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ART. I.—*The Zurich Letters; or, the Correspondence of several English Bishops, and others, with some of the Helvetican Reformers, during the reign of Queen Elizabeth.* Chiefly from the Archives of Zurich. Translated from authenticated copies of the autographs, and edited for the Parker Society, by the Rev. Hastings Robinson, D. D., F. A. S., Rector of Great Warley, Essex, and formerly Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. Second edition, chronologically arranged in one series.

WHAT will be the ultimate destiny of the established Church of England, it is perhaps impossible to foretell, and therefore, vain to conjecture. We know of no book, however, which throws so much light upon its origin, genesis, growth and complicated structure, as the one before us. It completely exposes the hypothesis lately put forth by D'Aubigné, that the English Reformation proceeded primarily from the people, and was a purely religious Revolution. It is equally at variance with the opposite sentiment, that it was nothing more than a political change dictated by the pride or the policy of her rulers. The truth is, as usual, to be found in the mean between the two extremes. The circumstances of the times were, unquestionably, favourable to the progress of the Reform-

ation in England, up to a certain point; but they were adverse to a perfect and thorough Reformation. The insular position of the realm—the jealous pride of the people—their habitual and hereditary impatience of foreign control, or interference in their domestic affairs—(a salutary quality which their Anglo-Saxon descendants in America seem to have inherited)—rendered them naturally averse to the Papal Headship. The indisposition of Henry VIII. and his Protestant successors to submit to foreign dictation, had been repeatedly evinced from the earliest times, and was equally felt by the nation at large. The innate and unrelaxed tendency of Rome to unite and identify her spiritual claims with secular ambition—which has ever rendered her despotism so intense, so peculiar, so profound, so all-engrossing wherever her sway has been submitted to—will probably in the righteous retributions of Heaven, furnish its own correctives and antidote. Abhorrence of political Popery, is, we are persuaded, at the bottom of the Know-Nothing movement now going on so extensively in America; and opposition to the temporal power of the Pope, cannot fail to present a powerful barrier to the success and spread of the papal system—so long as civil liberty and national independence are prized and revered.

These considerations are sufficient to show that D'Aubigné's view of the subject is both defective and erroneous. The common Papal explanation of the phenomenon of the English Reformation—to wit, that it was wholly brought about by the lust of Henry, the ambition of Cranmer, and the political interests of Elizabeth, is still more unsatisfactory. The Reformation in England never could have made such progress, had it not been flowing on in the same current with the nation's sympathies, and had it not been essentially pervaded, purified, sustained and sanctioned by the word and Spirit of God. In so far as its objects and agents were political, it was, in inception and origin, in marked contrast with the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland, but as compared with England before that period, it was a religious revolution to rejoice in, and to be thankful for—a displacement of ignorance, and superstition, and a substitution in their room of the true doctrine and service of God.

It is not only freely conceded, but vaunted by Macaulay, that the English Reformation was not the work of Theological Reformers, like Calvin and Knox, men who were governed exclusively by religious considerations, and who sought only religious objects, but by men like Somerset and Cranmer, of whom one was little more or better than a mere politician—and the other, though at heart a good man, was too timid and feeble to resist the powerful will of Henry and Elizabeth. It is to this circumstance that he very justly ascribes the pompous ritual, the splendid liturgy, the magnificent ecclesiastical edifices, and the peculiar orders and officers of the English establishment. To the same source, as we shall soon see, may be referred the Popish doctrines which were retained and which were so little in harmony with the purer elements of the Reformation. During her long religious gestation, the Church in England has been like Rebekah in her travail—the children have struggled together within her—the Esau of Popery, red all over like a hairy garment, and the Jacob of Protestantism; Jacob the supplanter—Jacob the prince with God, prevailing by piety and prayer. Two nations have been in her womb, and two manner of people have been separated from her bowels; and may we not indulge the prophecy and prayer, that in this case also the older shall serve the younger? (Gen. xxv. 21–26.)

That the English Reformation bears a very striking resemblance to the constitution of the Christian Church in the first quarter of the fourth century, has been often affirmed by its warmest admirers. In both instances, the Revolution was essentially Christian, but the constitution of the Church and the organization of the Hierarchy were studiously and skilfully adjusted to the constitution of the State—to the majesty of the empire—to the personal tastes and habitudes of the ruling princes—to the secular interests and immediate worldly successes of the Church, favoured by the sovereign and established by law. The adaptation of the constitution of the Church to that of the State, was in both cases remarkable, but in neither accidental.*

* The characteristic, historical, and doctrinal difference between the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, is well brought out in a pregnant passage of S. T. Coleridge. "Whatever is not against the word of God is for it—thought the founders of the Church of England. Whatever is not in the word of God is a

The mingling of the political with the religious element; in the English Reformation, and the frequent conflicts between the two, are apparent on almost every page of this varied and interesting correspondence. The Queen and the Reformers are perpetually in an attitude of opposition. She, as is well known, having little sympathy either with the religious doctrines or practices of the thoroughly Reformed Churches, and being attached to the Reformed Party principally from the circumstances of her descent from Ann Boleyn, a decidedly Protestant Princess, her personal and political interests, and her high intellectual sympathy with the progress of knowledge and literature, was a Protestant by "position" (as the grammarians say) rather than by principle. To the last she insisted on retaining the crucifix in her private chapel, greatly to the grief and scandal of her best advisers, in discouraging the marriage of the clergy, and generally in restricting the liberty of speech and action, with an iron will and an iron hand.

What Bishop Burnet, with an excess of charity, says of her father, Henry VIII., is strictly true of Elizabeth. She is rather to be reckoned among the great than the good princes. In many personal qualities—in intellectual abilities and accomplishments—in indomitable strength of will—in the clear discernment of statesmanlike qualities—in instinctive and well-nigh unerring tact in the choice of able counsellors—personal proficiency in the literature of the times—unyielding courage amid pressing difficulties and appalling dangers—in the commercial prosperity, in the military renown, and in the literary splendour of her protracted reign, she must be reckoned among the most illustrious of the long and often brilliant line of English royalty. Her personal weaknesses, on the other hand, were scarcely less remarkable; haughty, hard-hearted, vain beyond the common vanity of her sex and station,

word of man—thought the founders of the Church of Scotland and Geneva. The one proposed to themselves to be reformers of the Latin Church; that is to bring it back to the form which it had during the first four centuries; the latter to be the renovators of the Christian religion, as it was preached and instituted by the Apostles, and the immediate followers of Christ thereunto specially inspired. When the premises are so different, who can wonder at the difference in the conclusion?" Notes on Jeremy Taylor, Vol. 5., p. 149: Shedd's edition. A page or two before, he had spoken of "The first grand apostasy from Christ to Constantine."

passionate, perverse in her dealings with her dependents, profane in speech, moody and capricious—*semper varium et mutabile*—prone to unreasonable and unseemly, if not criminal fondness for unworthy objects, often terminating in unmerited cruelty and excessive and implacable disgusts; economical in the administration of her government to spare her exchequer, quartering herself on her wealthy nobles, often to their permanent embarrassment, and yet rendering herself ridiculous by the variety and costliness of the splendid robes with which she bedizened her plain person, even when worn and wrinkled by time and trouble.*

This volume is uniformly religious in its tone and temper, but not in its topics. It is a record of the familiar and friendly correspondence of the English and Continental Reformers—Sampson, Sandys, Foxe, Parkhurst, Grindal, Jewel, with Bullinger, Martyr, Gualter, Cassander, Hubert, Simler, Sturmius, Farrell, Beza, Calvin—names renowned and venerable. Associated in true friendship, in Christian communion and godly labours here, in a sacred fellowship of suffering and sacrifice on earth, now doubtless they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them—their troubles ended, their services and sacrifices graciously received and rewarded graciously, they now worship and rejoice together in the heavenly city! There is, to us, something strange and solemn in being brought so near to men whom we have been so long in the habit of venerating at a distance—in being admitted to their secret counsels, in being honoured, as it were, with their personal confidence, in being witness to the treasured hopes and feelings of their hearts, as only a free epistolary correspondence can admit us. The very age and body of the times is imaged here. We have the contemporary impressions, original judgments in relation to the most interesting characters and memorable events of this important period. The characters are as various and as picturesque as the pilgrims in the Canterbury tales. Courtiers, theologians, politicians, students, schoolmasters, kings and queens, every extreme of life and every turn of fortune, the manifold accomplishments, the basilisk

* In Letter 64 we have an interesting account of Elizabeth by her eminent and learned teacher, R. Ascham.

beauty of Mary, Queen of Scots, together with her dark intrigues, her incredible and inscrutable hypocrisies and her bloody crimes, whom nothing but her high courage and heroic death save from utter detestation and contempt. What Malcolm says of the death of Cawdor was eminently fulfilled in her.

“ Nothing in her life
Became her like the leaving it; she died
As one that had been studied in her death,
To throw away the dearest thing she owed
As 'twere a careless trifle.”

We have Philip of Spain, narrow-minded, ambitious, superstitious, and despotic: Burleigh, the able minister of the crown, servile toward his imperious mistress, but truly devoted to the interests of his country, which he had perhaps unconsciously, but sagaciously and habitually identified with his own: Leicester, plausible and pleasing to a woman's eye, but dark, insincere, insidious, aspiring, murderous: Robert, Earl of Essex, impetuous, brave, proud, self-confident, but without solid judgment, without settled principle, dazzling others by the brilliancy of his achievements, and the still greater brilliancy of his promise and pretensions; himself dazzled by courtly and royal favours, impelled by arrogance, ambition, and an evil genius to a criminal enterprise and a bloody end—these figures pass before us in the perusal of this volume, as in a magic mirror.

The special and crowning value of the book, however, arises from the light which it throws upon the views of the early English Reformers, on the two great subjects of theological doctrine and church government. It is exceedingly instructive, as showing what were the genuine doctrines of the Reformation, and as evincing the harmony of all the leading divines English and Continental; plainly setting before us the views which they derived from the direct, impartial, and independent study of the word of God, especially in regard to those doctrines usually denominated Calvinistic.*

Would that we could see a revival and return of harmony between the English and Continental Churches, based upon

* See especially on this subject, the letter of Bishop Grindal to C. Hubert, the 67th of the series.

scriptural consent of doctrine and evangelic agreement of sentiment and feeling!—such as is everywhere expressed in these letters; articulately, affectionately and emphatically in letter 65th.

The tone of deference and affection, in which the most eminent prelates of that period addressed these foreign Presbyterian divines, not only precludes the notion that they imagined they enjoyed any official superiority over them, but it is evident that they regarded any deviation from the simplicity of service and order, which then prevailed in the Reformed Continental Churches, not as matter of triumph and rejoicing, but as a lamentable necessity of the times. So far were they from recommending to their Presbyterian correspondents, the adoption of the English forms and offices and ceremonies as “a more excellent way,”—that they repeatedly express their own unwillingness to assume the state and title of Prelates, not because appalled by the awful sanctity of the office, but because alarmed and shocked by its resemblance to Rome, and offended by “the pomps and vanities” with which it was inseparably connected, by the will of the sovereign and the constitution of the realm. The great burden of the book is a long lamentation over “the relics of the Amorites, the rags of Popery,” which the Queen, who was fond of glitter and finery in everything, insisted on retaining. Accordingly, we find them consulting these Presbyterian friends, brethren, and fathers, asking their judgment on the practical question, how far they might admit these things with a good conscience, affirming openly that the only circumstance of sufficient weight in their estimation to justify conformity, was the apprehension, that, if they should refuse, more pliant tools would be found, who would not hesitate to sacrifice fundamental doctrine; and it was only from the dread of this, that their Continental correspondents advised and sanctioned the course adopted by the English Reformers.

It is really not a little remarkable that the very things which were borne with reluctantly and impatiently at that time, which were regarded as blotches and blemishes on the fair face of their Church, should in a generation or two after, and ever since, be pointed to as her peculiar glory. It is, as

Swift would put it—as if a man should have an ugly wart or wen upon his face, and transmitting it faithfully to his son, the youthful Adonis should pride himself hugely on what had been the shame and grief of his more discerning father. Laudism in a following age, and Puseyism in our own, are but the natural and necessary expansion of the Popish elements then retained by authority and submitted to by compulsion. It is perfectly plain, that the English Reformation “begun” and to a certain point “continued” by the royal authority, was, alas! “ended,” long before it should have been, or would have been, had it rested with the Reformed Theologians, and the most godly among the laity of England. The simple truth was, as Beza said, that the Papacy never was abolished in that country, but rather transferred to the Sovereign.

In regard to the subject of church government, there seems to have been no material difference of opinion between these English Reformers and their foreign and Presbyterian correspondents. The strong likelihood is, that if their circumstances had been reversed, each party would have acted as the other did; and the proof of this is found in the fact, that the Presbyterian divines counselled what the English Reformers did, as the best that could be done in their circumstances. Both parties agreed in holding that there is no one form of organization prescribed in the New Testament, as essential to the existence of the Church; and that while certain general principles are therein enjoined as of perpetual obligation, the details of church polity and government may be varied to suit the exigencies of particular times and places.

High Churchmen take the opposite ground. Romanists and Anglicans hold that the Church in its essential nature is an external society organized in a particular form, and can exist in no other. High Churchmen of a different class, while they do not make the mode of external organization essential to the being of the Church, deny that the Church has any discretion in matters of government, any more than in matters of doctrine. They affirm that everything that is lawful is prescribed, and, therefore, of perpetual and universal obligation. If either of these theories were correct, we should expect to find the platform of church government prescribed in the New Testament

with the same particularity and distinctness, as the frame-work of the Jewish theocracy is laid down in the Old Testament.

When God means to order anything, he can speak so as to be understood. He can declare his will so plainly that it shall be impossible to misunderstand him. Thus Moses received clear directions in regard to the minutest details connected with the divine constitution of the Jewish Church; the size, shape, and texture of every part of the tabernacle; the material, fashion, and ornaments of the priests' robes; and every thing pertaining to the offices and order, to the discipline and service, to the constitution and *cultus* of the Jewish Church. The utmost fidelity in this matter is urged upon him twice in the compass of a single chapter: Ex. xxv. 9, 40. "According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it." "And look that thou make them after their pattern which was showed thee in the mount." Now, it is perfectly notorious that there is no such clear pattern, no such fixed and definite model, given us in the New Testament. On the other hand, the duties pertaining to certain offices recognized and referred to in the New Testament Church, and directions in regard to the details of the worship of God, are few, scanty, vague, and general, but amply sufficient. "Let all things be done decently and in order," is the Apostolic prescript. It should seem, indeed, that visible and invariable uniformity was by no means prevalent in the various churches existing in Apostolic times, founded by the Apostles themselves, and under Apostolic control. If an exact resemblance to the Apostolic Church, in all its usages, offices, and institutions be declared essential to the existence of the Church at present, then it is clearly demonstrable that there is no such thing as a Christian Church now in existence. There were many offices in the Apostolic Church which no longer exist, as apostles, prophets, healers of the sick, deaconesses, and others.*

The constitution of the Apostolic Church was peculiar and

* In his chapter on the Worship of God, in his work on Church Government, Owen makes several just and striking observations in answer to the Query 13th, "Are not some institutions of the New Testament ceased?" &c. p. 465, Gould's edition.

inimitable, and was never designed to be permanent and universal. The Apostolic office itself was, from its conditions and purpose, temporary and personal—incapable of transmission or succession. It was essential to the Apostolic commission, that it should be derived directly and personally from the Lord Jesus; and as the Apostles were the constituted witnesses of the fact of his resurrection—the point around which the whole body of Christian evidences, truths, and doctrines revolved—the cornerstone of Historical Christianity—it was essential to the character of an Apostle that he should have seen Christ personally after his resurrection. Now let us try those “who say they are Apostles and are not” by these tests; let us examine the credentials of these boasted and boasting “successors of the Apostles”—by what all acknowledge to have been the signs of an Apostle. We might present those signs as summed up by Paul and fulfilled in him. Are they Apostles? Have they seen Christ? Can they work miracles? Can they bear personal witness to the great fact of the resurrection? Are they inspired to declare the unrevealed will of God? No! not one thing that is alleged in Scripture, as peculiarly a sign of an Apostle, can these successors of the Apostles do! The failure is not partial or equivocal, in one point, on one test, but unmitigated, unredeemed, total, throughout, universal, and ignominious. Successors of the Apostles, that have nothing particularly in common with the Apostles! As well might any ordinary English constable claim to be the successor of Alfred the Great and Queen Elizabeth. We fancy we hear the ancient, inspired, infallible Apostles saying to these their bastard sons, “Peter I know, and Paul I know—but who are ye?”

If the Bible had been constructed on the High Church theory, it would have been very different from what it actually is. It would have been abundant, minute, and explicit, in relation to every thing connected with the constitution and government of the Christian Church. The laws in regard to the validity and transmission of orders, and the rules of succession, would have been as numerous and definite, as were those which related to the Levitical economy. But such is not the case. It is certainly remarkable, on the hypothesis, that the theory which we combat is there, that while the Scriptures say so little

in regard to the constitution and transmission of ecclesiastical offices, they should say so much in regard to articles of faith, and moral dispositions and duties. It is evident that the inspired writers must have conceived that definite instructions in relation to the first and a fixed form were comparatively unimportant, and that the last were absolutely, for all times and all men, essential. Now it is just here, in regard to the nature and importance of Christian doctrine and moral duty, that all the Reformed Churches, at the period of the Reformation, and all evangelical Churches now, are substantially of one mind. The admirable harmony between the evangelical Churches and the Bible, which is their common bond and bulwark, deserves to be particularly pointed out. We have seen that the New Testament makes little of ecclesiastical descent and details, but much of doctrine and duty. Sometimes external authority and ecclesiastical tradition are brought face to face in opposition with essential and inspired truth. Thus our Saviour vehemently rebuked the constituted authorities and recognized teachers of the Jewish Church, for a wicked and wilful perversion of the divine law; charging them with making the law of no effect through their traditions. Paul, in the same spirit, said to the Galatians, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach unto you any other gospel than we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

The inevitable consequence of assuming that the Bible teaches more than it actually does teach, is the substitution of human for divine authority. Experience teaches certain things to be necessary, or at least highly expedient, which the New Testament does not enjoin. These things the Church is constrained to include in her organization, and then they are enforced as of divine right; and brethren are censured or rejected for not acknowledging them as such. This vitiates the nature of religion, and inevitably corrupts the Church. Things that are external and entirely independent of the spiritual life, are made essential. Wherever this principle is adopted, another consequence is sure to follow. What is human is made of more consequence than what is really divine. Among Romanists, if a man denies the supremacy of the Pope, he is led to the stake, while he may violate every precept of

the Decalogue with comparative impunity. The Puseyites consign to perdition all who renounce the jurisdiction of prelates, but they are latitudinarians in matters of doctrine. Churches which excommunicate a member for singing hymns, often admit drunkards to their communion. We need not deceive ourselves. If men assume the authority of God, they will drive themselves and those who submit to them to destruction. If they teach for doctrine, the commandments of men, they will make the word of God of no effect. While, therefore, we hold firmly to the authority of the Scriptures, and submit gladly to all that it enjoins; and while we believe that the great principles of Church polity are clearly revealed, and should be universally adopted, it is no less important that we should resist all high-church assumptions, and refuse to regard as divine that which is merely human.

G. Addison Alexander.
 ART. II.—*The Coptic Language.*

THERE are some kinds of knowledge which a bad custom has too much restricted to the class by courtesy called *learned*, and withheld from many quite as able to appreciate their value, and in multitudes of cases far more curious and inquisitive respecting them. Among the kinds of knowledge here referred to is the knowledge of strange languages, not in their philological minutiae, much less in their metaphysical principles, but in their general history and structure, with reference to which one dialect may differ from another just as faces do, and yet have just as real a generic likeness. The observation and enjoyment of this lingual physiognomy requires no extraordinary gifts or training, as a previous preparation, no abstruse or transcendental processes and methods in the actual process of investigation. The plainest and least educated traveller in foreign lands, if possessed of any natural shrewdness and propensity to observation, may derive enjoyment from variety of looks and manners, forms and institutions, without caring to philosophize about their causes. In like manner we have often