

^A Cal⁴/₆₈ HENRY VIII

AND

THE ENGLISH MONASTERIES

*AN ATTEMPT TO ILLUSTRATE THE HISTORY OF THEIR
SUPPRESSION*

BY

FRANCIS AIDAN GASQUET D.D.

MONK OF THE ORDER OF ST. BENEDICT
SOMETIME PRIOR OF ST. GREGORY'S MONASTERY DOWNSIDE BATH

VOL. II

—
Sixth Edition
—

X¹¹ - 289

JOHN HODGES,
BEDFORD STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

—
1902.



SIR RICHARD SOUTHWELL,
AUDITOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

A

CONTENTS.

TO THE READER.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE LESSER MONASTERIES.

State of affairs in the spring of 1536—Obstacles to Henry's return to obedience of Rome—Establishment of Court of Augmentation—Instructions for commencement of dissolution—General method of procedure—Monasteries refounded by Henry—Fines paid for licence to continue—Number of religious expelled on dissolution of lesser monasteries—Petitions for preservation of monasteries—Re-establishment of Bisham by the king—Progress of the work of destruction—Resistance of the Hexham canons. . . . pp. 1-40

CHAPTER II.

THE RISING IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

Outbreak of the rising—Causes of popular discontent—The resistance at Louth—People rose in defence of the faith—Feeling against Cromwell and some of the bishops—Statute of uses—Story of the rising—Destruction of the registrar's books in Louth—Murder of the bishop of Lincoln's chancellor—The "articles" of popular discontent—Henry's answer to the demands—Royal anxiety as to the result and the effect of the news in foreign countries—Collapse of the movement—Part taken by the monks. . . . pp. 41-83

A

CHAPTER III.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE.

Popular sympathy with the insurgents—Severe measures taken by Henry—Causes of the Yorkshire discontent—Aske's declaration and examinations—Story of the rising—Religious replaced in their houses—Henry's instructions to Norfolk—His "politic device"—Insurgent envoys to the king—Assembly at Pomfret—The settlement at Doncaster. . pp. 84-120

CHAPTER IV.

THE SECOND NORTHERN RISING.

Dispersion of the insurgents—Henry's attitude with regard to the promises made to them—Proclamation of the royal pardon—Instructions to the officials as to the reinstated religious—Aske's endeavour to restrain the people—His belief in the king's honour—The new rising and its failure—Part taken by the religious in the popular movement and especially those of Watton, Jervaulx, Whalley and Bridlington—The *quondam* abbot of Fountains—Trials and executions. . pp. 121-158

CHAPTER V.

DISSOLUTION BY ATTAINDER.

The royal vengeance—Attainder of a religious superior advantageous to the king—Fate of Whalley, Barlings, etc.—Abbot and monks of Furness forced to surrender—Holm Cultram—Lenton Priory—Story of the fall of Woburn—Abbot Hobbes—His examinations in the Tower—His views as to papal supremacy—His anguish of mind—His death. pp. 159-202

CHAPTER VI.

THE SUPPRESSION OF CONVENTS.

Hard case of disbanded nuns—Number of convents—Good reputation of the English nuns—Some convents purchased a temporary respite from destruction—Many reduced to a state of destitution—Injunctions for Synningthwaite convent in 1534—Con-

ventual life—The good done by religious ladies—Testimony of royal commissioners—Importance to the king of surrenders and royal instructions on the point—Failure as regards convents—Final suppressions—Number of nuns . . pp. 203-237

CHAPTER VII.

FALL OF THE FRIARS.

Fundamental principle of the mendicant orders—Numbers in England on suppression—Their troubles—Bishop Ingworth's work in dissolving the friaries—The Dominican prior of Newcastle-on-Tyne—Opposition to the royal policy—Friar Anthony Brown—Progress of the dissolution—Friar Stone—Doctor London and the friars—The surrenders—Small value of the spoils—Sites of the friaries much sought after—Special hardships to which the disbanded friars were exposed. pp. 238-276

CHAPTER VIII.

PROGRESS OF THE GENERAL SUPPRESSION.

Value of surrenders—Policy of Henry in hiding the scheme of total suppression—Religious anticipate the work of spoliation in some instances—Second suppression of Bisham—Destruction of Lewes—Suppression of Abingdon—Example of Vale Royal—Royal pressure to secure surrender at Hinton Charterhouse and Athelney—Abbots appointed for the purpose of surrendering their houses—Deprivation of the abbot of St. Albans—And forced resignation of abbot of Evesham—Romsey abbey—Dr. Hillyard and the monks—Account of the dissolution of Roche—Total number of ejected religious. . pp. 277-324

CHAPTER IX.

THE THREE BENEDICTINE ABBOTS.

Pre-eminence of Glastonbury—High position of abbot Whiting—The oath of supremacy—Royal visitation of Glastonbury—Last glimpse of abbot Whiting at Glastonbury—Greater

monasteries not legally dissolved—Whiting removed to London—The Abbey dismantled in his absence—Examinations in the Tower—Crumwell's notes—Whiting removed into Somerset "to be executed"—The final scene—Abbot Cook of Reading—His friendship with the king—His attitude to the men of "the new learning"—His adherence to papal supremacy—First troubles—Examinations in the Tower—Abbot Cook's execution at Reading—Abbot Marshall of Colchester—Early troubles—Views of the abbot as to the deaths of More and Fisher—Examination of witnesses against abbot Marshall—His execution pp. 325-386

CHAPTER X.

THE MONASTIC SPOILS.

imate of total value—Amount received by the Crown smaller than usually stated—The general scramble for monastic lands—Work of gathering in the spoils—Private purses made by his agents—Monastic plate—Irreverence shown to relics—Demolition of shrines—Winchester, Canterbury, Durham—Feeling of the people at the work—Total value of the plate—Ecclesiastical vestments taken for the king or sold—Destruction of books and manuscripts—"Defacing" of churches—Lead and bells—Destruction of the buildings, etc. . . . pp. 387-439

CHAPTER XI.

THE SPENDING OF THE SPOILS—THE EJECTED MONKS AND THEIR PENSIONS.

al promises not fulfilled—Act of Parliament in 1539 dealing with the great monasteries—How Henry spent the property—Proportion spent on national purposes—Pensions of the ejected monks—Only a portion of the monks pensioned—Voluntary surrender a condition for receiving anything—Amount of pensions—Reasons for granting large sums in a few cases—Deductions from the sum allowed—Many patents for pensions sold—What became of the disbanded religious—

Wills of some Winchester Nuns—Restoration of some monasteries in Mary's reign—Last records of disbanded religious. pp. 440-489

CHAPTER XII.

SOME RESULTS OF THE SUPPRESSION.

Popular prejudice against monastic bodies—A subsequent growth—The effect of the dissolution on the poor—Associated labour and prayer the fundamental idea of conventual existence—Caricature drawn by novelists—Various kinds of regulars—What the great monastic houses did for the poor—How the poor were robbed in their dissolution—Consumption of the sources of charity—Thrift of the old monastic owners—Rack-renting by new lay-owners—Contemporary account of the state of the country—Vagrant laws—Effect of the dissolution on education—Possibility of monasteries taking part in revival of letters—Conclusion. . . . pp. 490-526

APPENDIX.

- I. Monasteries which purchased a temporary existence.
- II. Example of a corrody at Bridlington.
- III. Accounts of the Augmentation Office, etc.
- IV. The Holy Blood of Hayles.
- V. List of English monasteries in the time of Henry VIII. pp. 529-564

MAPS.

- I. The Black Monks (Benedictines, Cluniacs).
- II. The White Monks (Cistercian).
- III. The Regular Canons, Black (Augustinian), and White (Premonstratensian).
- IV. The Nunneries.

GENERAL INDEX.

TO THE READER.

Although this second volume is larger than the first, it must not be supposed that the limits of "an attempt to illustrate," fixed by the title, have been in any way overpassed. I have steadily resisted the temptation to make use of many incidents which would have added interest to my pages, and which bore more or less upon my subject, but which were not necessary to its illustration. The mass of records ready to hand is all instructive and would furnish material for special monographs on many subjects of deep and present interest not merely to the historian, but to the political inquirer.

My sincere thanks are due for constant and invaluable aid to many friends, amongst whom I trust I may reckon the officials of the Museum and Public Record Office, to whom I had such good reason to express my indebtedness in my first volume. The kindness of one friend has relieved me of the irksome task of making the "Index," another, Mr. Marsham Adams, has helped me in the concluding chapter; while to Mr. Edmund Bishop, who, from first to last, has aided me by counsel and suggestion as well as by his careful examination of every proof sheet, I owe a debt of gratitude which I gratefully here record. The Maps both in this and Vol. I. are the work of Dom. Conrad Banckaert, of Downside.

*St. Gregory's Monastery, Downside,
8th December, 1888.*

HENRY VIII.

AND

THE ENGLISH MONASTERIES.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISSOLUTION OF THE LESSER MONASTERIES.

By the spring of the year 1536 Henry had partially succeeded in his designs against the monasteries. The parliament, acting according to his royal will and pleasure, had in March granted him power to deal with the possessions of every religious house, the income of which did not exceed £200 a year. The time was marked by events of importance, both to the church and the nation at large. Death had ended the troubles of the unfortunate queen Katherine in January. And the sudden fall and execution of Anne Boleyn four months later seemed to offer a favourable occasion for the reconciliation of Henry with the pope. The king of France had shown the English ambassadors, immediately upon the news of Anne's degradation, that there could not be "a better opportunity of wiping out the stains on