

Fall 1977

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Citation

Sandler, Florence. 1977. "The Temple Of Zerubbabel: Pattern For Reformation In Thomas Fuller's Pisgah-Sight and Church-History of Britain." *Studies In The Literary Imagination* 10(2): 29-42.

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Florence Sandler

THE TEMPLE OF ZERUBBABEL: A PATTERN FOR
REFORMATION IN THOMAS FULLER'S *PISGAH-SIGHT*
AND *CHURCH-HISTORY OF BRITAIN**

Valued in his own day as an historian and antiquary, Thomas Fuller has not fared well at the hands of the modern historian. The later volumes of his *Church-History of Britain* (1655) might be consulted for a contemporary opinion of men and events and particularly for Fuller's eye-witness account of Laud's last Convocation; one might also turn to his *History of the Worthies of England* (1662) to check on the seventeenth-century reputation of persons notable in English history and letters (always making due allowance for Fuller's well-known idiosyncrasies). But his other works, including the *Pisgah-sight of Palestine*, are dismissed as mere period pieces, and the historian is unlikely to go so far as to concern himself with Fuller's basic attitudes, which appear to be all too conventional and outmoded. Unlike Spelman, Fuller had not come to a modern sense of periodicity; instead, like most of his contemporaries, he could uncritically accept medieval precedents as being immediately applicable to his own age, not realising that the very structure of feudal society gave a different meaning to any particular word or act. Unlike Harrington, he had not come to the modern realization that political changes are based upon changes in the economic structure of society; instead, like most of his contemporaries, he was likely to see political change in terms of the moral corruption or improvement of the leaders of society. Unlike Hobbes, he was not concerned to reduce his knowledge of history and public affairs to a science of politics, but saw public life as the interaction in the larger sphere of individual moral personalities. In short, he is not innovative but representative of his age, and it is this very quality of representivity that demands some attention.

In his historical methodology (if not in his rhetorical engagement with the reader) Fuller is relatively unself-conscious. He follows Parker, Camden and Ussher (three writers whom he greatly honours) in disentangling the historical facts as objectively and clearly as he can from legend, supposition and propaganda, but the quality of the facts thus disentangled and the time-scheme into which they are to be fitted he can take for granted. The Augustinian perspective of medieval history is so deeply engrained in him as to appear self-evident. In his own day, however, the Augustinian view of history had come under violent challenge, presented

* My thanks are due to the Folger Shakespeare Library for the fellowship that gave me time to research Thomas Fuller.

not only in academic terms but in revolutionary political movement.

Augustine's view of world history (or, more strictly, of the present epoch of world history, the sixth and last, stretching from the Incarnation to the end of time) is that it holds within itself no essential meaning, no essential dynamic. Properly understood, neither the fall of Rome nor any other event constitutes an historical crisis anywhere between the Crucifixion and the Last Judgment. Empires may come and go, providing a greater or lesser degree of peace and justice within their sway, but secular history constitutes at most a landscape against which is played out the drama of faith, of God and the soul. The Christian soul is in the world, but not of it. The Church, the *civitas peregrinans*, moves through a temporal extension, responding not to history but only to God who is above and beyond history.

Augustine's view had been calculated *inter alia* to render irrelevant the apocalyptic mentality of the Early Church and specifically chiliasm, the common belief in the literal future millenium, a belief finally condemned as heretical by the Council of Ephesus in 431 A.D. For Augustine, the millenium, the thousand-year rule on earth of Christ with his saints, could not be regarded as an impending event towards which history now strained but as a spiritual reality already achieved in the hearts of the faithful. It could be interpreted, then, as being commensurate with the historical existence of the Christian Church.

The apocalyptic mentality seems, however, to have remained as an undercurrent through all of Western European history. After a significant revival in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under the sponsorship of Joachim and the Spiritual Franciscans, another revival had been launched in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by the radical wing of the Protestant Reformation. The new style of Protestant history pioneered on the continent by the Magdeburg Centurians and in England by Bale and Foxe remained basically within the Augustinian perspective in so far as it interpreted the millenium not as a future event but as the whole Christian era. Within that era, however, Foxe and the Magdeburgians were concerned to trace an urgent and dynamic pattern. For them, many of the prophecies of the Apocalypse of John had already been fulfilled: the great Dragon of the apocalypse who persecuted the saints had indeed been bound in the days of Constantine but after a thousand years had been unleashed and was in fact now ensconced in the papal seat directing the persecution of the Protestant martyrs. So many of the apocalyptic vials of wrath had already been poured out—though there were, to be sure, some differences among exegetes as to whether the Turkish capture of Constantinople, for example, constituted the fourth, fifth or sixth of those vials! In any case, history was straining toward the immediate crisis wherein the Whore of Babylon would finally be overthrown and in

her place the Bride, the New Jerusalem, be manifest on earth.

Having wrenched the Augustinian perspective to the limit the radical exegete needed to take only one more step to find himself outside that perspective altogether, and in England the step seems to have been taken first by the Cambridge scholar, Joseph Mede. In his 1632 edition of the *Clavis Apocalyptica* (republished a decade later by the authority of the Long Parliament), Mede stated that he believed that the millenium of Revelation 20 was a future impending event. Chiliasm, which was now discovered to have been part of the faith of the Apostolic Church, was again a respectable belief, and it suddenly became widespread in England in the 1630s and 1640s.

Several recent studies have concerned themselves with the way in which the Civil War in England which began at first as a constitutional struggle between King and Parliament came to be transformed into a popular religious crusade. The cry to bring down the bishops and liturgies and finally the monarchy itself was fuelled by a remarkable apocalyptic and millenarian fervour which saw all of these institutions as part of the complex of the great Papal Whore which must be overturned in order to clear the way for the impending millenium and the personal rule of Christ with his saints in England. Bernard Capp, the author of the definitive work on the Fifth Monarchists, has pointed out that the rise of that sect in the early 1650s was only the last and the least realistic assertion of a viewpoint prevalent, especially in the New Model Army, from the mid 1640s; for the Army, in its own eyes, was exactly that army of saints which God had raised up in these latter days to accomplish the work of destruction and to inherit the Kingdom. Thus the soldiers who invaded Scotland in 1650 issued a *Declaration* to the effect that they were "perswaded in our consciences, That he (Charles I) and his Monarchy was one of the ten horns of the Beast," quoting Rev. 17: 12-15. They called on the Scots to "joyn together in the advancement of the Kingdome of Jesus Christ, and throwing down, and trampling upon the Seat of the Beast," and to "rejoyce to see the Horns of the Beast cut off."¹

In 1643, while the campaign mounted against the "Seat of the Beast," Fuller in his pulpit at the Savoy had found himself increasingly isolated

¹ Peter Toon, ed., *Puritans, the Millenium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600 to 1660* (Cambridge and London: James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 1970), p. 70. This book mentions in passing (p. 104) that Fuller's *Pisgah-sight of Palestine* provides a critique of millenarian doctrines. See also, among recent studies, Bernard S. Capp, *The Fifth-Monarchy Men: A Study in 17th-Century English Millenarianism* (London: Faber, 1972); Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1965) and Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (New York: Viking, 1972).

by his style of moderate Royalism, and increasingly subjected to harassment.² Finally, in midsummer, rather than take the oath of loyalty to Parliament in a form incompatible with his conscience, he fled to the King's Court at Oxford. But before doing so, he had preached and arranged for the publication of his forthright *Sermon of Reformation*, in which he reproved the two extremist positions, Laudian and radical, and addressed himself directly to the radical demand for the thorough and perfect Reformation of the Church in that generation. Here he took an explicitly Augustinian position: "*Christians living under the Gospel, live*"—already, by definition—"in a time of Reformation."³ Christianity itself being the thorough Reformation of the world and the inauguration of Christ's Kingdom, no other Reformation was to be expected short of the world to come. This was not to deny that within the historic Church itself there must be constant repair against corruption. Specifically, the Church in England had needed the Protestant reforms of Edward and Elizabeth; and, though its doctrine was now purified, reforms were still needed, Fuller thought, to correct certain faults in practice and ceremonies—a glance here at Laudian innovations! He was, in fact, prepared to subscribe to the need for a "Thorough Reformation" of the historical Church, but only with the proper Augustinian qualification, "that by *Thorough Reformation* we meane such a one whereof we are capable, *pro statu viatorum*, made with all due and Christian moderation" (I, 302).

The most radical position that Fuller confronted in the *Sermon* was not merely that the Church in England still, after Edward and Elizabeth, stood in need of "Thorough Reformation," but that it should be abolished altogether, being no Church at all, but from the beginning and in essence an institution of Babylon. Fuller is offended by such ignorance: "If justly we be angry with the Papists for making the Brittish Church (a tall stripling grown) to weare swaddling cloathes againe: more cause have we to distaste the pens and preachings of such who make their addresses unto us, as unto pure Pagans where the word is newly to be planted." Or earlier: "Let none . . . brag that they are now the first Founders of a church in *England*, built long since therein, time out of minde" (I, 309-10).

Finally his quarrel with apocalypticism and the call for the "Thorough Reformation" is based not only on exegesis and history but on his reading of human nature: "Look not to finde that in man out of Paradise, which

² The most accessible biography of Fuller is William Addison's *Worthy Dr. Fuller* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1951).

³ *Collected Sermons, 1631-1659*, ed. John Eglington Bailey, completed by William E. A. Axon, 2 vols. (London: Gresham Press, Unwin Bros., 1891), I, 299. Subsequent references appear parenthetically.

was not found in man in Paradise, continuance in an holy estate. *Martin Luther* was wont to say, he never knew good order in the Church last above fifteen yeares in the purity thereof; yea, the more perfect the Reformation is, the lesse time it is likely to last. . . . I speake not this to dishearten men from endeavouring a perfect Reformation, but to keep them from being disheartened, when they see the same cannot be exactly observed." As for the imminent arrival of "Christ's Corporall visible Kingdome," if not impossible of belief, yet it was "strange, as set commonly afoot with these few last yeares." Fuller is not so much afraid to face that prospect as afraid that, when the Kingdom is postponed, the end result will be a general defection from the faith. And since of things to come, man can know little, and that doubtfully, he bids his congregation meantime to pray for Peace on God's terms and in God's time (I, 311-2).

Fuller's challenge to the radicals was picked up by John Saltmarsh, the doughty chaplain to the New Model Army and one of the celebrated "new lights" and "saints" of his age, who directed against Fuller's *Sermon* his turgid *Examinations*. Fuller's reply, *Truth Maintained*, reprinted Saltmarsh's passages one by one, analysing their illogicalities, restating and elaborating upon his own position. It was exactly Saltmarsh's claim to the "new light" or "latter-day glory," the conviction of a new revelation vouchsafed to the present generation, that he found disturbing (he was to preach a Sermon on the subject at Exeter just before the town fell to the parliamentary armies), and it sprang, he was convinced, not only from spiritual arrogance but from a genuine ignorance of the historical dispensation. What was needed was the appreciative chronicling of God's dealings with the historical Israel, and then with the historical New Israel, the Church. What was needed, in short, was the *Pisgah-sight of Palestine* and the *Church-History of Britain*.

Meanwhile, in the course of the Civil War, Fuller proceeded to serve as chaplain for Hopton's Royalist Army, and in that capacity lived through the sieges of Basing House and Exeter. The victory of the parliamentary forces left him without home or livelihood. Even before the execution of the King, Fuller appears to have gone through a period of acute depression and crisis of conscience. But he eventually rallied, took up gratefully the offer of a living at Waltham Holy Cross and proceeded to publish the two books on which apparently he had never ceased working through the years of national and personal distress. The *Pisgah-sight* would be published in 1650, and the *Church-History* in 1655. In the circumstances one could expect both books to be partly a response and corrective to those sectarian and apocalyptic views which, for a Church apologist, constituted the chief aberration of his own generation.

On the face of it, the *Pisgah-sight of Palestine* appears to be objective

enough. It is a chorographical treatment of ancient Israel, delineating the areas inhabited by each of the twelve tribes and then Jerusalem itself, and narrating in each case whatever was known of the region and the historical events that occurred there. The format of the book is derived from the *Britannia*, the tribal regions of Israel assuming here the importance Camden had given to the original areas of the British tribes in Roman times. One might suspect, however, that Camden's format is particularly useful to Fuller in that it allows him to arrange his events geographically rather than historically and thus disregard the historical linearity on which prophecy and apocalyptic are based. Even then, so many events important for prophecy and apocalypse occur within Jerusalem itself that Fuller cannot proceed entirely by implication but must face the issue squarely. Indeed, he had laid his cards on the table with his original announcement that his topic was to be the *historical* Canaan, the *historical* Jerusalem (or, as he might have said, the historical and visible Church) in contradistinction to the entity which was invisible and celestial.

He is aware that in his generation there are many who say that the historical is dead; that

describing this Countrey is but disturbing it, it being better to let it sleep quietly, intombed in its owne ashes. The rather, because the *New Jerusalem* is now daily expected to come down, and these corporall (not to say carnall) studies of this terrestriall *Canaan*, begin to grow out of fashion, with the more knowing sort of Christians.⁴

Since the proponents of the New Jerusalem drew their texts from the Apocalypse of John in the New Testament or the Book of Ezekiel in the Old, Fuller in this book will barely mention the Apocalypse, and he gives short shrift to "Ezekiel, his Visionary Land of *Canaan*."

Perusing the nine last Chapters of *Ezekiels* prophesie (invited thereunto with the mention of many places in *Palestine*, whilst I hoped to find, or feel a *Solid body*, I onely grasped the *fitting aire*, or rather a *meer spirit*; I mean in stead of a literall sense I found the *Canaan* by him described no *Geography*, but *Ouranography*, no earthly truth, but mysticall prediction. (V, 189).

⁴ *A Pisgah-sight of Palestine and the Confines thereof, with the History of the Old and New Testament acted thereon* (London: Printed by J. F. for John Williams, 1650), I. 3. Since there is more than one series of pages in the 1650 volume, it is cited here by book and page, in roman and arabic numbers respectively. Subsequent references appear parenthetically. For a more extended account of the political bias of the *Pisgah-sight* see my forthcoming article in the *Huntington Library Quarterly*.

Fuller, like Augustine, will continue adamantly to separate the two dispensations, the heavenly from the earthly, the eternal from the temporal, and to insist upon the error of expecting the first ever to become apparent within the second. And just as, in his capacity of historian, he knows better than to count on the eternal city's arrival within time, so, as geographer, he resents Ezekiel's confusion of the actual Jerusalem (unsymmetrical, built up at different times on an irregular terrain) with a four-square mandala of perfection. Simply, he says, the City of Jerusalem, "as presented by the Prophet, was fairer, finer, slicker. smoother, more exact, more uniforme then any fabrick the earth afforded" (V, 190).

It is true that for Fuller, as for any Biblical commentator at the time, the City and Temple of Jerusalem in the reign of Solomon represent a glory such as the world has hardly seen since, but Fuller will insist, by reminding the reader of Solomon's shortcomings, that that glory was not perfect, and he will turn from his description of the riches and beauties of that Temple to a more applicable model, namely, the Temple of Zerubbabel. This, rather than the original Temple, is the pattern for the rebuilding and Reforming of the English Church. Fuller reminds a generation that has always known the Church as poverty-stricken that Zerubbabel was without Solomon's wealth and resources. Zerubbabel, moreover, was harassed by "the people of the land" who wanted things to stay as they were, and complained to the Emperor of Persia that any religious reform in Jerusalem was in derogation of his authority. For the English situation, "the people of the land" are, of course, the Papists, who would maintain the Church in its medieval corruption and who see the English monarch's assumption of the governorship of the English Church as derogating from the proper authority of the Pope. The Sanballats and Tobiahs who organize them are the leaders of the Devon and Norfolk rebellions in Edward's day, or Persons and his fellow Jesuits in Elizabeth's.

But Zerubbabel persevered, and the Temple was restored, though without its former glory:

Wherefore at the foundation of this Temple, the old man wept . . . , who could call to minde the greatness, and gallantry of the former. . . . But the youngsters, being moe in number, and greater in strength, shouted for joy, conceiving the foundations newly laid a matchless fabrick for magnificence, having never seen better, nor other in that place. Thus, such as have been bred in the *dark*, when first brought into the *twilight*, admire at the incomparable lustre thereof. . . .

But what saith the Prophet, in reference to this mean fabrick? *Who hath despised the day of small things?* God, who is all in all, delights to improve such things, as are next to nothing. He that loved the *Jews* best, who were the *fewest of all people*, . . . did cherish and hatch this weak building under the wings of his protection, bringing it from feeble beginnings, by faint proceedings, to full perfection. (III, 411)

It was the Second Temple, built by Zerubbabel, that was “miserably defaced and prophaned by the wicked Antiochus,” before being cleansed and rededicated by Judas Maccabeus and later rebuilt and embellished by Herod the Great to become the magnificent structure that Jesus knew—less glorious, Fuller thinks, than Solomon’s Temple, and yet glorious indeed. Likewise, the English Church, rebuilt in Edward’s day, had been undone by Mary, who in Protestant eyes had played a role comparable with that of Antiochus; while the true Church, in Mary’s day as in the day of Antiochus, had been represented by the martyrs whose sufferings were recorded in the *Acts and Monuments* and in II Maccabees, respectively. Elizabeth, like Judas Maccabeus, had been thereupon raised by God to cleanse and restore the Church again, though this was in fact a continual task which Charles and the Caroline churchmen had inherited in their generation.

Fuller intends that the vicissitudes and the eventual vindication of Zerubbabel’s Temple should provide a timely moral for those who are distressed by the present imperfections of the reformed English Church—rather than condone the violent iconclasm of the 1640s and let the structure be torn to the ground, they should emulate God’s affection for the English Church and His patient encouragement. And if it is a problem that God allowed Herod, the tyrant and murderer, to be a builder of the Temple, when even David had been rejected, one must know that “God uses even such.” Indeed, as Temple builder, Herod showed more wisdom than the hot-heads of the present age. On the one hand, he knew better than to despise whatever was old on that account alone. “No doubt,” Fuller assures us (on no grounds whatsoever, but simply from the conviction that it must have been so), “*Herod* made use of whatsoever was firm, sound, and undecayed in *Zorobabels* Temple.” On the other hand, Herod was careful to avoid a vacuum: “to satisfie, and content the *Jews* (half suspecting his power, or pleasure to rebuild the Temple) he plucked not down the old Temple, till all necessaries for the new one were perfectly provided, and brought in place, ready to be set up, lest otherwise between two Temples, none at all should be left. Such as take down one Church, before fully furnished for the setting up of a new, make a dangerous breach for profaneness and Atheisme to enter in thereat. No such *regnum* for Satan, as in the *interregnum* between two religions” (III, 421-2). That this comment also pertains to the events of his own times no one would doubt who read Fuller’s Preface to the *Abel Redevivus* [sic] (1651): “*Episcopacy* put off, and another Government [i.e., Presbyterianism] not as yet close buckled on, *Prophanenese* and

Licenciousnesse have given a great and grievous wound to the Church of God.”⁵

The *Pisgah-sight*, indeed, for all its appearance of objectivity, maintains to the end its critique of millenarianism, coming to its conclusion by confronting another favourite millenarian tenet, namely, the imminent conversion and restoration of the Jews. Fuller is by no means scornful of the idea; later he would become a correspondent of Manasseh ben Israel and interest himself in Manasseh’s mission to England in 1655. Nevertheless, he makes it clear in the *Pisgah-sight* that the basis for any hope of the Jews’ restoration and conversion is not the impending arrival of the millenium, since no Christian can presume to know the time of that event; rather, it is a part of Christian charity to want to share with the Jews the full measure of God’s grace and to trust that God’s Providence will allow for this in time. Even here Fuller is employing the principle that he sees exemplified in the rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel, namely, the preference of Divine Charity for working by gradual degrees and within ordinary circumstances.

There is, of course, an exegetical problem in holding up the example of the Second Temple, for, while it is the culmination of Old Testament history, it is the point at which New Testament prophecy strongly rejects its Jewish antecedents. Certainly Jesus and the Apostles knew the Temple and preached there, but those who understood their preaching knew that the Temple was doomed, and that the Christian dispensation required the replacement of the proud Herodian pile by the true Temple which was invisible, being nothing less than the Temple of Christ’s Resurrected Body. “Destroy this Temple,” says Christ in the Gospel of John, “and in three days I will raise it up again”; the evangelist adds, “He spake of the temple of his body” (2: 19-21). To the Antinomian of the 1640s it was clear that the Resurrected Christ could not reign in England until the Visible Church there was destroyed, its ceremonies outlawed, its altars smashed, its priesthood disbanded. The royal and priestly character of the English Church made the comparison with the Herodian Temple the more apt and, to the Antinomian, the more damning. Nor was its antiquity any protection, as it had been no protection for the Second Temple. Simply, if the old wicked Jerusalem was to be superseded by the New, there was no place for the Visible Church: “I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it” (Rev. 21:22).

Fuller himself does not make explicit his answer to the exegetical objection, but one can conjecture what it might have been. Within history, the

⁵ *Abel Redevivus* [sic], or, *The Dead Yet Speaking, the Lives and Deaths of the Famous Divines*, by several Hands, ed. Thomas Fuller (London: Printed by Thomas Brudenell for John Stafford, 1651), A4^v.

Christian Church had been prefigured by the Jewish Temple, and its three ages were to be seen as parallel with three periods of the Temple: the glory of the Apostolic Church corresponded with the Solomonic Temple; the Church in middle age with the Temple of Zerubbabel. Only with the Eschaton would the Church have arrived at the period that corresponded with the abolition of the Temple following the triumph of Jesus' Resurrection. And the Eschaton was not yet.

Meanwhile, Zerubbabel's rebuilding of the Temple answers all three criteria for true Reformation which Fuller lays out in the *Church-History*, namely, just cause, legitimate authority and moderate procedures.⁶ One can surmise that it was a model present in the minds of the Tudor Reformers themselves: like Zerubbabel returning from the Babylonian Exile to confront the ruins of the Solomonic Temple, they saw themselves as emerging from the Babylonian Exile which was the period of Papal Supremacy to confront the ruins of the English Church; like Zerubbabel they had the task of clearing away the rubble to rebuild upon the Foundation and to raise an ecclesiastical structure which would be the true heir of the Primitive Church in Britain, fitted with canons, liturgies and Scriptures free from all medieval excrescences.

Although the reform of the English Church, like the rebuilding and maintenance of the Second Temple, was being carried out in a day when prophecy had largely failed and the resources of piety and scholarship must suffice instead, nevertheless, the reformed structure deserved reverence as well as critical evaluation. This, at least, is the context in which the translators of the King James Version refer to the Second Temple. True, they admit, that any modern Biblical translation cannot claim the preeminence of the original texts. As "the Temple built by *Zerubbabel* after the returne from *Babylon*, was by no means to be compared to the former built by *Solomon* (for they that remembered the former, wept when they considered the latter) notwithstanding, might this latter either haue been abhorred and forsaken by the *Iewes*, or prophaned by the *Greekes*? The like wee are to thinke of Translations."⁷ The like we are to think also, Fuller would add, of the Caroline bishops and of Cranmer's liturgy.

Fuller's comments in the *Pisgah-sight* are thus indicative of the line he takes on the English Reformation in the *Church-History* which he was writing at this very same time, a line which, up to the reign of Elizabeth, is basically that developed by Foxe in the *Acts and Monuments* but with modifications and emphases of his own.

⁶ *The Church-History of Britain, from the Birth of Jesus Christ until the Year MDCXLVIII*. 3 vols. (London: Printed for Thomas Tegg, 1842), II, 49.

⁷ *The Holy Bible, King James Version*, "The Translators to the Reader."

For Henry VIII Fuller holds no brief, since the dissolution of the monasteries and abbeys owed much to the King's desire for power and revenue and little to his piety. Likewise, the overthrow of the papal supremacy in England was occasioned by Henry's simple lust for Anne Boleyn. Yet, since in England the power to reform the Church devolved squarely upon the monarch, the moral in Henry's case as in Herod's is that "God uses even such." Anne herself Fuller regards as a sincere patron of Protestants, and certainly under Henry the Protestant bishops were able to make headway, so that the second last Convocation of the reign produced a "medley-religion," a "tugging . . . betwixt . . . opposite sides" of Protestant and Papist. "Some zealots of our age will condemn the Laodicean temper of the protestant bishops; because, if sticking to purpose, and improving their power to the utmost, they might have set forth a pure and more perfect religion. Such men see the faults of Reformers, but not the difficulties of Reformation. These protestant bishops were at this time to encounter with the popish clergy, equal in number, not inferior in learning, but far greater in power and dependencies. Besides, the generality of the people of the land, being nusted [nursed] in ignorance and superstition, could not on a sudden endure the extremity of an absolute Reformation."⁸ Even such little headway as this was lost with the last parliament of the reign, Henry's zeal for reform having abated once he had gained the power and profit which was his only aim.

The true heroes of the English Reformation, however, are the boy king Edward, witty, pious and conscientious beyond his years, and the Protector, Somerset, who governed in Edward's name and who, straightway, even before parliament could be summoned, implemented Injunctions against popish superstitions and corrupt practices. Such action might well appear precipitate; Fuller is therefore at some pains to point out the element of moderation in the proceedings. Rather than abolish at once all candles from the altar, for example, Edward's Injunctions limited the number of candles to two. "Let us here admire God's wisdom in our first Reformers, who proceeded so moderately in a matter of so great consequence. To reform all at once, had been the ready way to reform nothing at all" (II, 308). Even at the time, Edward's Church was subjected to radical criticism by those who looked upon its retention of vestments and liturgy as the Mark of the Beast. Fuller, having seen the latter-day consequences of rampant non-conformity, cannot afford to be as kind as Foxe to the non-conformists of Edward's day, though Hooper himself was included in their ranks. Those who then, like Hooper, denounced the

⁸ *Church-History*, II, 76.

bishops' vestments would give rise in Fuller's own generation to those who denounced the very existence of bishops and effected the abolition of the episcopacy, root and branch. Or, as he says elsewhere, "nonconformity, in the days of king Edward, was conceived, which afterward, . . . under king James, grew up a . . . tall stripling; but, towards the end of king Charles's reign, shot up to the full strength and stature of a man, able, not only to cope with, but conquer, the hierarchy, its adversary" (II, 329). All the while, in Edward's day, too many of "the people of the land" were rejecting the very substance of the Reformation, as appeared by the support given to the Norfolk and Devon rebellions and the machinations at court against Somerset himself. Indeed, while Mary remained heir to the throne, it was folly for Protestants to argue among themselves about the merits or demerits of vestments or a liturgy. "Such who formerly would not—soon after durst not—use the Common-Prayer; mass and popery being set up by queen Mary in the room thereof" (II, 360).

Following in Foxe's footsteps, Fuller recounts the sufferings of the Marian martyrs, vindicating especially the memory of the three great bishops which since the 1640s been subjected to slander by the anti-episcopal party. But when the Crown passes again to Elizabeth, and the work of Reformation is resumed, Fuller resumes also his characteristic comment. The compromise implied in the Elizabethan Settlement and the slow pace of Reformation throughout the Queen's reign had become the object of constant criticism from the radicals. He is determined to make it clear, then, that a "*slow but sure*" pace of Reformation was exactly what was called for. "For the first six weeks, the queen and her wise council suffered matters to stand in their former state, without the least change; as yet not altering, but consulting what should be altered. Thus our Saviour himself, coming into the temple, and finding it prophaned, with sacrilege, when he had looked round about upon all things, departed for that evening, Mark xi.11; contenting himself with the survey of what was amiss, and deferring the reformation thereof till the next morning. But on the 1st of January following, being Sunday (the best new-year's gift that ever was bestowed on England), by virtue of the queen's proclamation, the Litany was read in English, . . . in all churches of London" (II, 438).

There is no doubt of Fuller's loyalty to the Elizabethan Settlement nor of the strength of his conviction that the failure to maintain that Settlement had led directly to the catastrophe of his own day. Briefly, he has seen the Elizabethan Settlement eroded both from the right and the left, both by Laudian prelates with their unnecessary innovations in matters of ceremony, and by radical sectaries whose innovations in doctrine had been equally excessive, to the point where they claimed to have a mono-

poly upon the Holy Spirit which left them not accountable to any traditional church structure or doctrine whatsoever. Laud himself Fuller regards as politically inept and capable of arrogant and vindictive actions. (He records in some detail, though without comment, the humiliation of his own uncle, Bishop Davenant of Salisbury.) Nevertheless, one had to concede Laud's personal sincerity and conscientiousness according to his lights, and give him due credit for his splendid restoration of St. Paul's Cathedral. (As Fuller noted ruefully later, a fair-minded account such as he had given was, though less than Laud's friends expected, more than he was thanked for). As for the sectaries, Fuller records the results of their deprivations of the Church and the grievances that they registered within the Westminster Assembly, but refrains from launching into invective against them—a gesture which would concede altogether too much of a place to them in what is, after all, a *Church* history. Instead, he will place his emphasis on the indubitable piety of eminent Caroline churchmen (even the bench of bishops at the time of the abolition of the episcopacy was made up predominantly, he thinks, of worthy, learned and charitable men). Finally he will give the stage to Charles himself, whose personal piety likewise was beyond doubt. The strong and moving account of the King's execution and burial, with which the *Church-History* ends, is the passage that prompted Coleridge's celebrated effusion on Fuller as the writer who, next to Shakespeare, excited the sense and emotion of the marvellous.

But it was hardly the sense of the marvellous that inspired Fuller in that account; rather, it was the sense of the tragic impasse that had been reached in his own age. In the name of Reformation, the achievements of the Reformation Church had been for the most part undone, its Governor executed, and its affairs dictated by new men who had little understanding of the historic Church and less affection for it. Those who had been called upon to play the part of Zerubbabel and rebuild the Temple as best they might according to its ancient lineaments had instead out of iconoclastic zeal reduced the Temple to rubble and proclaimed the result an improvement.

It was a situation in which the celebrated charity and geniality of Thomas Fuller had won a hard triumph over indignation and despair. Only after a crisis of conscience had he discovered how to assert himself again in his old role of teacher and moderator, attempting to curb the excess and heal the divisions of the day. In the narrative of Charles' death and burial he was appealing by pathos. More characteristically, through the *Church-History* and the *Pisgah-sight*, he had made his appeal with vivacity and good humour to the common traditions, national and Biblical, that should have served to unite all Englishmen. His *History of the Worthies of England*, published posthumously in 1662, was to be informed by the same spirit.

Meanwhile, Fuller made his last explicit defense of the moderate position in his *Appeal of Injured Innocence* (1659), defending his *Church-History* from the attack of the Laudian Peter Heylyn. He will not allow his Laudian antagonist to pretend that the English Church has never needed reformation, just as he has all along refused to allow the sectary to maintain that the existence of abuses requiring reformation disqualified the English Church from being a true Christian Church at all. It is the balanced Augustinian perspective that Fuller has maintained throughout his career. The Church in its earthly pilgrimage is not the Church celestial, as Zerubbabel's Temple was not Solomon's. One must therefore, like the older generation of Israelites that watched the laying of the foundation, weep for its inadequacy, but one must also, like the younger generation, celebrate its "matchless fabrick for magnificence, having never seen better, nor other in that place."

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