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LANGBAINE, Gerald, the elder (1609-58)

Gerald Langbaine was born in Birton Kirke, Westmoreland and died in Oxford on 16 February 1658. He was educated at Queen's College, Oxford. Langbaine graduated BA in 1630, gained his MA and Fellowship in 1633, and proceeded DD in 1646. He was Provost of the College from 1645 until his death.

He wrote a conventional, if clear, exposition of Aristotelian philosophy which was published in 1698 as *Philosophiae moralis compendium*. Later editions, entitled *Ethices compenium*, appeared in 1714 and, supposedly revised by John Hudson, also Provost of Queen's, in 1721 and 1745. The work was certainly in use in Oxford as a textbook in the early eighteenth century. In his lifetime Langbaine published various works relating to University affairs.

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LAUD, William (1573-1645)

William Laud was born in Reading on 7 October 1573 and was beheaded in the Tower on 10 January 1645. He attended the borough Free School in Reading and

matriculated at St John's College, Oxford in 1589, being elected Fellow of the College in 1593. Laud graduated BA in 1594, MA in 1598, BD in 1604 and DD in 1608. His tutor John Buckeridge was a leader of the late Elizabethan Arminian resistance to the Calvinist orthodoxy then prevalent in the University. Laud was ordained deacon and priest of the Church of England in 1601 and became a Proctor of Oxford University in 1603. In the same year he became chaplain to Charles BLOUNT, Earl of Devonshire, thus beginning a career of ecclesiastical preferment which would lead eventually to the see of Canterbury. He defended a controversial thesis in support of *jure divino* episcopacy when he graduated BD. He was elected President of St John's in 1611 in the midst of further controversy between Arminian and Calvinist factions within the University and at court. King JAMES I ruled in Laud's favour when irregularities were charged in connection with the election. Laud was made Archdeacon of Huntingdon in 1615 and Dean of Gloucester Cathedral in 1616. In 1617 he was invited to attend James's court, then in Scotland, and succeeded in scandalizing the northern capital by wearing a surplice. (This episode presaged his fateful role in the promotion of ceremonial uniformity in the Church.) In 1621 James issued the *congé d'élire* for Laud's preferment to the bishopric of St David's in Wales. Shortly before his

episcopal consecration he resigned the presidency of St John's.

Laud was not a great constructive theologian although he was an immensely learned scholar. His knowledge of the early Church fathers was especially outstanding. He quoted them throughout his writings. As were most scholars of his generation, he was influenced significantly by the scholastic-Aristotelian tradition. Much of his collected works are taken up by sermons, controversial writing, letters concerned with affairs of state, Visitation Articles, etc. Nothing he wrote provides a systematic account of his thought, although the *Conference with Fisher the Jesuit* (1639) is his most substantial piece and offers his chief apologia of his theological principles and assumptions, especially with respect to the 'rule of faith' controversy. In 1622 James appointed Laud to engage in a theological conference with the Jesuit John Piercy (alias Fisher) in an attempt to dissuade the Countess of Buckingham from conversion to the Church of Rome. The disputation centred on the question of the infallibility of the Church. According to Laud, 'Christ did not intend to leave an infallible certainty in His Church, to satisfy either contentious, or curious, or presumptuous spirits' (*Works*, vol. 2, p. 397). Popes have lapsed into heresy and the Church has frequently fallen away from the truth in such matters as, for example, the worship of images. Characteristically, Laud looked to the tradition of the 'Primitive Church' for confirmation of sound doctrine. Laud denied the infallibility of the Scriptures, argued for the combined authority of the Bible and traditional creeds as the foundations of the faith, and upheld the power of General Councils of the Church to interpret and declare the meaning of specific articles of faith held in dispute. Scripture and tradition were to be regarded as mutually reinforcing.

While the one faction cries up the Church

above the Scripture, and the other the Scripture to the neglect and contempt of the Church, which the Scripture itself teaches men both to honour and obey; they have so far endangered the belief of the one, and the authority of the other, as that neither hath its due from a great part of men; whereas, according to Christ's institution, the Scripture, where it is plain, should guide the Church; and the Church, where there is difficulty, should expound the Scripture; yet so, as neither the Scripture should be forced, nor the Church be so bound up, as that upon just and further evidence she may not revise that which in any case hath slipped by her.

(*Works*, vol. 2, p. xv)

Following Richard HOOKER, he sought to clarify the distinction in doctrine between matters 'necessary to salvation' and 'things indifferent', between matters essential to the being of the Church and things subject to periodic alteration. In this regard Laud anticipated the style of theological reasoning characteristic of the latitudinarians of the Great Tew Circle. In effect his arguments seek to reduce considerably the field of questions subject to any single authority claiming infallibility. These arguments would be developed later by William CHILLINGWORTH (Laud's godson), Henry HAMMOND and John HALES, among others. With reference to various possibilities of demonstrating the authority of the Bible – for example, by appeals to ecclesiastical tradition, to Scripture itself, to the immediate inspiration of the Spirit, or, finally, to reason – Laud maintains that none of these can stand by itself, although the appeal to reason is to be preferred:

Reason can give no supernatural ground into which a man may resolve his faith, That scripture is the word of God infallibly: yet reason can go so high, as it can prove that Christian religion, which

rests upon the authority of this book, stands upon surer grounds of nature, reason, common equity, and justice, than any thing in the world which any infidel or mere naturalist hath done, doth, or can adhere unto, against it, in that which he makes, accounts, or assumes as religion to himself.

(*Works*, vol. 2, p. 88)

For Laud, theology, like all the sciences, rested on unproved axioms. Such, in short, was his contribution to the early phase of the Infallibility controversy. (The argument was taken up in earnest by Chillingworth in the 1630s, and Laud oversaw the publication of his godson's treatise *The Religion of Protestants* in 1638.) Although Laud did not ultimately succeed in convincing the Countess of Buckingham, as a consequence of the conference he nevertheless secured a powerful new patron in her son George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham.

Laud's pre-eminence in the Church of England commenced with the accession of Charles Stuart in March 1625. In a sermon preached at the opening of Charles's first Parliament, Laud set the stage as it were for the reign with an encomium of royal power in both Church and Commonwealth. In 1626 Laud was appointed Dean of the Chapel Royal and translated from St David's to the see of Bath and Wells; in 1628 he moved closer to levers of power as Bishop of London; and in 1629 he added the Chancellorship of Oxford to his belt. With the full backing of the king, Laud promoted uniformity of external practice, discipline and ceremony in both Church and University. In the University he enforced the wearing of caps and gowns, and insisted on a stricter adherence to the discipline of academic exercises required for the attainment of degrees (*Works*, vol. 5, pp. 3–34). In the practice of religion he acknowledged the importance of the distinction between the 'sign' and the

'signified', between the external appearance or 'form' of the ceremonial action on the one hand, and the underlying substance or spiritual 'matter' on the other. At the same time, he insisted that the exaltation of either to the exclusion of the other was a denial of the very heart of religion. Ceremonies were thus as inseparable from the essence of religion for Laud as form was, in actuality, inseparable from matter for Aristotle. Laud maintained that the 'decent external worship of God among us was sunk very low', and that he 'found that with the contempt of the outward worship of God, the inward fell away apace, and profaneness began boldly to show itself' (*Works*, vol. 3, pp. 407, 408). Or, as Peter HEYLIN records it, Laud clearly saw 'that the public neglect of God's service in the outward face of it, and the nasty lying in many places dedicated to that service, had almost cast a damp upon the true and inward worship of God, which while we are in the body needs external helps, and all too little to keep it in any vigour' (*Cyprianus Anglicanus*, p. 517). In connection with these policies he professed a certain attachment to a practical Aristotelianism, viz. the pursuit of habitual virtue through adherence to the mean. 'Truth usually lies between two extremes, and is beaten by both, as the poor Church of England is at this day by the papist and the separatist' (*Works*, vol. 3, p. 415).

In 1633, following the death of Archbishop George Abbot, Laud was promoted to the see of Canterbury and, with Charles's full support, continued to dominate the ecclesiastical policy of the realm for the remainder of the decade. In 1635 he was appointed to the Treasury Commission and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Privy Council. In 1636 he commenced a full-scale Visitation of the two Universities, and his revised statutes for Oxford were readily accepted by the University later the same year. In a set of revised canons drawn up by Laud and

approved by the Convocation of the Church (which continued to sit although Parliament had been suspended), 'the sacred order of kings' was affirmed as ruling 'of divine right', and resistance to the divinely ordained power of the sovereign was held to be damnable. In this way Laud's ecclesiastical policy came to be closely tied to Charles's assertion of his claim to absolute authority in the civil sphere.

By 1640 Laud's ascendancy was ebbing swiftly. One of the first acts of the Long Parliament was Laud's impeachment for treason in December of that year, and he was imprisoned in the Tower shortly after. His trial did not commence until March 1644. After dropping articles of impeachment, the Commons proceeded to debate and pass an ordinance of attainder in which Laud was accused of undermining the fundamental law of the realm, of seeking to alter the established religious settlement, and of subverting the rights of Parliament. Although the ordinance was initially resisted by the Lords, and despite his tendering a pardon issued by the king in the previous year, Laud was executed.

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embraced 'the principles of Natural Religion and Morality and the Truth of the Christian Religion', so that the post was effectively 'a Professorship of Divinity'. Law's son William was considered for the same post in 1745, on John Pringle's resignation, but declined to stand.

LAWSON, George (1598–1678)

George Lawson was born in Yorkshire, probably in the tiny village of Langliffe in May 1598. He died in July 1678 and is buried in More church. In 1615 he entered Emmanuel College, Cambridge as a sizar, suggesting that his family was not rich. Emmanuel was a Puritan College though later Lawson was a staunch defender of Archbishop LAUD, no friend of the Puritan cause. He was ordained in 1619 and reordained in 1624 and licensed to preach by Archbishop Laud in 1636, in which year he was recorded as entitled to serve *stipendarius* at Mainstone in Shropshire, by which time Lawson was married and living in the neighbouring hamlet of More, where he was to remain for the rest of his life. He was appointed rector of More in 1637. The appointment was in the gift of Richard More who supported the Parliamentarians in the civil war and Lawson became closely attached to the More family, possibly as tutor to the younger boys. He was probably thereby protected during the Interregnum from the consequences of his earlier support of Laud. In 1649 after the king's execution Lawson accepted the Engagement and acceptance of which required obedience and acceptance of the Commonwealth regime and which many clergy refused, thus losing their livelihood.

Lawson had certainly begun writing by 1649, but it was in the years leading up to the Restoration that he was at his most

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LAW, William (1662–1729)

William Law matriculated at Leiden in 1687. He became a regent at Edinburgh University in 1690, and acquired a strong reputation among the English dissenters. In ontology and pneumatology he gave dictates from De Vries, against Cartesianism. In natural philosophy, by 1705 he was lecturing on the cosmology of FLAMSTEED, Huygens and NEWTON, and was a subscriber to Pemberton's *View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy* (1728). With the creation of fixed specialisms at the University in 1708, he became Professor of Moral Philosophy. At the same time the three years of the philosophy curriculum were reduced to two. Law was given an increased stipend to compensate for the loss of student fees, and left to teach whatever options might usefully supplement the compulsory diet of the Professor of Natural Philosophy and Ethics, Robert Steuart. William Wishart recalled in 1745 that moral philosophy in Law's hands