

In an article published in the winter of 1972 in *Erasmus in English* I attempted to show how the first English translation of Erasmus's *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* became a convenient tool for English propagandists and was used by them to advance the cause of Protestantism in England between 1533 and 1576. The following is a resumé of that argument. The Latin text of the *Enchiridion* was first translated into English in the early 1520s by William Tyndale.¹ It was probably this translation that was published by Wynkyn de Worde for John Byddell in November 1533.² A heavily revised version of this 1533 English text was published only three months later in February 1534.³ The 1534 edition is a remarkably close translation of Erasmus's Latin text and deviates from it in no significant way.⁴ It reflects in total Erasmus's emphasis in the Latin text on the *philosophia Christi*, evangelical pietism, the ethics of the New Testament and the call for unity and tolerance among all Christians. It also manages to capture the tone of the original – at once both hortatory and bitingly irreverent. According to Erasmus's own definition the *Enchiridion* was in no way heterodox.⁵ It criticized existing institutions and practices in the Catholic Church such as monasticism and unnecessary religious ceremonials or Jewishness but never once took issue with matters of faith or established dogma. The 1534 English edition of the *Enchiridion* is faithful to Erasmus's original intentions and designs for the work. However, what I tried to show in *Erasmus in English* was that the editions of this first translation after 1534 purposely and seriously distorted the content of the *Enchiridion* in order to make it fit and corroborate the changes that were taking place in the protean English Church. In the 1538 edition for example,⁶ references to the word pope are altered to the more restrictive phrase 'bishop of Rome.' This alteration is clearly meant to give substance and support to the Act of Supremacy's withdrawal of universal power in spiritual matters from the Roman See. In the 1541 edition of this first translation alterations are carried a step further. References to the bishop of Rome are sometimes accompanied by slanderous parenthetical statements about the pope, and many references to monks and monasteries found in 1534 are either deleted altogether or changed to more innocuous words or phrases. This latter alteration corroborates the fubrics of the Act of Dissolution which, as Dickens points out, were all but completed by 1540.⁷ These changes are retained in the two editions of this English translation published in 1544, the one edition of 1548 and the two editions of the 1550s. The final edition of this first translation published in 1576 adds even more to this pattern. Erasmus's references to the Mass, faithfully retained in the 1534 edition, are altered to the more Protestant phrase 'communion service' in 1576. In general what becomes apparent in these editions of the first translation from 1533 to 1576 is the deliberate and willful manipulation of material to suit political and religious ends. Ironically, a work written by a devout if critical Roman Catholic becomes, in the hands of ardent anti-Catholics, a tract made to corroborate the establishment of a national English Church which has purged itself of all vestiges of papistry.⁸

In this paper I will try to show the fate of the *Enchiridion* as manifested in two other

translations and editions of the work published in the sixteenth century. What one notices in these translations is a pattern consistent with the one outlined above. Both of these translations come out in support of various hues of Protestantism against Catholicism and as such distort the intentions and designs of the original.

Coverdale's abridgement of the "Enchiridion"

In May 1545 Adam Anonimus, that is, Steven Mierdman,⁹ published at Antwerp Miles Coverdale's abridgement of Tyndale's translation of the *Enchiridion* entitled *A shorte Recapitulation or abridgement of Erasmus Enchiridion*.¹⁰ The popularity of Tyndale's translation, particularly in the 1540s, must have contributed to Coverdale's decision to abridge the work. In this decade the *Enchiridion* appeared first in 1541, twice in 1544, once in 1548, and as Devereux points out, once probably in 1547 although this latter edition has not survived.¹¹ Coverdale would have realized that the *Enchiridion* had a wide popularity and reading public and doubtless felt that an abridgement would be just as well received if not more so than the original lengthy translation.¹²

That it should have been Coverdale who chose to abridge Tyndale's translation is not surprising. From the very first his inclinations seemed to be strongly Erasmian. His associations with the early English Erasmians such as Robert Barnes and the group of Cambridge reformers who congregated at the White Horse attest to his Erasmian affiliations.¹³ So also does his Biblical scholarship which places him squarely in the Erasmian tradition of dedication to and propagation of the true source of Christianity. That he knew Erasmus's writings and drew his inspiration largely from them is shown in more than one instance. In *The Acts and Monuments* Foxe records the recantation of one Thomas Topley an Augustinian friar who was brought before Cuthbert Tunstal in 1528. According to Foxe:

This Thomas Topley had been converted before by one Richard Foxe, priest of Bumstead, and Miles Coverdale, insomuch that he, being induced partly by them, partly by reading certain books, cast off both his order and habit and went like a secular priest.¹⁴

At the beginning of his recantation, Topley warns "all christen men" to beware of consenting to Erasmus's Fables, "for by consenting to them, they have caused me to shrink in my faith ..." Later it is pointed out that Topley:

in the Lent past, as he was walking in the field at Bumstead with sir Miles Coverdale, late friar of the same order, going in the habit of a secular priest, who had preached the fourth Sunday in Lent at Bumstead, they did commune together of Erasmus's works¹⁶

This excerpt seems to attest to Coverdale's knowledge of at least some of Erasmus's writings. Also in a letter dated 20 February 1545 and addressed to Conrad Hubert, Coverdale refers to the earlier "sickness of our dear friend Erasmus."¹⁷ And in his *Ghostly Psalms and Spiritual Songs* (1539?)¹⁸ one hears through Coverdale another echo of that central and influential passage from Erasmus's *Paraclesis*.¹⁹ In his preface to the reader Coverdale states:

Yea, would God that our minstrels had none other thing to play upon, neither our carter and ploughmen other thing to whistle upon, save psalms, hymns, and such godly

songs as David is occupied withal. And if women, sitting at their rocks, or spinning at the wheels, had none such other songs to pass their time withal, than such as Moses' sister, Glehana's wife ... have sung before them, they should be better occupied than with *bey nony nony, bey troyly boly*, and such like phantasies.²⁰

Coverdale's close associations with the translator would have given him an added reason for producing a shortened version of the *Enchiridion*. Both Tyndale and Coverdale were ardent English reformers who were forced to escape to the continent when the wave of conservatism struck at home. Both were influential members of the Protestant reforming party and shared many similar beliefs. But most importantly, both possessed a burning devotion to the cause of Biblical scholarship and translation. It was Coverdale who helped Tyndale with his work on the translation of the *Pentateuch*. Foxe states that

Master Coverdale tarried for [Tyndale], and helped him in the translating of the whole five books of Moses, from Easter till December, in the house of a worshipful widow, Mistress Margaret Van Emmerson, A.D. 1529.²¹

Generally, Coverdale's writings are strongly Erasmian in tone. An exception to this is his controversial and often vituperative *Confutation of the Treatise of John Standish* (1540)²² and also certain passages in his writings where his hatred of the Roman Church often gets the better of him as in *The Defence of a Certain Poor Man* (1545).²³ Most of the time however, Coverdale's Protestantism is characterized by a strong degree of moderation and his works are, for the most part, spiritually instructive in nature rather than polemical. Indeed, by virtue of Coverdale's prudent selectivity, his rendering of the *Enchiridion* is even less controversial than Tyndale's accurate translation of the Latin text.

In general, Coverdale's abridgement emphasizes only the original's positive proposals, popularly known as the *philosophia Christi*. Many attempts are made to steer clear of inflammatory or contentious material. Erasmus's virulent attacks on clerical and monastic abuses and the excesses of scholasticism, faithfully rendered in the Tyndale translation are, if not entirely omitted, at least played down or passed over quickly by Coverdale. As well as emphasizing Erasmus's positive policy, Coverdale's interest in the text is on the sustained metaphor of the Christian knight. This recurring motif often gets lost in the Latin and in Tyndale's translation principally because of the long and numerous explanatory passages and digressions. In short, while capturing the essence of the true Christian life as outlined in the *Enchiridion*, Coverdale sacrifices by omission its spirit and tone and contributes to the de-personalization of the work, much of whose original popularity lay in its articulation of abuses and its biting attacks as in its more rational and tranquil positive proposals for a true Christian life.

Coverdale's intentions to assert Erasmianism and emphasize the metaphor of the Christian knight are evident right from the beginning of the abridgement. The title page contains two Biblical excerpts not found in the original translation. These are clearly meant to serve as an introduction to the *leit-motif* of the Christian knight. The first is from Paul's second Epistle to Timothy: "Suffer afflictions as goode and feathfull sowdyars of Iesu Christ." The second is from the Book of Job, chapter 7: "Syeng the lyffe of man, ys but A battell or werfare apon the earthe." Two more Scriptural passages replace the poem written by Byddell to the reader in the Tyndale translation. One is from Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, chapter 6:

Be stronge in the lorde, and in the power of his myght. And put on the armour of God, that ye maye stande stedfaste, agaynste the crafty assautes of the deuyll. For ye must not wrestelle against fleshe and bloude: But against rule, against power, and worldly rulers of the darkness of the world, against spretual wickednes, for heavenly thynges.

The second passage is from Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 10:

Let not your weapons pertayning to thys battaylle, be carnal thynges, but myehty in God, able to caste downe strong holdes, and auer throwe the ymaginacion of man, and euery hie thyng that exalteth yt selfe against the knowledge of God. And bring into captiuite, al vnderstanding to the obedience of Christe oure lorde and God.

It is clear from these citations in which direction Coverdale will move through the text. His emphasis here is solely on the Christian knight, the adversity he will meet and the weapons with which he is to arm himself in this life. Not content to allow the ambivalence of the word "Enchiridion" to explain itself and unwilling to trust the explanation to the clumsiness of the printer's poem he returns *ad fontes* for his texts to that stronghold of Protestant theology, the Bible.

The Tyndale translation begins by articulating Erasmus's own adversities and troubles and continues in the tone of a general apology for the work coupled with an attack on its detractors. The personal nature of his own adversities is mentioned by Erasmus; seen in the light of his own problems even the troubled Ulysses might consider himself as fortunate as Policrates. One would not expect an abridgement written twenty-seven years after the original to contain such personal material. Coverdale alters this section and attempts to make it more objective in tone. He mentions that all must suffer and experience adversity and be willing to tolerate it. The same pattern continues throughout the two prefaces. Where Tyndale captures Erasmus's feelings of annoyance with those divines who have scorned his "lytle boke, as nothing erudite and clerkly" and then shows how "Dunces questyons" have nothing to do with true godliness and the needs of the common people, Coverdale omits the former apology and disinterestedly states that the "best teachers" are those who avoid "the tediousnesse of huge and great volumes."

Coverdale's desire to avoid Erasmus's prolonged attacks and to concentrate only on the core of the *philosophia Christi* and the Christian knight motif is evident in his omission of Erasmus's indictment of the Schoolmen. Erasmus takes the opportunity to attack scholastic disputation. The following passage is characteristic of the length of his digressions and their biting tone. Nothing quite so sustained or vituperative is evident in Coverdale's text:

But what thinke you shulde come of it / if to suche of the Turks that shall be ouercomen (for I do not suppose that they shall all be kyllled with weapons) we shall lay the werkes of Occam / Durandus / Duns / Gabriell / Aluaros / or any such schole men, for thentent to bring them in mynde to take Christes profession vpon them? what shall they ymagyn and thynke in their myndes (for surely euen they, though they be naught els, are men and haue wyt and reasone) whan they shall here those thorny and combrous inextricable subtyll ymagynacions of instantes / of formalytes / of quiddites / of relacion: namely whan they shall se these great doctours and teachers of religyon and holyness so farre disagreyng / and of so sondry opinyons amonge them selfe that often tymes they dispute and reason so longe one with another / vntyll they chaunge colour, and be pale / and

reuytle one another spytyng eche at other and fynally dealyng buffettes and blowes eche to other. whan they shall se the blacke freres fyght and skolde for their Thomas / and than the gray freres matched with them, defendyng on the other partye their subtyle and feruent hote doctours which they call seraphicos / some spekyng as reals, some as nominals.

Perhaps one's initial feelings after reading such a passage is to admire Coverdale's discriminating omissions as the mark of a more rational and controlled mind, and conversely to castigate Erasmus for his lack of restraint and control. And yet one must recall that the events of 1518 were much different than those of 1545. By the latter date the dangers of scholasticism, for example, were no longer such a serious threat to the simplicity of the Christian message. Such was not the case in 1518. It is reasonably safe to say that Erasmus's fear of scholasticism, with which he was preoccupied for most of his life, was in any case valid, and even though he occasionally descends to the lowest sort of attack, he does so with a real apprehension for the simple Christian and the general unity of Christendom. At the same time, although Coverdale's abridgement contents itself with distilling the essence of Erasmianism from the Tyndale rendering, the omission of these more satiric, biting, and perhaps by 1545, antiquated passages, results in a less spirited and somewhat more emasculated tract than the Tyndale text.

Coverdale becomes more at home when Erasmus begins to express the most positive aspects of his philosophy. For example, Erasmus's discussion of the corruptness of the world and the security of referring all things to Christ is briefly but faithfully summarized by Coverdale. So also is the Old Testament text of the Philistines' pollution of Jacob's wells and the updating of the text to include contemporary philistines who lead men astray by polluting the sacred texts with their perverse interpretations. However, some significant excisions occur in the text which reflect both the political and religious situation in the 1540s as well as Coverdale's own Protestant leanings. While content to seek out Erasmus's metaphor of the Christian knight, Coverdale boldly ignores two other important metaphors that Erasmus employs. The first is the concentric circles metaphor which Erasmus uses to describe the outlines of an ideal Christocentric society. Christ is the centre of the circles. In the first circle are the spiritual members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy; in the second are princes and civil rulers and in the third are all the common people. England's political and religious bias is shown by the discarding of this metaphor. No mention is made by Coverdale of the first circle inhabited by the spiritual hierarchy. Not only are papists a force to contend with and excluded from the ranks of Christian knighthood, they are seen elsewhere by Coverdale as "the stout sturdy souldiers of Satan." Very brief mention is given to the duties of bishops and priests. When they are mentioned they are seen as subservient to the prince. Coverdale's emphasis in this section of the work is on the Christian Prince as the supreme head of the Church. Such an alteration of the original helps to transform the work into a decidedly Protestant tract.

The other important excision in Erasmus's preface is the image of the ideal Christian commonwealth as analogous to a monastic community. Erasmus questions the validity of monasticism and states that the true Christian community is not unlike a large monastery in which the monastic vows invented by men play a minor role next to the highest vow which every Christian takes at Baptism. By moving Christianity outside the walls of a monastery, Erasmus shows his concern for the inculcation of a true Christian laicism in

which all men might take an active part. Coverdale's abridgement of this section is faithful to the spirit of the original and especially to the view of all society as a Christian unit. But it is significant that he omits all references to the image of the monastery which is Erasmus's point of comparison and contrast to society. In 1518 and up to 1540 Erasmus's simile would have had some basis in fact. But by 1545 any reference to monasticism would be little more than an anachronism and an allusion to an alien and defunct institution.

The most notable characteristic of Coverdale's abridgement of the text itself is its selectivity. The total number of pages of the abridged text is sixty-two or about one quarter of the length of Tyndale's translation. In his summary of the text Coverdale again shows his devotion to the task of outlining the *philosophia Christi* and tracing the metaphor of the Christian knight. He scrupulously sticks to this and omits Erasmus's long and frequent explanatory passages almost to the letter. His side-notes, unlike the majority of Tyndale's, are closer to the Latin in terms of length. Unlike Tyndale, he keeps them brief and concise and does not turn a side-note into an explanatory passage in its own right. Erasmus's Old Testament glosses and allegorical interpretations are, in almost all cases, omitted by Coverdale. A few New Testament references are retained but these are kept to a minimum. Erasmus's Christian humanism which displays itself in the wide variety of pagan and classical references which he brings to the services of Christianity are, in almost all instances, deleted by Coverdale. So also are most references to monks, monasteries, the Mass, the pope and anything else that might conjure up the image of the papal anti-Christ. What one is left with is a work completely in harmony with Protestant doctrine and devoid of much of Erasmus's spirit and personality.

A fine example of Coverdale's selectivity and his indebtedness to Tyndale's prose style can be seen by examining a part of his text. The Tyndale rendering of chapter 13 for example runs to almost fifty-seven pages of black letter type. Coverdale's abridgement of this chapter is scarcely more than three pages. It reads in part:

1. The fifth rule is, that we counte it parfite godlynnesse, alwaye to applie our selues to *ascende from thinges visible to thinges inuisible*. 2. Whiche yf we do not: then are we no *true honourers of god*, but *playne superstitious*. 3. And yet beyng *straungers* in this visible world, what soeuer *offreth it selfe* to our *sensible powers*, we considering it, ought to *applie* the same either to the world angelical, or els to maners, euen unto god, and to the *inuisible porcion* of our selues. 4. And thus the thing that we perceauē bi our *sensible wites*, shalbe unto vs an occasion of godlynness. 5. Yea by the light of this *visible Sonne* we shal lerne, that great is the pleasure of the *inhabitauntes of heauen*, vpon whom the eternall light of god is ever shyninge. 6. And like wise by the darck night, we shal thynke how horrible it is, a soule to be *destitute of the light* of god: and that yf the beautie of the body be pleasaunt, the beautie of the soule is much more honest. 7. For *the lesse felyng we haue in thynges* transitory and *of the body*, and the less we are moued therwith, the more *swetnesse we fynd in thinges perteyning to sprete*, and the better are we acquainted with thinges eternall: to the loue whereof we ought to arise from thinges temporal, and *in comparison* of the other euen to despyse them, and more to fear the disease, poysoun and death of the soule

This section from Coverdale's abridgement occupies about one and a half pages of text.

The corresponding section of Tyndale's translation covers about eleven pages. Sentences 1 and 2 cover about one half page of development in Erasmus and Tyndale. Between sentences 3 and 4 Tyndale includes one page of explanations by drawing analogies between the visible world and the invisible world. Sentences 5 and 6 are expanded into a discussion of about one and a half pages and sentence 7 comprises about three pages of examples and further explanations. Coverdale's method is to take a topic sentence which introduces a concept and then follow it up quickly with a concluding statement. In order to do this, much linking and explanatory material is discarded and often it is difficult to recognize a logical progression from one statement to the next. The latter is exemplified in sentences 2 and 3. The opening of sentence 3 – "And yet beyng straungers ..." – enters the picture rather jarringly and does not seem to follow logically from the preceding thought. Coverdale overcomes this difficulty in part at least by using words which create an impression of continuity. The beginnings of sentences 3, 4, 6, and 7 demonstrate this. Coverdale introduces artificial connectives to create a sense of continuity: "And yet," "And thus," "And like wise," and "For." The same lack of continuity often occurs in the Latin and Tyndale's translation but for the opposite reason. Frequently the drift of an argument is lost in the complexity and length of the explanation and examples.

For his choice of expression Coverdale is greatly indebted to Tyndale's work. In the above passage I have italicized words and phrases that are drawn directly from Tyndale's translation. In addition to these numerous direct borrowings, one finds a great number of close paraphrases and identical words and phrases used in a different syntax. On the other hand, for the sake of economy Coverdale cuts out a good deal of Tyndale's doublings and passes up opportunities to include such typically Tyndalian sentences as:

The sonne gothe downe, aryseth / rageth in heate / is temperate / quyckeneth / bryngeth forth / maketh rype / draweth to hym / maketh subtile and thynne / purgeth / hardeneth / mollyfyeth / illumyneth / clereth / cheryssheth, and comforteth.

Coverdale also misses much of the sheer tangible expressiveness of Tyndale's prose. For example:

For in the stede of tentes and paulyons, we tumble and walter in our beddes: and in the stede of sallets and harde armure, we be crowned with roses and fresshe floures, bathed in damasks and rose waters / smoked in pommaunders and with musk balles / chaungyng poyntes of warre with ryot and ydelnes / and in the stede of wepons belongyng to the warre we handle and take vnto vs the vnhardy harpe / as who say, this peace were not of all warres the moost shamefull.

In conclusion, Coverdale's precis sacrifices a good deal of what is both typically Erasmusian and Tyndalian. Most of Erasmus's delineations of abuses in the tradition Church are omitted; words, phrases and references to the Roman Church which serve as a vindication of Erasmus's orthodoxy are deleted; Erasmus's humanism, his love of the classics, and his tremendous indebtedness to both Old and New Testament in the *Enchiridion* are undercut through excision. Similarly, while deeply indebted to Tyndale as a source, Coverdale neglects a good deal of the work's original vigour so admirably captured by Tyndale, and much that is characteristic of Tyndale's style is sacrificed for the sake of economy. Although one cannot doubt the sincerity of Coverdale's motives in abridging the work, nevertheless to

read only this shortened version is to wonder how the English *Enchiridion* attained such a widespread popularity and influence.

John Gough and the 1561 edition of the "Enchiridion"

In 1561 William Seres published John Gough's *A Godly Boke wherein is containyd certayne fruitefull, godlye, and necessarye Rules, to be exercised and put in practice by all Christes Souldiers lyuynge in the campe of this worlde*.²⁴ The *Short-Title Catalogue* records only two published works by Gough: the first is *A Godly Boke*, a translation of Erasmus's *Enchiridion*, and the second, published in 1570 by John Awdeley, is *The Aunswer of Iohn Gough Preacher, To Maister Fecknams Obiections, against his Sermon lately preached in the Tower of London*.²⁵

Very little biographical material is available on Gough and that which can be found is at best sketchy and roughly drawn.²⁶ He was ordained deacon by Edmund Grindal, Bishop of London, on 14 January 1559-60. On November 15 he was admitted rector of Saint Peter Cornhill, London. In 1576 he was deprived of this rectorship for nonconformity. Although most of Gough's life and activities are a blank, we are fortunate in being able to reconstruct his religious convictions from his polemical *Aunswer* to John Feckenham. At the beginning of this tract Gough mentions that on January 15, 1570 he preached a sermon in the Tower of London in the presence of "Doctour watson, sometime bishop of Lyncolne, and Master Fecknam, sometime also Abbot of westminster." According to Bishop Cox, Feckenham was "a gentle person, but in popish religion too, too obdurate."²⁷ Feckenham's adherence to the religion of Rome resulted in his four main objections to Gough's sermons. In his *Aunswer*, Gough sums up the abbot's objections:

where I affirmed, that it was impossible to keepe the law of God, he hath taken vpon him to affirme the contrarie. vz. That it is possible, and that it lyeth in mans power, to observe and keepe them. Secondly, where I taught, that we be justified by faith onely: he denieth the same, and therewyth teacheth justification by workes. Thirdly, where I denied the inuocation of Saintes: he affirmeth the contrary. And fourthly and lastly, where as I affirmed, that all sinnes are deadly: he teacheth the contrary. Aduouching that there be some veniall sinnes, and therefore concludeth that all are not deadly.

Such a statement which defends the view of man's basic depravity and justification by faith alone and declaims against the invocation of saints places Gough squarely in the Protestant camp. Moreover, his deprivation for nonconformity in 1567 brands him as one of the more extreme and radical elements in the English reformed Church. His hatred of anything remotely connected with the Roman Church is clearly evident in his preface to the *Aunswer*. Addressing Master Pellam, the Lieutenant of the Tower, to whom the work is dedicated he states:

Having therefore now finished this my aunswer and defence of my doctrine aforesayd: thought it good to dedicate the same to your worship, that you with the rest of Gods Children, may be the better settled and grounded in this wholsome and sound doctrine of God his glorious Gospell. And the other, whose eyes are not yet opened, God may in his great mercies hereby remove the mistes of the false and corrupt doctrine of the Papistes, from the same.

Gough not only sees papistry as intrinsically evil for all true Christians, but also, given contemporary events, he recognizes it as having detrimental effects on the Protestant establishment under Elizabeth.²⁸ In Feckenham's objections to Gough's sermon, the papist has deliberately wrested Scripture and the Fathers to vindicate and defend an institution which is under the direct patronage of Satan. In the *Aunswer* each of Feckenham's charges is answered by Gough and supported by interminable Scriptural citations. After this main section of the work Gough launches into a further attack on Roman Catholic doctrine. He begins by taking to task the Real Presence and Transubstantiation. Doubtless Gough's mind is here fixed on the celebrated "Black Rubric" controversy.²⁹ He states:

But amongst other things in my Sermon (M. Facknam) hauing by meanes of Peters wordes, to do with the liuing God, I found your dead bready God in your Sacrament of the Aultar.

This criticism is followed by an attack on the doctrine of free will. The tract closes with a brief statement on the misleading nature of vestments³⁰ and an appeal to Feckenham and his kind to turn to the true doctrine of Christ:

Cease therfore to bleare the eyes of the simple and vnlearned, wyth your gylted glistering coppes, and geue place to the truth. Seeke rather Iesus Christ, and the profit of his church, then your owne estimation.

Although written some nine years earlier, Gough's *A Godly Boke* contains in essence all of his strong Protestant beliefs that he stoutly defends against Roman Catholicism in his *Aunswer* to Feckenham. *A Godly Boke* is divided into two parts. The second part is the text of the *Enchiridion* itself and this section of the work is a controlled and even-tempered summary of the Christian knight's progress to salvation. However, the first part is a violent attack on the evils of the Catholic Church and an impassioned defence of Protestantism. From this opening section of the work which replaces Erasmus's preface to Volz is it clear that Gough's intention is to use the *Enchiridion* as support for his more extreme Protestant views against what he considered to be vestiges of papistry in the English Church under Elizabeth. This prologue, which informs one's reading of the entire work, is akin to his polemical *Aunswer* to Feckenham and transforms the *Enchiridion* into a document devoted to the propagation of opinions which its author could never have abided. In the prologue Gough states his Christian duty: he must produce an edition of the *Enchiridion* because it contains the truth of "heauenly doctryne, so consonant and agreynge wyth goddes booke, and so mete for thuse of all estates, and sortes of people (beynge christians)" Like all devoted preachers of the time Gough attempts to outline for the elect the straight and narrow path of Christianity, the deceptions and enticements of the flesh, and the primacy of the Scriptures as the source of all wisdom and truth. The prologue then attacks the old order which saw Christianity as the exclusive property of a few. In this view Gough is close to Erasmus's own attitudes although his tone is perhaps more abusive:

though shalte perceauce (deere reder) that the lyfe of a very christian (of what estate or degree so euer he be) to excede and far passe, the counterfayte lyues of cloyning cloysters, of mummynges monkes, fonde fryers, or of hypocrytical heremytes, and that we nede not ronne to seke a straye lyfe among the Charterhouse monkes, for the perfection of a christian lyfe....

Gough then introduces the theme of the Christian commitment in this life and the incessant temptations of the flesh that plague man. This section ends in true Goughian style with a defence of the doctrine of justification by faith and an attack on the Roman Church:

And thys I write, onely to stoppe the mouthes of suche, as slaunderously reporte and saye that these new preachers (for so it pleaseth them to tearme, suche as moste syncerlye preache Gods trueth) would haue no good workes, but preach lyberty, lybertye. Who (in dede) meane nothyng lesse: but bycause they seeke to plucke them from their fond trust in their vayn meritorious workes, taughte them by the papistes (thereby makinge Christe but halfe a Sauioure) and sette forthe the perfection of a trewe faith which is most playnly taughte vs. in the .17. of Luke by Christ himselfe....

He continues:

So that it is most manifest, what impudent and vnshamefast lyars and slaunders, the papistes and their adherentes are vpon god his preachers and his mynsters, for neyther they, nor none other at any time, hard any other doctrine out of anye of those preachers mouthes (whom it hath pleased them to cal new preachers) but thei and their doctrine (I meane the papistes) may be called this dayes bakinge in comparyson of the auncientry of the doctrine whiche is taught by these newe fellowes, then this that I haue aboue writen.

Then follows a rather surprising concluding statement to this section of the prologue:

Whiche in dede most abundantly, and plentifully is sette forthe in this little booke: both godly and learnedly.

This piece, coming as it does at the end of a long and bitter attack on Roman Catholicism and its evil effects upon the English Church, seriously distorts the original motives of the *Enchiridion* by identifying it with the extreme Protestantism of Gough. This is not to suggest that the *Enchiridion* did not contain elements which were sympathetic to the new Church; indeed its popularity as propaganda suggests that much that it had to say corroborated some of the views held by Protestant reformers. But for Gough to maintain that the work gives support to his own thesis of a reformed Protestant doctrine obsessed with destroying papistry is to ignore Erasmus's constant call for unity and brotherhood and his insistence upon his unwavering devotion to the Roman Catholic Church. What one witnesses with Gough's edition of the *Enchiridion* is a phenomenon which runs through all of the editions up to 1816: a distortion of a work in order to make it serve a cause or series of causes quite alien to the author's own inclinations and desires.

Gough then describes in some detail the trials and tribulations of the true Christian life. He devotes a long section of the prologue to the history of oppression and draws many examples from the Old Testament. This leads into a discussion of pagan worship and idolatry. Not unnaturally Gough takes this opportunity to draw an analogy between pagan worship and the idolatry found in the Catholic practice of invocation of saints; one can see in the section elements with which Erasmus would not have disagreed. But, on the other hand, he would not have approved of Gough's tone nor would he have sympathized with his motives:

And now ye see, how farre those fond reasons of worldlye wysedome is from God, and how quyte it is ouerthrowne. And I pray you how farre dysented our Christyanitie from their gentilitye? They had for euerie thyng a sundry God, we had for euerie thinge a sundrye Saynct, we had S. Uncomber for yl husbandes. S. Job for the pore. S. Roke for the plage. Saynct Barbara for thunder, Sayncte Sithe, for our keyes, Saynct Anthony for our pygges, Saynct Loye for our horse, Sainct Agatha for the tothe ake, Saynct Leonarde was good maister to theues, our Ladye for women wyth chylde, and a number of such abhominable, and stynkyng ydolatrie yea and becoue we woulde be nothing inferior vnto them, we woulde haue for their dronken Bacchus, a dronken martin.

The remaining part of the prologue is given over almost exclusively to an attack on the Roman Church and its perverse influences. The devil's "eldest sonne" is "Antechriste of Rome." Gough sees himself as one who must help others be "plucked from antechrist ... and al popishnes." The papists devote their time to effete and meaningless ceremonies and "all is done with a godly shewe to the eyes of worldlynges, with golden Copes, golden crosses, silver sensers, frankinsence burnyng before their idolles and with many other gay goodly thinges...." The ultimate destruction of papistry is proven by Scripture. The Roman Catholic faith is not only misguided but also un-Christian and attacked by St. Paul in his Epistles:

Thus doth S. Paule by most euydent wordes pluck vs from the superstycious rytes of the papystes, whose religion (in dede) is altogether in outward shewe and worldly pompe.

The prologue closes with a final appeal to all true Christians to hear the truth of Christ's doctrines and to turn from "gods enemyes the papistes, and carnall ghospellers, who haue the ghospell in their mouthes, but not in their conuersatyons."

It is not difficult to speculate on Erasmus's attitude to Gough's prologue. In a letter written to Philip Melancthon in 1524 during the Lutheran controversy he voices his discontent with those who deliberately stir up ill-feeling over spiritual and religious matters:

What good is done by telling foolish lads that the Pope is Anti-Christ, that confession carries the plague, that they cannot do right if they try, that good works and merits are a vain imagination, that free will is an illusion, that all things hold together by necessity, and that man can do nothing for himself.³¹

Contained here and developed further in *De amabili Ecclesiae concordia*³² is a statement of Erasmus's hatred of those contentious religious issues that were doing so much to divide Christendom into a number of warring factions. Undoubtedly his feelings would have been even more greatly aroused had he realized that it was his work as controlled and directed by Gough that was propagating division.

The actual text of Gough's *Enchiridion* is selective in its inclusion of material. Not unnaturally, Gough retains most of Erasmus's statements that appeal to and support his Protestant views. Included in his work are Erasmus's appeals for the development of inner pietism, a renewed Christian laicism, and a return to the Scriptures as the basis of Christian truth. Omitted are all sections that even vaguely conjure up the Roman Catholic Church such as Erasmus's views on the Mass, confession, the monastic life, and the spiri-

tual hierarchy. A further deletion is Erasmus's many references to the pagan classics. This omission undercuts the important humanistic basis of the work and helps to make it less of an Erasmian tract. But of course for Gough, the invocation of the classics would have run counter to his view of the Scriptures as the one and only source of truth.

Stylistically, Gough's version is considerably less impressive than Tyndale's. Gough's prose is mundane and lacks the originality and inventiveness and sheer love of extended description so evident in Tyndale's translation. The following are passages drawn from both works; the first is Gough, the second Tyndale:

It is maruel to see how quietly, how with oute all feare, they slepe continually:

It is a meruaylous thyng to beholde, how without care and circumspection we lyue /
how ydelly we slepe / now vpon the one-syde / and now vpon the other....

For sometime he furiously rageth, and in open battel inuadeth man, by much aduersite,
prouinge the strength of his soule.

For somtyme with gonnes of aduersite / as one ragynge with open warre / he shaketh the
walles of the soule.

Beneath the, that slipper and dysceitful serpent, the breaker of our quietnes, by many di-
uerse ingins lieth in waite to cause the sensuall apeteite to fal to sin, which is that Eue by
whom the most false serpent first allured man to comit deadly sinne.

Last of all, vnderneathe / the slypper serpent, the fyrst breker of peace, father of vquietnes
/ otherwhyles hyd in the grene grasse, lurkyng in his caues, wrapped togyder in an hondred
rounde rolles, ceaseth not to wathe and lye in a wayte bynethe in the hele of our woman
/ whom he ones poysoned.

Apart from these stylistic differences one also finds the omission of such descriptive phrases
as:

This felowe must be watched with an hondred eyes / leest perauenture he set open the
castel or cite of god, for deuyls to entre in.

For in the stede of tentes and paulyons, we tumble and walter in our beddes: and in
the stede of sallets and harde armure, we be crowned with roses and fresshe floures,
bathed in damaske and rose waters / smoked in pommaunders and with muskballes /
chaungyng poyntes of warre with ryot and ydelnes / and in the stede of wepons be-
longyng to the warre we handle and take vnto vs the vnhardy harpe....

The political and religious issues which Erasmus's *Enchiridion* was made to uphold and
defend make it, as we have seen, a work for all seasons. Protestants and Catholics alike
drew support from it and Erasmus, we can be sure, would have found little comfort in
simultaneously running with the hare and hunting with the hounds. Its compatibility with
the tenets held by polar opposites springs from the nature of the work itself. Its implied
doctrinal orthodoxy coupled with its call for reform attracted the attention of those more
liberal elements within the Roman Church interested in purging the institution of its abuses

while at the same time staying within its pale. On the other hand, the *Enchiridion's* attacks on abuses in the Church, its firm Scriptural basis, its call for a renewed Christian laicism, and its emphasis on inner piety devoid of meaningless ceremonials made it an excellent source-book for the more radical reformers.

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Notes

- 1 See John Foxe, *The Acts and Monuments*, ed. Josiah Pratt, vol. V (London, 1877), p. 115.
- 2 See the arguments of John A. Gee, "Tindale and the 1533 English *Enchiridion* of Erasmus," *P.M.L.A.* XLIX (1934), 460-71; J. F. Mozley, "The English *Enchiridion* of Erasmus, 1533," *Review of English Studies*, XX (1944), 97-107. For a brief summary of some of the evidence pointing to Tyndale as the translator see E. J. Devereux, "Some Lost Translations of Erasmus," *The Library*, 5th series, vol. xvii, no. 3 (Sept. 1962), 257.
- 3 Ferd. Vander Haeghen, *Bibliotheca Erasmi* (Gand. 1893; reprinted Nieuwkoop, 1961), p. 81; E. J. Devereux, *A Checklist of English Translations of Erasmus to 1700* (Oxford, 1968), C42.2 p. 15.
- 4 For a brief comparative examination of the English and Latin texts see Douglas H. Parker, *A Critical Edition of the English "Enchiridion Militis Christiani" of Erasmus, 1534*, vol. I (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham, 1971), ccxciii-ccxiii; Mozley, *op. cit.*
- 5 *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, ed. P. S. and H. M. Allen, vol. IV (Oxford, 1906-58), 1033, pp. 105-06.
- 6 The *Short-Title Catalogue* listings for the editions from 1533 to 1576 are as follows: 1533 S.T.C. 10479; 1534 S.T.C. 10480; 1538 not in S.T.C. John Rylands Library, Manchester; 1541 S.T.C. 10482; 1544 S.T.C. 10483; 1544 S.T.C. 10484; 1548 S.T.C. 10485; 1551-53 S.T.C. 10481; 1576 S.T.C. 10487. S.T.C. datings for these editions are not accurate. The most recent bibliographical findings are in Devereux's *Checklist*.
- 7 A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (London, 1964; reprinted, 1967), p. 203. See also G. W. O. Woodward, *Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London, 1966); David Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, 1948-59).
- 8 Erasmus's popularity in Tudor England is shown in an excellent article by Craig R. Thompson, "Erasmus and Tudor England," *Actes du Congrès Erasme* (Amsterdam and London, 1971), pp. 29-68.
- 9 For the identification of Adam Anonimus see Colin Clair, "On the Printing of Certain Reformation Books," *The Library*, 5th series, SVIII (Dec. 1963), 275-87.
- 10 S.T.C. 10488. For Coverdale's life see *D.N.B.* For his works see S.T.C.; *Writings and Translations of Myles Coverdale*, ed. Rev. George Pearson, Parker Society (Cambridge, 1844); *Remains of Myles Coverdale*, ed. Rev. George Pearson, Parker Society (Cambridge, 1846). Coverdale is perhaps best known for his work on the English Bible. For a more detailed study of this aspect of his work see Elizabeth W. Cleaveland, *A Study of Tindale's Genesis Compared with the Genesis of Coverdale and the Authorized Version* (London, 1911); Henry Guppy, *Miles Coverdale and the English Bible 1488-1668* (London, 1935); J. F. Mozley, *Coverdale and His Bibles* (London, 1953).
- 11 E. J. Devereux, *A Checklist of English Translations of Erasmus to 1700* (Oxford, 1968), C42.7 p. 16.
- 12 McConica maintains that Coverdale's abridgement shows the popularity of the *Enchiridion* at the time. The original English translation "was presumably too loquacious and extensive for the general public which it was now beginning to reach." James K. McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics Under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965), p. 204.
- 13 See Marshal M. Knappen, *Tudor Puritanism* (Chicago and London, 1935; reprinted, 1965), p. 5 ff.
- 14 John Foxe, *The Acts and Monuments*, vol. V.
- 15 Foxe, V, p. 40.
- 16 Foxe, V, p. 40.
- 17 Foxe, V, p. 40.
- 18 *Remains of Myles Coverdale*, ed. Rev. George Pearson, Parker Society (Cambridge, 1846), p. 521.

- 19 "Would that, as a result, the farmer sing some portion of them at the plow, the weaver hum some parts of them to the movement of his shuttle, the traveller lighten the weariness of the journey with stories of this kind!" *Desiderius Erasmus, Christian Humanism and the Reformation*, ed. John C. Olin (New York, 1965), p. 97.
- 20 *Remains of Myles Coverdale*, p. 537.
- 21 Foxe, V. p. 120.
- 22 *Remains of Myles Coverdale*, pp. 325-429.
- 23 *Ibid.*, pp. 453-489.
- 24 S. T. C. 12132.
- 25 S. T. C. 12131.
- 26 See D. N. B. *sub nomine*; Patrick Collinson, *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement* (London, 1967) Collinson makes it clear that Gough associations were with the militant Protestants in England.
- 27 D. N. B. *sub nomine*.
- 28 Knappen, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-216; Patrick McGrath, *Papists and Puritans Under Elizabeth I* (London, 1967), p. 11.
- 29 Knappen defines this as a controversy over the sacrament of the altar in which the action of kneeling while receiving "did not imply any belief in the doctrine of transubstantiation." p. 97.
- 30 A reference to the Vestiarian controversy; see Knappen, pp. 187-216.
- 31 Translated in part by J. A. Froude, *Life and Letters of Erasmus* (London, 1894; reprinted, 1900), p. 304. The Latin text is in Allen V, 1523, p. 595.
- 32 *Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami Opera Omnia*, vol. V (Lugduni Batavorum), 469-506.