IV

THE POINTS OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONGREGATIONALISM AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, 1603

EDITIONS AND REPRINTS

I. In Johnson and Ainsworth’s Apologie or Defence of such True Christians as are commonly (but unjustly) called Brownists: etc., 1604, pp. 36–38.1

II. With the Confession of 1596–98 in Confessio Fidei Anglorum quorundam in Inferiori Germania exulantium. Vnd cum annotatione brevi præcipuarum rerum in quibus differimus ab Ecclesia Angliae, etc. 1607.2

III. Also with the Confession of 1596–98 in The Confession of Faith of certayn English people, living in exile, in the Low Countreyes. Together with a brief note of the special heads of those things wherein we differ frō the Church of Eng- lond, etc. 1607.3

IV. Dutch version of the Apologie, 1614,4 (probably).

V. Dutch version of the Apologie, 1670.5

VI. Dexter, Congregationalism, as seen in its Literature, pp. 307, 308.

LITERATURE

Our chief source of information regarding these petitions and the circumstances under which they were presented is Johnson and Ainsworth’s Apologie, already cited; Hanbury, Memorials, I: 112–117, with extracts from the enlarged form of the Points of Difference; Pynchard, History of Congregationalism, III: 253–265, with an abstract of the Points and extracts from the petitions; Dexter, Congregationalism as seen, pp. 306–310.

WHEN death removed, in 1603, the great queen under whose reign the London-Amsterdam church had been driven into exile, the throne was taken by James I.,—a man whose affiliations and promises had excited the hopes of all parties, from the Catholics to the Puritans, but who was to disappoint religious men of every shade of opinion except the supporters of the royal prerogative and the Church in the form established by Elizabeth. At first, however, the king’s real sentiments were unknown, and it was with some confidence of a favorable hearing that about 750 ministers of the Establishment, of Puritan sympathies, laid before

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1 See ante, p. 41, VI.
2 Ante, p. 41, VII.
3 Ante, p. 41, VIII.
4 Ante, p. 41, IX.
5 Ante, p. 41, X.
him the famous Millenary Petition,1 praying for a reform of the English Church in the direction of a more thorough-going Protestantism. These hopes of the Puritans were shared by the little Separatist body at Amsterdam, and in like manner they prepared a petition and sent it to London with a copy of their perfected creed of 1598, to convince the new king at once of their loyalty and the correctness of their views. There seems little doubt that Johnson and Ainsworth were its bearers.2 Not hearing from this petition, the representatives of the church sent to the king a second appeal, containing the brief summary of the fourteen points of difference between the petitioners and the Church of England, which is the document here republished. Whether the king, or his ministers, saw fit to make any inquiries or not, we do not know; but the Separatists now prepared a third petition, recapitulating the points already presented and supporting them elaborately by arguments and citations from the Scriptures. This document seems to have failed of a hearing altogether, and after a considerable waiting, a man of position or influence at court was persuaded to present in their behalf a brief little prayer3 that the Amsterdam Separatists might be permitted to live in their native land on the same terms as the French and Dutch churches then enjoyed on English soil, and that their opponents might be required to answer their points and arguments, and the whole question be fairly laid before the king. The result was unsatisfactory enough. The Separatists received none of the things for which they sued. And by the close of January, 1604, the Hampton Court Conference must have made it plain to all men that no essential reforms of any sort were to be looked for from the new English ruler.

Doubtless the Convocation of the province of Canterbury, which considered and adopted 161 canons during May, June, and July, 1603, had little if any knowledge of the petitions which the obscure brethren from Amsterdam were pressing upon the attention of the

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1 The Petition may be found in full in Fuller, Church History of Britain, ed. London, 1842, III: 193-196; or in Perry, History of the English Church (Student's Series), London, 1881, pp. 372, 373 (from Fuller).
2 Dexter, Cong: as seen, p. 306. All these Separatist petitions are in the Apologie.
3 Johnson and Ainsworth, Apologie, p. 82; see also, Puchard, III: 264.
king.\footnote{Perry, \textit{History of the English Church}, pp. 367, 368. Neal, \textit{History of the Puritans}, II: 27, 31-36, gives an epitome of the canons which concern dissent. See also Punchard, \textit{Hist. of Cong.}, III: 273, 274.} But as one reads the rules for church government which that body prepared, under royal license, and which the king's letters-patent soon approved,\footnote{James ordered that these canons should be read in every church at least once a year.} one sees clearly that Johnson and Ainsworth had nothing to hope from men so diametrically opposed to the theories of the church which the Separatists drew from the New Testament. Those canons declared that to deny the true and apostolic character of the Church of England, as then established; to hold that the forms of prayer or the rites of that Church were in any way repugnant to Scripture, or superstitious; to question the Christian character of such offices as archbishoprics, bishoprics, or deaneries; to doubt the lawfulness of the ordination and call of bishops, priests, and deacons, when tested by the Word of God; to separate from the Church of England, or to assert that any other bodies of English subjects than those assembling according to the forms established by law can constitute a true church; to do or declare any one of these things is \textit{ipso facto} to incur the penalty of excommunication, in such severity that naught but a public recantation and the satisfaction of the archbishop as to the genuineness of his repentance can restore the offender to the Church. The Separatists might well feel that if Elizabeth had chastised them with whips, James bade fair to chastise them with scorpions. The best that they could hope to do was to remain beyond his reach in their Amsterdam exile.

THE POINTS OF DIFFERENCE.

"1. That Christ the Lord hath by his last Testament given to his Church, and set therein, sufficient ordinary Offices, with the manner of calling or Entrance, Works, and Maintenance, for the administration of his holy things, and for the sufficient ordinary instruction guydance and service of his Church, to the end of the world."
2. That every particular Church hath like and full interest and power to enjoy and practise all the ordinances of Christ given by him to his Church to be observed therein perpetually.

3. That every true visible Church, is a company of people called and separated from the world by the word of God, and joyned together by voluntarie profession of the faith of Christ, in the fellowship of the Gospell. And that therfore no knowne Atheist, unbeliever, Heretique, or wicked liver, be received or retaine a member in the Church of Christ, which is his body; God having in all ages appointed and made a separation of his people from the world, before the Law, vnder the Law, and now in the tyme of the Gospell.

4. That discreet, faithfull, and able men (though not yet in office of Ministerie) may be appointed to preach the gospell and whole truth of God, that men being first brought to knowledge, and converted to the Lord, may then be ioyned togethier in holy communion with Christ our head and one with another.

5. That being thus ioyned, every Church hath power in Christ to chuse and take vnto themselves meet and sufficient persons, into the Offices and functions of Pastors, Teachers, Elders, Dea-

wood, used language which at least implied that there might be other systems of church-government more warrantted by Scripture example than Episcopacy. But with Bancroft's sermon at Paul's Cross, in 1589, the claim was set up (rather indistinctly and indirectly, it must be said) that Episcopacy is of divine warrant and apostole example. This view was further developed by Thomas Bilson, bishop of Worcester 1596-7, and of Winchester from 1597 to his death in 1616, in his Perpetual Government of Christ's Church, 1593, wherein not only is Episcopacy asserted to be the only Scriptural method of church government, but apostolic succession is affirmed to be essential to the very existence of the church. Even the moderate Richard Hooker, in his Ecclesiasticall Politie, 1594, while denying that Episcopacy is necessary to the existence of the church, or under all circumstances to be required, asserted it to be the form of government most agreeable to Scripture. Bancroft and Bilson's views gained constantly over the Erastian theories, and with Bancroft's appointment as archbishop, in 1604, mounted the throne of Canterbury. Yet the divergence of this article even from their view is considerable, for though the high churchmen would find in Episcopacy the only form of polity warranted by the Word of God, they hardly claimed that all the minute of offices and rites were prescribed in the New Testament. See Perry, History of the Church of England, (Student's Series,) 342-349. Bancroft's sermon may be found in Hicks, Bibliotheca Script. Eccles. Angl., London, 1709, pp. 347-315 (where the old style date of 1588 is assigned to it). His views are set forth with more elaboration in his Survey of the Pretended Holy Discipline, 1593. A new edition of Bilson's Perpetual Government was brought out by Robert Eden, at Oxford, 1642.

1 It may not be amiss to add, as an illustration of the conception of the form of a church here set forth, the definition given by Henry Jacob, Johnson's opponent in the extreme Separatism of the latter, but a Congregationalist of great desert, the friend of Robinson, who founded, in 1616, in Southwark, London, the first Congregational church to maintain a continuous existence on English soil. It is in his Divine Beginning and Instituion of Chrits True Visible or Ministerial Church, Leyden, 1610, p. 18: "A true Visible & Ministerial Christ Church of Christ is a number of faithfull people joyned by their willing consent in a spiritual outward society or body politike, ordinarilly comming togethier into one place, instituted by Christ in his New Testament, & having the power to exercise Ecclesiasticall government and all Gods other spirituall ordinances (the means of salvation) in & for it selfe immediatly from Christ."
cons and Helpers, as those which Christ hath appointed in his Testament, for the feeding, governing, serving, and building vp of his Church. And that no Antichristia Hierarchie or Ministerie, of Popes, Arch-bishops, Lord-bishops, Suffraganes, Deanes, Arch-deacons, Chauncellors, Parsons, Vicars, Priests, Dumb-ministers, nor any such like be set over the Spouse and Church of Christ, nor retained therein.

6. That the Ministers aforesaid being lawfully called by the Church where they are to administer, ought to continew in their functions according to Gods ordinance, and carefully to feed the flock of Christ committed vnto them, being not inioyned or suffered to beare Civill offices withall, neither burthened with the execution of Civill affaires, as the celebration of marriage, burying the dead &c. which things belong aswell to those without as within the Church.

7. That the due maintenance of the Officers aforesaid, should be of the free and voluntarie contribution of the Church, that according to Christ's ordinance, they which preach the Gospell may live of the Gospell: and not by Popish Lordships and Livings, or I ewish Tithes and Offerings. And that therefore the Lands and other like revenewes of the Prelats and Clergie yet remayning (being still also baits to allure the Iesuies and Seminaries into the Land, and incitements vnto them to plott and prosecute their woonted evill courses, in hope to enjoy them in tyme to come) may now by your Highnes be taken away, and converted to better vse, as those of the Abbeyes and Nunneries have been heeretofore by your Maiestyes worthie predecessors, to the honor of God and great good of the Realme.

8. That all particular Churches ought to be so constituted, as having their owne peculiar Officers, the whole body of every Church may meet together in one place, and jointly performe their duties to God and one towards another. And that the censures of admonition and excommunication be in due maner executed, for sinne, convicted, and obstinatly stood in. This power

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1 This article, the last clauses of which are so foreign to modern Congregational sentiment, represents the view also of the founders of New England regarding marriages and funerals. As far as known, the first instance of prayer at a New England funeral was at Roxbury in 1685 (Palfrey, Hist. N. E., III: 495). The next year, 1686, saw the first marriage by a minister in Mass. (Proc. Mass. Hist. Soc., 1858-60, p. 283). Connecticut permitted ministers to join in marriage by a law of Oct. 1694 (Conn. Records, IV: 136).

2 i.e., the priests from the Seminary which Cardinal William Allen established in 1568 at Douai in the then Spanish Netherlands. These men, trained for work in England, from 1577 onward were looked upon as the most dangerous foes of English Protestantism.
also to be in the body of the Church wherof the partyes so offending and persisting are members.

9. That the Church be not governed by Popish Canons, Courts, Classes, Customes, or any humane inventions, but by the lawes and rules which Christ hath appointed in his Testament. That no Apocrypha writings, but only the Canonickall scriptures be vsed in the Church. And that the Lord be worshipped and called vpon in spirit and truth, according to that forme of praier given by the Lord Iesu, Math. 6. and after the Leitourgie of his owne Testament, not by any other framed or imposed by men, much lesse by one traslated from the Popish leitourgie, as the Book of common praier &c.

10. That the Sacraments, being seales of Gods covenant, ought to be administred only to the faithfull, and Baptisme to their seed or those vnder their governement. And that according to the simplicitie of the Gospell, without any Popish or other abuses, in either Sacrament.

11. That the Church be not vrged to the observation of dayes and tymes, Jewish or Popish, save only to sanctify the Lords day: Neyther be laden in things indifferent, with rites and ceremonies, whatsoever invented by men; but that Christian libertie may be reteined: And what God hath left free, none to make bound.

12. That all monuments of Idolatry in garments or any other things, all Temples, Altars, Chappels, and other place, dedicated heerfore by the Heathens or Antichristians to their false worship, ought by lawfull auctoritie to be rased and abolisshed, not suffered to remayne, for nourishing superstition, much lesse imploied to the true worship of God.

13. That Popish degrees in Theologie, inforcement to single life in Colledges, abuse of the study of prophane heathen Writers, with other like corruptions in Schooles and Academies, should be remooved and redressed, that so they may be the wel-springs and nurseries of true learning and godlinesse.

14. Finally that all Churches and people (without exception) are bound in Religion only to receave and submit vnto that constitution, Ministerie, Worship, and order, which Christ as Lord and King hath appointed vnto his Church: and not to any other devised by Man whatsoever.