

Foreshadowings of Quakerism

ALBERT PEEL, M.A., Litt.D., etc., of Great Harwood, Lancs., has presented to D. a copy of his valuable work, *The Seconde Parte of a Register*, being a Calendar of Manuscripts under that title intended for publication by the Puritans about 1593, and now in Dr. Williams's Library, London, printed at the Cambridge University Press, in 2 vols., 1915, with sixty-four pages of indexes.

There are many subjects of interest in these volumes, and many similarities of belief and expression between the dissenters of Queen Elizabeth and those of the Commonwealth.

About 1580, R.H. (—? Robert Harrison) wrote :

“ Then you charge us that we persuade the people to be rather in *houses* and corners then to be where there is the publique face of the Church ; that is to say, that the Congregation can not publiquely meete in a house, except it be a great *house* of *lime* and *stone*. . . . Thei set bandoggs on us to baite us from their doors, and since this looke out and say there came no bodie there, and thei chide us when thei meete us, because we came not to their house ; for our mynister preched first, and we heard him in a Church of *lime* and *stone*, from thence we were driven into the Churchyard, from thence into a house adjoyning upon the Churchyard, from thence we being had to prison, after that some of us had got some libertie out, we got into that Church again, from thence we were had to prison againe. *Yet now we are charged as people which will not come to the Church, thus reasonable are we dealt with* ” (ii. 66).

1648. George Fox at Leicester :

“ The Church was the pillar and ground of truth, made up of living stones . . . which Christ was the head of ; but he was not the head of a mixed multitude, or of an old *house*, made up of *lime*, *stones* and wood.”

1652. George Fox :

“ These mett together in severall dwellinge *houses* which was not caled ye temple nor ye Church ” (Camb. Jnl. i. 57).

1663. George Fox :

‘ At Wellingborough in Northampton sheere about this time ye toundes officers warned freinds to come to ye steeplehouse : & they mett together to consider of it : & ye Lord moved y^m to goe to there steeplehouse to meete in, And when they came Into ye steeplehouse they sate down together & waited upon ye Lord in his power & spirit & minded ye Lord Jesus Christ there teacher & saviour & did not minde ye preist : soe ye officers came to y^m to putt y^m out of ye steeplehouse : & they saide nea Itt was not time for y^m to breake uppe there meetinge yett & soe ye preist when he had donn his stuffe they woulde have had freinds goe home to Dinner : & they tolde y^m they did not use to goe to Dinners but was feedeing upon ye breade of life : & there they sate waiteing upon ye Lord Ienjoyeing his power & presence till hee ordered y^m to departe.

“ *And soe they was offended because they could not gett y^m to ye steeplehouses & when they was there they was offended because they could not gett y^m out again* ” (Camb. Jnl. ii. 32).

The Puritans of Elizabeth's day described the clergy with much the same wealth of language as was used by Friends respecting the ministers of the Commonwealth.

1587. "These cathedral churches are indeede verie Dennes of Theves, where the tyme and place of Gods service . . . is moste filthyly abused In pyping with Organnes, in singing, ringing and Trowing of the Psalmes from one side of the Quiar to another, with squeaking of Chaunting Queresters. . . . These unprofitable Members, for the moste parte Dumme *Doggs*,¹ Unskilfull sacrificing priestes, Destroyeing Drones, or rather *Caterpillars* of the Word. . . . They are Dennes of Lazie Loytring Lubberds, the verie harborowes of all disceitfull and Tymeserving *hippocrites*, whose prebendaries and lyvings belonge some to gentlemen, and some to boyes, some to servingmen, and some to others" (ii. 211).

1652. Richard Clayton called Priest Sawrey of Ulverston a "rotten-hearted *Hippocrite*," and Margaret Fell called him "a *catterpillar* wch shall bee swept out of ye way" (Camb. *Jnl.* i. 408).

1654. It is said that Anne Clayton called Shaw, the rector of Aldingham in Furness, a "greedy *dogg*"; Jane Ashburner called him "thou painted beast," and Mary Howgill addressed him as a "wel favored harlott" (note to p. 59 of the forthcoming *Household Account Book of Sarah Fell of Swarthmoor Hall*).

The strong language of the Puritan period is justified by reference to Scripture. R. H. wrote :

"You reckon up a greate sorte of sharpe speaches, and you make a bead roule of them: as felow deceivers, false brethren, menpleasers, blinde guides, trees without fruit, etc., and you say precisely that thei are not wordes proceeding from the Spirit of God; but thei and such like are wordes proceeding from our Saviour Christe, the apostles and prophetes, therefore, by your reason [these] had not the Spirit of God. I pray you, whence these speaches, generation of vipers, painted sepulchers, hypocrits, foxes, painted walls, adulterous generation, prince of Sodom . . . and a thowsand more. I am sure you knowe them and where to finde them" (ii. 67).

In an article in the *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, vol. vii. (1920), entitled "A Conscientious Objector of 1575," Dr. Peel prints a MS. in "The Seconde Parte of a Register," of which he writes :

"On the whole, the manuscript now printed for the first time is an excellent example of Elizabethan religious controversy, and it will be read with no little interest at a time when non-resistance and the Christian's attitude to weapons and war are again the subjects of keen disputation. It will be noted that the kinship of the Anabaptist with the Quaker appears alike in this particular and in the matter of using oaths and law courts."

¹ "Dumb dogs," unpreaching clergy so-called, has a reference to itself in the Index with nigh a score of entries.