

THE PUBLICATION OF THE ENGLISH PARAPHRASES OF ERASMUS

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SINCE the middle of the sixteenth century little attention has been paid to Erasmus's *Paraphrases in Novum Testamentum*,¹ and its influence on religious thought has probably not been significant. But in the reign of Edward VI a group of English reformers, working under the patronage of Catherine Parr, attempted to make the book the basis for an Erasmian Church, and an English text was published in conjunction with the *Homilies* and the new *Prayer Book*. Whether the attempt failed or succeeded is not easily seen ; it may indeed have helped inspire the Elizabethan compromise in religion ; but few references to the *Paraphrases* can be found in contemporary writings, and it seems certain that Erasmian humanism was given a minor place in an English Church that found itself increasingly under pressure from the opposing forces of counter-reformation Catholicism and rising Calvinism.

The *Paraphrases* consisted of a series of commentaries on every book of the New Testament but Revelation, a book for which Erasmus had no great regard. The commentaries appeared singly between 1517 and 1524, the earliest ones from Thierry Martens's press at Louvain, others from Michael Hillenius at Antwerp, and the last and most important, those on the Evangelists and Acts, from the Froben house at Basle.² It

¹ There are two important modern studies : J. C. L. Coppens, *Les Idées Réformistes d'Érasme dans les Préfaces aux Paraphrases du Nouveau Testament* (*Analecta Lovaniensa Biblica et Orientalia*, Ser. III, Fasc. 27, Louvain, 1961) and J. K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965). There is a survey of the main theological positions of the work by Roland H. Bainton in *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, lvii (1966), 67-76.

² See *Opus Epistolarum Erasmi*, ed. P. S. Allen et al. (12 vols., Oxford, 1906-1958), xii. 26-27 and P. S. Allen, "Erasmus' Relations with his Printers", *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, xiii (1913-15), 313. The preeminence of the Evangelists and Acts is shown by Erasmus's dedication of each section to an important ruler : Matthew to Charles V, Mark to Francis I, Luke to Henry VIII, John to Ferdinand, and Acts to Pope Clement VII.

was obviously intended as the layman's guide to Scripture advocated by Erasmus in 1518 in his dedication of the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* to Paul Volzcius.¹ Though the *Paraphrases* were no doubt intended to be orthodox, it seems certain that they were much more popular among the reformers than among conservative theologians. In 1537, for example, a complaint was made to the king about the dismissal from a school of a priest named William Rede, who had construed them with his scholars; and it was noted that the commissary who had dismissed him had also urged people to pay Peter's Pence.² In 1547 Bishop Stephen Gardiner of Winchester preferred imprisonment to agreeing with the Protectorate's plan of forcing the *Paraphrases* on all English parish churches. And perhaps most interesting of all is the fact that the only vernacular translation of Erasmus specifically condemned by the Tridentine Index was the Italian version of the *Paraphrases* on Matthew by Bernardino Tomitano.³

The first English translation known to have been made was a private version of Jude made in 1530 by John Caius of Gonville Hall, who was later prominent among Tudor Roman Catholics.⁴ But two years earlier William Tyndale had written that the preface *Pio Lectori* of the *Paraphrases* contained arguments for the translation of Scripture that his enemies should be forced to answer⁵; and in 1534, probably in connection with Convocation's appeal for an authorized English Bible,⁶ the preface was published in English along with an earlier version of the *Paraclesis*, another work of Erasmus's recommended by Tyndale, both with the royal privilege.⁷ In the same year Leonard Cox, a

¹ Allen, iii. 365: "Comodissimum itaque mea sententia fuerit si muneris hoc viris aliquot iuxta piis ac doctoris delegetur, vt ex purissimis fontibus Euan-gelistarum et Apostolorum, ex probatissimis interpretibus vniuersam Christi philosophiam in compendium contrabant, ita simpliciter vt tamen erudite, ita breuiter vt tamen dilucide."

² *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J. S. Brewer et al. (21 vols., London, 1862-1932), xii, part 1, doc. 842.

³ *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, "App. Ind. Trid." ⁴ D.N.B.

⁵ See William Tyndale, *Doctrinal Treatises*, ed. Henry Walter (Cambridge, 1848), pp. 161-2.

⁶ For the appeal see S. L. Greenslade, "English Versions of the Bible, 1525-1611", *Cambridge History of the Bible* (Cambridge, 1963), p. 147.

⁷ S.T.C. 10494 and an earlier and a later edition not in S.T.C.

schoolmaster of Reading, offered another selection directly to Thomas Cromwell. On 13 May Cox sent his translation of the *Paraphrase* on Titus, with a preface that he had just added, to the stationer John Toy, asking him to show it to Cromwell, “to know his pleasure whether it shall abrode or nott”; and offering to translate as well the *Paraphrases* on the first and second Epistles to Timothy.¹ All three were relevant to the problem of popularizing the doctrine of the Royal Supremacy, since all treated the Christian’s obligation to obedience in the State. The Titus was printed late in 1534 or early 1535 by John Byddell.²

Cox’s translation was intended, as his preface makes clear, to show “how moche and howe straytly we be bounde to obey next God our kyng and souerayne lorde”; to give thanks further for the “lukkye maryage” of the king and Anne Boleyn and for England’s delivery from the “rauenying mouth” of the Pope; and to oppose the wordly power of popes and abbots who “haue possessyons & domynyons more lyke to kynges & emperours then spirituall fathers”.

Is not this a greate token gentle redar, that almyghty god is well content with this gracyous & veray fortunate maryage, whiche hath sente vs the light of his lawes sens that tyme & hath brought vs out of the thraldome of yll bysshops. And as he made kynge Dauid keper of his herd of Israell as it is expressed of the prophet in the forsayd chapyre, euen so he hath by the voice of his people, chosen our most noble & vertuous kynge Henry to be hed of his Englishe flocke, as well in spirituall gouernance as in erthly domynyon. Let here no man murmur as some do yet, *that* his grace is electe to be hedde of the chyrche in his realme, no further then goddes lawes do permyt, as who saieth, there is in *that* pointe an obstacle. For why sholde not by goddes lawe our kynge and souerayne lord be our hed herdes man as well as Dauid beyng a lay prince was hed shepherd to his flocke of Israell? Now wher can ony of them fynde one iote in scripture that proueth theyr most holy father to be aboue kynges & temporall rulers? peradventure, they wyll brynge forth for them, that Peter sayde to our lorde, lo lorde here be .ij. swerdes & thereof inferre, that he & his successours had giuen to them by power both ouer spyrytuall & also temporall. In good soth this is a ioly smal reason and worthy to come out of a profounde sophysters mouth.

The argument must have been pleasing to the king, but no

¹ *Letters and Papers*, vii, doc. 659. Cox later revised his translation for the complete *Paraphrases*, but did not do Timothy, which implies that he made no other translation in 1534.

² S.T.C. 10503. Byddell was certainly one of Cromwell’s clients, and printed several translations of Erasmus and other books intended to further the reformation.

further translations from the *Paraphrases* appeared in his reign, and it is possible that the work was too radical for Henry VIII. When the complete version was being assembled late in 1545 Nicholas Udall expressed, in a dedicatory letter to Catherine Parr, the hope that the king might have the English *Paraphrases* printed, if it pleased him to do so ; but in such a way as to suggest that the project had no direct encouragement from him. And it is quite certain that plans for the publication of the translation completed in 1545 did not really get started until Henry's death, although preliminary arrangements were being made.

Catherine Parr was the patroness of the translation of the Evangelists and Acts. Before her royal marriage on 12 July 1543 she had been inclined to a moderate reforming position, and John Foxe claims that her religious tendencies even put her into serious danger after her marriage.¹ Soon after her marriage she must have decided to use her influence to have the whole of the *Paraphrases* translated and if possible printed and circulated as a source of proper scriptural exposition. Within two years the Evangelists and Acts section was done, and the dedicatory letters to her indicate that publication was considered possible. On 20 September of 1544 or 1545, almost certainly the latter, she wrote to Princess Mary asking her for her translation of John, suggesting she might let it be published under her royal name.

Cum autem (ut accipi) summa iam manus imposita sit per maletum operi Erasmico In Iohannem (quod ad translationem spectat) neque quicquam nunc restat nisi ut iusta quedam uigilantia, ac cura adhibeatur in eodem corrigendo te obsecro ut opus hoc pulcherimum, atque vtilissimum, iam emendatum per malletum aut aliquem tuorum ad me transmitti cures, quo suo tempore prelo dari possit, atque porro significes, an sub tuo nomine in lucem felicissime exire uelis, aut potius incerto auctore : cui operi mea sane opinione in iuriam facere videberis, si tui nominis autoritate etiam posteris comendatum iri recusaueris.²

On 30 September 1545 Nicholas Udall sent the Queen his translation of Luke, characteristically the one that had been dedicated

¹ John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, ed. Josiah Pratt, v (London, 1877), 556-61. She also owned copies of the English versions of the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* and *De Praeparatione ad Mortem* : see F. Rose-Troup, "Two Book Bills of Catherine Parr", *The Library*, 3rd ser, ii (1911), 40-48.

² MS. Cotton Vespasian F III. 37. A translation by Sir Frederic Madden is printed in Agnes Strickland's *Lives of the Queens of England*, iii (London, 1860), 229.

by Erasmus to the king, with a long letter (included in the printed text) in which he confessed himself to be “by many degrees inferior in knowelage & facultee to all the others whom I heare *that* your highnesse hath appointed to the translating of the other partes”. Other sections came in at about the same time. Thomas Key’s version of Mark, made at the suggestion of the king’s physician George Owen, was prefaced by a letter praising the queen for having “commaunded certayne well learned persons to translate the said worke, the paraphrase vpon S Marke excepted”. Evidently things were being done piecemeal, with each man putting his hopes on the patronage he might expect to receive from the queen or through her intercession; there was no general editor. That he wrote when the memory of the marriage was still fresh but probably after Catherine’s appointment as Regent during the king’s expedition to France in 1544, is shown in his statement that “all Englande hath iuste occasion to reioyce at this your graces honorable aduancement, yea rather highly to thanke god that our most gracious soueraigne hath matched himself with so vertuous a Lady”. Matthew and Acts were certainly done at about the same time; both were anonymous, and were revised and checked against the Latin by Udall, as he explained in the preface he wrote for the printed text.

Most or all of the text of what was to be the first volume was ready and in the hands of the queen by the latter part of 1545, after which Udall was given the responsibility for “addying, digestyng, and sortyng the texte with the paraphrase”. Udall had in 1542, the year after his dismissal from the headmastership of Eton following a scandal,¹ made in collaboration with the Bible printer Richard Grafton a translation of Books III and IV of Erasmus’s *Apophthegmata*, intended as the first of a series of popular yet scholarly humanist publications.² In it he had shown

¹ *D.N.B.*

² S.T.C. 10443, with a preface from Udall and Grafton urging readers to “accepte both our laboures as we maye thereby bee encouraged gladly to sustain ferther trauiall in wrytyng and setting foorth suche authours”, explaining the principles of the translation, the arrangement (with the apophthegm in “a greate texte lettre”, Erasmus’s explanation in “a middle lettre”, and Udall’s additional illumination in “a small lettre”); and an alphabetical index of names and subjects to which “readie waye and recourse maye with a weat fyngre easily be found out”.

considerable skill as an organizer of learned material for the common reader; it is possible that this collaboration with Grafton recommended Udall to the queen. Publication of the *Paraphrases* was very much in his mind: in one dedication he assured her that she had “dooen a thing to your most regall spouse the kinges Maiestee so acceptable, that he will not suffer it to lye buryed in silence, but will one daie, whan his godly wisdom shall so thinke expedient, cause the same paraphrase to bee published & set abroade in prient”.

Despite his confidence it seems more likely that there was little hope of getting the translation published until after Henry VIII's death. During the last three years of the old king's life step-by-step preparations, however, were being made. From 1545 on Catherine extended what patronage she could to Grafton and his former associate Edward Whitchurch, zealous reformers who had produced the first Great Bible under Cromwell's patronage.¹ They had been left in a dangerous position after Cromwell's execution and the conservative reaction in the English Church. On 8 April 1543 they were imprisoned in the Fleet for “printing off suche bokes as wer thought to be unlawfull”, along with several other well-known Protestant stationers.² Grafton had been printing ballads lamenting the fall of Cromwell, of which he had given, with more discretion than valour, the imprint of an uninfluential neighbour and minor client of Cromwell's, Richard Bankes.³ Both were released from the Fleet a few months before the king's last marriage.⁴ On 29 May 1545 they issued the new official *Primer*, “to be taught lerned & read: and none other to be vsed”, with a special licence in the back giving Grafton the new title of “printer and

¹ A. G. Dickens, *Thomas Cromwell and the English Reformation* (London, 1959), pp. 116-19; and A. W. Pollard, *Records of the English Bible* (London, 1911), pp. 218-65.

² *Acts of the Privy Council*, new series, ed. John Dasent, i (London, 1890), 125. In 1541 they had been in trouble about the Act of Six Articles: see J. A. Kingdon, *Incidents in the Lives of Thomas Poyntz and Richard Grafton* (London, 1895), p. 19.

³ See H. Maynard Smith, *Henry VIII and the English Reformation* (London, 1962), pp. 339-40.

⁴ *Acts of the Privy Council*, new series, i, 125.

Seruaunt to oure moost dearest sonne prince Edward” and granting both men the king’s “ grace especial ”.¹ Clearly plans were being made for some publications, and it is just as clear that they would have to wait for the king’s death.

The old king died on 28 January 1547. On 22 April Grafton became king’s printer, with a fee of tweluepence yearly and the right to succeed on the death of Thomas Berthelet to the £4 annuity that went with the title.² Since there seems to be no reason why Berthelet, who had worked faithfully for the king since 1530 and who was in any event one of the best printers of his time, should suddenly lose the post,³ it must be inferred that Grafton’s promotion came from high in the Protectorate, and possibly, surmising from the other evidence, through the queen’s intercession. The terms of the patent show further that Grafton was not only a privileged supplier of print and paper, but was an official, with the authority to arrest those who might violate his rights. On the same day he and Whitchurch were given a privilege for all service books authorized for the Church of England, both English and Latin, and for all books of sermons, with the threat of imprisonment at the king’s pleasure for anyone who violated the patent, and a septennial privilege for all their other publications.⁴ The two patents indicate that the Protectorate was interested not only in taking good care of two safely Protestant stationers, but in making certain that they alone handled all books of religion, in a programme of publication directed at establishing uniformity of Anglican doctrine and liturgy.

The first important step was taken on 31 July, when Grafton issued the new *Iniunccions geuen by the moste excellent prince, Edwarde the sixth*.⁵ As the date was a Sunday the injunctions

¹ S.T.C. 16034-6 from Grafton, 16037-9 (dated 19 June at first, then 20 June) from Whitchurch. Grafton had a special device cut, with the feathers of the Prince of Wales instead of his usual rebus of a graft growing out of a tun, for use in certain edifying books. It does not appear in McKerrow’s *Devices*, but is reproduced in Kingdon, *op. cit.*

² *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1 Edward VI, i (London, 1924), 187.

³ It is significant that his annuity was not taken from him.

⁴ *C.P.R.* 1 Edward VI, p. 190.

⁵ S.T.C. 10088-93, all with the same date. Reprinted in Edward Cardwell, *Documentary Annals of the Reformed Church of England*, i (Oxford, 1839), 4-23.

must have been read at churches and then circulated. Under the seventh injunction all parishes were to provide

within three monethes, nexte, after this visitacion, one boke of the whole Bible, of *the* largest volume in English. And within one twelfe monethes, next after the saied visitacion, the Paraphrasis of Erasmus also in Englishe vpon the Gospelles, & the same sette vp in some conuenient place, within the sayed Church, that they haue cure of, whereas their Parishioners maye moste commodiously resorte vnto the same, and reade the same. The charges of whiche bokes shalbe ratably borne, betwene the persone or proprietary, and the parishioners aforesaied: that is to saie, the one halfe by the persone or proprietary and the other halfe by the Parishioners.

The twelfth injunction added

that euery Persone, Vicar, Curate, Chauntery priest and stipendiary, beyng vnder the degre of bachilar of diuinitie, shall prouide and haue of his awne, within three monethes after this visitacion, the newe Testament, bothe in Latyne and in Englishe, with Paraphrasis vpon the same of Erasmus, and diligently study thesame, conferring the one with the other.

The injunction is not clear on whether the clergy had to have English texts of the *Paraphrases*, or whether Latin texts brought in from the Continent would be sufficient for conferral with their Latin and English New Testaments.

The next step was to get the book into print as soon as possible. The Bible does not seem to have been their main concern: though “of *the* largest volume in English” must certainly have been meant to imply the Great Bible, they may still have had ample stocks of editions they had printed before,¹ and Whitchurch had issued New Testaments of the same text in 1546 and 1547.² For whatever reason, the first Great Bible after the injunctions appeared as late as 29 December 1549.³ The first concern of Grafton and Whitchurch was to keep the *Injunctions* in print; the second was to keep the *Homilies* in print;⁴ the third was to publish the *Paraphrases*.

¹ S.T.C. 2070-6.

² S.T.C. 2849-50.

³ S.T.C. 2079, following two reprints of the Matthew Bible by Day and Seres and by Rinalde and Hill. The second partnership also published at about this time a reprint of the earlier anonymous version of the preface *Pio Lectori* (p. 349 above), which was not used in the official complete *Paraphrases*. It survives in a unique copy in the National Library of Scotland.

⁴ S.T.C. 13639-44 by Grafton and Whitchurch and 13645 by John Oswen at Worcester, all dated 1547 and the first two 31 July.

Work must have started well before the issuing of the *Injunctions*. By the autumn some of the translation, almost certainly in printed form, was available to Bishop Gardiner in the Fleet Prison. But towards the end of the year the enormous task of printing the whole *Paraphrases*, the corresponding Great Bible text, and the long introductions and dedications forced the printers to seek more help. They received from the Protectorate writs of aid granting them the power to seize the workmen and equipment of any other printers in England, paying what could be agreed on as a fair price, to help them in what was explicitly referred to as the king's work. Typefounders as well as compositors could be impressed, and matrices as well as presses and paper. Whitchurch's writ allowed him

not onely to take vpp and prouyd frome tyme to tyme duryng the space of one twelfe moneth next ensuyng the date herof fully complete and ended for vs and in our name in all places wythin this our realme of Englande aswell wythin the liberties and ffranchesies as without suche and as manye Prynters Composytours and founders aswell housholders as prentyces and iorynmen as others what soeuer they be as the said Edwarde shall thynke mete to sue for the spedye furtheraunce of our workes onely and no others in his office but also to take vp and prouyde for vs and in our name suche and asmoche paper ynke presses and matrices and all other maner of thynges as shalbe requysyte and necessarye for the same offyce yeldyng and payinge ymmedyatlye for the same after our reasonable rates and prices withe also cariage sufficiente for the same as well by sea as lande or fresshe water for our reasonable prices and paymentes to be made immedyatly in that behalfe.

All officials were commanded

to be aydyng helpyng counsaillyng and assytyng our seid Subiecte and his seid deputy and deputies berers herof in his name in the due execucion of this our Commission as ye and eny of you tender our pleasure and also the spedye furtheraunce of our worke and wyll answere for the contrerye at your vttremost perill.

Grafton's writ, identical to the one quoted, was recorded at Westminster under the Privy Seal on 17 December, and Whitchurch's on the next day.¹ Both printers worked on,

¹ *C.P.R.*, 2 Edward VI, vol. ii (London, 1924) has Whitchurch's writ at 98 and Grafton's at 99. The former is here transcribed from Patent Roll 814, 2 Edward VI. P. G. Morrison's *Index of Printers, Publishers and Booksellers in [S.T.C.]* (Charlottesville, 1961), lists forty-seven publications for Grafton in 1547-8, many of them recurring reprints, thirteen for Whitchurch, including the *Paraphrases* first volume (which is one entry in S.T.C. but actually represents five complete printings of the folio volume), and five for their associate Nicholas Hill, who produced only one book in 1549 but seven in 1550, after the rush of the

assisted presumably by extra men, using initials from several other shops but text types from Whitchurch and Nicholas Hill,¹ until the book was finally issued for the first time, with the date as “the last date of Ianuarie. Anno Domini. 1548”, a date which was to be kept through four further printings of the volume. Whether this was actually the date of publication or not is uncertain, and it is tempting to speculate on the fact that 31 January was half-way between the date of the *Injunctions* and the end of the “one twelwe monethes”, by which copies were supposed to have been bought. Such speculation is encouraged further by the strange pattern of issue for the first four first volumes, which consist of four different mixtures of sections of text and preliminaries from two different printings of the text: these four appear to have been issued virtually simultaneously, which would suggest that the text was twice printed before any volumes were issued, which would in turn suggest that the date was an arbitrarily chosen one.²

These reprintings complicate the bibliography of the English *Paraphrases*, and indeed of the whole output of Whitchurch and *Paraphrases* and *Homilies* publication was over. These figures are approximate and will remain so until a study has been made of the publications of the two patentees, but are the best indication available of the work, official and otherwise, they were doing at the time.

¹ F. S. Isaac, *English & Scottish Printing Types 1535-1558*1552-1558* (London, 1932), facsimile 50 and note that, while the title and preliminaries are in Whitchurch's types “the text is remarkable for the use of w¹¹ in 72 type, a letter which is too small for the fount”; and which was used by Hill in 1546 in S.T.C. 19786.

² For example, the obvious first printing of Matthew has as its head title “The Paraphrasis of Erasmus vpon saynt Mathew, translated into Englysh”, a form of head title not used in any other section or printing; the second printing has “The Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the gospell of saynct Mathew”; the earlier form appears in the first two editions. Yet the second of these editions, with the earlier form of the Matthew head title, has a second title page with the “Anno Domini” of the date in Roman type rather than Italic and the text from Mark to the end in a new printing; while the third has the second Matthew printing with the original printing from Mark to the end; and the fourth has the original title page. The only reasonable conclusion I can reach is that the text was printed twice, stored or passed over to whatever binders were being employed, and the first four first volumes issued more or less together, under the date chosen as the half-way mark in the publication programme. The varieties of the first volume are distinguished in my *Checklist of English Translations of Erasmus to 1700* (Oxford Bibl. Soc. Occasional Publications, No. 3, Oxford, 1968), entries C 67. 1-C67.8.

Grafton under their Edwardian patents, including the *Homilies* and later the *Book of Common Prayer*. Although the speed with which service books and books demanded by injunction had to be printed must have made the calculation of time, equipment, and press runs very difficult, it is strange that printers experienced in Bible publication would have been unable to plan more accurately the amount of work they would have to do; Grafton in particular knew very well about monopolies of this kind.¹ Even if they were, Gardiner had in the autumn sent an estimate to Somerset, in a letter quoted below, of the number needed if the *Injunctions* were to be followed. It would appear, although there is no direct evidence, that Grafton and Whitchurch were made to share the extremely large profits from the forced sale of service books among a fairly large number of workmen by printing no more than a certain number of sheets from any single setting of type;² the resetting of sections after the allowed number of copies had been printed could account simply enough for the number of editions and issues of the first volume, while the flexibility with which such a ruling might be interpreted could account for the appearance of the same settings of Udall's dedication of Matthew to the dowager queen and of the translation of Erasmus's dedication of Mark to Francis I in all four of the early editions and issues. The last two editions are by far the most common, suggesting that the number of copies printed from a setting increased each time.

The use of the same date in numerous reprints is characteristic of books produced by Whitchurch and Grafton under their service book patent, and was probably a result of the Act for the Advancement of True Religion, which commanded all printers to

¹Pollard, pp. 219-22: Grafton asked Cromwell in 1539 for a temporary monopoly on the Bible and a royal order "that euery curat haue one of them that they maye learne to knowe god and to instruct their parysshens. Ye and that euery abbaye shuld haue vj to be layde in vj seuerall places. . . . Ye I wold none other but they of the papisticall sorte shulde be compelled to haue them."

²Such regulations were used later by the Stationers. See Sir Walter Greg, *A Companion to Arber* (Oxford, 1967), doc. 131 of December 1587 against leaving formes standing and using long runs; and also docs. 69, 296. The largest impressions even for special books seem to have been 3000. If this was a tradition among the stationers, we might be able to assume a circulation of 15,000 copies of the first volume in 1548 and 1549.

add to all books of religion “ the printers name his dwellyng place the daie and yere of the printing ”,¹ which must have been interpreted to mean the actual day of publication (not completion of the printing necessarily) of an authorized book of religion, which should be continued in reprints until some change or revision led to the addition of a new date.² That the 31 January in question was that of 1548, and not of 1548-9, is shown by the evidence of hasty printing, the writs of December 1547, the large number of printings before the summer of 1549, and the church records (some quoted below) showing that copies were bought before the autumn of 1548.³

The second volume of the English *Paraphrases* had not the success of the first. It was not specifically ordered by the *Injunctions*, and no doubt many churches refused to buy it. That there was only one edition and a second issue with some resetting implies that circulation must have been much smaller than that of the first volume, of which there are seven varieties representing five printings.

Nicholas Udall was responsible as general editor for “ the digestyng and placyng of the texte throughout all the ghospelles, and the actes ”—except in Mark, where Key had insisted on doing his own editing—“ to thintente the vnlearned readers maie perceiue where and how the processe and circumstaunce of the paraphrase aunswereth to the texte ”. In four prefaces dedicating sections to Catherine Parr—again Key had taken care of his own section—he expressed satisfaction at the translation and assured her that the whole had been reviewed, particularly the two anonymous sections : “ conferryng the same with the Latine I haue here and there doeen my good will and diligence to make the Englishe aunswerable to the Latine booke, at leste wyse in sence.”

¹ Statutes of the Realm, 34 & 35 Henry VIII, cap. i, sect. vi.

² The problem of books being reprinted without change of date is raised by R. B. McKerrow in *An Introduction to Bibliography* (Oxford, 1928), pp. 202-3, with reference to publications by Grafton, whom McKerrow, however, does not mention.

³ Renaissance printers often changed the year date from 1 January. See W. W. Greg. “ Old Style—New Style ” in *Joseph Quincy Adams Memorial Studies*, ed. J. G. McManaway *et al.* (Washington, 1948), pp. 563-9.

The general dedication to Edward VI was an encomium of the whole Henrician reformation, the moderate Anglican position based at least partly in Erasmian thought, and of the godly government of the Protectorate. With some hyperbole Udall wrote to the young king :

when I dooe in my mynde make a comparison of you three together, Erasmus in wryting this Paraphrase, Quene katerine dowagier in procuryng thesame to bee turned into Englishe, and your highnesse in publishyng thesame by your godly iniunccions . . . me semeth I dooe well note Erasmus to haue dooen the leste acte of the three.

Still he compared the *Paraphrases* to a sort of compendious library of all good divinity books, which is more or less what Erasmus suggested in his letter to Volzcius in 1518. Udall's preface to Princess Mary's text of John, which he tactfully noted had needed only division into sections, is interesting for its Erasmian praise for the " noble weamen ", who were

not onely aswell seen & as familiarly traded in the Latine & Greke tongues, as in their own mother language : but also bothe in all kyndes of prophane litterature, and liberal artes exactly studied and exercised, and in the holy scriptures and Theologie so rype, that thei are hable aptely, cunnyngly, and with mucche grace either to endicte or translate into the vulgare tounge for the publique instruccion & edifying of the vnlerned multitude.

The prefaces to sections of the second volume indicate that Whitchurch himself brought together translators in the autumn of 1548 to complete the work. The queen had died and the new patroness, the Duchess of Somerset, could not give as much help. Udall had moved on to potentially more profitable fields,¹ and the position of general editor fell to Myles Coverdale, who had worked with Whitchurch and Grafton on the Great Bible. The tone of the translation, free from the restraints of Henry VIII and Catherine Parr, became more strictly Protestant. One of the translators questioned Erasmus in a preface as one who had been " a ready strong interpretour in many places ", but who had been

¹ Perhaps impressed by Whitchurch and Grafton's manner of working, he had decided to set up as a printer himself, with a patent to print and sell his own translations of the works of Peter Martyr Vermigli (*C.P.R.*, 4 Edward VI, iiiii (London, 1925), 315). His one translation was printed for him by Robert Stoughton (S.T.C. 24665), so evidently he never got the " compositor or presseman " protected by the patent from being taken away from him.

in his lifetime “subiecte to infirmitie and imprefeccion”. Included in the volume were William Tyndale’s *Prologue to Romans*, itself largely a translation of Luther’s,¹ and a paraphrase of Revelation by the Swiss reformer Leo Jüd.

Since Whitchurch was hoping to get increased royal patronage and a revision of the *Injunctions* to include the second volume in the enforced sale, Coverdale wrote a dedication to the king, praising his work of reformation, comparing the *Paraphrases* and *Homilies* to “the ryche Iewels, that Moses vsed to the pleasaunt garnishing of the Tabernacle”, and offering in the name of the translators and printers “this right frutefull volume, conteining the Paraphrases of the famous Clarke Erasmus vpon the Epistles” to the king in the same cause.

Coverdale himself probably translated Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians; John Old, a friend of Whitchurch’s, did Ephesians, Philippians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Philemon, and the Canonical Epistles, and was rewarded by the duchess with a Warwickshire living, for which he thanked her in a dedication. His prefaces also show that Whitchurch intended to try to sell the volume under the twelfth injunction.

Forasmuche (moost gentle reader) as euery pryest vnder a certayne degree in scholes is bounden by the kynges Maiesties most gracious iniunctions to haue prouided by a daye lymited for his owne study and erudicion *the whole Paraphrase* of D. Erasmus vpon the newe testamente both in Latine and Englishe: And wheras I heard neuertheles in the begynnyng of this last somer by the Pryntour, my very hertie good friend Edwarde Whitchurche, that the Paraphrases vpon seuen of Paules Epistles . . . were neither translated ready to Prynte, ne yet appoynted certaynly to be translated of any man, so as thafore mencioned iniunction should be lyke in this case to be frustrate of his due execucion.²

That the translation was in hand during the latter half of 1548 is shown in Old’s dedication of the Canonical Epistles to the Duchess of Somerset, which is dated 15 July 1549, and in which he stated that he had translated Pauline Epistles “in the latter end of thys laste yeare” at the request of “your graces humble seruant, my speciall good frende Edward Whitchurch Printour”.

¹ Without Tyndale’s name or Luther’s.

² The twelfth injunction had in fact ordered “the newe Testament, both in Latyne and in Englishe, with Paraphrasis vpon the same of Erasmus”, without specifying the language of the *Paraphrases* text needed for priests. Churches were only required to have the Evangelists, the first volume.

Old had also sought out Leonard Cox and arranged for him to revise his earlier version of Titus. In dedicating his section to John Hales, Cox wrote that Old had

brought vnto me a paraphrase of Erasmus of Roterodame vpon saincte Paules Epistle to Titus, the whiche I had certaine yeares gone translated into englyshe, requiring that I would peruse it againe, and amende suche faultes as were therein eyther by the printers neglygence or myne ouersyght. . . . And so to place the texte with the paraphrase, that it might easily be perceaued what parte of the paraphrase to what parte of the Epistle is correspondent.

Cox added that he had done the work while inhibited from preaching, doubtless after the proclamation of 23 September 1548.¹

The revised editions that appeared in 1551 and 1552 had alphabetical subject indexes. That of the first volume was prepared by Udall, while the second volume was indexed by Thomas Norton, a young reformer who had been Somerset's amanuensis and who later married Archbishop Cranmer's daughter (Whitchurch's step-daughter) and lived and worked with the printer.²

There remains the question of whether the *Injunctions* were obeyed; whether parish churches and clergy bought copies or not; and whether visitations insisted, as they were supposed to, on seeing copies. The question has been touched on by P. S. Allen, who remarked that it had always been said that few copies could actually be traced in contemporary records, and commented that it was "a matter worth looking into, if sufficient material can be gathered".³ Parish records for the period are scanty and carelessly kept. It can be seen from a sampling that many churches did not buy their copies until well after the stipulated time. On the other hand it is unsafe to assume that because a church has no record of an expenditure for the book it did not buy it. Churches that still possess copies are few, but no judgement can be made from that either: the books had to be exposed, as had the Great Bible, and books on public lecterns have limited lives, as can be seen from the gnawed margins and scribbled pages of many extant copies.

¹ S.T.C. 7818.

² D.N.B.

³ P. S. Allen, *Erasmus, Lectures and Wayfaring Sketches* (Oxford, 1934), p. 71.

The large number of varieties of the first volume suggests a circulation of perhaps 20,000 copies between 1548 and 1551. Gardiner's estimate may be of value: he argued that the enforced sale of the first volume would bring the printers business worth £20,000; since the price is consistent at about ten shillings (probably for unbound copies), he must have made his calculation on a count of about 40,000 parishes, churches, and priests under the degree of B.D.¹ The actual number printed must have been rather lower, at the very most somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000 copies.

A sampling of records shows that the cost of the book was divided as directed by the *Injunctions* between the parish and either its minister or the owner of the advowson. The price ranged from ten shillings to about thirteen, depending no doubt on the binding. In 1547-8 the records of St. Mary at Hill show an expenditure of five shillings for the *Paraphrases*,² half the price of an unbound copy. Before All Saints' Day, 1 November, 1548 All Souls College paid the full price for a chapel copy ("xij^s viij^d pro Erasmi paraphrasi in nouum testamentum") and less than half that price for a less well bound copy for one of its benefices.³ In 1548 New College paid the university bookseller Herman Evans six shillings "pro dimi paraphras Erasmi pro ecclesia de Whaddon", and in the next year the same amount for a copy for Swalcliffe.⁴ Magdalen College bought itself a Chapel copy in 1549, paying ten shillings "pro duobus libris videlicet

¹ Gardiner was probably in a good position to make such an estimate, having more information than is now available. Simon Fish had claimed that England had 52,000 parish churches, which Sir Thomas More had called "one plain lie to begin with": see E. M. Nugent, *Thought and Culture of the English Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 211, p. 228.

² *The Mediaeval Records of a London City Church*, ed. Henry Littlehales (London, 1905), p. 387.

³ "v^s vj^d pro dimidio pretij Erasmi paraphrasis" (All Souls College Bursar Rolls, All Saints' Day 1547 to All Saints' Day 1548). The appearance of such records in the rolls of Oxford Colleges was indicated by Mr. N. R. Ker in his notes in a Bodleian Library display catalogue, *Oxford College Libraries in 1556* (Oxford, 1956), p. 19.

⁴ New College Bursars' Rolls 205, 1 & 2 Edward VI, and 206, 2 & 3 Edward VI. The Whaddon copy may have returned ultimately to the College, as the copy now in New College Library came from the bequest of Richard Eyre, a former vicar of Whaddon, in 1778.

nouum testamentum et paraphrasis Erasmi ” ; the uncommonly low price suggests that they might have been Latin books from continental presses, although Magdalen is one of the few Colleges to have a copy from the 1550's.¹

The price was considerable enough to have been a burden. Croscombe parish records show in 1550 a credit of 6s. 2d. owing from “ the person for the perrafrase ”,² and there is at least one record of a chain bought for a copy.³

The scale of prices can be guessed from the records ; no copy that I have seen contains any statement about prices, but several of the service books and some Bibles have price scales running from unbound to forel binding to “ paste or bordes ”, with carriage allowances per hundred miles transport : there must have been a similar scale for the *Paraphrases*.⁴

That the cheapest copies were unbound is shown in Bettrysden parish records, where an expenditure of ten shillings in 1548-9 for “ the boke of Erazamus ” is followed by a claim of a shilling by a messenger “ ffor myne expensis when I went to Mr Neuell fflore the boke of paraphrasis ”.⁵

¹ Libri Computi S. M. Mag. Coll. 1543-1559, fol. 70^v (3 Edward VI). The Magdalen copy is endorsed “ 1554 ” in two different places, as Mr. Ker has noted (see above, p. 363, n. 3).

² *Church-Wardens Accounts of Croscombe*, ed. Bishop Hobhouse (London, 1890), p. 5.

³ T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, *Historical Catalogue of the Printed Editions of Holy Scripture in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, i (London, 1903), 37.

⁴ For such records see *The Two Liturgies*, ed. Joseph Ketley (Cambridge, 1884), p. viii ; H. S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers 1475 to 1557* (Cambridge, 1952), p. 230 ; and *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, ed. P. L. Hughes and J. F. Larkin, i (New Haven and London, 1964), 464. Including such statements began with the negotiations of Whitchurch and Cranmer on the price of the Great Bible in 1539 ; on the advice of the King's Printer Thomas Berthelet, Cranmer set the price at 13s 4d, which was reduced to ten shillings on Cromwell's request. Whitchurch and Grafton felt such a price would be feasible only if they had a monopoly, and agreed “ to prynte in thende of their bibles the price therof, to thentethe Kinges lege people shall not hensforth be decyvid of thair price ” (Pollard, pp. 257-8).

⁵ *Churchwardens Accounts at Bettrysden*, ed. Francis R. Mercer (Ashford, 1928), pp. 89-90. The only Nevill listed as a Tudor stationer in E. G. Duff's *Century of the English Book Trade* (London, 1905) is Thomas Nevill, mentioned in *York Minster Fabric Rolls* as a binder and mender of books.

Whitchurch seems to have failed in his efforts to convince churches that the *Injunctions* called for the second volume ; no records that I have been able to find or examine list purchases of more than one volume.

The Marian government apparently made some effort to recall the *Paraphrases* and many may have been called in and destroyed¹ ; but there is no evidence of any serious campaign against the book. The Elizabethan *Injunctions* of 1559 again commanded, under their sixth injunction, that all parishes should provide “ within one .xii. monethes next after the said Visitation, the *Paraphrases* of Erasmus also in English vppon the Gospell ”, and under the sixteenth that all clergy “ vnder the degree of a maister of Arte ” should have New Testaments in Latin and English and the *Paraphrases* and confer “ the one with the other ”.² No new edition appeared, however, and although for a decade after the accession of Queen Elizabeth visitation articles continued to demand copies of the *Paraphrases* in all churches, there was no place from which copies could be bought, unless the queen’s printer had taken over stored copies with his patent. By 1583 the patent for the *Paraphrases* was unimportant enough to be offered by Christopher Barker for the relief of the poor of the Stationers’ Company.³

It is probable that some objected to being forced to buy the English *Paraphrases*, either on doctrinal grounds or because of objections to the expense. Bishop Gardiner may well have been speaking for many of his clergy in the series of letters he wrote against the book and its enforced circulation, but his complaints are the only ones to have survived.⁴

On 14 October 1547 he wrote the Protector from the Fleet to argue that, whatever the Council might have decided about the use of Erasmus’s *Paraphrases*, they in fact defined positions opposed to the very foundations of the Church of England.

¹ Philip Hughes, *The Reformation in England*, ii (London, 1954), 243.

² S.T.C. 10095-103. The change from B.D. to M.A. must have been intended to reduce the number of clerics needing the books.

³ Edward Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640*, ii (5 vols., London 1875-94), 781.

⁴ J. A. Muller, *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner* (Cambridge, 1933), cited here as Muller with the numbers given the letters by the editor.

Erasmus had stated, for example, that the king ruled not by “debt or ryght, but mutuall charitie: which is a meruelous matter”; he had defended purgatory and the invocation of saints, and had concluded that “if St Paule were aliue in this daye, he wold not improue the present state of the Church”.

First, as concerning the pollicye and state of the realme: Whersoever Erasmus might take an occasion to speake his pleasure of princes, he paieth home as roundlye as busshoppes haue ben of late touched in playes. And such places in Scripture as we haue been vsed to alledge for the state of princes, he wresteth and wrydeth them so, as if the people redde him and belieued him, they wold after smalle regard that allegation of them.

Erasmus called monarchs “prophane kinges” and bishops “verye kinges of the Gospell”. The paraphrase form allowed him to speak as Christ and the Apostles, not merely as a theologian. He called the Eucharist a symbol and allowed remarriage after divorce for adultery. “By the Paraphrasis the keping of a concubyne ys called but a light fault. And that were good for Lankeshire.”

His worke, the Paraphrasis, which should be auctorisid in the realme, which he wrote aboue 26 yeres ago, when his penne was wanton, as the matter is so handled as being abroad in this realme, were able to minister occasion to euell men to subuerte, with religion, the policie and order of the realme.

He must have had a printed text of Matthew in the Fleet with him, as he quoted the English text correctly and wrote that, having the book with him, he was able to attack the translators as well as Erasmus.

And your Grace shal further vnder stand that he (who it is I know not) who hath taken the labors to translate Erasmus into Englysh, hath for his parte offended some time, as apereth plainely, by ignoraunce, and sometime euidently of purpose, to put in, leaue out, and chaunge as he thought best, neuer to the better, but to the worse; with the specialities wherof I wil not nowe encomber your Grace, but assure you it is so.¹

On 27 October he expressed his appreciation of those who had blamed Erasmus for laying the eggs that Luther hatched, and refused to consider changing his views.² On 12 November he continued his attack with further comments on “the malice and vntrithe of mucche matter out of Erasmus penne, and also the

¹ Muller, 130.

² Muller, 131. The saying was attributed to the Franciscans of Cologne: see Allen v, 609; xi, 21.

arrogant ignorancy of the translator into English", who had shown himself "ignoraunt in Latten and Englishe, a man farre vnmete to meddle with such a matter, and not without malice". Further the circulation of the book under the *Injunctions* would cost "rather aboue xx.m pound then vnder . . . by estimate of the number of biers and the price of the whole bokes".¹ As the month went on Gardiner continued his study of the *Paraphrases*:

In which booke I am now so well learned, and can showe the matters I shall alleage so planely, as I feare no reproche in my so doinge. And as for the Englishe, eyther my Lorde of Canterbury shall say for hys defence that he hathe not read ouer thEnglishe, or confesse more of himselfe then I will charge him with. Therefore I call that the faulte of inferior ministers whom my Lorde trusteth. The matter it selfe is ouer farr out of the way, and the translatinge also. In a longe worke, as your Grace towchethe, a slumbre is pardonable, but this translator was a sleepe when began, hauinge such faultes.²

By the end of November the exasperated Cranmer apparently suggested that Gardiner was out of his mind.

If my Lord of Canterbury think I wil wax mad, he is deceiued; for I waxe euery day better learned then other, and finde euery day somewhat to impugne the Paraphrasis and homelies, not by wit or devise or other subtilty, but plain sensible matter, if I may be hard.³

He was not heard, and in July 1550 the Council informed him that "it was and is commaunded by the Kinges Majesties Injunctions that the Paraphrases of Erasmus, in Englishe, shoulde be sett up in somme convenient place in everie parishe church of this realme".⁴

There was little if any further reaction. How energetically Gardiner worked at suppressing the book in the reign of Mary, who was after all one of the translators, is not known. But it was never printed after 1552, seldom mentioned in visitation articles after the first few years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, and its copyright was given up by the queen's printer in 1583—all of which suggests that he need not have worried, and that the English *Paraphrases* of Erasmus ultimately had only slight influence on Anglican thought.

¹ Muller, 133.

² Muller, 135.

³ Muller, 236.

⁴ *Acts of the Privy Council*, New Series, iii (London, 1891), 72-77.