

## PROTESTANT NONCONFORMIST TEXTS VOLUME 1

Like the other volumes in the four-volume series of which it is a part, this book breaks new ground in gathering and introducing texts relating to the origins of English and Welsh Dissent. Through contemporary writings it provides a lively insight into the life and thought of early Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists and Quakers, as well as of smaller groups no longer extant.

# PROTESTANT NONCONFORMIST TEXTS

**Series editor: Alan P. F. Sell**

This series of four substantial volumes is designed to demonstrate the range of interests of the several Protestant Nonconformist traditions from the time of their Separatist harbingers in the sixteenth century to the end of the twentieth century. It represents a major project of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries. Each volume comprises a General Introduction followed by texts illustrative of such topics as theology, philosophy, worship and socio-political concerns. This work has never before been drawn together for publication in this way. Prepared by a team of twelve editors, all of whom are expert in their areas and drawn from a number of the relevant traditions, it provides a much-needed comprehensive view of Nonconformity told largely in the words of those whose story it is. The works will prove to be an invaluable resource to scholars, students, academics and specialist and public libraries, as well as to a wider range of church, intellectual and general historians.

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# Protestant Nonconformist Texts

## Volume 1

1550 to 1700

*Edited by*  
R. TUDUR JONES

*with*  
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1550 - 1700

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## Series Editor's Preface

I had long felt the need of a series which would present texts from the history and thought of Protestant Nonconformity in England and Wales in such a way that the breadth of the Nonconformists' interests, the extent and variety of their activities, and the depth of their devotion from the days of the sixteenth-century Separatists onwards would become plain. When the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries was formally constituted on 23 October 1993, with the objective of sharing intelligence and facilitating co-operative scholarly activity across the several denominational boundaries, I formally proposed the preparation of a series of Protestant Nonconformist Texts to the membership.

There was unanimous agreement that a need existed which could, and should, be met. It was determined that the series should comprise four volumes covering the periods 1550–1700, the eighteenth century, the nineteenth century and the twentieth century; and that each volume should be in the hands of a co-ordinating editor assisted by two co-operating editors drawn from different church traditions. The secretaries of the member societies, with the guidance of their respective committees, nominated scholars who might be approached to serve as editors. I am pleased to say that within a month the twelve editors were mustered, and I am most appreciative of their enthusiasm for the task, and of the expeditious way in which they have carried it out. It is proper to make special and grateful mention of the late Reverend Professor R. Tudur Jones who, in addition to serving as the co-ordinating editor of the first volume – a task he completed within days of his sudden and much-lamented death on 23 July 1998 – also cordially agreed to act as consultant on Welsh matters to the editors of all four volumes. The sudden death of the Reverend Dr Ian Sellers, a contributing editor of Volume II, has left a further significant gap in the ranks of scholars of English Nonconformity, as has the passing of the Reverend Dr Arthur Long, a contributing editor to this volume, whose death was announced as Volumes I and IV were in the press.

The editors were given a fairly free hand in the organisation of their volumes: indeed, the nature of the materials has been permitted to suggest the layout of the several volumes. It is claimed that the order of each volume is clear and justifiable, even if in format one may differ slightly from another.

It is hoped that the series will prove helpful to students and interested readers, and that scholars may find it useful to have a checklist of sources which, though necessarily limited by considerations of space, is intended as an appetiser and a stimulus to further quarrying.

Above all, it is hoped that worthy tribute is here paid to those who, often at great personal cost, and in face of socio-political obstacles of various kinds, declared their faith and bore their witness. Indeed (to advert to realities, not to utter a lament), in a time of general apologetic caution, widespread doctrinal ignorance

*Series Editor's Preface*

and apathy, fitful ecumenism, queried national institutions and overall numerical decline among the Protestant Nonconformists of England and Wales, it may even be that forebears have something to teach those who inherit their mantle – and any others who may care to listen.

On behalf of my editorial colleagues I should like to thank Sarah Lloyd, Liz Pearce and all at Ashgate Publishing for their commitment to this project and for the care they have lavished upon it.

Alan P. F. Sell

## Preface

This collection of documents is the first in a series which is intended to illustrate the development of Protestant Nonconformity in England and Wales. This volume is inevitably highly selective but the extensive bibliography should make it possible for readers to explore this aspect of Christian history in greater detail. We have depended upon the advice and assistance of many people. We have drawn upon the resources of The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, and of Dr Williams's Library, London. At the University of Wales, Bangor, the Welsh Librarian, Mr Rheon Pritchard, has been most helpful, as well as Dr Densil Morgan and Dr Geraint Tudur of the School of Theology and Religious Studies. The expenses incurred by Dr Rosemary Moore in preparing the Quaker material were largely met by a grant from the Edith Ellis Trust and she has drawn heavily on the advice and assistance of Mr Malcolm Thomas, the Friends House Librarian and his staff at the Friends House Library, London. Dr Hugh Pyper proposed and most kindly edited the extract from Robert Barclay's writings. Mr Cecil Sharman advised on Isaac Penington and Professor Edwin B. Bronner on William Penn. Ms Elisa Glines helped with the transcription of Margaret Fell's letter from the Thirnbeck MSS. Valuable comments and advice were also received from Dr Hugh Barbour, Dr Daniel Christopher, Professor J. William Frost, Dr Douglas Gwyn, Dr H. Larry Ingle, Dr Phyllis Mack, Dr Geoffrey F. Nuttall, Mr Joseph Pickvance and Mr John Punshon. None of these scholars is in any way responsible for the use that has been made of their contributions. The general editor of the series, Professor Alan P. F. Sell, has monitored our progress with unfailing sympathy and generosity.

To all these, we extend our warmest gratitude. But any errors or faults in the volume are the responsibility of the editors.

R. Tudur Jones



## Abbreviations

BQ	W. C. Braithwaite, <i>The Beginnings of Quakerism</i>
CHST	<i>Congregational Historical Society Transactions</i>
CJ	<i>The Journal of George Fox</i> (ed. N. Penney, Cambridge edition)
CR	<i>Calamy Revised</i> (ed. A. G. Matthews)
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
DQB	<i>Dictionary of Quaker Biography</i> , Friends House, London
DWB	<i>Dictionary of Welsh Biography</i>
EED	Champlin Burrage, <i>Early English Dissenters</i>
EQL	Early Quaker Letters, 1952 (ed. G. F. Nuttall: unpublished but available in the main libraries)
EQW	Barbour and Roberts, <i>Early Quaker Writings</i>
JFHS	<i>Journal of the Friends Historical Society</i>
LEF	<i>Letters of Early Friends</i> (ed. A. R. Barclay)
NIDCC	<i>The new International Dictionary of the Christian Church</i> (ed. J. D. Douglas)
NJ	<i>The Journal of George Fox</i> (ed. J. L. Nickalls)
ODDC	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church</i> (ed. F. L. Cross)
QPE	H. Barbour, <i>Quakers in Puritan England</i>
SPQ	W. C. Braithwaite, <i>The Second Period of Quakerism</i>
VCH	Victoria County History



# Introduction

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word 'Nonconformist' was first used in 1619 and it meant 'one who, while adhering to the doctrine of the Church of England, refused to conform to its discipline and practice (chiefly in the matter of certain ceremonies)'. Thus the authors of *An Apologeticall Narration* (1644) refer to Thomas Cartwright and his colleagues in the age of Elizabeth as the 'good old Nonconformists'. But, continues the *Oxford Dictionary*, 'after the passing of the Act of Uniformity of 1662 and the consequent ejection from their livings of those ministers who refused to conform' the word was used to refer to 'a member of a religious body which is separated from the Church of England' and so became synonymous with 'Protestant Dissenter'. In fact the word 'Dissenter' began to be used in a general sense as early as the 1640s. Thus we find Dr John Owen in the appendix, 'On Toleration', to his sermon before the House of Commons, 31 January 1648, referring to 'those dissenters who are known by the names of Presbyterians and Independents'.<sup>1</sup> After the passing of the Toleration Act in 1689, 'Dissenters' came into common use to signify those whose limited freedom to worship was assured by that Act.

In selecting documents for inclusion in this collection we have used the word 'Nonconformist' in a more inclusive way than its history, strictly interpreted, would permit. Thus we have included quotations referring to Elizabethan 'Separatists' although their contemporaries would not have called them 'Nonconformists', as well as those in the period before 1662 considered by our contemporary historians to be the precursors of modern Nonconformist denominations.

The history of Nonconformity moves through five closely interconnected stages. First was the period coinciding with the reign of Elizabeth when the main principles of protest were being developed in defiance of official oppression. The second stage, beginning with the accession of James I and extending to about 1640, was characterised by gradual growth whose consequences became evident in the third stage. At the same time these were years of increasing frustration when hundreds of Nonconformists emigrated to seek a wider freedom in the Netherlands and New England. The third stage was the period of ascendancy extending from 1640 to 1660 in which Presbyterians and Independents secured access to the centres of power. At the same time there emerged at this time a new type of vigorous sectarian Nonconformity. With the restoration of the monarchy and the Church of England in 1660 came a long period of persecution which failed to uproot Nonconformity and which in many ways brought out the best elements in it. This stage continued up to the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the subsequent accession of William and Mary. And so the last ten years of the period covered in this book ushered in the age of toleration.

When interpreted in a broad sense, Nonconformity is seen as a very complex movement. The amount of material available to illustrate its many facets is

enormous. A selection of documents restricted to one volume therefore can hope to do no more than illustrate some of the various aspects of the movement as it developed in the period up to 1700. A parallel selection could easily be made consisting of quite different documents.

The government, liturgy and theology of the Church of England were 'by law defined'. To be a Nonconformist meant disobeying the laws of the land. So it could be said, albeit in a negative way, that Nonconformity was defined by law. That is why a selection of relevant portions of the laws that had a bearing on the actions and beliefs of Nonconformists are included. The implementation of the laws and their administration involved the use of several modes of discipline. The ecclesiastical courts were still active in the period between 1559 and 1700 although their authority was diminishing. Their records, where they have survived, often cast a vivid light on the treatment meted out to Nonconformists.<sup>2</sup> Much the same is true of the civil courts particularly in the period after 1662 when Nonconformists were accused of infringing the Penal Code. The Court of High Commission, although originally an ad hoc commission, had become by 1580 a permanent institution and under the guidance of John Whitgift, who became archbishop of Canterbury in 1583, it proved an efficient instrument for eliminating overt Puritanism amongst the clergy.<sup>3</sup> Cases involving Nonconformists inevitably took up much of its time. Now and again cases involving them were tried in the Court of Star Chamber, whose existence as an institution separate from the Privy Council can be dated from about 1540.<sup>4</sup> The implementation of the laws relating to religion involved also pronouncements by archbishops. Examples of such are Matthew Parker's *Advertisements* of 1566 or the articles which John Whitgift formulated in 1583 in which preaching, catechising or reading in private houses were prohibited while no one was to exercise ecclesiastical functions unless he had subscribed to the royal supremacy and promised to abide strictly by the Book of Common Prayer and the Thirty-nine Articles. Equally demanding were the detailed visitation articles produced by William Laud in the 1630s. The monarch was, of course, the 'Supreme Governor' of the Church of England and as such could intervene in religious matters. Elizabeth had no qualms about doing this as when she instructed Archbishop Grindal to prohibit the holding of prophesyings. The *Book of Sports*, first issued by James I in 1617 and reissued in 1633 by Charles I, described what recreations were permissible on Sundays. But the most dramatic example of royal intervention was the promulgation by Charles II of the Declaration of Indulgence in 1672.

Naturally the Puritans in general were compelled to seek relief from the legal restraints upon them by parliamentary action. An early example of such action was the *Admonition to the Parliament* of 1572 which expressed the views of those like Thomas Cartwright (1535–1603), John Field (1545–88) and Thomas Wilcox (1549?–1608) who hoped that the support they had among members of parliament would lead to further reformation of the Church of England and bring about amongst other things the replacement of its episcopal structure by some form of Presbyterianism. They were disappointed in their hopes and the movement had collapsed by 1591. Its hopes revived with the accession of James I in 1603 and they



found expression in the Millenary Petition which was presented to him on his way south. These hopes, however, did not find favour with the King.

Official representations to the authorities were not the only means of protest open to Nonconformists. A constant flow of books and pamphlets promulgated their views. Most of these were contributions to the learned debate about the various points of difference between the parties. Such were the tomes produced by the likes of Thomas Cartwright, William Ames (1576–1633) and John Cotton (1584–1652). The more radical agitators, however, dared to defy censorship by producing pamphlets on illegal printing presses. The most notorious of these productions was the series of seven pamphlets known as the Martin Marprelate Tracts, the first of which appeared about October 1588 and the last in September 1589. Not all Nonconformists were satisfied with printed declarations of their views. The more moderate amongst this group felt that practical action was necessary. One such activity was to organise a ‘prophesying’. A group of ministers would meet every Saturday morning to expound scripture, each one taking it in turn to address the meeting. The public were invited to be present and were permitted to ask questions. But this experiment in adult education was prohibited when the Queen in May 1577 ordered them to be suppressed, a step she took on her own account when Archbishop Edmund Grindal (1519?–83) refused to obey the order. After a meeting of some sixty leaders at Cockfield in Suffolk an attempt was made to organise groups of parishes into voluntary presbyteries. This ‘Classis Movement’ blossomed mainly in the Midlands and East Anglia and its best-known centre was at Dedham in Essex. These attempts to graft a nascent form of Presbyterianism on the Church of England were short-lived and succumbed under the pressure brought upon their instigators by John Whitgift (c. 1530–1604) and Richard Bancroft (1544–1610), bishop of London from 1597 and Whitgift’s successor at Canterbury from 1604.

These activities took place within the Church of England but there were more impatient spirits who raised fundamental questions about the doctrine and the administration of the Established Church. For them the logical course to take was to leave it and establish new churches. These were the Separatists. Such groups existed early on in the reign of Elizabeth. The congregation associated with the name of Richard Fitz is an example. They caused some anxiety to the authorities and the members were arrested and closely examined. Soon the case for separation from the Church of England was argued with greater consistency and vigour. The pioneer in this activity was Robert Browne (c. 1553–1633) who together with his friend Robert Harrison (d. 1585), established a Separatist Church at Norwich about 1580. Browne expounded his views on the nature of the church in *A Treatise of Reformation without Taryng for Anie* (1582). Separatism in London moved in the same direction. The leaders, Henry Barrow and John Greenwood, both of whom were executed in 1593, were arrested in 1586 and after May 1587 were imprisoned together at the Fleet Prison. They were able to acquire writing materials and to provide the public with accounts of the treatment to which they were subjected as well as to publicise their views. Barrow’s book *A Brief Discoverie of the False Church* is an unsparing indictment of the Church of England and, together with his

other writings, expounds his understanding of the nature of the Christian Church. Towards the end of 1592 John Penry, who had been deeply implicated in the printing of the Marprelate Tracts, became a member of the London Separatist Church. He too was executed in 1593. It is true that the Separatists formed a minute proportion of the population but their significance lies not in the undoubted bitterness of their writing but in the fundamental challenge they made to conceptions of the nature of the Christian Church and of its relationship with the secular power which had dominated European culture ever since the reign of the Emperor Constantine the Great.

Despite the fact that some fifty-two of its members were in prison by 1590, the London Separatist congregation organised itself into a gathered church in September 1592 and elected Francis Johnson (1562–1618) to be its pastor and the learned John Greenwood (d. 1609) as its teacher. In April 1593 the ‘Act to retain the Queen’s subjects in obedience’ was passed and decreed banishment for incorrigible Nonconformists. Harsh as its wording was, it prompted the Separatists to seek a safe haven in Amsterdam. Soon Separatism was to gain support in the neighbourhood of Gainsborough, where John Smyth (c. 1565–1612) was the leading light, and Scrooby, where the church was organised by John Robinson (c. 1575–1625). Following the example of the London Separatists they too emigrated. Smyth and his flock settled at Amsterdam where he adopted Baptist principles about 1609 and embraced an Arminian theology. He and his supporters were admitted into the Mennonite Church. Those members of the congregation who disagreed with his disavowal of his own baptism supported Thomas Helwys in his opposition to Smyth and returned to England in 1612, thus pioneering the tradition of the General Baptists. Because these differences led to animated controversy in Amsterdam, John Robinson and his people moved to Leyden where he became a much respected figure in the life of the university and town. They were not entirely happy there and sought a new home. With this end in view many of them emigrated to New England and found fame as the ‘Pilgrim Fathers’. Robinson did not share the bitterness of the earlier Separatists. In his book *Of Religious Communion Private and Public* (1614) he had argued that to refuse to participate in the official church actions of the Church of England did not entail a refusal to join in personal religious acts with individual godly members of the church. By 1617 he had taken a further step in *A Treatise of the Lawfulness of Hearing of the Ministers of the Church of England*, published posthumously in 1634, and argued that Separatists could attend parish services in order to hear ministers whose sermons were edifying and scriptural without compromising their opposition to the pattern of government in the church. This ‘semi-Separatism’, as it has been called, found support on English soil when Robinson’s friend Henry Jacob (1563–1624) founded the Independent Church at Southwark in 1616.

The objections of these early Nonconformists to the religion by law established centred on four topics. First, there was intense disquiet amongst all Nonconformists about the Book of Common Prayer. They asked themselves whether it conformed with the prescriptions of the New Testament and decided that it did not. The central concern of Christianity is the relationship between people and God.

Never has that concern been expressed more succinctly and more memorably than in the opening words of the Shorter Westminster Catechism, 'What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever.' Amongst the many implications of this conviction was the desire to ensure that fellowship with God was maintained and enriched in ways pleasing to God and in consonance with his revealed will in Holy Scripture. It was therefore little wonder that such an animated discussion about Christian worship should have exercised the minds of religious leaders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Early in the reign of Elizabeth controversy began about the vestments which clergy were instructed to wear in accordance with the ornaments rubric of the 1559 Book of Common Prayer. The 1552 book had merely required priests and deacons to wear a surplice but in the 1559 book they were commanded to wear alb and vestment or cope. The protesters would not wear them. Archbishop Matthew Parker at the behest of the Queen sought to preserve compliance with the rubric by issuing his *Advertisements* in 1566 and threatening suspension upon all clergymen who did not wear the required vestments. But the disobedience continued despite the punishment meted out from time to time by the authorities. Dissatisfaction with the Book of Common Prayer was not confined to the question of vestments. Richard Hooker (c. 1554–1600), the foremost apologist for the Anglican Church in the reign of Elizabeth, summarised what Puritans said about the Prayer Book in these words: 'it is not orderly read, nor gestured as becometh, ... it hath a number of short cuts or shreadings, which may be better called wishes than Prayers: it useth the Lord's Prayer too often; ... it craveth earthly things too much; ... some things it asketh unseasonably, when they need not be prayed for, as deliverance from thunder and tempest, when no danger is nigh'.<sup>5</sup> These and many other detailed criticisms sound petty and niggling but the fundamental objections were serious enough such as the objection to kneeling when receiving Communion because it smacked of adoring the elements and the objection to making the sign of the Cross over a child at baptism because it suggested that it produced a miraculous transformation such as immediate regeneration. And the Baptists, of course, objected to the baptism of infants. Unless the New Testament stipulated what a minister must wear and do in the conduct of divine service, then the secular authority could not make them compulsory.

The second topic which made many Nonconformists dissatisfied with the Church of England was episcopacy. Here much of their thinking was conditioned by the fact that the Reformed churches on the Continent of Europe had rejected episcopacy. As with worship, so with church government, the crucial question was what kind of ministry was authorised by the New Testament. There was no unanimity amongst Nonconformists on this topic. In fact, there were those who combined objections to the stipulations of the Prayer Book about worship with acceptance of episcopacy, although not necessarily the precise type of episcopacy to be found in the Church of England. Then there were those who wished to substitute some form of presbyterianism for episcopacy and this group was to become very influential by the time the Long Parliament met. Then there were the more radical Nonconformists who argued for a congregational form of church polity.

The third point of protest had to do with the church courts and their Canon Law. Naturally, people who had suffered at the hands of these institutions had very strong feelings about them. Again, they felt that there was no warrant in Scripture for them and that discipline in the church should be in accordance with biblical principles and not in accordance with a system of law that had persisted since the Middle Ages.

A fourth point of disagreement concerned the relationship between church and state. This was a difficult and dangerous topic in the period because to criticise the integration between the Established Church and the state could only too easily be construed as treason. Here again there was a diversity of opinion amongst Nonconformists. Some merely wanted a revision of the relationship in order to ensure that the church was not oppressed by political considerations. But the more radical protesters, and the Separatists particularly, did raise questions that in a later era would imply the disestablishment of the church. But the time for such a demand lay in the future.

Thus by 1620 Nonconformity had found expression in a variety of forms. There were ministers within the Church of England who deviated from the strict stipulations of the laws of religion and the orders of archbishops and bishops. There were also those outside the Church who adopted the views of John Robinson and appreciated the piety and theology of these Puritan ministers but felt bound in conscience to form churches separate from the Church of England. Alongside them were those Separatists or Brownists who rejected any kind of communion public or private with the Established Church.

The harassment suffered by Nonconformists of all kinds reached a new pitch with the advent to power of William Laud (1573–1645). His election to the see of London in 1628, followed by his elevation to Canterbury in 1633, provided him with the authority to attack Puritanism by a rigorous application of his High Church principles. The Separatists and the Pilgrim Fathers were not the only ones who sought freedom from his attentions by emigrating. Many thousands went to New England or to the Netherlands. Despite losing many able leaders, Nonconformity was by no means entirely uprooted. That it had been quietly spreading in the kingdom became obvious in a dramatic way after the Long Parliament began its work in 1640.

Thus all Nonconformists were dissatisfied with the Elizabethan religious settlement but they were not all dissatisfied for the same reasons nor to the same extent. In addition people's attitudes were affected by powerful economic, social and political influences at work during the period with which we are concerned. The state was seeking to maintain stability in a volatile society where brutality and disorder were never far from erupting into something much more serious. There was a prolonged crisis in the economy. The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries experienced a distressing escalation of inflation which continued from about 1510 up to the outbreak of the Civil Wars. In the 1590s domestic prices rose alarmingly because of bad harvests and government expenditure on wars. Conditions in this respect grew even worse in the 1630s. If the price index be put at 158 in 1540, by 1638 it had reached 707. The price of grain, for

example, rose from 154 points in 1540 to 569 in 1639. It is true that the wages of agricultural labourers had risen threefold between 1509 and 1640 but their purchasing power had halved.<sup>6</sup> Obviously such a severe economic crisis bore hard upon the workers of the land and fuelled a desperation that was to find expression amongst the radical sects of the Interregnum. But it also deeply affected the professional classes, the people who were not closely attached to the soil and could not produce their own food. Naturally, they became increasingly uneasy. There was deep dissatisfaction with government administration and it found a focus in growing criticism of the central institutions of state and the monarchy in particular. The condition of the poor was often desperate. Many of the well-to-do found their wealth being eroded while those who had the means could buy them out. In addition, the immense increase in internal trade from 1570 onwards brought into being a mobile class of people who were wanderers and wayfarers. They were a challenge to any settled order, mercantile pilgrims whose spiritual equivalent was John Bunyan's Christian who had no settled home this side of the Eternal City. The very foundations of the patriarchal, feudal society were cracking. The ferment was strongly affected also by the influence of the Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation upon the attitudes of the intellectuals. No longer could cultured people be expected to be governed by principles elaborated by a handful of leaders at the behest of a monarch. There was a growing conviction that personal independence was a right to be treasured. The doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers might emerge initially as a spiritual and theological principle but it could very easily be transformed into a political demand for equality of opportunity. The protagonists of the ecclesiological convictions of Presbyterians, Separatists and Independents might insist stridently that these were no threat to social order. In practice, however, they did confer on all the members of their respective congregations a real local self-government in the religious sphere which could without difficulty be transformed into democratic political programmes. It was little wonder that their activities prompted the sharp disapproval of Queen Elizabeth, Charles I and William Laud. It is therefore possible to argue that the defenders of the Church of England were inspired by a frequently unacknowledged anxiety about preserving social order while their Nonconformist opponents were motivated by a desire for social change.

Whatever measure of truth there is in these possibilities they should not be allowed to justify cynicism about the sincerity of the theological concerns of the participants. No economic and social crisis is without its spiritual repercussions in the minds and hearts of those who are caught up in it. It was an age when people took the wrath of God seriously. As John Penry put it:

We feel the Lords hand many waies against vs at this time in regard of the scarcity of all things, and especially of victuals, and great number of poor ... The vnseasonable haruest 1585 yealded very little Corne ... The winter 1585 destroyed al their cattle wel near, so that now the very sinowe of their mainteinance is gone ... This famine is for our sinnes, the Lord without our repentaunce saith it shal continue.<sup>7</sup>

The lengthy and tortuous theological controversies that erupted in the reign of Elizabeth and subsequently might seem highly academic to a more secular age but in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they were intensely relevant precisely because famine, poverty and oppression were closely connected with God's displeasure with a disobedient people. All these controversial topics were matters of intense seriousness for the Christians of that age and it behoves us to consider with patience and understanding the theological disquisitions that they produced in such abundance. And so in our selection of documents we have sought to give examples, if no more, of this side of the Nonconformist experience.

The period between 1603 and 1640 was a frustrating time for Nonconformists of all kinds. Those who found it possible to continue in the ministry of the Church of England were reconciled to biding their time, concentrating on the educational, spiritual and moral aspects of their work and eschewing for the time being any thought of parliamentary agitation. Others withdrew to New England or the Netherlands, many of them looking forward to a time when they could return and continue the struggle to reform the Church of England. Then in 1640 with the convening of the Long Parliament a remarkable opportunity was offered them. As early as 11 December 1640 the citizens of the City of London expressed their criticisms of the Church in the Root and Branch Petition submitted to the House of Commons demanding that the existing ecclesiastical government 'with all its dependencies, roots and branches, may be abolished' and enumerating in detail twenty-four objections. Reforms followed one another rapidly. On 5 July 1641 the Court of Star Chamber was abolished as well as the High Commission. Then on 1 December 1641 the House of Commons presented to the King its Grand Remonstrance on the state of the kingdom, enumerating complaints about most aspects of government policy. But the King's Proclamation on Religion on 10 December demonstrated that he was quite unmoved by this agitation and commanded that the services of the Church of England should be conducted in accordance with the laws of the land. The tensions between King and Parliament intensified and at last the King decided to take the field against Parliament. On 22 August 1642 he raised his banner at Nottingham and declared the Commons and their soldiers to be traitors. So the first Civil War began.

It soon became obvious to Parliament that it could not effectively prosecute the war without help from Scotland. That help was secured by signing the Solemn League and Covenant. The signatories undertook, amongst other things, 'the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government, according to the Word of God, and the example of the best reformed Churches'. In the preceding negotiations, the Scots had wanted the covenant to include a specific commitment to establishing Presbyterianism. Two of the parliamentary commissioners, Henry Vane and Philip Nye, who were Independents, objected and it was they who insisted on the words 'according to the Word of God'. In order to fulfil its promise, Parliament convened 'an Assembly of learned, godly and judicious Divines' to advise it how best to bring the Church of England 'into a nearer conformity with the Church of Scotland and other Reformed Churches abroad'. This was the Westminster Assembly which

held its sittings from 1 July 1643 until 22 February 1649. It was to make a very significant contribution to Calvinistic theology that was to influence not only the Nonconformists but many thousands of Christians in many countries over the next three centuries. Its Confession of Faith was completed on 4 December 1646 and approved by Parliament on 20 June 1648. It also produced two catechisms which were completed in the autumn of 1647. The Shorter Catechism became exceptionally popular and for several generations was used as an educational tool in the Nonconformist churches. The Savoy Declaration, produced by the delegates of the Independent churches in England and Wales in 1658 hardly differs in its dogmatic sections from the Westminster Confession and the same is true of the Baptist Confession of 1677. If there was agreement on dogmatic theology in the Westminster Assembly, there were acute differences on the point of church government. A small group of Independents, usually referred to as the 'Dissenting Brethren', objected to the proposals of the majority to institute a thoroughly presbyterian system on the Scottish model. The leaders of this dissenting group were Philip Nye (1596?–1672), Thomas Goodwin (1800–80), William Bridge (1600?–1670), Jeremiah Burroughes (1599–1646) and Sidrach Simpson (1600?–55) and they were supported by others from time to time. They expounded their main principles in *An Apologeticall Narration* (1643). The debates in the Assembly provoked a fierce pamphlet warfare in the country. But the Presbyterians carried the day and drew up plans to reform the Church of England in ways consonant with their own convictions.

Calvinism was the theology favoured by the majority of Nonconformists and it had some able expositors in men like John Owen (1616–83), Thomas Goodwin and John Bunyan (1628–88). There were those who were critical of the Westminster Standards. The Independent John Goodwin (1594?–1665), for example, was a vociferous Arminian and Richard Baxter (1615–91), the most prolific of all Puritan authors, insisted on modifying the accepted Calvinism. The Quakers also were vigorous and trenchant critics of Calvinism.

During the turbulent years between 1640 and 1650 virtually every group of Christians was at one time or another Nonconformist. The Roman Catholic recusants had, of course, been Nonconformists from the Church by law established ever since the accession of Elizabeth. Their faith was still proscribed but Oliver Cromwell himself showed a moderation towards them that was quite exceptional at the time. He desired to assist those among them who abided by the law. English Catholics (in contrast to Irish Catholics) had no real reason to feel bitter towards the Protector.<sup>8</sup>

The Anglicans experienced mixed fortunes. It is difficult if not impossible to compute the exact number of incumbents who were ejected between 1643 and 1660. John Walker in his book *The Sufferings of the Clergy* (1714) sought to provide as full a picture as he could but A. G. Matthews in his *Walker Revised* (1948, 1988) showed that Walker had underestimated the number. Matthews counted 2,425 sequestered benefices, about a thousand more than those listed by Walker but with the prevalence of pluralism it is not possible to estimate accurately how many incumbents suffered as a result. In the case of Wales (with which

Matthews was not concerned) we can be fairly certain that under The Propagation Act (1650) 271 clergymen were ejected with an added 81 in the previous years.<sup>9</sup> Walker was quite justified in writing about 'the sufferings of the clergy' for suffer they did, many hundreds of them. It is true that Anglicans were still able to maintain clandestine services and many priests succeeded in continuing their ministrations unmolested and hundreds were ordained secretly. But the Church of England suffered permanent disruption as a result and, as A. G. Matthews put it, 'Nonconformity had become inevitable'.<sup>10</sup> It would have been possible for us to include documents to illustrate what the experience of refusing to conform meant to Anglicans and Catholics but we have chosen not to do so.

The 1640s saw a remarkable outburst of intellectual energy. Publication of books and pamphlets overwhelmed the official machinery for controlling the press. Ever since Elizabeth's Injunctions of 1559, the government had sought to protect the public from offensive, heretical and seditious ideas. Printers and booksellers were required to seek permission to publish and sell books through the Stationers' Company. Censorship was exercised under the Crown by the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Canterbury. It became impossible to maintain this system as the attack on episcopacy intensified. A parliamentary ordinance on 14 June 1643 sought to reimpose control over the press by appointing licensers to act as censors while the Stationers' Company and the officers of the two Houses were authorised to search for unlicensed presses and to break them up as well as to search for unlicensed books, to confiscate them and apprehend the offenders. But in vain. Not only were illicit books being published but an increasing number of them were arguing openly for toleration. No wonder a Presbyterian like Matthew Newcomen (1610?–69), in his sermon before Parliament on 12 September 1644, insisted that the opinion 'that every man is to be left to the Liberty of his own Religion' which 'if encouraged, (& they are encouraged, if connived at) will open a door to *Turcisme, Judaisme, Atheisme, Polytheisme*, any monster of opinion'.<sup>11</sup> November 1644 saw the publication of the most powerful plea for liberty of printing and freedom in general, namely John Milton's *Areopagitica*. In practice the failure of censorship let loose a flood of books and pamphlets upon the public. George Thomason (d. 1666), the London bookseller, made a hobby of collecting every possible publication issued between 1642 and 1662, by which time he had amassed a collection of no less than 23,000 items. Every conceivable aspect of religion, morality and politics found expression in these publications. The Presbyterian Thomas Edwards (1599–1647) was appalled and on 16 February 1646 the first part of his three-volume *Gangraena* was published, in which he produced a massive list of heresies and of heretics. Similarly Ephraim Pagit (1575?–1647) treated every divergence from Calvinistic orthodoxy as pernicious heresy in his *Heresiography* (1645). Such virulent protests did nothing to stem the expression of divergent and alarming views. It was a time of intense excitement amongst Puritans. There was a feeling that history was moving towards a dramatic climax. The victories of Cromwell and the execution of Charles I on 30 January 1649 intensified the conviction that these events had a profound eschatological significance. The Fifth Monarchy Men were not the only ones who believed that a new age was dawning.



Dr John Owen, for example, in his sermon on 19 April 1650, *The Shaking and Translating of Heaven and Earth* based on Hebrews 12.2, said:

The Lord Jesus Christ, by his mighty power, in these latter days, as anti-christian tyranny draws to its period will so far shake and translate the political heights, governments and strength of the nations, as shall serve for the full bringing in of his own peaceable kingdom – the nations so shaken become thereby a quiet habitation for the people of the Most High.<sup>12</sup>

Owen was not himself a Fifth Monarchist but he was one of those who contributed towards the creation of that feverish atmosphere in which fantastic speculation about God's intervention in worldly matters jostled with sober exposition of the Bible. The clash of ideas led to the formation of groups and parties which caused the authorities, both religious and secular, no little anxiety. Such were William Walwyn (*fl.* 1600–51) and John Lilburne (1614?–57), the leaders of the Levellers; Gerard Winstanley (*fl.* 1648–52) and the Diggers; Ludovicke Muggleton (1609–80) and John Reeve (1608–58), the founders of the Muggletonians, men who, like William Erbury, believed that the Age of the Spirit, the Third Dispensation, had dawned; Vavasor Powell (1617–70) and the Fifth Monarchy Men; Laurence Clarkson (1615–67) who at various times belonged to almost every possible sect, together with Abiezer Coppe (1619–72) are linked with the Antinomian group usually called the Ranters. Then there were such free spirits as John Saltmarsh (d. 1647) and William Dell (d. 1664) whose emphasis on free grace and criticism of legalism laid them also open to the charge of Antinomianism. Several sectarians were critical of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity and agreed with the Unitarianism of John Biddle (1615–62). Amidst all this John Durie (1596–1680) worked diligently but unsuccessfully to promote Christian unity.

These groups were short-lived although many of their ideas were to persist and to reappear in varying contexts in later generations. But there was one notable exception. Amongst all these fascinating personalities none was more impressive than George Fox (1624–91). In his youth he had known what it was to seek the truth amidst the conflicting voices of his religious contemporaries. At last he found rest in 1647 when he was 'convinced' by profoundly moving experiences of the 'infinite love of God', as he put it in his *Journal*, and the reality of the guidance provided by the 'Light Within'. In 1649 he began his mission to proclaim the truth that had been revealed to him. It was a mission which took him through large areas of Britain at the cost of incessant harassment, persecution, insult and imprisonment. His was a heroic career which resulted in the formation of the Religious Society of Friends. Unlike the other groups and sects that flourished during the Interregnum, the Quakers survived to make their unique contribution to modern Christianity.

This was a highly articulate age in religious matters. Nonconformists shared the faith of their contemporaries in the influence of the press. But that enthusiasm was not confined to the printed word. This was one of the most striking periods in the history of preaching, more so in England than in Wales. Preaching was seen as the

foremost means of grace. Thomas Goodwin made the point in a poetical metaphor when he said:

When en ointment box is once opened, then it casts its savour about; and when the juice of the medicinal herb is once strained out and applied, then it heals. And so, it is the spiritual meaning of the word let into the heart which converts it and turns it to God.<sup>13</sup>

It was this conviction that inspired the passing on 22 February 1650 of the Act for the Better Propagation of the Gospel in Wales and of a similar act for the northern counties of England a week later. Naturally, preachers varied considerably in their abilities as communicators. John Owen, for example, admitted that he was envious of John Bunyan's gifts as a preacher. King Charles II once asked Owen why he listened to an uneducated tinker. He replied, 'Could I possess the tinker's abilities for preaching, please your majesty, I would gladly relinquish all my learning'.<sup>14</sup> Owen was rather too modest. He himself was an impressive preacher, as was his colleague, Thomas Goodwin, although doubtless their appeal was to a rather different audience from that which crowded to hear Bunyan on his visits to London. There is no doubt about people's readiness to listen to sermons at least up to the Restoration. Inevitably the Nonconformist congregations diminished during the age of persecution. Alongside the sermon was the lecture although the distinction between them was a very thin one. Some series of lectures were exceptionally long. Joseph Caryl (1602–73) spent twenty-three years expounding the book of Job while William Gouge (1578–1653) lectured on Hebrews for thirty-three years. Preaching or lecturing was usually in the context of a leisurely service. Thus John Howe (1630–1705) on a fast day would begin the day at nine o'clock and continue with prayers, bible readings and sermon until four o'clock with only a brief break for a snack.<sup>15</sup> The willingness of people to listen to sermons and the fact that such large numbers of the sermons were published means that what was said from the pulpits was felt to be relevant to the concerns, hopes and anxieties of the listeners.

The enthusiasm and excitement of the Interregnum came to an abrupt end. On 3 September 1658 Oliver Cromwell died and the Puritan ascendancy ended. When the news was conveyed to the small company that had been praying for the Protector's recovery, Thomas Goodwin expressed his grief in the words of Jeremiah 20.7, 'O Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived'. The death of Cromwell and the events that followed were more than a political disappointment for Nonconformists. They created a profound spiritual crisis. They meant the shattering of those apocalyptic hopes that had been the focus of so many prayers and sermons over the previous years. In view of the increasing turmoil and uncertainty of 1659, both Parliament and the army concluded that the only solution was to invite the exiled king to return to his throne. Charles II landed at Dover on 25 May 1660. Those who had participated in the struggle against the Church of England took heart from the Declaration he had made at Breda on 4 April which promised that there would be 'a liberty to tender consciences, and that no man shall

be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion in matter of religion ... excepting only such persons as shall hereafter be excepted by Parliament'.<sup>16</sup> The Presbyterians hoped that a settlement could be achieved which would make it possible for the Church of England to accommodate them. The King did issue a declaration promising to institute limited episcopacy and relaxing conformity with the Book of Common Prayer,<sup>17</sup> but a further suggestion by the King that an addition to the declaration could admit Anabaptists and Independents provoked the opposition of Richard Baxter.<sup>18</sup> When the original document was laid before the Commons on 28 November, the motion to accept it was lost by 157 votes to 183.

It was becoming obvious that the leaders of the restored Anglican Church had no intention of making any compromises. The new Archbishop of Canterbury, William Juxon (1582–1663), although he had a reputation for tolerance, was a close friend of William Laud and committed to his principles as was his successor, Gilbert Sheldon (1598–1677). The new Archbishop of York was Accepted Frewen (1588–1664) who, although considered by Richard Baxter to be a mild and peaceable man, was well known as the man who had introduced Laudian High Church practices into the college chapel when he was President of Magdalen, Oxford. Discussions between the Presbyterians and the Anglican leaders proved fruitless. On 15 April 1661 the Savoy Conference brought them together but to no purpose. The culmination of the process of restoration came on 19 May 1662 when the royal assent was given to the Act for the Uniformity of Public Prayers, and Administration of the Sacraments. Every minister was required on some Lord's day before the feast of St Bartholomew (24 August 1662) to declare publicly his 'unfeigned Assent and Consent to all and everything contained ... in ... the ... Book of Common Prayer'. All who failed to do so would be automatically deprived. The total number deprived was 1,909 in England,<sup>19</sup> and 120 in Wales.<sup>20</sup> That makes a total of 2,029.

In this way modern Nonconformity emerged in England and Wales. The long struggle to achieve a more comprehensive Established Church was over. Nor was the Act of Uniformity the end of the story. Like Louis XVIII's courtiers the Cavaliers 'had forgotten nothing and learnt nothing'.<sup>21</sup> A series of repressive acts, commonly known as the Clarendon Code, was passed in order to prohibit dissenting religious meetings and to exile ministers from the parishes where they had previously served.

A long period of persecution followed. Persecution was an element in the Nonconformist experience which had far-reaching consequences. Memories of those years of suffering lasted long and it took many generations for them to be extinguished. Persecution engenders fear, suspicion and bitterness but one of the remarkable things about the Nonconformists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is the way in which they produced a theology which transformed persecution into a creative experience. They drew inspiration from the account of Stephen's martyrdom in Acts 6 and 7, from Eusebius's history of the persecutions of the early church and not least from John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. Of course, Foxe's martyrs suffered in defence of the Reformed Church of England against Roman Catholic repression but Nonconformist protesters against their Anglican

successors cast themselves, not without some subtle manipulation of the evidence, in the role of witnesses to the same fundamental truths. In consequence, they were enabled to explain their own sufferings as an integral part of their Christian testimony. So the sufferers were seen as saints and heroes. Their example was to be kept alive from generation to generation. In this way we see them marshalled and extolled on the pages of Edmund Calamy's *Account*. Their deeds of spiritual valour were to be recounted and celebrated down to the end of the nineteenth century and beyond.<sup>22</sup> This very powerful body of thinking led to both a realistic and idealised understanding of persecution. Even before the Restoration, Walter Cradock had summed up the theme in a telling phrase, 'All a Christian's life is spent either in believing, or in doing, or in suffering'.<sup>23</sup>

People who suffer persecution learn the value of liberty. It is one thing to demand freedom for one's own convictions but it takes time to embrace a philosophy or a theology that encourages the promotion of general toleration. That was true of the Nonconformists. Throughout the ages it has been assumed that since Christianity is the true religion, it had a duty to suppress the untruth which was embraced by others. In Elizabethan England, this principle was embraced in the policy that the state should support one form of religion and that its monopoly should be made secure by penal statutes to punish those that advocated other religious forms. Nonconformists did make a substantial contribution to the achievement of toleration, partly by their suffering but partly also by the dissemination of considered arguments. It was no fault of theirs that the aim was not fully achieved in the seventeenth century.

The persecution was intermittent and varied in intensity in different parts of the kingdom. There were examples of friendly co-operation between Anglican clergy and nonconforming ministers. Thus Calamy writes of the Congregationalist Stephen Hughes (1622–88), 'his Moderation and Lively Preaching, recommended him to the Esteem of the sober Part of the Gentry, by whose Connivances he often preach'd in the publick Churches ...'.<sup>24</sup> Such examples were rare. Even when due allowance is made for them, there is little justification for minimising the anxiety, fear and suffering caused by the persecution. Nevertheless it was a period which brought out some of the finest elements in the Nonconformist character. Gone were the days of compromise and of surrendering to the temptations of political and military power. It was now a time to display courage and perseverance. There was the discomfort of making clandestine journeys to inaccessible places such as caves or remote valleys. In towns there was the constant danger that a service would be betrayed by spies and broken up by order of magistrates. And above all there was the peril of imprisonment. It was now a time to concentrate upon the spiritual consolations of their faith and to meditate upon the significance of their failure to consolidate that spiritual and social revolution in which so many of them had participated. Out of the bitterness of these experiences came some of the most memorable products of Nonconformist culture – John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, both in 1671. John Bunyan produced a remarkable autobiography in his *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* (1666) and his literary work reached a brilliant climax in his *Pilgrim's*

*Progress* (1678, 1684) and *The Holy War* (1682). In theology the period was no less fruitful with the appearance of many substantial books by the likes of John Owen, Thomas Goodwin, Richard Baxter, John Howe and many others.

Despite the repression, the Nonconformist congregations continued to meet. The extent of their success in maintaining their work became obvious as their leaders sought licences for themselves and their meeting-places under Charles II's Declaration of Indulgence in 1672–3. It became obvious that the elimination of Nonconformity was beyond the capabilities of the authorities. That did not prevent them from attempting even more repression in the years following 1673. But when James II sought to secure the support of Nonconformists for his own pro-Catholic policies by issuing his two Declarations of Indulgence, it became clear that their support was not forthcoming. It was clear also that his days as king were numbered. With the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the accession of William and Mary, the future of Nonconformity seemed brighter. They greeted the passing of the Act of Toleration in 1689 with profound relief. It is true that it did not grant them the full freedom for which they had hoped and the Unitarians amongst them were not included in the terms of the act. But they were allowed to build their own places of freedom and were ensured of freedom from molestation as long as they licensed their places of worship and their ministers swore the necessary oaths that would secure for them a licence to preach. But the Test and Corporation Acts were still in force. That meant that Nonconformists were excluded from specified public offices and in practice were treated as second-class citizens. It would take several generations of effort to secure full equality with other citizens.

## Notes

1. *Works*, ed. W. H. Goold (Edinburgh, 1862), VIII, 193.
2. For a lucid account of the procedures in the ecclesiastical courts, see W. T. Morgan, 'The Consistory Courts in the Diocese of St. David's, 1660–1858', *Journal of the Historical Society of the Church in Wales*, VII (1957), 5–24 as well as his articles in subsequent issues.
3. For its history, see G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution* (Cambridge, 1968), 217–21 and R. G. Usher, *The Rise and Fall of the High Commission* (Oxford, 1913).
4. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution*, 158–61.
5. *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, V. xxvii. 1.
6. F. P. Braudel and F. Spooner, 'Prices in Europe from 1450 to 1750', *Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, 4 (1967), 378–486; Y. S. Brenner, 'The Inflation of Prices in Early Sixteenth-Century England', *Economic History Review*, II: 14 (1961), 225–39 and 'The Inflation of Prices in England, 1551–1650', *ibid.*, 15 (1962), 266–84; E. H. Phelps Brown and S. V. Hopkins, 'Wage-rates and Prices', *Economica*, 24 (1957), 289–306.
7. *The Aequity of an Humble Supplication* (London, 1587), 58–9.
8. R. T. Petersson, *Sir Kenelm Digby: The Ornament of England* (London, 1956), 256 for Cromwell's close friendship with a well-known Catholic and *ibid.*, 257, for Cromwell's abortive negotiations with the Pope. See also P. H. Hardacre, *The Royalists during the Puritan Revolution* (The Hague, 1956), 119.

9. T. Richards, *Puritan Movement in Wales, 1639 to 1653* (London, 1920), 115–33.
10. A. G. Matthews (ed.), *Calamy Revised* (Oxford, 1934), xvii.
11. *A Sermon, Tending to Set Forth the Right Use of the Disasters that Befall our Armies* (London, 1644), 31ff.
12. *Works*, VIII, 244ff.
13. *Works*, XI, 364.
14. J. Ivimey, *Life of Mr. John Bunyan* (London, 1809), 294.
15. Henry Rogers, *The Life ... of John Howe* (London, 1863), 32.
16. S. R. Gardiner, *The Constitutional Documents of the Puritan Revolution* (London, 1906), 465–7.
17. It is printed in George Gould (ed.), *Documents Relating to the Act of Uniformity* (London, n.d.), 63ff.
18. Matthew Sylvester, *Reliquiae Baxterianae* (London, 1696), I, 277.
19. A. G. Matthews (ed.), *Calamy Revised*, (Oxford, 1934), Introduction, xiii–xiv.
20. *Y Cofiadur* (1962), 8. These figures include all those excluded between 1660 and August 1662.
21. The phrase of Maréchal Dumouriez (1739–1823) – *n'ont rien oublié et n'ont rien appris*.
22. For a penetrating analysis of the Puritan understanding of heroic suffering, see John R. Knott, *Discourses of Martyrdom in English Literature, 1563–1694* (Cambridge, 1993).
23. *Gospel-holinesse* (1651), 363. He compares contemporary experiences of persecution with the martyrdom of Stephen on pp. 60–1.
24. E. Calamy, *Account* (London, 1713), II, 718.

# **PART I**

## **THE BEGINNINGS, 1550–1603**





**Document I.1**

**Early Separatism in London: Letter of Thomas Lever  
to Henry Bullinger, 8 August 1559**

The proclamation referred to, dated 27 December 1558, is in John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation in England*, 4 vols (3rd edn, London, 1735), I.ii.390. For Thomas Lever (1521–77), v., DNB. He was minister of the exiled English congregation at Aarau from September 1556 to January 1559. He arrived back in England the following month. Johann Heinrich Bullinger (1504–75) became Zwingli's successor at Zurich in December 1531. He supported the leaders of the Church of England in their opposition to the Presbyterianism advocated by Thomas Cartwright and others. John Whitgift made his collection of sermons, *The Decades*, required reading for Anglican clergymen. For a study of his extensive influence in England, v., D. Keep, *Henry Bullinger and the Elizabethan Church* (1970). See also G. W. Bromiley (ed.), *Zwingli and Bullinger* (London: Library of Christian Classics, 1953).

The letter is printed in H. Robinson (ed.), *The Zurich Letters* (second series, Cambridge: Parker Society, 1845), 28–30.

On returning from you towards England, in the course of my journey I saw at Strasburgh a proclamation,<sup>1</sup> that is, an edict published by the authority of queen Elizabeth, strictly prohibiting all preaching and exposition of holy scripture, or any change of religion throughout all England, until the ... Parliament, hereafter to be called together, shall have come to a decision respecting religion. When then I returned to England, I saw, according to the proclamation above mentioned, or rather, I shrunk from seeing, masses and all the follies and abominations of popery, everywhere sanctioned by the authority of the laws, and the gospel no where to be met with, except among some persons at London, who were either admitted to preach before the queen at court on a few stated days, only in the time of Lent, or else in a congregation that remained in concealment during the whole time of persecution, and then not venturing forth beyond such private houses as were open to them, on the cessation of persecution, they were permitted by queen Elizabeth in open private houses, but in no public churches. For there had been a congregation of faithful persons concealed in London during the time of Mary, among whom the gospel was always preached, with the pure administration of the sacraments; but during the rigour of the persecution under that queen they carefully concealed themselves, and on the cessation of it under Elizabeth they openly continued in the same congregation. But as their godly mode of worship was condemned by the laws of the realm, the magistrates, though they connived at their frequent assembling in private houses, would not allow them notwithstanding, to occupy the parish churches. In consequence of which, large numbers flocked to them not in the churches, but in private houses. And when the Lord's supper was administered among them, no strangers were admitted, except such as were kept pure from popery and even from the imputation of any evil conduct; or who, ingenuously acknowledging their backsliding and public offence, humbly sought pardon and reconciliation in presence of the whole assembly. I have frequently

been present on such occasions, and have seen many returning with tears, and many too in like manner receiving such persons into communion; so that nothing could be more delightful than the mutual tears of all parties, on the one side lamenting their sins, and on the other congratulating them on their reconciliation and renewed communion in Christ Jesus ...

## **Document I.2**

### **The Vestiarian Controversy**

Thomas Sampson (1517?–89) was dean of Christ Church, Oxford, from 1561 until 1565 when he was ejected on the orders of the Queen for inconformity. Laurence Humphrey (1527?–1590), elected President of Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1561, had also written to Bullinger (see letter in *Zurich Letters* (first series), 151–2, dated 9 February 1566). Bullinger's reply to both men's questions is long but the excerpts in (b) give the essential parts of it.

Sampson's letter is in H. Robinson (ed.), *Zurich Letters 1558–1579* (first series, Cambridge: Parker Society, 1842), 153–5; Bullinger's in *ibid.*, 345–55.

#### **(a) Letter of Thomas Sampson to Henry Bullinger, London, 16 February 1566**

that you may more readily understand the matter in controversy, I have thought it best to reduce it into certain questions, which are these:

I. Whether a peculiar habit, distinct from that of the laity, were ever assigned to the ministers of the gospel in better times, and whether it ought now to be assigned to them in the reformed church?

II. Whether the prescribing habits of this kind be consistent with ecclesiastical and christian liberty?

III. Whether the nature of things indifferent admits of coercion; and whether any violence should be offered to the consciences of the many who are yet not persuaded?

IV. Whether any new ceremonies may be instituted, or superadded to what is expressly commanded in the word?

V. Whether it be lawful to revive the Jewish ceremonies respecting the habit of the priesthood, and which were abolished by Christ?

VI. Whether it be expedient to borrow rites from idolaters or heretics, and to transfer such as are especially dedicated to their sect and religion to the use of the reformed church?

VII. Whether conformity and general agreement must of necessity be required in ceremonies of this kind?

VIII. Whether those ceremonies may be retained which occasion evident offence?

IX. Whether any ecclesiastical constitutions may be tolerated, which, though from their nature they are free from any thing impious, do not, nevertheless, tend to edification?

X. Whether any thing of a ceremonial nature may be prescribed to the church by the sovereign, without the assent and free concurrence of churchmen?

XI. Whether a man ought thus to obey the decrees of the church; or on account of non-compliance, supposing there is no alternative, to be cast out of the ministry?

XII. Whether good pastors, of unblemished life and doctrine, may rightfully be removed from the ministry on account of their non-compliance with such ceremonies? ...

(b) Henry Bullinger to Laurence Humphrey and Thomas Sampson, 1 May 1566

1. To the question, *whether laws respecting habits ought to be prescribed to ecclesiastics, that they may be distinguished by them from the laity*, I reply, that there is an ambiguity in the word *ought*. For if it is taken as implying what is necessary and appertaining to salvation, I do not think that even the authors of the laws themselves intend such an interpretation. But if it is asserted, that for the sake of decency, and comeliness of appearance, or dignity and order, some such regulation may be made ...

2. *Whether the ceremonial worship of the Levitical priesthood is to be reintroduced into the church?* I reply, if a cap and habit not unbecoming a minister, and free from superstition, are commanded to be used by the clergy, no one can reasonably assert that Judaism is revived ...

3. *Whether is it allowable to have a habit in common with papists?* I answer, it is not yet proved that the pope introduced a distinction of habits into the church; so far from it, that it is clear that such distinction is long anterior to popery. Nor do I see why it should be unlawful to use, in common with papists, a vestment not superstitious, but pertaining to civil regulation and good order ...

6. *Whether the dress of the clergy is a matter of indifference?* It certainly seems such, when it is a matter of civil ordinance, and has respect only to decency and order, in which things religious worship does not consist ...

[The latter part of the letter deals with Sampson's questions. They cover much the same ground as his answers to Laurence's questions but the following excerpt reveals Bullinger's views on active nonconformity.]

*Whether it be more expedient to obey the church, or on account of disobedience to be cast out of the ministry? And whether good pastors may lawfully be removed from the ministry on account of their non-compliance with such ceremonies?* I answer, if in these ceremonies there is no superstition, no impiety, but yet are imposed on godly pastors ... I will certainly allow ... that a burden and bondage is imposed upon them; but I will not allow ... that their station or ministry is on that account to be deserted, and place given to wolves ... or to ministers less qualified than themselves; especially, since there remains the liberty of preaching ...

## **Document I.3**

### **Parker's Advertisements, 1566**

The *Advertisements* were issued by Archbishop Matthew Parker, apparently on his own authority, in order to secure a measure of uniformity with regard to ecclesiastical dress in view of the Puritan protests against the traditional Catholic vestments. The following selection deals with this particular issue.

Text in H. Gee and W. J. Hardy, *Documents Illustrative of English Church History* (London, 1896), 467–75. For Matthew Parker (1504–75), archbishop of Canterbury from 1559, v., J. Strype, *Life and Acts of Matthew Parker* (London, 1711) and modern life by V. J. K. Brook (*Matthew Parker* (Oxford, 1962)).

The 'queen's majesty's Injunctions' are the Royal Injunctions of March 1559, v., Gee and Hardy, *Documents*, 417–42.

Item, in the ministration of the Holy Communion in cathedral and collegiate churches, the principal minister shall use a cope with gospeller and epistoler agreeably; and at all other prayers to be said at the Communion Table, to use no copes but surplices.

Item, that the dean and prebendaries wear a surplice with a silk hood in the choir; and when they preach in the cathedral or collegiate church, to wear their hood.

Item, that every minister saying any public prayers, or ministering the sacraments or other rites of the Church, shall wear a comely surplice with sleeves, to be provided at the charges of the parish; and that the parish provide a decent table standing on a frame for the Communion Table.

Item, that they shall decently cover with carpet, silk, or other decent covering, and with a fair linen cloth (at the time of the ministration) the Communion Table, and to set the Ten Commandments upon the east wall over the said table.

Item, that all communicants do receive kneeling, and as is appointed by the laws of the realm and the queen's majesty's Injunctions ...

## **Document I.4**

### **London Separatists: Edmund Grindal to Henry Bullinger, 11 June 1568**

Edmund Grindal became bishop of London, 1559; archbishop of York, 1570 and archbishop of Canterbury, 1575. For his career, v., P. Collinson, *Archbishop Grindal 1519–1583* (London, 1979). His letter is in *Zurich Letters 1558–1579* (first series), 201–2.

Some London citizens of the lowest order, together with four or five ministers, remarkable neither for their judgment nor learning, have openly separated from us; and sometimes in private houses, sometimes in the fields, and occasionally even in ships, they have held their meetings and administered the sacraments. Besides this,

they have ordained ministers, elders, and deacons, after their own way, and have even excommunicated some who had seceded from their church. And because masters Laurence Humphrey, Sampson, Lever, and others, who have suffered so much to obtain liberty in respect of things indifferent, will not unite with them, they now regard them as semi-papists, and will not allow their followers to attend their preaching. The number of this sect (*hujus factionis*) is about two hundred, but consisting of more women than men. The privy council have lately committed the heads of this faction (*hujus factionis*) to prison, and are using every means to put a timely stop to this sect.

## Document I.5

### The Plumbers' Hall Congregation

On 19 June 1567 a company of about one hundred persons had gathered at Plumbers' Hall in London under pretence of celebrating a wedding. They were apprehended and fifteen of the leaders were arrested. The following day, 20 June, eight of them were examined by two Ecclesiastical Commissioners, Edmund Grindal, bishop of London, and Gabriel Goodman, dean of Westminster, the Lord Mayor of London and seven lay persons.<sup>1</sup>

In the 1593 edition of this document the printer added this information: 'Here they entered into a question of ministering the sacraments in a private house. And further is not come into my hands.'

The report is slightly abbreviated. It was first published in *A Parte of a Register* (Middelburgh, 1593) and in W. Nicholson (ed.), *The Remains of Edmund Grindal* (Cambridge: Parker Society, 1843), 201–16, and in part in H. C. Porter, *Puritanism in Elizabethan England* (History in Depth Series, Cambridge, 1970), 80–94. It is the earliest surviving Puritan document of this kind and is a rare example of how the High Commission conducted an examination. From this account it is clear that none of the usual judicial procedures of a court were observed. No oaths were tendered and no counsel were present either for the prosecution or the defence. Grindal conducted the proceedings and at this time his primary concern was pastoral. His attitude was to change later on. For the significance of this account in the history of ecclesiastical discipline, v., R. G. Usher, *The Rise and Fall of the High Commission* (Oxford, 1913), 56–8.

When we were come in, we did our obeisance, and they bade us come near, and the bishop's registrar called us by name: John Smith, William Nixon, William White, James Ireland, Robert Hawkins, Thomas Boweland, and Richard Morecraft. The bishop said, Is here all? One answered, No, there are ten or eleven in the Compter.<sup>2</sup>

*Bishop Grindal:-* I know that well enough.

The bishop said unto the mayor: My lord, will you begin?

The mayor said unto him, I pray you begin.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Well then, here you have showed yourselves disorderly, not only in absenting yourselves from your parish churches, and the assemblies of

other Christians in this commonwealth, which do quietly obey the Queen's proceedings, and serve God in such good order, as the Queen's grace, and the rest having authority and wisdom, have set forth and established by Act of Parliament; but also you have gathered together, and made assemblies, using prayers and preachings, yea, and ministering the sacraments among yourselves; and thus you gather together to the number of an hundred; whereof there were about fourteen or fifteen of you sent to prison. And our being here is to will you to leave off, or else you shall see the Queen's letter,<sup>3</sup> and the council's hand at it. (Then he opened it, and showed it us, but would not read it. The effect of it, he said, was to move us to be conformable by gentleness, or else at the first we should lose our freedom of the city, and abide that would follow.) And moreover, you have hired the Plumbers' Hall, saying, you would have it for a wedding. Where is Boweland?

*Thomas Boweland:-* Here I am, and if it please you.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Did you hire the hall?

One of us said: 'In that we said to the sheriffs, it was for a wedding, we did it to save the woman harmless, and at her request.'

*Bishop Grindal:-* Yea, but you must not lie; that is against the admonition of the apostle: 'Let every man speak the truth to his neighbour.' And herein you have put the poor woman to great blame, and enough to lose her office: this is against the order of charity.

Here we would have answered, but he would not suffer us, but said, You shall be heard anon.

*Bishop Grindal:-* But to the matter. In this severing yourselves from the society of other Christians, you condemn not only us, but also the whole state of the church reformed in King Edward's days, which was well reformed according to the word of God, yea, and many good men have shed their blood for the same, which your doings condemn.

*Robert Hawkins:-* We condemn them not, in that we stand to the truth of God's word.

But he would not suffer us to answer to it.

*Bishop Grindal:-* But have you not the gospel truly preached, and the sacraments ministered accordingly, and good order kept, although we differ from other churches in ceremonies, and in indifferent things, which lie in the prince's power to command for order's sake? How say you, Smith? You seem to be the ancientest of them, answer you.

*John Smith:-* Indeed, my lord, we thank God for reformation; and that is it we desire, according to God's word. (And there he stayed.)

*William White:-* I beseech you, let me answer.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Nay, William White, hold your peace, you shall be heard anon.

*William Nixon:-* I beseech you, let me answer a word or two.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Nixon, you are a busy fellow, I know your words; you are full of talk. I know from whence you came.

*Robert Hawkins:-* I would be glad to answer.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Smith shall answer. Answer you, Smith.

*John Smith:-* Indeed, as you said even now, for preaching and ministering the sacraments, so long as we might have the word freely preached, and the sacraments administered without the preferring of idolatrous gear above it, we never assembled together in houses. But when it came to this point, that all our preachers were displaced by your law, that would not subscribe to your apparel and your law, so that we could not hear none of them in any church by the space of seven or eight weeks, except Father Coverdale,<sup>4</sup> of whom we have a good opinion; and yet (God knoweth) the man was so fearful, that he durst not be known unto us where he preached, though we sought it at his house. And then were we troubled and commanded to your courts from day to day, for not coming to our parish churches.

Then we bethought us what were best to do; and we remembered that there was a congregation of us in this city in Queen Mary's days;<sup>5</sup> and a congregation at Geneva, which used a book and order of preaching, ministering of the sacraments and discipline, most agreeable to the word of God; which book is allowed by that godly and well learned man, Master Calvin, and the preachers there; which book and order we now hold.<sup>6</sup> And if you can reprove this book, or anything that we hold, by the word of God, we will yield to you, and do open penance at Paul's Cross; if not, we will stand to it by the grace of God.

*Bishop Grindal:-* This is no answer.

*William White:-* You may be answered, if you give leave.

*Bishop Grindal:-* White, you shall speak anon; let the elder speak first.

*John Smith:-* Would you have me go back from the better, to such churches that I had as leave go to mass as go to them, they are so evil-favouredly used; as the parish church where I dwell is one. He is a very papist that is there, and yet he hath another place too.

*Dean Goodman:-* Lo, he counteth the service and reformation in King Edward's days as evil as the mass.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Lo, because he knoweth one that is evil, he findeth fault with all. But you may go to other places, as at St. Laurence.

*William White:-* You say we find fault with all, for one papist. If it were well tried, there should a great company of papists be found in this city, whom you do allow to be preachers and ministers, and thrust out the godly for your pleasure's sake ...

*Roper:-* I know one that in Queen Mary's time did persecute God's saints, and brought them forth to Bishop Bonner,<sup>7</sup> and now he is minister allowed of you, and never made recantation.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Can you accuse any of them of false doctrine, and show us of it?

*William Nixon:-* Yea, that I can, and he is even now in this house that I can accuse of false doctrine. Let him come forth and answer his doctrine that he preached upon the 10th of John. (And so I looked back upon Bedel, and Bedel hung down his head, and the bishop looked upon the dean, and one looked upon another.)<sup>8</sup>

*Dean Goodman:-* You would take away the authority of the prince, and liberty of a Christian man.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Yea, and therefore you suffer justly.

*Robert Hawkins:-* But it lieth not in the authority of the prince, and liberty of a Christian man, to use and to defend that appertaining to papistry and idolatry, and the pope's canon law, as we may plainly see in the 7th of Deuteronomy, and other places of the Scriptures.

*Dean Goodman:-* When do you hear us maintain such things in our preachings?

*Robert Hawkins:-* Though you do it not in your preachings, yet you do it in your deeds and by your laws.

*William White:-* The prophet saith, That the foolish say not with their mouths, there is no God, but in their hearts; their doings are corrupt and vain.

*Robert Hawkins:-* You preach Christ to be priest and prophet, but you preach him not to be king, neither will you suffer him to reign with the sceptre of his word in his church alone; but the pope's canon law and the will of the prince must have the first place, and be preferred before the word and ordinance of Christ.

*Dean Goodman:-* You speak unreverently here of the prince before the magistrates: you were not bidden to speak; you might hold your peace.

*Robert Hawkins:-* You will suffer us to make our purgation, seeing that you persecute us.

*Bishop Grindal:-* What is so preferred?

*William Nixon:-* Why, that which is upon your head and upon your back, your copes and your surplices, and your laws and ministers; because you will suffer none to preach nor minister, except he wear them, or subscribe to them.

*Bishop Grindal:-* No, how say you to Sampson and Lever,<sup>9</sup> and other: do not they preach?

*William White:-* Though they preach, you have deprived them and forbidden them, and the law standeth in force against them still, howsoever you suffer them now. And for what purpose you will not suffer other, whom you cannot reprove by the word of God, I know not.

*Bishop Grindal:-* They will not be preachers, nor meddle with you.

*William White:-* Your doings is the cause.

*Robert Hawkins:-* They will not join with you. I heard one of them say that he had rather be torn in a hundred pieces than to communicate with you. We hold nothing, nor allow any thing but that which is maintained by the word of God; the which word, saith Esau, 'shall come forth of Sion, and give sentence among the heathen, and reform the multitude'. And Christ saith, 'The word that I have spoken, shall judge in the last day', when both the prince, and you, and we, shall stand naked before the judgement-seat of Christ. And if you can prove that we hold not the truth, show it and we will leave it.

*John Smith:-* And if you cannot, we pray you, let us not be thus used.

*Dean Goodman:-* You are not obedient to the authority of the prince.

*William White:-* Yes, that we are; for we resist not, but suffer that the authority layeth upon us.

*Bishop Grindal:-* So do thieves suffer that the law layeth upon them.

*William White:-* What a comparison is this? They suffer for evil doing, and you punish us for seeking to serve God according to his word.



*William Nixon:-* Both the prince and we must be ruled by the word of God, as we read in the first book of Kings, the 12th chapter, that the king should teach only the word of God.

*Bishop Grindal:-* What, that the king should teach the word of God? Lie not.

*William Nixon:-* It is that both king and people should obey the word of God, or else they shall perish.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Indeed it is true in effect, that the prince should and must obey the word of God only. But I will show you this consisteth in three points. The first is, that which God commandeth may not be left undone. The second is, that which forbideth may not be done. And the third consisteth in things which God neither commandeth nor forbideth, and they are of the middle sort, and are things indifferent. And such things princes have authority to order or to command.

*Prisoners:-* Prove that, said one. Where find you that? said another.

*Bishop Grindal:-* I have talked with many men, and yet I never saw any behave themselves so unreverently before magistrates.

*William White:-* I beseech you, let me speak one word or two.

*Bishop Grindal:-* White, stay a little, you shall speak anon.

*Robert Hawkins:-* Kings have their rule and commandment in the 17th of Deuteronomy, not to decline neither to the right hand nor to the left from the word of God, howsoever you make your distinction.

*John Smith:-* How can you prove that indifferent, which is abominable?

*Bishop Grindal:-* What, you mean of our caps and tippets, which, you say, came from Rome?

*James Ireland:-* It belongeth to the papists; therefore throw it to them.

*Canon Watts:-* You would have us use nothing that the papists used; then should we use no churches, as the papists have used.

*Robert Hawkins:-* Churches be necessary to keep our bodies from the rain, but surplices and copes be superstitious and idolatrous.

*William White:-* Christ did cast out the buyers and sellers in the temple and their ware, and yet the temple was not overthrown for all that.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Things not forbidden of God may be used for order and obedience' sake: you shall hear the mind and judgement of a well learned man, whom you like of, namely, Master Bullinger: (then he read out of a book this in effect): 'It is not yet proved that these garments had their first origin from Rome. And though we use them not here in our ministry, yet we may lawfully use them as things that have not yet been removed away.'<sup>10</sup> These be Bullinger's words: therefore we desire and wish you to leave off and be conformable.

*John Smith:-* What if I can show you Bullinger against Bullinger in this thing?

*Bishop Grindal:-* I think not, Smith.

*John Smith:-* Yes, that I can.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Well, all reformed churches do differ in rites and ceremonies, and we agree with all reformed churches in substance of doctrine.

*Canon Watts:-* Yea, that we do.

*Robert Hawkins:-* Yea, but we should follow the trueth and best way. Christ saith, 'Go you forth and preach to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the

Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you'. But you have brought the gospel and sacraments into bondage to the ceremonies of anti-Christ, and you defend idolatry and papistry. There is no ordinance of Christ but you have mingled your own inventions withal. How say you to godfathers and godmothers in baptism?

*Canon Watts:-* O! wise reason.

*Bishop Grindal:-* How say you to the church of Geneva? They communicate with wafer cakes, which you are so much against.

*William Nixon:-* Yea, but they do not compel to receive so, and with none other.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Yes, in their parish churches.

*William White:-* The English congregation did minister loaf bread there.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Because they were of another language.

*William White:-* It is good to follow the best example: but we must follow them as they follow Christ.

*Dean Goodman:-* All the learned men in Europe are against you.

*Canon Watts:-* Ye will believe no man.

*John Smith:-* Yes, we reverence the learned in Geneva, or in other places wheresoever they be; yet we build not on them our faith and religion.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Will you be judged by the learned in Geneva? They are against you.

*Robert Hawkins:-* We will be judged by the word of God, which shall judge us all at the last day, therefore sufficient to judge now. But how can they be against us, seeing they know not of our doings; also, holding of the same truth as they do (except they will be against the truth and against themselves)?

*Bishop Grindal:-* Here is the letter that came from Geneva, and they are against you and your doings and going from us, in these words. Then he turned to this place, which is: That against the prince's and bishops' wills they should exercise their office, we do so much the tremble at, because of these reasons, which of themselves are plain enough, albeit we do not utter them. Mark how that he saith he doth 'tremble' at your cause.

*Robert Hawkins:-* Why, the place is against you: for they do tremble at the prince's case and yours, because that you by such extremities, should drive us against our wills to that which of itself is plain enough, albeit they would not utter them.

Then the bishop wrong himself and said: See, ye enter into judgement against us.

*Robert Hawkins:-* Nay we judge not; but we know the letter well enough, for we have it in our houses; it maketh nothing against us.

*Bishop Grindal:-* We grant it doeth not. But yet they count this apparel indifferent, and not impious and wicked in their own nature; and therefore they counsel the preachers not to give over their function or flocks for these things.

*Robert Hawkins:-* But it followeth in the same letter that if they should be 'compelled to allow it by subscription' or silence, that they should give over the ministry.

*William Nixon:-* Let us answer to your first question.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Say on, Nixon.

*William Nixon:-* We do not refuse you for preaching the word of God, but because you have tied the ceremonies of Antichrist to it, and set them before it, so that no man may preach or minister the sacraments without them. For before you compelled them by law, all was quiet.

*Bishop Grindal:-* See how you be against indifferent things, which may be borne withal for order and obedience sake.

*Mayor:-* Well, good people, I would you would wisely consider these things, and be obedient to the Queen's Majesty's good laws, as I and other of the Queen's subjects are, that you may live quietly and have liberty, as my lord here and masters have said. And as for my part, I would you were at your heart's ease, and I am sorry that you are troubled; but I am an officer under my prince, and therefore blame not me. I cannot talk learnedly with you in celestial matters, but I have a mother wit, and I will persuade the best that I can. The Queen hath not established these garments and things for any holiness' sake or religion, but only for a civil order and comeliness; because she would have the ministers known from other men, as the aldermen are known by their tippets, and the judges by their red gowns, and sometimes they wear coifs; and likewise lords' servants are known by their badges. I will tell you an example. There was an alderman within this year, that went in the street, and a boisterous fellow met him, and went between him and the wall and put him towards the channel, and some that were about him said to him, 'Knowest thou not what thou doest? He is an alderman.' And he said, 'I knew him not, he might have worn his tippet.' Even so, when the ministers began to be despised, the Queen's grace did ordain this priests' apparel, but the people cannot be content and like it. Now what may the papists say? Some of them goeth to the court, whispering, saying that you cannot be content that the Queen should command anything in the church, not so much a cap or a tippet, whereupon the Queen may have occasion to say: 'Will they not be content that I should rule in the Church, I will restore that my forefathers have followed.' And therefore, masters, take heed.

*Robert Hawkins:-* I beseech you to let me answer your lordship before all your wisdoms. Philip Melancthon [sic], writing upon the 14th chapter of Romans, hath these words: 'When the opinion of holiness, of merit, or necessity, is put unto things indifferent, then they darken the light of the gospel, and ought by all means to be taken away.'

*Bishop Grindal:-* It is not commanded of necessity in the church, or of heavenly things.

*Robert Hawkins:-* You have made it a matter of necessity in the church, and that many a poor man doeth feel.

*William Nixon:-* Even so, my lord, as you do say that the alderman is known by his gown and tippet, even so by this apparel that these men do now wear were the papist mass-priests known from other men.

*Dean Goodman:-* What a great matter you make of it.

*Robert Hawkins:-* The apostle Paul would not be like the false apostles in

anything, and therefore you have the apostle against you.

*Bishop Grindal:-* There be good men and good martyrs that did wear these things in King Edward's days; do you condemn them?

*William Nixon:-* We condemn them not: we would go forward to perfection, for we have had the gospel a long time amongst us. And the best of them that did maintain it did recant for it at their death, as did Ridley, sometime bishop of London, and Doctor Taylor.<sup>11</sup> Ridley did acknowledge his fault to Hooper, and when they would have put on the same apparel upon him, he said, they were abominable and too fond for a vice in a play.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Where find you that in the book of letters of the martyrs?

*Robert Hawkins:-* It may be showed in the book of the monuments of the church, that many which were burned in Queen Mary's time died for standing against popery, as we now do.

*Bishop Grindal:-* I have said mass: I am sorry for it.

*James Ireland:-* But you go like one of the mass-priests still.

*Bishop Grindal:-* You see me wear a cope or a surplice in Paul's. I had rather minister without these things, but for order's sake and obedience to the prince. ...

*Dean Goodman:-* Doth not St. Peter say, 'Be obedient to all manner ordinance of man?'

*William White:-* Yes, as they obey God.

*William Nixon:-* This hath always been the doings of popish bishops. When as they cannot maintain their doings by the scriptures, nor overcome them, then they make the mayor and the aldermen their servants and butchers, to punish them that they cannot overcome by scripture. But I trust that you, my lord, seeing you have heard and seen it, will take good advisement.

*Mayor:-* Good Lord, how unreverently do you speak here before my lords and us in comparing so.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Have we not a godly prince? Answer, is she evil?

*William White:-* What a question is that, the fruits do show.

*Thomas Bowland:-* No: but the servants of God are persecuted under her.

*Bishop Grindal:-* Yea, go to; mark this, my lord. (Reader, see Luke xix.7.)

*Robert Hawkins:-* Why, this question the prophet may answer in the psalm: 'How can they have understanding that work iniquity, spoiling my people, and that extol vanity?'

*Dean Goodman:-* Do we hold any heresy? Do we deny any article of the faith, as 'I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ his Son?' Do we deny any of these articles? Do we maintain purgatory or pilgrimages? No, we hold the reformation that was in King Edward's days.

One of us said, No more did the papists in words.

*William White:-* You build much of King Edward's time. A very learned man as any is in the realm, (I think you cannot reprove him,) writeth these words of King Edward's time: 'I will let pass to speak of King Henry's time, but come to King Edward's time, which was the best time of reformation: all was driven to a prescript order of service, pieced and patched out of the popish portas of