

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Bachelor of Divinity

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

6-1-1958

The Influence of Thomas Cranmer on Henry VIII and Through Him on the English Reformation

John Edward Golisch

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_golischj@csl.edu

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



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

Recommended Citation

Golisch, John Edward, "The Influence of Thomas Cranmer on Henry VIII and Through Him on the English Reformation" (1958). *Bachelor of Divinity*. 578.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/bdiv/578>

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.

SHORT TITLE

INFLUENCE OF CRAMER ON HENRY VIII

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia University, St. Louis,
Department of Historical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Divinity

By
The Rev. Edward William Gifford

June 1877

Approved by
Edw. W. Gifford
Edw. W. Gifford

THE INFLUENCE OF THOMAS CRANMER ON HENRY VIII
AND THROUGH HIM ON THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Historical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

John Edward William Golisch

June 1958

Approved by:

Carl S. Meyer
Advisor

Richard P. Cameron
Reader

CHAPTER I
TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. THE PERSON AND CHARACTER OF HENRY VIII	6
III. THE HIGH REGARD OF HENRY VIII FOR THOMAS CRAMER	13
IV. THE PERSON AND CHARACTER OF THOMAS CRAMER	17
V. CRAMER'S ALLEGED ERASTIANISM	35
VI. CRAMER'S ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS WITH KING HENRY VIII.	38
The Bible	42
The Ten Articles	46
The Bishops' Book	50
The Thirteen Articles	54
The King's Book	55
The Six Articles	58
Miscellaneous Accomplishments	61
VII. SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS.	68
Problems for Further Study Arising out of this Study.	72
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	73

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem this paper seeks to answer is: What influence did Archbishop Cranmer--particularly the personal character of Cranmer--have on King Henry VIII and through him on the English Reformation? From grammar school and high school history classes a certain curiosity had been aroused in the author. Some day he would like to know the personal character and the story behind Thomas Cranmer. The aged archbishop was prelate during the stormy years of Henry's reign. He was a leader in the Reformation. Then he denied all he had been living and fighting to accomplish during Mary's persecutions (and persecutions fire the imagination of a young boy--they spark speculation as to what he would have done had he been the one). And yet he was allowed by a gracious Lord to bear a sincere, simple, honestly penitent, and (in all this) eloquent witness to his life's Lord and His work he had been permitted to champion. What kind of man was this? A little investigation in preparation for a problem study in this area for Dr. Carl S. Meyer's history course raised the question of how Cranmer and Henry VIII could get along together at all, much less work together and enjoy the friendship and mutual respect and trust they so evidently did. Out of this grew a problem study investigation of considerable proportions on the personal characters of the two men, their mutual evaluation of one another, and something of the nature and amount of influence that Cranmer had on the Reformation through Henry, particularly because of Cranmer's personal character in relationship to that of Henry VIII. A desire was expressed by the author to investigate

further sometime: Direction on where further research might prove profitable was given by the professor. Action upon the suggestions produced this bachelor's thesis with expanded research throughout and greatly expanded chapters on the nature of Crommer's character, particularly on instances and validation of Crommer's accomplishments with Henry VIII in a material way--insofar as these could be found, proved, or conjectured on some evidence.

The amount of effect an interplay of personalities has may be very hard to measure and prove, especially when many other factors are involved, as in the case of Henry VIII. But having gone into the study with much more of an analytical curiosity than any noticeable bias, the author found a general feeling developing in regard to the relationship under study as he grew in knowledge about the whole topic in general. He emerged feeling he had met and talked with, even lived with, the Archbishop somewhat during this period under Henry VIII. He grew to like and respect this great man who was at once sinner, scholar, Christian, witness. He'd like to get better acquainted sometime with the man in other settings and acts in his life. He hopes the study here presented has not suffered from the prejudice now acquired, but may perhaps be more near to the real truth of the matter in its sympathies.

A sampling of general and specific, secular and church, Protestant and Roman, primary source, early and contemporary histories was consulted by the author. A Parker Society volume of Crommer's Works, Strype, Burnet, Pollard, Hughes, Hardwick, Bromley and Rupp provided the major portion of the data actually used in the text of the study. Bromley's book and article were outstandingly helpful and pointed for this study. His works almost completely represent the conclusions the author of this paper had

come to from his study of most of the other works by the time Bromley's (and Rupp's, too) works came to his attention. One is tempted merely to point to Bromley for the answer to the question posed for this study. But Rupp, Strype, Burnet, Pollard, Hughes and the others each have their own peculiar shadings and colorings to add to the total picture, though the outlines remain the same. They, too, were eminently worth consulting and using.

What influence did the personal character of Archbishop Thomas Cranmer have on Henry VIII and through him on the whole progress of the English Reformation?

Church historian Latourrette states:

What course the Reformation would have taken in England had it not been for Henry VIII we cannot know. It was that monarch who broke with Rome, set the Church of England on its independent course, and helped to give it some of its distinctive features.¹

What influence, if indeed any, did Cranmer have in the reformatory accomplishments of Henry his king?

Some historians have inferred that Cranmer's character was weak, vacillating, and an impediment to the real progress of the Reformation in England.

¹Kenneth Scott Latourrette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper & Brothers, c.1953), p. 799. Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), I, 193, says: "The king's proceedings": the Reformation in England was just that; and that the 'proceedings' were indeed the king's was what gave the revolution life, and ensured it success. He was not the only intelligence active in the design; Henry VIII did not create those factors in the national life, those elements in the mentality of the Englishmen who were his most important subjects, to which, so largely, its success was due; but it was the king who initiated all, who first willed that there should be changes, decided what these should be, and where they should begin; it was he who chose Thomas Cromwell, the planner of destiny; and if Henry gave Cromwell

Many others point to Cranmer's writings and what he accomplished under Edward VI and in his martyrdom as noteworthy, but refer to his influence upon Henry as only mildly positive.

Others say that Cranmer had a very salutary, but by no means earth-shaking, influence on Henry VIII, and among the main advantages was that a man of his position and caliber retained his high office through the various "purgings" of Henry's reign and was in a position to wield his influence and office for the Reformation under Edward VI.

And at least one other historian intimates that only a man of Cranmer's character and ability could have accomplished nearly as much as he did with the person of King Henry VIII.²

Hutchinson says: "The English Reformation ought almost to be called the Cambridge Movement."³ To what extent is Cranmer included if this is true? Would Latourette's statement about Cranmer classify him as on the periphery? "Studious, learned, modest, dignified, courteous, deeply

his head, he supervised, nevertheless and sanctioned every detail of the plan as it went into execution; it was the fact that these 'proceedings' were indeed the king's that secured them, in the most delicate moment of all--the moment when they were first proposed--from any immediate show of hostility in the nation; the theme of loyalty to the king as--in these 'proceedings'--the protector of the realm from the destruction to which the pope was dooming it, was the very heart of the first Reformation propaganda; and it was only because the leader of the revolution was actually the king--and king at that particular moment of English history--that, amid a thousand hidden dangers, the revolution was brought to success."

²G. W. Bromley, "Cranmer's Message to Our Times," Christianity Today, (November 12, 1956), p. 19. Cf. also Albert F. Pollard, Thomas Cranmer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, c.1904), pp. 225ff.

³F. E. Hutchinson, Cranmer and the English Reformation. Teach Yourself History Library, edited by A. L. Rowse (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 14. E. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of the English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII) (Cambridge: The University Press, 1947) quotes in a footnote from Bass Mullinger, History of the University of Cambridge, p. 101: "The first edition of the English Prayer Book was almost exclusively the work of Cambridge Divines: of its thirteen compilers all but one was a Cambridge Man."

religious, by nature conservative, he [perhaps]⁴ did not become a member of the group led by Bilney."⁵ Or do his accomplishments with Henry VIII and the whole movement merit him one of the lead roles? He was from Cambridge. Is it true that he displayed what H. M. Smith calls an "English talent for compromise" and the "English contempt for consistency"⁶ and thus succeeded in attaining his ends with Henry VIII? Or was just such a procedure the reason he did not accomplish much? Did he in actuality display these "qualities" in his character? What did he accomplish with Henry VIII and why? The attempt to answer this question, for it is all one question, shall follow this order: a summary of the character and theological acumen of Henry VIII; a consideration of the high personal regard he had for Cranmer; a study of Cranmer's character in detail; a particular concentration on Cranmer's alleged Erastianism and regard for Henry; an attempt to ascertain what Cranmer's actual accomplishments with Henry were; and an attempt to summarize why Cranmer accomplished as much as he did with Henry.

⁴Certainly he was not prominent in it; though just as certainly he had opportunity to take a quiet part in it. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 241, says: "At Cambridge [Cranmer] had been one of those who frequented the secret gatherings at the White Horse Inn."

⁵Latourette, *op. cit.*, p. 801.

⁶H. Maynard Smith, Henry VIII and the Reformation (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1948), p. 140.

CHAPTER II

THE PERSON AND CHARACTER OF HENRY VIII

Since Henry VIII was regarded as both hero and villain,¹ a brief review is in order, first of his personal traits and then of his theological bent and ability, for these are of the essence of this study together with Crommer's character and their reciprocal effects.

"Handsome, athletic, able, well educated, musical, having more than a cursory knowledge of theology, masterful, he was not quite eighteen when (1509) his father's death made him king."² "Henry was from the first determined always to have his own way."³ Wolsey described him as self-willed and stubborn.⁴ Lingard calls Henry "fickle in his friendship."⁵

¹Albert F. Pollard, Henry VIII (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), p. vi: "As with his policy, so with his character. There was nothing commonplace about him; his good and his bad qualities alike were exceptional. It is easy, by suppressing the one or the other to paint him a hero or a villain." Cf. Gilbert Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England. Part I: Of the Progress Made in It During the Reign of Henry VIII (New York: D. Appleton and Co.; and Philadelphia: George S. Appleton, 1843), p. xi f. Burnet inimitably summarizes Henry's faults and then compares him to others used by God who were both great and wicked.

²Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper & Brothers, c.1953), p. 799.

³H. Maynard Smith, Henry VIII and the Reformation (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1948), p. 227.

⁴F. E. Hutchinson, Crommer and the English Reformation. Teach Yourself History Library edited by A. L. Rouse (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 20.

⁵John Lingard, The History of England from the First Invasions by the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688 (Sixth edition; New York and Montreal: D. & J. Sadlier & Company, 1879), V, 107.

H. N. Smith is particularly helpful on this whole subject.⁶ He says:

"Henry was a complete egoist . . . a remarkable casuist . . . always prepared to justify his conduct. It was because of his surrender to momentary impulses that no one could calculate on what would happen next."⁷

Henry was above all an opportunist. A dangerous twin characteristic, his temper, could become devastating on the slightest provocation. Even Cromer came near Henry's wrath sometimes according to Burnet.⁸

There were those in England who protested or refused to acknowledge the royal supremacy over the Church and paid for their temerity with their lives. . . . These executions, especially of Fisher and More, sent a thrill of horror through Western Europe, but Henry was not to be deterred from making himself autocrat in both Church and state. . . . To a degree which would have been the envy and admiration of even his strongest predecessors, he had made himself master of both state and church.⁹

Henry's was a program of schism without heresy,¹⁰ and he was able to make

⁶ Smith, *op. cit.*, *passim*, but especially chapter XIII, entitled "Henry VIII: A Review of His Life," pp. 226ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

⁸ Burnet, *op. cit.*, pp. xxxviii. Burnet's summary opinion of Henry on p. 582 is somewhat quaint and very interesting.

⁹ Latourette, *op. cit.*, p. 802. Henry Gee and William John Hardy, Documents Illustrative of English Church History Compiled From Original Sources (London: Macmillan & Co., Limited, 1921), pp. 176-8. "We . . . do offer and promise"--give power and submission to Henry because of his being something special--not a recognizing of it as an inherent right of the crown. In this "Submission of the Clergy, A.D. 1532" they praised Henry for "your most excellent wisdom, your princely goodness and fervent zeal to the promotion of God's honour and Christian religion, and also in your learning, for excelling, in our judgment, the learning of all other kings and priests that we have read of." On the other hand on p. 187 in "The Restraint of Appeals"--it was argued that history supported this legally for the crown.

¹⁰ Roland H. Bainton, The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1956), p. 189, opines: "Henry well calculated that he would meet with no serious popular opposition so long as he toppled merely the papal tiara and not the Holy Trinity or the established dogmas." And on p. 190 he states: "Henry set to work by a tactic . . . of spacing shocks and launching the second only after the first had been absorbed."

himself "Pope"¹¹ in England with powers no Pope ever possessed."¹² And yet, "Autocrat though he was, Henry was careful not to move until he was fairly confident of carrying the bulk of public opinion with him. Much of his strength lay in his popularity with the majority of his subjects and in his ability to sense the temper of the nation."¹³

As to the theological side of Henry's character: "Henry VIII was fully persuaded of his divine right, and that anyone who did not admit it was not only a traitor to himself, but to the God whose vicar he was. . . .

[And] he could confront his opponents with a formidable case."¹⁴

He was himself no mean theologian. He had read and discussed Aquinas with Wolsey; he had talked of religion and reform with More. As a man of the New Learning he had a contempt for superstitions, but he had too clear an apprehension of an articulated and co-ordinated creed to be tolerant of the aberrations of a popular Protestantism. He was proud of his

¹¹Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), I, 72, says: "Of the 15 prelates, bishops of English sees, who, in 1517, were resident in England, all but 5 had come to the episcopate through service to the king, 3 specifically through service as 'civilians'--the technical term for the trained professionals of the Roman Law; 3 of the bishops, indeed, were doctors of this law, of Oxford, of Cambridge, of Paris or of Bologna."

¹²Pollard, op. cit., p. 325, continues: "with limitations, of course. Henry's was only a potestas jurisdictionis not a potestas ordinis. . . . Crammer acknowledged in the King also a potestatem ordinis, just as Cromwell would have made him the sole legislator in temporal affairs; Henry's unrivalled capacity for judging what he could and could not do saved him from adopting either suggestion."

¹³Latourette, op. cit., pp. 802-3.

¹⁴Smith, op. cit., p. 128. James Gairdner, "Henry VIII," The Dictionary of National Biography edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (London: Oxford University Press, 1949-50), IX, 527-545, p. 534, elaborates: "As an author Henry was by no means contemptible. . . . We have the testimony of Erasmus to his own facility in Latin composition; and it is quite certain that in the numerous letters, manifestos, and treatises, both Latin and English, put forth in his name during his reign, his own hand is very often traceable. His skill in theological subtleties. . . ."

orthodoxy, and of his gift for exposition. No one else could roll out such sonorous sentences for the confutation of a heretic or the condemnation of a sinner. He had an intelligent appreciation of Protestant theology and had collected a considerable Lutheran library. Intellectually, he had a great respect for a scholar like Melancthon, and took a keen interest in the conferences of his own divines with those of Germany. He was ready and able to address the German scholars who came here on disputed points, but quite unwilling to make any concessions. He had no intention of accepting a religion from Germany or of reconstituting the Church on a Lutheran model.¹⁵ He was too fully convinced of his own self-sufficiency to contemplate the possibility that he might need outside help.¹⁶

Dubbs reports that Henry VIII was educated for the priesthood¹⁷ and was theologically apt.¹⁸ Rupp calls him "that modern figure, the eminent layman who fancies himself as a theologian."¹⁹ That Henry felt himself

¹⁵E. C. Rupp, Studies in the Making of The English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII) (Cambridge: The University Press, 1947), p. 91: "That the King changed his attitude towards the German Reformers was entirely due to political considerations, and not to any kindling sympathy with evangelical doctrine." Ibid., p. 101: "In the negotiations, . . . the English and the Germans had different interests and objectives. Henry was primarily concerned with the Divorce judgement, with the papal council and with the safety of his realm. What he least intended was a reform of English doctrine on the lines of the Augsburg confession such as should make it appear that the English church was in tutelage to Wittenberg."

¹⁶Smith, op. cit., pp. 128-9.

¹⁷Pollard, op. cit., p. 16, refers to an inference that Henry may have been in line for the see of Canterbury in his father's plans. It may be only conjecture from his education seeming more suited to a clerical than a lay career. . . . But the story is probably a mere inference from the excellence of the boy's education, and from his father's thrift. Remember, too, that Arthur died in 1502 when Henry was only 10.

¹⁸Joseph Henry Dubbs, Leaders of the Reformation (Philadelphia: The Heidelberg Press, c.1898), p. 134.

¹⁹Rupp, op. cit., p. 89.

capable theologically²⁰ he showed often even after his famous (pre-English-Reformation) attack upon Luther (1521) which earned him the title Defensor Fidei²¹ from the Pope. For example, when the heretic Lambert was embarrassing Cranmer with his arguments and Cranmer was replying in his usual moderation, Henry felt constrained to personally intervene and confute

²⁰John Strype, Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cranmer, Sometime Archbishop of Canterbury. Wherein the History of the Church, and the Reformation of It, During the Primacy of the Said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; and many singular Matters relating therunto, now first published (1694). In Three Books, Collected Chiefly from Records, Registers, Authentic Letters, and Other Original Manuscripts (A New Edition, with Additions. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1812), I, 75. "The King [Henry] affecting to be though learned, affected also to have books called by his name; not that he was always the author of them, but that they came out of his authority, and had undergone his corrections and emendations." Cf. also Geoffrey W. Bromley, Thomas Cranmer, Theologian (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 4, regarding Henry's opinion of his own theological worth.

²¹Rupp, op. cit., p. 90, says: "The historical importance of the work is greater than its theological significance. Much or little as Henry wrote, it was coupled with his personal authority and bound up with his prestige. . . . There were two results. First, it made all personal contact with Luther impossible. Secondly, it tied the King to certain doctrinal statements which he could not retract without losing face." He continues: "How much of his book vs. Luther was written by the King, we cannot say. His comments on the Bishops' Book of 1537 are far below the theological level of this book. There is not much proof that the King had either learning or leisure enough to produce the Assertio Septem Sacramentorum Adversus Martinum Lutherum."

"Book-tasting, 'as it were', aptly describes the royal theological method, and the best measure of the theological learning of the King lies, not in the sparkling erudition of the treatise against Luther, but in the comments on the details of the Bishops' Book which the King sent to Cranmer. Cranmer's counter criticism should dispose of yet another legend, that of the Archbishop's timidity, for he takes his royal master to task as severely as if he had been back at Jesus [college], coming with tired severity the efforts of the youngest in the Schools; now it is clumsy English, then bad Latin, here redundancy of though exposed, there flat disagreement registered." Ibid., p. 139.

the heretic in the trial.²² Dr. Ridley²³ wrote in a book on Bishop Ridley: "The reason why the Reformation proceeded so far under Henry was because the king was better read in divinity than Gardiner; and the reason why it proceeded no further was, because he was less read in it than Cranmer."²⁴ Traill offers a final summary point on Henry's theology: "For whatever were the king's personal leanings, doctrinally he sympathizes to the end with the highest Churchmanship."²⁵

²²Charles W. Le Sas, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833) I, 155-6.

²³Dr. Ridley, also called "Gloicester" or "Gloster," lived from 1702 to 1774 and was "a collateral descendant of Bishop Nicholas Ridley." In 1763 he wrote a Life of Bishop Nicholas Ridley, which Todd quotes here. Dr. Ridley's "degree of D. D. was conferred upon him by diploma on 25 February 1767" from New College at Oxford. Cf. William Prideaux Courtney, Dictionary of National Biography edited by Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee (London: Oxford University Press, 1949-56), XVI, 1168-9.

²⁴Quoted in a footnote in Henry John Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cranmer (London: G. J. G. & F. Rivington, 1831), I, 238.

²⁵H. D. Traill, editor, From the Accession of Henry VIII to the Death of Elizabeth in Social England. A Record of the Progress of the People In Religion Laws Learning Arts Industry Commerce Science Literature and Manners from the Earliest Times to the Present Day (Second edition; London, Paris & Melbourne: Cassell and Company, Limited, 1895), III, 67. For excellent longer summaries cf. Smith, op. cit., pp. 226-235, and Pollard, op. cit., pp. 116-7, 125. Cf. also supra, footnote 15.

Charles Hardwick, A History of the Articles of Religion: to which is added a Series of Documents, from A.D. 1536 to A.D. 1615; together with Illustrations from Contemporary Sources (London: George Bell & Sons, 1881), p. 58, states: "However much the King was willing on some points to acquiesce in Lutheran definitions, there was little or no hope of weaning him from other vices in the doctrine and administration of the Church." Remember, too, the 1538 negotiations with the Lutherans and the Thirteen Articles were followed shortly by the Six Articles. Hughes, op. cit., p. 349, says: "Henry, in all this long series of conversations with the princes of Germany, never for an instant meant to aid their heresies, and still less to give these a real footing in his own realm and church. But he was very willing, when the international situation pressed hard, to be sided through these heretical princes." But ibid., p. 360, states emphatically that Henry was not Roman Catholic to the end. He becomes

sarcastic in his treatment of that nation even with reference to the Six Articles. In support of this, for example, on p. 368 he cites the fact, as others have done, that two days after Cromwell was executed "Dr. Barnes, with two other well-known Lutherans and three defenders of the papal supremacy, followed him out of this life."

But while Henry VIII remained theologically in the Catholic camp, he developed a great liking and respect for Archbishop Cromwell, and was particularly devoted to him and defended him from his French enemies as a villain when Cromwell's efforts to reform the church were being set aside.¹ As Henry was always trying to subordinate his church to his state,² and often regarded Cromwell as representing moral and theological principles that were in some degree inimical to Cromwell's subsequent rise to office, it is not surprising that Henry's attitude was throughout the rest of his reign. It seems that Cromwell's great theological learning was one of his virtues in the king's eyes.³ Henry attests to his great regard for it during a speech in his presence before Cardinal Beaufort and Cromwell: "The King much rejoiced in, by telling Beaufort that Cromwell was not experienced a learned man."⁴

¹ Joseph Henry Thayer, *History of the Reformation in England*, The Westminster Press, c. 1900, p. 151, states it was "unquestioned that he regarded Henry's conduct." Cf. R. H. Sayers, *Henry VIII and the Reformation*, London, Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1903, p. 125. "The (Henry) pronounced himself well pleased, as that disagreement with him, spent their indignation, and as unresolvable also."

² See, Charles G. L. Lee, *The Life of Archbishop Richard Hooker*, New York: T. & T. Clark, 1900, I, 214.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 214, 215.

⁴ See Henry Lane Fox, *The Life of Archbishop Thomas Cromwell*, London: T. & T. Clark, 1911, vol. II, p. 123.

⁵ Richard C. Bellamy, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, 1912, pp. 125-126, and Richard C. Bellamy, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation*, 1912, pp. 125-126. "The King's attitude toward Cromwell's private life, see pp. 125-126."

CHAPTER III

THE HIGH REGARD OF HENRY VIII FOR THOMAS CRAMMER

But while Henry VIII remained theologically in the Catholic camp, he developed a great liking and respect for Archbishop Cramer, and surprisingly enough,¹ spoke well of him and defended him from his Romish counsellors at a time when Cramer's efforts at reform were anything but veiled.² But "Henry was always trying to accommodate his conscience to his acts,"³ and often consulted Cramer on important moral and theological questions from the Anne Boleyn incident (and Cramer's subsequent rise to office somewhat at Henry's caprice) on throughout the rest of his reign.⁴ It seems that Cramer's great "theological learning was one of his titles to the king's favour."⁵ Henry attests to his great regard for it during a dispute in his presence between Gardiner and Cramer: "The King interrupted it, by telling Gardiner that Cramer was too experienced a leader

¹Joseph Henry Dubbs, Leaders of the Reformation (Philadelphia: The Heidelberg Press, c.1898), p. 142, states it was "marvellous that he retained Henry's confidence." Cf. H. Maynard Smith, Henry VIII and the Reformation (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1948), p. 229: "He [Henry] proclaimed himself God's Vicar, so that disagreement with him, apart from disobedience, was an unforgivable sin."

²Cf. Charles W. Le Bas, The Life of Archbishop Cramer (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833), I, 216f.

³Smith, op. cit., p. 231.

⁴Cf. Henry John Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cramer (London: G. J. G. & F. Revington, 1831), vols., I, 183ff.

⁵Albert F. Pollard, Thomas Cramer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, c.1904). For a description of Cramer's private library see ibid., p. 319.

to be defeated by a novice."⁶ Though Henry was notorious for his intolerance of disagreement, Cranmer could talk to the king and openly disagree.⁷ "Cranmer . . . held views for which other men were burnt, but Henry knew his pliability and his doglike fidelity to himself, and he was ever ready to defend him against his many enemies."⁸ Even Hughes admits, "He was one of the few for whom Henry developed a real affection which nothing ever shook."⁹

Gardiner and other Roman leaders tried often "to deprive Cranmer of the royal regard,"¹⁰ and though they succeeded in some measure with others,¹¹ "the plotters little knew their King; Henry had many failings, but no monarch had a keener insight into men's minds or less liking for being made the tool of others."¹² And though "furiously beat the waves of reaction upon the chief remaining pillar of the Reformation in England, and many were the attempts to procure Cranmer's downfall,"¹³ the result

⁶Todd, op. cit., I, 238.

⁷Cf. Pollard, op. cit., p. 169. Cf. also supra., footnote 21 in Chapter II.

⁸Smith, op. cit., p. 129.

⁹Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), I, 241.

¹⁰Todd, op. cit., I, 237.

¹¹Ibid., p. 260.

¹²Pollard, op. cit., p. 151.

¹³Ibid., p. 144. Cf. John Lingard, The History of England from the First Invasions by the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688 (Sixth edition; New York and Montreal: D. & J. Sadlier & Company, 1879), V, 96f. Pollard, op. cit., p. 144, says Cranmer "had foes at Court, foes on the episcopal bench, among the squires of Kent, within the precincts of his own cathedral and the walls of his own house."

was always condemnation from Henry of the plotters and high public praise of Cranmer to his accusers: e.g.,

I would you would well understand that I account my Lord of Centerbury as faithful a man towards me as ever was prelate in this realm, and one to whom I am many ways beholding by the faith I owe unto God; and therefore whose loveth me will regard him hereafter.¹⁴

Once, when accusation was brought against Cranmer, Henry put the Archbishop in charge of the fact-finding committee for the prosecution with the remark to Cranmer: "For surely I reckon that you will tell me the truth; yea of yourself, if you have offended."¹⁵

That this was no empty of isolated testimony on the part of Henry in his continuing regard for Cranmer's character and the complete confidence he had in him is clearly discernable from many sources.¹⁶ Henry even praised Cranmer for remaining firm in his theology and prophesied that he would one day shed blood because of it.¹⁷ This same importance of the personal factor with Henry is shown in an incident he had with Katherine Parr, who was not unlike Cranmer in her own learned and patient wifely ways.¹⁸ While one historian reports that Cranmer "had been banished from the royal favour"¹⁹ at the time of Anne's death, he is called on to

¹⁴

¹⁵ Pollard, op. cit., p. 157.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 151.

¹⁷ Ibid. Cromwell and Russell (an enemy of Cranmer) are quoted. Cf. also Smith, op. cit., pp. 210f. Also F. E. Hutchinson, Cranmer and the English Reformation. Teach Yourself History Library edited by A. L. Rowse (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), pp. 87f.

¹⁸ Le Bas, op. cit., p. 209.

¹⁹ Smith, op. cit., p. 221.

J. Milton Smith, The Stars of the Reformation: Being Short Sketches of Eminent Reformers, and of the Leading Events in Europe which Led to the Revival of Christianity (Second Edition; London: S. W. Partridge & Co, n.d.), p. 196.

be godfather to both Elizabeth (before) and Edward²⁰ (later). This is an indication either that it was not a bad rift in the first place, or that the wounds healed quickly and well. Cramer was personally loved and respected by Henry, and it was a mutual love.²¹ The final and one of the best examples of this is that on his deathbed, knowing there were but a few hours left, Henry wanted "no other but the Archbishop Cramer"²² with him. "Faithless to many, to Cramer the King was true unto death; and from that day to his own last agony the Archbishop left his beard to grow in witness of his grief."²³

²⁰Todd, op. cit., I, 225.

²¹K. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of The English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII) (Cambridge: The University Press, 1947), pp. 130f: Cramer "was doubly fortified in practice by the ungrudging and unfailing friendship of the King. It was a relationship, strange as it may appear, based upon mutual affection and respect. Cramer knew his Henry better than any other man: nobody had better claim to be considered the keeper of the King's conscience, and if that seems to us an unlovely and sometimes a dreadful thing, it was not unseemly that the Archbishop should find pity for its dark recesses."

²²Todd, op. cit., I, 378. Cf. H. M. Smith, op. cit., p. 225, and Pollard, op. cit., p. 182.

²³Ibid., p. 183. Cf. H. M. Smith, loc. cit.

CHAPTER IV

THE PERSON AND CHARACTER OF THOMAS CRAMMER

But what was there in Thomas Cramer's personality or character to prompt such unflinching protection, respect, and friendship on the part of the oft-fickle Henry VIII? A detailed study of the extraordinary character of the Archbishop does much to begin to answer this question--as much as indeed it can be answered by academic research and analyzation. A summary¹ of such a study of the character and person of Thomas Cramer is in order.

That Thomas Cramer was a first-rate scholar, one of the very best in his country in his day, is very well attested.² He earned his doctorate

¹There are several very good summaries of Cramer's character. Those are now cited: Charles W. La Bas, The Life of Archbishop Cramer (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833), I, 273. Henry John Todd, The Life of Archbishop Cramer (London: G. J. G. & F. Revington, 1831), 2 vols., I, v-vi. Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper & Brothers, c.1953), p. 809. Geoffrey W. Bromley, Thomas Cramer, Theologian (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. viiif. H. Maynard Smith, Henry VIII and the Reformation (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1948), pp. 34, 203ff., includes a contrast with Gardiner. George S. Robbert, "The Reformation of Cramer with Special Reference to Its Doctrine and The Influences upon It" (Unpublished Bachelor's Thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1948), p. 9, has an interesting description of Cramer by a student of his at Cambridge. Francis Hackett, Henry the Eighth (Star edition; Garden City, N. Y.: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., c.1931), pp. 200f, is not nearly as complimentary as the others.

²Many attest his thorough scholarliness. Bromley, op. cit., pp. 1-11, has an excellent chapter. Cf. Burton in Thomas Cramer, A Short Instruction into Christian Religion. A Catechism set forth by Archbishop Cramer in MDLXVIII together with the same in Latin translated from the German by Justus Jonas in MDLXXIX, Parker Society Publication edited by Edward Burton (Oxford: The University Press, 1829), pp. xvii-viii; Joseph Henry Dubbs, Leaders of the Reformation (Philadelphia: The Heidelberg Press, c.1898), p. 143; even Hackett, op. cit., p. 199; Latourette, op. cit.

in divinity at Cambridge and for a number of years acted as examiner in the theological schools. He received and declined an invitation from Wolsey to serve in the newly founded Cardinal's College at Oxford.

Bromley states: "Already in the twenties he had that developed reputation as a scholar which would assure him of a minor eminence in his own sphere."³ His opponents, of course, developed a habit of decrying his scholarship.⁴ Bromley points out that when a survey of his total literary remains is taken, it is astonishing how small it is compared with the vast bulk of Luther or Calvin or even of Zwingli. But he goes on to offer reasons for this that may give insight into the type of scholar Cramer was:

The preoccupation with ecclesiastical business is no doubt responsible in the main for this paucity of theological utterance. But there may be, perhaps, another and a deeper reason. The temperament of Cramer was more that of the pure scholar than the independent thinker. His primary impulse was to amass knowledge rather than to state or discuss it.

Yet that is not the whole truth, for Cramer is responsible for a tremendous amount of what we are forced to describe as indirect theology.⁵

Pole gives an account of his daily time-table, stating that he normally devoted the first four hours of every day, from five o'clock to nine,

pp. 801, 837; Albert F. Pollard, Thomas Cramer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, c.1904), pp. 18f., 52, 165, 238, who gives testimonies of Gardiner and Cromwell and says only Pole was in the same category intellectually; and H. F. M. Prescott, Mary Tudor (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1953), pp. 90, 108-10.

3

Bromley, op. cit., p. vii.

4

Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), I, 345, belittles Cramer as a theologian, saying he did not know the scholastics and therefore naturally could not be a theologian. Cf. Bromley, op. cit., p. 4.

Ibid., pp. 6-7.

to prayer and reading. Whenever possible he "associated with learned men, for the sifting and boulding out one matter or another." The afternoon and evening were often claimed for outside business, but any time that could be spared was given to reading and discussion, so that the habits formed at Cambridge were carried forward into the new and very different circumstances of his years as archbishop.⁶

Peter Martyr has been pointed out both as the scholar who probably knew Cranmer best and as the one who had the highest opinion of him, scholastically and theologically as well as personally.⁷ And the opinion of Henry himself and the use he made of Cranmer's learning are anything but irrelevant here. Henry seems to have leaned heavily on Cranmer's learning in disputed issues, even though he did not always follow his judgment. Henry, at any rate, recognized the genuine scholarship of the archbishop and attested to it on occasion by his words as well as his actions. In regard to Cranmer's opinions and judgments given to the king Bromley states that they "were based always on a solid foundation of knowledge, and that if he sometimes hesitated, it was not because of weakness but because of his grasp and appreciation of more than one side of a question."⁸ But this is not his only outstanding trait.

One simply does not speak or write about Cranmer without some tribute to his mastery of English.⁹ Ratcliff ties it in with his whole personality and character as well as his scholarship thus:

⁶ Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 5-6, summarizes and quotes from Martyr's written opinions of Cranmer.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

⁹ Geoffrey W. Bromley, "Cranmer's Message to Our Times," Christianity Today, I (November 12, 1956), p. 13.

It is now a commonplace to speak of Cranmer's magnificent English. Yet wherein, we may ask, does the magnificence lie? The question is not to be answered by conventional observations upon mastery of style. Cranmer was master of more than one style. Liturgical style, to be effective, must express a sense of the Divine Majesty which is the Object of address. Cranmer was the master, or rather the creator, of English liturgical style, because he had apprehended the nature of worship. To serve the purposes of worship he brought the resources of the scholar: appreciation of the fine compositions of liturgical Latin; knowledge of the rules of rhythm and clause; facility and felicity in translation; a feeling for the meanings of words. With such resources, and moved by a profound religious sincerity, Cranmer made of English a liturgical language comparable with Latin at its best.¹⁰

There seems to be no argument that though Cranmer was no musician and had no gift for poetry, he was one of the great masters of English prose.¹¹

Cranmer was interested in many things and in many people. These all in return influenced him.¹² While the main concern of this paper is Henry and Cranmer, other major influences should be taken into account and at least briefly mentioned.

There was, of course, much contact with essentially secular people and with those who were primarily secularly minded (e.g., Cromwell). There were also the contacts and controversies with the ever-present Gardiner, Bonner, and the other Catholic bishops. But in a more positive

¹⁰ E. C. Ratcliff, "The Liturgical Work of Archbishop Cranmer," The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, VII (October 1956), 202.

¹¹ F. E. Hutchinson, Cranmer and the English Reformation. Teach Yourself History Library edited by A. L. Rouse (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 96; Carl S. Meyer, "Cranmer's Legacy," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVII (April 1956), pp. 259f.; and Pollard, op. cit., p. 175, are one in attesting this.

¹² There is a great deal of disagreement among historians as to what extent he was influenced by his associates and how easily. This is discussed later in the chapter.

theological way, his interests and his contacts seem to have continually and considerably widened with his advancement and with the passing years. At Cambridge he had the society of some scholars and the assistance of books and a bookish atmosphere. But at Lambeth he was in constant touch with some of the best minds of the age both at home and abroad, for he entered into direct communication with many of the leading continental scholars. Still later Lambeth became something of a clearing-house of theologians and theological discussion with such names as Ridley, Bradford, Grindal, Jewel, Parker among the young English scholars present, and Martyr, a Lasco, Bucer, Ochino and other lights from among the continental reformers present. But that is already past Henry's time and into Edward's for the most part. And they were mainly Reformed contacts. Particularly important for Henry's time are the German Lutheran contacts.¹³ No definite relationship has been established linking Cramer with Bilney's White Horse Inn group, but it must remain a very possible element of influence. Todd states of the time just preceding his ascendancy to the archbishopric: "His residence in Germany was now drawing to its close. . . . To the new doctrines, ere he returned, he had perhaps become almost an

¹³H. D. Traill, editor, Social England: A Record of the Progress of the People in Religion Laws Learning Arts Industry Commerce Science Literature and Manners from the Earliest Times to the Present Day. From the Accession of Henry VIII to the Death of Elizabeth (Second edition; London, Parish & Melbourne; Cassell and Company, Limited, 1895), III, 181, says, "In 1549-1552 Cramer passed from his Lutheran doctrine to his final and mainly Calvinistic phase of belief. . . . Under influence of Bucer, Martyr, Ridley, and John a Lasco, in 1550 he had already left the Lutheran standpoint of his Catechism." In Cramer, op. cit., p. xxii, editor Burton says that Cramer shifted his doctrine on the Lord's Supper, important as they are, did not seem particularly apropos to his influence on Henry in this study. Therefore there is little mention of the whole problem in this study. For a concise, reliable, and readable summary of it see Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 125-132.

entire convert."¹⁴ And H. M. Smith points both to this time and to later conferences with the Lutheran divines saying he was profoundly influenced by them and came to look on Germany as spiritual home.¹⁵ And while this study purports to deal with Cranmer's influence on Henry, there seems to be little doubt that with the amount of interaction there was between the two Henry's influence upon Cranmer certainly cannot be discounted.

So much for interaction with people. But books and movements also interested and influenced Thomas Cranmer. With Erasmus at Cambridge in Cranmer's early years, there can be little doubt of some influence of humanism on Cranmer both at this time and later whether direct or indirect.¹⁶ One can still, however, only raise the question of the extent of its influence on him.¹⁷ The patristic learning of Cranmer is also a distinctive feature. In this connection Bromley remarks: "Always, however, Cranmer was careful to subject the fathers to the apostolic, and therefore the scriptural, norm."¹⁸ In turn in praising Cranmer Burnet compares him with Athanasius and Cyril and says of him: "we shall find as eminent virtues, and as few faults in him, as in any prelate that has been in the Christian church for many ages."¹⁹

¹⁴Todd, op. cit., I, 45-6.

¹⁵Smith, op. cit., pp. 145, 160f.

¹⁶Cf. Bromley, Thomas Cranmer, Theologian, p. viii.

¹⁷Meyer, "Cranmer's Legacy," op. cit., p. 268.

¹⁸Bromley, "Cranmer's Message to Our Times," op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁹Gilbert Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England. Part I: Of the Progress Made in It During the Reign of Henry VIII (New York: D. Appleton and Co.; and Philadelphia: George S. Appleton, 1843), pp. xliiif.

But perhaps the greatest influence discernible in Cranmer, and that because it was so deep and so permeated his life as well as his thinking, was the Bible. At Cambridge Cranmer devoted three years almost exclusively to Scripture study. Pollard says: "The Bible was Cranmer's Ark of the Covenant, and his lack of the speculative instinct saved him from the temptation to lay impious hands upon it."²⁰ H. M. Smith writes of Cranmer's relation to the Bible and his primary concern with the spiritual needs of man in the same breath.²¹ Carl S. Meyer speaks of his total reliance on his Savior as a noteworthy quality.²² His concern for the Bible and his Christian life are such completely outstanding characteristics of Cranmer that--but let it suffice at this point to mention Cranmer's own preface²³ to the Holy Bible which came to be called by his name and to continue a total description of his character.

But Cranmer was by no means perfect, and in his high office the weak strains in his constitution were frequently exposed.²⁴ Bromley reveals:

²⁰Pollard, op. cit., pp. 19, 224-9.

²¹Smith, op. cit., p. 349; cf. also Meyer, "Cranmer's Legacy," op. cit., pp. 247f.

²²Ibid., p. 268.

²³Cranmer's Preface may be found in John Strype, Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cranmer, Sometime Archbishop of Canterbury. Wherein the History of the Church, and the Reformation of It, During the Primacy of the Said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; and many singular Matters relating therunto, now first published (1694). In Three Books, Collected Chiefly from Records, Registers, Authentic Letters, and Other Original Manuscripts (A New Edition, with Additions; Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1812), II, 1020-34, or in Thomas Cranmer, Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556, Parker Society Publication, edited by John Edward Cox (Cambridge: The University Press, 1846), pp. 118-125. Hereafter this work shall be referred to as "Cranmer, Miscellaneous Writings."

²⁴Bromley, "Cranmer's Message to Our Times," op. cit., p. 19.

Cramer as a man has been the center of almost persistent controversy and misunderstanding. He has been pitied as a weakling and vilified as a sycophant. He has even been accused of hypocrisy and deliberate cruelty. And there are facts or episodes which can, of course, be adduced to support any or all of these interpretations.²⁵

Pollard quotes from the letter of a Zwinglian to Bullinger:

Centerbury . . . conducts himself in such a way . . . that the people do not think much of him and the nobility regard him as lukewarm. In other respects he is a kind and good-natured man.²⁶

Bromiley admits:

For his activities in this sphere he had ample justification in law and precedent, but Cramer himself obviously felt the distastefulness of his work, especially in relation to Ann Holeyne. Not even his warmest advocate can enthuse over this side of his activity.²⁷

Hughes seems to delight in subtly belittling Cramer:

[Cramer] comes down to us as a man of great simplicity of life, quite unworldly, amiable, kindly, very willing to do a service to beginners, sensitive and indeed timorous, self-effacing, anything rather--it would seem, so far--than a man of affairs or a leader.

To this he safely attaches the footnote:

Friedman's judgment of Cramer is not flattering: ". . . elegant, graceful and insinuating. An admirable deceiver, he possessed the talent of representing the most infamous deeds in the finest words."²⁸

Editor Cox offers

to assist the general student to a just estimate of his [Cramer's] principles, as viewed in connection with the singular and appalling difficulties of his position.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Pollard, op. cit., p. 210.

²⁷Bromiley, Thomas Cramer, Theologian, p. xii.

²⁸Hughes, op. cit., p. 241.

These difficulties, candidly considered, will often suggest a satisfactory reply to the obloquy, which either religious or political acrimony has attempted to cast on the name of this illustrious martyr.²⁹

Bromley supplies this as a solution:

Perhaps the real element of truth . . . is that Cromer was undoubtedly thrust willy-nilly into a position which he did not desire and for which he had, humanly speaking, no particular aptitude. Cromer was almost a born scholar. He loved his quiet, studious life at Cambridge. He had no taste or ability for great matters of state and government. He was humble by nature and modest in taste and ambition. He had not the nature either to ride rough-shod over opponents or to stride gladly and militantly to martyrdom. He was one of the little things of the world, a despised earthen vessel, destined by God to carry a great treasure.

That is perhaps overstating it in an oversimplified and petic manner, but there seems to be more than a grain of truth both in that and in this further statement of his: "Cromer was not by any means perfect. . . . But if he had the weakness of his virtues, they were solid virtues all the same--and genuinely Christian virtues."³⁰

What were some of these weaknesses, faults, or Christian virtues? Bromley said he was quiet, studious, modest and humble by nature. Poilard too, states that he was "naturally of a reticent and unaggressive disposition."³¹ While his life was not cut off so abruptly as early in life, neither did Cromer ever attain the direct power, authority, and influence that either Welsey or Cromwell did. And so it is written by one man that he was "of sturdy but humble parentage,"³² another describes

²⁹Cromer, Miscellaneous Writings, p. vii.

³⁰Bromley, "Cromer's Message to Our Times," op. cit., p. 19.

³¹Poilard, op. cit., p. 22.

³²Latourette, op. cit., p. 971.

him as "meek and mild,"³³ while a third contrasts him with Gardiner thus: "Cramer was an 'intellectual' in love with simplicity, whereas Gardiner delighted in pageantry and pomp."³⁴ And Cramer himself can be quoted as saying on his last day: "I have been a man that all my life loved plainness. . . ."³⁵

The Archbishop's modesty and quiet humility are borne out in the related characteristics of unselfishness and lack of greed and desire for self-advancement. This was remarkable in the age and surroundings that were Cramer's. In regard to his rise to the position of archbishop Bromley says:

Cramer was undoubtedly thrust willy-nilly into a position which he did not desire³⁶ and for which he had, humanly speaking, no particular aptitude. Cramer was almost a born scholar. He loved his quiet, studious life at Cambridge. He had no taste or ability for great matters of state and government. He was humble by nature and modest in taste and ambition. He had not the nature either to ride rough-shod over opponents or to stride gladly and militantly to martyrdom.³⁷

Cramer himself apparently never had the force or authority to implement his suggestions during the reign of Henry VIII, nor did he seem to be seeking to attain it.³⁸ It is hard to discover any selfish ambitions the man

³³ Meyer, "Cramer's Legacy," op. cit., p. 242.

³⁴ Smith, op. cit., p. 203.

³⁵ Pollard, op. cit., p. 381.

³⁶ Cf. Dubbs, op. cit., p. 139; Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 33; Smith op. cit., p. 33; Todd, op. cit., I, 47ff; and others concerning Cramer's reluctance to become archbishop and his delay in returning from Germany to receive the office. Hughes betrays his bias here again when he states that Cramer "left immediately for England" upon receiving the king's summons. Hughes, op. cit., p. 242.

³⁷ Bromley, loc. cit.

³⁸ Pollard, op. cit., p. 136, e.g. states: "the Archbishop's political influence was never very considerable."

may have had. He did not seem to covet wealth³⁹ or glory or power, nor did he abuse his position even in the scramble for monastic riches.⁴⁰

The converse of saying he was unselfish and not greedy is to point to the many times he showed that he was kind, friendly, tender, merciful, openhanded and forgiving. The list of these instances is long and entirely in keeping with his nature, the nature of a living, practicing Christian love.⁴¹ Even in formulating doctrine midst controversy the "broad soft touch of Grammer" is noted along with his "brevity of statement and the avoidance of controversy."⁴² Pollard's "the incurable optimism of his soul"⁴³ is apt in this connection. Todd exclaims about "that forgiveness in regard to personal opposition, which so often he displayed. The duke had been his enemy."⁴⁴ In an age of persecutions by both

³⁹Cf. The Lives of the British Reformers (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, n.d.), p. 54; Todd, op. cit., I, 371.

⁴⁰Bromley, loc. cit. His lack of greed and his disposition to put the best construction on everything is well portrayed in a letter of his to Cecil reproduced in Grammer, Miscellaneous Writings, pp. 437. Lewis Einstein, Tudor Ideals (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1921), p. 183, and Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 71, report that Grammer favored the monies from the monasteries being used for education, and that not only for the rich and noblemen's sons, but that rich and poor alike be educated as they were intellectually worthy. He at least carried this policy out in the Canterbury School.

⁴¹This is the thing in his study that has above all else impressed itself upon the author. It comes closest (in his admittedly limited studies) outside of the New Testament's St. John the Apostle to exemplifying what Christian *ἀγκη* lived by a sensitive and conscientious, yet sinful, human being is like.

⁴²Pollard, op. cit., p. 286, quoting Canon Dixon.

⁴³Ibid., p. 285.

⁴⁴Todd, op. cit., I, 377.

Protestans and Romans "Cranmer's mildness made him reluctant to persecute, and the tale of his victims is short."⁴⁵ Above all, Thomas Cranmer was openhanded and friendly, especially to those who attacked or offended him. "Do my Lord of Canterbury an ill turn, and he will be your friend forever," was a saying well supported by the facts.⁴⁶ Prescott presents a good picture of his compassion: "Archbishop Cranmer interviewing her [Queen Katherine Howard], after she had been charged with treason, found her in a 'fransy' and was so much touched that he talked to her of mercy rather than of faults."⁴⁷ Noteworthy, too, are his intercessions to Henry on behalf of Cromwell, Anne Boleyn, and princess Mary!⁴⁸

Again, if he was humble and loving, he was also wholly honest and candid in relation to himself. When his enemies attacked, he was quite prepared to be examined⁴⁹ and did not try to bluster his way through or slip out of the charges. Pollard uses the term "simple, transparent honesty" of him advisedly.⁵⁰ Throughout his long life he held tenaciously

⁴⁵Pollard, op. cit., p. 122. Cf. also The Lives of the British Reformer, pp. 48f., and Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 143-45.

⁴⁶Bromley, loc. cit.

⁴⁷Prescott, op. cit., p. 95.

⁴⁸Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 85; Pollard, op. cit., pp. 139, 162; Burnet, op. cit., pp. 322ff.

⁴⁹Pollard, op. cit., pp. 154f.

⁵⁰Pollard, op. cit., p. 339; in a letter to Mary. Cf. ibid., pp. iv-v, 56-7, 211; Smith, op. cit., pp. 35, 402; Burton in Cranmer, A Short Instruction into Christian Religion, p. xciii; John Lingard, The History of England from the First Invasions by the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688 (Sixth edition, New York and Montreal: D. & J. Sadlier & Company, 1879), v, 125, 177; and Prescott, op. cit., p. 305.

to the scholarly and Christian quality he had developed of open-minded truth-seeking. He was ever ready to think a thing through again from the very beginning though he had done so a thousand times before. This left him wide open to the charge (not wholly without merit) that instead of being open-minded, he was rather weak-minded in the sense that he was very easily influenced by others.⁵¹ But there is a difference between

⁵¹This seems to be a matter of great debate among the historians and even within a single book. Thus: Prescott, *op. cit.*, p. 328, says concerning Cramer's last days: "It was not only physical fear that wrought on him. His subtle and balanced mind apprehended the force and implication of every argument. . . ." The Lives of the British Reformers, p. 54, quotes Cramer as saying: "To be short, I am not so doted to set my mind upon things here, which I neither can carry away with me, nor tarry long with them." Pollard, *op. cit.*, pp. 170, 190, 228, 381, calls Cramer open-minded, with a "tendency to rely on a stronger power," a man who apparently reaches his convictions by reason rather than a wrestling of the spirit and an emotional experience, and points to a change from relying on logic and the like to rely on his conscience. Robert, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 37, says: "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." And since "he was of a receptive nature and influenced quite easily by external factors, we have in Cramer almost a human barometer which indicates the influence of the various religious views and trends as they gained the upper hand in England." Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 33, quotes Narratives of the Reformation, p. 238: "Henry chose Thomas Cramer, a gentleman born and bred, gentle and devout, a man very much at home in the world of books and not without the vanity of the scholar, a man who was very ignorant of this wicked world, a man who was credulous and easily impressed by a stronger personality." Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 121, says: "Cramer was specially attracted to Eucer." Meyer, "Cramer's Legacy," *op. cit.*, p. 268, raises the question of the extent of humanism's influence on Cramer. Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 145, 160f., points out that Cramer was profoundly influenced by the conferences with the Lutheran divines and came to look on Germany as spiritual home. He also states that Cramer, "most subservient of royal ministers and most open-minded of theologians," replied to Henry's critique of The Bishops' Book "with devastating comments." Todd, *op. cit.*, I, 45-6, also points out both sides: "His residence in Germany was now drawing to its close. . . . To the new doctrines, ere he returned, he had perhaps become almost an entire convert." And he quotes Cramer himself as saying: "It is lawful and commendable for a man to learn from time to time; and to go from his ignorance, that he may receive and embrace the truth." Charles Hardwick, A History of the Articles of Religion: to which is added a Series of Documents, from A.D. 1536 to A.D. 1615: together with Illustrations from Contemporary Sources (London: George Bell & Sons,

being influenced by something after having thought it through carefully and being tossed about by every wind, or being considered "almost a human barometer" of "the various religious views and trends as they gained the upper hand in England."⁵² Perhaps Bromiley again summarizes it best:

Cramer was a dogmatician, but he was not a dogmatist. He had a mind which was always open to new truth. He took seriously the possibility that he might misunderstand the Word and revelation of God. He was always willing to be taught--so long as the teaching was in the right school and by the right Master. He was sixty years old before he came to understand the doctrine for which he died. And having found it, he did not lose all sympathy for those who had not yet done so. That is why he made his articles of religion as comprehensive as possible within an evangelical and scriptural framework. He was no inquisitor or persecutor. . . . If truth, as he saw it, was quite incompatible with error, it was not incompatible with charity. And he had no illusions of having a monopoly of truth.⁵³

Closely allied with the preceding discussion and almost as controversial is the question of whether Cramer was so timid, self-effacing, and perhaps afraid that his resistance to anything was at best very feeble or whether beneath his tact and evangelical nature he was yet loyal and courageous, even firm, persistent and conscientious in defending those things which according to his vision, sobriety of tone, and sense of balance were worthy of defense in the face of great opposition and even danger.

1881), pp. 66f., says, "After granting that the life of Cramer was disfigured here and there by human blemishes; after granting that the caution and timidity of his nature had degenerated, on some rare occasions, into weakness and irresolution; he is still, if we regard him fairly as a whole, among the brightest worthies of his age." Cf. also *infra.*, footnote 54.

⁵²Robbert, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

⁵³Bromiley, "Cramer's Message to Our Times," *op. cit.*, p. 12.

The overwhelming evidence⁵⁴ rests on the side of the latter opinion particularly in view of Cramer's character otherwise. His consistent Christian charity joined his scholar's outlook and his conscientious erastianism to make him appear quite timid to extremists on both sides and to those looking for the bold kind of stand that openly staked the reformer's life on each issue.⁵⁵ He was not the outspoken leader of the masses or even of the intelligentsia,⁵⁶ but that does not mean he was cowardly or disloyal to his sincere convictions. He spoke and wrote his convictions when and where and against whomever he felt it proper. In one instance he refused a request from Cromwell for a marriage dispensation for a friend and servant of the king.⁵⁷ Later he wrote to Henry on behalf of deposed Cromwell, when to do so could have occasioned or caused

⁵⁴ Whether Cramer was weak and cowardly or quite a brave and bold man would make a study of its own. The following references are on this topic and are mainly, but not totally, pro-Cramer. Ludwig Häusser, The Period of the Reformation, 1517 to 1648, edited by Wilhelm Cackon, translated from the German by Mrs. G. Sturge (New York: American Tract Society, n.d.), p. 571. Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 123, 139. Lingard, op. cit., V, 65, 176, 197. Pollard, op. cit., pp. 101, 121, 255-85, 290, 332, 359, 383. Prescott, op. cit., pp. 199f., 299. Smith, op. cit., pp. 89, 393. Cf. also supra., footnotes 26 and 51.

⁵⁵ For an interesting and thoughtful comparison of Zwingli, Calvin, Luther and Cramer, and a comparison of the theological with the practical carrying out of reform, see Bromley, Thomas Cramer, Theologian, pp. 9-10.

⁵⁶ Hughes, op. cit., pp. 88-9, presents a very interesting, if oversimplified and a bit too neat, theory concerning the progress of the Reformation based on a division of the priests. "There were two kinds of priests, the untrained and the trained, the illiterate (professionally speaking) and the learned." "Between such leaders . . . and those priests . . . the gap was too great for their influence to be more than external." "The clerical plobs, on the whole, gives the government no trouble; it is patently acquiescent to whatever Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth, in turn, demand." "These educated leaders, too, are acquiescent under Henry VIII, but very largely (it would seem) contre coeur; and under Elizabeth they are in the main unsubmitive, even openly hostile."

⁵⁷ Strype, op. cit., I, 65ff. It was a case of uncle and niece in about 1536.

his own fall.⁵⁸ Cramer had put himself in jeopardy previously in writing a tender letter to Henry in behalf of Anne at her downfall as well as interceding for Mary in 1533.⁵⁹ Quoting John Bale, sometime Bishop of Ossory, Strype says: "No man ever so happily and steadfastly persisted, with Christ himself, in the defence of the truth, in the midst of falsely learned men, in such imminent hazard of his life, and yet without receiving any harm."⁶⁰ Nor was this confined to Henry's (and Mary's) reign or the displeasure of the Catholic party only. One historian declared that every "measure that Cramer took," particularly during Edward's reign, "excited the displeasure of the extremists."⁶¹ Prescott, too, gives Cramer credit for protesting very strongly against the extremists when Dudley was in power.⁶² When Cramer changed it was usually slowly and cautiously, but it was done conscientiously when convinced. For example, during the year after Henry's death, while he felt it "convenient to use the vulgar tongue in the mass," he excepted from this "certain mysteries, whereof I doubt."⁶³ Later that year the doubt seems to have been removed, and his actions were in accord with his new opinion.⁶⁴

⁵⁸Burnet, op. cit., p. 445, quotes part of the letter.

⁵⁹Pollard, op. cit., pp. 139, 162. Cf. Burnet, op. cit., pp. 322ff.

⁶⁰Strype, op. cit., I, 658.

⁶¹Pollard, op. cit., p. 265.

⁶²Prescott, op. cit., p. 165.

⁶³Cramer, Miscellaneous Writings, p. 151.

⁶⁴Batcliff, "The Liturgical Work of Archbishop Cramer," op. cit., p. 194, says: "The 'secret mysteries' would presumably include the consecration. Notwithstanding on 9. September of the same year [1548], in consecrating Ferrar to the see of St. David's at Chertse Abbey, Cramer consecrated the Sacrament in English."

Hardwick remarks in summing up the life and work of Cramer: "To him we are indebted, under God, for much of the sobriety of tone that marks the English Reformation."⁶⁵ He wanted a worship that had wealth and dignity and tradition. He worked hard to give it to the English church, both in creating it and also in promoting it (though not by modern mass advertising media to be sure). In this as in all his work "he tried to keep the balance between conservatism and reform." In conscientiously and perseveringly and honestly doing so "he pleased neither the extremists nor the reactionaries."⁶⁶ From the heyday of the extremists comes Martyr's voicing great respect for Cramer's tenacity as well as for his learning.⁶⁷ In all of this, Bromley points out, Cramer showed "a wide range of vision, and if he had been given the opportunity he might easily have carried through a far-reaching program of reform" himself.⁶⁸

A concluding summary of Archbishop Cramer's character might well include opinions or statements from Strype, Burnet and Rupp, three prominent reformation scholars, two long in the grave, one very much alive today. Strype said: "No man did more prudently bear with some false apostles for a time, although, with St. Paul, he knew what most pestilent men they were, that so they might not be provoked to run into greater rage and madness."⁶⁹ Burnet praises Cramer's very Christian behavior very

⁶⁵

Hardwick, op. cit., pp. 66f.

⁶⁶

Bromley, "Cramer's Message to Our Times," op. cit., p. 13.

⁶⁷

Bromley, Thomas Cramer, Theologian, p. 6.

⁶⁸

⁶⁹Bromley, "Cramer's Message to Our Times," op. cit., p. 13.

Strype, op. cit., I, 658. Actually this is part of a quotation from Bishop John Bale which Strype expounds and whom he says was "well acquainted with the AEP, and a long and diligent observer of his demeanor in his superintendency over the church." Ibid., p. 657.

highly, likens it to Christ's own, and says it was indeed fitting of a bishop and reformer.⁷⁰ Rupp summarizes of Cranmer:

Recent historians have paid tardy tribute to his great qualities, and it may be hoped that the legend of the pusillanimous courtier, tossed about by every wind of doctrine, has been disposed of to all but those who read their history with their emotions rather than their heads.⁷¹

There is one more outstanding characteristic, however, that fairly cries out for separate treatment, and that is Cranmer's regard for the crown, or his Erastianism.⁷²

⁷⁰Burnet, op. cit., p. 528.

⁷¹E. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of The English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII) (Cambridge: The University Press, 1947, p. 129.

⁷²The use of the term "Erastianism" is, of course, an anachronism, but the term itself seems to describe it better than any other one word at present.

CHAPTER V

CRAMMER'S ALLEGED ERASTIANISM

In generous understatement one historian states: "Crammer . . . set great store by the king's authority."¹ Another overstates his case in saying that unquestioning obedience to the crown was a doctrine, a matter of conscience, with Crammer.² The truth seems to lie in the not-so-broad in-between. Crammer, like Henry VIII, believed the doctrine of the divine right of the monarch was based on Scripture.³ In his address at Edward's coronation Crammer stressed the point that Edward's authority came from God.⁴ Crammer believed it the "moral obligation of the government to lead the people along what it considered the straight and narrow way."⁵ But he was not so dependant on the state that he did not have some very independent ideas of his own,⁶ and he voiced them to the crown. He wrote a strong remonstrance to Cromwell and the royal court about keeping

¹Carl S. Meyer, "Crammer's Legacy," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVII (April, 1956), 245.

²Joseph Henry Dubbs, Leaders of the Reformation (Philadelphia: The Heidelberg Press, c.1898), pp. 140f.

³Albert F. Pollard, Thomas Crammer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, c.1904), p. 65. Pollard also says: "Crammer, like every one else in that age, admitted the right of the State or the Church to overrule individual conscience; and the tyranny of this political principle was not brough home to his mind till towards the end of his life." Ibid., p. 132.

⁴Thomas Crammer, Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Crammer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556. Parker Society Publication edited by John Edmund Cox (Cambridge: The University Press, 1846), pp. 126f.

⁵Pollard, op. cit., p. 204. Cf. also Ibid., p. 340.

⁶Ibid., pp. 229f.

St. Thomas a' Becket's day with fasting when it had been abrogated. He was disturbed over the "inconsistency of the royal practice and profession"; he stated it; and he at least feasted openly.⁷ In the last part of Edward's reign he withdrew in protest from attending the council and incurred Northumberland's reproof for inactivity in his radical reform.⁸ Under Mary his actions certainly requested severe censure from the crown.⁹ And even against Henry's express desire, Cramer remained to debate against the Six Articles.¹⁰ But while his guiding principle was to resist to the utmost the things he disagreed with, once it was law he felt the state must be obeyed.¹¹ He gave in against his judgment to please the crown;¹² he was intimidated by Warwick and reluctantly gave him his support;¹³ he compromised his theology in 1537 in Institution of a Christian Man;¹⁴ and he ultimately yielded to the false doctrine of the Six Articles, when men like Latimer resigned.¹⁵ The statement that

⁷ Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, Historical Memorials of Canterbury (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph, 1889), pp. 288f.

⁸ F. E. Hutchinson, Cramer and the English Reformation. Teach Yourself History Library edited by A. L. Rouse (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), pp. 116f.

⁹ Cf. H. F. M. Prescott, Mary Tudor (New York: The Macmillan Company, c. 1953), pp. 199ff., and John Lingard, The History of England from the First Invasions by the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688 (Sixth edition; New York and Montreal: D. & J. Sadlier & Company, 1879), V, 197.

¹⁰ Charles W. Le Bas, The Life of Archbishop Cramer (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833), I, 171.

¹¹ Ibid., I, 173.

¹² Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 137.

¹³ Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 81.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 82.

Granmer was "theologically hazpered by Erastianism"¹⁶ certainly has merit, but the question remains: Did this same sincere Erastianism help impress Henry¹⁷ and help Granmer and the whole English Reformation through Henry and in spite of Henry's theology?

¹⁶ Carl S. Meyer, Book Review of Thomas Granmer, Theologian by G. W. Bromley, Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVII (November 1956), 903. Cf. Pollard, op. cit., p. 227.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 137.

CHAPTER VI

CRANMER'S ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS WITH KING HENRY VIII

Just what were Cranmer's accomplishments with Henry? Remember that "the king was practically the pope of England, and there was no room for any other papal authority."¹ There were other large obstacles in the path of whatever reforms Cranmer might desire. Hackett says that when Cranmer was raised to the office of archbishop,

what was badly needed as a judicious, resourceful man, reputable in theology, fertile in ecclesiastical devices, and ready with an array of legal and political constitutional lore that would favor an orderly divorce, soothing Henry's conscience while challenging the papacy.²

H. M. Smith points out that Henry wanted above all a united church in his country, not strife, but while Gardiner and Tunstall shared Henry's views theologically, they

did not to any extent share his confidence. He much preferred Cranmer, a better man than either; and Cranmer in his study, with the aid of German correspondents, was planning an altogether different future for the Church of England.³

There were other impediments. Cromwell overshadowed Cranmer and took over some of his leadership responsibilities. Thus it was not until after the fall of Cromwell that Cranmer became the most influential subject in the realm, although he had been primate for seven years

¹Joseph Henry Dubbs, Leaders of the Reformation (Philadelphia: The Heidelberg Press, c.1898), p. 157.

²Francis Hackett, Henry the Eighth (Star edition; Garden City, N.Y.: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., c.1931), pp. 199f.

³H. Maynard Smith, Henry VIII and the Reformation (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1948), p. 214.

already.⁴ This alone shows great progress midst great odds. Cromwell's very fall, being "denounced as a heretic . . . brings home to us how unpopular the changes of religion had been with the majority of the people, and how popular it was to have them condemned."⁵ The majority in England were Catholic to the core in 1538-39 at least.⁶ Even The Bishops' Book, which was a document of compromise, "was ill-received, chiefly, we imagine, because it was new and Englishmen are very conservative."⁷

There were times when Crommer resisted strongly, but to no avail.⁸ "The King had passed in Parliament, against the steady opposition of Crommer, the Act known as the Six Articles."⁹ Four years later in 1543 Parliament forbade ignorant people and women to read the Bible.¹⁰

These were some of the oppositions Crommer had to face and try to overcome. Was there help for him among the reform element? Certainly there was some, but even here he encountered great difficulties at times. The Lollards were not numerous enough to launch a reformation movement in

⁴Dubbs, op. cit., p. 137.

⁵Smith, op. cit., pp. 177E.

⁶Albert F. Pollard, Thomas Crommer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, c.1904), p. 126.

⁷Smith, op. cit., p. 163.

⁸F. E. Hutchinson, Crommer and the English Reformation. Teach Yourself History Library edited by A. L. Rowse (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 118.

⁹J. Milton Smith, The Stars of the Reformation: Being Short Sketches of Eminent Reformers, and of the Leading Events in Europe which Led to the Revival of Christianity (Second edition; London: S. W. Partridge & Co., n.d.), p. 196.

¹⁰Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 93.

England.¹¹ And what part they actually played in the Reformation at that time is still an unanswered question.¹² Cramer continually deplored the abuse of the sacrament particularly by overzealous reformers.¹³ Like Luther, he had his "Carlistadts" and "Ihuensters" to trouble him almost as much as the Catholic party. And like Luther, he didn't shirk his duty. In fact, to Cramer is due the greater credit for stopping the Anabaptist danger and making the Reformation conservative.¹⁴

Among "the multiplied vexations and impediments which were scattered in his path towards the spiritual deliverance of his country"¹⁵ was that when Henry permitted reform it was usually for political reasons.¹⁶ Cramer was much more a loyal subject, a sincere man of God, and a scholar than a politician.

Still, Hardwick calls Cramer "the centre of the moral and doctrinal reformers." He continues:

¹¹ Ibid., p. 11.

¹² Philip Hughes, The Reformation in England (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), I, 196, reports that Lollard groups were scattered here and there and were really quite weak. On p. 133 he speaks of the Bible as being the only thing that preserved "the tiny spark of Lollardy." Per contra cf. E. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of The English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII) (Cambridge: The University Press, 1947), pp. 1-6, 11, who says, "They [the Lollards] were a factor to be taken seriously."

¹³ H. F. M. Prescott, Mary Tudor (New York: The Macmillan Company, c.1953), pp. 112f.

¹⁴ Dubbs, op. cit., p. 145.

¹⁵ Charles W. Le Bas, The Life of Archbishop Cramer (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833), I, 95.

¹⁶ Pollard, op. cit., pp. 114f.

He was gradually made conscious of the errors and abuses in this province of the Christian Church, and, as befitted his exalted name of "primate of all England," was determined to promote the work of purification and revival.¹⁷

And determined he was in his own due time and manner. Burnet reports that once against much opposition and though it was greatly revised and abandoned by many of the reforming party, Cramer by the sheer force of his persistence succeeded in getting a bill passed into law.¹⁸ Many, many times, however, his plans met with defeat no matter how hard he tried. For example, Cramer tried very hard to get a reform of the canon law, but he was never successful, not even in Edward's reign.¹⁹ On clerical marriage "he seems to have made a strenuous effort to convert Henry to his view"²⁰ and never succeeded. In 1538 Cramer tried to get Barnes the Deanery of Tamworth College, but his letter to Cromwell was to no avail.²¹ Burnet reports that he had elaborate and noble educational remedies for the clergy, but

—17—

Charles Hardwick, A History of the Articles of Religion: to which is added a Series of Documents, from A.D. 1536 to A.D. 1615; together with Illustrations from Contemporary Sources (London: George Bell & Sons, 1881), 18p. 32.

Gilbert Burnet, The History of the Reformation of the Church of England. Part I: Of the Progress Made in It During the Reign of Henry VIII (New York: D. Appleton and Co.; and Philadelphia: George S. Appleton, 1843) 19pp. 516f.

Cf. Ibid., pp. 530f., and Geoffrey W. Bromley, Thomas Cramer, Theologian (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. xvi and p. xii where he says: Cramer "was always pressing for a reform of the canon law. . . . But not unaturally he could never overcome the innate hostility of the civil rulers, who had no great desire for a stricter ecclesiastical discipline."

²¹Ibid., p. 49.

E. G. Rupp, op. cit., p. 43. The letter is printed in Thomas Cramer, Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cramer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556, Parker Society Publication, edited by John Edward Cox (Cambridge: The University Press, 1846), pp. 380f.

the popish party then at court, who very well apprehended the advantages such nurseries would have given to the Reformation, borne down this proposition, and turned all the King's bounty and foundations another way.

And so "Cramer's design was quite disappointed."²²

Yet Bromiley states:

With the introduction of the articles Cramer completed the three-fold contribution--Bible, Prayer Book and Confession--which more perhaps than the political enactments of King and Council has revolutionized the church and nation.²³

While the last two are usually thought of in connection with Edward's reign, Cramer made his influence felt in their precursors during Henry's reign. With his steady planning and persistence, the reform progressed as opportunities arose, counter-attacks were met and stopped or slowed, and the stage was continually being set for further scenes and developments in Henry's and in Edward's times. A survey of Cramer's influence and accomplishments with the publishing and distribution of the Bible, in the several outstanding religious acts and documents, and in a few miscellaneous other matters seems in place at this point.

The Bible

It is fitting that this be considered first, for Strype is probably not far wrong when he reports that the publishing of the English Bible "gave the good Archbishop as much joy as ever happend to him in all the

²²Burnet, op. cit., p. 483.

²³Bromiley, op. cit., p. xxvii.

time of his prelacy." He had to fight to get his way over the King, More, and most of the bishops in this matter of the English Bible.²⁵ But Cramer's Biblical interest and emphasis had been strong for many years already. He personally knew and used Greek and Hebrew, used the literal meaning, not an allegorical one, of the texts, and looked on Scripture as the highest authority in his life.²⁶ Scripture in the vernacular "could not but open the eyes of the nation." Therefore Cramer "made it his chief business to set it forward, which in conclusion he happily effected," Burnet states.²⁷ Strype says: "Our Archbishop, from his first entrance upon his dignity, had it much in his mind to get the holy Scriptures put into the vulgar language, and a liberty for all to read them." And he began with convocation in 1534 already.²⁸ "Cramer was instrumental in obtaining regal endorsement" for the English Bible version of 1537.²⁹ Indeed, "Henry was personally little concerned in the publication of the first authorized English

²⁴ John Strype, Memoriale of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cramer, Sonetime Archbishop of Canterbury. Wherein the History of the Church, and the Reformation of it, During the Primacy of the Said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; and many singular Matters relating thereunto, now first published (1694). In Three Books, Collected Chiefly from Records, Registers, Authentic Letters, and Other Original Manuscripts (A New edition, with additions; Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1812), I, 81.

²⁵ Cf. Pollard, op. cit., pp. 110f, and Hutchinson, op. cit., pp. 90f.

²⁶ Bronkley, op. cit., pp. 12ff. On p. 19 Cramer's attitude toward the Bible is well summarized.

²⁷ Burnet, op. cit., p. xxxix.

²⁸ Strype, op. cit., I, 34.

²⁹ Carl S. Meyer, "Cramer's Legacy," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVII (April 1956), 246. Cf. Pollard, op. cit., pp. 111-4.

bible."³⁰ It is reported:

Matthew's bible appeared in 1537 under Cramer's auspices with a dedication to the king, and was authorized by Cromwell,³¹ the clergy were enjoined in 1538 to have a copy in every church. This edition was called "the bible of the largest volume." A revised edition, published as Cramer's bible in 1540, was the first distinctly authorized to be read in churches instead of being merely placed there for consultation.³²

Fittingly enough, his name was popularly associated with the 1540 and 1541 revisions by Miles Coverdale. For a time it was generally known as "Cramer's Bible" from his excellent prologue which appeared in the first five editions.³³ Bromley declares:

It was not for nothing that Cramer as a university don had demanded a biblical knowledge from his students, and as archbishop took practical steps which resulted in the licensing and later the definite institution in the churches of the English Bible.³⁴

Cramer did not achieve this by sitting idly by and weekly proposing good ideas as they came to him in his study. In 1542 he had to counter Gardiner's attack on the English Bible after the latter had presented a long list of words which he wished to be retained in their "catholic and invariably incorrect usage." And he did so successfully.³⁵ Nor was he

³⁰James Cairdner, "Henry VIII," The Dictionary of National Biography, edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (London: Oxford University Press, 1949-50), IX, 545.

³¹J. M. Smith, op. cit., pp. 194-5, says, "Henry having received so much from Cramer, permitted an English version of the Scriptures, prepared by Miles Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, to be published in London, which was done in 1536 and dedicated to himself."

³²Cairdner, loc. cit.

³³Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 91.

³⁴Geoffrey W. Bromley, "Cramer's Message to Our Times," Christianity Today, I (November 12, 1956), p. 12.

³⁵Rupp, op. cit., p. 148.

content to bear the brunt of the legal battle (together with Cromwell through whom he worked to a great extent). Not only did he achieve its legal sale and use in England, but he publicly encouraged and gave somewhat detailed directions for beneficial use of the Bible.³⁶

Any idea of Cranmer's being mere putty in whosoever hands he fell is thoroughly controverted by the case of his continual, steady, persistent, strong advocacy and the step by step progress of the English Bible throughout Henry's reign and Cranmer's life. Even during the period of Catholic triumph (the extent of which has been exaggerated)³⁷ free use of Scripture was decreed by Henry "granted at Cranmer's intercession." He "now procured leave for private persons to buy Bibles, and keep them in their houses."³⁸

It is recorded that

between 1533 and 1553 [Henry died in February, 1547], during the time Cranmer was the leading churchman of England, seventy editions of the Bible or the New Testament appeared in English. Not all, but also not a few, of these were due to Cranmer's concern.³⁹

The importance of this one achievement of Cranmer's during Henry's reign and from time to time having the king's own endorsement can scarcely be overemphasized for the progress of the English Reformation.⁴⁰ But what of the various articles and injunctions?

³⁶ Strype, *op. cit.*, I, 90f.

³⁷ Cf. Rupp, *op. cit.*, pp. 147ff.

³⁸ Barnet, *op. cit.*, pp. 433f.

³⁹ Meyer, "Cranmer's Legacy," *op. cit.*, p. 243.

⁴⁰ Hutchinson, *op. cit.*, p. 15, says: "The cause of the Reformation in England was less advanced by Lutheran treatises than by the acquaintance of scholars with Erasmus' Greek Testament and his new Latin translation among the laity, and by the translations of the Bible in the vernacular."

The Ten Articles

Pollard says that Cranmer's general influence on Henry was remarkable and that this shows up particularly in the Ten Articles.⁴¹ Strype gives the background:

[Cranmer] consulting with . . . Cromwel . . . and by his and other his friends, importuning the King, a commission was issued out from him in the year 1537 . . . for various divines to meet together, and to devise on wholesome and plain exposition . . . and to set forth a truth of religion purged of errors and heresies. Accordingly they met at the Archbishop's house at Lambeth.⁴²

Rupp feels that there evidently was some dependence shown in the Ten Articles on the Wittenberg Articles. Of the latter he comments that it "was in no way a theological masterpiece and it soon dropped into the background of reformation confessional literature." He discusses the relationship and concludes: "The result was that the Ten Articles were more garbled even than the Wittenberg Articles. . . . 'Confusissime compositi,' sighed Melancthon, as he pondered his copy of them."⁴³

Hughes' view is important. He feels very definitely that the Articles of Wittenberg, accepted provisionally by the Bishop of Hereford as Henry's representative and which Henry refused to ratify, "influenced none the less, the next stage of the king's religious policy, and through the Ten Articles of 1536 helped on the first undoubted official movement toward an acceptance of the Protestant conception of Christianity."⁴⁴

⁴¹Pollard, op. cit., p. 104.

⁴²Strype, op. cit., I, 72.

⁴³Rupp, op. cit., pp. 111-114.

⁴⁴Hughes, op. cit., pp. 354f.

The Ten Articles were a compromise document, and they "bear indubitable traces of conflicting principles, and must have, therefore, been the fruit of mutual concession." The many variations in the various copies witness this, too, Hardwick points out further.⁴⁵ The compromise element apparently led one historian to declare: "These articles seem to have been drafted by the king himself and revised by Cramer."⁴⁶ Perhaps a paragraph from the "Preface" to the Ten Articles would serve to show its character. It was written by or in the name of Henry and signed by Cromwell, Cramer and a host of others.

Among other cures appertaining ["committed" in a variant] unto this our princely office, whereunto it hath pleased Almighty God of His infinite mercy and goodness to call us, we have always esteemed and thought, like as we also yet esteem and think, that it most chiefly belougeth unto our said charge diligently to foresee and cause, that not only the most holy word and commandments of God should most sincerely be believed, and most reverently be observed and kept of our subjects, but also that unity and concord in opinion, namely in such things as doth concern our religion, may increase and go forthward, and all occasion of dissent and discord touching the same be repressed and utterly extinguished.⁴⁷

The Sacrament of Penance is kept quite Romanish in Article III. The Sacrament of the Altar has a very definite Catholic leaning, and yet the Lutheran position is not explicitly condemned (Article IV). In Article V Justification receives a Lutheran treatment in the main, with some

⁴⁵ Hardwick, op. cit., p. 39. E.g., "Articles devised by the King's Highness" and "Articles about Religion, set out by the Convocation, and published by the King's authority."

⁴⁶ James Gairdner, "Cramer, Thomas," The Dictionary of National Biography edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (London: Oxford University Press, 1949-50, p. 22. Strype mentions this, too, however, being sure to state "we have reason to attribute a great share therein to the Archbishop." Strype, op. cit., I, 57.

⁴⁷ Hardwick, op. cit., p. 239.

Catholic ideas admitted. Article VII shows a "modified reverence" for the saints. Article VIII still declares, however, "it is very laudable to pray to saints in heaven . . . to be intercessors." Nevertheless, many "cautions" and "caveat's" are added--also in Article IX on Rites and Ceremonies. In Article X the wording is very tactful, but it is decidedly against the papal doctrine of Purgatory.⁴⁸ Hardwick attributes the rebellion in the north to a reaction against the Ten Articles.⁴⁹

Hughes points out how many of the Ten Articles have Lutheran words and phrases in them and declares it a "careful compromise in words between Traditionalists and Reformed--to the gain, of course, of the Reformed."⁵⁰ And again, "This solitary reference [to the mass] is in flat contradiction with Catholic teaching; as is also the statement, in this last article, about indulgences."⁵¹ And in regard to the Ten Articles and the accompanying injunctions Hughes significantly points out that while "the people are to be taught from the pulpit an English version of the Our Father, the Creed . . . and the Ten Commandments," the "Hail Mary" is omitted.⁵² Strype conjectures that the many Biblical references to confirm the respective tenets "instead of the ordinary custom then used, of doing it by schoolmen and popish canons" were "inserted by the pen of the Archbishop." In evaluating the character of the Ten Articles he declares:

⁴⁸ Hardwick, op. cit., pp. 45-47 (commentary), 248ff. (text of the articles).

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 49-50.

⁵⁰ Hughes, op. cit., pp. 350f.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 352.

⁵² Ibid., p. 354.

We find indeed many popish errors were mixed with evangelical truths: which must either be attributed to the defectiveness of our prelate's knowledge as yet in true religion, or being the principles and opinions of the King, or both. Let not any be offended herewith; but let him rather take notice, what a great deal of Gospel doctrine here came to light; and not only so, but was owned and propounded by authority to be believed and practiced.⁵³

That the evangelical party and Cramer's position had influence is shown, too, by a reading of the First Royal Injunctions of Henry in 1536 in explanation of the Ten Articles.⁵⁴ Hardwick points out that officially they were not supplanted until the King's Book in 1543 and that many of the articles had been substantially engrafted on the Bishops' Book in 1537.⁵⁵ The Ten Articles are very important as the first real step toward an evangelical theology in the English Reformation. Cramer was close to the King and had an important part in the framing of the Ten Articles. Rupp sums up the evangelical strategy and success nicely:

⁵³ Strype, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 62f. Pp. 58-62 contain an abbreviated text of the Ten Articles. Hardwick's insight in this connection is worthy of note: "These Articles [the Ten Articles] belong to a transition-period. They embody the ideas of men who were emerging gradually into a different sphere of thought, who could not for the present contemplate the truth they were recovering, either in its harmonies or contrasts, and who consequently did not shrink from acquiescing in accommodations and concessions which to ripener understandings might have seemed like the betrayal of a sacred trust." Hardwick, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

⁵⁴ Cf. Henry Gee and William John Hardy, Documents Illustrative of English Church History Compiled From Original Sources (London: Macmillan & Co., Limited, 1921), p. 269ff.

⁵⁵ Hardwick, *op. cit.*, p. 50 says: "But this early set of articles [the Ten] was virtually superseded in the course of the next year (1537), on the appearance of a second Formulary of Faith, entitled the 'Institution of a Christian Man.' On it, however, many of the Articles of 1536 had been substantially engrafted; and as the new work never gained the formal sanction either of Convocation or the Crown these articles were really [*italics his*] in force until supplanted by the 'Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man,' set forth as late as 1543."

The Ten Articles had indeed gone rather far in omitting the four sacraments, and in the context of the rebellion the evangelical bishops concentrated on getting their distinction accepted between the three primary sacraments and the others, as indeed was included in the Bishops' Book.⁵⁶

The Bishops' Book

"The Institution of a Christian Man," or the "Bishops' Book," as it was popularly called, was drawn up by a number of commissioners, but never regularly submitted to Convocation. And although it was published by the king's printer, it was not, like the Ten Articles, provided with a preface by the king commanding it to be received by his subjects. And while he assented to its publication, Henry did not commit himself to a full sanction of its contents. "Being thus destitute of the royal authority, it was called the Bishops' Book."⁵⁷

Rupp states: "Edward Foxe took a leading part, and may be considered editor-in-chief. Crammer, though much pressed by other affairs, did what he could."⁵⁸ But Foxe was then a chronic invalid and a dying man, and the work was interrupted. Then, when the work was shaped and the king would have been consulted, the Plague came, the bishops were forbidden to bring the contagion of the "smoky air" of London into the royal presence, and the bishops dispersed. Rupp postulates: "Perhaps these delays rather than Royal guile account for the manner of his half approval."⁵⁹ At any

⁵⁶ Rupp, op. cit., p. 136.

⁵⁷ Hardwick, op. cit., p. 50, in a footnote.

⁵⁸ Rupp, op. cit., p. 139.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

rate the king "kept it for six months, and then authorized its publication, declaring he had not had time to examine it as requested."⁶⁰

Pollard agrees that with "The Bishops' Book, Henry had little to do. . . . He trusted, however, to their wisdom and agreed that the book should be published and read to the people on Sundays and holy days for three years to come."⁶¹

Rupp shows that the Bishops' Book derived large portions directly from Luther through Marshall's Primer, though these portions were mainly non-controversial. Even the division of the book into Creed, Sacraments, Commandments, and Lord's Prayer shows an obvious affinity to Luther's Small Catechism. The Church of Rome is declared to be a "particular member" of the universal Church. Baptism, Penance, and the Sacrament of the Altar are taken from the Ten Articles. Confirmation and Matrimony have a sacramental character to them. However, the section that caused the most discussion in court circles and was most criticized by Henry in his comments on the book was the one on Orders, particularly the section dealing with the controverted potestas jurisdictionis as distinct from the potestas ordinis. And Rupp points out that "there is some evidence that it was written by Cuthbert Tunstal," and of all the sections it was the most severely handled in revision being almost a new treatise in the King's Book. Rupp states pointedly:

⁶⁰Gairdner, "Henry VIII," op. cit., p. 545.

⁶¹Albert F. Pollard, Henry VIII (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), p. 379. Cf. Cranmer, op. cit., pp. 469, 83ff., 359f. On p. 337, n. 3, 2nd column, there is a nice summary of the whole argument and place of authority, with an attempt to help solve some of the difficulties involved. Cf. also pp. 469f. for Henry's letters regarding the publishing of the Bishops' Book.

The treatment of this section warns us against judging the pronouncements of this period from any modern notion of "evangelical" and "catholic," "conservative" or "reformed." It is possible that this section of the work was one reason why Henry withheld from it his full approval.⁶²

It marked another step, however, in the direction Cranmer was pointing. Henry not only declined all responsibility for the Bishops' Book of 1537, but soon afterward "urged on its revision."⁶³ Henry "at his leisure diligently perused, corrected, and augmented."⁶⁴ He then sent it to Cranmer to give his judgments on his changes. Note the difference in the tone of the reports of Cranmer's reply between Strype and Rupp:

The Archbishop advisedly read and considered what the King had writ; and, disliking some things, made his own annotations upon some of the royal corrections. . . .⁶⁵

Book-tasting, "as it were," aptly describes the royal theological method, and the best measure of the theological learning of the King lies, not in the sparkling erudition of the treatise against Luther, but in the comments on the details of the Bishops' Book which the King sent to Cranmer. Cranmer's counter criticisms should dispose of yet another legend, that of the Archbishop's timidity, for he takes his royal master to task as severely as if he had been back at Jesus, coming with tired severity the efforts of the youngest in the Schools: now it is clumsy English, then bad Latin, here redundancy of thought exposed, there flat disagreement registered.⁶⁶

Although he covers the criticism with a very tactful letter, Cranmer was not sparing in upholding what he felt was true and pointing out in no uncertain terms what he felt was false. That he and Henry were not one in

⁶²Rupp, op. cit., pp. 140f.

⁶³Follard, Henry VIII., p. 417.

⁶⁴Strype, op. cit., I, 79.

⁶⁵Ibid. Part of Cranmer's letter to the king is quoted on p. 73f. But the dates mentioned seem impossible!

⁶⁶Rupp, op. cit., p. 139. The text of both Henry's and Cranmer's criticisms can be found in Cranmer, op. cit., pp. 83ff.

doctrine is amply shown by the criticisms. It is remarkable that they continued throughout Henry's reign not only as king and loyal subject, nor even only as very good friends, but as respecting one another highly throughout the many consultations with each other, discussions and frequent disagreements. The personal character of Cramer was a real influence on Henry, if often behind the scenes, and is shown here again in the openness of approach he had to a king who is often described as both fickle and ruthless. The evangelical advances evidenced in the Bishops' Book in the first place may have been allowed to be published and used (though without royal endorsement) partly because of his respect for Cramer and his part in them. Though it may be but a courtly nicety or custom, Henry's words to the commission seem to fit well his opinion of Cramer and perhaps in thought he addressed to him particularly. At any rate, with the following quasi-endorsement the Bishops' Book was published and commended to be used:

According to your humble suit and petition, we have caused your said book both to be printed, and will the same to be conveyed into all the parties of our realm, nothing doubting but that you, being men of such learning and virtue, as we know you to be, have indeed performed in the whole work that you do promise in the preface.

And even after Henry worked through the work and criticized it, Pollard could say that he "had fully discussed with Cramer the amendments he thought the book needed."⁶⁸ The Archbishop was in the front line throughout.

⁶⁷Cramer, *op. cit.*, p. 469. Cf. Strype, *op. cit.*, I, 72-5, for a portrayal of the struggle between evangelical archbishop and bigoted king in the matter of the Bishops' Book.

⁶⁸Pollard, *loc. cit.*

The Thirteen Articles

In 1538 a number of German and English bishops and divines headed by Cramer met for five months and arrived at the Thirteen Articles, based on the results provisionally reached at Wittenberg two years before.

Hardwick says:

Traces are surviving of a partial disagreement between them [the German Lutheran delegation] and the committee of English theologians; yet we also know that union was effected to a very great extent, and that a number of Articles were actually compiled as the result of their deliberations on the leading points of Christianity.⁶⁹

The political situation changed and Henry refused to consider the conclusions to which they came. Their influence and use in the Forty-Two Articles later is universally acknowledged, particularly because it

is manifestly founded on the Confession of Augsburg, often following it very closely, and departing from it exactly in those instances where the mixture of English and German theology might have been expected to cause a variation. It is also in Latin. . . .⁷⁰

Rupp says:

The Thirteen Articles . . . attained no measure of public authority whatever. . . . The origin of them is threefold: the Augsburg Confession, the Wittenberg Articles of 1536, and the deliberations of 1538.

He continues with a summary "indication of the extent to which those sources were blended." While he attributes to them an "intrinsic interest, apart

⁶⁹Hardwick, op. cit., p. 59.

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 60ff. It is printed out in Latin on pp. 259ff., showing the parallels to the Augsburg Confession. Cf. pp. 62f. for a comparison of the Thirteen Articles and the Augsburg Confession. P. 13: "The XIII Articles, drawn up, as we shall see, in 1538, were based almost entirely on the language of the great Germanic Confession."

from the use made of them in the articles of 1552,"⁷¹ they have little relation to the topic at hand except perhaps that even with Henry's extreme disinterest and even discourtesy toward the visiting Lutherans, Cranmer was allowed to initiate, continue, and complete (in some manner at least) the negotiations, debates, and discussions so far as to draw up the Thirteen Articles. There was value in it, and whatever the extent of its value Cranmer probably deserves a great share of the credit. But its immediate influence on Henry was minute.

The King's Book

Active steps towards a revision of the Bishops' Book were taken as early as June 1540 when two commissions were appointed, one to deal with doctrine and the other with ceremonies. There was still difference of opinion about the number of Sacraments and the questions of Orders, particularly on that part of the Bishops' Book which denied priestly functions to the king. In April 1543 various committees were appointed to consider the various parts of the new book. Rupp points out that although the Catholic Party were of great influence at this time, it should be noted that the chairman of the all-important section on the sacraments was the Archbishop Thomas Cranmer.

This time the King kept in close touch with the makers of the book and it is clear that full and respectful use had been made of his comments on the Bishops' Book. The Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man [the official title of the King's Book] does not reflect a "triumph for the Catholic party." . . . Many changes were simply due to exigencies of style, spacing and general arrangement.⁷²

⁷¹Rupp, op. cit., pp. 117f.

⁷²Ibid., p. 150. Cf. Rupp, op. cit., pp. 148ff. Strype, op. cit., I, 75, does not know whether it came out in 1540 or 1543. He thinks it

Rupp presents a very pregnant five-page summary of the theological content, intent, and direction of the various parts of the King's Book and concludes: "Thus there is enough compromise in the shaping of the King's Book to have enabled the Reformers to hope that the Word of God had not lost the upper hand."⁷³

Hardwick calls it "on the whole a revised edition of the Bishops' Book, although (as Collier observes) 'it seems mostly to lose ground, and reform backwards.'" He continues to point out that unlike its predecessor it was not only drawn up by a committee of divines, but "actually approved in Convocation, and enjoined by a royal mandate."⁷⁴

Strype says that Cramer "allowed no preaching or arguing against" the King's Book in his diocese although

indeed there were some points therein which the Archbishop himself did not approve of, foisted into it by Winchester's means and interest at that time with the King.⁷⁵ Which bishop,

was 1540. He calls it the Bishops' Book come "forth again . . . very much enlarged, and reduced into another form and bearing another name." On p. 78 he says: "In the year 1543 the same book was printed again, amended much both in sense and language: yet not having any step in the progress of the reformation more than the former. . . . But in this much is added about free-will, which it asserts, and good works. In 1544, the same was printed again . . . in Latin. . . ." On pp. 136f. he states: "The Archbishop was this year [1542] . . . employed in the King's Book. . . . For the King was minded now to have it well reviewed . . . corrected and amended: and so to have it recommended unto the people as a complete book of Christian principles, in the stead of the Scripture: which, upon pretence of their abuse of, the King would not allow longer to be read . . . accordingly . . . copy sent to Cramer to peruse: which he did, and added his own annotations upon various passages in it at good length."

⁷³Rupp, op. cit., p. 154.

⁷⁴Hardwick, op. cit., p. 50f.

⁷⁵Rupp, op. cit., pp. 149f., points out in contrast to Cramer's chairmanship of the "all-important section on the Sacraments," that "We find Gardiner with the Bishops of Rochester and Westminster reporting on

politely as well as flatteringly, called it The King's Book, a title which the Archbishop did not much like. . . . But because of the authority of parliament ratifying the book, and the many good and useful things that were in it, the Archbishop introduced and countenanced it in his diocese, and would not allow open preaching against it.⁷⁶

At any rate and whatever its excellencies may have been, Pollard states flatly: "It failed of its purpose,"⁷⁷ which Strype had said was to give the people "a complete book of Christian principles, in the stead of the Scripture; which, upon pretence of their abuse of, the King would not allow longer to be read."⁷⁸

It is hard to come to a clear conclusion here. It was not the step forward the Ten Articles and the Bishops' Book were--on paper at least. But it was official and close to Henry's wishes and designs for such a document. That it was not still closer to his theology or leaning more toward the Catholic side seems very noteworthy in the context of the time when it was published and may speak very well of the leaven of the Archbishop.

the 'Lord's Prayer' and the 'Ave Maria' and the same bishops examining the exposition of 'Faith.'" Strype seems particularly weak on the whole matter of the King's Book. Cf. *supra*, footnote 72. Perhaps he is generalizing from Gardiner's letter to Cramer. Cf. footnote 76.

⁷⁶Strype, *op. cit.*, I, 143. *Ibid.*, II, 780f., contains a letter from Gardiner to Cramer written on this very point after Henry's death and four years after publication of the King's Book: "It greveth me much to rede wryten from your G. in the begynning of your lettres, how the King our late Sovereign was seduced, and in that he knew by whom he was compassed in that I cal the Kings Majesties Book. Which is not his Book, because I cal it so, but because it was indeed so acknowledged by the hol Parliament, and acknowledged so by your G. thom, and al his life; which, as you afterwards write, ye commanded to be published and red in your Diocese, as his book. . . ."

⁷⁷Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 418.

⁷⁸Strype, *op. cit.*, I, 176.

The Six Articles of 1539

Pollard says: "The endeavor to stretch all his subjects on the Procrustean bed of Six Articles was one of Henry's least successful enterprises!"⁷⁹ Strype says the act came about in this way: The King was

displeased with the Archbishop and the other bishops of the new learning, as they then termed them, because they could not be brought to give their consent in the parliament that the King should have all the monasteries suppressed to his own sole use.

They wanted the money for schools, Strype continues; the king was influenced by Gardiner and company, and he "made the terrible bloody cut of the Six Articles."⁸⁰ Rupp reports that a German embassy was on the way to England.

Then came the news that an agreement had been reached between the German Protestants and the Emperor, one article of which forbade the widening of the League by the admission of new members. This was a fatal, perhaps a deliberate, blow at the negotiations in England. . . . If this was a snub to the English, what followed was a resounding buffet for the Germans. So far from the "four abuses" being eradicated, the new act of Six Articles named, commended and enforced them under savage penalties. The "foreign policy" aspect of the Six Articles is not to be exaggerated, but it deserves to be noted. They ended all hope in the hearts of the Elector and the theologians of Wittenberg. It was now quite clear that Henry had been moved throughout by political motives.⁸¹

At the time they passed it did not look like Crommer had any influence at all with the king. And ten years later Crommer still protested that the Act would never have been passed: "If the King had not come into

⁷⁹Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 401.

⁸⁰Strype, op. cit., I, 103.

⁸¹Rupp, op. cit., p. 121.

the parliament house" and that it was "enforced by the counsel of certain papists against the truth and common judgment both of divines and lawyers."⁸² The articles are a definite reaction against the intent of the Bishops' Book as Cramer expressed it.⁸³ Yet Rupp points out that this "sensational" act "made explicit much which in the Bishops' Book had either been ignored or veiled in reticent ambiguity." And he says "there was nothing in the Six Articles which explicitly and directly contradicted "the Institution of a Christian Man."⁸⁴

Briefly, the Six Articles upheld transubstantiation only, communion in one kind, clerical celibacy vows of chastity, private masses, and auricular confession as necessary and good.⁸⁵ And although "against these the Archbishop of Canterbury argued long," yes, "argued three days against these articles,"⁸⁶ and although Strype entitles a whole chapter "The Archbishop retired," and conjectures that "the troubles he met with in these

⁸²Ibid., p. 147, and Cramer, op. cit., p. 168. Gairdner, "Cramer, Thomas," op. cit., p. 22, says, "Cramer used every effort on the side of freedom. . . . But his efforts were fruitless. The king himself entered the house and his influence immediately silenced the advocates of the new learning." Strype, op. cit., II, 743, quotes, "Part of a Letter from a Member of Parliament, concerning the transactions of the House, about passing the Act of the Six Articles." Thus: "I assure you never Prince shewed himself so wise a man, so well lerned, and so Catholik, as the King hath done in this Parlyment. . . . And notwithstanding my Lord of Canterbury . . . defended the contrary long tyme: Yet finally his Highness confounded them all with Goddes learning." (sic)

⁸³Cramer, op. cit., p. 351. Rupp concurs when he quotes from it: Rupp, op. cit., p. 147.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Cf. Geo, op. cit., p. 303-19, for the complete text of the Six Articles. Cf. Cramer, op. cit., p. 168, in a footnote, for an excellent summary of them.

⁸⁶Burnet, op. cit., pp. 413 and 415.

times from his enemies, made him judge it convenient for him now more warily to conceal himself until better days,"⁸⁷ Rupp relates:

The extent of Catholic triumph has been exaggerated. Shaxton and Latimer resigned their sees, but both had been stormy petrels and never did bishop more eagerly lose his charge than Latimer, nor could happier days induce him to take again the burden. But Cramer, Barlow, Hilsey and Goodrich all retained theirs, and there is much evidence that the King even went out of his way to show his favour to Cramer.⁸⁸

Pollard declares: "The ferocious Act of Six Articles had never been more than fitfully executed."⁸⁹ And a year after the Act was passed Henry "ordered that 'no further persecution should take place for religion, and that those in prison should be set at liberty on finding security for their appearance when called for.'"⁹⁰ Cramer himself wrote that "within a year or a little more" Henry "was fain to temper his said laws, and moderate them in divers points; so that the Statute of Six Articles continued in force little above the space of one year."⁹¹ Pollard says:

The idea that from 1539 to 1547 there was a continuous and rigorous persecution is a legend derived from Foxe; there were outbursts of rigour in 1540, 1543, and 1546, but except for these the Six Articles remained almost a dead letter.⁹²

Rupp opines:

⁸⁷ Strype, op. cit., I, 123.

⁸⁸ Rupp, op. cit., p. 147. Cf. also Burnet, op. cit., p. 426, where he speaks of Henry's reassurances to Cramer and his request to write out all grievances against the Six Articles--even sending the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk and Cromwell to dine with and reassure Cramer.

⁸⁹ Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 415.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 401.

⁹¹ Quoted in Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

If Henry did relax the enforcement of the legal penalties attached to the Six Articles it was not because he had been moved by German pressure. Meanwhile, the marriage negotiations must continue and Henry had no wish to break altogether with Wittenberg.⁹³

Editor Cox relates that in the year 1544 Cranmer succeeded "through his influence with the king, in mitigating the Act of the Six Articles, and effecting a great change in the forms of public devotion, by the introduction of an English Litany, with responses." However, he states that his further attempts at a reformation were defeated, and only "by the continuance of the firm friendship of Henry" was he released from "another measure of hostility on the part of his adversaries" in 1545.⁹⁴

Miscellaneous Achievements

Ratcliff concurs in the opinion that "until Henry VIII died, circumstances remained unfavourable to extending the use of English beyond the Litany."⁹⁵ Cranmer's secretary, Morice, "truly says: 'Men ought to consider with whom he [Cranmer] had to do, specially with such a prince as could not be bridled, nor be againstsaid in any of his requests.'"⁹⁶ Burnet discusses Henry's particular reasons for being personally against the Reformation--as it touched or came from the Lutherans at any rate--and how Cranmer, greatly influenced by the Lutherans, worked on Henry

⁹³Rupp, op. cit., p. 125.

⁹⁴Cranmer, op. cit., p. ix.

⁹⁵E. C. Ratcliff, "The Liturgical Work of Archbishop Cranmer," The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, VII (October 1956), p. 194.

⁹⁶Gairdner, "Cranmer, Thomas," op. cit., p. 24.

persistently.⁹⁷ Bromiley is of the opinion that the execution of Cromwell had more serious consequences than the Six Articles,

for it deprived Cranmer of his main supporter, reversed the policy with which he had been identified, brought his most active opponents to power, and threatened ruin and disgrace to Cranmer himself. Indeed, the odds in London were ten to one that Cranmer would share the fate of his lay colleague.⁹⁸

Cranmer worked against heavy odds throughout his career under Henry. This makes his accomplishments the more remarkable. Peter Martyr wrote to Bullinger in 1550 that the labor of Cranmer "is not to be expressed. For whatever has hitherto been wrested from them (the bishops) we have acquired solely by the industry, and activity, and importunity of this prelate."⁹⁹ What were some of the rest of Cranmer's accomplishments with Henry?

Strype points to two abuses in religion that Cranmer

by time and seasonable inculcation brought the King off from. He had a very great esteem for images in churches, and for the worship used to the cross; and many disputations and discourses happened between the King and the Archbishop concerning them. . . . At length, by the Archbishop's wife¹⁰⁰ and moderate carriage and speeches, the King was brought to another opinion, and to give him orders for the abolishing of a great many of them.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Burnet, op. cit., pp. 282f.

⁹⁸ Bromiley, op. cit., p. xvi.

⁹⁹ Cranmer, op. cit., p. x.

¹⁰⁰ A strange and inexplicable reference! It is very difficult to find more than mere references to the fact that he had a wife. And Strype here has her influencing King Henry! That is, unless "wife" is a misprint for "life." Then, of course, it fits.

¹⁰¹ Strype, op. cit., I, 195. He continues: "But when he had done this, he would not forego the other, but commanded kneeling and creeping to the cross. And gross was the superstition that was committed in this blind devotion; which the King, by the Archbishop's means, being at length sensible of, was prevailed with that this also should no more be used. . . ."

There is much discussion about Cramer's assertion that in the last months of his reign the king commanded him to pen a form for the alteration of the Mass into a Communion. Whatever the reason or the extent of the "command," some of Cramer's influence would almost have to be present.¹⁰² The Epistle and the Gospel came to be read in English and part of the liturgy of the Lord's Prayer.¹⁰³

Occasional prayers and suffrages to be used in all the churches were increasingly advocated by royal authority toward the end of Henry's reign. Strype attributes it to Cramer's influence on the king, fitting in with his purpose that he might

by little and little, bring into use prayer in the English tongue . . . that the people, by understanding part of their prayers, might be the more desirous to have their whole service rendered intelligible; whereby God might be served with the more seriousness and true devotion.¹⁰⁴

Cramer's influence shows itself plainly in the 1538 Injunctions.

Hughes declares:

The Angelus is abolished and forbidden . . . "lest the people do hereafter trust to have pardon for the saying of their 'Aves'; and "it must be taught and preached" that, in the Litany of the Saints, "better it were to omit Ora pro nobis."¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³Hutchinson, op. cit., p. 101.

¹⁰⁴Strype, op. cit., I, 181f. Even after he obtained royal approval of some things and royal injunctions, too, reforms often were not carried out, e.g., concerning "certain godly prayers and suffrages in our native English tongue . . ., we have sent unto you these suffrages, not to be for a month or two observed, and after, slenderly considered, as other our injunctions have to our no little marvel been used." And a threat, "you will answer to us for the contrary," must be added. This is found in "Literae Regiae Archiepiscopo Cantuar, pro Publicatione Regiarum Injunctionum," Cramer, op. cit., p. 494.

¹⁰⁵Hughes, op. cit., p. 362.

In them, too, Bible reading was promoted as well as the setting up of the Great Bible in each church where the people could best read it. The people were to be taught the Pater Noster and the Creed in English. They were to be preached on. How they were to be taught was carefully outlined, a phrase a week. Teeth were to be put in the process--no Lord's Supper to be given them next Lent if they did not know them. Idolatry and superstition, pilgrimages and some images were to be forgotten. One is struck by the very sweeping reform of Roman abuses contained in these injunctions--on paper. ¹⁰⁶

Cranmer had success in getting from Henry an act for "translating of the prayers for the processions and litanies into the English tongue" together with an order that it should be used all over Cranmer's province. ¹⁰⁷

In 1543 a general revision of service-books was ordered, with a view to eradicating "false legends" and references to saints not mentioned in the Bible, or in the "authentic doctors." ¹⁰⁸

A Parker Society volume contains a document of considerations that Cranmer offered to Henry in 1537 "to induce him to proceed to further

¹⁰⁶

See, *op. cit.*, pp. 276ff. Burnet, *op. cit.*, p. 363ff., thinks the king's injunctions, "it is likely, were penned by Cranmer." They definitely were opposed to the pope, some images, shrines, feast days, pilgrimages, overuse of taverns, and advocated instead the education of the people, especially of the children, and giving to the poor. At any rate, "The very opinions . . . for which the Lollards were, not long ago either burnt or forced to abjure them, were now set up by the King's authority." *Ibid.*, p. 365.

¹⁰⁷

Burnet, *op. cit.*, p. 532. Ratcliff, "The Liturgical Work of Archbishop Cranmer," *op. cit.*, p. 190, presents a good example in a letter of Cranmer to Henry, of how Cranmer himself worked and how he worked on and appealed to Henry. Burnet, *op. cit.*, p. 534, quotes the contents of a paper of Cranmer to Henry "to persuade him to proceed to a further reformation." It's mainly a warning against papistic things--very tactfully, yet firmly and vitally done.

¹⁰⁸

Pollard, Henry VIII, p. 417.

Reformation," particularly for marriage of the clergy. Cranmer even offers his life as forfeit if defeated in open debate on the question.¹⁰⁹ Apparently Henry ignored the whole thing. Cranmer remained alive, and the clergy remained legally celibate.

Pollard reports that

amid the distractions of his Scottish intrigues, of his campaign in France, and of his defence of England, the King was engaged in his last hopeless endeavour to secure unity and concord in religious opinion!¹¹⁰

This was about 1543-4 and shows that Cranmer and/or his associates in favor of reform had some influence or hold on Henry that he should be thus so concerned.

Burnet cites documents "written by the King; which show that then he did not believe there was a purgatory."¹¹¹ Someone changed this mind.

Who but Cranmer in a matter such as this?

Burnet also says that with Cromwell's fall

the progress of the Reformation, which had been by his endeavors so far advanced, was quite stopped. For all that Cranmer could do after this, was to keep the ground they had gained; but he could never advance much farther. And indeed every one expected to see him go next.¹¹²

Overstated as this may be concerning Cranmer's personal danger and the reformation being "quite stopped," Burnet does set forth a point worthy of mention and keeping in mind when evaluating Cranmer's influence on Henry.

¹⁰⁹ Cranmer, *op. cit.*, pp. 466f.

¹¹⁰ Pollard, *Henry VIII*, p. 415.

¹¹¹ Burnet, *op. cit.*, p. 592.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 458. Burnet even says that "it is very probably, that had not the incontinence of Katherine Howard . . . broken out not long after, he had been sacrificed the next session of parliament."

That point is the "keeping the ground they had gained" and stopping the very strong opposition party time and again with Henry and his power.

Another influence not to be overlooked is seen in a last minute change in Henry's will, leaving Gardiner out of the ruling council entirely and Cranmer and the reformers in control during Edward's reign.¹¹³

Finally Todd says of Cranmer's influence on Henry toward Henry's end that it was great enough "to promote many who coincided in his opinions; and [Cranmer] numbered on his own side more prelates than at any time before."¹¹⁴

¹¹³H. N. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 158. Follard, *Henry VIII*, p. 421, says: "His [Henry's] days were numbered and finished, and every one thought of the morrow. A child of nine would reign, but who should rule? Hertford or Norfolk? The party of reform or that of reaction?" Strype, *op. cit.*, I, 636, contributes: "And as for this King's next successor, King Edward, the Archbishop had a special care of his education. Whose towardliness, and zealous inclination to a reformation, was attributed to the said Archbishop, and three other bishops; viz. Ridley, Hoper and Latimer, by Rudolph Gualter of Zurich: who, partly by his living some time in England, and partly by his long and intimate familiarity and correspondence with many of the best note here, was well acquainted with the matters relating to this kingdom. Of the great influence of one of these upon this King, viz. the Archbishop, the former memorials do sufficiently show."

¹¹⁴Henry John Todd, *The Life of Archbishop Cranmer* (London: C. J. G. & F. Revington, 1831), 2 vols., I, 372. Hughes, *op. cit.*, p. 342, says: "When, in the winter of 1533, the decision was taken to set religion upon the new principle that the English king is, in England, the supreme earthly head of the Church of Christ, there was, among the leading counsellors and ministers of Henry VIII one alone who, at that moment, had any real sympathy with the Reformation going on abroad. This was the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer. Two years later Henry had despatched an embassy to the Lutheran princes of Germany, and was allowing his ambassadors to discuss a theological accommodation with Luther himself; and of the seven appointments to vacant sees in that short interval, six had gone to men with Lutheran sympathies. Cranmer no longer stood alone; he was, indeed, the leader of a party." Burnet, *op. cit.*, p. 534, attests that Cranmer was outdone by Gardiner in playing politics with Henry in world affairs. But on the next page he points out that Cranmer "alone, without friend or support" appointed many reforming bishops and the archbishop of York, "so that now Cranmer had a greater party among the bishops than at any time before." *Ibid.*, p. 535.

This was another big step forward for the Reformation. And finally Cramer himself attests his great and growing influence on Henry towards the end.¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵Todd, op. cit., pp. 375f., says, "While Cramer's optimistic statements regarding this cannot be verified and substantiated clearly and precisely from other evidence as yet, neither is it a lighter task to disprove him and show him up as a dreamer."

In the circumstances and position of the King, it may indeed be argued that the other way round, Henry himself, could have had any such words. Even the constant crying wolf at the side of John's despots.

For the "British Dictionary" George says of Richard that he

received part of his education between 1512, that was that time, to of the royal council, deliberation, and individuality were, with the King and the people of this state, and were collected from the long and short teachings of Henry.

Henry's advice and eventually how he went about doing this:

By the presence of Cramer was constant and persistent. He was always in his own consciousness, and he did not attempt to prove that Henry was wrong. He was always in touch with the inevitable circumstances of the time, and a lot of instruction on the other. The King was not so

¹George F. S. Todd, Richard III and the English Reformation, 1899 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900), pp. 113f.

²George F. S. Todd, "Cramer's Influence on Henry VIII," Historical Magazine, December 11, 1900, p. 17.

³John Strype, Annals of the King Edward VI and the English Reformation, 1709 (London: Printed by W. Stansfeld, 1811), p. 113. The history of the Church, and the Reformation of it, during the reign of the said King Edward, are pretty illustrated; and many singular events relating thereto, are there published (1694). In these books, collected chiefly from Strype's Register, Annals, Letters, and other Original Manuscripts in the British Museum, with additions selected at the Clerical House, 1811, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS

Pollard has a very good (if somewhat overstated) summary of the Lutheran, Zwinglian, Calvinistic, and English Reformation and why Cramer was the man for England and not Luther or Zwingli.¹ Bromiley agrees:

In the circumstances and setting of the time, it may indeed be doubted whether any churchman, however forceful, could have done very much more. Even the masterful Wolsey broke on the rock of Tudor despotism."²

In "The Epistle Dedicatory" Strype says of Cramer that he deserved best of any Archbishop before him, that were that mitre: to whole solid learning, deliberation, and indefatigable pains, both the Kings and the people of this realm owe their deliverance from the long and cruel bondage of Rome.³

Bromiley points out incisively how he went about doing this:

By temperament Cramer was cautious and conservative. He came slowly to his own convictions, and he did not attempt to press them hastily on others. He was content to wait both for favourable circumstances on the one hand and a leaven of instruction on the other. His aim was not to

¹Albert F. Pollard, Thomas Cramer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556 (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, c.1904), pp. 225f.

²Geoffrey W. Bromiley, "Cramer's Message to Our Time," Christianity Today (November 12, 1956), p. 19.

³John Strype, Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cramer, Sometime Archbishop of Canterbury. Wherein the History of the Church, and the Reformation of It, During the Primacy of the Said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; and many singular Matters relating thereunto, now first published (1694). In Three Books, Collected Chiefly from Records, Registers, Authentic Letters, and Other Original Manuscripts (A New edition, with additions; Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1813), I, i. Cf. also Ibid., I, xiif.

sectionalize the Church and nation, but if possible to carry them with him, reforming not merely by edict from without but by renewal from within.⁴

In the preceding chapter the tale of his "reforming by edict from without" was told. Throughout the paper the author has tried to let the overtones of his "renewal from within" be heard, for it is his opinion, too, that this part of it (often so hard to explicitly validate) was the key to Cranmer's success both upon the country and on Henry his king. Rupp cryptically points out: "his personality made little impression upon the common people." He was not the dynamic leader of masses of people. Apparently he realized this, or realized what was needed in England to bring about reform, or maybe he just followed his conscience and convictions trusting that his Lord would guide and strengthen him and bring to pass what should come to pass. Whatever it was, very likely a combination of the three, Burnet relates that

Cranmer retained always his candour and simplicity, and was a great prelate: but neither a good courtier, nor a statesman. And the king esteemed him more for his virtues, than for his dexterity and cunning in business;⁵

⁴Geoffrey W. Bromley, Thomas Cranmer, Theologian (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. xix. Cf. pp. 43 and xlii., especially pp. xiii, xvii, and xviii. Cf. also Bromley, "Cranmer's Message to Our Times," op. cit. One is tempted to quote pages of Bromley because of agreement with his findings and his masterful style of writing them.

Cf. Thomas Cranmer, Miscellaneous Writing and Letters of Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1556 (Parker Society Publication edited by John Edmund Cox; Cambridge: The University Press, 1946), pp. viii-ix. Editor Cox presents an excellent two-page chronological summary of Cranmer's relation and influence with King Henry.

⁵E. G. Rupp, Studies in the Making of The English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII) (Cambridge: The University Press, 1947), p. 130. But on Henry!--that's a different story, the story of this paper.

⁶Gilbert Burnet, The History of The Reformation of the Church of England. Part I: Of the Progress Made in It During the Reign of Henry VIII (New York: D. Appleton and Co.; and Philadelphia: George S. Appleton, 1843), p. 485.

and Pollard points out that throughout and after the Six Articles and all the rest "Crammer retained his curious hold over Henry's mind."⁷

Other general summary opinions include Strype's:

And whosoever shall consider that good progress that by his means was made in religion, not only in King Edward's reign, but even in that of King Henry, under the discouragements of an anciently-riveted superstition and idolatry; and withal shall ponder the haughty nature of that Prince, of so difficult address, and so addicted to the old religion; and how dangerous it was to dissent from him, or to attempt to draw him off from his own persuasions; cannot but judge Crammer to have been of a very bold spirit, to venture so far as he did. And undoubtedly his courage went an equal pace with his wisdom and discretion, and was no whit inferior to his other excellent qualifications.⁸

and Rupp's:

The triumph of the Catholic Party in 1539 and after has been exaggerated. The Six Articles was something more than a scare, but its bark was worse than its bite. The fall of Cromwell was a complexity, and the balanced execution of Friars and Reformers in 1540 can scarcely be called a party triumph for any side. Meanwhile, Crammer, far from being in disgrace, went on with the work of reforming his own clergy, and, as we shall see, presided, in making the "king's Book," over the all-important committee on the Sacraments. The failure of the considerable "Prebendaries Plot" against him in 1543 is something more than a personal success of Crammer against Gardiner. If there is no striking change in this period comparable with the catastrophic acts of the preceding decade, there are some very significant pointers. There is evidence to show that the country stood on the edge of far-reaching changes at the death of Henry⁹ that Henry himself proposed to be their executor, and that the death of the King and the accession of Edward meant a weakening rather than strengthening of the cause of Reform, by the new instability it engendered. In any case, the reforms of Edward's reign . . . did not spring suddenly into being but were the fruit of long and careful preparation in the preceding years.¹⁰

⁷ Albert F. Pollard, Henry VIII (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919), p. 416.

⁸ Strype, op. cit., I, 653f.

⁹ Cf. Strype, op. cit., I, 634f. and Crammer, op. cit., pp. 415f.

¹⁰ Rupp, op. cit., p. 131.

and Bromiley's again, who points out that Cramer worked primarily as a theologian rather than an administrator; and further: "Because he operated at the deep level of the Word and the Spirit, Cramer's greatness has necessarily an enigmatic quality, which is also apostolic." And,

His accomplishments were not the striking successes of administration, but the unnoticed, intangible, incalculable things which in the long run have often the most decisive and enduring consequences.¹¹

It is the conclusion of this study on the basis of the total evidence that the influence of Cramer on Henry was very high, taking everything into consideration, and that what was just quoted is true not only of Cramer's total impact on the church and the world, but also on Henry. One could almost call it an indirect, rather than a direct, head-on, influence. One is tempted to conjecture that it had to be this way if what was accomplished in the English Reformation under Henry was to be accomplished under him. Yet one should not try to limit the ways and workings of God even in this manner, for He did use forceful men like ~~W~~oswell and Latimer to further the Reformation in England, too. But Cramer's was probably the greatest human, non-political, non-economic influence on the Reformation in England through the person and means of Henry VIII. Henry's outstanding respect and regard for Cramer as a loyal, sincere, and able scholar, Christian and friend lasted long, grew and remained strong to the end. A final statement from the pen of Bromiley concludes the paper:

And God did indeed use this weak thing of the world to confound the high and the mighty. At the deepest level, even in time, the contribution made by Cramer in his lowliness and weakness was greater and more far-reaching¹² than that

¹¹Bromiley, Thomas Cramer, Theologian, pp. 10-11.

¹² Kenneth Scott, op. cit., pp. 10-11, says simply: "Cramer's contribution found stamp upon the Church of England." (New York: Har-

of Henry in his power, or Wolsey in his statecraft, or Gardiner in his guile, or Northumberland in his forceful repacity.¹³

Problems for Further Study Arising out of this Study

- A. What influence did Henry have on the theology and work of Cramer?
- B. How much was Cramer hampered theologically by his Erastianism?
- C. How much good did Cramer do the Reformation by slowing and sometimes topping Gardiner, Bonner and other Romish bishops and men of authority including Henry himself?
- D. The influences on and the development of Cramer's doctrine of the Lord's Supper.
- E. The relationship of his Erastianism to his recantations.
- F. Cramer and the Protestant extremists should be a rewarding study.
- G. What were the influences of Cramer's imported galaxy of continental Reformation stars on Cramer himself and on the whole English Reformation?
- H. The place of the Lollards in the Reformation at this time.
- I. An annotated bibliography on Cramer and another on the whole English Reformation would prove a practical and worthwhile project.

¹³Bronley, "Cramer's Message to Our Times," op. cit., p. 19.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Primary Sources

Cramer, Thomas. Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cramer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Martyr, 1536. Parker Society Publication. Edited by John Edmund Cox. Cambridge: The University Press, 1846.

-----. A Short Instruction into Christian Religion. A catechism set forth by Archbishop Cramer in MDCXVIII together with the same in Latin translated from the German by Justus Jonas in MDCXXIX, Parker Society Publication. Edited by Edward Burton. Oxford: The University Press, 1829.

Geo, Henry and William John Hardy. Documents Illustrative of English Church History Compiled From Original Sources. London: Macmillan & Co., Limited, 1921.

B. Secondary Sources

/Bainton, Roland H. The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1956.

Bromley, Geoffrey W. "Cramer's Message to Our Times," Christianity Today, I, (November 12, 1956), 12-13, 19.

-----. Thomas Cramer, Theologian. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956.

Burnet, Gilbert. The History of the Reformation of the Church of England. Part I: Of the Progress Made in It During the Reign of Henry VIII. New York: D. Appleton and Co.; and Philadelphia: George S. Appleton, 1843.

Courtney, William Frideaux. "Ridley, Gloucester," The Dictionary of National Biography. XVI. Edited by Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee. London: Oxford University Press, 1949-50. Pp. 1168-9.

Dubbs, Joseph Henry. Leaders of the Reformation. Philadelphia: The Heidelberg Press, 1898.

Einstein, Lewis. Tudor Ideals. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1921.

Froude, James Anthony. History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth. II. New York: Scribner, Armstrong, and Company, 1875.

- Gairdner, James. "Cramer, Thomas," The Dictionary of National Biography. V. Edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. London: Oxford University Press, 1949-50. Pp. 19-31.
- , "Henry VIII," The Dictionary of National Biography. IX. Edited by Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee. London: Oxford University Press, 1949-50. Pp. 527-545.
- Hackett, Francis. Henry the Eighth. Star edition. Garden City, N. Y.: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1931.
- Hardwick, Charles. A History of the Articles of Religion: to which is added a Series of Documents, from A.D. 1536 to A.D. 1615; together with Illustrations from Contemporary Sources. London: George Bell & Sons, 1881.
- Husser, Ludwig. The Period of the Reformation, 1517 to 1648. Edited by Wilhelm Oeckel. Translated from the German by Mrs. G. Sturge. New York: American Tract Society, n.d.
- Hughes, Philip. The Reformation in England. I. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951.
- ✓ Hutchinson, F. E. Cramer and the English Reformation. Teach Yourself History Library. Edited by A. L. Rowse. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951.
- Latourette, Kenneth Scott. A History of Christianity. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953.
- La Dou, Charles W. The Life of Archbishop Cramer. I. New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833.
- ✓ Lingard, John. The History of England from the First Invasions by the Romans to the Accession of William and Mary in 1688. V. Sixth edition. New York and Montreal: D. & J. Sadlier & Company, 1879.
- The Lives of the British Reformers. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, n.d.
- Meyer, Carl S. Book Review of Thomas Cramer, Theologian by G. W. Bromley, Concordia Theological Monthly, XXVII (November 1956), 903.
- , "Cramer's Legacy," Concordia Theological Monthly (XXVII (April 1956)), 241-268.
- ✓ Pollard, Albert F. Thomas Cramer and the English Reformation, 1489-1556. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904.
- ✓-----, Henry VIII. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1919.
- Prescott, H. F. M. Mary Tudor. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1953.

- Ratcliff, E. G. "The Liturgical Work of Archbishop Cramer," The Journal of Ecclesiastical History, VII (October 1956), 189-203.
- Robbatt, George S. "The Reformation of Cramer with Special Reference to Its Doctrine and the Influences upon It." Unpublished Bachelor's Thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1948.
- Rupp, E. G. Studies in the Making of The English Protestant Tradition (Mainly in the Reign of Henry VIII). Cambridge: The University Press, 1947.
- Smith, H. Maynard. Henry VIII and the Reformation. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1948.
- Smith, J. Milton. The Stars of the Reformation: Being Short Sketches of Eminent Reformers, and of the Leading Events in Europe which Led to the Revival of Christianity. Second edition. London: S. W. Partridge & Co., n.d.
- Stanley, Arthur Fearhyn. Historical Memorials of Canterbury. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph, 1889.
- Strype, John. Memorials of the Most Reverend Father in God Thomas Cramer, Sometime Archbishop of Canterbury. Wherein the History of the Church, and the Reformation of It, During the Primacy of the Said Archbishop, are greatly illustrated; and many singular Matters relating thereunto, now first published (1694). In Three Books, Collected Chiefly from Records, Registers, Authentic Letters, and Other Original Manuscripts. A New Edition, with Additions. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1812.
- Todd, Henry John. The Life of Archbishop Cramer. 2 vols. London: C. J. G. & F. Revington, 1831.
- Trails, H. D., editor. Social England: A Record of the Progress of the People in Religion Laws Learning Arts Industry Commerce Science Literature and Manners from the Earliest Times to the Present Day. Vol. III: From the Accession of Henry VIII to the Death of Elizabeth. Second edition. London, Paris & Melbourne: Cassell and Company, Limited, 1895.