

**FROM THE RESTORATION
OF 1660 TO THE
REVOLUTION OF 1688**

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From the Restoration of 1660 to the Revolution of 1688 by John Brown

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JOHN BUNYAN.

(From Robert White's Pencil Drawing in British Museum.)

From the Restora- tion of 1660 to the Revolution of 1688

BY

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PREFACE

THE period of our national history with which the following pages are concerned is pre-eminently that in which Non-conformity took separate and organised form in English life. In many previous centuries there had appeared earnest-minded men and women who from time to time had asserted the supremacy of conscience as against the controlling authority of the State. But it was not till the Act of Uniformity of 1662, and the Ejectionment of Two Thousand ministers from the National Church, there came the great line of cleavage between Conformist and Nonconformist which divides the nation to this day. The Secession which followed upon the Act of Uniformity became legalised by the Act of Toleration, and has steadily grown in numbers and influence till it now embraces quite half the worshipping part of the nation.

This being the case, and the period in question having so largely determined the ecclesiastical conditions of our English life, it is of consequence that we should gain as accurate knowledge of the forces at work and

of the course of events as we possibly can. Moreover, the controversies of that time are still the burning questions of to-day and seem likely to be for a long while to come.

I have tried to state the facts as fairly as truth demanded. I am afraid, however, that I cannot lay claim to an entirely detached and dispassionate spirit in relating the cruel wrongs which our Nonconformist fathers suffered at the hands of the leaders of the Anglican Church. It is difficult to restrain the rising feeling of indignation as one reads the story of the treatment meted out to some of the most saintly people in the nation by high-handed ecclesiastics backed by the power of the State. Future generations will, I think, wonder at the long-suffering patience with which both we and our fathers have submitted to the disabilities and indignities inflicted by a Church in evil alliance with the State.

In presenting the history of the twenty-eight years between the Restoration and the Revolution I have made what use seemed desirable of the State Papers in the Public Record Office and of the documents brought to light by the Historical MSS. Commission Reports, which are of great value for the purposes of local and national history.

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