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## THE CLERGY AND THE DECLARATION OF INDULGENCE, 1688.

BY THE REV. HAROLD SMITH, D.D., St. John's Hall, Highbury.

IN the ordinary accounts all the stress is laid on the action of the Seven Bishops—Bishop Compton, of London, being quite overlooked. He shared with the rest in drawing up the Petition, and did not sign it simply because he had already been suspended for not suspending Dr. Sharp without a hearing, in compliance with the King's wish. Also the part taken by the London clergy is usually quite subordinated to that of the bishops. But it would be more correct to say that the clergy made up their minds and pushed the bishops in front of them.

Simon Patrick, afterwards Bishop of Ely, was then Rector of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, and Canon of Westminster, as well as Dean of Peterborough. He was very intimate with Thomas Tenison, then Vicar of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. In his autobiography he says that in May, 1688 :

"we were in great perplexity about reading the declaration for liberty of conscience, which all my acquaintance seemed to abhor. We had many meetings about it, twice at Ely House with the Bishop, and on the 11th of May at the Temple, where at the Master's house we came to this resolution, that the Bishops should be desired to address to the King, but not upon any address of ours to them. For we judged it best that they should lead the way and we follow them. And on the 13th we met there again, every one resolving for some reason or other, not to read the Declaration. There were near twenty of us, as I remember, who were desired to feel the pulse of all the ministers in London, how they stood affected ; and if they were generally so resolved as we were, His Grace of Canterbury promised to petition the King not to exact it of us. Accordingly Dr. Tenison and myself were appointed to go to all the ministers at one end of the town, and know their mind ; and others undertook to go into other parts of the city. And on Thursday, May 17th, we met at a house in St. Paul's Churchyard, and an account was given of near seventy who promised not to read it. Some could not be found, and a few spoke dubiously. I wrote a list of those who promised not to read it, fairly, with my own hand, and carried it to the Bishop of Peterborough, who lodged hard by at Mr. Clavel's, to be delivered to my Lord of Canterbury. He [Bishop White] was not within, so I sealed it up and desired that it might be given him as soon as he came in, and he carried it to Lambeth that night. Upon this the Archbishop sent to all the bishops in town or near, to come to Lambeth on Friday morning, and gave notice to Dr. Tenison and me, that it was fit we should keep it as a day of fasting and prayer to beg God's direction and a blessing on what was intended. I gave notice of it to some others, and between ten and eleven Dr. Tenison, Dr. Grove and I went over to Lambeth, where we found five bishops with Dr. Stillingfleet and Dr. Tillotson. After morning prayer we entered into consultation, about an address to the King, and at last it was agreed it should be by way of petition from his Grace and the bishops present with him, and in behalf of their brethren and the clergy of their dioceses. About two o'clock came another bishop. . . . They went over to Whitehall a little after six o'clock . . . but it was nine o'clock before they could have audience, the King being abroad and not returning till that time. . . ."

It is clear from all this that the delay till Friday in petitioning the King was only partly due to the desire to gather as many bishops as possible ; another more serious reason was that the bishops were wanting to know clearly whether any large number of clergy were likely to refuse to read it ; they would not act till they knew this.

Patrick continues :

“ The next Sunday it was not read by any considerable person ; but our Dean [Bishop Spratt] sent it to one of the Petty Canons to read it in the Abbey. But at St. Margaret's and the new Chapel [Christ Church, Broadway] it was refused. The middle of that week I went to keep my residence at Peterborough, where I did what I was able to prevent the reading of it ; which was not difficult to persuade them unto, they being generally everywhere inclined to follow the example of the London clergy. And I look upon it as a great providence that the clergy were not enjoined all to read it on the same day, but those of London on the 20th of May and those in the country on the Sunday fortnight after ; whereby they had opportunity to hear what those in London had generally done, and their reasons for their refusal, which were everywhere published.”

But the Declaration was ordered to be read on May 20 not only in London itself, but in all churches within ten miles. The clergy of the outlying parishes were naturally not fully in touch with the resolutions of their London brethren. The correspondence of John Strype, the historian, vicar of Leyton, throws light on the doubts, discussions and ultimate action of those of the south-west corner of Essex. (These letters are among the Baumgartner MSS. at Cambridge ; copies by William Cole are in the British Museum.)

Joshua Stanley, vicar of West Ham, was apparently rural dean of Barking, a deanery extending from Hornchurch to Epping and Waltham Abbey. Some of these parishes lay beyond the ten-mile radius, but a number lay within it. He writes to Strype :

“ Sir, My resolution is not to read it, because it does not come from the bishops according to the order of Council ; but chiefly because I am verily persuaded that there is much more than the bare reading in the reading of it so solemnly. Dr. Mills, Mr. Copping, Mr. White of Bow, and I think Mr. Robins and Mr. Rust, are of the same mind. Use your discretion. I judge no man. The Lord have mercy upon us all.”

Strype endorses the letter : “ This was about King James' Declaration . . . I read it not.”

Dr. Mills, rector of Wanstead, was also rector of St. Olave's, Hart Street, where he is often mentioned by his parishioner, Samuel Pepys. Thomas Copping was his curate, and succeeded him at St. Olave's. It would seem that Mills, knowing the attitude of the London clergy, persuaded his country colleagues also to adopt this. Edward Rust was vicar of East Ham ; Stephen Robins, rector of Little Ilford. Dr. Mills had held his London living since 1657 ; he had been ordained by Ralph Brownrigg, Bishop of Exeter, on March 13, 1655-6. When Sion College was burnt in the Great Fire, he contributed well to its rebuilding, and induced Pepys to give a large sum.

Two other clergy of the district call for notice. Isaac Wright of Walthamstow wrote to Strype :

"I was wavering and uncertain till last night when I had Mr. Stanley's reasons. . . . God direct and keep us fast to Him, and then the wrath of men shall praise Him. I heartily thank you for this."

Cole suggests: "It is probable that Strype sent Mr. Stanley's letter to this wavering brother."

At Barking, Bishop Cartwright, of Chester, was still vicar. His curate, John Chisenhale, like his neighbours, did not read the Declaration, and was accordingly dismissed by Cartwright. An entry in the register there after June 17, 1688, runs: "Mr. John Chisenhale exit for not reading the Declaration. R. Hall, Curate." But we find in the following February: "Exit Mr. Hall; restaur. John Chisenhale."

Patrick says later:

"I cannot but here remember with what joy the news of their (the Bishops) being cleared was received at Peterborough. The bells rang from three o'clock in the morning till night, when several bonfires were made, with tabor and pipe and drum, and a great part of the night was spent in rejoicing, and all of their own accord; whereas the day before, which was a thanksgiving for the birth of the Prince of Wales, the bells did not stir till twelve o'clock. So great a difference there is between that which is constrained and that which is done voluntarily."

Patrick's account of his ordinations is interesting. He was Fellow of Queens' College, Cambridge, where he came under the influence of John Smith, whose funeral sermon he preached.

"After this I had occasion to go to London, and being bound by the statutes of the College to enter into holy orders when I was two years Master of Arts, I knew no better than to go to a classis of presbyters who then sat, and was examined by them and afterwards received the imposition of their hands. This afterwards troubled me very much, when not long after I met with Dr. Hammond upon *Ignatius's Epistles* and Mr. Thorndike's *Primitive Government of the Church*; whereby I was fully convinced of the necessity of episcopal ordination. This made me inquire after a bishop to whom I might resort; and hearing that Bishop Hall lived not far from Norwich, of which he was bishop, thither I went with two other fellows of our college and a gentleman, Mr. Gore, with whom I had contracted a great friendship, as a companion and witness of what we did. There we were received with great kindness by that reverend old bishop, who examined us and gave us many good exhortations, and then ordained us in his own parlour at Heigham, about a mile from Norwich, 5 April, 1654."

Patrick carefully preserved the certificate of his ordination by the London Classis; it is now among the Tanner MSS. in the Bodleian. We learn from it that the date was April 8, 1653, and the place St. Alban, Wood Street. It was the Sixth London Classis, comprising the clergy of the parishes north of Cheapside; the signatories are Simeon Ashe, then of St. Michael Bassishaw; Edmund Calamy, of St. Mary Aldermanbury; George Smalwood, of St. Mildred, Poultry; Thomas Case, of St. Mary Magdalen, Milk Street; John Wells, of St. Olave Jewry; Samuel Balmford, of St. Alban, Wood Street. Few if any other original certificates survive, though there are copies of some given by Calamy. The Presbyterian system having been very imperfectly set up, especially in the eastern side of the country, there were many counties where there were no

possibilities of local ordination; hence it was ordered that the London Classes should hold ordinations in turn for candidates for all parts. Thus the records of the Fourth Classis shows the ordination of many fellows of colleges.

We have the names of at least fifty men ordained by Bishop Joseph Hall of Norwich, between 1649 and his death in 1656; this is probably well short of the true number. Most histories do not notice the number of men ordained under the Commonwealth by Bishops Hall, Brownrigg of Exeter, and King of Chichester, besides two Irish bishops, Maxwell of Kilmore and Fulwar or Fuller of Ardfert and Aghadoe. Ordinations by Duppa of Salisbury and Skinner of Oxford are much better known. Bishop Hall's house—now the Dolphin Inn—still exists near the river; it ought to be carefully preserved as the scene of so many ordinations during the Troubles.

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THE SIGN OF FAITH. By Philip Carrington. London: *S.P.C.K. and St. Christopher's Press.* 1s. net.

We are told that this is the first section of a work called "A Little Outline of Christianity." It is the old Historical Christianity in its English form—so presented as to appeal to young people of both sexes. It is to follow the structure of the Catechism—this section being based on the first part, while the remaining two sections will cover the rest of the Catechism. A most useful booklet for those whose work it is to instruct young people in their Religion.

S. R. C.

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REALITY IN RELIGION AND OTHER ESSAYS IN CHRISTIANITY. By Harold Ford, M.A., LL.D., D.C.L. London: *Thynne and Co., Ltd.* 5s.

Dr. Harold Ford, whose works on Extempore Speaking and The Art of Preaching are so well known, gives us in this volume ten helpful addresses. Each of these is prefaced by an analysis characteristic of the author's practical method, and while we are told in the preface that they have been primarily written for the Clergy, the hope is expressed that they will make an appeal to that larger public who "eagerly respond to any sincere interpretation of the Sayings of Jesus." The subjects are very varied in character: The Sacredness of Womanhood—Is the Bible Inspired?—Does God Answer Prayer?—The Mystery of Suffering and the Poets—etc. Downright and orderly Dr. Ford maintains his reputation in this latest of his writings.

S. R. C.