

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

## Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

---

Bachelor of Divinity

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

---

5-17-1948

### The Reformation of Cranmer with Special Reference to Its Doctrine and the Influence Upon It

George S. Robbert

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir\_robbertg@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv>



Part of the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Robbert, George S., "The Reformation of Cranmer with Special Reference to Its Doctrine and the Influence Upon It" (1948). *Bachelor of Divinity*. 272.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv/272>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Bachelor of Divinity by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

**The Reformation of Cranmer with Special Reference to  
Its Doctrine and The Influences upon It**

**A Thesis presented to the  
Faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements of the degree of  
Bachelor of Divinity**

by

**George S. Robbert  
Concordia Seminary**

Approved by

W. G. Palacky  
Thos. Hoyer

## Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	
<b>Chapter I The Historical Backgrounds</b>	
A. Birth and Early Life	1
B. Cranmer and the Divorce of Henry VIII	10
C. Cranmer and Royal Supremacy	31
<b>Chapter II Cranmer's Doctrinal Position</b>	
A. Cranmer's View on the Papacy	33
B. Cranmer's View on the Eucharist	37
<b>Chapter III The Influences upon Cranmer and His Reformation</b>	
A. The Lutheran Influence	45
B. The Swiss Influence	58
C. Peter Martyr	59
D. Martin Bucer	59
E. The Reformed Theologians	60
<b>Chapter IV Historical and Theological Summary of Cranmer's Reformation</b>	63
<b>Bibliography</b>	68

## INTRODUCTION

At the time of Cranmer's youth and early schooling England was Catholic. At the time of his death, it was Protestant. How did this change take place and what were the motivating forces in this change? The opportunity for the break from Rome was given when Henry VIII sought a divorce from Catherine of Aragon in order to marry Anne Bolyen. Cranmer's part in the proceedings of the divorce brought him into the public eye and to a large extent made possible the Reformation of Cranmer. After the break with Rome Cranmer, who was easily influenced by his companions, maintained a Lutheran position until, influenced by Dr. Ridley, he began to change to the Reformed position. Even while he held this position, as shown by his views on the Eucharist, the Lutheran Influence shows itself at various points. But Lutheranism was destined to give place to the Reformed theologies which from the time of the Thirteen Articles until the present day has affected the confessions of the Church of England.

Thus did England change from Roman to Lutheran to Reformed during the lifetime of one man, Thomas Cranmer.

## CHAPTER I

### The Historical Backgrounds

#### Birth and Early Life

In the modest little hamlet of Aslacton on the second day of July in the year 1489 there was born a man who was "the first Protestant archbishop of his kingdom, and the greatest unstrument under God, of the happy Reformation of this Church of England; in whose piety, learning, wisdom, conduct, and blood the foundation was laid"<sup>1</sup>. This, the second son of Thomas and Agnes Cranmer, was named Thomas Cranmer.

His ancestors were obscure and humble people as Cranmer himself said later in life, "I take of it ... that none of us all here, being gentlemen born, but had our beginnings that way from a low and base parentage"<sup>2</sup>. The family took their name from a manor named Cranmer located in the parish of Sutterton in Lincolnshire. Some historians and other men interested in tracing geneologies have traced the geneology of the

---

1. Strype, Cranmer, ed. 1820, p. 1 quoted in Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 2.

2. Narratives of the Reformation (Camden Soc.), pp. 274-5, quoted in Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 3f.

Cranmers back to the reign of Edward I, when, according to them, a certain Hugh de Cranmer is said to have wedded the daughter of William de Sutterton.

The arms of the family are a chevron between three cranes which is an heraldic pun on the name and signifies a lake that is abounding in cranes. But this was not to remain throughout his life, the arms of Cranmer, for we are told that:

"... the King changed his coat of arms. For unto the year 1543 he bore his paternal coat of three cranes sable, as I find by a date set under his arms, yet remaining in a window in Lambeth-house. For it is to be noted, that the King, perceiving how much ado Cranmer would have in defense of his religion, altered the three cranes, which were parcel of his ancestors' arms into three pelicans, declaring unto him, 'that those birds should signify unto him, that he ought to be ready, as the pelican is, to shed blood for his young ones, brought up in the faith of Christ. For,' said the King, 'You are like to be tasted; if you stand to your tacking at length'."

The first person of the Archbishop's ancestors to connect the name of the family with Aslacton was Edmund Cranmer who, in 1425, sold his lands in Lincolnshire and bought land in Aslacton.

Thomas Cranmer's older brother, John, was born in the spring of 1487 and was expected to follow in the footsteps of his father in keeping the inheritance and rearing sons to carry on the family line and its tradi-

---

3. Strype, Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God, Thomas Cranmer. A new edition with additions. p. 181.

tions. Since it was not possible for any other sons to be supported by the family property both Thomas and his younger brother, Edmund, who was born about 1491, were destined by their father to take holy orders and enter the church. And so, early in life he received a start toward his education.

Probably there was little love lost on the part of Cranmer for his early schoolmaster, for Morice, his secretary writes:

"... as towching his education and bryngyng upp in his youthe I have harde hymself reporte, that his father did sett hym to scole with a mervelous severe and cruell scolemaster whose tyranny towards youthe was suche, that, as he thoughte, the said scolemaster so appalled, duller and daunted the tender and fyne wittes of his scolers, that thei (more) hated and aborred good litterature than favored or embraced the same, w(hose) memories were also so mutilated and wounded, that for his p(arte) he lost moche of that benefitt of memory and audacitie in his youthe that by nature was given unto hym, whiche he could never recover, as he divers tymes reported."<sup>4</sup>

Morice speaks of Cranmer's leaving his "grammar school" to go up to Cambridge. Pollard is of the opinion that he went to "grammar school" at Southwell and bases this conclusion upon a recommendation that Cranmer made in 1533 that his nephew and god son,

---

4. Morice, Anecdotes of Archbishop Cranmer. (Narratives of the Reformation) pp. 238-9. The words in parentheses indicate where the margin was torn off in the original manuscript.

Thomas Rosell should be sent to this school.<sup>5</sup>

Morice also relates that Cranmer's father:

"...was very desirous to have hym lernyd, yet wolde he not that he shoulde be ignorante in civill and gentilman-like exercises, inso-much that he used hym to showte, and many tymes permitted hym to hunte and hawke and to exercise and to ryde roughe horses. So that nowe being archebisshopp, he feared not to ryde the roughest horse that came into his stable, whiche he wolde do very comblie, as otherwise at all tymes there was none in his house that wolde become his horse better. And when tyme served for recreation after studie he wolde both hawke and hunte, the game being prepared for hym beforehand. And wolde sometyme showte in the longe bowe, but many tymes kille his dere with the crossbow and yet his sight was not perfayte, for he was pooreblinde."<sup>6</sup>

But this training on the part of his father was not to last. When Thomas was twelve years old his father died on the twenty-seventh of May, 1501. Two years later, in 1503 or 1504, we find Thomas Cranmer entering the University at Cambridge.

Cambridge University at this time had very little to offer an eager intellectual mind. The Roman Church still discouraged the study of Greek because this was the language of the rival church in the East. Nor did the classical Latin authors find a place in the studies of this university. Pollard relates that at the end

---

5. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 9.

6. Morice, Anecdotes of Archbishop Cranmer. (Narratives of the Reformation) pp. 238-9.

of the fifteenth century the library did not consist of more than five or six hundred books, "and in this somewhat meagre collection there was not a Greek nor classical Latin author; even patristic theology was poorly represented, and the library only possessed part of the works of the four great Fathers of the Latin Church, Ambrose, Gregory, Jerome, and Augustine."<sup>7</sup> "So Cranmer's education proceeded uneventfully along the dusty, well-worn paths of the trivium and quad-  
rivium."<sup>8</sup>

While Cranmer was still at the university a revival of interest took place in the university, even the king himself and his mother paying a visit to Cambridge. In the same year, 1506, the university offered the degree of Doctor of Divinity to the great scholar of that age, Erasmus. From this time on the scholastic standards of Cambridge seem to be rising. Erasmus taught at the university. "That Cranmer attended Erasmus' lectures is possible; but it is by no means clear as to what extent Erasmus lectured, either on divinity or on Greek..."<sup>9</sup>

Cranmer must have evidently taken advantage of the recent rise in the scholastic standards of the university for about the year 1510 or 1511 he was elected a fellow

---

7. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 13.

8. Ibid.

9. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 17.

of the college. Todd comes to the conclusion that somewhat earlier than the date of his fellowship he had "distinguished himself as a scholar...".<sup>10</sup>

But Cranmer was not to hold this fellowship for long. Soon after his appointment to his post he fell in love with a girl named Black Joan and married her. Styrton, in his novel about Cranmer entitled The Three Pelicans, ascribed this name to her as being bestowed by the students on account of her "raven hair and black eyes".<sup>11</sup> Le Bas, in writing on the life of Cranmer makes the statement that "the marriage of Cranmer was, of course, attended with the forfeiture of his fellowship. It did not, however, disqualify him from his office of a college Teacher and Lecturer".<sup>12</sup>

This marriage was evidently not frowned on or considered as wrong for Doctor Hook says of his marriage "Cranmer's marriage was not regarded as disreputable, for although as a matter of course, he forfeited his fellowship, he at once found income to support his wife by accepting the appointment of Reader or Lecturer at Buckingham Hall."<sup>13</sup> Buckingham College which was founded

---

10. Todd, Life of Archbishop Cranmer, p. 4.

11. Styrton, The Three Pelicans, p. 4.

12. Le Bas, Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. 1, p. 35.

13. Hook, Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury, Vol. 6, p. 432f.

about this time is now known under the name of Magdalen College.

About a year after his marriage to Black Joan she died in childbirth and "his old college paid Cranmer the compliment of re-electing him to his old fellowship. The honor was the more marked because this extension of the term 'unmarried' to a widower was an interpretation of college statutes which remained unique for centuries."<sup>14</sup>

After the death of his wife Cranmer, probably under the influence of his bereavement, took up his studies with increased vigor. The pendulum was swinging away from scholasticism and toward the study of the Bible and literature. Cranmer entered wholeheartedly into this movement and the publication of Erasmus' New Testament in 1516 and of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses in 1517 might be taken as the starting point for Cranmer's systematic study of the scriptures.

Pollard gives us a long quotation from the Narratives of the Reformation (p. 219) which shows the reasons and results of Cranmer's intensive Bible study:

"Then he... considering what great controversy was in matters of religion (not only in trifles but in the chiefest articles of our salvation), bent himself to try out the truth herein; and forasmuch as he perceived that he could not

---

14. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 18.

judge indifferently is so weighty matters without the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures (before he was infected with any man's opinions or errors), he applied his whole study three years to the said Scriptures. After this he gave his mind to good writers both old and new, not rashly running over them, for he was a slow reader, but a diligent marker of whatsoever he read; for he seldom read without a pen in hand, and whatsoever made either for one part or the other of things being in controversy, he wrote it out if it were short, or at least, noted the author and place, that he might find it and write it out at leisure; which was a great help to him in debating of matters ever after. This kind of study he used till he was made Doctor of Divinity which was about the thirty-fourth of his age."<sup>15</sup>

Soon after the restoration of his fellowship Cranmer was ordained Priest and entrusted with the task of preaching at the university as one of the regular university preachers. Having received the degree of Doctor of Divinity he was appointed as Public Examiner in Theology. It was his task to examine candidates in divinity and to endeavour "to raise the standard of Biblical knowledge by requiring from them some evidence of their having studied the Scriptures".<sup>16</sup> As to his ability as Examiner in Theology we may arrive at a conclusion from a passage that Collette quotes from Strype in his Life of Thomas Cranmer:

"He did much good, for he used to question the candidates out of the Scriptures, and by no means would he let them pass if he found they were unskilled therein, or unacquainted with the history of the Bible. The Friars,

---

16. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 20.

whose study lay only in school authors, especially were so, whom therefore he sometimes turned back as insufficient, advising them to study the Scriptures for some years longer, before they came for their degree, it being a shame for a professor in Divinity to be unskilled in the book wherein the knowledge of God and the grounds of divinity lay. Whereby he made himself from the beginning hated by the Friars yet some of the more ingenous afterwards rendered him great thanks for refusing them, whereby, being put upon the study of God's Word, they attained to more sound knowledge of religion."

Up to now we have discussed Cranmer's private life. He appears to have passed a rather uneventful life while at college, but making no great contributions and doing no great acts which would bring him before the public eye.

We will close this discussion of the early life of Thomas Cranmer with a description of him quoted in Collette's book of the life of Cranmer from an extract taken from "Mr. Burke's late work, 'Historical Portraits of the Tudor Dynasty' which he purports to give from a letter of one John Alcock, a student and contemporary of Cranmer, and a chess player at the 'Dolphin,' 'abbreviated and modernized as to diction'. If genuine, we may take it as an interesting description of Dr. Cranmer at this period:

At this time Father Cranmer looked oldish; he was of dark complexion, with a long beard, half grey, part of his head had no hair; he spoke little; his amusement at times was chess. He was accounted an admirable hand at that game, which he enjoyed very much. His habits were temperate, and he frequently admonished young gentlemen 'for indulging in the use of strong liquors' - a vice then making progress amongst the students of Cambridge. Father Cranmer was reckoned a good horseman, and he, like most early risers, was much given to walking on a summer morning; his manners

---

17. Collette, The Life, Times, and Writings of Thomas Cranmer, p. 10.

were cold and disdainful, unless to those to whom he considered it his interest to be the reverse. He seems to have had no desire for the society of educated women. I must state that he had no opportunity of meeting them. 'Black Joan' as his wife was styled from her hair and complexion, was a woman of no education - a peasant girl from a neighboring farm. During the long years Thomas Cranmer was attached to Cambridge, he had many acquaintances, but was never known to have formed what might be called a friendship for any fellow-student."<sup>18</sup>

### Cranmer and the Divorce of Henry VIII

Cranmer's part in the divorce of Henry is the turning point in his life. From now on he is a public figure. Up to this point, the world had not yet heard from Cranmer but from the time of the divorce on, Cranmer was one of the most well known figures in the history of his time.

Several fortunate experiences occurred which made Cranmer's entry into public life possible. The first of these may be termed a negative good and the latter, a positive help. In 1524 Wolsey offered to Cranmer a position as canon at the newly founded Cardinal College at Oxford. Fortunately as subsequent events will show, he did not accept this offer.

He decided to remain at the university, and while there augmented his duties by occasionally taking charge

---

<sup>18</sup>. Collette, The Life, Times, and Writings of Thomas Cranmer, p. 10.

of some private pupils. It was in line with this policy that in 1529 two boys by the name of Cressy were entrusted to his care. During that summer an epidemic of sweating sickness was raging through England. Perhaps this was a reoccurrence of a plague that took place a year before "in which 'a pest occurred in the several houses of learning', in the sister University also; and in which the sweating sickness too had renewed its visit to the metropolis and other parts of the kingdom."<sup>19</sup> Due to this plague Cranmer and his two charges retired to the country.

The mother of the two Cressy boys seems to have been in some way related to Cranmer. Their father owned a house at Waltham in Essex and it was here that Cranmer and the Cressy boys retired to escape from the plague.

This was the second important move on the part of Cranmer for while he was in the country an incident happened which changed the whole course of Cranmer's life and helped to alter the course of English church history.

Perhaps an excursus at this point upon the preliminary happenings with regard to the divorce and its purpose may shed some additional light upon subsequent developments.

"That question", the divorce of Henry, "was not the cause, but only the occasion of the permanent breach with

---

19. Todd, p. 11 who quotes from A. Wood, Annals Univ. Oxon. under 1528, edit. Gutch, 1796.

Rome."<sup>20</sup> For many years the breach between England and Rome was growing wider and wider. In early times there had been a feeling of antipathy between them and this was now augmented by the realization that "For four centuries there had been no English pope, and the two setbacks Wolsey's hopes of the tiara had suffered, on the election of Adrian VI and Clement VII, made this exclusion more apparent".<sup>21</sup> The people knew that if the Pope were a Frenchman today, tomorrow he might be a Spaniard but there was no doubt in their minds that the Pope would never be an Englishman. It is true, there was always one English Cardinal in the Cardinals College but what is one man in a group of forty?

Another disturbing factor to the English mind was the papal claims for temporal power. These may have been tolerated as long as the medieval ideal of a unified world under one spiritual and one temporal head was desired. But with the coming of the ideals and spirit of nations and nationalities these desires of papal supremacy were becoming obnoxious. "The Pope's spiritual influence contracted as his worldly possessions expanded; and his estimation and credit have never increased so

---

20. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 27.

21. Constant, The Reformation in England, p. 6.

fast as in the generation which followed the loss of his temporal power".<sup>22</sup>

During the reign of Henry the English people were definitely antipapal. When, in 1512, they wanted to insult the Scots, they called them "Pope's men" and at this same time "the people of London were said to be so hostile to the Church that any jury would condemn a cleric though he were as innocent as Abel".<sup>23</sup> Thus Henry knew that if he chose to quarrel with Rome he would have the support of the people.

But while Henry's divorce was not the only cause for his break with Rome it is equally clear that Henry's passion for Anne Boleyn was also not the sole cause for his divorce or his doubts in respect to the validity of his marriage with Catherine.

Catherine of Aragon was the fourth daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile. At the time when Henry VII was the reigning king of Spain it was thought advantageous to both England and Spain to effect an alliance. To further this alliance the marriage between Arthur, Henry VII's oldest son and Catherine was arranged. They were married with great pomp and splendor at St. Paul's on November 14, 1501. The royal couple took up residence

---

22. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 26.

23. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 28.

at Ludlow Castle in Wales. Within five months after the marriage Arthur, who was in a weak state of health, succumbed to a plague April 2, 1502 and Catherine was left a widow.

Immediately there was a question between Henry VII and Ferdinand as to the dowry of the Princess. Henry naturally wanted to retain this dowry and several projects for a continued union between the two countries were considered. Henry VII, himself a widower, proposed to marry Catherine, but her parents objected too strenuously. The next proposal offered was that Catherine be married to Henry's second son, the future Henry VIII. Although Henry's son was only twelve years old while Catherine was eighteen, the court of Spain was finally induced to accede to the proposal provided that a dispensation from the Pope could be obtained. This was because a union with a brother's widow was forbidden by both the Canon Law of the Church and the Divine Law. If the marriage between Arthur and Catherine had not been consummated this would not have been necessary but abundant evidence was produced to indicate that the marriage was consummated.<sup>24</sup> Thus the dispensation of the Pope was an absolute necessity.

This was not a presumptuous request to make to the Pope for he claimed, and for that matter still continues

---

24. Cf. Burnet, The History of the Reformation, revised by Pocock, Vol. I, p. 73.

to claim, not only the right to declare a divorce between husband and wife - even when there are no legal grounds - but also to give a dispensation sanctioning a marriage within prohibited degrees of affinity. History shows that this was done repeatedly by the Popes.<sup>25</sup>

The future Henry VIII and Catherine were betrothed in December, 1503 and a bull was obtained from the Pope on December 26, 1503, to this effect:

"That the pope, according to the greatness of his authority, having received a petition from prince Henry and the princess Catherine, bearing, that whereas the princess was lawfully married to prince Arthur, (which was perhaps consummated by the carnalis copula,) who was dead without any issue, but they, being desirous to marry for preserving the peace between the crowns of England and Spain, did petition his holiness for his dispensation; therefore the pope, out of his care to maintain peace among all Catholic

---

25. "Pope Stephen withdrew his anathama and sanctioned the divorce of the French monarch, Charles, from his then wife, to marry Bertha, Princess of Lombardy; and when the some Prince divorced Bertha to make room for another, this act also was sanctioned by the French Bishops, and was not condemned by Pope Adrian. Innocent IV., in 1243, authorised the divorce of Alphonsus of Portugal from his queen, to marry Beatrice." "Alexander VI., in his Brief dated 8th June 1501 (the very year of the marriage of Arthur and Catherine), authorised Alexander, Duke of Lithuania, and afterwards King of Poland, to put away his wife Ann de Foix, on the ground that she belonged to the Eastern Church, in direct violation of his solemn oath, given when wedding her, that he would never subject her to any compulsion on account of their religious differences. For thirty thousand ducats the same Pope allowed Louis XI. of France to dissolve his marriage with Princess Jane, and to marry Anne of Brittany." Collette, The Life, Times and Writings of Thomas Cranmer, p. 19.

kings, did absolve them from all censures under which they might be, and dispensed with the impediment of their affinity, notwithstanding any apostolical constitutions or ordinances to the contrary, and gave them leave to marry; or if they were already married, he confirming it, required their confessor to enjoin them some healthful penance for their having married before the dispensation was obtained."

Even though many cardinals opposed this dispensation the Pope overrode their feelings about the matter because it was in the interest of the papacy to do so. The Pope, an enemy of the French King Louis the Twelfth, would do anything to make an alliance against him firmer. Therefore he was easily persuaded to confirm a thing that would obligate the succeeding kings of England to maintain papal authority, since it was from this authority that they derived their title to the crown. Little did he think that by this action he was providing an occasion for the crushing of papal power in England. So moves the hand of God.

Prince Henry and Catherine were married while Henry was still under age:

But Warham had so possessed the king with an aversion to this marriage, that, on the same day that the prince was of age, he by his father's command, laid on him in the presence of many of the nobility and others, made a protestation in the hands of FOX,

---

26. Burnet, The History of the Reformation, revised by Pocock, Vol. I, p. 74

bishop of Winchester, before a public notary, and read it himself, by which he declared, "That whereas he, being under age, was married to the princess Catherine; yet now, coming to be of age, he did not confirm that marriage, but retracted and annulled it, and would not proceed in it, but intended in full form of law to void it and break it off; which he declared he did freely and of his own accord."<sup>27</sup>

The state of affairs continued thus until the death of Henry VII, April 22, 1509. One of the first things that came under consideration when the young king assumed the throne was the question, should the young king conclude his marriage or break it totally. For about six weeks this question was discussed and at the end of this time those who favored the completion of the marriage prevailed with the king and on June 3 he was married again publically and soon after, on June 24, they were both crowned. She bore him several children but they all died with the exception of one daughter, Mary.

The cause for Henry's desire for a divorce from Catherine arose not so much from his affection for Anne Boleyn, as for his desire to have an heir to assume the throne upon his death. When his daughter Mary was eleven years

---

27. Burnet, op. cit. p. 75, who quotes from Morysinus (Ricardus) Anglus. Apomaxis calumniarum convitiarumque quibus Jo. Cocleus, homo theologus exiguus artium professor, scurra procas, Henry viii. famam impetere, nomen obscurare, &c. studuit. 450 Lond. 1537.

old she was betrothed to one of the sons of the King of France. But the Bishop of Tarbes, the French King's Ambassador denied the legality of Henry's marriage with Catherine on the grounds that it was contrary to divine precept with which no human authority had the power to dispense. He denied the legitimacy of Mary and pointed out that she could not legally receive the crown of England. This immediately put an end to the proposed marriage and raised in the mind of Henry the question as to the legality of his marriage. After consultation with Cardinal Wolsey and his confessor, Longland, and after examining his favorite author Thomas Aquinas he came to the conclusion that the marriage was illegal. He found in Lev. 20:21 the law of Moses that "if a man shall take his brother's wife,... they shall die childless", and reasoned that the death of his children was an indication of the curse of God upon his marriage.

If Mary were illegitimate there would be no immediate successor and James of Scotland, the enemy of England would then be the next heir to the English throne. This could and probably would lead to a repetition of the War of the Roses because on his death there would certainly be rival claimants to the throne. Therefore he longed for a son to succeed him on the throne. The divorce of Catherine of Aragon was the only means that

seemed to solve the problem.

Henry probably reached this decision early in 1527, because in February of this year the Bishop of Tarbes, who had raised the question of the legitimacy of Mary, arrived in England. In May Henry took the first step when:

he allowed himself to be cited in private before Wolsey as Legate and called upon to justify his marriage. Nothing came of the proceeding, except that on June 22 Henry shocked his wife by telling her that they must part company, as he found by the opinions of divines and lawyers that they had been living in sin. He desired her, however, to keep the matter secret for the present....<sup>28</sup>

But while the Bishop of Tarbes had denied the authority of the Pope to set aside the laws of God, Henry at this time was not inclined to deny this power of the Pope. He hoped, quite to the contrary, that through the Pope he could remove the impediment to his perplexing problem. Henry then presented his petition to Clement VII.

In view of past papal decisions this petition did not seem unreasonable nor did the Pope consider it so. He, at this time had taken refuge in the Castle St. Angelo at Orvieto because the French commander had invaded Italy and shut up the Spaniards in Naples. The French seemed to be the victors and the Spanish dominion in Italy seemed

---

28. The Cambridge Modern History, Vol. II, p. 428.

seemed destined to perish. Perhaps it was because the Pope wanted to court the favor of England at this time that he delegated the Cardinals Campeggio and Wolsey "to pass sentence without publicity or the usual forms of justice. None could deny their verdict or appeal from it. Finally, each of the delegates had the right to act alone, if the other no longer wished to do so."<sup>29</sup> This was almost equal to a verdict in Henry's favor and he might well think that his case was won.

But no sooner had Campeggio left Rome for England than the fortunes of war changed and this changed the Pope's whole viewpoint on the situation. The French were defeated, and the Emperor was victorious. Immediately the Pope's secretary wrote to Campeggio that he must not pronounce a decision without a fresh commission from Rome. He was instructed to delay as long as possible because, in view of the victorious position of Charles, the granting of Henry's divorce would mean ruin for the church because she was not wholly within the power of the Emperor. The Emperor Charles was assured by Clement that nothing would be done to the prejudice of his aunt, Catherine of Aragon. As Pollard observes, "Campeggio's proceedings in England were therefore merely a farce intended to divert the English until the final event of

---

29. Constant, The Reformation in England, p. 59.

the war in Italy should make up Clement's mind."<sup>30</sup>  
The French met a decisive defeat at Landriano on June 21, 1529. Clement's nephew was promised to the illegitimate daughter of Charles, the city of Florence was returned to rule of his family, and all towns taken from the papal state during the war were to be restored. In return for this the Pope was to quash the proceedings against Catherine. Campeggio was informed of the Pope's intentions but not before the divorce case had made considerable progress.

Court was in session on the case and on July 23, Henry, who was ignorant of this understanding between Clement and Charles, appeared in court expecting to hear Campeggio pronounce his sentence. But instead of pronouncing judgement when he rose to speak, Campeggio adjourned the case. Henry, instead of losing his temper as was expected of him, displayed remarkable self-control and the friends of the Queen flattered themselves that the affair would now blow over.

But early in August Henry made arrangements for summoning Parliament, and then began a tour of the country. On the 4th of August he was at Waltham, on the 6th he went hunting at Hudson. From there he went to Tyttenhanger and three days later returned to Waltham.

---

30. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 37.

He had with him, Doctor Edward Fox and Stephan Gardiner, who were quartered in Cressy's house during their stay at Waltham.

Let us now return to our story of Cranmer, who, you will remember was staying at the Cressy home, having left the university because of the plague raging there.

Gardiner and Fox were old friends and acquaintances of Cranmer's and quite naturally these three friends, meeting at dinner in Cressy's house fell to discussing the question of the divorce. Cranmer was asked his opinion and being a theologian and not a lawyer (it was forbidden by the statutes of his college to pursue the study of canon law) he did not have much patience with the law's delays and suggested the more speedy way of submitting the question to the faculties of various universities. Whether this suggestion was one entirely of his own conception or whether he was reminded of this possibility by the opinion rendered already at this time by the University of Orleans is not certain.<sup>31</sup> At any rate it was a fairly common procedure at this time to submit both theological and scientific questions to the various universities. Constant says that these universities were considered "to be 'the scattered council' whose opinion would

---

31. Cf. Le Bas, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. I, p. 39.

prevail over that of the Pope."<sup>32</sup>

Fox and Gardiner were very well pleased over this suggestion and as soon as possibly told Henry, who was also delighted and immediately exclaimed, "'Where is this Dr. Cranmer? Is he still at Waltham?' Gardiner and Fox replied, that they left him there. 'Marry,' said the king, 'I will surely speak with him, and therefore let him be sent for out of hand. I perceive that this man hath the right sow by the ear. And if I had known this device but two years ago, it had been in my way a great piece of money, and had also rid me out of much unquietness.'<sup>33</sup>

Cranmer was called to appear before the king. When he arrived Henry told him how pleased he was with his suggestion and then turning to the earl of Wiltshire, asked him to permit Cranmer to stay at his house at Durham-place and provide him with all necessary books until he had written upon this subject. This task kept him busy during December and January.

While Cranmer was working on his book other steps were being taken in accord with his suggestion. Doctor Richard Pole, a great Greek scholar, was sent to Italy to go through all the libraries in search of writings

---

32. Constant, The Reformation in England, p. 76.

33. Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. I, p. 19 f.

which could be used in Henry's favor.

As soon as Cranmer's book was completed it was circulated in manuscript among the leading dons of Cambridge. He was also sent down to Cambridge to argue in favor of his book. These methods evidently met with success for in one day seven men who had opposed the divorce of Henry were convinced and changed their minds.

Henry read Cranmer's book and then calling him to his side asked Cranmer if he would abide by what he had written before the bishop of Rome. Cranmer replied that he would do this, by God's grace, if Henry would send him to Rome. The royal reply was, "I will send you".

Such was Cranmer's introduction into public life. Before he had been a little known scholar and tutor; from now on he was to be one of the most important men in England whose name was on the lips of thousands.

Cranmer left for Rome in the spring of 1530. On the 28th of July he reported to Croke, another of the king's agents in Rome:

"As for our successes here (at Rome), they be very little; nor dare we to attempt to know any man's mind, because of the pope; nor is he content with what you have done; and he says, no friars shall discuss his power. And as for any favour in this court, I look for none, but to have the pope with all his cardinals declare against us."<sup>34</sup>

But the situation was far from hopeless for Henry.

---

34. Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. I, p. 27.

Francis I of France was expected to give his support and the "universities of Paris (July 2nd, 1530), Orleans (April 5th, 1530), Ferrara, Pavia, and Padua (July 1st, 1530), not to mention the individual opinions of a few doctors, decided in Henry's favor."<sup>35</sup>

Cranmer left Rome in September bringing to England little result of his mission except the votes of the Italian universities. He seems to have made a favorable impression on the Pope personally because the Pope appointed him Penitentiary for England, but on the divorce question he was lacking in success.

Cranmer was now left in comparative quiet, broken apparently only by his request to examine Reginald Pole's treatise on the divorce question. He reported that Pole had skillfully and plausibly handled his arguments but that if the book were published the minds of the people would be fixed in hostility to the King's cause.

Early in 1532, Henry again called on him to give his time and efforts on behalf of England. He was selected for the post of ambassador to the Emperor Charles V. He accordingly left England for the second time, proceeding to Germany where he joined the Imperial Court at Ratisbon. In addition to his other duties he was "to sound the Lutheran princes with a view to an alliance, and to obtain the removal of some restrictions on English trade."<sup>36</sup>

---

35. Constant, The Reformation in England, p. 77

36. The Encyclopedia Britannica, p. 642.

But since Charles had left the determination of commercial affairs in the Low Countries in the hands of his sister, Mary the Regent, Cranmer did not meet with any success in carrying out this part of his instructions.

In July he left quietly and went to the Court of Saxony.

In 1532 Cranmer married the niece of Osiander, one of the German divines. "Hook finds in the fact of this marriage corroboration of Cranmer's statement that he never expected or desired the primacy; and it seems probable enough that, if he had foreseen how soon the primacy was to be forced on him, he would have avoided a disqualification which it was difficult to conceal and dangerous to disclose."<sup>37</sup>

However, despite Cranmer's lack of foreknowledge, he was destined for the office of Archbishop. In August of 1532, Archbishop Warham died and Henry at once proposed to name as his successor, Thomas Cranmer. Henry wanted to rush the consecration and sent hurriedly to Rome for the bulls for his promotion. But there was a matter of some four months before he consented to the promotion. Perhaps he was dubious about the advisability

---

37. Ibid.

of taking such a high office under a man of Henry's temperament. Also his recent marriage might tend to strengthen his reluctance.

Nevertheless he finally accepted, the bull to succeed Warham was dated February 22, 1533, and he was consecrated on March 30. However, four days before he issued a protest in which he sets forth his intended stand as Archbishop. It reads as follows:

"In the name of God, Amen. I Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury elect, do before you, persons of authority and credible witnesses, here present, say, allege, and, by this present instrument in writing, openly, publicly, and expressly protest, that whereas before my consecration, or at the time thereof, I am obliged to take the oath, or oaths, usually taken by the archbishops of Canterbury elect to the pope, for form sake, rather than for any essentiality or obligation there is in the thing, in order to my obtaining the same; it neither is, nor shall be, my will or intention to oblige myself by the said oath, or oaths, howsoever the same may seem to be worded, to any thing hereafter to be said, done, or attempted, by reason thereof, which shall be, or seem to be, contrary to the law of God, or contrary to our most illustrious king of England, or to the laws or prerogatives of the same: And that I do not intend to oblige myself by the said oath, or oaths, in any manner whatsoever, so as to disable myself freely to speak, consult, and consent, in all and singular matters, and things, any way concerning the reformation of Christian religion, the government of the Church of England, or the prerogatives of the crown thereof, or the good of the commonwealth; and every where to execute and reform those things, which I shall think fit to be reformed in the Church of England. And I do protest and profess, that I will take the said oath, or oaths, accord-

ing to this interpretation and this sense, and none other, nor in any other manner. And I do further protest, that whatsoever the oath may be, which my proctor hath already taken to the pope in my name, it was not my intention or will to give him any power, by virtue whereof he might take any oath in my name contrary to, or inconsistent with, the oath by me already taken, or hereafter to be taken, to our said illustrious king of England: And, in case he hath taken any such contrary or inconsistent oath in my name, I do protest, that the same being taken without my knowledge, and without my authority, shall be null and invalid. And these my protestations I will have to be repeated, and reiterated, in all the clauses and sentences of the said oaths: From which (protestations) I do not intend, in any manner whatsoever, by deed or word, to recede, nor will recede, but will always hold the same to be firm and binding to me."<sup>38</sup>

Pollard remarks concerning this oath of Cranmer:

"At his trial this protest was represented as a scandalous act, amounting to perjury. It was due rather to an excess of scruple on Cranmer's part. Most men would have taken the oath without question, thinking that any future Act of Parliament repudiating the papal jurisdiction would be sufficient release from its obligations. Cranmer was not satisfied with this; he foresaw that England would throw off its allegiance with Rome, and he determined that there should be no misconception as to his own action. It was, however, necessary that he take the oath, because it had been the law, or at least the custom, so to do, and it was doubtful whether he could be regarded as a properly constituted Archbishop unless he fulfilled all the prescribed formalities."<sup>39</sup>

---

38. Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. I, p. 58ff.

39. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 57.

Four days after his protest he was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury. The divorce of Henry then began to move rapidly. Before Cranmer's consecration, on January 25, Henry was secretly married to Anne Boleyn. The actual date is not known for certain but in a letter dated June 17, 1533, Cranmer wrote concerning this marriage that it took place "about S. Paul's day last" i.e. the 25th of January.<sup>40</sup> Henry, knowing her to be with child began making preparations to have her openly proclaimed Queen. "On Easter Eve, April 12, Anne went to mass in great state and was publicly named Queen."<sup>41</sup> The King had not yet been given any sentence by a court that would release him from his marriage to Catherine. However on Good Friday Cranmer had written to the King a humble request that he be allowed to try this case which had so long been pending. Of course the King willingly gave him the commission to do so. Cranmer then cited Henry and Catherine to appear before him at Dunstable, which was probably chosen because it was conveniently out of the way. Catherine declined to appear and was declared contumacious. On May 23, the Archbishop gave judgement, pronouncing the marriage null and void from the first. This was the final decree because the Act of Appeals prohibited any appeal from the Archbishop's court. Five days later

---

40. Cf. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 60, n. 1.

41. The Cambridge Modern History, Vol. II, p. 439.

he pronounced the marriage between Henry and Anne valid. "Anne was crowned at Westminster on Whitsunday, June 1, with all due state, but with no appearance of popular enthusiasm. Then another deputation was sent to Catherine, now at Ampthill, to inform her that she was no longer Queen and must henceforth bear the name of Princess Dowager; but she refused to submit to such a degradation."<sup>42</sup>

Rome passed sentence of excommunication upon Henry on July 11, but allowed him until the end of September to make amends by putting away Anne and taking back Catherine.

Early in September Anne's child was born and on September 10, Cranmer stood godfather to her child, the future Queen Elizabeth.

The Pope pronounced Henry's marriage with Catherine valid in March 1534, but Parliament in England passed an Act of Succession in favor of Anne Boleyn's child.

On May 11 of this same year Henry was able to make peace with his nephew, James I, of Scotland "relieved him from the danger of a papal interdict being executed by means of an invasion from Scotland."<sup>43</sup>

Thus came to a successful conclusion the divorce of Henry. We have dealt with this affair quite in detail because it was the point of departure of Cranmer into his

---

42. op. cit., p. 440.

43. op. cit., p. 441.

public life and illustrates the political backgrounds of the times and the theological stand Cranmer was to take in the future. Up to the time of the divorce Cranmer stood in the wings of the stage of England. But this was his cue to take his place on stage and under the floodlights of history to play his role in the Protestantizing of England.

#### Cranmer and Royal Supremacy

The divorce question had settled the question also of the power and authority of the pope in England. Soon after the divorce question was settled by the actions of Cranmer, a foreigner writing to the Republic of Florence said; "Nothing else is thought of in that island every day, except of arranging affairs in such a way that they do no longer be in want of the Pope, neither for filling vacancies in the Church, nor for any other purpose."<sup>44</sup>

Parliament, on May 15th, 1532, issued a resolution called the Submission of the Clergy which aided the King in forcing his submission "Not only on the clergy of England, but of the Pope, to his wishes."<sup>45</sup>

In 1532 an Act forbidding the payment of Annates was

---

44. Lindsey, A History of the Reformation, p. 326.

45. op. cit., p. 327.

also passed, and on the Act of Supremacy, dated 15 January, 1534 it was declared that the King "justly and rightfully is and ought to be the Supreme Head of the Church of England".<sup>46</sup>

This was the political and religious atmosphere in which Thomas Cranmer worked, and he was heartily in favor of it. As will be shown in the next chapter, he was of the opinion that the pope was the Antichrist and that the King was the head of the Church as well as of the State.

---

46. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 82.

## CHAPTER II

## Cranmer's Doctrinal Position

In this chapter we are going to take up the doctrinal position of Thomas Cranmer. The Archbishop was easily influenced by his associates and their influence caused him to change his position which in turn changed the direction of the Reformation in England. At an early period in the Reformation Cranmer was definitely Lutheran. At a later period in his life he changed to a more Calvinistic approach to theology.

The doctrine of the Eucharist, or the Lord's Supper, is perhaps the best doctrine we could choose which would show his varying position most clearly and Cranmer's view of that doctrine will be discussed at length.

The one other doctrine which would affect his Reformation probably the most, at least as to its inception, was his views on the Papacy. It is to this doctrine that we will first direct our attention.

## Cranmer's views on the Papacy

The basis of Cranmer's policies with regard to his Reformation lay in the root-idea that the Church was subordinate to the State. The officials of the State are the officers of the sovereign and all revenues collected are to be administered subject to the control of the sovereign.

Also to this sovereign absolute obedience is due.

"The sovereign, to Cranmer, meant the king, and by implication anyone acting by royal authority; whether Parliament, or a vicar-general, or an archbishop. By royal assent, even papal authority could be restored; by the royal will it might be cast off."<sup>1</sup>

To Cranmer, the Pope was merely the Bishop of Rome, and had no more authority in England than any other foreign secular prince or bishop.

When Cranmer made a visitation of his province he obtained signatures of the clergy to a declaration that "the Bishop of Rome has no greater jurisdiction conferred upon him by God in this kingdom of England than any other foreign bishop".<sup>2</sup> The Convocation of Canterbury, on March 31, 1534 had given an opinion to this effect, and a similar judgement was given by that of York on May 5, which the archbishop certified on June 1 and 2. "Declarations of royal supremacy, with renunciation of papal authority, were likewise obtained from the two universities and the monasteries throughout the kingdom."<sup>3</sup>

That this had been Cranmer's opinion and view on the papacy may be seen even as early as his consecration to

- 
1. Innes, Cranmer and the Reformation in England, p. 87.
  2. Gairdner, A History of the English Church, Vol. 4, p. 149.
  3. op. cit., p. 149 f.

the office of Archbishop of Canterbury. In his protest, issued before he was consecrated, Cranmer states that he will not oblige himself to anything "contrary to the law of God, or contrary to our most illustrious king of England, or the commonwealth of this his kingdom of England, or to the laws or prerogatives of the same."<sup>4</sup> It is very plain that Cranmer intends not to make the laws and commands of the King the basis by which he acts and on which he wishes to be held responsible. He continues to state that he intends to "execute and reform those things, which I shall think fit to be reformed in the Church of England."<sup>5</sup> At the close of his protest he says that he will not consider binding upon him any oaths which his proctor has already taken to the pope in his name because he intends to take oaths which shall not be inconstant with the "oath by me already taken, or hereafter to be taken to our said illustrious king of England".<sup>6</sup> Thus Cranmer makes it very clear that he does not recognize papal supremacy but only that of his monarch.

Later in life he preached two sermons, in East Kent and in his own church in Canterbury, in which he speaks against the papal supremacy and authority. He says of these sermons:

---

4. Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. I, p. 59.

5. Ibid.

6. loc. cit. p. 60.

The scope and effect of both my sermons stood in three things. First, I declared that the bishop of Rome was not God's vicar in earth, as he has taken. And although it is so taught these three or four hundred years, yet it is done by means of the bishop of Rome, who compelled men by oaths so to teach, to the maintenance of his authority, contrary to God's Word. And here I declared by what means and craft the bishop of Rome obtained such usurped authority. Second, because the see of Rome was called sancta sedes Romana, and the bishop was called sanctissimus papa, and men's consciences peradventure could not be quiet to be separated from so holy a place, and from God's most holy vicar; I showed the people, that this thing ought nothing to move them, for it was but a holiness in name. For indeed there was no such holiness at Rome. And hereupon I took occasion to declare his glory and pomp of Rome, the covetousness, the unchaste living, and the maintenances of all vices. Third I spake against the bishop of Rome's laws: which he called divinas leges and sacros canones, and makes them equal with God's Law. And here I declared, that many of the laws were very contradictory, and some of them, which were good and laudable, yet they were not of such holiness as he would make them, that is, to be taken as God's Laws, or to have remission of sins by observing them.

Cranmer's position on the doctrine of the Papacy seems to be clear enough in his own words. There is no need to elaborate upon them beyond this, that he did not regard the Pope as the vicar of Christ on earth, nor did Cranmer consider the Pope to have the authority in temporal or spiritual matters that he claimed for himself.

Having discussed a doctrinal view of Cranmer which had bearing on his political as well as his religious ac-

---

7. Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. I. p. 112 f.

tions, let us turn our attention to a doctrine in which his religious views are expressed and which will also to some degree of certainty show us the effect of the varying influences of other men upon Cranmer.

#### Cranmer's View on the Eucharist

Of the reformers Cranmer is the only one who did not take a firm and definite stand which he supported at all times and which he held until the end of his life. His enemies accuse him, and rightly so, of holding three different views in regard to the Eucharist.

This may seem odd but it can be explained, at least in part. He occupied the thankless position of being the mediator between the Roman, Lutheran and Swiss theologians. Since he was of a receptive nature and influenced quite easily by external factors we have in Cranmer almost a human barometer which indicates the influence of the various religious views and trends as they gained the upper hand in England.

England was a sort of "melting pot" for all these religious elements which were gradually combined to form the Anglican Church.

It seems that Cranmer never held a purely independent view on the Eucharist. He was influenced either by the Romanist, the Lutherans or the Reformed. At the end of his life he seems, however, to have held a rather definite

view. This view had a rather strong Reformed flavor but was actually a combination of the Catholic, Lutheran, and Swiss theologies.

As early as 1538 Cranmer took a definite stand against the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation. In that year he wrote to Cromwell:

AS concerning Adam Damplic of Calais, he utterly denieth that ever he taught or said that the very body and blood of Christ was not presently in the sacrament of the altar, and confesseth the same to be there really; but he saith that the controversy between him and the prior was because he confuted the opinion of transubstantiation, and therein I think he taught but the truth.<sup>8</sup>

Cranmer took a definite stand against the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation in 1538 and at this same time he was also far from adopting the Zwinglian position for the year previously, 1537, he wrote to a Zwinglian by the name of J. de Watt:

Unless I see stronger evidence brought forward than I have yet been able to see, I desire neither to be the patron nor the approver of the opinion maintained by you. And I am plainly convinced ... that the cause is not a good one.<sup>9</sup>

There can be little doubt that at this time Cranmer held the Lutheran position on the Real Presence. This doctrine, he thought, was proved by "evident and manifest passages of Scriptures and handed down to us by the Fathers

---

8. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 234.

9. Ibid.

themselves and men of apostolical character from the very beginning of the Church."<sup>10</sup>

Many of his biographers hold that Cranmer never held the Lutheran interpretations and in defense of their position point to a dialogue between Cranmer and Thomas Martin in which Martin accuses Cranmer of having taught three contrary doctrines of this sacrament and Cranmer answers that he did not hold three contrary doctrines but only two.<sup>11</sup>

The whole defense of Cranmer is quite ambiguous. Although he does state that he held two contrary views and it is possible that he did not maintain the Lutheran view on the Real Presence for any great length of time, he does not deny that he favored the Lutheran position. He was identified with the Lutheran cause because of his publication of the Catechism of Justus Jonas. In the eyes of the public, both before the Romanists and the Zwinglians he was considered a Lutheran. In 1547, Bullinger, Zwingli's successor was informed:

This Thomas has fallen into so heavy a slumber that we entertain but a very cold hope that he will be aroused even by your most learned letter. For lately he has not only approved the foul and sacrilegious transubstantiation of the Papists in the holy supper of our Savior, but all the dreams of Luther seem to him sufficiently well-grounded, perspicuous,

---

10. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 234

11. For a fuller account of this dialogue Cf. Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer, Vol. II, p. 438 f.

and lucid.<sup>12</sup>

We may assume that at least for a time between 1538 and 1548 Cranmer was inclined to favor the Lutheran view of the Eucharist. Another reason which will strengthen this position is his Eucharistic prayer written for the First Book of Common Prayer in 1549. Although it has a passage in it that is definitely Reformed in character it is still strongly Lutheran in tenor.<sup>13</sup>

Beginning with December 1548, Cranmer seems to lean toward the position of the Swiss theologians. He admitted later that this change had been forced upon him by Ridley.

In 1546, Doctor H. Ridley, the Bishop of London, brought to Cranmer's attention a treatise of Rabanus "in which he combated the opinions of Paschasius, who first asserted, in the ninth century, the doctrine of a change of the substance of the consecrated elements, or Transubstantiation, though that expression was not then invented."<sup>14</sup> The commonplace book of Cranmer shows that he studied this treatise quite extensively.

After Ridley had removed from Cranmer's mind the Catholic view of the Eucharist, Cranmer began also to waver with regard to the Lutheran view. In December 14-17, 1548

---

12. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 210.

13. For the text of this prayer Cf. Una Sancta, Vol. VII, No. 3, pp. 13-17.

14. Collette, Life of Cranmer, p. 281.

Cranmer made some public statements before Parliament which were looked upon as favoring the Reformed view. Soon after this Traheron, a member of Parliament, wrote that Cranmer and Ridley argued so well on behalf of the Zwinglian view that "truth never obtained a more brilliant victory. I perceive that it is all over with Lutheranism, now that those who were considered its principal and almost sole supporters have altogether come over to our side."<sup>15</sup>

This seems to be the almost universal opinion. The view was that from now on the Reformed position was to be the prevailing one. Peter Matyr wrote to Bucer:

The palm rests with our friends, but especially the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom they till now were wont to traduce as a man ignorant of theology, and as being conversant only with matters of government; but now, believe me, he has shown himself so mighty a theologian against them as they would rather not have proof of, and they are compelled, against their inclination, to acknowledge his learning and power and dexterity in debate. Transubstantiation, I think, is now exploded, and the difficulty respecting the presence is at this time the most prominent point of dispute; but the parties engaged with so much vehemence and energy as to occasion very great doubt as to the result; for the victory has hitherto been fluctuating between them."<sup>16</sup>

On December 28, 1547 Traheron again wrote to Bullinger: "You must know that Latimer has come over to our opinion respecting the true doctrine of the Eucharist together with

---

15. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 217.

16. loc. cit. p. 217 f.

the Archbishop of Canterbury and other bishops who heretofore seemed to be Lutherans."<sup>17</sup>

The Reformed view seemed to be in the ascendancy and it was to remain such for the rest of Cranmer's life. The best statement of his doctrine of the Eucharist is found in his "A Defence of the True and Catholic Doctrines of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Savior Christ". Strype says that this book is to be valued:

as being writ by him in his mature age, after all his great readings and studies, and most diligent and serious pursuals of all ecclesiastical writers; whereby he became thoroughly acquainted with their judgements and opinions in that doctrine. And in it are contained his last and ripest thoughts on that argument. This book displayeth the great weakness of that distinguishing doctrine of the church of Rome, that asserts transubstantiation. <sup>18</sup>

Since this is probably his best and completest statement of his doctrinal position on the Eucharist we will quote several lengthy excerpts from it.

But it is not the doctrine of Christ, but the subtle invention of Antichrist, first decreed by Innocent the Third, and after more at large set forth by school authors whose study was ever to defend and set abroad to the world all such matters as the Bishop of Rome had once decreed. And the Devil by his minister Antichrist, had so dazzled the eyes of a great multitude of Christian people in these latter days, that they sought not for their faith at the clear light of God's word, but at the Romish Antichrist, believing whatsoever he perscribed

---

17. loc. cit. p. 216 f.

18. Strype, Memorials, Vol. I, p. 567.

unto them, yea though it were against all reason, all senses, and God's most holy word also.<sup>19</sup>

For Christ teacheth, that we receive very bread and wine in the most blessed Supper of the Lord, as sacraments to admonish us that as we be fed with bread and wine bodily, so we be fed with the body and blood of our Savior Christ spiritually. (p. 310)

But the true Catholic faith grounded upon God's most infallible word teacheth us, that our Savior Christ (as concerning his man's nature and bodily presence) is gone up into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and there shall he tarry until the world's end, at what time he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead, as he saith himself in many scriptures: I forsake the world, saith he, and go to my Father. And in another place he saith: You shall ever have poor men among you, but me you shall not ever have. And again he saith, Many hereafter shall come and say, Look, here is Christ, or, Look, there he is, but believe them not. And St. Peter saith in the Acts, That heaven must receive Christ until the time that all things shall be restored. And St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, agreeth hereto, saying, Seek for things that be above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of the Father. And St. Paul, speaking of the very sacrament, saith: As often as you shall eat this bread and drink this cup, show forth the Lord's death until he come. "Till he come", saith St. Paul, signifying that he is not there corporally present. For what speech were this, or who useth of him that is already present to say, "Until he come"? For "Until he come" signifieth that he is not yet present. This is the catholic faith, which we learn from our youth in our common Creed and which Christ taught, the Apostles followed, and the Martyrs confirmed with their blood. (p. 311)

And although Christ in his human nature substantially, really, corporally, naturally and sensibly, be present with his Father in heaven, yet sacramentally he is present and spiritually he is here present. For in water, bread, and wine, he is present as in signs and sacraments, but he is indeed spiritually in the faithful Christian people, which according to Christ's ordinance be baptised, or receive the holy communion, or unfeignedly believe in him. Thus have you heard the second principal article, wherein the papists vary from the truth of God's Word and from the catholic faith. (p. 311)

---

19. The Remains of Thomas Cranmer, Vol. II, p. 309 f. All subsequent quotations in this chapter are taken from this book and will be indicated merely by the page number.

In which process shall be showed, that these sentences of Christ, this is my body, this is my blood, be figurative speeches. (p. 372)

Wherefore to all them that be any reasonable means will be satisfied, these things before rehearsed are sufficient to prove, that the eating of Christ's flesh and drinking of his blood, is not to be understood simply and plainly, as the words do properly signify, that we do not eat and drink him with our mouths; but it is a figurative speech spiritually to be understood, that we must deeply print and fruitfully believe in our hearts that his flesh was crucified and his blood shed, for our redemption. And this our belief in him, is to eat his flesh and to drink his blood, although they be not present with us, but he ascended into heaven. As our forefathers, before Christ's time, did likewise eat his flesh and drink his blood, which was so far from them, that he was not yet then born. (p. 381-382)

We have taken this doctrine as an indication of Cranmer's general doctrinal position. In it are most easily seen the various elements, Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed which influenced Cranmer to take his doctrinal position.

In his early youth he was probably Catholic. From the period 1538-1548, he favored the Lutheran position on doctrine, and after this, beginning with the influence of Doctor Ridley, he turned to a Reformed view of the Eucharist and other doctrines. He maintained this position until his death, only briefly retracting them in the hour of trial but at the stake returning firmly to his doctrinal stand.

## CHAPTER III

## The Influences upon Cranmer and His Reformation

## The Lutheran Influence

The first influence upon the Reformation came from Germany although Germany had not sent out any missionaries to spread the Lutheran doctrine. There were merely scattered individuals who sympathized with the monk of Wittenberg and read and spread his writings. For example, Luther's Theses on Indulgences were sent by Erasmus to his English friends John Colet and Thomas More a little more than four months after they had been composed and had spread over Europe. A number of volumes of Luther's works had been exported to England as early as February, 1519. "One of them fell into the hands of Henry VIII or his sister Mary, quondam Queen of France, as is shown by the royal arms stamped on it."<sup>1</sup>

The first contact with the Lutheran doctrine that Cranmer had was probably at the University of Cambridge. At this university especially, although there were such groups of students at several of the universities, a group of young men met regularly to discuss these new ideas. The men from Cambridge met at the White Horse Tavern quite regularly. They met to study Scripture in preference to the Sentences of the Fathers which formed

---

1. Preserved Smith, The Age of the Reformation, p. 281.

their regular university work and in addition studied the writings of Luther and also undertook little missionary enterprises such as visiting the sick in hospitals and the unfortunates in the prisons. This tavern in which they met, The White Horse Tavern, soon acquired the nickname "Germany" and the young enthusiasts were likewise nicknamed "Germans". It was probably in the White Horse Tavern near Cambridge that Cranmer was first introduced to the ideas of Luther and to Lutheran doctrine.

The government at an early time took its stand against this heresy. Many books had been translated from the German into English and people were reading them and discussing their contents. Burnet tells us:

If a man had spoken but a light word against any of the constitutions of the church, he was seized on by the bishop's officers; and if any taught their children the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles Creed, in the vulgar tongue, that was crime enough to bring them to the stake; as it did six men and a woman at Coventry, in the Passion week, 1519, being the fourth of April. Longland, bishop of Lincoln, was very cruel to all that were suspected of heresy in his diocese; several of them abjured, and some were burnt.<sup>2</sup>

This suppression on the part of the government was widespread. Luther's books were examined by a committee of the University of Cambridge, condemned and burned soon after by the government. On May 12, 1521, at St. Paul's in London "in the presence of many high dignitaries and a crowd of thirty thousand spectators, Luther's books were

---

2. Burnet, History of the Reformation, revised by Pocock, Vol. I, p. 68.

burnt and his doctrine 'reprobated' in addresses by John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and Cardinal Wolsey."<sup>3</sup>

But in spite of all these efforts of the government to suppress the "Lutheran heresy" it grew. The rapid diffusion of Lutheranism is proved from many interesting side points. John Heywood's The Four P's: a merry Interlude of a Palmer, a Pardoner, a Polycary and a Pedlar, which was written about 1528 but not published until some years later is full of Lutheran doctrine. John Skelton's Colyn Clout, a scathing indictment of the clergy, mentions that

"Some have smacke  
Of Luther's sake,  
And a brennyng sparke  
Of Luther's warke."<sup>4</sup>

At Easter, 1529, Lutheran books advocating the confiscation of ecclesiastical property and the reduction of the church to its state of apostolic simplicity began to circulate at court. Even Henry VIII, who had recently called Luther a "wolf of hell and a limb of Satan" and had written a book against him which gained for Henry the title of Defender of the Faith, pointedly praised Luther to Chapuis, the imperial ambassador, remarking "that though he had mixed heresy in his books that was not sufficient reason for reprovng and rejecting the many truths he had brought to light."<sup>5</sup>

---

3. Preserved Smith, The Age of the Reformation, p. 282.

4. op. cit., p. 283.

5. op. cit., p. 288.

In 1529 Cranmer also had come very definitely under the influence of the Lutherans. In that year, while in Germany at the request of his monarch, he met Osiander and married his niece which no doubt did much to cement his friendship with Osiander and the Germans in general.

We have so far seen how Lutheranism spread in England and the contacts that Cranmer had with it. The next and one of the best evidences of the Lutheran influence on the Reformation of Cranmer is in the confessional writings of the Church of England. The first of these is the Wittenberg Articles.

These articles came about through an attempted alliance with the Smalcaldic League. Cromwell had been striving for a long time to effect such an alliance but up to this time his efforts were in vain. But from December 1535 to April 1536, negotiations were in progress. Gardiner, the leader of the moderate party in England hoped that the alliance would be purely political, whereas the Lutherans were anxious for a preliminary agreement on doctrine. Foxe, who was in Germany at the time, made a speech to the assembled States in which he asked "that an embassy should be sent to England to come to an understanding on matters of religion, and that a conference should be held beforehand in Germany itself..."<sup>6</sup> The

---

6. Constant, The Reformation in England, p. 71.

Lutherans expressed their joy at this proposal and expressed it in their answer which consisted of thirteen articles, written at Melancthon, Christmas Day, 1535. They agreed to an immediate conference between the English ambassadors and the German theologians. This was held at Wittenberg. The English envoys reached this city on January first, 1536, and negotiations began. The result of this meeting was the Wittenberg Articles. If we compare these Articles with the Augsburg Confession and the Apologia of that Confession we can readily see that the Wittenberg Articles were drawn from these sources.

The English ambassadors accepted the Wittenberg Articles on the condition, which they thought would be easily obtainable, they they would be approved by the king. But despite the desire on the part of the king for an alliance he refused the Lutheran confession. This is the reason why the Wittenberg Articles have almost been forgotten. Nevertheless we may credit them with having given an impetus to further reform plans. An interesting sidelight is given by Jacobs on the reception by the Wittenberg theologians of the decree of the king. They saw at a glance that only the less important matters had been touched upon while the chief abuses had been retained. Melancthon wrote on the margin of this decree two very significant Greek words, οὐδὲν ὄγιόν , "nothing sound".<sup>7</sup>

---

7. Jacobs, The Lutheran Movement in England, p. 71.

The next confessional writing on the Anglican church is the Ten Articles of 1536, which also show a marked similarity to various Lutheran confessional writings. A comparison of them will show the extent of the Lutheran Influence at this time. The two books that they drew up in the main were the Augsburg Confession and the Apology. In Article III, "The Sacrement of Penance" we find the following passage of striking resemblance to the Augsburg Confession and the Apology.

Augsburg Conf. (Art. XII: L.)

"Such as have fallen after baptism may find remission of sins at what time they are converted."

Apology, (181: 28)

"We have ascribed to repentance these two parts viz., Contrition and faith. If any one desire to add a third, viz., fruits worthy of repentance, i.e., a change of the entire life and character for the better, we will not make any opposition." <sup>8</sup>

Augsburg Conf., (XII: 305)

"Repentance consisteth properly of these two parts: One is contrition, or terrors stricken into the conscience through the acknowledgement of sin; the other is faith, which is conceived by the gospel, or absolution, and doth believe that for Christ's sake sins be forgiven." <sup>9</sup>

Ten Articles.

"Such men which after baptism fall again into sin... shall without doubt attain remission of sins."

Ten Articles

"The Sacrament of perfect penance which Christ requireth, consisteth of three parts, that is to say, contrition, confession and amendment of the former life, and a new obedient reconciliation unto the laws and will of God, which be called in Scripture, the worthy fruits of penance." <sup>8</sup>

Ten Articles

"Contrition consisteth in two special parts, which must always be conjoined together, and cannot be dis-severed; that is to say the penitent and contrite man must first acknowledge the filthiness and abomination of his own sin ...; the second part, that is to wit, a certain faith, trust and con-

8. op. cit., p. 91

9. op. cit., p. 92

penitent must conceive certain hope and faith that God will forgive him his sins and repute him justified, and of the number of elect, not for the worthiness of any merit or work done by the penitent, but for the only merits of the blood and passion of our Savior Jesus Christ." 9

Apology, (181: 29.)

"Contrition is the true terror of conscience which feels that God is angry with sin."

"And this contrition occurs when sins are censured from the Word of God... When this is taught, it is the doctrine of the Law." 9

"Feeling and perceiving in his conscience that God is angry with him for the same." "Unto which knowledge he is brought by hearing and considering of the Will of God declared in His laws." 9

"In Article V, 'Of Justification,' Archbishop Laurence found the sentence by which he connected the Articles with Melanchthon's Loci." 10

Melanchthon's Loci

"Justification signifieth remission of sins and the reconciliation or acceptance of a person unto eternal life." (C.R. xxi; 412)

Apology, (109: 37)

"Since justification is reconciliation for Christ's sake, we are justified by faith, because it is very certain that by faith alone the remission of sins is received." Id. 114: 61: "We are justified before God by faith alone, because by faith alone we receive remission of sins and reconciliation." 11

Ten Articles

"Justification signifieth remission of sins, and our acceptance or reconciliation into the grace and favor of God." 11

9. op. cit., p. 92

10. op. cit., p. 94

11. op. cit., p. 94

"The correspondence in the definition of good works is especially marked:

Apology, (85: 8)

"The decalogue requires not only outward civil works, but also other things placed far above reason, viz., to truly fear God, to truly love God, to truly call upon God, to be truly convinced, that God hears." 12

Ten Articles

"God necessarily requireth of to do good works commanded by Him; and that, not only outward and civil works, but also the inward spiritual motions and graces of the Holy Ghost; that is to say, to dread and fear God, to love God, to have firm confidence and trust in God, to invoke and call upon God." 12

Thus we can see that in the formation of the Ten Articles the Lutheran Influence was definitely felt. Throughout these Articles use is made of the Lutheran Confessions, particularly the Augsburg Confession and the Apology.

The Ten Articles of 1536, however, like all compromises inspired no enthusiasm. Therefore we are not surprised to find that early in 1537 a commission, composed mostly of bishops, gathered at the house of Archbishop Cranmer for the purpose of preparing a book that would meet all the wants of the people at that time. The book they drew up is known as The Bishop's Book of 1537.

There is little doubt that while Cranmer was in Germany in 1531 and 1532 and especially while he was staying at Osiander's house, he became well acquainted with Luther's Catechisms and their vast influence.

In this Bishop's Book, not only the Augsburg Confession

and the Apology are used but also Luther's Large Catechism. Let us compare the explanation of the First Commandment as found in the Bishop's Book with Luther's explanation as found in his Large Catechism.

Luther's Large Catechism

"To have God is not to have him as we have other outward things, as clothes upon our back, or treasure in our chests; nor also to name him with our mouth, or to worship him with kneeling or other such gestures; but to have God is to conceive him in our hearts, to cleave fast and surely unto him with hearts, and to put all our trust and confidence in him, to set all our thought and care upon him, and to hand wholly on him, taking him to be infinitely good and merciful unto us." 13

The Bishop's Book

"For to have God, you can easily perceive, is not to lay hold of Him with our hands or to put Him in a bag (as money), or to lock Him a chest (as silver vessels). But to apprehend Him means when the heart lays hold of Him and clings to Him. But to cling to Him with the heart is nothing else than to trust in Him entirely, For this reason He wishes to turn us away from everything else that exists outside of Him, and to draw us to Himself, namely, because He is the only eternal good." 14

In 1538 a Lutheran delegation came over to England to continue the doctrinal discussions that had been started two years previously and resulted in the Ten Articles. The result of this meeting was the Thirteen Articles but they were of no importance except that they were used in the formation of the 42 Articles of 1553. With these Thirteen Articles the Lutheran influence terminated until the time of the First Prayer Book in 1549.

For approximately eleven years the Lutheran Influence in England was dormant but it shows itself again <sup>in</sup> the Book of Common Prayer which was introduced in the churches on Whitsunday, 1549. This book was mainly the work of Cranmer. Smith says That "doctrinally, it was a compromise between Romanism, Luther -

13. op.cit., p. 583. - 14. The Concordia Triglotta, p.583.

anism and Calvinism".<sup>15</sup> Many of the most beautiful portions of it are translations from the Roman Breviary. It also retained several medieval features such as "the mixed calice, the commemoration of the blessed Virgin, prayers for the dead and reservation for the sick."<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless the Lutheran Influence upon the Book of Common Prayer of 1549 are quite marked. In fact, "there are so many evidences of Lutheran influences in the work that some scholars regard this first book as a Lutheran Liturgy."<sup>17</sup> In this first Book of Common Prayer Cranmer followed the suggestion of Luther and also the use of the early church in appointing an entire Psalm for the Introit for each Sunday and festival. The use of this Prayer Book was enforced by the First Act of Uniformity.

In 1552 the Second Book of Common Prayer was approved by Parliament on April 14. This was a revision of the First Prayer Book of 1549, which had proved to be too Lutheran. There was little left of the mass and nothing of confession or anointing of the sick. Although it contained some Roman and Calvinistic elements. "in the main it was Lutheran. Justification by faith was asserted; only two sacraments were retained."<sup>18</sup> The Real Presence in the Lutheran sense was retained and it also stated that "by Christ's ordinance the sacrament is not reserved, carried about,

---

15. Preserved Smith, The Age of the Reformation, p. 312

16. Reed, The Lutheran Liturgy, p. 133

17. *ibid.*

18. Preserved Smith, The Age of the Reformation, p. 313

lifted up, or worshiped." 19

In this Book we can see the beginning of the Calvinistic or Reformed influences which were to crowd out the Lutheran influence. In the first Book of Common Prayer Cranmer included the Prayer for the Church. "In the second Book of 1552, however, this Prayer was considerably altered, in deference to Bucer's criticism." 20 Also at this time the "vestments approved in 1549 were forbidden (alb, chasuble, cope), and priests were permitted only surplices and bishops rochets." 21

Even though this book was the widest swing from the conservative and historical positions it did not satisfy the extreme Protestant group and definitely offended the conservatives. This Book had a brief life of eight months.

In 1529 Luther revised the Litany of All Saints. "Cranmer leaned heavily upon Luther in the preparation of his Litany in 1544." 22

The relation of Cranmer's work to Luther's becomes manifest when we examine the manner in which the Reformed Anglican Litany attained its present form. In 1535 already, a translation of the chief parts of the service, as a private attempt at its reformation, known as Marshall's Primer, was published. It retains in the Litany, the intercession of saints, With these omitted, it will be seen at a glance how closely it corresponds to Luther's Latin Litany. 23

Luther, 1529

Marshall, 1535

Kyrie Eleison.  
Christe, Eleison.  
Kyrie, Eleison.

Lord, have merch upon us  
Christ, have mercy upon us.  
Lord, have mercy upon us.

19. ibid

20. Reed, The Lutheran Liturgy, p.328

21. Reed, The Lutheran Liturgy, p.135

22

23

Christe, Eleison,  
Pater de coelis Deus,  
Fili redemptor mundi,  
Deus,  
Spirite sancte Deus,  
Miserere nobis.

Propitius esto.  
Parce nobism Domine.  
Propitius esto.  
Libera nos, Domine.  
Ab omni peccato,  
Ab omni errore,  
Ab omni malo,  
Ab insidiis diaboli,

A subitanea et improvisa  
morte,  
A peste et fame,  
A bello et caede,  
A fulfure at tempestatibus,

A morte perpetua;  
Per mysterium sanctae  
incarnationis tuae  
per sanctam nativitatem tuam,  
Per baptismum, jejunium et  
tentationes tuas,  
Per agoniam et sudorem  
tuum sanguineum,  
Per crucem et passionem  
tuam,  
Per mortem et sepulturam tuam,  
Per resurrectionem et  
ascensionem tuam,  
Per adventum Spiritus  
Sancti, Paraleti;  
In omni tempore tribulationis  
nostrae,  
In omni tempore  
Felicitaais nostrae,  
In hora mortis,  
In die judicii  
Libera, nos, Domine.

God the Father of the heavens,  
have mercy upon us.  
God the Redeemer of this world,  
have mercy upon us.  
God the Holy Ghost, have mercy  
upon us.  
The Holy Trinity in one God-  
head have mercy upon us.  
Be merciful to us,  
And spare us, Lord.  
Be merciful to,  
And deliver us, Lord.  
From all sin,  
From all error,  
From all evil,  
From all crafty trains of  
the evil,  
From the eminent peril of sin,  
From the possession of devils,  
From the spirit of fornication,  
From the desire of vain glory,  
From the uncleanness of mind  
and body,  
From unclean thoughts,  
From the blindness of the  
heart,  
From sudden and unprovided  
death,  
From pestilence and famine,  
From all mortal war,  
From lightning and tempestuous  
weathers,  
From seditions and schisms,  
From everlasting death;  
By the privy mystery of thy  
holy incarnation.  
By thy holy nativity,  
By thy baptism, fastings, and  
temptations.  
By bhy painful agony in  
sweating blood and water,  
By thy pains and passions on  
thy cross,  
By thy death and burying,  
By thy ressurection and  
ascension,  
By the coming of the Holy Ghost;  
In the time of tribulations,  
In the time of our felicity,  
In the hour of death,  
In the day of judgement;  
Deliver us, Lord

Peccatores  
Te rogamus, audi nos;  
Ut conctos Episcopos,  
Pastores et Ministros  
ecclesiae in sano verbo et  
sancta vita sequare digneris; 24  
Vers. Domine, non, secundum  
peccata nostra facias  
nobis.

Ans. Neque secundum  
iniquitates nostras,  
retribuas nobis.

Deus misericors Pater, qui  
contritorum non despicias  
gemitum, et moerentium  
non spernis affectum,  
adesto precibus nostris  
quas in afflictionibus,  
quae jugiter nos premunt,  
coram te effundimus, easque  
clementer exaudi, etc.

Vers. Peccavimus Domine  
cum Patribus nostris

Ans. Injuste egimus,  
iniquitatem fecimus.

Deus, qui delinquentes  
perire non pateris,  
donec convertantur et  
vivant, debitam, quaesu-  
mus, peccatis nostris  
suspende vindictam, et  
praesta propitius, ne  
desimultio cumulet  
ultionem, sed tua pro  
peccatis nostris  
misericordia semper  
abundet.

Luther adds three collects:

"Omnipotens aeterne Deus,  
cujus Spiritu;" "Omni-  
potens Deus, qui nos in  
tantis periculis constituit;"  
and "Parce, Domine, parce  
peccatis." 25

We sinners,  
Pray thee to hear us, Lord.  
That it may please thee, Lord,  
to govern and lead thy Holy  
Catholic Church; 24

O Lord, hear thou my prayer

That my calling may come  
unto thee.

O Omnipotent and merciful God,  
the Father eternal, which dost  
not despise us sinners, bewailing  
with contrite heart for offend-  
ing the high majesty, we pray  
thee, by thy holy grace and  
mercy,  
by the holy grace and mercy to  
draw us near to thee, to hear  
our prayers, to forgive our  
offences, and to comfort us in  
our afflictions etc.

We have sinned with our fore  
fathers.

Iniquity have we wrought with  
unjust living.

Lord, God, which dost not  
suffer sinners to perish and die  
in their works, but rather wilt  
that they shall convert and live,  
we humbly pray thee to forgive  
us now, while we have time  
and space, And give us grace  
that we do not abound in sin,  
nor in iniquity, no more, lest  
Thou, Lord, be wroth with us,  
etc.

Marshall adds one collect:

"O most high and mighty Lord  
God and King of peace," etc.  
for the King and counsellors  
etc., 25

24. op. cit. p. 234 f.  
25. op. cit.

No one can deny that Cranmer's liturgical reformation can be traced to the Lutheran Church.

So far we have seen the Lutheran influence upon Cranmer's Reformation. It cannot be doubted that these influences played an important part in his Reformation. We will now, for the sake of completeness, mention some of the other influences upon Cranmer.

#### The Swiss Influence

When Lutheranism began to weaken in England the Swiss element became strong. After the Lutherans had prepared the way for reform it was not difficult for the Swiss to gain a foothold.

Of the Swiss theologians, Zwingli himself, was never in direct contact with the English Reformation. His successor Bullinger and later Calvin were the ones who helped to bring the Reformed influence to England. The publications of Bullinger, Zwingli, and Calvin appeared in England side by side with the translations of the writings of the Lutherans.

Since England could not turn to Germany for spiritual aid, she, therefore, turned to the Reformed theologians. There was an exchange of letters between Cranmer and Calvin, Bullinger and others. In reply to these requests for foreign theologians Peter Martyr, Ochino, Tremellus, Drylander and John A Lasco came to England. Because of the Interim in Germany, Fagius and Bucer also decided to go to England in 1548. Melancthon had received several invita-

tions, but on account of the great need of the Saxon Lutherans, he refused to leave Germany.

### Peter Martyr

By birth Martyr was an Italian. He had come to England in 1547 and was appointed regius professor of divinity at Oxford. Martyr was at first inclined favorably toward the Lutheran position but as he got older his opposition to Lutheranism increased. In 1561 in negotiations with the King of Navarre, at the Colloquy of Paissy

when he was asked his judgement concerning the Augsburg Confession, he answered that the Word of God seems to us sufficient, as it clearly contains all things which pertain to salvation. For even if that Confession be received, reconciliation with the Romanists will not follow since they prescribe it as heretical. <sup>26</sup>

Martyr's influence must have been felt in the Reformation because he "was the spiritual father of Bishop Jewel, whose 'Apology' is almost a symbol in the Anglican church." <sup>27</sup>

He was driven from England on the accession of Mary to the throne ending his life as a Professor at Zurich.

### Bucer, Martin

Bucer considered himself the mediator between Lutheranism and Zwinglianism. In 1536 he came to an

---

26. op. cit. p. 210

27. op. cit. p. 210

understanding with Luther and Melanchthon in the Wittenberg Concord. He did, however, reserve the nature of the communion of the unworthy as a point unsettled in his mind. Later in life he seems to have given himself over entirely to Calvinism. In his "Sententious Sayings of Master Martin Bucer upon the Lbrd's Supper", written in 1550 while he was a professor at Oxford, he says "There is no presence of Christ in the Supper, but only the lawful use thereof, and such is obtained and gotten by faith only". Again he writes: "I define or determine Christ's presence, howsoever we perceive it, either by the sacraments or by word of the Gospel, to be only the attaining and perceiving of the commodities we have by Christ, both God and man, which is our Head reigning in heaven, dwelling and living in us, which presence we have by no worldly means, but we have it by faith." 28

His influence upon Cranmer and his Reformation has been previously shown in connection with our discussion of the Second Book of Common Prayer in which Prayer for the Church was changed at his request.

#### The Reformed Theologians.

The remaining important theologians who came over to England from the Continent were representatives of the Reformed view. It was this element that finally triumphed in their influence upon the church of England.

In the First Book of Common Prayer we can see the Lutheran influence and in the Second Book of Common Prayer

---

28. op. cit. p. 211.

We see the Reformed influence at work. Such men as Bucer, Martyr and Ridley all exerted their Reformed influence on this Book which became one of the confessional standards of the Anglican Church. Pollard has the following to say about the changes that were made from the First Book of Common Prayer: "The changes affected between 1549 and 1552 were designed to facilitate an accommodation with the Reformed Church abroad..." 29

Cranmer had asked the Reformed theologians for their aid and advice and he was therefore not only influenced by them, but obliged to adopt their views. Collette tells us concerning Cranmer's final views: "the best and most certain proofs, however, of the Primate's perfect renunciation, at this date, both of the Romish and Lutheran tenets connected with the Sacrament of the 'Lord's Supper', is the gift of his crowning work to the English Church on the completed Book of Common Prayer." 30

Thus we see that the Reformed finally triumphed over the Lutherans and gave the Church of England a Reformed character which exists even to this day.

Possibly another reason why the Reformed triumphed over the Lutherans lies in the moral conditions of the day. England had a low moral standard and the low morals of the Catholic clergy were notorious. To a group of people trying to reform not only the theology of the church but also the people the Reformed theology with its legalistic ap-

---

29. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer, p. 274

30. Collette, The Life, Times, and Writings of Thomas Cranmer, p. 282.

proach would appeal more than the Lutheran approach which seeks to change the heart. The Reformed approach to these problems would perhaps seem to be a more rapid and logical method of procedure. Hence those in charge of the Reformation would tend strongly to favor the Reformed view both with regard to doctrine and practice.

## CHAPTER IV

### Historical and Theological Summary of Cranmer's Reformation.

Probably the best way of indicating the historical and theological progress of Cranmer's Reformation would be to give a brief review of the various confessions and liturgical writings of the Reformation again using as our point of departure the view taken on the Eucharist.

#### The Wittenberg Articles:

The first confession resulted from the combined efforts of the English and Lutheran theologians in 1536. This was really a variation of the Augsburg Confession. Concession was made to favor the English as far as possible without changing any of the Lutheran doctrines.

#### The Ten Articles:

Neither party was very enthusiastic about the Wittenberg Articles. In the same year the English, on the basis of these Wittenberg Articles, drew up a confession known as the Ten Articles. At this time Cranmer had abandoned completely the Roman doctrine of transubstantiation and still believed in the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence. But these Ten Articles, like the Wittenberg Articles accomplished very little.

#### The Bishop's Book:

In 1537 several English theologians representing Catholic and Lutheran views met in Cranmer's home to produce what is now known as the Bishop's Book. This Book constitutes the climax of the Lutheran Influence during the reign of Henry VIII. The Bishop's Book is from the Ten Articles, the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechisms.

#### The Thirteen Articles:

In 1538 a Lutheran delegation was sent to England to continue the doctrinal discussions that had been begun two years before. The result of this meeting was the Thirteen Articles. They are of little importance aside from the fact that they were used in the formation of the 42 Articles of 1553. These Thirteen Articles terminated the Lutheran Influence in England until the time of the First Book of Common Prayer in 1549.

#### The Six Articles:

In 1539 this anti-Reformation confession was introduced by the English Catholics and sanctioned by Henry. For the time being all reformation activities ceased.

#### The King's Book:

This Book appeared in 1543. In distinction to the Bishop's Book of 1537 this Book was sanctioned by the King.

The treatise on the Sacrament of the Altar is more elaborate than that in the Bishop's Book. In the same year Cranmer issued a pastoral letter requesting the clergy to avoid discussing such doctrines as had previously been debated for an entire year. This request served merely to increase the confusion and indifference.

#### The Book of Homilies:

Cranmer issued his first Book of Homilies in 1546 but did not even mention the Sacrament of the Altar.

#### The Communion Service:

In March, 1548, a new order of the Communion Service was published, but the interpretation of the Sacrament of the Altar remained an open question.

#### The First Book of Common Prayer:

Again the Lutheran Influence shows up in this First Book of Common Prayer published in 1549. While this Book is a compromise between the Roman, Lutheran and Reformed views, the Lutheran Influences are very marked. The use of this Prayer Book was enforced by the First Act of Uniformity.

#### The Second Book of Common Prayer:

In this Book we can see the beginnings of the Reformed Influences. While the Second Book of Common Prayer, issued in 1552, still remains Lutheran in tenor, a special

effort was made to avoid a direct Lutheran interpretation. The words of distribution, for example, show a Reformed spirit.

#### The 42 Articles:

In 1552 Ridley and Cranmer published the 42 Articles. In drawing up these Articles use was made of the Thirteen Articles of 1538 and the Wittenberg Articles of 1536. These Articles were first outlined in 1551, circulated among the clergy, enlarged and revised, and finally published publicly in 1553. At that time they were known as the 42 Articles of 1552 because they had been privately published in that year.<sup>1</sup>

#### The 39 Articles

In 1562 after more revision and some changes the 42 Articles were issued as the 39 Articles. They were sanctioned by Parliament in 1571. The clergy, henceforth, were obligated to subscribe to and adopt them. That these 39 Articles are of Lutheran origin cannot be denied.<sup>2</sup> Yet these Articles are so elastic and ambiguous that those favoring the Reformed view could easily sign them.

The English divines framed an Article which, as long experience has shown, can be signed by men who hold

- 
1. Cf. Jacobs, The Lutheran Movement in England  
p. 240
  2. loc. cit. p. 340 sqq.

different opinions; but a charge of deliberate ambiguity could not fairly be brought against the Anglican fathers. In the light of the then current controversy we may indeed see some desire to give no needless offense to Lutherans, and apparently the Queen suppressed until 1571 a phrase which would certainly have repelled them, but, even when this phrase was omitted, Beza would have approved the formula, and it would have given greater satisfaction at Geneva and Heidelberg than at Jena or Tubingen. <sup>3</sup>

Thus it can be seen that while the 39 Articles are of Lutheran origin, the Reformed could and did adopt them as their confession of faith, which has remained the chief confession of the Anglican church even until today.

Such was the pattern taken by the Reformation of Cranmer. While the Lutheran theology played a large part in influencing his Reformation the final victory goes to the Reformed who succeeded in establishing their views, particularly on the Eucharist, in the Church of England which has retained its Reformed character even down to the present days.

---

3. The Cambridge Modern History, Vol. II, p. 588 f.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- The Cambridge Modern History, Vol. II, The Reformation, Cambridge, at the University Press, 1903.
- The Encyclopaedia, 14th ed., Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc., New York & Chicago.
- Triglot Concordia, The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Missouri, Concordia Publishing House, 1921.
- Anonymous, "The Eucharistic Prayer", Una Sancta, Vol. VIII, No. 3, (Passiontide, 1947).
- Burnet, Gilbert, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England, revised by Pocock, Vol. I Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, MDCCCLXV.
- Collette, Charles Hastings, The Life, Times, and Writings of Thomas Cranmer, D.D., London, George Redway, York Street, Covent Garden, 1887.
- Constant, G., The Reformation in England, Vol. I The English Schism, Henry VIII (1509-1547), New York, Sheed and Ward Inc., 1935.
- Gairdner, James, A History of the English Church in the Sixteenth Century from Henry VIII to Mary, London, Macmillan and Company, Limited, 1903.
- Innes, Arthur D., Cranmer and the Reformation in England, Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark, 1900.
- Jacobs, Henry Eyster, The Lutheran Movement in England, Philadelphia, General Council Publishing House, 1908.
- Jenkyne, The Rev. Henry, The Remains of Thomas Cranmer, DD., Archbishop of Canterbury, Oxford, at the University Press, 1838.
- Le Bas, Charles W., Life of Archbishop Cranmer, New York, J. & J. Harper, 1833.
- Pollard, Albert Frederick, Thomas Cranmer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556, New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904.
- Reed, Luther D., The Lutheran Liturgy, A Study of the Common Service of the Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia, Muhlenberg Press, 1947.

Smith, Preserved, Age of the Reformation, New York,  
Henry Holt, 1920.

Strype, John, Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God,  
Thomas Cranmer, a new edition with additions, Oxford,  
at the University Press, MDCCXL.

Styron, Arthur, The Three Pelicans, New York, Harrison Smith  
& Robert Haas, 1932

Todd, The Rev. Henry John, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer,  
Printed for C. J. G. & F. Rivington, St. Paul's  
Churchyard and Waterloo-Place, Pall Mall, 1831.