

ities. He aimed at vigorous and idiomatic language. His Old Testament is that of Matthew, with some variations; his New Testament is Tyndale's, with numerous changes in the translation. He retained many of the notes in Matthew's Bible, and added some valuable original comments.

Under the patronage of Lord Cromwell, and dedicated to the king, three editions were sold in the first year of issue, 1539, and two editions of the Testament. One of the Bibles was in folio and two in 4to.; one of the Testaments was 4to., and the other 12mo. In 1549 an edition was published in 12mo. in five volumes or parts, especially for the poor.

The title of the first folio edition is as follows:—

The Most | Sacred Bible, | Which is the holy scripture, con- | teyning  
the old and new testament, | translated into English, and newly | recog-  
nized with great diligence | after most faythful exem- | plars. By  
Rychard | Taverner. | Prynted at London [etc.] M.D. XXXIX.

The arrangement of the books is the same as in Matthew's Bible.

---

## IX.

### THE GREAT BIBLE.

#### 1. *The Edition of 1539.*

THOMAS CROMWELL,<sup>1</sup> BORN 1490, DIED 1540.

*For principal contemporaries see under COVERDALE, page 28.*

Cromwell, though neither translator nor editor, deserves mention here because he was the prime mover in the preparation and publication of this work. He was born at Putney about 1490, of humble parentage. He was employed by Cardinal Wo.sey, and, after the fall of that official, Henry VIII. took him into his service, and from that time his promotion was rapid. In 1531 he was knighted; in 1532 appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer; 1534, principal Secretary of State; 1535, vicegerent; 1536, a baron, and Master of the Rolls; 1537, the garter and the Deanery of Wells were given

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes spelled Crumwell.

to him; April 17, 1540, created Earl of Essex; July 28, of the same year, beheaded for treason.

Though not noted for piety, Cromwell was a friend of the Reformation. He broke up the monasteries, which had become nests of corruption. He persistently opposed the papal supremacy, working, however, for political, rather than religious, ends. He was shrewd, ambitious, proud, unprincipled, and a man of great courage and firmness. With all his worldliness, he professed a deep veneration for the Scriptures. He was the early friend and patron of Coverdale, and used his influence for him when he published his translation of the Bible. He interceded with the king for the royal permission to publish Matthew's Bible, and patronized Taverner in his publication. When at his highest position he was the most powerful subject in the kingdom. Vicar-general and viceroy, he represented the king as the head of the Church, and presided in Convocation, much to the disgust of the learned bishops, who looked upon him as "an ignorant layman." Living in bloody times, he was a man of blood, and at last went to the ax, where he had sent so many others.

Though sometimes called Cranmer's Bible, the edition of 1539 was Cromwell's sole enterprise, Cranmer having nothing to do with it. It was a revision of Matthew's Bible, which, in turn, was a compilation of the translations of Coverdale and Tyndale. In 1538 Cromwell directed Coverdale and Grafton to put the work through the press, the former as editor, the latter as printer. Coverdale had previously prepared the work in England, but the printing was to be done in Paris, because better materials and workmanship could be obtained there than in England. For this purpose Henry VIII. obtained permission from Francis I. After the work was partly completed an order came from the Inquisition, forbidding its prosecution, and commanding that all copies be seized and destroyed. Two thousand five hundred copies were accordingly burned, but, through the cupidity of the official who had charge of the burning, "four great dry vats" of them were sold to a haberdasher to lay caps in. These were afterward bought for Grafton, and, with the types, presses, and workmen, were safely taken to England. In April, 1539, the Bible was published. It was called "great," because of its


size, the pages being fifteen inches by nine, and larger than those of any other Bible.

It had no dedication, unless the remarkable wood-cut surrounding the title can be considered such. In this the king is represented as sitting on his throne, and giving the Bible to Cromwell and Cranmer, and they, in turn, giving it to clergy and laity, who surround them. At the bottom is a preacher addressing a crowd. From the mouths of the chief personages are labels with various brief speeches, while from many in the crowd comes the shout, "*Vivat Rex.*" Above the king is a representation of the Almighty speaking from the clouds. This cut is said to have been designed by the celebrated Hans Holbein.

In the center of this engraving is the title, as follows:—

The Byble in | Englyshe, that is to say the con- | tent of all the holy  
Scripture, bothe | of y<sup>e</sup> olde and newe testament trully | translated after  
the veryte of the | Hebrue and Greke textes, by y<sup>e</sup> dy- | lygent studye  
of dyuerse excellent | learned men expert in the forsayde | tongues. |  
Prynted by Rychard Grafton & | Edward Whitchurch. | Cum priu-  
legio ad imprimen- | dum solum. | 1539. |

The books are arranged in the order to which we are accustomed in the "Authorized Version."

It was originally intended to have notes, or "certen godly annotacyons," in an appendix, and the texts thus to be annotated were indicated by a ; but as there was not time for the "oversyght and correccyon of the sayde annotacyons," they were omitted until "more convenient leysour" was found for their preparation; but the "leysour" never came. To denote words which were rendered from the Vulgate, but which were not in the original, smaller type was used.

By the authority of the king an injunction was issued to the clergy requiring that each parish should be provided with a copy of the Bible to be set up in a convenient place within the church, and the people were to be urged to read it.

## 2. *The Subsequent Editions.*

THOMAS CRANMER, BORN 1489, DIED 1556.

*For principal contemporaries see under COVERDALE, page 28.*

Cranmer was born in Aslacton, Nottinghamshire, July 2, 1489. He was educated at Oxford, where he stood high in

scholarship, and in 1510 was made a Fellow. In 1523 he took the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and became a lecturer in the college. In 1528 an opinion which he had expressed concerning the proposed divorce between Henry VIII. and Catherine of Arragon came to the ears of the king, who sent for him and made him write it down, as it suggested a plan by which the desired divorce might be obtained. He was appointed chaplain to the king, and in 1529 was one of the ambassadors from the king to the Pope. He attached himself closely to the fortunes of the king, and in 1533 was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury. He seems to have coincided with the royal views in reference to the numerous matrimonial alliances in which the king indulged. He took a prominent part in all the movements which culminated in the separation of England from the Church of Rome. At the death of Henry, in 1547, Cranmer was made one of the regents. In 1548 he was at the head of a commission of twelve divines who were appointed to prepare a liturgy for the Church of England. The work was finished in 1552. On the death of King Edward VI., in 1553, Cranmer swore allegiance to Lady Jane Grey, as queen, and when Mary attained to the throne he was arraigned, with many other prelates and ministers, on charges of treason and heresy. Refusing to subscribe to the papal dogmas, he was excommunicated in November, 1555, and in February, 1556, was formally degraded. His courage failing him in view of certain death he wrote six recantations, but these did not save his life. On the day of his execution, March 21, 1556, his fortitude returned to him, and in the presence of an immense crowd he expressed regret for his recantations, and reaffirmed his opposition to the papacy. He was led to the stake, where he displayed remarkable firmness, holding out his right hand for the flames to consume, because with that he had written what was contrary to his heart. He cried out, "This unworthy hand! Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Cranmer has been called the Melancthon of the English Reformation. He was learned, mild, and amiable, but lacked firmness and courage to keep him steadfast in the midst of opposition and of danger.

Cranmer early identified himself with movements for the translation of the Scriptures. In December, 1534, nearly a

year before the appearance of Coverdale's Bible, he proposed to Convocation a plan for the translation of the Bible, and the work was actually divided among nine or ten of the bishops and other learned men, but the project for some reason was never pushed to completion. As soon as Matthew's Bible came into the country, in 1537, he showed a deep interest in it. No wonder, then, that he exhibited a similar interest in the Great Bible issued under the patronage of Cromwell.

In April, 1540, there appeared a second edition of the Great Bible, with this title:—

The Byble | in Englyshe, that is to saye, the con- | tēt of al the holy  
scriptures, both | of y<sup>e</sup> olde and newe testamēt, with | a prologe therinto,  
made by | the reverende father in | God, Thomas, archbysshop of Can-  
tor- | bury. | This is the Byble apoynted | to the vse of the churches.

This Bible was printed in London by Parisian workmen, and with Parisian type. It was merely a revision of the first edition, Coverdale still being editor. The prologue was written by Cranmer, and, through Cromwell, received the approbation of the king. Hence this Bible and the five subsequent editions are known by the name of "Cranmer's Bibles." These editions were severally issued April, 1540, July, 1540, November, 1540, May, 1541, November, 1541, December, 1541. In the edition of November, 1540, the arms of Cromwell, which had appeared under his figure in the engraving on the title-page, were removed, and a suggestive blank space tells the story of his fall. The index hands, which had been intended to refer to the notes, had they been written, were also seen no more. The editions of November, 1540, and November, 1541, have on the title-page the names of Bishops Tunstall and Heath, who were appointed by the king to oversee the work, because they belonged to the party opposed to Cromwell. Thus the credit of the book was supposed to be confirmed.<sup>1</sup>

In May, 1540, the king, by proclamation, again commanded that Bibles should be provided for public reading, since many parish churches were still destitute of them. Bonner, who had lately been appointed Bishop of London, and who afterward became so infamously known in the persecutions

<sup>1</sup> See Westcott, p. 79.

under Mary, set up six Bibles in St. Paul's, chaining them to the pillars that were by the desks on which the books were placed. The joy of the people at this opportunity of reading the Bible was very great.

In May, 1541, another similar proclamation was issued, and in 1542 the curates of the parish churches were directed to read the Bible in English, publicly, in course. The Great Bible became very popular. "From 1539 to 1541 so large was the demand that it is supposed not fewer than twenty-one thousand copies were printed."<sup>1</sup>

In 1543 the disposition of the king seemed to waver, for at his suggestion Parliament passed an act prohibiting the use of Tyndale's translations, ordering the destruction of all annotations and preambles, and forbidding certain classes, such as apprentices, mechanics, farmers, servants, and laborers, to read any part of the Bible, either in public or in private.

Cranmer's Bible was not issued after 1541 until 1549. It was issued, at intervals, for twenty years after, sometimes in folio, sometimes in 4to., and in one instance (1566) an edition was printed in 8vo., and was very popular because of its convenient size.

---

## X.

### WHITTINGHAM'S NEW TESTAMENT.<sup>2</sup>

WILLIAM WHITTINGHAM, BORN 1524, DIED 1579.

*For principal contemporaries see under COVERDALE, page 28.*

Whittingham was born in 1524, in Lanchester, near Durham. He was educated in Oxford, and afterward spent many years in foreign travel. He returned home in 1553, only a few weeks before the death of Edward VI., but soon left again for the Continent. In 1554 he preached to an English congregation in Frankfort. In 1555 he married Catherine Jaquemayne, of Orleans, the sister of Calvin's wife. In 1556 he was

<sup>1</sup> Fry: "A Description of the Great Bible," etc. P. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Though Whittingham's name does not appear anywhere in the book, he elsewhere "distinctly identifies himself as the editor." Eadie, ii, 5.<sup>1</sup>