

CHAPTER 18

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PREACHING THE ELIZABETHAN SETTLEMENT

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STUDIES of the Elizabethan settlement have tended to focus on the legal, liturgical, and doctrinal documents—the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, the Prayer Book of 1559, the Royal Injunctions of the same year, the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1563, and the Canons of 1571—by which, over a period of years, the new religious order was gradually put into place. This is entirely understandable. These documents gave the settlement the political and statutory embodiment that was necessary to make it work; they have also been central to subsequent debates over the confessional identity of the Church of England, which have frequently revolved around the precise interpretation of particular rubrics in the Prayer Book or passages in the Articles. But this focus on written documents has resulted in something of an imbalance in the scholarship on the Elizabethan settlement, with more attention paid to the way that the settlement was constructed on paper than on the way it was mediated through the pulpits. Preaching has not been ignored, but very often the governing assumption has been that the historic formularies played a primary role in creating and defining the settlement, whereas the sermons of the early Elizabethan period played a secondary role in defending and supporting it. Historians of the Elizabethan church have not always found it easy to come to terms with the idea that the settlement might have been brought into being as much by speech acts as by written texts.

This chapter looks at some of the sermons preached in the first decade of Elizabeth's reign. Its purpose is not merely to provide a survey of the arguments used in defence of the Elizabethan settlement, but also to investigate what these sermons have to say about the activity of preaching itself. One of the most striking aspects of these early Elizabethan sermons is their self-reflexive nature, particularly with regard to the relationship between the preacher and his audience. Bishop John Jewel, who, as the leading apologist of the Elizabethan settlement in its first decade, had more occasion than most to reflect on

such matters, commented that the audience response to preaching seemed to fluctuate from one extreme to another: ‘So it happeneth oftentimes that either the people judge too much of the Preachers of Gods word, or else they judge too little: Sometime they attribute unto them too much honour, sometime againe they give them too little honour: Sometime they credit them too much, sometime they beleeeve them nothing at all. So are the people alwaies inconstant, so are they mooved on either side’ (Jewel 1607: sig. B2^r). This was not just the lament of a Protestant preacher about the difficulty of weaning people away from the old religion. It was a concern about the complex and unpredictable nature of popular allegiance, which, as we shall see, was also expressed in very similar terms by some of Jewel’s Catholic adversaries.

The need to direct and moderate the audience’s response also forced preachers to confront questions of pulpit rhetoric and decorum, which again are a common self-reflexive theme in the sermons of this first decade. Bringing the new settlement into being, against a background of widespread popular attachment to the old religion, required them to adopt an aggressive, confrontational strategy that in other circumstances they might have preferred to avoid. It required them to handle explosive issues of theological controversy in front of a popular audience, running the risk that the whole debate would spiral dangerously out of control. It required them to attack their opponents, not just with reasoned arguments but with mockery, sarcasm and invective, and even to bring some of the techniques of the theatre into the pulpit. As Thomas Wilson remarked in a well-known passage in *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553), ‘menne commonly tary the ende of a merie plaie, and cannot abide the halfe hearyng of a sower checkyng Sermon’, so that ‘even these auncient preachers, must now and then plaie the fooles in the pulpite, to serve the tickle eares of their fleetyng audience’ (Wilson 1553: sig. A2^v; see also Anselment 1979: 35). This was a period when the conventions of pulpit decorum were still very fluid. In retrospect, the sermons of the 1560s mark a transitional phase in Elizabethan preaching, characterized by a self-consciousness about the role of the preacher, by experiments with different rhetorical strategies, and by a pervasive uncertainty about the nature of the audience (see Armstrong, Chapter 7, this volume).

CONSTRUCTING THE SETTLEMENT, 1558–65

With the accession of Elizabeth I in November 1558, English pulpits were reopened to Protestant preachers. On the Sunday after her accession, as Edwin Sandys reported in a letter to Heinrich Bullinger, ‘the Queen caused the gospel to be preached at that renowned place, Paul’s Cross, which duly occurred to the great delight of the people’ (*Zurich Letters* 1842–5: i. 4). But this moment of Protestant triumphalism did not last long. Hardly had the pulpits been reopened than they were abruptly closed again, only a few weeks later, by a royal proclamation of 27 December 1558, which ordered that all preaching was to cease for the time being, pending a resolution of ‘matters and ceremonies of religion’ by the queen and parliament. In the meantime, the clergy were required to limit themselves

to the reading of the Gospel, Epistle, and the Ten Commandments, without ‘any maner of doctrine or preachyng’ or any ‘exposition or addition of any maner, sense or meaning to be applyed or added’ (Strype 1824: i.2. 391–2). The new Elizabethan regime thus came into existence, not to a chorus of welcome from Protestant preachers, but to a resounding silence from the pulpits.

This was not what the returning Protestant exiles had been hoping for. James Pilkington, future bishop of Durham, argued in his exposition of the prophet Haggai that God’s house could only be rebuilt on a solid foundation of preaching:

Thus we may learne here the necessitie of preaching, and what inconvenience folowes where it is not used. Where preaching fayles saieth Salomon the people perishe . . . What is the cause that the Papistes lye so sounde on sleepe in theyr abominations, but that they care not for preachinge, nor thinke it so necessarye, and because they woulde not be tolde of their faultes, that they mighte amende them? (Pilkington 1562: sigs Bvi^v–Bvii^r)

Pilkington warned that without a vigorous preaching campaign, the Elizabethan regime could never hope to succeed in its task of re-converting England to Protestantism: ‘Wel worth the Papistes therfore in their kind, for they be earnest, zelous and painful in their doinges, they will build their kingdom more in one yeare with fire and fagot, than the colde gospellers will do in seven’ (1562: sig. A4^v). For hotter gospellers like Pilkington, it was distinctly embarrassing that one of the first acts of the new regime should have been to impose a ban on preaching. The ban lasted until the following spring, by which time frustrated Protestants like Thomas Lever, ‘considering that the silence imposed for a long and uncertain period was not agreeable to the command and earnest injunction of Paul to preach the word in season and out of season,’ had started to force the pace of religious change by preaching openly in London in defiance of the royal proclamation (*Zurich Letters* 1842–5: ii. 29–30).

Why, then, was the new regime so reluctant to let Protestant preachers off the leash? One reason was that, contrary to Pilkington’s claims about Catholic disdain for preaching, the Marian government had been extremely effective in using sermons to win popular support. To be sure, the leading Marian churchmen did not regard preaching as the sole means to the reconversion of England. Reginald Pole, in a well-known letter to Cardinal Carranza in June 1558, maintained that preaching could be ‘more of a hindrance than a help, unless it is preceded or accompanied by the establishment of church discipline’ in order to compel people to attend church and receive the sacraments. Pole’s vicar-general Henry Cole would later make a similar point in his controversy with John Jewel, remarking sardonically that people tended to be selective in the sermons they chose to hear: ‘As men chouse theyr wives, so chouse they their teachers . . . Sermons tende more to teache, than to convince’ (Jewel 1560: sig. D7^r). But this did not mean that the Marian regime was careless or neglectful of the role of preaching. Indeed, Pole’s letter to Carranza went on to argue that preaching and church discipline ought to go hand in hand, and that discipline could not be properly established without the preaching of the word. He also stressed that there was no shortage of preaching in London, pointing out

that sermons were preached every week at Paul's Cross, 'to which the people resort in large numbers', and that he himself had been careful to appoint religious and learned men to the London parishes under his control (Duffy 2006; Quirini 1744–57: v. 69–76).

It also became clear in the early weeks of the new reign that many Catholic clergy were not prepared to go quietly. John Christopherson, bishop of Chichester, preaching at Paul's Cross on 27 November 1558, launched a ferocious attack on the Protestant sermon delivered from the same pulpit the previous Sunday, declaring: 'Believe not this new doctrine; it is not the gospel, but a new invention of new men and heretics' (*Zurich Letters* 1842–5: i. 4). John White, bishop of Winchester, preaching at the funeral of Queen Mary on 13 December, warned his audience that 'the wolves be coming out of Geneva, and other places of Germany, and hath sent their books before, full of pestilent doctrines, blasphemy, and heresy, to infect the people' (Strype 1822: iii.2. 536–50). Similar sermons may have been preached from other London pulpits, as the royal proclamation of 27 December refers to certain preachers 'assembling specially in the City of London in sondry places, great number of people, whereupon riseth amonges the common sort not only unfrutefull dispute in matters of religion, but also contention, and occasion to break common quiet' (Elizabeth I 1558). Elizabeth's advisers would undoubtedly have been aware of the disturbances at Paul's Cross at the beginning of Mary's reign, when a dagger had been thrown at the preacher, and the authorities had been forced to station 200 soldiers around the pulpit to keep order during the sermon (MacLure 1958: 196). In 1558, as in 1553, it was entirely possible that the sermons at Paul's Cross, and elsewhere in London, might have served as the flashpoint for popular opposition to religious change. Not surprisingly, the Elizabethan regime preferred not to take that risk.

There were further reasons why it was expedient to shut down the pulpits. John Jewel, in a remarkably frank appraisal sent to Peter Martyr in January 1559, suggested that one reason was the shortage of Protestant preachers available to fill the pulpits, there being 'at that time only one minister of the word in London, namely, Bentham' (that is, Thomas Bentham, later bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, who had served as chief pastor to the secret Protestant congregation in London). But another reason, Jewel went on, was that news of the disputes among the English exiles at Frankfurt had already begun to filter through to England, and, 'having heard only one public discourse of Bentham's, began to dispute among themselves about ceremonies, some declaring for Geneva, and some for Frankfurt' (Jewel 1850: 1198). This was a reference to the dispute between the English congregation at Geneva, which, under the leadership of John Knox, had adopted the Book of Order as its liturgical standard, and the English congregation at Frankfurt, where a faction led by Richard Cox, future bishop of Ely, had prevailed over Knox's wishes by retaining an adapted version of the 1552 Book of Common Prayer. These were highly divisive issues that the Elizabethan government had no wish to see openly debated in London pulpits, particularly when the future form of public worship had not yet been officially determined.

During the spring of 1559, the government gradually began to open up the pulpits again, beginning with a series of Lenten sermons preached at court by a succession of former Marian exiles, including Cox, Parker, and Grindal, who would soon be promoted to epis-

copal office. As Peter McCullough has remarked, these court preachers were ‘a remarkably well-tuned choir’, their sermons running in parallel with the proceedings of the 1559 parliament and providing the first public indication of the shape of the new religious settlement (1998: 60). The sermons at Paul’s Cross resumed in May, beginning with a sermon by Grindal in the presence of the privy council in which, according to one observer, ‘he dyd proclayme the restoring of the booke of kyng Edward, whereat as well the lords as the people made or at least pretended a wonderful rejoysing’ (Machyn 1848: 197). The following week Robert Horne, future bishop of Winchester, preached a sermon from the same pulpit, in which he denounced the pope as the vicar of Antichrist, setting a tone of fierce anti-papal polemic that would become the staple fare at Paul’s Cross for many years to come (Churton 1809: 392–4). It was not long after this that the custom was introduced of concluding the Paul’s Cross sermon with the singing of a metrical psalm, as a way of orchestrating popular support for what had now become a more aggressively Protestant occasion. Jewel, writing to Peter Martyr on 5 March 1560, claimed that congregational singing had played a major role in building up popular allegiance to the new religious settlement: ‘You may now sometimes see at Paul’s Cross, after the service, six thousand persons, old and young, of both sexes, all singing together and praising God.’ This, he added, greatly annoyed the Catholics, ‘for they see that by this means the sermons sink more deeply into men’s minds’ (*Zurich Letters* 1842–5: i. 71; see also Machyn 1848: 228).

Only a fortnight after writing this letter, Jewel himself stood in the pulpit at Paul’s Cross to deliver his famous ‘Challenge’ sermon, first preached at the Cross the previous November and then repeated at court on 17 March and at the Cross on 21 March. The sermon was a set-piece defence of the Elizabethan settlement against its Catholic opponents. Jewel focused on the Eucharist as the clearest marker of religious difference, and recognized that one of the crucial objections to Protestant sacramental practice was that it was perceived as something newly invented, in contrast to the old-established rite of the Catholic Mass. This was the issue he set out to address. Preaching on 1 Corinthians 11:23 (‘for I have received of the Lord that which I also have delivered unto you’), he depicted St Paul as a proto-reformer, arguing that he had been attempting to call back the Corinthians to ‘the institution of Christe from whence they were fallen’. From this, he went on, we learn that, ‘when soever any order geven by God is broken or abused, the best redresse therof is, to restore it again into the state that it first was in at the beginning’ (Jewel 1560: fo. 121^{r-v}). But the Catholic Mass, he argued, had no basis in the Scriptures or in the writings of the early Fathers, and therefore bore no resemblance to the original state of the Lord’s Supper. After firing off a battery of patristic references to support his case, he threw down his challenge to his opponents, declaring that, ‘if any learned man of all our adversaries’ could prove the contrary ‘out of any olde catholike doctour, or fater: Or out of any olde generall counsell: or out of the holy scriptures of God: or any one example of the primitive Church’, then ‘I am content to yelde unto him and to subscribe’ (Jewel 1560: fos 162^v, 165^v; see also Ettenhuber, Chapter 3, this volume). This was a skilful polemical manoeuvre, as it threw his opponents onto the defensive, forcing them to justify their own sacramental practice rather than leaving them free to attack the novelty of the Elizabethan Prayer Book.

Jewel's reliance on patristic writings in the Challenge sermon has often been seen, particularly by Anglican scholars, as heralding a more positive attitude to the Fathers that would eventually reach fruition in the classical Anglican doctrine of a threefold authority, the famous 'three-legged stool' of scripture, reason, and tradition. Recent scholarship, however, has made it clear that Jewel's strategy was more pragmatic. His main aim was to show that his Catholic opponents did not hold an uncontested monopoly of patristic authority; or, as he put it in a later sermon:

We are not so farre to seeke in learninge, as they woulde have us appeare to be . . . They are seene in the tongues, Latine, Greeke, and Hebrewe: so are wee. They have studied the artes, so have wee: they have read the Doctours, the generall Councils, and the scriptures: so have wee. (Jewel 1583: sig. M5^r)

From this point of view, the Catholics had surrendered their advantage in the debate merely by acknowledging that there was a debate to be had. And, while Jewel was quite prepared to cite the Fathers in order to refute his opponents' claim to antiquity, he did not regard them as an indispensable guide to the interpretation of scripture, still less as an independent source of authority in their own right. Another Paul's Cross preacher, in January 1566, was at pains to stress that the teaching of the Fathers was strictly subordinate to scripture: 'The Doctors have their heresies, as Tertullian condemneth second marriage as unlawfull, Origen sayth that Christ after his ascension suffered the second passion . . . besides this the Doctors be contrary one to another, and therfor Augustyne sayth, we must not judge of the scripturs but accordinge to the scripturs, but of the doctors we must judge accordinge to the scripturs' (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 37^r). Jewel would have agreed, even if he would not have made the point so bluntly.

For our present purposes, however, Jewel's attitude to the Fathers is arguably of less relevance than the strategy of persuasion he adopts in the Challenge sermon. He is acutely conscious of preaching to audiences who have, until very recently, heard Catholic doctrine delivered from the very same pulpits: 'These thinges, good brethern, I know have ben often times spoken out of such places as this is, & stoutly avouched in your hearing' (Jewel 1560: fo. 130^v). Simply denouncing it as false is therefore not an option. Instead, he adopts a strategy of placing his opponents' arguments side by side with his own, almost in the manner of a formal academic disputation, and inviting his audience to choose between them, 'that after ye have once taken aswel sum tast of theyr arguments, as ye have of ours: ye may the better, and more indifferently, judge of both'. He frankly admits that this is a high-risk strategy, and that he would have preferred not to go into such detail about Catholic doctrine, 'yet at this tyme the importunitie of them forceth me so to do . . . And let not them, that privlie and untrulye fynd fault with our reasons, be agreed, if they heare openlye, and truly, sumwhat of their own.' This approach reveals an awareness of Catholicism as a very close and present danger. At the same time Jewel flatters his audience by suggesting that, rather than being prejudiced in favour of one side or the other, they are capable of judging impartially between the alternatives set before them. 'Nowe, good people, judge ye in your conscience indifferently, us both, whether of us, bringeth you the better & sounder arguments' (Jewel 1560: fos 147^r, 150^v).

Jewel's sermon was the opening shot in an exchange of hostilities that continued for another ten years, with the circle of English Catholic exiles at Louvain contributing most of the ammunition. But to see this simply as a paper war conducted through the printing presses of London and Antwerp would be to miss the point. The pamphlet controversy was important in setting the terms of the debate and forcing both sides to lay claim to patristic authority, but Jewel's opponents plainly felt that the real battle for hearts and minds was taking place not in print but in the pulpit. Thomas Dorman accused Jewel of whipping up a frenzy of popular agitation by inciting the crowds at Paul's Cross to shout 'Amen' in response to his anti-Catholic tirades: 'Is he not noted by yow for a papist, and in daunger of a shrewde turne that being present at youre sermones answereth not Amen, to youre blasphemies uttered against the moste holy sacramentes?' Thomas Harding claimed that Jewel had chosen to issue his challenge in a sermon, rather than in an academic disputation, because he did not want to risk putting his arguments to the test: 'you will not yet adventure the triall of them with making your matche with learned men, and in the meane tyme set them forth by sermons busly among the unlearned and simple people' (Dorman 1564: 127; Harding 1565a: 17^r). This view of Jewel as a shameless crowd-pleaser makes little sense unless we see the controversy not just as a textual exchange but as a pulpit event.

We can follow the progress of this controversy through the sermons preached at Paul's Cross and other London pulpits, week by week, with the help of four contemporary manuscripts. Two of these are comparatively well known: the diary or chronicle of Henry Machyn, parish clerk of Holy Trinity the Less, recording sermons and other public events in London between July 1550 and August 1563, and the memoranda of John Stow, providing a similar record of public events from February 1561 to July 1567. The other two are less well known: a manuscript in the Bodleian Library (MS Tanner 50) containing a full and detailed record of the sermons preached at Paul's Cross from June 1565 to November 1566, and another volume of sermon notes in Lambeth Palace Library (MS 739) recording sermons preached by two prebends of St Paul's, John Bullingham (later bishop of Gloucester) and John Mullins (archdeacon of London), between September 1565 and November 1568. Together, these manuscripts make it possible to reconstruct the staple fare of the London pulpits in those crucial early years of Elizabeth's reign when the new religious settlement was being constructed. Yet they do not always speak with one voice. The contrasts between them serve as a reminder that sermons were filtered through the experience of individual hearers, who often differed sharply in how they responded and what they chose to record.

The most opinionated voice is that of John Stow, whose notes frequently register his disgust with the strongly anti-Catholic tone of the sermons at Paul's Cross. In September 1563, for example, when the Marian bishops were moved out of the Tower of London and placed under house arrest, Stow records that 'theyr delyveraunce (or rather chaunge of prison) dyd so much offend the people that the prechars at Poulis Crosse and on other placis bothe of the citie and cuntrie prechyd (as it was thowght of many wysse men) verie sedyssyowsly, as Baldwyn at Powlls Cros wyshyng a galows set up in Smythefyld and the old byshops and othar papestis to be hangyd thereon' (Stow 1880: 126). In this case

Stow, like Dorman and Harding, sees the preachers as deliberately fuelling the fires of popular anti-Catholic prejudice. In other cases, however, he depicts them as actually taken aback by the strength of popular feeling, particularly as directed against those preachers who had conformed to the official line on clerical vestments. In June 1566 he notes that, when a preacher at St Margaret Pattens appeared in a surplice, ‘a certayne nombar of wyves threw stons at hym and pullyd hym forthe of the pulpyt, renting his syrplce and scrattyng his face, &c’, and in January 1567 that, when Bishop Grindal came to preach at St Margaret’s Old Fish Street, ‘the people (especially the wymen) that ware in the sayde churche unreverently howtyd at hym with many oprobrious words’, shouting ‘Ware horns’ in reference to his cornered cap (Stow 1880: 136, 140). The impression given by Stow’s memoranda is of a volatile and often violent Protestant mob that even the preachers themselves were not fully able to control.

The preachers were equally concerned to take the temperature of popular opinion, but the impression they give is, not surprisingly, very different from Stow’s. Again and again they expressed anxiety about the fragility of the religious settlement, which appeared to them to rest on a very shaky foundation of popular support. Matthew Parker’s chaplain Nicholas Robinson, preaching at court early in the new reign, warned that there were many who ‘thinke ynough to be thought protestantes’ without believing it in their hearts:

It is a pittiful case to see abroad in cuntrey and towne, and we maye see it dayly, if we shut not owre eyes. Godly preachinges heard with owt remorse or repentance: lawfull prayers frequented with owt any devotion: fastinges kept with owt any affliction: holly daies celebrated with owt any godlines: almes geven with out compassion: Lent openly holden with owt any discipline. And what frute of life maye be looked for, upon so symple a seedesowing?

The target of Robinson’s attack was the reluctant conformist whose outward observance was only a cloak for crypto-Catholicism or irreligion: ‘He will not come to church but that the law compelleth him... He cometh to the sermon for fashion sake only... He is a protestant because of his lands.’ Such hypocrites, he declared, were everywhere to be found, not least at court. Dropping a hint to the queen, he commended the example of Constantius, father of the emperor Constantine, who put his courtiers to the test by offering preferment to anyone who would renounce Christianity:

where upon (saith Eusebius in the first booke of the Life of Constantine) it came to passe that many hypocrites fell to false religione agayne: whom when Constantius perceaved, he bannished by decree from his court for ever, saying, Thei cold not be trustie to his life and crowne, who were so unfaithfull to their Lord and saviour. (Corpus MS 104, p. 325)

Robinson returned to the charge in a sermon preached at Paul’s Cross on 4 November 1565, in which he warned that the English, like the Israelites of old, were only too ready to draw back from the promised land. He described how the Israelite spies sent to explore the land of Canaan had come back with tales of giants, ‘which set the people in such a fear that they begane to rise agaynst the magistrats and would have stoned them to

death, so that they might have turned backe into Egipt agayn, until Caleb and Joshua intervened to prevent them.

Even so now a dayes do certen which willfully runne into other contreys and there do lyve at lesse ease then they might at home, and persuade the people that they do fight agaynst the Pope, agaynst stronge bulwarks, custome and antiquitye, therby to drive the people agayn into the bondage of Rome. But in have stept the Bishope of Salisbery and Mr Nowell whom I may well terme Calibe and Josua, and have showed the weaknes of their foundation. (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 25^v)

He was echoed by Thomas Cole, archdeacon of Essex, who, preaching at the Cross a week later, argued that the greatest threat to the new settlement came from religious lukewarmness and lack of conviction. ‘Some dastards ther be’, he told his audience, ‘that will fight on neyther side’; they will not be Protestants ‘for fear lest they be marked with *nigra carbone*, a blacke coal, if any change should happen’, but they will not be papists either, ‘because they have not the upper hande now’, and so ‘they soothe up the one side, and smile on the other’ (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 26^r).

This sense of the Protestant settlement as fragile and at risk provided the justification for the fierce anti-Catholic preaching at Paul’s Cross. There was evidently some doubt about how far this could be justified. In drawing up the 1565 Advertisements, Parker and his fellow-bishops seem to have considered the option of banning controversial preaching altogether but finally, as Parker reported to Cecil, came to the conclusion that this would not be feasible. ‘To be proscribed in preaching, to have no matter in controversy spoken of, is thought far unreasonable, specially seeing so many adversaries as by their books plentifully had in the court from beyond the sea, do impugn the verity of our religion’ (Parker 1853: 233). The final version of the Advertisements stipulated that all clergy admitted to preach should be ‘admonished to use sobriety and discretion in teaching the people, namely in matters of controversy; and to consider the gravity of their office and to foresee with diligence the matters which they will speak, to utter them to the edification of the audience’ (Frere 1910: iii. 172). This left considerable liberty to individual preachers to engage in anti-Catholic controversy as they saw fit. It was a liberty of which the Paul’s Cross preachers took full advantage.

The dispute at Paul’s Cross was inevitably one-sided, as the Catholics were unable to respond from the pulpit. Yet they were very much present through their printed books, which were frequently quoted at length and in considerable detail. Alexander Nowell, dean of St Paul’s, took the opportunity offered by his sermon on 27 January 1566 to respond to the latest publications of his Catholic opponent Thomas Dorman, ‘two bookes come over since I last preached here, an aunswer to the Apologie of the Englishe church, and a disproffe to my reproffe, wherein Mr Dorman sayth I was very rashe in aunsweringe certen poynts in this place, of Mr Hardinges booke befor I had red it over’. Stung by Dorman’s charge that he had answered only the first part of Harding’s book, he declared that he had felt it unnecessary to tackle the remaining parts because he knew these would be dealt with in Jewel’s *Replie unto M. Hardinges Answere* (1565), which at that time was ‘redy to come into print’. Nowell’s sermon is of interest for the way it shows

the controversy proceeding on two fronts simultaneously, in print and in the pulpit, with preachers using their sermons to influence the reception of their books and to amplify or justify points of perceived vulnerability. It also shows how preachers took it for granted that many members of their audience would be familiar with the latest Catholic publications. Speaking of his previous sermon at the Cross, Nowell explained a little lamely that he had had only limited time to prepare a response to Harding's book, as it 'cam not to my hands past three days befor I preached heer, and rather two days than three', but that he had felt obliged to say something about it, as it was 'come in all mens hands allmost' (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 38^v).

It is hardly surprising that the preachers chose to confront their Catholic opponents so openly, even at the cost of giving their writings more publicity. Their difficulty was not just that the Marian regime was too recent to be ignored, but that it had enjoyed too much popular support to be easily dismissed as a period of oppression and persecution. They therefore sought to come up with a persuasive and coherent critique that would explain why it had attracted so much popular allegiance. Jewel, in his Challenge sermon, was careful to avoid any personal attack on Mary, suggesting instead that she had reintroduced Catholicism out of force of habit, 'for that she knew none other religion, and thought well of the thyng that she had ben so long trained in' (Jewel 1560: fo. 130^v). Other preachers appealed directly to their listeners' memories of the 1550s, and attempted to turn the popularity of the Marian regime back on itself by presenting it as evidence of popular folly and superstition. One Paul's Cross preacher in October 1565 recalled the street processions in London, noting that 'not longe ago such a necessitye was in knelinge required, that who so kneled not at the Sacrament when it went by in the street, yea and put not of his cap at the hearing of the bell, he was condemned as an heretike'. Parker's chaplain Thomas Bickley, preaching at the Cross in December 1565, singled out John Stow for attack, claiming that in his recent *Summarie of Englyshe Chronicles* (1565) he had deliberately omitted to mention the popular rejoicing over Mary's supposed pregnancy in 1554: 'Now a days it is knowen wel enoughe how in Queene Maries tyme, their was a talke of the Queens delyvery, processiones and bonfyers for the same, but one John Stowe in his cronicle perceavinge this to mak agaynst their vanitie hath left it clean out' (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fos 20^r, 30^v).

These sermons operate on several different levels, constantly shifting back and forth between the high ground of theological disputation and the rough-and-tumble of insult and invective. Not coincidentally, they are also much preoccupied with questions of rhetoric and style. Both sides in the debate sought to position themselves as more moderate by drawing attention to the intemperate language of their opponents. Harding declared that 'the manner of writing which I have here used, in comparison of our adversaries, is sober, softe, and gentle', a boast he may later have come to regret when Jewel responded with a two-page catalogue of his choicer terms of abuse, including 'your filthy railing rabble', 'your detestable blasphemies', 'your malignant church', and much more in the same vein (Harding 1565b: preface; Jewel 1567: sig. A5^r). The 'railing' language of Harding and other Catholic controversialists was soon seized upon by the preachers at Paul's Cross. John Bridges, preaching there in March 1566, attacked the 'ruffianly termes'

used by his opponents, and sarcastically enquired whether the university at Louvain had a 'school of railing' rather than a school of rhetoric. James Calhill made a similar observation: 'They say I do nought ells but rayle, indeed I must not contend with them in words nor in raylings for then I shalbe surely overmatched, but yf they looke and compare my sayenges with others, they shalbe found but cold reproffs to their sharpe raylings.' In fact Calhill gave as good as he got. Dorman, in a casual aside, had patronisingly suggested to Calhill that he would have done better to have stuck to his studies at Oxford, 'in the quiet haven at the ancre wherat once he lay', rather than 'committing him selfe to the mercye of the windes and waves of these troubelouse seas of controversies, wherein no skilfuller pilote than he sheweth him selfe to be, maye easely make a foolishe shipwreke, and be cast awaye'. Calhill shot back: 'I would he should know it, that I was admitted to be a Pilot befor he was thought worthy to be a shipe boy' (Dorman 1565: fo. *3^r; Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fos 41^v, 46^v).

As this example suggests, the tone of the debate was often highly personal, reflecting the fact that the participants had, in many cases, known each other at Oxford. Particular odium was directed at Calhill, a student of Christ Church, on account of his relative youth and rapid preferment. Ordained by Grindal in 1560, he had been chosen to preach at Paul's Cross only a year later, in January 1561, and delivered a sermon in which 'amongst other thyngs he lamented the myserye of Oxford, that it was yet under the papystycall yoke'; the sermon was rapturously received, moving 'a nomber of teares' from the audience and causing one admiring bystander to thank God for raising up 'such yong ymps' to take the place of 'the old preachers' martyred under Mary (BL MS Harleian 416, fo. 170^v). Thereafter Calhill's rise was unstoppable: later that year he took his BD degree and in 1564 became Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford. It was almost certainly Calhill whom Dorman had in mind when he observed sourly that if Grindal would take more care to examine those 'whome he admitteth to preache at Powles crosse (a place sometime for bachilers and Doctours of Divinitie)... suche store of unlearned but most railing sermones should not be made there as daily there are' (Dorman 1565: fo. *1^r). Here again we find the relationship between theological argument and popular preaching emerging as a central theme of the controversy. John Martial, another of Calhill's opponents, argued that Calhill had demeaned his academic position by descending into the arena of public debate, and sketched a vivid little vignette of the call-and-response between the preacher and his audience: 'at Poules crosse... the precher talking against the papistes, saieth, the Lord confounde them', to which 'the prentises and dentye dames... answer Amen' (Martial 1566: 60).

CONSOLIDATING THE SETTLEMENT, 1565–70

The success of the preaching campaign in support of the Elizabethan settlement depended, in large part, on maintaining a united front against the Catholic opposition. Yet this task was made considerably more difficult by divisions within the preachers' own

ranks. Archbishop Parker's efforts to enforce the wearing of the cap and surplice, as required by the Act of Uniformity, were hindered by the fact that many of the best-known preachers in London were opponents of the vestments. These included Calhill and Robert Crowley, who as prebendaries of St Paul's were on the regular preaching roster at Paul's Cross. The difficulties that Parker faced, not only in finding suitably conformable men to fill the pulpit at Paul's Cross but even in bringing the appointment of preachers there under his control, were starkly revealed in the spring of 1565 when he discovered that two of the leading opponents of the vestments, Thomas Sampson and Laurence Humphrey, had been invited without his knowledge, either by Grindal or by the lord mayor, to preach at the Cross during Easter. Parker was tempted to remove them, but admitted to Cecil that, 'if these solemn sermons should stay for want, now after so short a warning, it would raise a marvellous speech' (Parker 1853: 239–40). This was only one instance of the wider difficulty he faced in weeding dissenters out of the London pulpits. Stow records that, even after the major crackdown on clerical nonconformity in the spring of 1566, many of the suspended ministers simply carried on preaching as before, using 'words of great vehemencie agaynst the ordar before sayd set forthe, as also agaynst the quene, counseyll, and byshops for settinge forthe the same' (1880: 138–9).

Stow's report of the vestiarian controversy is skilfully designed to illustrate his favourite theme of the violent and unruly Protestant mob. Typical of his approach, with its artfully casual use of anecdote, is his account of a sermon preached in the church of All Hallows, Thames Street, in April 1566, at the height of the controversy, by a visiting minister who fiercely denounced the vestments, 'with very byter and vehement words', despite the fact that the vicar of the parish had chosen to conform by wearing the cap and surplice. Halfway through the sermon the vicar was seen to smile at the preacher's 'vehemente talke', angering some of the hearers, who remonstrated with him after the sermon. As the quarrel escalated, the parishioners divided into factions, and the preacher's supporters 'toke the matter so grevowsly that they fell from roughe wordes at the last to blowes with them who toke parte with the mynystar' (Stow 1880: 138). Stow's account is clearly highly partisan, but the widespread extent of clerical opposition to the vestments is confirmed by other sources. From the other end of the religious spectrum, Thomas Earle, minister of St Mildred's, Bread Street, noted in his diary that, while the majority of London ministers had ultimately chosen to conform, many did so with considerable reluctance, complaining that 'we are kylled in the soule of our soules, for this pollutyon of ours' (CUL MS Mm.1.29, fo. 3^v). Earle, as it happens, is the subject of another of Stow's anecdotes, which describes how 'the worshypfull of the paryshe of Seynt Myldred in Bred strett', having brought in a conformable minister to say the afternoon service, were resisted by Earle and his supporters and eventually had to stand beside the minister to protect him from being physically assaulted.

These bitter disputes were naturally reflected in the sermons at Paul's Cross. Our main record of the sermons preached at the Cross, in MS Tanner 50, does not begin until June 1565, by which time Parker's campaign against clerical dissidents was already under way, but the anti-vestiarian tone of some of the sermons is unmistakable. Particularly notable in this regard is the sermon preached by Robert Crowley in the cathedral on St Luke's

Day (18 October) 1565, in which he exhorted his audience to be sober in all things, 'which doth not consist only in dyet, but also in gesture, behaviour and apparell'. On the subject of apparel, Crowley went on, 'though I might heer speake muche, yet at this tyme I will speake but a little, because in my last sermon that I preached heer I spake somewhat of it, which was taken and otherwise reported than I ment'. In his previous sermon he had said that it did not matter what the clergy wore as long as it did not go beyond the bounds of sobriety, for 'Peter was not knowen to be Christs disciple by his apparell but by his language, Mathew by the apparell he used being a publican, and Luke to use the apparell of a phisitian as well after he was an Evangelist as before'. Some members of his audience had apparently taken this to mean that the cap and surplice were acceptable clerical dress. However, Crowley was at pains to stress that he was not advocating total freedom in clerical apparel: 'for who would thinke that it were sober apparell for the prophets to use the apparell of the prests of the Ethnikes'? (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 23^v). Here was a sermon that made no attempt to disguise its nonconformist sympathies, preached openly from one of the most prominent pulpits in London in blatant defiance of the official line on clerical vestments.

The Catholic controversialists were, of course, well aware of these divisions and sought to turn them to polemical advantage. How, they demanded, could the Protestant preachers claim to be obedient to the queen's authority, when, 'even in a matter of no greater importance than is the wearing of a square cappe, they refuse the ordre of the supreme governour'? (Dorman 1565: sig. *2^v). Some of the Catholics' most effective polemical thrusts came from exploiting the disagreements among their opponents. Dorman mounted a particularly damaging attack on Calhill's *Aunswere to the Treatise of the Crosse* (1565), pointing out that in condemning material images of the cross Calhill was effectively condemning the crucifix in the queen's chapel, and that his breezily dismissive attitude to the Fathers—notably his description of St Cyprian as 'proud and blasphemous'—did not square with Jewel's profession of respect for patristic authority. Calhill's efforts to defend himself at Paul's Cross, first by reiterating his view that 'the material crosse is a will-worshipe and abhominable' and then by declaring that the writings of the Fathers had no authority independent of the Scriptures, may have pleased some members of his audience but only served to make these points of difference even more embarrassingly obvious (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 41^v).

By the summer of 1566, however, a new tone is discernible in the sermons at Paul's Cross, as a number of more conformable preachers attempted to close up the divisions that their Catholic opponents had prised open. A Mr Pady, chaplain to Bishop Horne of Winchester, argued in September 1566 that the dispute over vestments was not only trivial in itself, but had actually benefited the Church of England by causing the enemies of the religious settlement to reveal themselves in their true colours:

Ther is a scisme at this day in the Churche of god, not of great and principall matters as god be thanked therfor but of a trifle, but of a small sparke a greater flame may arise, and that which heerin Satan goeth about to deface, god stoppeth it and turneth it to his glory. The Ipocrits are mad manifest, the Atheists and Epicures take hart againe to open them selves, the secret Papists they open them selves, they will have

crosse and candles and omnia bene, and so the secret enemies are mad now open enemies. When the Quens maiestie shall see these hot enemies, I trust god willinge, that when they be rooted out, this scisme allso shalbe rooted out, and omnia bene all thinges shalbe well, let us not prevent gods worke, but tarry his leasur. (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 83^r)

Like Robinson in his earlier sermon at court, Pady offered counsel to the queen by way of a classical *exemplum*, recounting an anecdote from the *Historia augusta* of a man who, having had a request refused by the Emperor Hadrian, dyed his hair black in the hope that the emperor would not recognize him when he asked a second time:

So the Queens maiestie hath many such about her, they seemed in the begynninge in grey beards, but now they follow the auncient man in dyeng them blacke, counterfettinge protestants, yet she like unto wise Adrian perceavinge them under the collar of a protestant to be a papist may say I denyed it to thy father the Pope and so to thee. (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 80^r)

Several Paul's Cross preachers also drew attention to the problems of clerical negligence and popular ignorance in the Church of England. These were hardly new topics, but the frequency with which they appear in the sermons of the later 1560s suggests a deliberate effort to move away from the vestiarian controversy by refocusing attention on basic issues of teaching and preaching. A Mr Eggrave, preaching at the Cross in September 1566, bewailed the 'lamentable' state of the clergy and urged his audience to petition parliament for redress of grievances. 'And thoughe thou art none of the parliament house yet do thy dewty, the doors are open and never shut agaynst any, so that every man may put in his complaynt . . . every man may put his bill into thes parliament, and this is no excuse to say I am not of the house.' It had been a mistake, Eggrave admitted, to allow dispensations for pluralism and non-residence, but there was still time for the mistake to be corrected: 'the parliament then erred, and the parliament now may redresse them' (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 87^r). John Mullins, in a visitation sermon preached around 1567–8, attacked unlearned ministers but confessed, with startling honesty, that 'the miserye of this tyme requireth us to choose them to the ministrye of whom we hope that thei will learne afterwards, which thei will not'. In Mullins's view, the greatest danger to the Church of England was not the survival of Catholic doctrine but the legacy of popular ignorance that the Catholics had left behind them: 'The papists have so pluckt thinges into lattyn, that thei have almoste brought olde men from ther belefe' (Lambeth MS 739, fo. 155^v).

This was also a recurring theme in Jewel's sermons, notably his sermon on Joshua 6:1–3 in which he set out his agenda for the reform of the church. Like most of his surviving sermons, this bears no date, but his nineteenth-century editor John Ayre assigned it on internal evidence to November 1569, and this dating has been generally accepted by later scholars. The sermon has a retrospective flavour, as Jewel looks back at the collapse of Catholicism in England, comparing it to the fall of the walls of Jericho, a miraculous deliverance that could have been accomplished only with God's help. But he warns his audience not to be complacent. 'God can give peace, God can withdraw

it... That thing which hath bin done, may be done again.' To safeguard England against the re-establishment of Catholicism, he argues for the instruction of the common people, the maintenance of schools and learning, and the removal of the familiar abuses of unlearned ministers, non-residence, and pluralism. Like Mullins, he sees popular ignorance as the greatest threat to the survival of the Elizabethan settlement:

When we see the miserable blindnesse and ignoraunce in all places abroad, what hope may wee have to see Hiericho [Jericho] suppressed and quite overthrown? It cannot be but great inconveniences shall followe in the Churche of God, as confusion of order, and dissolution of life, to the indangering of the state, unlesse by godly care of the Magistrates, some helpe be provided. (Jewel 1583: sig. D3^v)

Jewel also glances briefly at the vestiarian controversy, remarking that some things may lawfully be salvaged from the destruction of Jericho, but that 'they may not be things meet to furnish and mainteine superstition, but such thinges as be strong, and may serve either directly to serve God, or els for comelines and good order' (1583: sig. C6^r). This passage is particularly interesting for what it does not say. It is fairly clear that Jewel is thinking of the disputed vestments, crosses, images, and other vestiges of popery when he refers to 'things meet to furnish and mainteine superstition,' yet he leaves his audience to draw the application, and leaves open the possibility that the vestments could be justified on grounds of 'comelines and good order.' This was as far as he was prepared to go in support of clerical nonconformity.

These hints of a new strategic direction in the sermons of the later 1560s are brought into focus in the sermon preached, at Grindal's invitation, by John Foxe at Paul's Cross on Good Friday (24 March) 1570, almost exactly a decade after Jewel's Challenge sermon. Several versions of this sermon have been preserved. According to his own account, Foxe kept no copy of the sermon and had therefore to reconstruct it from memory, 'having nothing written before... wherby either to ease my labour or to direct my penne' (Foxe 1570: sig. A2^r). Among his surviving papers, however, are several pages of notes taken by William Aylward, rector of St Anne and St Agnes, London, and corrected by Foxe himself (BL MS Harleian 425, fos 131–3). These may have provided the basis for the printed edition, *A Sermon of Christ Crucified*, published by John Day later the same year, in which Foxe claims to have followed the 'sentence, order and principall poyntes' of the sermon as he had delivered it, 'so farre as remembrance could serve me', with some extra material added. As Day's printing-house was located in Aylward's parish, it seems very likely that Aylward was involved in putting the sermon into print. Despite Foxe's protestations that he had consented to publish the sermon only at the insistence of his friends, and then only reluctantly, it appears that the sermon was recognized very soon after its delivery, if not before, as providing an opportunity for a major public statement, comparable to Jewel's Challenge sermon, on the present position and future prospects of the English church.

Foxe's sermon, like Jewel's, is governed by the overriding need to defend the Elizabethan settlement against its Catholic enemies, and at first glance there may seem to be little to choose between them. Certainly Foxe does not regard Catholicism as any

less of a threat than Jewel had done; indeed, his anti-Catholic rhetoric is in some respects even more ferocious. Jewel tends to avoid strong apocalyptic language about the papal Antichrist, commenting in one sermon: 'I knowe many men are offended to heare the Pope pointed out for Antichrist, and thinke it an uncharitable kinde of doctrine: therefore I refraine to use any such names.' Foxe, by contrast, has no hesitation in describing the pope as 'the great Antichrist... with his whole Colledge of Babylonicall strumpets and stately Prelates of Romish Iericho dronken with the bloud of persecution' (Jewel 1583: sig. E6^v; Foxe 1570: sig. H4^r). But, while Foxe sees Catholicism as an imminent threat, he also sees it as operating at a distance. At the beginning of his sermon he recalls the letter of reconciliation from the pope, brought to England by Cardinal Pole at the beginning of Mary's reign in 1554. At the time, he notes, it was hailed by Stephen Gardiner as 'the greatest message that ever came into England'. But what is left of it now? 'The sender is gone, the messenger is gone, the Queene is gone, and the message gone.' The pope and his reconcilers are 'already gone (God be thanked) and I besech God so may they be gone, that they may never come here agayne'. All that remains is the 'whispering of certaine privy reconcilers, sent of late by the pope, which secretly creepe in corners. But this I leave to them that have to do withall' (Foxe 1570: sigs B2^v, R4^v).

The effect of these remarks is to portray popery as a foreign rather than a domestic enemy. Whereas Jewel regards himself as speaking to a religiously mixed audience, Foxe presents himself as cautioning a Protestant audience against an external threat. Moreover, his view of the chief points of disagreement between Protestantism and popery is very different from Jewel's. In summing up 'the most and the greatest controversies, whereupon hath risen all the contention and variance that we have seen', Jewel identifies five key elements of Protestant worship: the institution of Holy Communion in place of the private Mass; Communion under both kinds; vernacular prayers; vernacular scriptures; and the abolition of images in churches. 'These are, I say, the controversies whereon hangeth all our debate.' Foxe, by contrast, shifts the basis of disagreement away from questions of worship and towards what he sees as the central differences of doctrine, commenting in a postscript at the end of his sermon that 'the controversies between [the papists] and us are weighty, and chiefly stand upon the effect and working of Christes passion' (Jewel 1607: sig. C4^r; Foxe 1570: sig. T3^v). By focusing on this as the main battleground, Foxe gives pivotal importance to the relationship between the preacher and his audience. In a double exhortation, he urges 'you that be preachers' to open to the people 'the promises of grace, the word of life,' and 'you that be the hearers' to 'give diligent hearing unto your preachers, and harken to the word of God.' This relationship bears fruit in repentance and forgiveness of sins, which Foxe—now bringing his argument full circle—presents as the true offer of reconciliation, as opposed to the false offer of reconciliation made by the pope and his messengers.

This model of preaching—in which the preacher, addressing a Protestant audience, reminded them of their sins and called them to repentance—was to become the basic paradigm of the Paul's Cross sermon for the remainder of Elizabeth's reign and beyond. Already, in the sermons of the later 1560s, there are signs of what was to follow. A Paul's Cross preacher in August 1566, after devoting the majority of his sermon to a detailed

refutation of the Catholic doctrine of baptism, ended with a condemnation of the sins of London and a warning of divine retribution if the city did not repent:

Nynyvy [Nineveh] was converted at the preaching of Jonas, London hath had many preachers, and lyveth yet in synne, and as he sayd, wo be to thee Chorazin, wo be to thee Bethsaida . . . so may I say unto you o London and Londiners, if the preachinge which is in you, had ben in the barbarouse contres, they would have repented and turned unto the Lord. (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 63^r)

This is the classic mode of the Paul's Cross jeremiad, familiar to anyone who has read the printed Paul's Cross sermons of the early seventeenth century (Morrissey 2000). A strong controversial element still remained, but the urgent excitement of the mid-1560s, as, Sunday after Sunday, the Paul's Cross preachers denounced the latest books hot off the presses of Antwerp and Louvain, gradually gave way to a more standardized type of anti-Catholic polemic. London itself, and the nature of the civic community, now became the defining theme.

CONCLUSION

One of the perpetual complaints of Dorman, Harding, and the other Catholic controversialists was that their opponents, instead of engaging in debate with learned men, were courting the support of the common people. This was a polemically motivated attempt to occupy the moral and intellectual high ground, but it was not without cause. The Protestant preachers knew how to use the weapons of scorn and ridicule to get the crowd on their side. Stow records, with distaste, a passage from a sermon at Paul's Cross in November 1565 in which the preacher compared Catholic priests to apes, 'for, saythe he, they be both balld alyke, but the pristes be balld before, the appes behynd' (1880: 133). They also knew the value of smear tactics and vicious *ad hominem* attacks. A visiting preacher from Oxford, responding to John Martial's *Treatyse of the Crosse* (1564) in a sermon at Paul's Cross in March 1566, retailed some old university gossip about one of Martial's pupils who had committed suicide. Even wearing a crucifix around his neck, the preacher declared with gleeful satisfaction, 'could not save him from drowninge' (Bodl. MS Tanner 50, fo. 45^r).

It is no accident that so much of the material in this chapter comes from, or makes reference to, the sermons delivered at Paul's Cross. These sermons epitomize preaching in the 1560s, just as court sermons epitomize it in the 1620s and parliamentary fast sermons in the 1640s. Even at the time, Paul's Cross seems to have been associated with a peculiarly aggressive and populist style of preaching. It may be significant that one of the few misjudgements in Calphill's meteoric career was a sermon preached at court in 1564, which one observer, Walter Haddon, described as the worst sermon he had ever heard there. We do not know what Calphill said to cause such offence, but, from Haddon's remarks about the need for more 'reverence' and 'modesty' when preaching before the

queen, it appears that the problem was one of style rather than substance. Having developed a blunt, hard-hitting style that went down well with the crowd at Paul's Cross, Calfhill seems to have found it difficult to adjust to the greater level of decorum deemed appropriate for a sermon at court (Parker 1853: 218–19; McCullough 1998: 78–9). Preaching at the Cross was certainly not for those of delicate sensibilities. Foxe dreaded the ordeal of being 'crucified at Paul's Cross', and, in what seems more than a conventional protestation of unworthiness, wrote to Grindal of his fears that in this 'renowned theatre' (*tam celebre theatrum*) he would 'either draw upon myself the mockery of the crowd, or be driven off the stage by their hisses' (BL MS Harleian 417, fo. 131^r).

The theatrical metaphor is not inappropriate. In their constant awareness of being on a public stage, and in the way they play to their audience by shifting abruptly from theological controversy to personal mockery, many of the Paul's Cross sermons have a dramatic, performative aspect that invites comparison not just with the theatre but with the Marprelate Tracts (1588–9). Joseph Black, in the introduction to a recent edition, describes them as having 'shattered conventions of decorum that had governed debates about the church since the Elizabethan Settlement' (2008: p. xvi). This could hardly be more mistaken. Indeed, the attacks levelled against the Marprelate Tracts for adopting the techniques of the popular stage closely resemble some of the attacks levelled against the Paul's Cross sermons twenty years earlier. Sir John Popham described one of the tracts in 1588 as 'a most seditious and libellous pamphlet, fit for a vice in a play, and no other'. Whether he realized it or not, he was echoing the words of Thomas Harding in his reply to Jewel, in which he compared the defenders of the Elizabethan settlement to a troupe of comedians: 'It should have become Scoggin, Patch, Iolle, Harry Pattenson, or Will Sommer, to have tolde this tale much better than your superintendentships. And if ye would nedes have played the part your selves, it had ben more convenient to have done it on the stage, under a vises cote, than in a booke set abroad to the world in defence of all your newe Englishe church' (*State Trials* 1809–26: i. 1265; Harding 1565b: fo. 256^v). The difference was that some of the stars of the Paul's Cross pulpit in the 1560s now, in the Marprelate Tracts, found themselves on the receiving end.

Self-evidently, these sermons were intended to have a direct impact on public opinion. The preachers saw themselves as engaged in a contest for popular allegiance, and one that was crucial to the survival of the Elizabethan settlement. If we are looking for a public sphere in sixteenth-century England, then Paul's Cross would appear the obvious place to find it. But to locate a public sphere does not necessarily take us very far in identifying the 'public' under discussion. The preachers and their opponents were not neutral observers of the public they encountered at Paul's Cross; they were calling the public into being, holding up to the audience at the Cross an image of itself. To Jewel, it was an audience of the uncommitted who needed to be persuaded out of their old familiar ways by having the choice between Protestant antiquity and popish novelty clearly set out before them. To Harding, it was a raucous Protestant mob cheering on the preacher's anti-Catholic diatribes. To Foxe, it was an audience of the faithful who needed to be shown the right path to repentance and forgiveness of sins. All of these imagined audiences undoubtedly contain an element of accurate social observation, but none of them

provides a particularly secure basis for generalization about the attitudes of the London sermon-going public.

Moreover, the fiercely confrontational style of Paul's Cross preaching, while, then as now, attracting most of the attention, was not the only available option. Foxe's sermon offers an alternative mode of preaching in which the basic message of repentance—'be ye now reconciled unto God, as he is to you'—leads on to an exhortation to be reconciled with one's neighbours. Here Foxe is appropriating a tradition that long pre-dates the Reformation, one that, as John Bossy (1998) has shown, carried great moral weight and was enormously influential all over Europe in its embrace of charity and peacemaking:

So if your neighbours, equals, or inferiours have offended you, or you them: stand not so much in your reputation to abase your selves, but either come, or send forth your messengers of peace, not onely to byd hym good morow or good even, but thus say: Neighbour, I have offended you and you me. Come therfore, let us be reconciled, and live in love and charitie lyke brethren in Christ, as Christ hath reconciled us both unto his father. (Foxe 1570: sig. G1^r)

John Bullingham, in a series of sermons preached at London livery company feasts in the mid-1560s, emphasized the same theme of neighbourly unity. 'Who is our neighbour?' Bullingham asked the assembled members of the Haberdashers' Company. 'That is he that standeth in nede of owre helpe. We may not suffer owre neighbour to be evill spoken of.' Bullingham's sermons at Paul's Cross show that he was capable of strong anti-Catholic polemic when the need required, but here we find a different aspect of his preaching, a plain, heavily proverbial style in which true religion is emphatically linked with the social virtues of charity and promise-keeping. 'Brother take hede be circumspecte, loke ere thow lepe, beware of brekinge promese... The lacke of providence and lokinge to makethe manye an one kepe in prisson. This makethe the wickede say lo where is ther god, is this ther Religion, is this ther gospels' (Lambeth MS 739, fo. 131^r). We should not neglect the possibility that the popular acceptance of preaching, and with it the acceptance of the Elizabethan settlement, had less to do with its ability to persuade through controversy than with its ability to recast this moral tradition in a Protestant guise.

The notes of one London sermon-goer point towards a similar conclusion. Henry Machyn, whose chronicle runs from the end of Edward's reign to the beginning of Elizabeth's, is generally assumed to have been a man of Catholic, or at least conservative, religious sympathies, as shown by the episode in 1561 when he was made to do penance at Paul's Cross for slandering the French Protestant preacher Jean Veron. Several entries in his chronicle clearly reveal a lingering attachment to the old religion. In 1560, he noted with obvious approval that in some parts of the country Rogationtide had been celebrated in the old way, with processions and banners, 'and in dyvers places they had good chere after'. Yet even after the accession of Elizabeth he continued to attend the sermons at court and at Paul's Cross, and does not appear to have been particularly disturbed by the Protestant doctrines he must have heard there. In April 1560, he noted that Matthew Parker preached at court 'and made a nobull sermon', while on other occasions he noted

that the preacher made a ‘goodly’ or ‘godly’ sermon (he uses the two words interchangeably) and ‘ther was grett audyence’ (Machyn 1848: 230, 236; see also Mortimer 2002). These tantalizingly brief notes leave much unsaid about Machyn’s religious opinions, but they suggest that, despite his underlying conservatism, he had weathered the transition to Protestantism with remarkably little difficulty and even some sense of continuity. Machyn may not have given his heart to the new religious settlement, but he was prepared to lend his ears to the preachers. Perhaps, in the final analysis, that was good enough.

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