Introduction

I. The History of the Texts

The Origin of the Bishops' Book

The events leading up to the appearance of the Bishops' Book in September 1537 can be traced back to the Church of England's break with the See of Rome three years earlier. In November 1534, after a gradual process of disengagement with the papacy, the English Parliament ratified the separation by passing the Act of Supremacy, which made King Henry VIII the Supreme Head of the Church on earth. The king's main concern was to abolish the control that the papacy had exercised over matters falling within the Church's jurisdiction, most notably in the realm of marriage and divorce, in which he had a particular interest. But the break with Rome, which that entailed, could not be contained within the framework of canon law alone. Whether the king wanted it or not, the Church of England had to define its theological position in a way that would justify its unilateral declaration of independence from Rome, while, at the same time, asserting that it was still part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. In practice, that meant preserving as much of its inherited tradition as it could, while seeking to make common cause with others who found themselves in a similar position. Realistically, this meant that they had little option but to forge an alliance with the Protestants of Germany, though some of the theological positions adopted by the German Protestants in the Augsburg Confession (*Confessio Augustana*) of 1530 (and developed by Martin Luther and his chief associate Philipp Melanchthon) were problematic. Neither did Henry VIII share Luther's interest in justification by faith alone, nor did he see any need to restructure the sacramental life of the Church in order to accommodate it. He had not broken ties with the pope merely to submit to the dictates of a German Reformer, but he needed allies in the struggle that would surely ensue if either the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (who was also king of Spain) or the king of France decided to invade England and restore its Church to the Roman fold. Whether he liked it or not, Henry VIII thus found himself drifting inexorably towards the Lutherans, whose ideas were already being discussed in English theological circles and attracting sympathy, quite apart from his own circumstances or desires.

In 1535, Henry therefore despatched an embassy to Wittenberg and charged it with the task of coming to terms with Lutheran thinking. Melanchthon realised that the English would never sign the *Augustana* and so he negotiated a new statement of faith, which the English ambassadors could take back home.

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These so-called 'Wittenberg Articles' were compatible with German Protestant beliefs but for that very reason almost certainly too radical for Henry's taste.[1] The English ambassadors must have known how the king would react to them, because as far as we know, the Articles never reached England, at least not in their original form. At some point along the way, they were drastically shortened and reworked, and, in the summer of 1536, were adopted by the convocation of Canterbury as the 'Ten Articles'.[2] They followed the Augsburg Confession in having two distinct sections, one theoretical and the other practical. The first five articles were doctrinal affirmations, which established the Church's beliefs in opposition to Rome, and the last five touched more directly on the worship and life of the Church. By Wittenberg standards, the Ten Articles were inadequate and more would need to be said, but in the climate of the time they were the most that the English Reformers could achieve.

One of the problems they had to face was that unlike Germany or France, where Protestantism was a popular movement with widespread support, England had become a Protestant kingdom with virtually no Protestants in the population. Its Reformation, such as it was, had been directed from the top for reasons of State, and those who wanted to move in a Lutheran direction knew that they had to get broader support if they were going to succeed. To do that, they had to educate the more literate members of the Church in the meaning of the faith that they were expected to profess. Archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) seems to have believed that the best way to do this was not to produce a longer and more detailed confession of faith, but a practical textbook outlining the Church's beliefs, within the recognised framework of traditional catechetical instruction.

This pattern was ultimately derived from Augustine's *Enchiridion*, a manual of Church teaching that had long been used to examine candidates for ordination. It consisted of three basic elements – the Apostles' Creed, which outlined the Church's fundamental doctrine, the Ten Commandments, which shaped its moral and spiritual discipline, and the Lord's Prayer, which governed its devotional life. Those who would be priests were expected not only to memorise these three basic texts but also to be able to expound them to a bishop, or more often (in practice) to an archdeacon, whom the bishop appointed to examine and approve them as suitable candidates for holy orders. It was expected that their replies would conform to the methods expounded by Peter Lombard (*c.*1090-1160) and his successors – methods that the sixteenth-century Reformers and modern scholars have both labelled 'Scholastic', because they formed the substance of the education that prospective ordinands received in the 'schools', or universities, of the time. What was needed, Cranmer and his associates believed, was a Protestant guide to these basic texts, complete with detailed explanations of how they should be interpreted in the light of the Reformation. It would be in a book of this kind, rather than in an abstract

1 See G.L. Bray, *Documents of the English Reformation*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: James Clarke, 2004), 118-61.

2 Bray, *Documents*, 162-74.

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confession of faith, that the Church's newly-established beliefs would be presented to, and absorbed by, its future ministers. The book could also serve as a manual of instruction for lay people, but most of those who would read and use it would have been young men destined for holy orders. They were Cranmer's principal target audience, even if the book's overall reach was wider than that.

It was with this aim in view that the bishops agreed to compose a suitable handbook of Christian instruction that would guide people in interpreting the main pillars of their faith and which would take Protestant positions into account without necessarily subscribing to them wholesale. The committee that was charged with drafting it consisted of the bishops who were available at the time, along with a selection of members of the lower houses of the two convocations (Canterbury and York). How the work of composing it was parcelled out among them is not possible to say, nor do we know whether there was any clear policy behind the choice of the clergy representatives, though it is reasonable to suppose that they must have been sympathetic to the proposed initiative. What we do know is that all the sitting bishops signed the final document which thus came to be known as the 'Bishops' Book', even though, as subsequent events would show, not all of them were equally enthusiastic about its contents. Back-pedalling among certain members of the episcopate would not be long in coming, and would receive the active encouragement of the king, but in the first phase, the reform-minded bishops had the upper hand and were able to persuade their colleagues to go along with the changes they wanted to introduce.

In addition to a detailed examination of the three elements of traditional Christian catechesis, the bishops also undertook a study of the seven sacraments recognised by Peter Lombard, which had become matters of considerable controversy as a result of the Reformation. They also included a few things that needed to be clarified but which had not figured in the traditional curriculum – in particular, the *Ave Maria*, the doctrine of justification and the state of the dead in purgatory. Of these, it was justification that was most comprehensively disputed, and the appendices devoted to it and related concerns indicate where the most acute flashpoints of theological disagreement were.

The composition of the Bishops' Book began after the conclusion of the great council presided over by Thomas Cromwell (*c.*1485-1540) in the winter of 1536-1537.[1] Cromwell had already installed himself, with the king's permission, as the vice-gerent of the Church, a role that enabled him to claim precedence over the archbishops and unite the two provinces into one, at least for administrative purposes. In practice, this meant that representatives of the northern province of York were involved in the composition of the Bishops' Book and not merely asked to ratify it after it had been approved by the convocation of Canterbury – which was the normal procedure. Given that York was in turmoil following the so-called 'pilgrimage of grace', a rebellion against the changes recently introduced by the king, its inclusion was particularly significant and somewhat

1 See P. Holmes, 'The Last Tudor Great Councils', *Historical Journal* 33 (1990), 1-22.

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surprising. It was, however, consonant with a reform that had originally been attempted by Cardinal Wolsey in the 1520s and that Cromwell wanted to make permanent, though he was to fail in that attempt.

It is not known when the committee that composed the Bishops' Book first met. A record of one of its early sessions has survived, thanks to the account of the Scottish humanist Alexander Alesius (1500-65), who happened to meet Cromwell in the streets of London and was taken along to the meeting.[1] Alesius claimed that this occurred in 1537 and, in his classic biography of Thomas Cranmer, Diarmaid MacCulloch surmised that it was in February, but there is a problem with this date, since the new year did not begin until 25 March and there is no reason to suppose that Alesius was using a different calendar.[2] But there is no doubt that work on the Book was well underway by the spring of 1537 and must have been completed by July or so, though the Book was not published until late September. The text bears signs of a rushed job, which is best explained by a desire to get it published as quickly as possible. It certainly appeared in print before the king had time to review it, because his annotations were made on a copy of the printed text. They have survived in two different versions, as have Cranmer's replies to them. The nature of the king's commentary strongly suggests that the text would not have appeared if he had had a chance to look at it before publication, though whether anyone had anticipated his negative reaction is unknown. Quite possibly, the bishops believed that they had been authorised to produce a definitive text without having to seek explicit royal approval and they acted accordingly, but it is impossible to be certain about this. All that we can say for sure is that the Book was out little more than a year after the promulgation of the Ten Articles and that it was signed by all the bishops without exception.

From the Bishops' Book to the King's Book

From this distance in time it is hard to say whether, or to what extent, the bishops believed that the book they produced in 1537 would be accepted (or acceptable) as a long-term statement of the Church's faith. The Reformation was very much a work in progress, even in Germany, and there were still hopes that an ecumenical council might be summoned to reconcile the warring factions of Christendom. It was well-known that Henry VIII was a conservative in theological matters and the road back to Rome was far from being definitively closed. With hindsight, the permission given to publish an English Bible and the dissolution of the monasteries appear to have been key moves towards a more assertive Protestantism, but against this must be weighed the doctrinal conservatism that produced the Six Articles of 1539, a reaction to recent reforming tendencies that was sufficiently strong as to persuade Hugh Latimer (*c.*1487-1555), one of Thomas Cranmer's chief allies, to resign his bishopric in protest. At the king's insistence, the doctrine of transubstantiation and the compulsory celibacy of the

1 Alexander Alesius, *Of the Auctorite of the Word of God* (London, 1537?), Av-Bviii.

2 For a detailed theoretical reconstruction of the chronology, see D. MacCulloch, *Thomas Cranmer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).

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clergy were to remain part of the Church's official teaching, a reminder that on matters of doctrine there had been no real Reformation at all.[1]

This was of great importance for the fate of the Bishops' Book, which was more concerned with fundamental beliefs than with relatively superficial matters of Church administration. The Book had incorporated elements of the teaching of Martin Luther (1483-1546), taken especially from his Larger and Shorter Catechisms, as can be seen from the confessional nature of many of its statements. The Bishops' Book often reads like a personal profession of faith, whether it was meant to be used for catechising individuals or not. This gave it a tone that did not sit too well with a significant segment of Church opinion, and the 'personal touch' was systematically eliminated in the subsequent revision.

The revision process can be divided into three stages, according to the evidence that we possess. The first stage is defined by the annotations on the printed Book, made by Henry VIII himself. We still possess a copy of the text on which he commented in his own hand. Somewhat later, a second version of his remarks appeared, with more extensive objections and proposals for revision, which this marks the second stage. The king's original comments were preserved, apart from a few which disappeared because the section to which they referred was removed. In compensation for that, there were substantial additional comments, particularly towards the end of the book. That the king was personally involved in this second stage can be deduced from the fact that it was in reaction to this recension that Thomas Cranmer penned his eighty-six notes, in which he took issue with many of the comments that he assumed the king had made.

The effect of the king's interventions on the third and final stage of the revision was considerable. Many of his annotations were minor, having more to do with the form in which things were said than with their substance, and most of them were accepted without further ado. There are numerous instances, especially in the latter half of the Book, where the king's proposed revisions were adopted, often word for word. It is also clear from Cranmer's objections to the king's proposals that the archbishop was often over-ruled, though, in a few cases, he was able to persuade the king and the text of the Bishops' Book, or something very close to it, was retained. It is therefore safe to say that although Henry VIII did not dictate the course of revision, his remarks were taken with the utmost seriousness and, more often than not, his suggested changes were incorporated into the final text.

Having said that, the third stage of the revision process, which we cannot follow in detail but whose results are known from the finished product, involved a sweeping revision that often rendered both the king's and Cranmer's observations redundant. We have no way of knowing whether (or to what extent) either or both of them were actively involved in this, but there is no doubt that the final version went well beyond what the king and the archbishop had discussed between them. The fact that the end result was published without demur shows that the king must have approved of

1 Bray, *Documents*, 222-32.

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the changes and that Cranmer went along with them, whatever his private reservations may have been. Who proposed these additional alterations is unknown. It is even possible that the archbishop was responsible for some of them, having been encouraged by the king to think again, though men like Bishop Stephen Gardiner (*c.*1483-1555) of Winchester and Edmund Bonner (*c.*1500-1569) of London were probably the main actors in the conservative reaction. This supposition gains plausibility from the fact that Bonner felt a particular attachment to what became known as the 'King's Book', which he revised and expanded when the Church of England returned to the Roman fold during the reign of Mary I. Had he felt no commitment to it, he could easily have disowned the King's Book; the fact that he undertook to revise it instead may be taken as evidence that he had been involved with it, and may have been one of its principal authors.

When exactly the various revisions were made is impossible to determine, though it must have been sometime between 1538 and 1542.[1] Modern opinion tends to prefer the earlier date but the later one has its defenders, and in any case the process of revision must have extended over some considerable time, perhaps with substantial periods of inactivity along the way. What is certain is that the theological climate changed considerably in the interval between the publication of the Bishops' Book and the appearance of its successor. From an openness to Lutheranism supported by Thomas Cromwell and (increasingly) by Thomas Cranmer as well, the Church swung back to a much more traditional approach, so much so that even the Great Bible, first produced in 1538 and launched as a serious attempt to make Englishmen familiar with the Word of God, was no longer printed after 1541. The sudden fall of Thomas Cromwell in the summer of 1540 removed one of the great supporters of change, and although Cranmer managed to survive this reverse, his plans for further reform had to be put on hold or cancelled altogether. The appearance of the King's Book was a major indication of the new conservative mood and there can be little doubt that Henry VIII was the chief inspiration behind it, if not its actual author.

Looking at the revision in detail, there were two main changes that affected the overall composition and appearance of the text. The first was that the intensely personal and confessional nature of many sections in the Bishops' Book was systematically eliminated, so that the King's Book is a much more objective and 'impersonal' text, more like a series of short theological essays than a catechism. The other is that the extensive notes that were appended to some of the sections of the Bishops' Book were removed, either by integrating their substance into the main text of the expositions or by dropping them altogether. Theological considerations may have played a part in this, but the main reason for the change seems to have been that the king did not like having notes appended to the main entries. The fact that the notes were all grouped together at the end, rather than attached to each individual exposition, made them awkward to use and easy to

1 For a survey of the available evidence, see T.A. Lacey, *The King's Book* (London: SPCK, 1932).

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overlook. Why the Bishops' Book presented them in this way is unclear; perhaps they were added as an afterthought or regarded as the popular equivalent of academic footnotes. Either way, they were inconvenient and their removal made sense, though, in the case of the Ten Commandments, Archbishop Cranmer fought (unsuccessfully) to retain them.

Later Developments

The King's Book appeared in 1543 and was received without further comment, but how much it impacted the Church is almost impossible to gauge. It represented a victory of sorts for the more conservative wing of the episcopate, but as they were less interested in theological education than the more radical bishops were, they had little incentive to push it. Those who were more committed to the Reformation were even less enthusiastic, and there is no sign that they made any effort to promote it either. The king had had his way, but the motives that had inspired the Bishops' Book had faded into the background and the revised version seems to have disappeared from view fairly quickly. After Henry VIII's death, there was no attempt to resurrect it and it did not figure in the more comprehensive Reformation that Archbishop Cranmer introduced during the reign of Edward VI. To all appearances it seems that the Church moved on, and that henceforth its doctrine would be communicated by other means – in the Homilies, for example, as well as in a catechism that eventually appeared in Queen Elizabeth's reign.

The King's Book might have vanished altogether had it not been for Edmund Bonner, the bishop of London, who was deprived of his See under Edward VI but restored on the accession of Mary I in 1553. Bonner belonged to the small group of conservative Henrician bishops who saw the Marian restoration of Catholicism as an opportunity to resurrect the kind of Church that they had been content to accept after 1534. He was happy to be back in communion with Rome, but he was less committed to the reforms that the papacy was then introducing. In 1545, when Henry VIII was still alive, Rome had convened the council of Trent in order to define the Church's positions with respect to the challenge of the Reformers. By 1553, the council had already met in two separate sessions, and a third was to follow before it was finally wound up ten years later. Trent purported to be a defence of the traditional faith, but in reality it was a reforming council that in some respects was more radical than the Reformers had imagined possible or originally desired. The representative of this new Catholicism in England was Cardinal Reginald Pole (1500-1558), who had spent many years on the continent and was fully conversant with developments there. He returned to England in 1553 as papal legate, with a commission to reform the Church along Tridentine lines, an objective that put him somewhat at odds with a man like Bonner, even though their main aims were similar.

Pole could not be elevated to the See of Canterbury until after the death of Cranmer in 1556, and so his plans for the reform of the English Church were put on hold for a couple of years. During that time, Bonner was able to

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prepare his own diocese of London for a return to the kind of Catholicism that he favoured, which retained links with the Henrician reforms in which he had acquiesced. With the assistance of his like-minded chaplains, and in particular John Harpsfield (1516-78), Bonner was able to issue a Book of Homilies that recycled two of those that had appeared under Edward VI in 1547. They had originally been composed some years before they were published – probably in 1542, when the project of writing homilies was approved by the convocation of Canterbury, or shortly after that. They were therefore contemporaneous with the King's Book, which Bonner also sought to revise for use in his diocese.

Freed from the need to placate any Protestant tendency, Bonner (or more probably Harpsfield) rewrote large sections of the King's Book and added a considerable amount of new material. It was published, along with Bonner's Homilies, on 17 September 1555 and is a useful indicator of the degree to which the theological pendulum had swung against the Reformation, at least in the minds of men like Bonner.

Needless to say, there was no opportunity for any response to be made to Bonner's Book, as the revised version came to be known, and we do not know how popular or widely used it was. Presumably it never circulated outside the diocese of London, for which it was authorised, but who used it within the diocese is impossible to say. What we do know is that it disappeared, along with the Marian restoration, when Elizabeth I came to the throne and Bonner was again deprived of his See. The Elizabethan Settlement of 1559 aimed to restore the doctrine and practice of the Church of England to what it had been at the close of the reign of Edward VI, though with certain modifications that were mainly designed to include as many traditionalists in the Church as possible. The Articles of Religion drawn up by Archbishop Cranmer in 1553 were accordingly re-issued in a revised form, as was the 1552 Book of Common Prayer. The Homilies were reprinted and a second volume, already projected in 1547, was added to them. Of the King's Book, no more was heard. It had been an ephemeral, rather than an enduring, feature of the Henrician Reformation, and nobody seems to have had any desire to revive it. It remains a witness to the theology of its time but it never succeeded in becoming one of the recognised formularies of the reformed Church of England.

The Bishops' Book and the King's Book were not rescued from oblivion until the early nineteenth century, thanks to the efforts of Charles Lloyd (1784-1829), who reprinted them in (what was then considered) a modernised format.[1] A few years later, Archbishop Cranmer's annotations to Henry VIII's comments on the Bishops' Book, along with those comments themselves, were printed in a separate edition by John Edmund Cox (1812-1890), the editor of Cranmer's *Remains* for the Parker Society.[2] Cox was aware of the copy of the Bishops' Book in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, which contained the handwritten comments of

1 C. Lloyd, *Formularies of Faith* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1825).

2 *Miscellaneous Writings and Letters of Thomas Cranmer*, ed. J.E. Cox, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1846), II, 83-114.

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Henry VIII.[1] He also knew of the manuscript of Cranmer's responses to them, which was in the Parker Library at Corpus Christi College in Cambridge.[2] But although he suspected that there must have been a further recension of the king's remarks, because Cranmer's annotations were more extensive than the royal comments in the volume available to him, he never located it, despite the fact that it was readily available among the Royal Collection of manuscripts in the British Library.[3] By the time it was 'discovered' and identified as the copy of the king's remarks that Cranmer had used when composing his replies, interest in the question had faded and nobody could be found who would produce a further and definitive edition of the whole project.

Interest in the King's Book was briefly revived by Canon Thomas Alexander Lacey (1853-1931), whose edition was published by the Church Historical Society shortly after his death. Lacey was a staunch Anglo-Catholic who recognised the Book's inadequacies but who nevertheless concluded: 'if it had been allowed a fair field, continuing and changing only as change was needed, there might have been a happier Church of England, and one not a whit more insular, than the last four centuries have known.'[4] There is no indication that Lacey was aware of Edmund Bonner's attempt to do just that and few impartial observers today would share his optimism. The present edition makes no claim to be reviving this now forgotten past as if its recovery might benefit the spiritual life of the modern Church, though there is no doubt that much of what the Books say is still valid and could be recycled for contemporary use. The sole aim of this edition is to shed light on a neglected phase of the English Reformation by printing and editing texts that give us a unique insight into the theological developments that characterised its earliest stages. From them we learn what the advocates of reform in the Church held in common with those of a more conservative outlook, and we can see more clearly on what points they differed. With the benefit of hindsight we know that it was the reforming tendency that won out in the end, an outcome that owed much to its solid grounding in the Biblical sources that all sides in the debates acknowledged. Yet we may also come to appreciate that it was the conservatives who took the bishops' original initiative more seriously and who clung to it long after it had been abandoned by everyone else. Their arguments were often based on spurious sources and dubious interpretations of Scripture, but the breadth and seriousness of their scholarship was remarkable for their time and reminds us that they were not just knee-jerk traditionalists reacting against all change. We have moved on from them now, but we can still respect their sincere intentions and their love of learning, which ironically are the very factors that oblige us to reject so many of their conclusions as erroneous.

1 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Quarto Rawlinson 245.

2 Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, MS 104, 241-69.

3 British Library, London, MS Royal 7C XXX.

4 Lacey, *King's Book*, xx.

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II. Analysis of the Books

The General Pattern

The three Books follow a similar pattern that is ultimately derived from the medieval schools. The core contents are a detailed analysis of the Apostles' Creed, the seven sacraments, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the *Ave Maria*, in that order. The Apostles' Creed represented the core doctrine of the Church, the Ten Commandments expounded the discipline inherited from the Old Testament law and the Lord's Prayer encapsulated the spirit of devotion that characterised the teaching of Christ. Doctrine, discipline and devotion are the three pillars on which the Christian life is founded and every candidate for ministry was expected to be thoroughly familiar with them. The seven sacraments form a separate section. They are not contained in a confessional document, as the other three are, and were not developed as a distinct category until Peter Lombard did so in the twelfth century. After that time, however, they became central to the life of the Church and were a major focus of controversy during the Reformation, so they could hardly be omitted. It is interesting to note that although the Ten Articles of 1536 had dealt only with baptism, the Eucharist and penance, following what was then standard Lutheran practice, the Bishops' Book and its successors retained the traditional number of seven, which would not be formally abandoned until the appearance of the Forty-Two Articles in 1553. The positioning of the sacraments immediately after the Apostles' Creed is also a reminder of their importance for the Church's doctrine.

The inclusion of the *Ave Maria* strikes modern readers as somewhat odd, but it was recognition of the growing veneration of the Virgin Mary in the devotional life of the Church. Modern Protestants usually shy away from that but it was not a problem in the sixteenth century, when even Mary's perpetual virginity was accepted without question. Here as elsewhere, there is a discernible difference between the piety of the Reformers and that of their descendants.[5]

The King's Book is prefaced by a declaration of faith, which is repeated (in a revised form) in Bonner's Book also. This innovation seems to have been called forth by the oft-repeated phrase 'justification by faith alone', which was in some respects the hallmark of the Reformation. The revisers of the Bishops' Book knew that there were many different senses in which 'faith' could be understood, and clarity on this point was essential. They expounded the difference between faith as belief and faith as trust, rightly regarding the second as the inescapable consequence of the first. Bonner's Book makes the same point at somewhat greater length, taking care to emphasise the need for human co-operation in what was primarily a work of God in the heart of the believer.

The deepest differences between the books appear in the appended sections at the end. On justification by faith, the Bishops' Book does no more than

5 Note, for example, that the Book of Common Prayer devotes space to Marian festivals like the Purification (2 February) and the Annunciation (25 March), though not to her Assumption (15 August), birth (8 September) or conception (8 December).

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reprint the fifth of the Ten Articles, without any additional comment, and its short section on purgatory draws on the last of those Articles, but is expressed in different words. These were controversial topics and the exposition is clearly Protestant, so it is not surprising that they were major targets for the conservative revision that was to follow. The King's Book replaces the section on justification with an entirely new exposition of the subject, to which other sections on free will (or as expressed in the King's Book, 'freewill') and good works are added. It also reworks the section on purgatory. What is especially interesting here is that we have evidence that the king desired changes of this kind, but that his proposals were not automatically accepted. Instead, the revisers produced their own theological reflections on the topics under consideration, an indication of how central they regarded them. Just as interesting is the fact that Bonner's Book dropped them entirely, presumably on the supposition that they were not really controversial at all!

Within the sections common to all three Books, the order followed is generally the same, though with some exceptions. In the Apostles' Creed, the Bishops' Book had originally included the clause concerning Christ's descent into hell with what came next – his resurrection from the dead. At the insistence of Henry VIII (and with the agreement of Archbishop Cranmer), however, this was moved in the King's Book to its more traditional place, as an appendix to the crucifixion, an order that Bonner's Book naturally followed.

More surprising is the displacement of the sacrament of matrimony in the Bishops' Book and of confirmation in the King's Book. In the former case, matrimony is elevated to first place, even before baptism. This was unprecedented and appears to be unique in the history of the sacraments. Some have thought that it may reflect a certain deference to the king, whose quarrels with the papacy on this subject are well-known, but although the matter was very much in the air at the time, there is nothing in the exposition itself that reflects the king's particular concerns. Nor is the subject of clerical marriage mentioned at any point.[1] The explanation of this displacement seems to be that matrimony was regarded as the most ancient and universal of the sacraments, predating the coming of Christianity and going right back to the Garden of Eden. As the only sacrament of creation, it was held to take precedence over the others, which were all sacraments of redemption. This was a strange argument and evidently not very convincing, because in the King's Book matrimony was put back in its usual place – a sign, if any were needed, that Henry VIII did not give it the kind of priority that modern scholars have sometimes ascribed to him.

At the same time, the King's Book removed confirmation to the end, followed only (and naturally) by extreme unction. The logic behind this, if there was any, is hard to discern. Confirmation has always been regarded as an extension or complement to baptism and has accordingly been attached to it. It is possible that it was removed from its traditional place in deference to the Lutheran idea, represented in the Ten Articles, that there were only three true

1 Clerical marriage was not legal in England until 1549, and it was abolished under Mary I (1553-58).

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sacraments – baptism, penance and the Eucharist (or the 'altar', as it is called in all three Books). These three were then followed by holy orders and matrimony, neither of which is compulsory and which the medieval Church had come to think of as mutually exclusive. Extreme unction was naturally placed at the end, though it was also controversial, as the exposition of it makes clear. Was it a rite for healing or for passing from this world to the next? In theory it was the former, but in practice it had become the latter, so the nature of the sacramental grace it supposedly conferred was open to dispute.

Following that logic, the only place left for confirmation was after matrimony and before extreme unction, even though it has no connection with either of them. Like extreme unction, though, its authenticity as a sacrament was (and still is) somewhat doubtful. The Eastern Churches have never recognised it as being distinct from baptism, and even many Western theologians have been at a loss to justify its separate existence.

Unsurprisingly, Bishop Bonner reverted to the traditional order, which (for the sake of convenience) is also the one followed in this edition. What is perhaps of greatest significance is that none of the Books so much as mentions the alternative classification of the sacraments that was soon to become classical Protestant teaching, which would be incorporated in the Forty-Two Articles of 1553. This was that there are really only two sacraments, both of them defined by the Gospel – baptism and the Eucharist. The rest may be godly ordinances (orders, matrimony), corrupt misinterpretations of apostolic teaching (penance, extreme unction), or traditional and worthwhile practices that are hard to classify in sacramental terms (confirmation). It would be only six years after the publication of the King's Book that the Church would authorise a Prayer Book in which baptism and the Eucharist received full recognition as sacraments, confirmation and matrimony would be provided for, penance and extreme unction would be omitted altogether, and orders would be treated in a separate document known as the Ordinal. But there was as yet no inkling of that development in 1543, and of course it was rejected by Bishop Bonner twelve years later.

Another point of minor interest concerns the Ten Commandments. The text was the same in all the classical versions of these, but over the centuries a different internal division had crept in. Under the influence of Augustine, the Western Church had combined the first and second commandment into one and then divided the last one into two, so as to preserve the total number of ten. That order was the dominant one in the sixteenth century, but it was challenged by humanist scholars who followed both the Hebrew text and Jerome, in the way that we do today. All three Books follow the modern order, but interestingly, only Bonner's Book seeks to justify its choice, evidently in reaction to traditionalists who thought it was Protestant and who therefore wanted to reinstate the Augustinian pattern. The Book apologises to them for refusing their request and sticks to its guns – an interesting example of how Bishop Bonner was not mindlessly traditional, but in fact was prepared to accept the findings of humanist scholarship when they were clearly justified and made no real difference to the final text.

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Bonner's Book also stands out from the others in the way that it seeks to support many of its statements by extensive quotations from (or at least references to) Scripture and the Fathers of the Church. No doubt this was to counteract the accusation, often levelled against traditionalists, that they lacked evidence for a number of their more controversial claims. It must be said that many of the sources cited in their defence would not pass muster today, but at least their conscience was pricked and they made an effort to justify themselves, which is more than can be said for the compilers of the King's Book, who were often content with somewhat vague references to classical authors but short on direct quotations from them, making it sometimes difficult to know to what exactly they were referring. The compilers of Bonner's Book certainly tried to prove more than the evidence would bear, but by the lights of contemporary humanist scholarship they can fairly be regarded as superior to the editors of the earlier Books, who used the same inadequate methods, but in a less thorough and effective way.

The Apostles' Creed

The first section in all three Books analyses the Apostles' Creed, which is subdivided into twelve distinct articles.[1] The last two of these, on the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, were combined and treated as one in the Bishops' and King's Books but separated out by Bonner. As already noted, Henry VIII insisted that Christ's descent into hell should be part of the fourth article, not the fifth, as it had been in the Bishops' Book, but although this adjustment was made (with Archbishop Cranmer's approval) there was little change in what was actually said about it.

Looking at how individual articles were revised, it is interesting to note that they were treated very differently. The fourth (dealing with the Crucifixion), the seventh (on the return of Christ) and the eighth (on the Holy Spirit) suffered relatively little change in the King's Book, beyond the removal of the additional notes found in the Bishops' Book, but in contrast to that, the ninth article (on the Church) was completely rewritten. In between these extremes, the first and second articles (on God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son) were drastically shortened, although there were also a few additions in each case, whereas in the others, about half the original text was removed and in most cases, replaced with substantial additions. The main exception is the tenth article (on the communion of saints and the forgiveness of sins) where relatively little was added to compensate for what was deleted.

The first article was uncontroversial in theological terms, and its content is much the same in all three Books. The deletions made in the King's Book were mainly passages of a 'confessional' nature and are best described as an attempt to remove the element of subjective self-examination that the Bishops' Book was so fond of. In Bonner's Book there is an extensive introductory section that underlines the importance of faith in a way that resembles what had already been said in the prefatory essay on that subject, but little else.

1 According to legend, one for each apostle!

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The deletions in the second article follow a similar pattern and the one serious addition is no more than an explanation of the meaning of the word 'Lord'. In Bonner's Book there are numerous clarifications and examples, taken from Scripture, that illustrate the points being made but do not add anything that the composers of the original Bishops' Book would have found objectionable.

The third article in the Bishops' Book contains a lot about the role of the Holy Spirit in the conception of Jesus. This is downplayed in the King's Book, for some reason, and replaced by a long paragraph about the sinful state of the world before the incarnation and the role of the Old Testament prophets in announcing its coming. Bonner's Book somewhat curiously omits most of the theology and replaces it with extensive quotations from the birth narratives in the Gospels. These in turn are supported by a few quotations from the Church Fathers which merely illustrate the Biblical texts and repeat what the omitted theological sections had said.

The fourth article is much the same in all three Books, apart from the transfer of the section on Christ's descent into hell. Bonner's Book says little that is new, though there is an odd discussion of the appropriateness of Christ going down to a place of no return, which is not resolved other than by saying that the word 'hell' means many different things in Scripture!

The fifth article follows the usual pattern in which the more subjective statements of the Bishops' Book are removed and attention is focused on Christ's resurrection and its significance for us at the end of time. Bonner's Book says much the same thing as the King's Book, but prefaces it with a long exposition of different passages of Scripture which support the doctrine of the resurrection.

The sixth article is greatly shortened in the King's Book, again by the removal of the personal applications that take up so much space in the Bishops' Book. A short paragraph is added that allows that the saints in heaven pray for us, but it is emphasised that only the mediation of Christ on our behalf is of any saving significance. That paragraph is omitted in Bonner's Book, which compensates by adding a number of quotations concerning the ascension, taken from Scripture and the Church Fathers. It also adds a paragraph defending the doctrine of transubstantiation by saying that it cannot be denied on the ground that since Christ's body has ascended into heaven, it is no longer present on earth in any form.

The seventh article, on the second coming of Christ and the last judgment, is much the same in all three Books, though Bonner's is notable for its listing of more than twenty Biblical references to the subject, including no fewer than eight from the Old Testament.

The eighth article is practically the same in all three Books, with the usual deletions in the King's Book of the Bishops' Book's subjective and extraneous material.

The ninth article, on the Church, was highly controversial and it is here that real differences appear. In the Bishops' Book the emphasis is on the spiritual quality of the Church and the institutional claims of Rome (in particular) are downplayed or denied. The King's Book removes the subjective note, as it always

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does, and puts more emphasis on the visible Church, while maintaining the right of local and national churches like the Church of England to call themselves fully catholic. Bonner's Book, not surprisingly, removes all that but says nothing about papal supremacy. Instead, it quotes the Church Fathers, and especially Cyprian and Augustine, in defence of the unity of the 'catholic church', leaving it to the reader to understand that this can only refer to the body that is centred on Rome.

The tenth article, which concerns the communion of saints and the remission of sins, was also a matter of controversy because of the dispute about the identity of the 'true catholic church', but otherwise what the three Books say is much the same. They all affirm the indispensability of the Church as the means by which union with Christ and the saints is secured, and they all put great emphasis on the Eucharist as the centrepiece of this unity. The Bishops' Book, as we might expect, downplays the outward symbols in favour of an inner communion of the heart, an emphasis that is more muted in the King's Book and largely suppressed by Bonner, who stresses the objective nature (and efficacy) of participation in the sacraments.

The eleventh and twelfth articles are taken together in the Bishops' and King's Books but treated separately by Bonner. The Bishops' Book puts the emphasis on the resurrection of the body and the King's Book on the future experience of eternal life. Bonner's Book has little to add to the eleventh article, other than to explain that the English word 'body' is used to translate the Latin word *caro* ('flesh') because in Biblical usage the two often coincide. On eternal life, Bonner stresses that there will be many who will be resurrected to eternal damnation, a subject that the other Books pass over in silence. It is interesting to note here that whereas the first English Reformers tended to avoid saying anything about eternal reprobation, Bonner anticipated the Puritans. Like them, he was not afraid to discuss this unpleasant subject, though doubtless they would have disagreed about who was forever damned!

The Seven Sacraments

Nowhere was the Reformation conflict more deeply felt than in the theological debates about the sacraments, and this is reflected in all three Books. Broadly speaking, the Bishops' Book goes as far in the direction of Lutheranism as was politically possible in 1537, the King's Book backtracks to a more traditional (but pre-Tridentine) position and Bonner's Book does its best to set out what its authors saw as classical Roman teaching at a time when that was still being defined by the Council of Trent. It therefore offers us some insight into what a group of educated, loyal Catholics thought about the sacraments before they were required to submit to the Council's decisions.

Looking at the King's Book first, there are huge differences in the degree of revision that the exposition of individual sacraments received. The article on baptism was greatly enlarged and essentially transformed from what it had originally been, whereas the one on confirmation was scarcely touched. The articles on penance, the altar and orders were completely rewritten, though in

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the last of these there was some carry-over from the Bishops' Book. Perhaps surprisingly, the section on matrimony was only lightly revised, whereas the final one on extreme unction was almost totally so. Ironically, it was the two displaced sacraments that suffered the least amount of modification, whereas the others were completely (or almost completely) rewritten.

When we turn to Bonner's Book, we notice first that the section on the sacraments is prefaced by a short essay that seeks to define what the sacraments are and why they are so central to the life of the Church. The authors claim that they are rooted in the Old Testament but that they have changed their character now that Christ has come. In the New Testament their number has been greatly reduced (to only seven!) but their efficacy has been correspondingly increased as they are now the preferred means by which the grace of salvation in Christ is communicated to the faithful. The exposition of the individual sacraments that follows is much more extensive than anything in the Bishops' or King's Books, and although a few phrases are carried over from the latter, what we find in Bonner's Book is essentially new.

On baptism, the Bishops' Book has relatively little to say. It affirms the necessity of the sacrament for the forgiveness of sins and the spiritual regeneration needed for living the Christian life. It condemns the 'Pelagians', who (in the eyes of the bishops) had reappeared as Anabaptists, because they denied the efficacy of the sacrament apart from a profession of faith on the part of the recipient, which it regards as a form of works righteousness. Its main emphasis is on the undeserved nature of God's grace, which is freely given to all who receive it. In the King's Book, this basic framework is preserved but there are substantial additions. The sinfulness of fallen humanity is underlined and the nature of original sin is carefully explained. Of particular interest is the emphasis on the validity of the sacrament, regardless of the worthiness of the minister, and the assertion that baptism is a kind of covenant between God and Man – a foreshadowing of the more developed covenant theology that would appear in the following generation, but which we normally associate with Puritanism.

Bonner's Book starts off with a lengthy exposition of the relationship between the words used in the administration of baptism and the signs that accompany them, before going on to affirm the sacrament's efficacy for the forgiveness of sins and the spiritual rebirth of the recipient. There are several quotations from the New Testament and from the Church Fathers that are used to illustrate these points. After that, the article repeats much of what is in the King's Book, including the denunciation of the Anabaptists, though it is interesting to note that there is no mention of any connection between them and the ancient Pelagians.

The article on confirmation in the Bishops' Book is very short and says little beyond claiming that even in the New Testament; those who were baptised were often subsequently confirmed by the laying on of hands. It recognises that the sacrament is not strictly necessary but encourages people to come forward to receive it so as to receive the spiritual gift of perseverance in the faith. The King's Book has nothing to add to this and retains the original text almost word

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for word. Bonner's Book however, discourses on it at some length, producing the usual series of quotations from the Bible and the fathers in support of its contention that the sacrament is not only beneficial, but required for growth in Christian maturity.

Penance was a more controversial subject than baptism or confirmation, a fact that is reflected in the way it is treated in the different Books. In 1537, the Lutherans were still prepared to recognise it as a sacrament, which is reflected within the Bishops' Book. It expounds penance according to the three elements that constituted it – contrition, confession and amendment of life. True contrition begins with conviction of sin, accompanied by an awareness of its seriousness in the eyes of God. But the penitent must also be aware that forgiveness and restoration are available in Christ, and this is the point at which confession to a priest and the assurance of absolution come in. The priest cannot confer (or withhold) absolution, but it is his duty to proclaim the grace of God in Christ, who grants it to all those who sincerely repent. That sincerity is then manifested by a changed life, a point that is constantly stressed by the Apostle Paul, whose words the Bishops' Book quotes to great effect.

In the King's Book, this article is completely rewritten. Contrition and confession are retained, but before the priest can grant absolution there must be evidence of satisfaction, that is to say, proof that the penitent is indeed sincere. It is priestly absolution that lies at the heart of the sacrament, which can only be dispensed with in case of necessity, as (for example) with the penitent thief on the cross! Bonner's Book takes up this theme and elaborates it much further, adding a very large number of Scriptural references that are meant to support its teaching. Of particular interest is the way in which it affirms the sufficiency of Christ's satisfaction for sin but at the same time warns that this is not applied to us unless we seek it and do something to show that we deserve to receive it. It also claims that the forgiveness of sin in a spiritual sense does not necessarily remove the need for temporal pain to be inflicted on the penitent, thereby justifying the mortification of the flesh that penance was traditionally thought to involve. Particularly noteworthy is the large number of Biblical quotations marshalled in support of this doctrine, a sign that the authors were aware of the charge that what they were teaching was not faithful to the New Testament.

The sacrament of the altar, more correctly known as the Eucharist (a term that was also used) is given only very cursory treatment in the Bishops' Book. This omission was put right in the revision, which contains a long discourse defending transubstantiation and even administration in one kind only. Unworthy reception is denounced, but it seems to have been understood as irreverent behaviour during divine service more than anything else. Bonner's Book incorporates a few phrases from the King's Book but for the most part it offers us a fresh exposition, amply illustrated by quotations from the Church Fathers (more than from the New Testament) designed to support the doctrine of transubstantiation. Communion in one kind is also defended at some length, as is the view that the Eucharist is the 'unbloody sacrifice' of Christ's body and blood. Unfortunately, it has to be said that most of the quotations used to

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support these teachings are spurious or taken out of context. What at first sight appears to be an impressive defence of Catholic Eucharistic doctrine turns out, on closer examination, to be inadequately grounded in the source material cited in its support.

On the sacrament of holy orders, the Bishops' Book waxes more eloquent than it does anywhere else. The office and authority of the Church's ministers was clearly a matter of the greatest concern to the bishops, who placed considerable emphasis on the procedure for appointing them and on the qualities required in candidates. They also point out that nobody is perfect, and that the validity of a sacrament cannot be made to depend on the supposed worthiness of the minister. Having done that, they go on to detail the particular tasks that are entrusted to bishops and priests, along with the limitations imposed on them. In particular, they emphasise the duty of the clergy to obey their secular rulers and although they permit clergy to exercise temporal power, this must always be subject to the authority of the rulers to whom that power is primarily committed. The claims of the bishop of Rome are, of course, rejected.

In the King's Book most of this detail is omitted, though the fundamental theological principles underlying it are maintained. The King's Book adds a section on deacons, and discourses at some length on the pretended claims of the bishop of Rome, demonstrating from the evidence of Church history that they are unfounded. Bonner's Book obviously rejects all that but has surprisingly little to say on the subject of orders. The duty of the priest to administer the sacraments is reaffirmed but there is nothing about the spiritual qualifications demanded from candidates for ordination, nor is anything said about the particular ministry of the bishop of Rome. It seems that Bonner and his assistants took the view that the less they said about the subject, the better!

On matrimony, the Bishops' Book lays great stress on the union of man and woman in one flesh, not only for the avoidance of sin but also for bearing witness to the pattern of the relationship between Christ and the Church, and for the upbringing of children in the faith. The King's Book repeats this with only minor amendments, the most important of which is the inclusion of a table of the prohibited degrees of kinship that prevent a couple from marrying. Bonner's Book replaces all that with a lengthy exposition of the meaning of matrimony, drawn largely from the creation narrative in Genesis, supplemented by the provisions of canon law. It also stresses the sacred and indelible character of the marriage bond, with particular emphasis on the procreation of children.

Finally, the article on extreme unction in the Bishops' Book justified the practice on the basis of James 5:16, reminding readers that its original purpose was for healing and not to facilitate the passage of the recipient into the next life. The place of confession and penitence in this sacrament is also recognised and encouraged. The King's Book says much the same thing but reminds us that the confession that forms part of this sacrament is not to be understood as a substitute for the sacrament of penance, which must also be used by those fortunate enough to recover from their illness. Bonner's Book adopts a similar

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position with respect to the primary purpose of the sacrament, and backs this up with a number of references to other kinds of anointing found in the New Testament. Like the King's Book, its authors stress that extreme unction is not a substitute for penance, despite a certain overlap between them.

The Ten Commandments

As we have already seen, in their treatment of the Ten Commandments, all three Books followed the Hebrew division into ten, advocated by Jerome, rather than the then traditional one, preferred by Augustine. The text itself was not altered and so the change in presentation was cosmetic, but it nevertheless represented a triumph for Erasmian scholarship over the authority of the Church.

The articles themselves suffered only minor revisions from the Bishops' to the King's Book, though the notes appended to the former, which were intended to make the Commandments more comprehensible, were deleted, despite Cranmer's plea to the king that they should be kept. To the modern reader, perhaps the most unusual feature of this section is the large amount of space dedicated to the fifth commandment, about honouring one's father and mother. This was clearly felt to be of great significance in a hierarchical society, in which fatherhood extended naturally from the family to the authorities in both Church and State.

Bonner's Book is unusual here in that it undertakes a revision of this section that is every bit as thorough as the others, which is somewhat surprising, given that its authors did not differ fundamentally with their predecessors. The Book begins with a general introduction to the Commandments, the keeping of which it naturally regards as obligatory for the Christian life. Particularly noteworthy is the exposition of the second commandment, where it is at pains to insist that the prohibition of idol worship does not apply to the veneration given to images in the church. In general, the Book rewrites the exposition of all of the Commandments, making the same general points as before but illustrating them with several examples from the Bible and the Church Fathers. The main exception, somewhat surprisingly, is the seventh commandment, against adultery, which Bonner leaves more or less unchanged from the King's Book.

***The Lord's Prayer and the* Ave Maria**

In the section on the Lord's Prayer, the notes that were prefixed in the Bishops' Book were included under the first petition in the King's Book. Otherwise, the general pattern of the revision was to delete the opening paragraphs in the exposition of each petition, though, in the first two, much of these excised portions was recycled in additional paragraphs that were inserted later on in the relevant text. On the whole though, the revisers were more concerned to omit what they must have thought were unnecessary preliminaries than they were to add new material. Bonner's Book however made major changes, starting with a preface to the whole, which grounds the practice of prayer in the cardinal virtues of faith, hope and charity. In their treatment of the individual petitions of the Prayer, Bonner's men tended to retain a considerable portion of the King's

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Book, adding their own comments as seemed appropriate. In the third petition ('Thy will be done') and again in the sixth and seventh ones ('Lead us not into temptation' and 'Deliver us from evil') they made no significant alterations at all.

In the Bishops' Book, the *Ave Maria* was annexed to the Lord's Prayer, but although it is more clearly distinguished from it in the King's Book, the text itself is hardly changed. Bonner's Book recycles most of it, with a few additions that were evidently occasioned by the fear that it was being neglected in the post-Reformation Church.

The Supplementary Texts

In the Bishops' Book there were two supplementary texts in addition to the main ones: the article on justification by faith, which had originally been the fifth of the Ten Articles of 1536 and the article on prayers for the dead, which was a modified version of the last of the Ten Articles. The King's Book adds an article on free will, replaces the article on justification with another one on the same subject and continues with a third article on the place of good works. This restructuring was obviously intended to counter the radical Protestant belief in justification by faith *alone* and is one of the chief signs of its reactionary character.

The article on free will seeks to find a balance between the sovereignty of divine grace, without which nobody can hear the Gospel or be saved, with the liberty given to human beings to accept or reject the offer of redemption in Christ. In effect, it asserts that the free will given to Adam and Eve has been so corrupted that it can no longer discern what is good in spiritual things, although it retains a certain liberty of judgment in purely temporal matters.

The article on justification stresses the need of contrition and faith for obtaining justification, but also insists that neither of these things helps to earn it, since justification is and can only ever be granted on the basis of Christ's merits and righteousness. It also emphasises the necessity of good works *after* justification, as evidence that God's grace has not been given in vain.

Henry VIII deleted this and produced another version which goes into much greater detail. The king does not deny the primacy of divine grace in salvation but, having acknowledged that, he then shifts the focus from the merits of Christ to the behaviour of the believer, who must attain the justification earned for him by the Saviour by one of three means – baptism, conversion or repentance. Baptism is given to those born into a Christian family, conversion is needed in cases in which that has not happened (and the king does not hesitate to mention Jews, Muslims and pagans) and repentance applies to those who have been baptised but who have fallen away and must be reconciled by the sacrament of penance. Henry VIII explicitly denies that human beings can obtain salvation by their works, but it is clear that he does not regard justification as a once-for-all gift of God that cannot be nullified by our behaviour.

The version of the article that appears in the King's Book is different again and considerably longer than either the original or the substitute offered by the king. It starts with an affirmation of the universality of original sin and adds that fallen human beings also suffer from 'concupiscence', or the desire to continue

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in active disobedience to God. It then goes on to spell out the mediatorial role of Christ, who, as God and man, has made full satisfaction for the sins of fallen humanity. From there, it goes on to expound a doctrine of justification in which faith is the necessary starting point but in which works are required to bring it to completion. In other words, justification is not a divine declaration made independently of any human achievement, but the end result of a lifelong process of sanctification that will only become clear at the last judgment.

The article then takes up the distinction made by Henry VIII but puts conversion first, followed by baptism (in the case of infants) and repentance (for backsliders in the faith). This, the authors explain, is the 'first justification', but it is not enough to guarantee our eternal salvation. For that, there must be daily repentance and good works that do battle with the concupiscence that remains in us. Moreover, there is no guarantee of eventual success, and the article explicitly rejects any idea of predestination that would allow a sinner to enter heaven without giving satisfaction for his sins. The authors recognise that this satisfaction can never be perfect but claim that God will respect the intentions of the penitent and not judge him by the effects of the works that he does as evidence of his faith in Christ.

The nature of these good works is spelled out in a third article, which distinguishes between works done in a spirit of charity with a good conscience, and those which are done as evidence of contrition and repentance. The first kind of works naturally precedes the second, because we are initially justified by faith, but the second kind is also necessary because we continue to sin in this life. Ultimately it is by perseverance, assisted by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and not by predestination, in which the grace of God is bestowed on us whether we have done anything to deserve it or not, that we come to eternal salvation. This is a clear repudiation of Protestant teaching and proof that the King's Book was a retreat from the Lutheran interpretation of the Gospel of salvation, even though there was no reconciliation with Rome as a result.

The article on praying for the dead in the Bishops' Book is a reworking of the last of the Ten Articles. It draws a fine line between tradition and the Reformation, retaining the condemnation of the abuses that had brought the doctrine of purgatory into disrepute but at the same time retaining prayers for the dead, which would hardly have been necessary if the existence of purgatory had been clearly denied. Once again, Henry VIII offered an extensive replacement for it, but on this occasion the revisers appear to have resisted him successfully, preferring to stick with the original text with only a few minor additions and modifications.

Bishop Bonner's Book, in sharp and somewhat surprising contrast to the King's Book, deletes all four of these appendices and instead has a short commentary on the seven deadly sins (pride, envy, wrath, sloth, covetousness, gluttony, lechery), the seven cardinal virtues (faith, hope, charity, prudence, temperance, justice, fortitude) and the eight beatitudes listed in Matthew 5:1-11. The Book concludes with a series of occasional prayers that are an appendix to the rest and can be ignored for our purposes.

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Principles of This Edition

Unlike the edition of Charles Lloyd, who printed the Bishops' Book and the King's Book in sequence, this edition combines them into a single whole. This can be justified by the fact that the King's Book was intended as a revision of the earlier document, although it requires a certain rearranging of the material. Given that the different sections and chapters stand on their own in any case, that is not as difficult as it might seem, and the transpositions made by the King's Book are clearly indicated in the composite text.

In order to help the reader, passages in the Bishops' Book that were deleted in the King's Book appear in *italic* script. Those that were added in the King's Book are in **bold** type. Words and paragraphs that are the same in both volumes are printed in roman type, so that the reader can see instantly what was retained, what was discarded and what was composed afresh in 1543. Very occasionally words and phrases from the Bishops' Book reappear in the King's Book in a different context, and when that happens, the texts in question are printed in ***bold italic***.

The comments made by Henry VIII are integrated into the main text, but Cranmer's replies (and those of Nicholas Heath and the bishop of Chichester) are too extensive to be accommodated in that way and so they have been placed in an appendix. However, there is a direct link in the footnotes to the main text that refers the reader to Cranmer's observations as and when appropriate. In this way, it should be possible for readers to reconstruct both the Bishops' and the King's Book and at the same time to follow the process by which one was transformed into the other.

Bishop Bonner's Book is considerably longer than either the Bishops' or the King's Book, but as it was technically a revision of the latter, the same basic procedure has been followed. Passages found in the King's Book but discarded by Bonner are in *italics*, whereas those that Bonner added are in **bold**. Texts that are common to both are in regular roman type. One interesting feature of Bonner's Book is that it usually gives references for the quotations it cites from the Bible and from other ancient authors, making it easier to locate the sources, including some that were taken over from the King's Book. Unfortunately, however, many of the references are wrong or else follow a system that is no longer used. In every instance, the original is given in the main text and the correct reference (by modern standards) is placed in a footnote. For patristic authors, references to J.P. Migne's *Patrologia Graeco-Latina* (PG) or his *Patrologia Latina* are also given. In several cases, works are attributed to ancient authors like Cyprian of Carthage, Augustine, Jerome and John Chrysostom but are now recognised as pseudepigraphal. Where the true source can be located, it is given in the footnotes; where it remains unknown, it is simply recorded as 'spurious'. It should be pointed out that these misattributions were not intentional – in the sixteenth century, they were genuinely believed to have come from the authors cited and there was no intention to deceive readers.

It must also be borne in mind that the Bible used in all three Books was primarily the Latin Vulgate. It did not contain verse divisions, which were not

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introduced until after 1550, nor was there a standard English translation that could be used as a reference. For the most part, the authors produced their own translations, sometimes going back beyond the Latin to the original Hebrew or Greek, but the reader must be warned that many of these differ considerably from what is normally found in Bibles today. For the most part, the chapter divisions are the ones we still use, except that the Psalter is cited according to the Greek and Latin numbering, not to the original Hebrew. In these cases, the original text is preserved but the reference is adjusted to the modern norm in an accompanying footnote.

The aim throughout has been to make this edition as user-friendly and accessible to contemporary readers as possible. Spellings have been modernised and standardised according to current British usage, as have the forms of Biblical names when confusion or misunderstanding might easily result. On the other hand, sixteenth-century words and syntax have been preserved. Some readers may find this compromise irritating, but when texts are being collated as they are here, a standardised spelling eliminates the need to record purely formal differences and helps the reader to focus on more substantial ones. As none of these texts has ever enjoyed more than a fleeting doctrinal authority in the Church of England, it has not been thought necessary to make more than the occasional passing reference to the Church's official formularies when appropriate. In no circumstances should anyone assume that what is found in these Books represents the teaching of the Church of England without checking it against other sources, since much of what they contain was controversial even when they were written. The Bishops' Book, the King's Book and Bishop Bonner's Book are valuable as historical records of what different groups within the Tudor Church thought and wanted to teach, but they must not be divorced from their historical context or used for trying to show that a particular theological position is authentically 'Anglican', unless it is supported by a document of recognised confessional authority.[1] All three of the Books vanished within a few years of their appearance, and that in itself should caution us about how we use them today.

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1 Lacey, *King's Book*, confessed in his introduction that he wished that it had been adopted as a doctrinal standard in the Church of England because it suited his brand of Anglicanism, though obviously he had to admit that it had not been.

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