The Coronation of Queen Elizabeth.

I HAVE recently come across some fresh evidence—fresh at any rate to me—on this subject, which seems worth reproducing. This evidence is furnished by the Jesuit Pedro de Ribadeneira, who came to London in 1558 with De Feria, the Spanish ambassador, and stayed in De Feria's house for several months, including January 1559, the month of the coronation. On 20 January, the coronation having taken place on the 15th, he wrote a letter to his general, Laynez, which states that Elizabeth

ha ordenado que la misa se diga como en la capilla de la Reyna, en la cual no se alza hostia ni caliz, ni si alzó domingo pasado 15 deste en la misa solenna de su coronacion.¹

In 1588 this same Ribadeneira published a work which was famous in its day, the *Historia ecclesiastica del Schisma del Reyno de Inglaterra*. The work is mainly a compilation from the *De Schismate* of Sanders, but it contains original passages, of which one, derived from Ribadeneira's personal knowledge, refers to the coronation in the following terms :—

Yo estava en este tiempo en Londres en casa de don Gomez de Figueroa, entonces Conde, y despues duque de Feria. . . . Entre las cosas que hizo [De Feria] como cavallero Catolico, y valeroso, fue una, que le rogaron è importunaron mucho por parte de la Reyna Ysabel que se hallasse presente a la solenidad y fiesta de su Coronacion, como se avia hallado a la del paseo por la Ciudad de Londres, y possession que tomò del Reyno. Y el Duque preguntò, si se avian de guardar en la coronacion todas las ceremonias usadas en las coronaciones de los otros Reyes Christianos, conforme al uso de nuestra santa madre Yglesia Romana. Y como supiesse que avia de aver alguna alteracion, nunca se pudo acabar con el, que assistiesse a la solenidad, ni estoviesse en la yglesia, ni en publico, ni encubierto, ni con los otros grandes de Reyno, ni a parte en un tablado que le quisieron hazer, por no autorizar con su presencia aquel auto impio, y dar exemplo del recato y circunspeccion que en semejantes cosas, por pequeñas que parezcan, deven tener los Catolicos para no contaminarse.²

The value of this passage lies in the fact that it records Ribadeneira's personal knowledge; it is absolutely first-hand evidence, and although it was not published till thirty years after the event we may feel satisfied of its accuracy. It tells us that Elizabeth used every effort to persuade De Feria to attend her coronation, but that he refused, because he learnt that a change (*alguna alteracion*) was to be made, which shocked his religious sentiments. If we turn now to what Ribadeneira wrote in 1559 we cannot doubt that this change consisted in the irregularity of the mass. Apart from that the

¹ *Précis Historiques* (Brussels), xxxix. (1890), p. 847.

² *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Madrid), p. 246.

ceremony was conducted in an orthodox way, and *auto impio* is exactly the word which a pious catholic would use to describe the omission of elevation, while it is inapplicable to anything else that happened. In view of Ribadeneira's evidence I feel forced to revise my former opinion,³ that the mass was celebrated with all the orthodox ceremonies, and to conclude that the significant rite of elevation was omitted.

The question still remains, Who was the celebrant? Ribadeneira's evidence having made it practically certain that the elevation was omitted, the inference can hardly be resisted that it was the dean of the Chapel Royal and not the bishop who celebrated. Oglethorpe had refused to commit this irregularity on Christmas Day, and it is not likely that, having had the courage to resist the queen then, he would sacrifice his conscience less than a month later. The statement of the English reporter that 'the Bishop began the Masse' may perhaps be explained by the assumption that Oglethorpe took some part in the ceremony, though he did not celebrate. Sanders says that the other bishops withdrew at the mass, thus implying that Oglethorpe remained.⁴

In my former article I put forward the theory that Elizabeth withdrew from the service during the canon, basing my opinion on the words 'retorned into her clossett hearing the Consecration of the Mass,' used by the English reporter. As Mr. Wilson pointed out⁵ these words, taken by themselves, are ambiguous and may mean either that she went to her dressing-room in St. Edward's Chapel or that she went to her state chair near the altar. The evidence of Ribadeneira having proved that the mass was celebrated irregularly, the words which I have quoted must mean that she went to her state chair, for she could have no conceivable object in withdrawing from a service conducted by her own chaplain in her own way.

C. G. BAYNE.

³ *Ante*, vol. xxii. p. 668.

⁴ Vol. i. p. 7, Catholic Record Society.

⁵ *Ante*, vol. xxiii. p. 87.