essays in Ecclesiastical Biography, p. 44, "Baxter was opposed to every sect, and belonged to none. He can be properly described only as a Baxterian--as at once the founder and the single member of an eclectic school, within the portals of which he invited all men, but persuaded none, to take refuge from their mutual animosities." Cf. also R.B., the early pages of Part II.



in all parties which he thought good, save the Papists, and there were elements in each with which he was not pleased. He worked for the good of what he believed was Scriptural Christianity always, and opposed anything which he thought fell short of this. The issues which were raised in the formation of each of these parties continued to function in his day, and this survey of their rise and development should aid materially in understanding him.

FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH  
OF BAYARD'S DAY TO BRUCE RE BELONGING  
AS REVEALED IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"None of our own land and lineage, in practical English shape, were Heres in the Sixth year gone. Who knew in every fibre, and with heroic daring laid to heart, that an Almighty Justice does verily rule this world; that it is good to fight on God's side, and bad to fight on the Devil's side. The essence of all heroisms and valorities that have been, is that will be."

-Signed by Carlyle-

Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches,

Vol. I, p. 13 f.

IV FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH  
OF BAXTER'S DAY TO WHICH HE REACTED  
AS REVEALED IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

CHAPTER FOUR  
FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH  
OF BAXTER'S DAY TO WHICH HE REACTED  
AS REVEALED IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

"Here, of our own land and lineage, in practical English shape, were Heroes on the Earth once more. Who knew in every fibre, and with heroic daring laid to heart, That an Almighty Justice does verily rule this world; that it is good to fight on God's side, and bad to fight on the Devil's side! The essence of all Heroisms and Veracities that have been, or that will be."

-Quoted by Carlyle-

Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches,

Vol. I, p. 10 f.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH OF BAXTER'S DAY TO WHICH HE REACTED AS REVEALED IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

#### IV FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH OF BAXTER'S DAY TO WHICH HE REACTED AS REVEALED IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

##### A. The Reign of Charles I

1. The Breach Between King and Parliament
2. Puritanism under Charles
3. The Triumph of Independency
4. The Increase of Sects

##### B. The Commonwealth and the Protectorate

1. The Commonwealth's Policy of Force
2. Cromwell's Policy of Toleration

##### C. After the Restoration

1. Attempts at Reconciliation
2. Forced Uniformity
3. Toleration Achieved

As to Baxter's frankness and adherence to facts as

he knew them (and who was in a better position to know them  
than he?), abundant testimony is available. He says himself  
of his narrative:

1. Quoted by Grier, *Nine Great Preachers*, p. 130.
2. Coleridge, *Notes on English Divines*, p. 43.

#### CHAPTER FOUR

#### FACTORS IN THE HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH CHURCH OF BAXTER'S DAY TO WHICH HE REACTED AS REVEALED IN HIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY

No truer contemporary picture of the English Church of Baxter's day can be found than is set forth in his Narrative of the Most Memorable Passages of His Life and Times. As a writer, Baxter has had few superiors. Hence, he was well qualified to vividly depict the events connected with the cause with which he was so passionately identified. Dr. Johnson once said, when questioned by Boswell as to which of Baxter's works he ought to read, "Read any of them, they are all good."<sup>1</sup> Coleridge strengthens this estimate of Baxter as a writer, when he says:

"It is impossible to read Baxter without hesitating which to admire most, the uncommon clearness (perspicuity and perspicacity) of his understanding, or the candour and charity of his spirit. Under such accursed persecutions he feels and reasons more like an angel than a man."<sup>2</sup>

As to Baxter's truthfulness and adherence to facts as he knew them (and who was in a better position to know them than he?), abundant testimony is available. He says himself of his Narrative:

... does not project before his imagination any  
... and fit things to correspond with that ideal,  
... he also simply as telling what he knew or what he believed  
to be true. . . . .

1. Quoted by Currier, Nine Great Preachers, p. 130.
2. Coleridge, Notes on English Divines, p. 43.

"... and therefore having my self now written this History of my self, notwithstanding my Protestation that I have not in any thing wilfully gone against the Truth, I expect no more Credit from the Reader, than the self-evidencing Light of the matter, with concurrent rational Advantages, from Persons, and Things, and other Witnesses, shall constrain him to; if he be a Person that is unacquainted with the Author himself, and the other Evidences of his Veracity and Credibility."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas writes of Baxter's Autobiography:

"He is guilty of few errors in his statement of facts, and, whatever may be said of his verdict upon them, his truthfulness and candour are beyond challenge."<sup>2</sup>

Witnesses need not be multiplied,<sup>3</sup> but Coleridge's statement is too beautiful to omit. He writes:

"I may not unfrequently doubt Baxter's memory, or even his competence, in consequence of his modes of thinking; but I could almost as soon doubt the Gospel verity as his veracity."<sup>4</sup>

With regard to Baxter's Narrative, one needs to peruse it in but a cursory way to discover that it is "a basic, though shapeless and confused, document for historical research".<sup>5</sup> It carries us into the events of the seventeenth

1. R.B., I, p. 136.

2. Introductory Essay, p. xx.

3. We here, however, include one more, Dowden, Puritan and Anglican: Studies in Literature, p. 215, "Baxter's autobiography has one quality which is among the rarest in books of its kind, and which gives it a value almost unique--it is written with absolute sincerity. He dresses up nothing; he does not project before his imagination any ideal self, and fit things to correspond with that ideal; he aims simply at telling what he knew or what he believed to be true."

4. Coleridge, p. 68.

5. Thomas, Introductory Essay, p. xxi.

century much as a competent guide conducts a personal tour through some historic battleground or famous museum. It is "a quarry rich in materials of various kinds,<sup>1</sup> to which every historian of the period must resort."<sup>2</sup> Of its charm, Thomas says,

"As we read his record of the times and follow his movements, we are constrained to yield to the spell of that great epic. Gradually we are carried away: the things of our day dissolve and evaporate to float past as an irrelevant murmur while the thunder of Rupert's Horse and of Cromwell's Ironsides become louder in our ears, or we mingle with the audience to overhear the futile prejudged discussion of the Savoy Conference, or see weaving around him the plots of sinister intriguers, and the perjuries of hired informers."<sup>3</sup>

Enticing though it be, but a few excerpts from his Narrative can here be set forth, revealing without detail the fortunes of the English Church as he was connected with it during his life time.

1. Cf. Thomas, Introductory Essay, p. xv, "There is a unique fusion of qualities in the personality of Richard Baxter which, even when we see him caricatured by satirists, persecuted by enemies, or, still worse, disfigured with his own failings, moves us with wonder which sometimes passes into awe." Cf. also p. xxi, "In him we seem to have all contradictions joined. He is a catholic Puritan as Savonarola was a puritan Catholic; a parliamentary Royalist who took Cromwell for an ambitious usurper and thought that Hooker and other defenders of monarchy conceded too much to democracy; a nonconformist Episcopalian who would fain, had conscience permitted, have conformed; an intellectualist but one who, as Calamy says, 'talked in the pulpit with great freedom about another world, like one that had been there and was come as a sort of express from thence to make a report concerning it'."
2. John, An Excerpt From Reliquiae Baxterianae, Preface, p. xii.
3. Thomas, Introductory Essay, p. xxi.

## A. The Reign of Charles I

### 1. The Breach Between King and Parliament

Inheriting a turbulent kingdom from his father, Charles I found a breach between King and Parliament continually widening. He married a Catholic woman, and appointed Laud, whose sentiments were Catholic, as Archbishop of Canterbury. Hence, during his reign the Catholics received kind treatment. The political grievances which Parliament held against Charles, added to their dislike of Laud's extreme measures, strengthened the adherents to Puritan sentiments. Many, both of the common people and men of position, began to cry out against the policies of the King, and Charles and Laud in turn reacted with added violence. The struggle soon resolved itself into a conflict between the King and the Bishops who adhered to him, and the Puritans.

### 2. Puritanism under Charles

In this struggle, the term Puritan covered a broad scope, and included all who were for godliness and reform of the evils of the Church, regardless of their Church relationship. As Baxter indicates, these Puritans were despised by the King's party, and by those who were of ungodly life. He writes of their treatment in his home town:

"When I heard them speak scornfully of others as Puritans whom I never knew, I was at first apt to believe all the Lies and Slanders wherewith they loaded them: But when I heard my own Father so reproached, and perceived the Drunkards were the forwardest in the reproach, I perceived that it was mere Malice: For my

Father never scrupled Common-Prayer or Ceremonies, nor spake against Bishops, nor ever so much as prayed but by a Book or Form, being not ever acquainted then with any that did otherwise: But only for reading Scripture when the rest were Dancing on the Lord's Day, and for praying (by a Form out of the end of the Common-Prayer Book) in his House, and for reproving Drunkards and Swearers, and for talking sometimes a few words of Scripture and the Life to come, he was reviled commonly by the Name of Puritan, Precisian and Hypocrite: and so were the Godly Conformable Ministers that lived any where in the Country near us."1

Thus we here see the outlines of one group in the Puritan party; namely, those who were for reform and godliness, yet conformed strictly to the Established Church.

Another group in the Puritan ranks was composed of the Nonconformists, who opposed certain practices prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer. They, too, desired to remain in the Church of England, and to correct these practices which they thought Popish and evil. Of these was Baxter. He gives an interesting account of how he arrived at his views, and of the issues raised by the Nonconformists.

"Till this time I was satisfied in the Matter of Conformity: Whilst I was young I had never been acquainted with any that were against it, or that questioned it . . . .  
"At last at about 20 years of Age, I became acquainted with Mr. Simmonds, Mr. Cradock, and other very zealous godly Nonconformists in Shrewsbury, and the adjoining parts, whose fervent Prayers and savoury Conference and holy Lives did profit me much. And when I understood that they were People prosecuted by the Bishops, I found much prejudice arise in my

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1. R.B., I, p. 2 f.



heart against those that persecuted them, and thought that those that silenced and troubled such Men could not be the genuine Followers of the Lord of Love.

"But yet I resolved that I would study the Point, as well as I was able, before I would be confident on either side."<sup>1</sup>

In his study, he leaned towards the side of the Conformists, because of the men he knew in the two groups, the Conformists were more learned, and because "the Books of the Nonconformists were then so scarce, and hard to be got (because of the danger) that I could not come to know their reasons."<sup>2</sup> Later, however, while engaged in Dudley as a schoolmaster (and preaching both there and at the surrounding villages), he "had occasion to fall afresh upon the study of Conformity."<sup>3</sup> After this study, he emerged a rather conservative Nonconformist.

The points opposed by the Nonconformists he lists as these: Episcopacy, knelling at the sacrament, the wearing of the surplice by the ministers, the ring in marriage, the cross in baptism, a form of prayer and liturgy, the lack of discipline in the Church, and subscription to the statement that there was nothing "contrary to the Word of God"<sup>4</sup> in the Prayer Book and liturgy of the English Church. Of these, Baxter opposed only subscription, the cross in baptism, and the lack of discipline, which resulted in a "promiscuous

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1. R.B., I, p. 13.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 14.

giving of the Lord's Supper to all Drunkards, Swearers, Fornicators, Scorners at Godliness, &c."<sup>1</sup>

Not long after this, however, Baxter and others were led to take a more definite stand against the Conformists. He had tried to soften the censoriousness of the Nonconformists, but he soon saw that the cruelty of the Bishops made this impossible. He writes:

"But I found that their Sufferings from the Bishops were the great Impediment of my Success, and that he that will blow the Coals must not wonder if some Sparks do fly in his face; and that to persecute Men, and then call them to Charity, is like whipping Children to make them give over Crying. . . . I saw that he that will be loved, must love; and he that rather chooseth to be more feared than loved, must expect to be hated, or loved but diminutively: And he that will have Children, must be a Father: and he that will be a Tyrant must be contented with Slaves."<sup>2</sup>

Added to his decision of the folly of calling these persecuted slaves to "great Patience and Charity",<sup>3</sup> came a further strengthening of it when the Et Cetera oath was passed in 1640. Baxter says this oath "was to swear us all, That we would never Consent to the Alteration of the present Government of the Church, by Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Arch-deacons, &c."<sup>4</sup> The result of this measure he gives as follows:

"And thus the Et cetera Oath, which was imposed on us for the unalterable subjecting of us to Diocesans, was a chief means to alienate me, and

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1. R.B., I, p. 14.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 15.

many others from it. For now our drowsie mindlessness of that subject was shaken off by their violence; and we that thought it best to follow our business, and live in quietness, and let the Bishops alone, were rowzed by the terrours of an Oath to look about us, and understand what we did."<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the stir in England over this Oath, trouble arose in Scotland when the King tried to impose a new Prayer-Book on the Scottish people. The Scots refused to receive it, formed an army, and advanced towards England. Before this could be settled, Parliament had to be called. They sat for a while, and were dissolved by the King. Shortly after, a new Parliament was called, by which an agreement was reached between the Scottish and English armies. This was the beginning of the Long Parliament.

This Parliament "being sate, did presently fall on that which they accounted Reformation of Church and State, and which greatly displeased the King as well as the Bishops."<sup>2</sup> The cause of Puritanism was greatly advanced by this, for a close unity resulted against the King and the Bishops. Baxter says that "The Concord of this Parliament consisted not in the Unanimity of the Persons . . . but in the Complication of the Interest of those Causes which they severally did most concern themselves in."<sup>3</sup> One group "made no great matter of these Alterations in the Church,"<sup>4</sup> yet were opposed to the King and sought freedom from his tyranny.

1. R.B., I, p. 16.

2. Ibid., p. 18.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

"The other sort were the more Religious Men, who were also sensible of all these things (that is, the tyrannical practices of the King),<sup>1</sup> but were much more sensible of the Interest of Religion."<sup>2</sup>

This unanimity in the Parliament, together with the concord of the people in their opposition to the tyranny of the King, made it possible for the Parliament to annul many of the undesirable Acts of the King and to begin some drastic reforms in the Church. A committee on "Scandalous Ministers"<sup>3</sup> was formed, which was "to receive Petitions and Complaints against"<sup>4</sup> the corrupted Clergy.<sup>5</sup> All of these moves served to please the people and to strengthen the hold of Parliament upon the loyalty of the common folk. Added to all this, the Papists in Ireland concurred in a great massacre, which Baxter describes with vividness.

"Two hundred thousand Persons they murdered. . . . Men, Women, and Children were most cruelly used; the Women ript up, and filthily used when they killed them, and the Infants used like Toads or Vermin: Thousands of those that escaped, came

various sects began to move into the centre of the picture. . . . .

1. R.B., I, p. 18.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 19.
4. Ibid.
5. It was at this time that the town of Kidderminster drew up a complaint against their Vicar. A settlement was reached whereby their Vicar was to "allow 60 l. per annum to a Preacher. . . .(and) should not hinder this Preacher from preaching whenever he pleased, and that he himself should read Common Prayer, and do all else that was to be done." R.B., I, p. 20. Baxter was the preacher that was called, and it was here that he did his greatest work.

2. Ibid., p. 44.

stript and almost famished to Dublin, and afterwards into England to beg their Bread: Multitudes of them were driven together into Rivers, and cast over Bridges and drowned. . . . In a word, scarce any History mentioneth the like barbarous Cruelty as this was: The French Massacree murdered but Thirty, or Forty Thousand; but Two Hundred Thousand was a Number which astonished those that heard it."<sup>1</sup>

This massacre greatly stirred up the people in England to fear and anger. "And when they saw the English Papists join with the King against the Parliament, it was the greatest thing that ever alienated them from the King."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the people and the Parliament, both those who were Conformists and those who were Nonconformists, were united in opposing the King and his Prelates, which greatly aided the cause of Puritanism. Soon a Civil War precipitated, the King was defeated and beheaded, and the cause of Episcopacy was temporarily lost.

### 3. The Triumph of Independency

At this stage, the Presbyterians, Independents, and various Sects began to move into the center of the picture. Needing the help of the Scottish armies, the Parliament entered into a Covenant with them "for a resolved Reformation, against Popery, Prelacy, Schism, and Prophaneness."<sup>3</sup> This virtually meant the establishment of Presbyterianism in place of Episcopacy. For, although the covenant was worded

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1. R.E., I, p. 28.
2. Ibid., p. 29.
3. Ibid., p. 48.

so that Independents could subscribe to it, it called for the "preservation of the Church of Scotland in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government", and for "the reformation of the Church of England according to the word of God and the example of the best Reformed Churches."<sup>1</sup>

The tide of Independency and Sectarianism, however, was constantly rising in the Parliamentary army under Cromwell. Those who were carried along on the crest of this tide had "one great principle in common, namely, the repudiation of ecclesiastical organisation, the insistence on the right of the individual soul to seek its own terms of reconciliation with God."<sup>2</sup> This sentiment was strongly opposed to the established Presbyterianism which insisted on "the necessity of clerical organisation empowered to regulate minutely both the faith and conduct of mankind."<sup>3</sup> It was evident that Presbyterianism and Independentism could not long dwell together in peace.

Cromwell soon began to gain the upper hand in the army. Taking advantage of the general dissatisfaction with the Earl of Essex, who was head of the army, Cromwell secured the reorganization of the Army, with himself at its head. This was easily done, for "every where the Religious Party that were deepliest apprehensive of the Concernment of the War, had far better Success than the other sort of Common Soldiers."<sup>4</sup>

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1. Wakeman, The Church and the Puritans, p. 152.
2. Ibid., p. 153.
3. Ibid.
4. R.B., I, p. 47.

Cromwell being a religious man and a very successful General, found little difficulty in ousting all who were not religious, and putting men of his choice in their stead. In effecting this reorganization, however, he worked to the advantage of the Independents and the Sectaries. He had Parliament pass the "Self-denying Vote, viz. That because Commands in the Army had much pay, and Parliament Men should keep to the Service of the House, therefore no Parliament Men should be Members of the Army."<sup>1</sup> This Act was set aside in one case only. "Cromwell only, and no other Member of either House, must be excepted, and so he is made Lieutenant General of the Army."<sup>2</sup>

Soon Cromwell had the important posts in the army filled with Independents and Sectaries. Baxter says of this:

" . . . when any Troop or Company was to be disposed of, or any considerable Officer's place was void, he was sure to put a Sectary in the place; and when the brunt of the War was over, he looked not so much at their Valour as their Opinions: So that by degrees he had headed the greatest part of the Army with Anabaptists, Antinomians, Seekers, or Separatists at best."<sup>3</sup>

This Parliament passed a Vote . . . to establish the Gov- Many of the members of Parliament were Presbyterians, so it was not long before the Presbyterian Parliament and the Independent Army fell out. Baxter accuses Cromwell of deceit- fully instigating trouble between the two bodies. Of this

he writes:

1. R.B., I, p. 48.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 57.

"The Design of Vane<sup>1</sup> and Cromwell now was not only to keep up an Army of Sectaries, when the Sober Party were Disbanded, but also to force the Parliament to their mind, and model it so as that they should do their work: (which I had foretold some Parliament Men of long before): One of the Principal Engines in this Contrivance was, to provoke the Parliament to pass such Votes as the Army would be most displeased with, and then to stir up the Army to the deepest Resentment of it. Accordingly the Parliament voted that part of the Army should go to Ireland, and part be disbanded, and part continued.<sup>2</sup> The Leaders in the Army incensed the Soldiers, by perswading them that this was to deprive them of their Pay, and to divide them, and when they had them at home again to ruine them as Sectaries, and this was the Reward of all their Services."<sup>3</sup>

The army being more powerful than Parliament, Cromwell and the Independents soon had things their own way. They gained control of Parliament and passed measures suited to their own liking. Of this Baxter says:

"And thus when the two Parts of the House were ejected and imprisoned, this third part composed of the Vanists, the Independents, and other Sects, with the Democratical Party, was left by Cromwell to do his Business under the Name of the Parliament of England; but by the People in Scorn commonly called, The Rump of the Parliament."<sup>4</sup>

This Parliament "passed a Vote . . . to establish the Government without a King and House of Lords; and so the Lords dissolved, and these Commons sat and did all alone."<sup>5</sup> Thus the Commonwealth was established. One step further was de-

1. Vane was the leader in the cause of Democracy and popular government. He was executed upon the restoration of Charles II.
2. The King had been defeated, and the full army was no longer needed.
3. R.B., I, p. 59.
4. Ibid., p. 63.
5. Ibid.



sired by Cromwell and his Rump Parliament. The King must be removed out of the way. So, they "sent for the King from the Isle of Wight. . . . And before his own Gate at Whitehall they erected a Scaffold, and before a full Assembly of People beheaded him."<sup>1</sup> From now until the restoration of Charles II, Independency was the ruling policy in English Church affairs.

#### 4. The Increase of Sects

From the time of the formation of the first Separatist group,<sup>2</sup> though they were suppressed in divers ways, certain Sects had continued to crop up here and there. When they saw the difficulties arising between the King and Parliament, they took that as a fitting opportunity to redouble their efforts for toleration. Of their scarcity, Baxter writes, "The remnant of the old Separatists and Anabaptists in London was then very small, and scarce considerable."<sup>3</sup> He continues, however, to describe their activity at this time, and the effect it produced.

" . . . they were enough to stir up the younger and unexperienced sort of Religious People, to speak too vehemently and intemperately against the Bishops and the Church and Ceremonies, and to jeer and deride at the Common Prayer, and all that was against their minds . . .

"These stirr'd up the Apprentices to joyn with them in Petitions, and to go in great numbers

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1. R.B., I, p. 63.
2. See above, p. 67.
3. R.B., I, p. 26.

to Westminster to present them: And as they went they met with some of the Bishops in their Coaches going to the House; and (as is usual with the passionate and indiscreet when they are in great Companies) they too much forgot Civility, and cried out, No Bishops."<sup>1</sup>

This action indirectly heightened the feeling in Parliament against the Bishops. For, either out of fear or displeasure at this action, the Bishops formulated a Protestation against any law that might be passed while they were absent from Parliament. Parliament reacted against this by sending those Bishops who voted for this to prison.

As the antagonism between King and Parliament increased and the Civil War came on, the activity of the Sects was intensified. Baxter speaks of the "Brownists Relicts",<sup>2</sup> who were Independents and "did drive on others according to their own dividing Principles, and sowed the Seeds which afterward spread over all the Land."<sup>3</sup> Later, when Independency rose to its heights under Cromwell, and Independent congregations were tolerated, these Sects increased in number and enthusiasm. Baxter mentions in addition to the Anabaptists and Independents, the Quakers,<sup>4</sup> the Levellers,<sup>5</sup> the Antinomians,<sup>6</sup> The Seekers,<sup>7</sup> the Vanists,<sup>8</sup> the Ranters,<sup>9</sup>

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1. R.B., I, p. 26.
2. Ibid., p. 39.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., pp. 69, 77.
5. Ibid., p. 53 f.
6. Ibid., p. 57.
7. Ibid., also p. 76.
8. Ibid., p. 74 ff.
9. Ibid., p. 76 f.

the Socinians,<sup>1</sup> the Fifth Monarchy men,<sup>2</sup> the Behmenists,<sup>3</sup> and the Familists.<sup>4</sup> Thus, instead of a national established and uniform Church, the picture now presented very closely resembles the religious landscape of the nineteenth century in America. Episcopacy has been uprooted, Presbyterianism has enjoyed a short-lived supremacy, and now Independentism has triumphed and the Sects are greatly multiplied.

## B. The Commonwealth and the Protectorate

### 1. The Commonwealth's Policy of Force

The picture remains essentially the same throughout the period of the Commonwealth and Protectorate as it was at the death of the King. In addition to the Sects above mentioned, the Papists,<sup>5</sup> the Prelates,<sup>6</sup> the Moderate Episcopates,<sup>7</sup> and the Presbyterians<sup>8</sup> are still on the field. A brief word will suffice to reveal the treatment of them by the Rump Parliament and by Cromwell.

Upon setting up the Commonwealth, the Rump "drew up a Form of Engagement, to be put upon all Men, viz. I do promise to be True and Faithful to the Commonwealth as it is now established without a King or House of Lords."<sup>9</sup>

1. R.B., I, p. 79.

2. Ibid., II, p. 207.

3. Ibid., I, p. 77 f.

4. Ibid., p. 76.

5. Ibid., pp. 75, 78, 106; II, p. 217, 218.

6. Ibid., p. 64.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

Without signing this, "no Man must have the benefit of suing another at Law . . . nor must they have any Masterships in the Universities, nor travel above so many Miles from their Houses, and more such Penalties."<sup>1</sup> A short time later, when the army was engaged in quelling the rebellion of the Scots, the Rump "made an Order that all Ministers should keep their days of Humiliation, to fast and pray for their Success in Scotland; and that we should keep their Days of Thanksgiving for their Victories; and this upon pain of Sequestration."<sup>2</sup> Baxter says that upon this, "we all expected to be turned out: but they did not execute it upon any save one in our parts."<sup>3</sup>

Harrison, one of Cromwell's right hand men, "had at once put down all the Parish-Ministers of Wales . . . and had set up a few itinerant Preachers in their stead, who were for Number incompetent for so great a Charge, there being but one to many of those wide Parishes."<sup>4</sup> England would have suffered a similar fate, had not Cromwell revolted against Harrison's extremes, and designed "the heading of a soberer Party, that were for Learning and Ministry; but yet to be the equal Protector of all: Hereupon in the Little Sectarian Parliament, it was put to the Vote, whether all the Parish Ministers of England should at once

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1. R.B., I, p. 64.
2. Ibid., p. 66.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 70.

be put down or no? And it was but accidentally carried in the negative by two Voices."<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Cromwell's Policy of Toleration

Following this, Cromwell took the reins of power entirely into his own hands, and set himself up as Protector.

His policy was mainly one of toleration. He did not use force on those who were peaceable and those who acquiesced in his governing policies. He desired

"not to detect and exasperate the Ministers and others that consented not to his Government (having seen what a stir the Engagement had before made): but he let Men live quietly, without putting any Oaths of Fidelity upon them; except his Parliaments; for those must not enter the House till they had sworn Fidelity to him."<sup>2</sup>

He appointed a committee of ministers "to sit at Whitehall, under the Name of Triers, who were mostly Independents, but some sober Presbyterians"<sup>3</sup> who were to try all "that came for Institution or Induction."<sup>4</sup> Though they were not altogether just in their dealings, they aided the clean-up in the Church. Baxter writes as his opinion of their work:

"And that sort of Ministers that either preacht against a holy Life, or preacht as Men that never were acquainted with it; all those that used the Ministry but as a Common Trade to live by, and were never likely to convert a Soul: all these they usually rejected; and in their

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1. R.B., I, p. 70.
2. Ibid., p. 74.
3. Ibid., p. 72.
4. Ibid., p. 71.

stead admitted of any that were able serious Preachers, and lived a godly Life, of what tollerable Opinion soever they were. So that though they were many of them somewhat partial for the Independents, Separatists, Fifth-Monarchy-men and Anabaptists, and against the Prelatists and Arminians, yet so great was the benefit above the hurt, which they brought to the Church, that many thousands of Souls blest God for the faithful Ministers whom they let in, and grieved when the Prelatists afterward cast them out again."<sup>1</sup>

In the large, then, Cromwell's policy was one of toleration.

The Anabaptists were "so much against any settled Government"<sup>2</sup> that Cromwell finally had to take measures to suppress them. Those who were so strong for Prelacy that they refused, as Baxter says, "to keep the state of things as entire as we can, till God be pleased to restore the King,"<sup>3</sup> and refused to submit to Cromwell, were ousted from their positions. The Papists were not tolerated, but had to "ply their work, as masked."<sup>4</sup> Those of ungodly lives also found themselves outside the scope of Cromwell's toleration. With these exceptions, however, the entire reign of Cromwell was characterized by a religious toleration before unknown in England. Wakeman says of this:

"Toleration from all who will abstain from interference with the civil government, unless they are either the slaves of Popish or Episcopal superstition, or are the acknowledged enemies of the moral law, is loudly proclaimed. It was but a limited toleration, yet a toleration which was far in

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1. R.B., I, p. 72.
2. Ibid., p. 74.
3. Ibid., p. 71.
4. Ibid., p. 78.

advance of any previous policy of the kind, because it proceeded, as far as it went, on the true principle of toleration, i.e. that the State, as such, has nothing to do with a man's religious opinions, except so far as they may issue in political action."<sup>1</sup>

Baxter lists as one of his reasons for success in his Kidderminster ministry this toleration enjoyed under Cromwell, and expresses his joy over the liberty with which he was blessed at that time. He writes:

"For my part, I bless God who gave me under an Usurper whom I opposed,<sup>2</sup> such Liberty and Advantage to preach his Gospel with Success, which I cannot have under a King to whom I have sworn and performed true Subjection and Obedience; yea, which no Age since the Gospel came into this Land, did before possess, as far as I can learn from History."<sup>3</sup>

This toleration, however, was comparatively short-lived, for in five years after assuming the office of Protectorate, Cromwell died.<sup>4</sup> His son Richard succeeded him, only to be ousted by the army in a very short time. Then, in 1660, King Charles II was recalled to take the throne, and religious liberty again yielded to an established system of intolerance.

Through the moderate Episcopalian, like Baxter, and . . . . .

1. Wakeman, The Church and the Puritans, p. 179.
  2. Baxter finally entered Cromwell's army as a chaplain, not because he was convinced that the policy of Cromwell and his men was right, but for the sole purpose of "Preaching, Conference, and Disputing against their Confounding Errours." R.B., I, p. 56.
  3. R.B., I, p. 87.
  4. 1658. . . . .
- ... said, p. 315, "What the Presbyterians did to preserve and restore the King, is a thing that we need not go to the corners of Cabinets to prove." Cf. also Ibid., p. 313, "But the Presbyterians said, We are bound by the Obedience to the King what that will, and by the Oath of Allegiance to him and his Heirs." Cf. also Ibid., p. 317, "And though not one of forty of the Ministers ever meddled with the King, they shall all fare alike if they be not Presbyterians."

### C. After the Restoration

"When Oliver Cromwel was dead, and his Son almost as soon pull'd down as set up . . . the Anabaptists grew insolent, in England and Ireland; and joining with their Brethren in the Army, were every where put in Power."<sup>1</sup> Being "apprehensive of approaching Misery and Confusion while the Fanaticks were Lords . . . the King's old Party (called then the Cavaliers) and the Parliaments Party (called the Presbyterians) did secretly combine in many parts of the Land to rise all at once and suppress these insolent Usurpers and bring in the King."<sup>2</sup> Shortly after this, "Major General Monk in Scotland, with his Army, grew so sensible of the Insolencies of . . . the Fanaticks in England and Ireland"<sup>3</sup> that he marched on London, overthrowing the old army "without one blow stricken, or one drop of Blood shed."<sup>4</sup> Shortly after this, Charles II was restored to the throne.

#### 1. Attempts at Reconciliation

Though the moderate Episcopal men, like Baxter, and the Presbyterians, had always remained loyal to the King,<sup>5</sup>

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1. R.B., II, p. 206.
2. Ibid., p. 207.
3. Ibid., p. 214.
4. Ibid.
5. Cf. Ibid., p. 215, "What the Presbyterians did to preserve and restore the King, is a thing that we need not go to any Corners of Cabinets to prove." Cf. also Ibid., p. 216, "But the Presbyterians said, We are bound by the Covenant to the King that last was, and by the Oath of Allegiance to him and his Heirs." Cf. also Ibid., p. 217, "And though not one of forty of the Ministers ever medled with the Wars, they shall all fare alike if they be not Prelatists."



and though they had a strong influence in bringing about the Restoration of Charles, yet they were to fare ill in the coming days. Being convinced of the Divine sanction of the monarchical form of government, they were willing to have the King restored, even at the cost of persecution for them, and to leave the results with God. Baxter writes:

"Therefore being obliged to the King, as the undoubted Heir of the Crown, we ought to do our Duty, as Loyal Subjects to Restore him, and for the Issue let God do what he will."<sup>1</sup>

He, with others, however, foresaw the outcome.

"We all look to be Silenced, and some or many of us imprisoned or banished: but yet we will do our part to restore the King, because no foreseen ill consequence, must hinder us from our Duty: And if ignorant Men be put into our places, and never so many Souls perish by it, the Fault is not ours, but theirs that do it."<sup>2</sup>

The moderate Episcopalians and Presbyterians sought for reconciliation with the Episcopal party. At first, the situation looked hopeful. "For the Gratifying and Engaging some Chief Presbyterians, that had brought in the King . . . above Ten or Twelve of them were designed to be the King's Chaplains in Ordinary."<sup>3</sup> Among these was Baxter. Several interviews were held with the King, who appeared very gracious in desiring concord between the differing parties. Baxter was even offered the Bishopric of Hereford, which he declined. These good omens soon vanished, however, for the

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1. R.B., II, p. 216.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 229.

King authorized a conference of the contending Divines at "the Savoy (the Bishop of London's Lodgings)."<sup>1</sup> Baxter was the leading figure on the Nonconformist side in both the writing and the discussion that took place in connection with this Savoy Conference. He drew up a reformed Liturgy which he proposed in place of the Prayer Book, but the Bishops would yield not an iota, and insisted on the enforcement of conformity to the Prayer Book as it then stood. Baxter speaks of their negotiations thus:

"But all was but casting Oyl upon the Flames, and forcing us to think of that Monster of Millan, that made his Enemy renounce God to save his Life, before he stabb'd him, that he might murder Soul and Body at a stroke. It seemed to be accounted the one thing necessary, which no Reason must be heard against, that the Presbyterians must be forced to do that which they accounted Publick Perjury, or to be cast out of Trust and Office, in Church and Commonwealth."<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Forced Uniformity

Shortly after, the Act of Uniformity was passed, which "gave all the Ministers that could not Conform, no longer time than till Bartholomew-day, August 24. 1662. and then they must be all cast out."<sup>3</sup> Baxter remarks:

"This fatal Day called to remembrance the French Massacre, when on the same Day 30000 or 40000 Protestants perished by Religious Roman Zeal and Charity."<sup>4</sup>

1. R.B., II, p. 305.

2. Ibid., p. 384.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

Two very important acts were subsequently passed by Parliament. The first was "the Act against Private Meetings for Religious Exercises."<sup>1</sup> No more than five persons were permitted to gather for religious purposes in any "other manner than is allowed by the Liturgy or Practice of the Church of England."<sup>2</sup> The second was the "Act of Confinement, to make the Silenc'd Ministers Case incomparably harder than it was before, by putting upon them a certain Oath, which if they refused, they must not come (except the Road) within five Miles of any City, or of any Corporation, or any place that sendeth Burgesses to the Parliament; or of any place where-ever they had been Ministers, or had preached since the Act of Oblivion."<sup>3</sup>

The seriousness of these Acts was temporarily tempered by the great plague and the great London fire. All people suffered so much that there was no time to persecute the Nonconformists while these two catastrophes were reaping their terrible toll, and "shame restrained them (the Prelates)<sup>4</sup> from imprisoning the Preachers so hotly and forwardly as before."<sup>5</sup> Some time later, too, the King issued a "Declaration of Liberty,"<sup>6</sup> granting "a convenient number of Publick Meeting-Places to Men of all sorts that Conform

1. R.B., II, p. 435.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid., III, p. 2. *author of this study.*

4. Parenthetical expression by author of this study.

5. R.B., III, p. 19. *also in the History of the Church of*

6. Ibid., p. 99.

not."<sup>1</sup> Parliament, however, met shortly after, "and voted down the King's Declaration as illegal."<sup>2</sup> Soon fears of the King's adherence to Popery were raised, and the Test Act was passed.<sup>3</sup> "The Summ was, That none Commissioned by the King may be by Arms resisted, and that they would never endeavour any alteration of the Government of Church or State."<sup>4</sup> Baxter does not clearly bring out all the implications of this Act, but it was quite definitely aimed at the Catholics, since "every person appointed to any office either in the army and navy or in the state (had)<sup>5</sup> to receive the Sacrament from a minister of the Church of England."<sup>6</sup> The Act also contained "a declaration against transubstantiation."<sup>7</sup> This anti-papal movement also had some little effect in increasing the persecution of the Nonconformists.

### 3. Toleration Achieved

At this point, Baxter's story ends, with detailed accounts of his own and others' suffering because of their Nonconformity. A brief word is here included to complete the sketch of the Church during his life time. Charles II

1. R.B., III, p. 99.

2. Ibid., p. 103.

3. Ibid., p. 167 ff.

4. Ibid.

5. Parenthesis by author of this study.

6. Gardiner, Outline of English History, p. 257.

7. Wakeman, Introduction to the History of the Church of England, p. 392.

died in 1685, and his brother James II ascended the throne. His was but a brief reign of five years. He was a Catholic, and set aside the laws which had been made against them by a "Declaration of Indulgence, announcing that all his subjects, Dissenters as well as Catholics, were free to worship as they pleased and to hold offices without taking any kind of test."<sup>1</sup> This, of course, materially decreased the persecution of the Nonconformists, and was a step in the securing of complete toleration for them. For the English people, finally revolting against James' papal leanings, requested William of Orange to come to their rescue. He came, James fled, and the throne of England was given to William and Mary who reigned jointly. At the very beginning of their reign complete toleration was given to the Nonconformists, and shortly after to the Catholics, "though it was a very long time before they were allowed to hold offices."<sup>2</sup> Gardiner speaks thus of the immediate change of policy under William and Mary:

"One of the first consequences of the change was the passing of the Toleration Act. The Dissenters at last got permission by law to worship in their own chapels."<sup>3</sup>

William and Mary came to the throne in 1689. Baxter died in 1691. He lived but two years to be relieved from persecution and to enjoy the toleration for which he had so long suffered.

. . . . .

Religious toleration finally came, however, when William and

1. Gardiner, p. 272.

2. Ibid., p. 279.

3. Ibid., p. 278.

Religious toleration was granted, and has remained to this day.

heroically striven.

Thus, we have traced the fortunes of the English Church throughout Baxter's life time. In his boyhood days there were two main groups among the Puritan party, which remained intact throughout his life. One conformed to the worship of the English Church, although constantly working towards its reformation. The other group refused to conform to the Church, choosing rather to suffer than to submit to a worship with which they could not agree. As the breach widened between the King and the Parliament, the Puritans, both Conformists and Nonconformists, began to gain in influence, as all who opposed the King, even for merely political reasons, lined up with them. Then, as the Civil War progressed, due to a covenant made with the Scots, Presbyterianism was virtually established in England. Soon, Cromwell threw his influence on the side of Independentism, and it supplanted Presbyterianism as the established religion. During this period, religious toleration was granted to all but Papists and extreme Prelates and those whose political views were detrimental to the welfare of the government. Later, upon the restoration of Charles II, this toleration was abolished, and uniformity was required by law. The Nonconforming bodies were suppressed and endured a great amount of severe persecution. Relief finally came, however, when William and Mary acceded to the throne. At the very beginning of their reign, religious toleration was granted, and has remained to this day.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Beginning with the Reformation of the English Church and closing with the death of Richard Baxter, the religious parties and the feelings with which they were concerned have been traced. This last chapter is an attempt to discover the factors in this

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a short historical synopsis of events is here given, antecedent to a conclusion summarizing their relation to Baxter.

In the main, three outstanding types of thought are evident throughout this period. At first, under Henry VIII, these took the form of the Papalists, the Catholics, and the Reforming party, the Papalists desiring to revert back to Rome, the Catholics desiring freedom from Rome but the retention of the doctrines and worship of the Roman Church, and the Reformers crying for a complete reformation which should do away with many of the superstitions which they thought were inextricably bound up with the Roman system. Henry broke with Rome, but favored Catholicism. Edward VI favored the Reforming party, and instituted some quite dramatic changes in the worship of the Church, which materially advanced the work of reform. At the close of his reign, different views among the adherents to the Reforming party began to be manifest. Some desired to go further than

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### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Beginning with the Reformation of the English Church and closing with the death of Richard Baxter, the religious parties and the issues with which they were concerned have been traced. This has been done in an attempt to discover the factors in this period of English Church history which assist in understanding Richard Baxter. A short historic panorama of events is here given, antecedent to a conclusion concerning their relation to Baxter.

In the main, three outstanding types of thought are evident throughout this period. At first, under Henry VIII, these took the form of the Papalists, the Catholics, and the Reforming party, the Papalists desiring to revert back to Rome, the Catholics desiring freedom from Rome but the retention of the doctrines and worship of the Roman Church, and the Reformers crying for a complete reformation which should do away with many of the superstitions which they thought were inextricably bound up with the Roman system. Henry broke with Rome, but favored Catholicism. Edward VI favored the Reforming party, and instituted some quite drastic changes in the worship of the Church, which materially advanced the work of reform. At the close of his reign, different views among the adherents to the Reforming party began to be manifest. Some desired to go further than



Edward and break entirely with anything which savored of popery, while others adhered to his policy of mild reform.

During Queen Mary's reign, there was a strong Papal reaction, when she persuaded Parliament to recognize the supremacy of the Pope over the English Church again. She instituted a terrible persecution of the reforming Protestants, taking the lives of practically all those who did not flee into exile. This precipitated a change in the fibre of the religious parties. Those who before were opposed to Rome, yet favorable to the Catholic system, were forced either to declare their allegiance to the Pope or to flee with the Protestants. Those who fled with the Protestants came into quite sharp disagreement with this more radical reforming group. They desired to retain many of the relics of Catholicism, and assented to reform only to the extent to which it had been carried out by Edward. Hence, upon their return from exile at the close of Mary's reign, there were still three main parties, but the general complexion was somewhat changed from that at the close of Edward's reign. The Papalists still clung to their Roman allegiance, the Conservative Protestants adhered to the mild reforms of Edward's reign, and the Puritans insisted on further reform measures.

The Papal reaction under Mary was followed by a counter-reaction during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who broke again with the Pope and established herself as supreme head

of the English Church. She favored the Conservative Protestants, changing but slightly the reform measures of Edward, and attempted to force conformity to her views. In this she was not successful. In spite of all her efforts to the contrary, some of the Nonconforming Puritans leaped the bounds of the Church and set up separate congregations. Separatism was a fire impossible to quench. It manifested itself in Independentism and Anabaptism and various other Sects. In addition to these groups, Presbyterianism began to make itself heard within the Church, and sought to be established in place of the then established Episcopacy. The Papists, too, in spite of persecution, were not to be removed from the scene, but clung tenaciously to their allegiance to Rome. Hence, at the close of Elizabeth's reign, it was fairly certain that Episcopacy was to be established in the English Church. Yet, it was also clear that conformity to the established Church could not be universally achieved in England, and that collectivism must yield to a certain amount of individualism in religion.

The subsequent story of the English Church was one of continual conflict between this collectivism and individualism in religion. Under James, the conflict continued much as it had under Elizabeth, with individualism unlawful and suppressed, yet with "head bloody, but unbowed" refusing to die. Under Charles, individualism began to scale the heights toward which it had been climbing for so long.

Charles was overthrown and beheaded, which gave individualism its chance to play the leading role for a time under Cromwell. After about two decades, however, at the restoration of Charles II, collectivism again took the throne in the form of an enforced conformity to the polity and worship of the Episcopal system. The Nonconformists again were persecuted in an effort to stamp them out, but again they refused to yield the field.

Finally, under William and Mary, the conflict ceased to rage so furiously, and a truce was reached. From then on, it was not to be "either or" but "both". Neither side spent itself in an effort to completely displace the other, but both decided to dwell together in peace, despite their differing views. The picture then resembled somewhat the close of a heated athletic contest between traditional rivals which has ended in a tie. The players, bent on vanquishing their opponents, bend every effort toward the accomplishment of that end. At the close of the contest, however, the players of both sides mingle together in friendly converse, neither having yielded to the other, nor either of them having conquered. Episcopacy was in England to stay, but toleration for those who refused to conform to it was also permanently achieved.

"They vowed to seal their broken past  
With fellowship and friendship fast."

What is the relation of all this to Richard Baxter?

Baxter lived during the exciting and significant days from  
Lewis, "Richard Baxter", *Hastings's Dictionary of  
Religion and Ethics*, Vol. II, p. 440.

Charles I to the reign of William and Mary, covering practically the whole of the seventeenth century, from 1615 to 1691. It was in this period that the struggle between the Church and the Nonconformists, the uniformists and the individualists, rose to its climax in the beheading of Charles I and the triumph of Independentism, followed by the restoration of Charles II and the subsequent attempt to enforce conformity. It was also at the close of this period that the struggle began to come to its terminus, when religious toleration was decreed at the beginning of the reign of William and Mary.

Though living to enjoy a measure of it for but two brief years, Baxter was a prophet who heralded the coming of the day when followers of the Lord of Love would cease their struggling over non-essentials such as the vestments of the Clergy, forms of worship and types of Church polity, and dwell together in the peace of Christ. In the terrible struggles of his day, he took a middle ground. He refused to conform to the Church of England, yet he opposed the extreme individualists who swung to the other side of the pendulum. He associated with no particular party and sought for the establishment of none to the exclusion of all the rest. He "always endeavoured to avoid the falsehood of extremes, and to find truth and harmony in the golden mean."<sup>1</sup> His motto was:

. . . . .

1. Lewis, "Richard Baxter", Hastings's Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. II, p. 440.

"In things necessary, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity."<sup>1</sup>

He stood at the apex of the mount of religious toleration while the opposing parties struggled with each other in the valley below, calling them to fellowship on a higher plane. Although he was unsuccessful in getting men to follow him while he lived, yet "Perhaps no thinker has exerted so great an influence upon Nonconformity as Baxter has done, and that not in one direction only, but in every form of development, doctrinal, ecclesiastical and practical."<sup>2</sup> And when he is seen in the light of the history of the English Church, his views, which nearly always pointed towards the golden mean, become more intelligible. They are brought into clearer outline by the extremes of all parties between which he steered. And the man himself, seen as an important actor in the living scenes of his day, speaks a clearer message to our own.

. . . . .

1. Lewis, Op. Cit., p. 441.
2. "Richard Baxter", Encyclopaedia Britannica, Edition XIV, Vol. III, p. 238, an unsigned article.

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