



Part I. Historical Development of Anglicanism 1533-1633.

Henry VIII: Factors tending towards a change in religion.

As a young man, Henry VIII had been married to Catherine of Aragon who was not only many years older than himself but was also the widow of his deceased elder brother, Arthur. In the normal course of events, such a marriage would not have been admissible according to Canon law. But Catherine's influential parents, Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, persuaded the Pope, Julius II, to grant a special dispensation.

The difficulty of obtaining a papal dispensation for such a marriage in the first place would later strongly affect the question of succession to the throne since this was still a time of absolute monarchy and the succession needed to be determined well in advance so as to avoid any confusion about the succession. It so happened that until that time "England had never been successfully ruled by a woman,"¹ and Henry wanted a son and heir.

Within two decades of marriage, Catherine had borne at least three sons and two daughters but all, except one--the Princess Mary, had died in infancy. Henry, who desired a male heir, began seeking reasons to justify an annulment of his marriage to Catherine. He found this justification in the words

¹ J.R.H. Moorman, A History of The Church in England

(London: Adam & Charles Black, 1980) 164.

of Leviticus 20:21: "If a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing . . . they shall be childless."² Stephen Neill observes, "And was this not very nearly the fate that had befallen Henry?"³ Henry reasoned that he had been transgressing the law of God. Therefore, to go on living with Catherine was to go on living in sin. Moreover, Catherine was then about forty years old, an age at which chances of bearing a male heir were very unlikely. Apart from this judicial argument, Henry had another reason to have his marriage with Catherine nullified. He was deeply in love with Anne Boleyn.

So as to legitimize the child that Anne Boleyn was expecting, Henry had to get his application for the annulment of his marriage with Catherine approved by the Pope and then he would be free to marry his next queen. But there were two difficulties barring Henry's desire. First there was the dispensation Pope Julius II had granted for his first marriage, and second the then reigning Pope, Clement VII, was virtually a prisoner of the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, the nephew of Catherine. Regarding the handling of this case, Stephen Neill states that:

It was plain to all men that the Pope was longing to accord Henry the nullity ...if he could ... He was prepared to go almost to any length, even apparently

² All biblical quotations are taken from The Holy Bible: Old and New Testaments in the King James Version, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1976).

³ Stephen Neill, Anglicanism (London: Mowbray, 1982) 37.

to the length of permitting Henry in these special circumstances to commit bigamy.⁴

The stand of the Pope in this situation caused a strong reaction among English citizens. Neill further quotes H.G. Wells' paradoxical remark that, "Englishmen objected to the Pope not because he was the religious head of the Church, but because he was not."⁵ The tolerance of the English people towards the Pope was coming close to its limit. The critical spirit of the Renaissance created confidence in the mind of Englishmen to speak their opinions boldly. They began to question the authority of the Pope, which led to the question whether Henry's case really needed approval from Rome.

As a matter of fact the dissatisfaction against the Pope had begun in the first few decades of the sixteenth century. The relationship became less and less tolerable as the anticlericalism of the Commons became more and more acute. "The root of this anticlericalism lay in the ordinary person's disgust at the power, wealth, pomp, privileges, and corruption of the clergy."⁶ Ordinary clergymen abused clerical privileges over the law of the land as well as over-exercising their power in ecclesiastical courts, while the higher clergy like Thomas Wolsey and other bishops were busy accumulating wealth and power. Not only did Wolsey's arrogance and abuses of power discourage many clergymen but it also enkindled the hatred of Londoners against the Pope who had earlier consecrated him a

⁴ Neill 38.

⁵ Neill 38.

⁶ Roberts 247.

cardinal. The already deep ill-feeling against Rome over papal taxes and the way the bishops behaved themselves created an atmosphere which was so fraught with tension that even some clergymen doubted whether subjection to Rome was worth it.

These bishops, deans, and archdeacons, were more often engaged in administration than pastoral care. They were sunk in complacency and routine, and lacked the intellectual superiority and spiritual dedication to stand against King and laity."⁷

The desire for the reform of the Church can also be seen in many social circles in Europe. In 1517 in Germany Martin Luther drew up his famous 95 theses in direct response to the Indulgences granted by Pope Leo X for contributions to the renovation of St. Peter's in Rome. Within a fortnight copies of the theses which had been affixed to the door of the Schlosskirche at Wittenberg had been distributed throughout Germany. This was a clear act of "protest" against many abuses in Church doctrine and life, and Protestantism began to spread throughout Europe. In due course Luther was excommunicated and he had to fight with different ideologies among his former adherents. However in 1520, Luther's writings were gladly welcomed by, and bore strong impact upon, English intellectuals, one of whom was Thomas Cranmer. In fact, the favourable reception of Lutheranism in England was due to the readiness prepared by some earlier movements* which inspired scholars and merchants to search for a new way of worship. The

⁷ Roberts 248.

* Lollardy, the New Devotion, and humanism.

intellectuals and the middle-class were disgusted with the exacting practices of medieval Catholicism. They longed for a kind of salvation that reconciled the just God to the individual's yearning for salvation through simplicity. This humanist concept was fed by Lutheran writings. Therefore, they were stirred to new ideas and new concepts of practising religion. The importance of the Scriptures was emphasized and many traditional rites and practices in the Church were questioned and challenged, including the authority of the Pope.

With an atmosphere conducive to Protestantism, Henry, who had first thought of being true to scriptural Catholicism, now unbound by papal authority, found it hard to limit the scope of reformation. "The infiltration of new ideas from the Lutheran Reformation in Germany have permanently moulded that strange and beautiful thing called Anglicanism."⁸

The breach with Rome.

Through subtle arrangement, Henry succeeded in ending the legislative independence of the Church and in cutting off England's financial and judicial ties with Rome. A complaint against clerical abuses was often the point of discussion in the House of Commons. The result of that complaint was a document known as The Submission of the Clergy which said that "all clerical legislation would receive the King's assent and that all obnoxious legislation in the past would be annulled by a royal commission."⁹ Soon after this document was promulgated,

⁸ Neill 47.

⁹ Roberts 249.

Henry subtly used Parliament as his instrument to pass a bill to "temporarily halt the payment of annates" to Rome. "This bill also declared that should the Pope refuse to consecrate a nominee, the nominee might be consecrated by English authority alone."¹⁰

The Act of Appeals of 1533 declared England to be a sovereign state, free of all foreign jurisdiction, within which the King was supreme. A year later, the Act of Supremacy declared the King to be the supreme head of the Church as well. In this series of bills, the Dispensations Act transferred the power of granting dispensations and licences from the Pope to the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Supreme Head Act gave the King power to define doctrine and to punish heresy, and the Succession Act "required Englishmen to acknowledge the validity of Henry's marriage to Anne and the invalidity of his marriage to Catherine."¹¹ This "made it possible for the king to demand an oath from any subject in favour of the new regime - refusal to take the oath was regarded as misprision of high treason."¹²

Ruling with absolute power and as Supreme Head, Henry found himself dictating what his people were to believe and what they should do. Henry's religious policy was as unpredictable as his political moves. Perhaps, Englishmen at that time were unable to remember under how many Articles or Injunctions they were living. No one knew what the king would want to do next. But

¹⁰ Roberts 249.

¹¹ Roberts 250.

¹² Moorman 168.

everyone knew that whoever stood in the king's way would be eliminated immediately. However:

Henry continued to burn 'Lutherans' and to hang 'Papists', sometimes together, which was thought ill of; but never in large numbers, and never to such an extent as to lose the goodwill of the majority of his subjects.¹³

The only indication of Henry's own belief was his significant act of entrusting his only son and heir to Protestant tutors.

Another significant religious issue Henry inaugurated was the dissolution of the monasteries. Actually Henry was desperate for money. He searched his kingdom from top to bottom and found tremendous wealth owned by the monks. Though being the greatest and most ancient institution of England, monasteries were in need of reform. Monks were frequently not living lives according to their vows. The poor did not feel one with them and the people were not given the proper spiritual assistance they needed. Writers of the time criticized the monks' role in society and monastic persons' lives sometimes appeared scandalous. Therefore, Henry tried "to convince people that these monasteries were not only redundant but a scandal, and that the king would be doing an act of service to the community if he brought these houses of iniquity to an end."¹⁴ Under the pretext of the monks' own decay, Henry slowly closed down small monasteries and confiscated their property. Through Parliament, Henry gradually dissolved all monasteries by 1540. In order to

¹³ Neill 61.

¹⁴ Moorman 174.

uproot any connection with Rome, Henry also closed down the friaries which were seen as papal agencies. Monks and religious persons were thus scattered. Some found new vocations in education or in other occupations. Some merged themselves with the parochial system or the cathedrals and chantries.* Some took husbands or wives and others went about either begging or waiting for a government pension. Thus, another major catholic institution gradually vanished from the English scene.

Along with the dissolution of the monasteries, places and things of popular devotion like shrines and miraculous images were also pulled down. " There was a considerable loss to the nation in the realm of art and learning. Images, jewelry, metal work, and reliquaries were melted down; libraries dispersed; and splendid buildings destroyed."¹⁵

For all the changes in religion Henry brought about, the English citizens were quite happy about them. Some conservative reactionaries revolted, such as the Pilgrimage of Grace, only to be subdued in a short time. Fear as well as satisfaction in Henry's policy which kept the country peaceful and prosperous were two main factors discouraging Englishman from rebelling. Henry's tactful excuses in conducting any change were always publicized and were made very agreeable to all. The annulment of his marriage to Catherine was done with biblical back-up. His breach with Rome won overwhelming support from his subjects. His

¹⁵ Roberts 253.

* Chapels for celebrating Masses supported by endowments for deceased persons.

dissolution of the monasteries was done with the general public consent. Conservatives learnt the far reaching implication of what 'Royal Supremacy' meant and therefore kept quiet. Even Henry's holiest and noblest subjects who protested were crushed.

A glance at the life of ordinary people would prevent the total picture from being distorted. No matter how much fundamental change took place at the level of national policy, religious practices of the country did not alter very much. Parish churches, the clergy's behaviour, and religious services were the same as they had been. Actual changes in the daily life of the ordinary people only occurred very gradually. Drastic changes at the grass-roots level would be revealed only in the next few reigns.

Edward VI: Liturgical Innovations.

Educated by Protestant teachers, the young king was further assisted by a council of regency who showed a strongly Protestant bias. The Lord Protector, the Duke of Somerset, though he was not a fervent Protestant himself, did a few things to promote Protestantism. Disliking religious persecution, he "persuaded his first Parliament to repeal the treason and heresy laws of earlier reigns . . . and all restrictions on printing the Scriptures."¹⁶ Following the repeal there was a great increase of Protestant writings; pamphlets, sermons, psalms, devotional works, and plays. Then came the first set of royal injunctions which ordered all images and paintings which might

¹⁶ Roberts 268.

lead to superstition to be removed from the churches, reduced lights on the high altar before the Sacrament to two, forbade ringing of bells during Mass, and, to promote sound learning, demanded "that a copy of the 'Book of Homilies' and of the 'Paraphrases of Erasmus' should be procured for each parish church."¹⁷ Meanwhile, the ideas of foreign scholars blossomed. These foreign scholars came to England for two reasons. Some had come as refugees during the earlier reign. Others came as guests of influential English reformers. In fact there was another source for the English intellectuals to contact; that was John Calvin.

John Calvin, a French humanist (1509 -1564) who was famous for his theological system, also split with Rome. He had a strong base in Geneva. Many of his theories are modifications of Luther's. Being a greater organizer and applying a more logical and systematic approach than Luther, Calvin took the lead in influencing other Protestant communities. By the end of Henry VIII's reign, he had won many English churchmen as his followers.

In 1548 he addressed a letter to the Protector Somerset indicating the changes which he wished to see introduced in England; in 1555 he gave shelter to English Protestant refugees.¹⁸

¹⁷ Moorman 181.

¹⁸ F.L.Cross and E.A. Livingstone, eds. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Hong Kong: Oxford UP, 1983) 223.

Catholic institutions were further closed by the Chantry* Act of 1547. Dissolved with the chantries were colleges, schools, hospitals and almshouses. This time the dissolution bore stronger impact on the lives of ordinary people, for it reduced the role of the familiar Church in society with no immediate replacement. The spirit of Protestantism had not yet taken root. During 1550 to 1555, John Hooper, a former Cistercian monk, was bishop of Gloucester and Worcester. In the Visitation of his diocese, the bishop found that "of 311 clergymen interviewed, nearly 60 percent were unable to repeat the Ten Commandments, 10 could not repeat the Lord's Prayer."¹⁹ The Visitation also disclosed that there were not enough devout and educated preachers. Priests had hardly preached and they were not capable of doing so .

In those days, there were no newspapers and reading materials were scarce. The religious and political issues were confusing. The pulpit was one of the most effective means of distribution of information and propaganda. Therefore, "the rulers both in Church and State felt it better that licences to preach should be issued only to those whom they regarded as

* A Chantry was an endowment to pay for celebrating of Mass for the soul of a specified person, often the endower. The meaning sometimes included a chapel for this purpose.

¹⁹ Neill 66.

'safe men.'"²⁰ Apart from the licence to preach, the 'Book of Homilies' mentioned above and the 'Paraphrases of Erasmus' were provided so that preachers could use them as guidelines to preach, or simply, for those who were unable or unauthorized to preach their own sermons, to "read" to the people.

In order to settle the uncertainties in religious services, Thomas Cranmer set forth a liturgical scheme which fixed a common order of religious services. His effort brought forth an English Prayer Book in 1549. In that same year Parliament passed an Act of Uniformity which, on pain of imprisonment, demanded all clergy to use the new Book of Common Prayer. The Book met with a wide variety of reactions from the reformers who supported it as well as from the conservatives who opposed it. The Cornish rebellion* against the Prayer Book was one of the causes of the Earl of Warwick, later Duke of Northumberland's seizing power and getting rid of Somerset. The change of power meant a change of policy. From now on, the atmosphere of compromise in religious practices lessened, though the essence of faith and doctrine of the English Church closely adhered to Catholicism. Meanwhile Cranmer went on developing his Prayer Book through consultations with other Churchmen, domestically as well as internationally. Much influenced by a German theologian,

²⁰ Neill 85.

* The Cornish rebellion of 1549 represents the early popular reaction to such elements in the Prayer Book as Mass in English rather than Latin, and communion of both cup and bread rather than bread only.

Martin Bucer, the revised version of the Prayer Book emphasized "the principle that everything without scriptural basis should be omitted."²¹ Clayton Roberts and David Roberts made clear that in 1552, the Second Act of Uniformity not only enforced the use of the revised version of the Book of Common Prayer but it also required the attendance of everyone in the parish at church on Sunday. If they were absent they were fined.²²

Though the new English Church had a liturgy, it needed to clarify its doctrine. Cranmer and his colleagues tried to define the doctrine of the Church of England in a series of forty-five Articles. These Articles were reduced to forty-two and received the royal assent in 1553. They aimed at striking a balance between the medieval doctrines still remaining in the conservative mind and the teaching of extreme Protestantism. "These Articles were intended to give a doctrinal 'platform' to the English Church and to set it upon that VIA MEDIA which, in later years, it was proud to tread."²³

Mary I and the Reconciliation with Rome.

Within a few months of her accession, Mary who had remained a loyal catholic started undoing all that had been done by her father and her brother. The work of restoration was clear. Reforming bishops were replaced by Catholic bishops who had been turned away in Edward's reign. Services were held in Latin

²¹ Roberts 277.

²² Roberts 277.

²³ Moorman 186.

according to the old formula of the ancient service books. Many parish priests of England were deprived of their living for having married. Parliament was made to repeal all laws affecting religion passed since Henry VIII. One year later, 1554, "the realm was solemnly absolved by the papal legate from the sin of schism, and brought back into the communion of the Roman Church."²⁴

Far from understanding the mind of her people, Mary replaced Cranmer by Reginald Pole who had spent twenty-years outside of England as a strong activist for Catholicism. Against the will of the English people, she further aggravated the situation by her marriage with Prince Philip II of Spain. Her gravest mistake lay in her belief that persecution could change the minds of Englishmen.

Though actual burning of heretics took place only 18 months after the outset of the reign, "persecution had been in the air from the very first day. Cranmer knew well what was coming, and within a month or two after the death of Edward VI had advised his friends to fly for their lives."²⁵ The intellectuals took heed and most of the foreign divines who had been invited to England previously fled to the continent together with many English reformers. The exact number of those who remained and lost their lives cannot be estimated exactly. However, three hundred is the accepted figure. People in town were more frequently executed than people in the countryside. These people were firm in the faith based on Scriptures and they courageously and cheerfully went to death, though a few recanted.

²⁴ Neill 89.

²⁵ Neill 90.

Apart from leaving a permanent scar of cruel persecution in the heart of her people, Mary also left a climate of dangling faiths in England. Since Henry VIII's reign, Englishmen faced new ideas in fierce struggle with the old ones. As some ground for reformation was laid by the reformers like Cranmer, the people were ordered by law, under the pain of punishment and death, to move in one direction. A few years later, the same people were ordered to do just the opposite. They were commanded to tread two different roads to salvation without the right to choose. Some traditionalists might feel secure in going back to the medieval practices again, but the new minds found it hard to reconcile them. Being forced to practise a faith not according to their personal choice, many were not firm in their belief. People in general felt lost. While their faith was beginning to take root, the entire land was shaken to the extent of uprooting them. They were badly in need of an established faith.

Elizabeth I: The Via Media Settlement.

When Elizabeth I ascended the throne, the country was ecclesiastically divided into three groups: first, those who supported Mary in the return to Rome -bishops and parochial clergy; second, those who had gone abroad to await better times, hoping to return if the new regime showed signs of a change in policy; third, were

the middle party who wished to see neither servility to Rome nor subservience to Geneva but a church of England truly catholic in all essentials and yet cleansed and reformed from the abuses which had

gathered round it during the Middle Ages.²⁶

As her people were gravely in need of clarification of religious beliefs, Elizabeth's compromising attitude slowly assured them of understanding and oneness between the ruler and the ruled. Brought up in the faith of Cranmer and the Reformers, Elizabeth, in her first Parliament in 1559, passed two important acts, namely the Act of Supremacy, which undid what Mary had done by making Elizabeth Supreme governor of the Church of England, and re-established the Church as of Henry VIII, and the Act of Uniformity, which emphasized the unity of the nation and reintroduced, with severe penalties for disobedience, the Prayer Book of 1552, with some slight alterations, as the Liturgy of the Church of England. Four years later, the Thirty-nine-point declaration of faith, based on the Forty-two Articles of Edward's reign, was imposed.

Though ambiguously worded, the Thirty-nine Articles were a statement of Calvinist doctrine. Thus it is not too great a simplification to say that the English Church emerged out of the Reformation Catholic in ritual, Calvinist in doctrine, and royalist in government.²⁷

Observing Elizabeth's religious policy, the exiled gentlemen who had lived abroad during the time of persecutions returned to England and rapidly organized themselves with those who had stayed in quiet hiding. They combined their doctrine and practices with the convictions they held in common and

²⁶ Moorman 199-200.

²⁷ Roberts 288.

continued their radical reformation. The movement was so strong that Bishop White of Winchester remarked in his preaching at Queen Mary's funeral that, "the wolves be coming out of Geneva and other places of Germany and have sent their books before, . . . to infect the people."²⁸

Rome was not at all pleased about these new developments. Roman Catholics claimed that Matthew Parker was invalidly consecrated as the Archbishop of Canterbury. However, Elizabeth went forward with her administration. She required all the clergy, justices, mayors, royal officials, and other classes of people to take the Oath of Supremacy. Most ordinary people who had always been easily adaptable found no difficulty in following any direction given by the Government. Perhaps, in the course of the past few decades, they had been too demoralized. Nonetheless there were some cynical conformists who were prepared for another change. In spite of the Queen's moderate approach, there were many shades of opinion; the papalist, the outward conformist, the indifferent, and the staunch supporter of the new ways.

Firm in her policy against persecution, yet sticking to the principle that Church and State should co-exist peacefully, the Queen tried to unify her people in faith and worship by persuasion rather than by force. In spite of all the laws, no Roman Catholic died for his faith during the first twelve years of her reign. But, England was not all peaceful for the Council of Trent had just ended (1566) and the Church of Rome was in militant mood to implement its decrees. A few years later, in

²⁸ Neill 101.

1568, Mary Queen of Scots fled into England, tried to rally the Romanists and posed a possible danger to the throne. Pope Pius V took this chance to make a strong attempt to restore Catholicism in England.

The peaceful co-existence of the Roman Catholics and the English Government came to an end when Pope Pius V excommunicated the Queen and decreed that she was not the rightful sovereign. Therefore, "her subjects were no longer bound by any oath of loyalty to her, and under the pain of excommunication, her subjects could no longer yield her obedience."²⁹ Not only did the Pope excommunicate the Queen; he also encouraged the English Roman Catholics to rebel against their lawful sovereign. The Pope's act not only ended religious toleration on the part of the Government, it also gave continental Catholic monarchs the right to invade England. Official papers later disclosed that there was some correspondence between English and Spanish Catholic Church officials, consulting about serving God through assassinating the Queen, saying that whoever would kill Elizabeth would not sin but would gain merit. From that time there was a great increase in the number of plots and counterplots involving the assassination of the Queen. Religion and politics became suddenly and hopelessly confused. In such a situation, every English Roman Catholic had to choose whether to be loyal to Rome and become a traitor to England or to be loyal to his country and be excommunicated.

²⁹ Neill 107.

Rome continued to try to bring England under the Church of Rome through many means. Seminaries were established and men were prepared to convert the English people. Missionaries were sent in while the Government tightened the laws to control and make their work dangerous and difficult. The Pope also pushed a concerted military crusade against England through the Spanish Armada which was defeated in 1588. All these attempts only stimulated patriotism in the English mind and identified Catholicism with the Spanish and the Pope. Thus, stricter measures against Roman Catholics in England were imposed and imprisonment and death accounted for about 250 lives.

The Elizabethan English Church had to face another danger from a group of people called the Puritans. While the Roman Catholics tried to overthrow the Church of England and restore the papal jurisdiction, the Puritans wanted to purify the Church in accord with extreme Protestant theology. Though much influenced by Calvinistic ideologies from Geneva, the Puritans were free from actual political and foreign interference. Therefore, no cause could imprison or prevent them from serving the Church and State in powerful positions. For them Elizabeth's religious policy was unsatisfactory because they regarded the Church of England as too much influenced by Romanism and untrue to Scripture. They wanted fewer and simpler ceremonies, more and better preaching, the Presbyterian system of Church government which gave complete liberty to the minister,* and a State

* The Presbytery was the earliest organization of the Christian Churches in Palestine which resembled that of the Jewish synagogues, each of which was administered by a board of elders.

Church under full control of Parliament. Their last emphasis could not be realized at that time since Elizabeth insisted on keeping religious matters under her prerogative and she needed the cooperation of Parliament in her moderate reformation of England.

The Puritans spread their practice of gathering people into groups who prophesied, studied the Bible, discussed and prayed. This kind of grouping slowly replaced the more liturgical assemblies prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer and developed into a congregational system which was similar to Presbyterianism. Such developments directly challenged the Elizabethan Establishment, yet they attracted people and gained much support. Combined with the idea that they were the only people fit to rectify the national Church of England, the Puritans began to raise their issues in Parliament. The Queen reaffirmed that matters of religion were her prerogative. Parliament had nothing to do with giving religious direction. The Queen and her bishops continued to administer all religious matters with their firm policy and the Puritans had to be obedient to the ruling.

Realizing the atmosphere of religious tension the Queen and her scholars, by 1593, plainly showed that the Church of England would walk neither the way of Geneva nor the way of Rome. It would be a Via Media, the middle way, which would be "based upon true scholarship, draw upon the best traditions of the primitive Church, be faithful to scripture, vital, honest, and dignified."³⁰ This Church "teaches the whole of Catholic faith, free from the

³⁰ Moorman 213.

distortions, the exaggerations, the over-definitions both of the Protestant left wing and of the right wing of Catholicism". The stand of the middle way was, "Show us anything clearly set forth in Holy Scripture that we do not teach, and we will teach it; show us anything in our teaching and practice that is plainly contrary to Holy Scripture, and we will abandon it."³¹

To clarify the stand against the Church of Rome, the Bishop of Salisbury, John Jewel, made clear that the Church of England was not a new invention but based its faith and doctrines on the Scriptures and the primitive Church of the first six centuries. Jewel further defended the right to reform of each national Church by claiming that by the sixth century Christian doctrine had been specified and there is no evidence since the early times about the supremacy of the Pope, the bishop of Rome. Jewel stated, "shew it plain that God's holy Gospel, the ancient bishops, and the primitive Church do make on our side, and that we have not without just cause left these men, or rather have returned to the apostles and old catholic fathers."³²

In defence of the Puritans, another Elizabethan scholar, Richard Hooker, agreed that the Holy Scriptures should be the basis of all. But he also emphasized the significance of human reasoning in the receptive mind of humble people. This logic defended the Church's right to make her own laws as long as they were not against the Scripture. However, towards the end of the reign, the danger from Rome lessened while the threat from the Puritans, after a period of active suppressed fermentation, increased.

³¹ Neill 119.

³² Neill 120.

At the beginning of the reign, the Government could not really implement the Act of Uniformity. There were groups of people who greatly differed in faith and doctrine. Quiet disobedience was almost everywhere. There were not enough clergy. Bishops appeared more as rulers like their predecessors in the Middle Ages rather than as pastors, fathers, or friends. The parish churches were poor. The old Marian clergy clung to their beliefs while the Puritans disapproved of the Prayer Book and episcopacy.* Nothing about the stand of the English Church or her doctrine was clear. Services and rites in worship differed from parish to parish. The over-all picture was one of diversity, not one of uniformity as the law demanded.

But developments towards concrete settlement gradually took place as the reign advanced. Churches were restored. Bishops and clergy were more and better educated and showed increasing signs of responsibility and conscientiousness. Literacy generally spread and "Bible was in the hands and homes of ordinary people."³³ By the end of the reign, in 1603, "there were few men living, apart from known recusants, who had ever heard or seen the Roman Mass. All they knew was the Prayer Book of 1559; and what they knew they had rightly come to love."³⁴

James I: Ecclesiastical Divisions.

When Elizabeth died, James VI of Scotland became James I of

* Episcopacy is the system of Church Government by Bishops.

³³ Neill 129.

³⁴ Neill 130.

England. Firmly believing in the theological interpretation of the Divine Right of Kings, James I, who did not know much about England, appeared a sharp contrast to Elizabeth who ruled the land so tactfully for almost half a century. James's belief in the Divine Right of Kings had a strong impact on his policy which subsequently worsened the already delicate control of ecclesiastical allegiance.

Though James came from Scotland, the land of Presbyterianism, he immediately expressed his deep appreciation of the English Church. At that time, the Puritans were active and gaining more acceptance and power from the governing class. They wished the king to support their moves for more liberty in worship and in church government. But, the king's attitude hampered the Puritans' hope. Instead of being a little compromising, James declared at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, that he preferred the Elizabethan Establishment and demanded that all others conform. This declaration turned the Puritans into opponents of James instead of his allies.

Despite the king's ruling, the Puritans refused to conform. Some continued to preach their strict doctrines one of which was Sabbatarianism,* others found England too oppressive to live in and fled overseas to Holland. Afterwards, the latter went to settle in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The Hampton Court Conference in 1604 not only brought some

* Sabbatarianism is the excessive strictness in the observance of the divinely ordained day of rest, prohibiting all kinds of sports and merry-making on Sundays.

slight changes in the Prayer Book, it also decided to do a new translation of the Bible. "The result of this decision was the publication in 1611 of the world's best-seller," the King James, or "Authorized Version of the Bible."³⁵ Also in 1604, a set of 141 Canons had been promulgated. Moorman concluded that these Canons included some medieval law, statutes and injunctions of Edward VI and Elizabeth I, and some new material. Meanwhile, the bishops became more powerful because

the Court of High Commission which, in Elizabeth's reign had developed from an inquisitorial court for the examination of heretics into a law court for the trial of all ecclesiastical causes, was brought more and more into action to deal with ceremonial and ritual irregularities, clerical misdemeanour, recusancy, sectarianism, immorality and divorce.³⁶

Charles I and Divine Right.

Few historians would object that James I clashed with the Parliament partly because of his strong belief in the Divine Right of Kings. But all historians would agree that the root cause of Charles I's failure was precisely this belief. Charles was worse because he practised his belief more strongly while his subjects were becoming more liberal, more progressive, and more powerful. Parliament was demanding a greater share in making decisions and governing the country while Charles was imposing just the opposite. The King entrusted affairs of State to the

³⁵ Neill 134.

³⁶ Moorman 225-26.

Earl of Strafford and ecclesiastical matters to the firm and capable Bishop of London, William Laud. It must be emphasized here that by this time there were several groups of ideologies, and people in authority like Strafford and Laud were trying to keep things in conformity. Since Charles had dissolved the Parliament, Convocation* acted in its place and issued seventeen canon** tightening the bonds between the Church and the King as well as legalizing Laudian schemes of conformity. This put English people under strict discipline, cruel punishment, and fear, and widened the divisions between religious ideologies.

To understand the religious atmosphere George Herbert lived in, it is important to have a rough idea of the ideologies some prominent religious groups held at this time. Firstly there were people who remained faithful to the Church of Rome. For them, the reign of Charles I gave them privileges of worship since Queen Henrietta Maria was a Roman Catholic. Some Anglicans like Richard Crashaw left their own Church and joined Roman Catholicism at this time.

Secondly, there were people who were contented with the episcopal organization of the Church as it emerged from the Elizabethan Settlement.

Thirdly, there were the Puritans who demanded of Laud a much severer kind of simplicity and austerity in the English Church, but Laud was firm in his stand.

Next was the group of people who looked to the continental Reformation as their perfect model for the Church.

* The assembly of bishops.

** Canon is the body of laws of a church.

Finally, there were the leaders of the Anglican Church themselves (known as Arminians), with High Church proclivities. This party was inspired by men like John Jewel, Richard Hooker* and Lancelot Andrews.** These revolted against Calvinism and stood for a doctrine of Anglicanism both catholic and reformed. They desired to improve the over-all aspect of the Church of England in regard to the standards of worship, the appearance of the churches, higher educational and moral standards, and the return to the apostolic practices of liturgy. William Laud maintained the principles of this group. The Caroline Divines also derived their principles from this party.

The Caroline Divines were writers and thinkers who tried to specify what they believed Anglicanism to be. They did not work as a team, but by their lives and works they proclaimed Anglicanism separately. Their contribution to the Church was by personal sanctity, by scholarship, and, for George Herbert by a dedicated life and by poetry. Their common attempt did not specifically aim to reach compromise through a kind of Via Media between two extremes of Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism and Calvinism, but by recovery of "the simplicity and purity of primitive Christianity."³⁷ They tried to recover the exact identity of the Church of England, to be free from both papal and protestant innovations and to remain true to the Scriptures.

* Richard Hooker (1554-1600) was an Anglican divine, appointed rector of Drayton Deauchamp, Master of the Temple and rector of Boscombe, Wilts, and Bishopsbourne.

** Lancelot Andrews (1555-1626) was bishop successively of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester.

³⁷ Moorman 234.

Part II. Development of Anglican Doctrine: Henry VIII-Charles I

As we have seen, the people of England had been familiar with the Bible in the vernacular since the reign of Henry VIII. Within the same century, Henry, Cranmer and churchmen of the following few reigns brought about the issuing of authorized homilies in 1547, the authorization and imposition of Books of Common Prayer in 1549 and 1552, and the successive versions of the Articles of Religion --in 1536, the Ten Articles, in 1537, the Bishops' Book, in 1538, the Thirteen Articles, in 1543, the King's Book, in 1553, the Forty-Two Articles, and finally in 1563, the Thirty-nine Articles which appeared in its final form in 1571. In the reign of James I, the Authorized Version of the Bible was released to the people in 1611. Meanwhile, there were attempts to codify the canons of the Church. A set of canons appeared in 1571, which was modified and confirmed by Elizabeth I in 1597. However, the Book of Canons took its final form with Richard Hooker's statement on justification (1594 - 1662). All these were either imposed with the authority of King-in-Parliament or issued by the clergy in Convocation.

Though the Anglican Church technically broke away from Roman Catholicism in Henry VIII's reign, the national Church of England remained, essentially, part of a reformed Catholic Church and needed time to settle. Amidst Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, Puritanism, and the political and social processes of the Reformation era, the Via Media of Anglicanism had to fight its way to establish a firm identity. However, Anglican faith and ecclesiastical structure, which were mostly determined in the reign of Elizabeth I, incorporated the fundamental insights of the continental Reformers while keeping

the fundamental reality of being part of the "One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church." Some slight alterations of doctrinal and liturgical issues during James I's and Charles I's reigns were merely ones of emphasis. So, it was the Elizabethan Settlement that clarified the fundamental doctrines and the constitution of the Anglican Church.

In spite of all the turbulences and groups of different ideologies, more and more English people lived out their faith within one framework. They had become convinced that, in the words of Elizabeth I,

they followed no novel and strange religions, but that very religion which is ordained by Christ, sanctioned by the primitive and Catholic Church and approved by the consentient mind and voice of the most early Fathers*.³⁸

From the ecclesiological point of view, Bishop Lancelot Andrewes (1555 - 1626) defined the boundaries of Anglicanism as: One canon reduced to writing by God himself, two testaments, three creeds, four general councils, five centuries and the series of Fathers in that period - the centuries that is, before Constantine, and two after, determine the boundary of our faith.³⁹

* Early Fathers were early Christian writers of the first six centuries.

³⁸ Stephen Sykes and John Booty, eds. The Study of Anglicanism (London: SPCK, 1988) 14.

³⁹ Sykes 237.

It is clear from Andrewes's definition that Anglicanism based its doctrine on the following sources: Firstly, on the Catholic faith that everyone is incorporated in the family of God; Secondly, on the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; Thirdly, on the three oecumenical creeds--Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian; Fourthly, on the dogmatic decisions of the first Four (Oecumenical) General Councils of the Church; and fifthly, on the primitive traditions of the early Christian Fathers of the first six centuries. The essence of these five points could be found in the Bible, the Book of Common Prayers, the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Ordinals, the Homilies, and the Canons.

Following is a description of the sources, doctrine and practices of Anglicanism as relevant in the reigns of James I and Charles I.

Supremacy of the Scriptures.

No Christian Church of the time would deny that the Scriptures were the inspired word of God. Given by God, the Scriptures contain the word and the divine will of God which is conveyed to man through the words of human writers so that everyone may attain his salvation. The term 'primacy of Scripture' meant that Scripture is the norm of faith and the norm by which other norms--creeds, tradition, confession of faith--are judged. Doctrinal systems, liturgical practices, behavioural conduct, and all ecclesiological matters were based on and proved by the Bible. Therefore, all English people had been exhorted to read the Bible as the "lively"* word of God,

* Lively bears the sense of today's "living".

which Christians must "embrace, believe, and follow, if they look to be saved."⁴⁰ Scriptures have been so central to the Church that, apart from identifying itself as a reformed Catholic Church, Anglicanism also understood itself as a 'scriptural' Catholicism.

The Book of Common Prayer.

After the Scriptures, the Book of Common Prayer has been second in importance to the Anglican Church. It established one uniform liturgy which was "true to the Scriptures, consonant with the practice of the early Church, unifying the Church, and edifying to the people."⁴¹ Integrated from many sources like the early Church Fathers, the Eastern and medieval Roman liturgies, the continental and the reformed English formularies, after a long series of revisions, the Book of Common Prayer became the accepted official service book of the Church of England. Aimed at simplifying and condensing the Latin services of the medieval Church, the Book of Common Prayer turned out to be a single, convenient, and comprehensive volume, in the English language, and an authoritative guide for priest as well as for the people in general.

The Book of Common Prayer contains the penitential prayers together with morning and evening offices for daily uses, the

⁴⁰ Sykes 11.

⁴¹ Sykes 122.

forms for administration of the Sacraments* and other public and private rites, the Psalter and the Ordinal. It prescribed special prayers for Wednesdays and Fridays. Commemoration of the "Supper of the Lord" ** "the Holy Communion," usually called the "Mass," was to be held on Sundays. Holy days retained were feasts of our Lord and the days of Apostles and Evangelists, St. Stephen the protomartyr, the Holy Innocents, St. Mary Magdalene, St. Michael and All Angels, and All Saints. The New Testament was to be read every four months while the whole Psalter was to be read every month.

In the eucharistic rite, there was a new adapted order: the private prayers of the priests were reduced, the Lord's Prayer, the Collect for Purity, and the eucharistic prayer were to be said aloud, the sacrificial aspect of the celebration was emphasized. This meant that just as Christ offered Himself for the whole world, the faithful were to offer their whole being as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving through their duty and service. In recovering the symbolism of Christ's body broken and of bread shared, the people, after proper preparation, were to

* A sacrament is an external and visible sign of internal and spiritual blessings given to men by God.

** The term "Supper of the Lord," "Holy Communion," "Mass," and "Eucharist" are different names of the same sacrament. The difference in meaning is of high, middle and low Church connotation.

receive the "chalice"* as well as the bread.

The Book of Common Prayer also prescribed other innovations in the Sacraments. The baptismal rite, which became a public act, was accompanied by the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the saying of proper prayers which replaced the Blessing of the Font, the threefold affirmation of the desire to be baptized, the threefold renunciation of the world in which the flesh and the devil replaced the traditional one of Satan, his works and his pomps. The person being baptized, unless weak, was immersed three times, once after the first immersion he was anointed on his forehead.

As for the confirmation rite, it linked catechetical** instruction, ratification of baptismal promises and admission of Communion together. Only the bishop was to administer the rite of anointing, imposition of hands on the recipients' heads, and the saying of the prayers of peace and blessing. When celebrating for a sick person, the eucharistic rite could be abbreviated.

The marriage rite was to be celebrated at a public Eucharist and the couple was required to receive Communion on that day.

In regard to the visitation, anointing, and Communion of the sick, these were to be used principally for the dying and for those who were seriously ill.

* Chalice refers to the cup of wine signifying the blood of Christ.

** Catechism is a handbook of questions and answers for teaching the principles of a religion.

The burial rite had four parts: the procession to the church or to the grave, a brief Office or a Daily Office, and the Eucharist before the burial.

Regarding the ordination rites, no provision was made for minor orders, or even the subdiaconate. Like the administration of other Sacraments, the ordination rites became shorter and simpler with no directions concerning the vestment of the candidates. Neither did the candidates have to be presented with any other instruments--cup and bread for priests, the pastoral staff for bishops--other than the Bible. However, a preface with following assertions preceded the rites:

that the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons existed from apostolic times; that admission to these orders was by 'public prayer, with imposition of hands'; that these orders were to be continued in the Church of England; and that no one not presently a bishop, priest, or deacon should function as such in the Church of England without ordination according to these forms.⁴²

The Book of Common Prayer obliged the clergy to say the Daily Offices and to read the Epistle of the day, obliged people to receive Communion at least three times a year, directed the people to kneel while receiving communion, and deleted all references to the chasuble, the alb, the tunicle, the cope,* the candles, and the altar.

⁴² Sykes 126.

* Sacramental vestments

The Thirty-Nine Articles of 1571.

The Thirty-Nine Articles of 1571 begin with five articles on the nature of God. Based on the traditional three creeds, and the definitions of the early oecumenical councils, they define the Christian doctrines of the Trinity and of the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. A summary of the doctrine can be found in one of the creeds, the Nicene;

I believe in one God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
And of all things visible and invisible:
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
The only-begotten Son of God,
Begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God,
Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father.
By whom all things were made:
Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man,
And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,
And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
And ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory
to judge both the quick and the dead:
Whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and giver of life,
Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,

Who with the Father and the Son
together is worshipped and glorified,
Who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.
And I look for the Resurrection of the dead,
And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

Articles Six and Seven assert the primacy and sufficiency of Scripture as the basis of Anglican belief. The names and number of the canonical books of the Old Testament are listed. These follow the ancient Hebrew Scriptures rather than the Greek Septuagint, but other, apocryphal books are appended for their spiritual and instructive value. All of the books of the New Testament were received as canonical. The teaching of the Old Testament, and particularly the binding nature of the fundamental commandments, is declared.

Articles 8 to 18 treat of the nature and effects of sin, of good works, and of salvation and justification. All people are in need of redemption, not only from the sins of personal wrong-doing, but first of all from original or "birth-sin." Heirs of the progenitor Adam, all people are corrupt in their very nature and inclined to do evil. They cannot by themselves and by their works become pleasing to God, but must be helped by the grace of Jesus Christ, who redeemed mankind by His sacrificial death. Justification is by faith in the merits of the sinless Christ. Good works are the fruit of faith but cannot in themselves effect the removal of sin or avert God's judgement. Works, even good works, performed before justification, are not pleasing to God. Moreover, works of supererogation, that is

voluntary deeds that go beyond what God has strictly commanded, are considered arrogant and impious. Sin after Baptism is possible but pardonable after repentance. Article 17 adopts the teaching of election and predestination: in eternity, before the world began, certain persons were chosen by God, who predestined them for salvation, while others receive God's predestination to condemnation. In summary of this section, Article 18 states that salvation is only in the Name of Christ, and not by membership in any sect or even by obedience to the law.

The next section, Articles 19 to 24, defines the nature of the Church, her authority and ministry. The visible Church of Christ is "a congregation of faithful men," reads Article 19. In it the Word of Scripture is preached and Sacraments are administered. But at no time has the Church been free of error in either doctrine, life or ceremonial. This was true of the primitive Churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria,* and it is also true of the Church of Rome. The Church has power to decree rites and ceremonies and even to settle disputes of doctrine, provided all be in accordance with Scripture. Article 21 states that General Councils must be convened by a Prince. Councils can err and have erred; their decrees must be measured against Holy Scripture. In one comprehensive statement, Article 22 rejects the "Romish" doctrine of "Purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration, images, relics, and invocation of the saints." Ministers of Word and Sacrament must be lawfully called and authorized by public authority. The English language is to be used for worship.

* Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria, were the original Patriarchates or central Churches of primitive Christianity.

The section on the Sacraments, Articles 25 to 31, defines Sacraments as effective signs of grace. There are two principal Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The other five traditional sacraments, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony and Extreme Unction* are explained as states of life but not as sacramental. Sacraments are received in their use; they are not objects of worship.** The unworthiness of ministers does not invalidate the efficacy of the Sacrament received. Baptism is the sacrament of initiation into the Church, with the promise of forgiveness of sin and adoption to be the children of God. The Lord's Supper is the Sacrament in which the consecrated Bread is received as the Body of Christ, and the Cup of Wine as his Blood, thus signifying his sacrificial death. Transubstantiation, the change of the substance of bread and the substance of wine into the substance of the Body and Blood of Christ, is not an adequate explanation of the Eucharistic Presence. Christ is present in the bread and wine in a heavenly and spiritual, but not substantial, manner. Both the bread and the cup of wine are to be offered to the faithful, who must receive them worthily.

Article 32 permits the marriage of bishops, priests and deacons. Article 34 gives national churches authority over ceremonies and customs, in accordance with the Scriptures.

* The anointing of the sick.

** This teaching was important to Anglicans. In reference to the Eucharist it meant that Christ was present in the receiving of Holy Communion. He was not considered to be substantially present in the consecrated Bread and Wine. Nor were these to be reserved for later adoration.

Article 35 endorses the Book of Homilies and appends a list of approved titles for homilies.

The consecration of bishops, priests and deacons must follow the norms already determined in the reign of Edward VI.

The King has supreme power in both civil and ecclesiastical matters but princes are not ministers of Word or Sacrament. The "Bishop of Rome"^{*} has no jurisdiction in England. Capital punishment may be inflicted for serious crimes. Christians may lawfully serve in wars when commanded by the Magistrate.

Article 38 defends private ownership of property, and Article 39 protects the integrity of oaths.

The Homilies.

The office of preaching was seen as the divinely-appointed way of taking the truth of the gospel to the minds, hearts and wills of the people. But if the men who were supposed to preach were not sufficiently educated, good and unerring Anglican doctrine had to be given to them as guidelines of their preaching or to be read in the form of a homily. According to Stephen Sykes and John Booty,⁴³ the Book of Homilies provided sermons for all major festivals—the ones on the Nativity of Christ, the Passion of Christ, the Resurrection of Christ—as well as for the rogationtide^{**} services of an agriculturally

* That is the Pope

⁴³ Sykes 139-40'

^{**} Rogation Days are certain prescribed days of prayer, fasting, and abstinence in the early summer.

based society. The Homilies taught a powerful doctrine of conversion to God, of personal spirituality, and of moral standards for personal and family life. They place great emphasis upon the need to attend and to rightly participate in the services of the parish church. Three Homilies instructed the people to look at the parish church as "truly a house of worship and prayer, suitably furnished for those who hear and live by the gospel."⁴⁴ Of all these Homilies, the primary messages were on justification by faith and on the purity and right ordering of Christian worship which should be free from medieval images and the cult of various saints .

Ordinals.

Bound up with the Book of Common Prayer, the Ordinal was the Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining, and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, according to the Order of the Church of England. The Ordinal prescribed the requirements for ordination, the rites, the threefold ministry of bishops, priests, deacons, and the minister of ordination. Basically all prescriptions emphasized the simplicity, brevity and supremacy of Holy Scriptures in everything. All candidates for ordination and consecration must be called, well prepared, and publicly tried and examined before they went through simple rites of ordination or consecration accordingly. With the authority to preach the word of God and to minister the holy sacraments, the

⁴⁴ Sykes 140.

bishops and priests bore the responsibility to be "the Messengers, the Watchmen, the Pastors, and Stewards of the Lord" in order "to teach, to premonish, to feed and to provide for the Lord's family, and to seek for Christ's sheep."⁴⁵ However, the bishops also held particular functions of maintaining the purity of doctrine, correcting and punishing the disobedient, and caring for the needy. As for those who aspired to be priests, after all other stages of preparation, they began their ministerial work upon becoming deacons. The diaconate was a one-year period in which the candidates assisted at the Eucharist, read the Scriptures, baptized, and preached. They also had the duty to take care of the sick, the poor and disadvantaged people of the parish.

The Ordinal fixed the bishop to be the president of ordinations to priesthood and diaconate, and the archbishop to preside over the consecration of a bishop. It was the practice that other priests present at the ordination of a priest and other bishops present at the consecration of a bishop were to join in the imposition of hands on the candidate. By tradition, apart from two bishops presenting the candidate to the archbishop, at least three other bishops were required in the consecration of a bishop.

⁴⁵ Sykes 147-48.

Canon Law.

The last document which expounds Anglican Spirituality is the Book of Canons. Canons were the logical consequence of the belief that Christians lived under God's reign established in Christ whose teaching and authority were to be recognized in the rule of the Apostles and their successors. As time passed by, in order to make sure that the Churches were ruled by God and not by the tyranny of personal private inspiration, the canon of Scripture and other publicly defined and agreed doctrine became essential parts of the law by which Christians were governed. Thus, the Book of Canons contained a convergence of Scripture, doctrine, and apostolic power, to communicate Christ's life and the conditions of participation in the liturgy. The essence of canon law was that it was the law of liturgy which was the law of believing. It regulated various moral and spiritual obligations of clergy and people. In other words canon law also contained the rules governing liturgy and the sacraments and the conditions of admission to them.

Along with the historical development, Anglican canon law embraced the laws of councils, courts of bishops, and other ecclesiastical authorities like kings and popes. Thus, Anglican credal and doctrinal statements were defined into Anglican canon law governing moral and spiritual discipline, property, and administrative activity of great complexity and diversity according to the range of authority, degree and kind of legislation.