

**MATERIALS FOR ENGLISH
CHURCH HISTORY
MORE ESPECIALLY IN THE
DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER**

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ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY**

**MORE ESPECIALLY IN THE
DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER
(1625-1649),**

BY

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MATERIALS FOR CHURCH HISTORY

(1624-1649)

MORE ESPECIALLY IN THE DIOCESE OF WINCHESTER.

CHAPTER I.

ANY attempt to deal with this great subject in detail would fill several volumes. We can therefore only indicate the sources and authorities from which materials, valuable alike to the student and to the general reader, may be drawn. "Religious controversy," says Lucy Aitkin,¹ "was the mania of the age. A bare list of the writers on divinity in the reign of James, with the titles of their works prefixed would make of itself a volume. Never was the warfare so keen between popery and protestantism, or the feud so active between the Calvinistic and Arminian parties within the Church itself." Guizot says² "The Anglican clergy in 1625 believed that the day had come when absolute monarchy would be compelled to acknowledge their independence to make sure of their aid. They had again got

¹ Memoirs of the Court of Charles I., vol. 1, p. 41.

² English Revolution, p. 50.

immense wealth, and enjoyed it without dispute. The papists no longer inspired them with alarm. The primate of the church, Laud, possessed the entire confidence of the sovereign, and alone directed all ecclesiastical affairs. Amongst the other ministers none professed like Lord Burleigh under Elizabeth, to fear and struggle against the encroachments of the clergy. The courtiers were indifferent, or secret papists. Learned men threw lustre over the Church." Church and king stood side by side, but the people were eager to complete reforms alike in church or state. It is ominous that Fuller thus begins his Eleventh Book of his Church History of Britain—"The sad news of King James' death was soon brought to Whitehall, Sunday, March 27, 1625, at that very instant when Dr. Laud, Bishop of St. David's, was preaching therein. This caused him to break off his sermon in the midst thereof, out of civil compliance with the sadness of the congregation, and the same day was King Charles proclaimed at Whitehall." Jeremy Collier¹ says of King James that "though he quitted so much in this world, he went pleased into the other." Lingard on the other hand² styles him "a weak and prodigal king, and a vain and loquacious pedant." His funeral sermon was preached by Williams, Lord Keeper, and Bishop of Lincoln, who took as his text 2 Chronicles ix, 29, 30, comparing the deceased monarch to Solomon, to the displeasure of his hearers, causing Fuller to remark "thus it is easier and better to please one God than many men with our sermons."³ Bishop Williams had risen to eminence through the favour of the Duke of Buckingham. "The doctor had crept far for ground ivy, but he must clasp upon this tree, or none to climb."⁴ Such was his church preferment which he was constantly seeking to augment by cringing, begging letters, that Heylin describes him as being

¹ Ecclesiastical History, vol. 7, p. 455.

² History of England, vol. 7, p. 141.

³ Church History, Book XI.

⁴ Life of Williams, I., 45.

"a perfect diocese in himself, being bishop, dean, residentiary, and parson, and all these at once."¹ But Williams was out of favour at court, and in spite of the most abject entreaties addressed to Buckingham he was not allowed to assist at the coronation. He writes "I never was brought into the presence of a king by any *saint* except yourself. Turn me not over, most noble lord, to offer my prayers at any other altar, etc." Charles I., according to Macaulay,³ was "like his father, a zealous episcopalian. He was, moreover, what his father had never been—a zealous Arminian, and, though no papist, liked a papist much better than a puritan."

At the coronation the place of Williams was supplied by Laud, "a man of the Bancroft school, and therefore a most bitter hater of the Puritans." Dr. Collier says⁴ "This sharp-featured man, with rat-like eye and villainous brow, had even as an Oxford student been noted for his popish leanings." Mr. Green writes⁵ "Bishop Laud was recognized as the centre of that varied opposition to puritanism whose members were loosely grouped under the name of Arminians." Clarendon states that "he was a man of great parts and very exemplary virtues, allayed and discredited by some unpopular natural infirmities." Heylin confesses that it was thought dangerous to keep him company. Neale, who loved him not, describes him as being "vastly fond of external pomp and ceremony in divine worship; and though he was not an absolute papist, he was ambitious of being the sovereign patriarch of three kingdoms." But why quote further, seeing that whenever the name of William Laud

1 Heylin's *Life of Laud*, p. 86.

2 Harl. MSS. 7000, No. 102.

3 *History of England*, vol. 1, p. 83.

4 Collier's *History of the British Empire*, p. 125.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Short History*, p. 396.

7 *History of the Rebellion*, vol. 1, pp. 97-8.

8 *History of the Puritans*, vol. 2, p. 156.

is mentioned it is a case of "*quot homines, tot sententiae!*" At the coronation Laud gave grievous offence by placing upon the altar an ancient crucifix which formed part of the regalia of Westminster Abbey, though Archbishop Abbott who was one of the puritan school, did not object to its presence, Abbott himself wearing a gorgeous cope.¹ Laud also offended many of the spectators by reviving the use of an old prayer, "not in fashion since the reign of King Henry VI.," "let him obtain favour for this people, like Aaron in the tabernacle, Elisha in the waters, Zacharias in the temple, give him Peter's key of discipline, Paul's doctrine." This I call a protestant passage, though anciently used in popish times, as fixing more spiritual power in the king than the pope will willingly allow, jealous that any should finger Peter's keys save himself.²

Superstition was rife in the days of the first Charles, and omens of evil were not wanting on the day of the coronation. During the summer of 1621, Archbishop Abbott, the officiating prelate, had taken part in a deer drive in Bramshill Park, immortalised by the ever to be lamented Charles Kingsley,³ and had the misfortune to kill Peter Hawkins, a keeper, with a chance arrow. The traditional scene of this accident is still pointed out.⁴ An enquiry was held, and mainly by the influence of Bishop Andrewes of Winchester, Abbott was acquitted from blame. Clarendon speaks of Abbott as "a man of very morose manners, and a very sour aspect, which in that time was called gravity."⁵ He had formerly been chaplain to the Earl of Dunbar, and contrary to all expectation he had been promoted to the See of Canterbury, which had been regarded as a certainty for Bishop Andrewes. A satirist of the day thus describes the appointment,

1 Hook's *Lives of the Archbishops*, vol. 5, p. 297.

2 Fuller's *Church History*, Book XI.

3 Kingsley's *Miscellanies*.

4 *Lives of the Archbishops*, vol. 5, p. 279.

5 *History of the Rebellion*, vol. 1, p. 88.

¹“Abbott,” he says, “had been blown over by a strong north wind across the Thames to Lambeth.” Another says “Dunbar carried Lambeth by a *coup de main*.” Despite the verdict of the commission of enquiry there were many who believed that Abbott was morally incapacitated from officiating. The queen and her ladies were seen dancing as the procession proceeded to the abbey,² and the visitation of the plague had plunged London into mourning.³ The king was robed in white, his favourite colour, and when, a quarter of a century later, the snowflakes fell white upon his pall at Windsor,⁴ there were not wanting those who recalled the omens of the White King’s coronation. On the other side the parliament employed William Lilly, the famous astrologer, who was a native of Odiham, Hants, to predict the success or failure of Sir William Waller at Cheriton Fight,⁵ and also to foretell the fortunate day and hour for the storming of Basing House.⁶ The latter of these predictions was very wide of the mark.

King Charles, on first meeting his parliament, had declared that as to his religion “I desire that you would repose in this assurance that I will not vary from those principles wherein I have been instituted at the feet of that eminent Gamaliel, my late father.”⁷ But his marriage with the Princess Henrietta Maria of France, the leanings of Buckingham towards the Church of Rome, of which both his wife and mother were members, the suspension of penal laws against papists, slights put upon the reformed churches, and the royal dislike to the puritan party made men uneasy and suspicious. In spite of the queen’s eating pheasant on S. John Baptist’s eve, her train of followers, which

1 Lambeth Palace and its Associations, p. 132.

2 Lives of the Archbishops, vol. 5, p. 296.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Fuller’s Church History, vol. 6, p. 433.

5 History of Alresford.

6 History of Basingstoke.

7 Baker’s Chronicle, p. 432.

included no less than twenty-nine priests, together with a youthful bishop, gave great offence to English minds, especially when with all solemnity she was conducted to Somerset House, in London, where a chapel was new prepared for her devotion, with a convent adjoining of Capuchin Friars, according to the articles of her marriage.¹ But Jeremy Collier says ² that the chapel was built not for her but for the Spanish Infanta to whom Charles had been formerly contracted, and that the Capuchins did not arrive until the Oratorians who first came over had been sent back to France in the year 1626, and until after the loss of Rochelle. Neal ³ quotes Bishop Kennet "The king's match with this lady was a greater judgment to the nation than the plague which then raged in the land; it was then easy to foresee it might prove very fatal to our English prince and people, and lay in a vengeance to future generations." It was rumoured that there were hopes of the queen's conversion.⁴ Perhaps she had herself unwittingly given rise to the report. Some one had impertinently asked her if she could abide a Huguenot? "Why not," she quickly replied, "was not my father one?" The king did not pay much attention to her priestly attendants, and when she heard mass he directed that no Englishman should be present.⁵ In 1626⁶ "the French priests and domestics of that nation which came into England with the queen were grown so insolent and put so many affronts upon the king that he was forced to send them home." This was partly due to a stormy scene at Titchfield House, when the king was hunting at Beaulieu in the New Forest. When her French retinue departed Charles was obliged to "drag her back into the room with her hands

1 Aitkin, vol. I., p. 77. Fuller's Church History, Book XI. Cassell's History of England, vol. III., p. 113

2 Ecclesiastical History, Book IX.

3 History of the Puritans, vol. II., p. 155.

4 Gardiner's History of England, vol. V., p. 334.

5 Gardiner's History of England, 1624-8.

6 Baker's Chronicle.