THE ANGLICAN REFORMERS

AND

BAPTISM

By

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The present study is an investigation into the teaching of the Anglican Reformers with regard to the sacrament of Holy Baptism. It was prompted originally by a doubt whether the Reformers carried out so thorough a reconstruction of their theology of baptism as they did of their theology of the supper. Current attempts to interpret the Anglican Liturgy and Articles in a sacramentalist and not an evangelical sense provided a further incentive to the work.

The author does not pretend that he undertook the enquiry without a very decided personal opinion upon the doctrinal points in question. Theological scholarship cannot afford hypocrisy in such matters, and the disguise of a complete impartiality is one which has worn rather threadbare. It is admitted that the possibility of a subconscious bias exists. On the other hand, no effort has been made to manipulate the evidence in favour of a desired conclusion. All relevant passages which have come within notice have been discussed, and no evidence of importance has been ignored or suppressed.

Selection was, of course, necessary. Originally it was hoped to give an exhaustive account of the teaching of all parties of the period, the popular teaching as well as the theological and the continental as well as the domestic. The rapid accumulation of material showed at an early stage that this design was far too ambitious. Romanist teaching - the term Romanist is used for convenience, and not in any derogatory sense - forms a complete subject in itself. So does the doctrine of the Anabaptists. So does the popular understanding. So does Puritanism. A full study of all these aspects of the problem would involve not a single volume but a series of volumes. It has been necessary then to restrict the field of enquiry to the Reformed Anglican teaching, treating of the others only as they have a direct bearing upon the central theme. In all cases, however, information has been gleaned as far as possible from original sources, even where it is strictly limited in scope.

The doctrine primarily studied is that of the Anglican Reformers during the reigns of the Reformation Tudors, Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth. Interest centres naturally upon the leading and most influential Reformers. The lesser writings and testimonies of the age have not been overlooked, but they have not been given prominence, for they did not affect the dogmatic formulation as did the works of the outstanding writers. For the most part the lesser works did little more than repeat, often tediously and at length, the ideas and arguments more forcibly presented elsewhere.

In order to illustrate the various points made a large number of quotations has been made from original works. The enormous
bulk of the Reformed literary output, even upon so narrow a subject as baptism, has made it quite impossible to quote the passages with the fulness which they often deserve. A consultation of the quotations in Goode's monumental study of the even narrower subject of the effects of baptism will show how considerable are the relevant passages and discussions. In the present study, which covers a far larger field than that of Goode, an effort has been made to build up representative evidence, not by the reproduction of whole paragraphs and sections, but by the citing of selected key sentences, sometimes conflated from a larger passage. Thus the disadvantages of inordinate length and discursiveness have been avoided, without, we believe, any sacrifice of historical accuracy.

The large number of quotations had presented a problem in reference-notation. In order to avoid breaking up the text, the usual foot-notes have been dispensed with, and references have been given in brackets, usually in shortened and abbreviated form. The key to the abbreviations will be found in the bibliography. In cases where a quotation from the original seemed desirable, the references have been numbered, and the original passages are given in notes at the end of each chapter. In the English text such passages have usually been paraphrased rather than translated in the stricter sense, the aim being to bring out the force rather than to provide exact English equivalents. No great liberties have been taken, however, and the inclusion of the original provides the necessary check.

The thanks of the author are due to the many who in different ways have provided help or encouragement. The mention of particular names would be invidious, but that of Dr. C. S. Carter ought not to be passed over, for it was he who first suggested a larger enquiry, and encouraged it when it was first undertaken. A real debt is owed to the staffs of various libraries, and more especially to those of New College, Edinburgh and Dr. Williams's Library, London. The task of the author would have been both more difficult and less enjoyable without their unfailing courtesy and kindly help.

Bristol 1948

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1. The Reformation in General

The theology of an age, or of a group within the age, forms a unity. No point of doctrine can be considered independently, for the teaching at one point is dependent upon the teaching at another. This unity runs across frontiers both of time and space, for the work of a theologian in one country at one point of time is closely related to that of others in other lands and even at different times. Indeed, the theological unity is itself part of a larger unity which comprises political and ecclesiastical action as well as thinking. The thinking is shaped to some extent by the events, and it is itself a force and inspiration which gives rise to events.

Formally and academically the theology of the Reformation could be isolated, the Anglican contribution isolated, and the Anglican teaching upon baptism isolated again. An analysis and exposition would be possible in that way. What would not be possible would be an understanding and evaluation. For the Anglican doctrine of baptism is not a self-sufficient entity. It forms a whole, but a whole which is part of larger wholes. A certain understanding of these larger wholes is essential if the lesser whole is to be truly presented and understood.

Of course an introductory sketch of these larger wholes, the Reformation movement, and the Reformation in England, must of necessity be broad and general. All that can be done is to pick out what appear to be the salient and significant features. The more detailed relating to background, especially to the background of thought, must form part of the analysis of the specific doctrine. In these introductory paragraphs it will be our aim to see the general background against which the Anglican doctrine of baptism must be set if it is to be understood.

Looking at it from the intellectual and spiritual standpoint we find that the Reformation was above all a time of questioning and of release. The mediaeval renaissance had given rise to a magnificent theology, Scholasticism, but it had spent its force. Theology had begun to ossify. It is true that in the later Middle Ages thinkers were not quite so bound in as they have been in the Roman Communion since Trent; indeed, even since that Council there has been room for controversy. The liberty which there was, however, was within limits broadly defined, and to some extent marked off, by the judgments of the past, and if necessary by the Inquisition. The liberty was a liberty of speculation rather than of real theology, and the issues tended to be too detailed or too abstruse to have real theological and religious value.

The new renaissance came in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. It brought with it a revival of interest in the classics. It also brought a revival of interest in the texts of the Christian Scriptures. The opening up of the originals meant for one thing a testing of the Latin translation upon
which all doctrines were officially based. The study of the original also made possible a new and more straightforward method of interpretation. Exegesis was still bound to some extent by the older formulae, according to which what the authors had intended to say had been the least interesting or important exegetical question. But the great Biblical scholars of the Renaissance, Colet and Erasmus for example, made a determined effort to recover the actual sense and teaching of the primitive writers.

The questioning, once begun, could not stop there. A comparison of the moral life and the ecclesiastical practice of the contemporary church with the ideals and life of the church in the New Testament could hardly do other than give rise to doubts. The need for reform had been felt throughout the fifteenth century, but the study of Scripture gave to criticism a sharper edge. It is not surprising to find men like Erasmus and Colet espousing the cause of moral reformation. They desired to see abuses in the life of the church checked. They exposed the crude swindles practised at famous shrines. They aimed to restore a primitive purity in morals. In doctrine they did not see their way so clearly, but they could not rest satisfied with a decaying Scholasticism. No thought of overturning the established order was in their minds, but the questioning of many aspects of that order had begun. (Seebohm: The Oxford Reformers)

Luther carried the questioning to its final stage. In this man the learning of the Renaissance coalesced with a deep religious experience, and the result was a questioning of the traditional theology at its very foundations. The decisive moment was when Luther learned to understand the Epistle to the Romans, both intellectually and experimentally, in Evangelical terms. This did not mean a decisive doctrinal break with all other theologians and with the official dogmas of the church. In fact, Luther had no more thought of a breach with the church than had the scholars of the Renaissance. It did mean, however, that the scholastic system was called in question. Luther did not throw off Scholasticism in a moment. But he had found a theology, a Biblical theology, to which the whole system of mediaeval theology was opposed both in spirit and in method - we might also add, in results. As Luther developed his Evangelical thinking, and tested established doctrines by the Scriptures, a conflict with Scholastic theology became inevitable.

The questioning was not carried to that further point (which many Roman Catholics regard as the logical end of Protestantism) at which the Scriptural basis is also called in question. There were of course libertines at the period of the Reformation, and some Anabaptists cast off the Scripture in favour of a direct inward illumination, but these played no very important part in the liberation of thought. The Scriptural basis remained unassailed. But as the errors in
thought and practice of the mediaeval church were exposed, the authority of the church and of tradition could not escape. The church was seen to be by no means free either from error or corruptions. Traditions might be good, but they might also be evil, and in any case the binding authority of Scripture could not be ascribed to them. The Reformation was a movement of revolt, but it was also a movement of return. It aimed to liberate life and thought from an alien and usurped rule, the rule of the church, and to restore the original and authoritative rule, the rule of Scripture. At every point where the usurping power had established itself, in theology, in church government, in morals, in ecclesiastical practice, in ceremonies, it was necessary to consider everything afresh in the light of Scripture.

It cannot be pretended, of course, that the Reformers themselves always approached Scripture with clear and unprejudiced eyes. Like ourselves, they belonged to a definite age and tradition. In many respects Luther and Calvin, for example, were very much children of the later Nominalism. They could never entirely throw off the influence of their upbringing. They tended to interpret Scripture in accordance with later thought and practice. All this may be granted, and yet the main point remains, that the Reformers were in revolt against acknowledged standards, and that they aimed to restore Scriptural standards. By their revolt they effected a liberation which for good or evil has changed the course of intellectual history.

The particular place of the Bible in the Reformation scheme has already been mentioned, but it needs to be stressed again. From the theological standpoint it was the concurrence of the new stress on Scripture with the rediscovery in experience and in exposition of the Scriptural doctrine of justification which made possible and indeed initiated the Reformation revolt. The Reformers had an original text — or at least a fair approach to the original. They had a purified Latin version. They were able when necessary to challenge the authority of the official Vulgate. They could appeal against translations which buttressed questionable doctrines or practices: the stock example is ‘penance’ for penitence or repentance. The church's mastery of the letter of Scripture was thus broken. But more than that, the Reformers could oppose to the awe-inspiring authority of a supernatural church and agelong tradition an authority less immediately awe-inspiring perhaps, but ultimately more clear-cut and decisive (variations in exposition notwithstanding), the authority of the Word of God written. Scripture was for the Reformers a divinely given rule or standard by which all things were to be measured, a court of appeal before which all ecclesiastical authorities must bow.

The Reformers did not only have an intellectual estimate of the Bible. They also had in experience a knowledge of its
Evangelical truth. For that reason the doctrine of justification formed the central doctrinal point at issue. Luther was led to see the error in the doctrine of indulgences - as opposed to its abuse in practice - because his own experience had led him to the Scriptural truth of free justification by faith. This truth was given to him through Scripture, and confirmed as it was by his own spiritual experience it opened his eyes to all Scriptural truth. For Luther justification was the decisive question. Other points of doctrine had their importance, but at this point the battle was joined and at this point it would be decided. If the Roman teaching with regard to justification were right, then its teaching with regard to the sacraments, the priesthood, purgatory, indulgences could also be accepted. But if that teaching were wrong, if it could be demonstrated wrong both from Scripture and from experience, then the whole accepted system of doctrine would collapse.

Perhaps the greatness of Luther from the Reformed standpoint is that he was able in this way to join battle at a decisive point. There had been critics of the church's teaching before. Transubstantiation had not been accepted willingly, and was constantly opposed. Abuses in ecclesiastical practice had always called for censure. Superstitious beliefs had been criticised. But the earlier Reformers were never able to break right through as Luther did. The appeal to Scripture had been made, but never had a full Evangelical theology been opposed to the ecclesiastical system, with a living spiritual appeal. Wycliffe, for example, had made very serious attacks upon the belief and practice of the church. He had held the principle that Scripture is the rule of faith and order, and he had opposed dogmas which the Reformers were later to overthrow. He was never able, however, to initiate that thorough-going doctrinal Reformation which Luther did when his heart and understanding were opened to the Scriptural teaching upon justification.

The Reformation was far more than a doctrinal revolution. It was also a political and economic movement. No serious student of the Reformation, however envious enthusiastic, can deny this more worldly aspect. Nor can it be denied that the Reformation in doctrine and morals was very largely made possible by the political and economic activities and policies of the secular leaders. The power of Luther was partly the power of the man himself, his experience, his personality, his courage. It was also partly the power of the resentment felt by the German princes and people against the exactions, the domination, the wealth and the corruption of the church in general and of the Roman see in particular. The German nation (in so far as it is proper to speak of a German nation at that time) was ready for Luther and his protest, not so much on religious and theological grounds, but on humanistic, political, social and patriotic grounds. Without the support of the princes, many of whom probably did have genuine religious convictions, it is difficult to see how the Reformation could have made its way.

These facts may be admitted, but the wrong deductions must
not be made. First, it must be remembered that the old ecclesiastical and political system - the position of the Papacy, the wealth and influence of the church - was intimately bound up with the old theology. Indulgences are a case in point. The theological doctrine of indulgences and the shady financial transactions which in the case of Albrecht of Mainz brought about the Theses crisis went hand in hand. It would be wrong to say that the doctrine was deliberately worked out to make these transactions possible. It would also be wrong to deny that financial and economic motives did influence the formulation and the defence of this and other doctrines. If the old structure formed a whole, it need occasion no surprise that Reformation theology and politics worked together to replace the old system by a new.

It is, however, quite fantastic to suggest that the theological side was entirely subordinate to the financial and economic. No doubt unscrupulous leaders did in many cases use the Reformers and their ideas to further their own ends. No doubt the theological movement might have failed without the support of such men. But obviously the Reformation was more than a political and economic revolution. Changes in ecclesiastical policy and in economic arrangements might well have been made without a complete break with Rome. There might have been the subjugation of the church to the state, legislation in respect of Papal taxes and other exactions, a dissolution of redundant monasteries. But this would not have been the Reformation. And the position could never have been securely established without the theological liberation. The truth is, not that there was no political or economic abuse of the Reformation, not that the Reformation itself was only an ecclesiastical reorganisation, with some consequent doctrinal changes, but that in the Reformation a whole way of life, with its political and economic organisation as well as its ethics and dogmatics, established itself in the place of the corrupted and in many respects outmoded way of life which Europe had followed during the Middle Ages.

For our immediate purpose it is necessary only to notice in a general way how the political revolution did positively affect the doctrinal movement. Of course, in lands which espoused the cause of reform, it made possible that comparative freedom of thought and speculation which was denied in countries dominated by the Papacy. This freedom must not be exaggerated, however, as the fate of Servetus and of many Anabaptists reminds us. The Reformers claimed liberty for the truth, not for human opinion. More than that, it raised again and sought to settle along new lines the vexed problems of church government and of the ministry. It brought to the fore matters of rite and ceremony, not as academic questions, but as practical issues which could now be dealt with in accordance with local conditions and Scriptural principles. The freeing of theology from the political power of Rome meant also the possibility of a positive work of theological reconstruction,
a work which was vitally necessary if a firm front was to be presented against Romanist teaching.

2. The Reformation in England

This relation of the political and doctrinal sides of the Reformation is particularly important in the case of England. In England the Reformation came first as a political breach with Rome. The story of the 'King's Matter' has been often told, although seldom without bias. Certainly more was at stake in that matter than the amorous adventures of a monarch, or even the establishment of a dynasty. The question became rapidly the old question of English history, whether the King or the Pope was to have the final say. The war had gone on, now openly, now secretly, now with success for the one party, now for the other, from the time of the Conquest. The 'King's Matter' was destined to bring the issue to a head once and for all.

When Henry renounced the authority of the Pope and initiated the series of sweeping anti-Papal enactments, he may perhaps have been encouraged by the examples of Lutheran princes, but he had certainly no thought of setting in train a reformation in doctrine. His aim was political. He wished to end an alien domination and to make himself thoroughly master in his own house. His aim was also to some extent economic. He was determined to stop the ruinous drain of English money to Rome, and to lighten the enormous treasure-chests of the church and the monastic orders. Henry was an autocrat who could brook no opposition. He was also something of a spendthrift, although apart from his own need of money he realised how dangerous it was for the country that so much wealth should be diverted to Rome, and that the church in one way and another should control so large a proportion of the country's economic and financial resources (See O.A. Marti The Economic Causes of the Reformation in England). The failure of the Pope, for political reasons, to grant him annulment of the marriage with Catherine was Henry's opportunity to renounce the Papal supremacy, to cut off the Papal revenues, and to dissolve the monasteries. There is convincing proof that in the spoiling of the Papacy, if not of the monasteries, he had the solid support of a large part of the nation, especially amongst the nobles and the Middle classes.

Henry himself had no wish to make any doctrinal changes, at any rate of a major character. He and his advisers seem to have thought it quite possible to set up an autonomous national church within the general Roman communion. Henry, it will be remembered, had won the title Defensor Fidei as an active opponent of the heretic Luther, and the reply of Luther was not calculated to change his opinion. As early as 1520 steps were taken to prevent the spread of Lutheran views, Wolsey setting up a Commission in that year (Strype E.M.T p.57). Lutheranism did, of course, find exponents at the Universities, especially at Cambridge, where Bilney was an early and zealous
champion. The authorities, however, remained hostile, and it was fashionable to condemn the new theology in academic exercises. In 1524 Latimer attacked Melanchthon in his B.D. thesis. Not a few of the Lutherans were martyred, including Bilney himself, who succeeded however in winning over Latimer. Others were forced to withdraw, like Barnes, who had preached an outspoken sermon in 1526. Tyndale met with persistent opposition when he attempted to put the Bible into English, and he had to do his work abroad, continually harassed by episcopal persecution. He had been condemned by Tonstal as a Lutheran in 1526.

There were of course many who desired renovation. Wolsey took steps to close the smaller and less useful monastic houses. The humanists, especially Colet, had castigated such abuses as non-residence, simony, and even pilgrimages and relics. At the same time it must be borne in mind that many of those who most actively sought renovation were the most zealous opponents of the doctrinal reforms of Luther. Fisher, who refuted Luther's teachings, and More, who wrote against Tyndale are the outstanding examples. In 1529 an index of prohibited books was published, and in 1530, at a time when the Lutheran princes might have expected and perhaps welcomed some alliance with England, the Augsburg Confession was rejected. The Six Articles of 1539 were not merely a reversal in pique of a policy of which Henry really approved - except that it had given him an unwanted wife. They were a return to the true convictions of Henry himself. Stephen Gardiner was never able to command the affections of the King as was the more Lutheran Cranmer, but without doubt he understood far better the policy which Henry was seeking to pursue so far as political exigencies would allow. His ascendancy during the latter part of the reign was due to that understanding, coupled as it was with an unrivalled ability in affairs.

The picture has another side. The point has been made before and will bear repetition, that ecclesiastical structure and policy cannot ultimately be separated from doctrine. On the face of it Henry only renounced the Papal authority when the breach came. In actual fact he was compelled to do more. Even so devoted a Catholic as Henry could not avoid a certain amount of doctrinal change when he parted ecclesiastically from Rome. In the first place, Henry's whole case for the putting away of Catherine rested upon an appeal to Scripture against the dispensing power of the Pope. The contention was that not even the Pope had the power to dispense against a positive Scriptural injunction, and that the dispensation to wed his brother's wife Catherine was therefore null and void. This was not important in itself, but it opened the way for more important things. In his anxiety to discredit the Papacy Henry was also willing to expose and to repudiate many of the money-raising devices at the shrines, and in the Injunctions under Cromwell (1536 and 1538) the exposure of swindles and destruction of shrines were enjoined. Henry's policy also committed him to an attack upon the cult of Becket, and upon pilgrimages in
general, and to the breaking of the power of the monks.

International complications also opened the way for doctrinal movements. Around 1535 Henry found it necessary to consider making common cause with the Lutherans, a project much fancied by Cromwell. The Lutherans were adamant that Henry should declare himself a Protestant, and Fox of Hereford and Heath were despatched to Wittenberg to consider what approximations might be made to the Augsburg Confession. The Lutherans submitted Thirteen Articles. In 1536 Taverner was able to publish an English translation of the Augsburg Confession, and in the same year the Anglicans adopted the mediating Ten Articles. Two German divines visited England, and Henry invited Melanchthon, of whom he had formed a high opinion. Melanchthon prudently declined the invitation. During the period of these negotiations Cranmer was able to secure the translation and official setting up of the Bible. The Act of 1539 put an end to these cautious movements of reform, but for a time teaching of a Reformed tendency had enjoyed a certain degree of favour, and the Bible remained. It must also be noticed that an increasing number of scholars was now beginning to desire as decisive a break in theology as in ecclesiastical government.

Already under Henry two main parties had emerged in the English church. The first, headed by the Archbishop, aimed at a fairly full measure of reformation, for the most part along Lutheran lines. Later of course Cranmer was to favour the Reformed rather than the Lutheran policy, at any rate in doctrinal matters. The evidence with regard to Cranmer's early relation to Lutheranism is rather confused, largely because it cannot be proved that Cranmer ever adopted the Lutheran view of the Supper. In all essential points, however, justification, Scripture, ecclesiastical government, liturgy, there can be little doubt that his views were strongly Lutheran. On the other hand there was the party headed by Stephen Gardiner and supported by Heath and Bonner. Gardiner was later to return to a full acceptance of the Roman position, but during the reign of Henry he attempted to combine the traditional doctrine with a championship of the Royal Supremacy. Behind his thought there was no doubt the idea of a church in full communion with Rome, but enjoying national liberties and privileges.

Cranmer and his supporters had their chance during the short period when Thomas Cromwell conducted affairs. They were helped by the latter's strong if unprincipled championship of reform in his capacity of Vicar-General. The story of the progress made is old and well-covered ground, and may be recapitulated briefly. The Injunctions were first published in 1536, some of them having a doctrinal inference. The Ten Articles appeared in 1536. These showed a slight movement away from Rome and some influence of the Augsburg Confession. An important Convocation was held in this year, in which Cranmer had the support of Goodrich, Shaxton, Fox, Latimer, Hilsey and Barlow. The Scot Alesius gave an address upon the number
of the sacraments. The strongly conservative Lower House sent a catalogue of errors in which were listed several Lutheran opinions. In this year too Coverdale published a translation of Luther's exposition of the Twenty-Second Psalm. The year saw the publication of the so-called Bishops' Book, conservative at many points, but with distinct traces of Lutheran influence, especially in the doctrine of justification. The recognition of Coverdale's translation of Scripture was a big step forward, followed in 1538 by the placing of the Great Bible in the parish churches. Scripture, the rule of faith, was thus made available to all in the national tongue. A further discussion upon the number of the sacraments took place in Convocation. In 1538-9 a collection of Goostly Psalmes was issued, but these fell quickly under the ban of 1539. The drafted Thirteen Articles of 1539, which came too late for official adoption, give clear indication of the way in which Cranmer and his associates hoped to move.

The ground gained was largely lost when Cromwell fell. Henry forced through the Six Articles, in spite of prolonged and courageous opposition on the part of Cranmer. The Reforming party came under a cloud. Barnes was martyred. Latimer resigned his see and spent some time in the Tower. Attempts were made upon the Archbishop himself, but these were frustrated by the King, who seems to have had a genuine personal affection for the gentle and learned primate. The strange persecution which followed the passing of the 1539 Articles - strange because it was aimed both at extreme Romanists and at Protestants - did not last any length of time. In the closing years of the reign Cranmer was even able to make a few cautious steps forward. The Bishops' Book was issued in amended form, as the King's Book. Some have described this as more Romanist - and in some respects it was - but in a few points it was perhaps more Protestant. The attempts made by Gardiner to institute a revision of the English version of Scripture, with the aim of killing the translation altogether, were foiled. Cranmer began his notable liturgical work when he issued the English Litany in 1544. It is noteworthy that in this same year there was renewed diplomatic contact with the Lutherans.

As long as Henry lived the possibilities of doctrinal advance were strictly limited. The Defensor Pidei, intractable in his political and financial opposition to Rome, would not countenance any widespread doctrinal change. This point must be remembered when the official formularies of the period are consulted as evidence of the doctrinal beliefs of the Anglican Reformers. In any case Cranmer himself seems only to have been feeling his way during this period. It is useless to deny that he was to a large extent under Lutheran influence. He had an early understanding of the main principles of justification by faith. He regarded Scripture translation as a necessary work. He knew and appreciated the ecclesiastical and
liturgical work of the Lutherans. His residence in Germany and connection with Osiander cannot be dismissed as unimportant. But it must not be presumed that Cranmer had committed himself at once to a full programme of reform. Cranmer was a scholar rather than a man of action. He moved with the caution of a scholar. Doctrines had to be sifted before they could be accepted and proclaimed. That is why Cranmer seems to have hesitated so long to abandon the central doctrine of Transubstantiation. It needed the impetus of the more robust Ridley to push him over from the Roman teaching, not to the impossible Lutheran view, but to the Reformed interpretation. Cranmer could probably see little advantage in Consubstantiation, and he shrank from the bare symbolism which seemed to be advocated by the Zwinglians. Only when he came to the spiritual view, in which there was ample allowance for the strong teaching of Scripture and the bold and imaginative language of the Fathers was he ready to take a stand at this point.

The slowness of the doctrinal revolt under Henry was perhaps unfortunate from one point of view. It meant a subjugation of doctrine to the civil power. In Saxony the Elector had often found it necessary to restrain Luther for reasons of policy, but doctrinally Luther had always been the master and the Elector the pupil. In England it was the royal theologian who was the master. Henry was willing to defer to Cranmer's learning, but he would allow no man to change or mould his opinions. This doctrinal Erastianism was always to be a drag upon the reforming movement in England, under Elizabeth for example, and especially under James, who played so large a part in theological discussion. From another point of view, however, the slowness was valuable. Had the way been open for a full-scale doctrinal revolution in the thirties, it would almost certainly have been Lutheran in character, and a serious battle between Lutheran and Reformed views might well have developed later in the century. The period of waiting enabled Anglican scholars and leaders to consider the issues in the light of Reformed as well as Lutheran teaching.

At any rate, little progress had been made when Henry died in 1547. The accession of the young Edward gave the Reformers their great chance, and enabled them to quicken the pace of doctrinal and liturgical reform, so as to bring it into line with ecclesiastical and economic change. Edward himself was precocious. He had tutors of pronounced anti-Roman views, notably the illustrious Cheke, and as far as the evidence goes seems to have been a sincere exponent of Reformed teaching. The members of the Council were mixed. The majority, led first by Somerset, later by Northumberland, championed the cause of reform, but not always for the best of motives. Even after the dissolution of the monasteries the church still retained great wealth. With no effective ruler, the great nobles were able to do the work of spoliation unchecked. The Chantry Act of 1543 carried forward the plundering of the church, and very little of the money acquired found its way into the educational and charitable
channels marked out for it by Cranmer and the young King. Sincere Christians must deplore the fact, but historically it was to a large extent this rapacity of the nobles which made possible the considerable work of reform accomplished during the reign.

The distinctive Roman ornaments were removed from the churches. A Communion Order was introduced to replace the Mass. The First Book of Common Prayer quickly followed. This book proved unsatisfactory, since it left too many loopholes for Romanisers like Gardiner. The defects were remedied in the second book of 1552, the basis of all subsequent revisions, which in its brief period of use ran through several editions. Men of repute were brought in from abroad to teach in the Universities, Bucer, Fagius and Peter Martyr. Hospitable treatment was accorded foreign refugees like John a Lasco. A strongly Lutheran Catechism had been issued in 1548, with the Archbishop's approval. This work, commonly called Cranmer's Catechism, is a translation of the Latin catechism of Justus Jonas, and seems to be an expansion of Luther's smaller catechism. Doctrinally, an important event was the duel between Cranmer and Gardiner upon the 'Sacrament of the Altar'. Cranmer now urged with all his skill and learning a view not very far removed from that of Calvin. A beginning was also made with a more comprehensive formulation of Anglican doctrine in the 42 Articles, which were the basis of the final authoritative statement of Elizabeth's reign.

The Edwardian period was one of tremendous doctrinal and liturgical activity, and all the main features of the later settlement may be discerned in the achievements of the reign. Had Edward lived it is possible that a more radical work would have been done than that which was eventually accomplished under Elizabeth. This is not certain however. If there were forces making for more ruthless change, Knox and Hooper for example, Cranmer himself seems to have been aiming at a compromise. In doctrine he had become a convinced adherent of the main Reformed teachings. In ecclesiastical organisation, however, he wished to retain as much of the old as possible. He regarded the threefold order of the ministry as apostolic and meet for good government. Liturgically, he was a purifier rather than an innovator. He could appreciate the great work of the past. He aimed to combine loyalty to Scripture with loyalty to traditional forms. In this respect he followed Luther. In his views upon the relation of church and state Cranmer was also in the Lutheran tradition. He accepted the royal headship of the church out of conviction rather than convenience. It has been suggested, perhaps fancifully, that the conflict of loyalties, to the truth and to the Queen, was the cause of the humiliation of the Recantations. Certainly his unwillingness to support the claim of the Lady Jane derived from his scruple to set aside the will of Henry.

It may be said then that Cranmer gave to the Church of
England a Reformed doctrine and a liturgy and government largely Lutheran. This point is very important, for Cranmer's work was accepted as the basis of the later settlement. Two tensions resulted: a tension between the doctrinal profession and the liturgical practice, the Articles and the Prayer Book - often more apparent than real; and a tension between doctrinal profession and ecclesiastical polity. These tensions have produced almost all the conflicts which the Church of England has experienced, from Puritanism, which as it were appealed to the Articles against the Prayer Book and Church government, to the Oxford Movement, which reversed the process and sought to interpret the Articles by the Prayer Book. There can be no real doubt what the Reformers themselves had in mind. Doctrinal reform was the all-important thing. Liturgy and church government could not be regarded as adiaphora, but they were subsidiary matters, which could be settled largely in the light of practical needs and past experience, so long as there was no conflict with Scripture. The Puritans could not conform because they would not concede this distinction, although in all major doctrines they were at one with the Anglicans. Later schools of thought have surely erred in taking the practice as a main clue to the meaning of the doctrinal formulation.

The untimely if not unanticipated death of Edward brought the second stage of the English Reformation to a speedy end. Doctrinally, however, maturity had already been reached when Mary came to the throne. The days of mediation had passed, for Gardiner, Heath and Bonner had returned to a full Romanism. Tactically, the Marian persecution was a mistake, but strategically there was no alternative. For a sincere Romanist like Mary it had to be all or nothing. Mary chose a full restoration (except in respect of alienated church property), and she attempted to destroy the new teaching by force. In so far as she achieved any result at all, it was to drive the new Anglicanism, doctrinally, more and more into the Reformed camp. Of course the masses of the people had as yet been little affected by the new teaching, except in London and the South-East, where the merchant-classes were strong and there was closer contact with the Continent. The restoration of Romanism undoubtedly had come as a relief to many, who had not yet grown to know and to love the masterly phrasing of the revised Liturgy. But even amongst the people the way was prepared for that great revulsion of feeling which was to be the foundation upon which Puritanism built, and the source of the widespread and deep-rooted English detestation of Popery.

The effect of Mary's repressive policy was especially powerful upon the intellectual supporters of Reform. The Marian exiles found refuge in Europe, mainly in Frankfurt, Strassburg, Zurich and Geneva. Many of them welcomed this opportunity of jettisoning the past altogether, and reforming the church after the pure and Scriptural example of Calvin. Those who remained loyal to the 1552 Prayer Book shared the admiration for Genevan
doctrine. The quarrel between Cox and Jewel on the one side
and Whittingham and Knox on the other, a quarrel which shattered
the harmony of the church in Frankfurt and gained for the exiles
a bad name in the city, was not a doctrinal quarrel. Even later,
when Cartwright and Whitgift were engaged in their great battle,
only minute doctrinal points divided the two protagonists. This
is a matter of great importance, for it means that as against
Romanist or semi-Romanist teaching the Anglican Reformers main­
tained a solid front in all substantial points. The contention
of Tract 90, still favoured in some circles, has no obvious
support in the writings of those who framed and supported the
Articles.

The Elizabethan Settlement added little or nothing to the
doctrinal Reformation, except that the Articles themselves were
amended, approved by Convocation, and finally in 1571, much
against the will of the Queen, ratified by Parliament. The
struggle now shifted away from the doctrinal field, where the
victory had already been won. The Puritans now made their great
effort to carry the Reformation further, reconstructing liturgy
and government as doctrine had been reconstructed. The church
history of Elizabeth's reign is largely the story of the battle
between the Puritans (and the Separatists who went even further)
and those who favoured the Edwardian scheme. The moderate Parker,
and later Whitgift and Bancroft were the champions of Anglican orth
odoxy. Elizabeth herself however was probably the main bulwark,
although she was careful to do her work entirely through the
bishops. She feared Calvinism because it invaded the Royal
prerogative, practically as well as theoretically. She had
no wish to see a thorough reform of the liturgy, perhaps out
of personal preference, perhaps because a show of Catholicism
could on occasion help forward her diplomatic schemes. The Gen-
evan way of life was in any case too exacting for her. From the
standpoint of domestic policy it was wiser to conciliate the
strong Romanist element in the country by compromise than to
alienate them by an open adoption of Genevan Protestantism.
Whatever Elizabeth's private opinions were, and they can hardly
have favoured a militant Protestantism, she opposed the expedi-
ency of statesmanship to the Puritan boldness of principle.
Physically the victory lay for the time being with the orthodox
group, but the final result was the shattering of the unity of
the church.

3. The Main Doctrines of the English Reformation

It has been said that the doctrinal battle had been won when
Elizabeth reversed the policy of her predecessor. It has also
been stated that the doctrinal reconstruction eventually took
Reformed rather than Lutheran lines. The more detailed ques-
tion must be asked: What exactly was the scope of this doctrinal
Reformation in England? In brief it may be summarised as a
replacement of the ecclesiastical and sacramental conception of the
Christian faith by a Scriptural and evangelical.
The key-point, in England as elsewhere, was the exalting of the authority of the Bible over against that of the church. The importance of Scripture for the Reformers may be gauged from the anxiety to put the Bible into English and to ensure its regular and systematic reading in the daily services of the church. The Anglicans were more cautious, perhaps, than some of the Continentals in their interpretation of Scripture, although the freedom of the latter must not be exaggerated. Cranmer set the fashion by enlisting so far as he could the support of the Fathers, but of course the early Luther had shewed a great and even excessive deference to authority, and Calvin was always pleased to refer to the Fathers. At any rate, a real value was set upon past exposition, although not to the point at which the Fathers became equally authoritative with the Bible itself. The Bible was the supreme court of appeal, if necessary against church, tradition and Fathers. The Scriptures contained everything necessary for salvation. Anything contrary to the Bible was erroneous. Anything not contained in the Bible was in the last resort superfluous. The Anglican position is plainly although not too rigidly stated in Article 6, and finds ample illustration in the teaching of the leading Reformers. As against the Puritans the Bible was not regarded as normative in matters of church organisation or ceremonial, but Puritan and Anglican alike accepted its full and final authority in all doctrinal and ethical matters.

A theology based upon Scripture meant an evangelical theology. Thus the doctrine of free justification by faith came to hold a supreme place in the thinking of the Anglicans. At this point all the Reformers were substantially agreed. Under Lutheran influences the doctrine of justification was one of the first of the Protestant doctrines to be held and expounded in England. It formed the theme of much literary work, both unofficial and official (in the great Homily of Salvation). The framers of the Articles were at great pains to make the position clear, marking off the pure doctrine from accretions and distortions. The exposition of this doctrine is not our present task, but it may be noticed that the struggle for a true doctrine of justification was threefold. Intellectually, it was a struggle against Scholastic subtleties; ecclesiastically, a rebellion against the yoke of indulgences, penances and purgatory; ethically, an abandonment of legalism in favour of a life of liberty, inspired and energised by faith. The assertion of the evangelical doctrine of justification meant necessarily the overthrow of the older scheme. That is why Cranmer and Gardiner, although originally agreed upon the need for Anglican autonomy, could never be anything but deadly enemies theologically. That is why Gardiner himself eventually abandoned even the idea of Anglican autonomy rather than see the whole structure topple. Compromise in this struggle was not a practical possibility.

The sacramental question was bound to be a foremost issue. Practically, separation from Rome meant, from the Roman standpoint, a partial invalidation of sacramental acts now performed
by schismatic priests. Of the proper performance of these acts: baptism, the Mass and penance was essential to salvation, a real problem arose. In point of fact this practical difficulty was not greatly felt by the Reformers because on other grounds they were led to question the sacramental system and its underlying assumptions. The teaching of justification by faith upon the merits of the work of Christ exalted Jesus Christ and individual faith. It depreciated the sacraments, or better, gave to them again their proper place and function as means of grace complementary to the written Word. The sacraments themselves - or at any rate the two Dominical sacraments - were not called in question, and their value was not denied. But the nature and necessity of the sacraments became matters seriously contested.

The battle centred naturally upon the Sacrament of the Altar. It was here that the the traditional Romanist teaching was seen to be most obviously contrary to the teaching of Scripture. The communion had been replaced by a mass. A dogma of transubstantiation had been elaborated which had no support in Scripture or antiquity, which unduly exalted the status of the priest, and which gave rise to all kinds of superstitious and even gross customs and beliefs. A doctrine of the propitiatory value of the sacrifice of the mass had been evolved which seemed to reflect upon the sole-sufficiency of the death of the Christ and the efficaciousness of saving faith. In the eyes of the Reformers the sacred act of Eucharist had become an abominable idolatry, a source of superstition, and an obstacle to evangelical faith. It is just possible, as some scholars urge, that the main wrath of the Reformers was directed against crude popular misconceptions and abuses rather than against the doctrine properly stated. On the other hand, when so eminent a man as Gardiner took up the cudgels on behalf of the traditional faith, he was mercilessly attacked by Cranmer and Gardiner. The Anglican Articles and the Canons of Trent are also diametrically opposed to each other.

A further reason why attention naturally centred upon the Supper was that this was the one leading issue upon which the Reformers themselves were divided. Luther and Zwingli agreed in rejecting transubstantiation, but Luther clung obstinately to a 'substantial' presence of Christ, taking his stand upon the text 'This is my body', of which he would only allow a literal interpretation. The Marburg Colloquy foundered on that rock. Even the persistent and subtle attempts of Bucer to achieve a harmonising formula (See Anrich:Martin Bucer) never met with more than temporary success. Calvin was able to unite the non-Lutheran bodies, and it is possible that had Luther lived he might even have been successful in coming to terms with Luther himself. The whole question aroused considerable agitation in the Reforming camp. The Anglicans, once they were persuaded that the old doctrine was wrong, were compelled to devote a good deal of attention to the problem. At no point
did the Reformation thinkers have greater difficulty in establishing to their own satisfaction a clear evangelical doctrine fully in harmony with the teaching of Scripture. The comparative slowness of the development of doctrine in England meant that serious controversy between the Reformation groups upon the Supper was avoided, and that the teaching of the Calvinistic type became quickly established. The working out and propagating of a correct view was, however, a matter of urgent concern.

4. The Doctrine of Baptism and the Anglican Reformation

It must be admitted that in sacramental theology the Supper attracted the greater notice. That does not mean that the Reformers were not interested in the other great sacrament of the Gospel, Holy Baptism. The impression had sometimes been left that the Reformers largely neglected this aspect of theology, and took over the Romanist view with very little change. A comparison of the language of the Baptismal Service in the Prayer Book with that of the Roman offices will reveal many points of contact. But Cranmer, like Luther, wished to preserve what was valuable in the old liturgies. Similarities are therefore to be expected. They are not necessarily an argument in favour of the view that the Reformers failed to do their work in this field. Naturally at some points they had good reason to abandon either the Roman liturgical form or the Roman teaching. They were not Reformers merely for the sake of change. A doctrine was not necessarily erroneous because it had been taught by the schoolmen. Even if controversy heightened the points of difference, which were fundamental enough, there might still be agreement in other and even in important matters.

In point of fact the baptismal question was forced upon the Reformers both in England and abroad. They had no choice but to think out the theological questions involved. There were three main reasons why this was so. The first was general. The fixing of a true doctrine of the sacraments, and of the Supper in particular, involved necessarily some study of the sacrament of baptism. This emerges clearly in Cranmer's 'True and Catholic Doctrine of the Lord's Supper', in which he illustrated his points from the doctrine of baptism (Cranmer Parker Society I p.64). In principle the two sacraments were the same. They differed of course in nature and application. Each had been appointed for its specific purpose. But as sacraments they corresponded closely the one to the other. To judge from the frequency with which Cranmer appealed to the doctrine of baptism it might almost be supposed that he came truly to understand the Supper in the light of the primary sacrament. But this very fact is proof that attention had to be and was paid to baptism.

A second and more particular reason was that baptism, as the sacrament of remission and regeneration, was very closely connected with the doctrine of justification. Luther's famous sermon upon baptism proves conclusively that the consideration of the Pauline doctrine of justification led naturally to a new study and a deeper understanding of baptism. In the light of that sermon it would be idle to pretend that the Reformers
meekly accepted traditional teaching here while boldly reconstructing at almost every other point. The great doctrines of justification and saving faith are necessarily and intimately bound up with the doctrine of baptism. It is no accident that Romans 6 forms an integral part of the Epistle of Justification. So too. it is no accident that baptismal teaching occupies a high place in the dogmatic reconstruction of the Reformers.

In England the thought of Luther's sermon on baptism was reproduced very closely in the Sermon of Baptism of Cranmer's Catechism (pp.181 f.). Numerous other passages of a similar nature could be cited to show that the Anglicans too saw the relationship between baptism and justification. Indeed they could hardly avoid this. Stephen Gardiner asked directly and bluntly why there was all this fuss about justification. For his part he believed that all were justified 'in the sacrament of baptism before they could talke of this justification we strive for' (Letters p. 407). The radical incompatibility of evangelical and sacramentalist conceptions emerges clearly at this point. Winchester's argument shows how impossible it was for the Reformers to accept the traditional teaching. In a sense a compromise was possible. Gardiner can hardly have meant by justification more than the remission of original and of pre-baptismal sin. The Reformers too believed that original sin was forgiven in baptism, at any rate to the elect. But for them justification was something far more. It was this new understanding of justification, with the new emphasis upon faith, which carried with it the new understanding of the sacrament and of its nature and value. Obviously mechanical theories of baptismal grace could have no place if salvation were a free gift of God appropriated by individual faith. A study of the bearing of the doctrine of justification upon current theories of baptismal grace could not be escaped. The rejection of a general sacramentalist scheme necessitated a revision at many points of the teaching upon baptism.

The question pressed even more acutely than that. Anabaptism formed a third reason why the doctrine of baptism had to be studied diligently and carefully. Anabaptism, sometimes described as the left wing of the Reformation, carried the Protestant revision to its farthest extreme. It rejected sacramentalism in toto. The sacrament was for the Anabaptists no more than a beggarly symbol (Muralt p.35 & p.40). Baptism was a sign of conversion and of the new birth which could only follow upon personal confession. It is not our business at the moment to discuss or to state the Anabaptist teaching in detail. It is our business, however, to point out that the Reformers were confronted with this challenge, and that they had to reckon seriously with it both for theological and for practical reasons. In Wittenberg the Zwickau prophets threatened to carry all before them before the return of Luther (Kidd D.C.R.pp.94ff.). In Zurich, where the Anabaptism was of a purer type, Zwingli himself was a friend of Manz and Grebel, and for a time seems to have sympathised with their views (Muralt p.7 f. & Kidd D.C.R.pp.450 f.).
Now it could be argued with great plausibility that the real reason why the Reformers opposed Anabaptism was that they feared the political and social radicalism of the movement rather than its theology, especially after the terrible experiences of the Peasants' War and the Munster disaster. Obviously men like Muntzer and John of Leyden were dangerous and fanatical demagogues. But even the peaceloving Grebel, Hubmaier and Simons presented a challenge to society. They would have nothing to do with the social order. They renounced the idea of a State church. They preached a Christianity of withdrawal. When Luther drove the prophets from Wittenberg and Zwingli persecuted his former friends in Zurich, they were using their influence on behalf of the State church and the established order against what were to them dangerous and subversive opinions.

All this may be admitted. It is another illustration of the inevitable interdependence of political thought and action and religious. It would be wrong to conclude that the Reformers evaded the theological problem of Anabaptism. Many of them were at first undecided - Bucer at Strassburg is another example (Anrich pp.33 f.). Defence of the State church did involve the defence of infant baptism. But it would be quite unfair to say that the Reformers closed their eyes to the light shed by the more honest Anabaptists and deliberately invented a defence of infant baptism. The extent to which the thought of any man is affected by considerations of self-interest is difficult to decide, but the Reformers generally were theologians enough to examine any teaching, not without bias, but without unreasonable bias. They devoted considerable time and labour to a study and refutation of Anabaptism on grounds of Scripture and theology. The general point is clear enough, that if baptism was not a leading issue of the time, in the light of the Anabaptist attack it could not fail to be an issue of importance.

It ought to be noticed that Anabaptism never assumed serious proportions in England during this time. It was confined almost exclusively to the Eastern counties, and persons convicted of the error were for the most part Dutch or German. The first attack upon them seems to have taken place in 1534, when after the Munster tragedy a proclamation was issued (Smith: The Anabaptists p.192). In the following year quite a number were arraigned, all Dutch, and some were executed, some pardoned (Foxe 5sp.44). A commission was appointed to root them out in 1538, and their books were banned in the Injunctions of the following year (Smith). Joan Boucher professed one of the common Anabaptist opinions, that Christ did not take flesh from the Virgin Mary. It is worth bearing in mind that the Anabaptists were suspected because of their unorthodox views upon the Incarnation and original sin.

During the reign of Edward, Ridley and Latimer were sent to Kent to deal with further Dutch Anabaptists (Smith), and a few English adherents appeared, notably the courtier Robert Cooke, who denied both baptism and original sin (Strype Cranmer 2 p.96),
and Michael Thombe, who boldly asserted that 'the baptism of infants is not profitable because it goeth without faith' (Strype E.M. 2.1 p.111). Many works were published against the Anabaptists at this time, mostly translations, as Bullinger's Holsome Antidotes, Calvin's Shorte Instruction and Turner's Preservative. Philpot's defence of infant baptism in a letter to a friend in Newgate points to the fact that Anabaptism had been at work, and some of the professors under Mary probably possibly held these views. The framers of the 42 articles were at great pains to refute Anabaptism, both theologically and politically. It was believed that the Papists sent Anabaptist emissaries to stir up dissension (Strype E.M. 2.1 p.19).

The proclamation against the Anabaptists was revived in 1560 (Burrage E.E.D.I pp41f.), and in 1562 a few more were expelled. The numbers must have been small, for in 1657 Jewel could deny that there were any Anabaptists in England (Burrage E.E.D.I pp.41f.). A fresh batch of thirty foreigners was seized in 1575, and in spite of the protests of Foxe the martyrrologist, a few were executed. Strype reports that around 1574 there was a great growth of Famism in certain parts (Strype Ann.2.1 p.556). Some of the clergy, including a certain Robert Sharp, were infected. The real numbers cannot have been very large in proportion to the whole population, and such Anabaptists and Famists as there were were mainly of foreign extraction.

At an earlier time it was often thought that some of the Separatists were Anabaptists, but as Burrage has shown (E.E.D.I pp.82-3 & 126-7) this was not the case. In ecclesiastical theory they shared to some extent Anabaptist views, but they did not refuse to accept infant baptism. The error arose through their refusal to allow that Anglican baptism was lawful - quite another matter. Similar cases had occurred during the Marian period. The Protestant Richard Woodman, for example, did not wish his child to be baptised in the Roman fashion. He had no objection to infant baptism as such - indeed he had arranged for a private baptism of his child during his absence from home. But he could not conscientiously consent to the idolatrous baptism at the parish church (See Foxe 3 pp351 f.). The Separatists held similar views with regard to Anglican baptism, and as far as possible arranged for baptism by their own pastors. It was only natural that they should be suspected of Anabaptism, as the famous case of Widow Unyon shows. That they had certain affinities with and tendencies towards Anabaptism is shown by the fact that one section of Separatists exiled in Holland attached itself to the Waterlanders (Burrage E.E.D.I p.155). The evidence does not warrant, however, an assumption of general doctrinal identity.

The term Anabaptist was very loosely used in sixteenth century controversy, being applied by Whitgift even to the Puritan Cartwright. Cartwright had disputed the validity of baptism administered by non-preaching ministers: 'the which questions', Whitgift argued, 'spring out of the school of the anabaptistes, and tend to the rebaptisation of all, or the most part of those that this day are living' (Whit.P.S.3 p.576). Anabaptist was in fact a term of abuse, calculated to bring a
thinker into disrepute. It conjured up visions of social and religious heretics engaged in subversive propaganda and activity. What the Christian was no doubt in Roman society, and what the Communist is today in many countries, the Anabaptist was in sixteenth century Europe, both Romanist and Protestant. Any person who adopted an unorthodox opinion ran the risk of acquiring the feared and hated name.

All the evidence suggests that the real number of Anabaptists in England, especially native Anabaptists, was extremely small. This does not mean, however, that the Anglican Reformers could neglect Anabaptist teaching. So radical and dangerous a departure from the orthodox could not pass unnoticed. The zealous protagonists of the new teaching constituted a permanent menace. Persecuted everywhere and by all parties (See Smith pp. 168 f. on the attitude of the Reformers abroad), they were watchful for every opportunity of gaining an entry. The arm of the State could be called in to check their activities, but a theological bulwark was also needed against their doctrines. The Reformers in England had no choice but to examine and refute the new doctrine. As writer after writer touched on the topic, little new could be added, but the whole question of the doctrine of baptism was brought to the fore.

The Reformers were bound to examine this doctrine of baptism, but were their conclusions sufficiently unanimous to make a unified study of their teaching possible and useful? Many complex and disputed questions are involved. A certain amount of minor disagreement is inevitable. Generally speaking, however, a cursory reading suggests that there was in fact a remarkable unanimity. Roman Catholic controversiasts have from time to time made great play with the variations of Protestant opinion as compared with the unity of Tridentine orthodoxy. Variations at some points must and may be admitted. But the fact remains that when the baptismal doctrine of the Anglican Reformers is studied it does form a definite theological whole. It forms a whole which may be related to the larger whole of the Reformed teaching without difficulty. It forms a whole which stands over against the Romanist whole in sharp and uncompromising hostility.

The Value of the Study

One final point of introduction might perhaps be briefly made. The historical setting and significance have been outlined. The general doctrinal development in England had been sketched. Reasons have been given to suggest the importance of the doctrine of baptism in Reformed theology. The general possibility of the study has been established. It ought then to be asked what is the value of a detailed historico-doctrinal investigation of this kind. There are never wanting those who assert that a concern for dead thought is largely a waste of time. The modern outlook has enlarged. New problems have arisen. In theology as in life new situations have to be faced for which the old solutions no longer suffice.
Many answers may be given. First, a study of this kind has the general merit of all history. It helps to a greater understanding of the past. It establishes the connection between the past and the present. It gives the stimulus which can never fail to be given by contact with the great minds of other ages, and especially of so important and formative an period as that of the Reformation. The field of investigation is restricted, but a large field of intellectual activity is opened up. Some of the controversies are perhaps petty and tiresome in detail, but high principles are always involved.

Second, the study has a direct bearing upon many problems of the present time. There are the more general problems which still remain, infant baptism, for example, or the question of indiscriminate baptism in a largely secular or 'post-Christian' society. Both of these matters were discussed in the Reformation period. Valuable insights may be gained from a consideration of the arguments advanced on the one side and the other. Indeed, the study of past controversies taught us that many arguments and conclusions which strike each generation as novel and startling are old ones dressed up afresh in the forms of speech and thought of a new age. The neglect of the past, either through ignorance or contempt, means permanent loss.

There are also wider problems, especially those connected with the Anglican communion. These will naturally be of more interest to the members of that communion, but the problems are of one communion cannot be only of local interest, especially when that communion has preserved a certain historic continuity in liturgy and order whilst accepting the Reformed theological reconstruction. The main problem is that of the relating of modern theological trends to the official doctrinal profession; and that problem is not by any means confined to Anglicanism. On the one hand, there are those who wish to overthrow the profession altogether. Their position is clear enough. On the other, there are those who wish to read into the profession views which approximate in varying degrees to those held by the Roman church, or perhaps by the pre-Tridentine Roman church. The contention is that the Reformers in England had no wish to break decisively with the past, as did the Reformers abroad. They deliberately couched the Articles in equivocal, or more kindly in eirenical terms. The liturgy affords evidence of their real sympathies.

A double question is involved. The first is the question of the ultimate truth of the confessional teaching. This is a theological question. Those who aim to overthrow the symbol regard it as erroneous, or only partially true. They claim that modern thought can no longer rest content with the old formulation. As the Reformers themselves laid hold of new truth and broke away from the mediaeval construction, so modern thinkers have gained new and larger insights which leave them no option but to discard the Reformed statement. The confession had today little more than an antiquarian value as a milestone on the upward road of
truth. The major part of our present task is naturally the exposition of the Reformed teaching as it was. At the same time a little attention will have to be paid to the problem of the value of that teaching at the present time.

The second question is that of loyalty to the actual formulation as the established rule of faith. This is a historical question. Some would have it that a full Protestantism is required, as a first reading of the formularies suggests. Others, while not going so far as Newman, claim that in the light of statements in the liturgy room is left for a less dogmatically Protestant interpretation. Such a contention cannot finally be overthrown. It rests upon the hypothesis that only a statement in general terms was adopted, and that that statement is so general as to be comprehensive. Little positive evidence is forthcoming to support this hypothesis. There is much to suggest that it is probably false. It cannot finally be disproved. What can be done, however, is to study the symbolic statement in the light of the Reformers' own views as expressed at large elsewhere. It is a fair presumption that if their own views are either non-reformed, or at least tolerant and comprehensive, the 'catholic' interpretation of the Articles is tenable. But it is also a fair presumption that if their views are uniformly reformed the Articles ought to be given a fully Protestant sense. The conclusion must not be anticipated, for only mischief can result from studying evidence in order to reach a desired result. Preliminary facts, however, the close interconnections with foreign Reformers, the willingness of the Puritans to subscribe to the theological articles, the commentary of Rogers, the Lambeth Articles, suggest that a Protestant interpretation is more likely to prove the correct one. If the Reformers themselves did develop anti-Romanist and decidedly Protestant conceptions, it will be fair to conclude that the Articles taken literally constitute one of the Reformed symbols.

The matter is partly one of domestic discipline. The prevailing confusion in the modern Anglican church can largely be dispelled once the position is known and admitted. It is also partly a matter of intercommunion. Anglicans aim to make their church a bridge-church, but in fact the Anglican church is today very much more an island church, with communion neither on the one side nor the other. Its orders and liturgy are rejected by Rome. It refuses to make doctrinal affiliation with non-episcopal churches a ground of fellowship. Intercommunion is only possible if questions are faced honestly and the true position is understood. If Anglican doctrine is found to be decidedly Protestant in character, then an insuperable obstacle will be placed in the way of reunion with Rome. On the other hand it will be seen that the Church of England and other Protestant churches have the basic things in common, and the question might well be asked why matters of discipline and order should be allowed to stand in the way of substantial unity. The creation of a solid doctrinal front on the basis of the Reformed theology, and the recognition of that dogmatic solidarity, would do much to make possible that union of Reformation churches which was a dream of Cranmer, and an earnest wish of the statesmanlike Calvin
CHAPTER I  THE GENERAL CONCEPT

1. The Word

The Reformers inherited the sacrament of baptism from the mediaeval church. With their spirit of enquiry they tested the old usage by the Holy Scriptures. They were also led to a certain extent to consider the problem of the foundations of the rite and the meaning of the term baptism, both linguistically and ecclesiastically. Too much must not be expected from the Reformation writers in this respect. They made great strides forward in the linguistic and historical study of the Bible. Their polemical against prevailing custom and belief compelled them to examine the Scriptures closely. Their love for the Bible and their loyalty to it as a supreme court of appeal against the church and against tradition taught them a carefulness in exposition, and inspired them to seek with diligence a correct text and a clear and accurate interpretation. The immense pains taken by Luther have been emphasised by some scholars (Cf. Mackinnon). At certain points the translation and exegesis of certain words or passages might determine a disputed dogmatic point, and here a more detailed discussion became necessary.

It must be stressed, however, that where no particular doctrinal question was involved the Reformers had little gratuitous linguistic and historical interest. They were not scholars even in the sense that Erasmus was a scholar, and they certainly did not share the enthusiasm for and belief in the historical method which have characterised the last two centuries. Baptism is a case in point. The immersion struggle had not yet arisen, and therefore no matter of importance depended upon the exact meaning of the term baptism. In the sixteenth century immersion was still the ideal, and not uncommon in practice, at any rate in England. Upon this there was general agreement. All accepted immersion in theory, even those who did not carry it out in practice. No party, not even the Anabaptist (Smith p.137), was prepared to insist upon it as doctrinally necessary. No point of controversial importance depended upon the exact meaning of the original.

In these circumstances the paucity of the linguistic discussion can hardly surprise, although it may disappoint the historically minded modern theologian. A definition of baptism had of course been given by the Scholastics. Thomas asked the question: Is baptism a washing i.e. Is it any kind of a washing, or a washing with a particular significance? He granted that the word may be used in a general sense, but found three reasons why it bore a particular significance in the Christian church: first, it seemed to be more than a general washing; second, the washing of baptism is not just water, but a certain use of it; third, in Christian baptism the word is and must be added to the element (Thomas 3 Qu.66).
During the Reformation period itself the theologians of Trent displayed some interest in the derivation of the term baptism. The Catechism, for example, explained that baptism was a Greek word which signified every kind of ablution (Cat.T.2,2,Qu.3). No attention was paid to the problems how historically the special kind of ablution now known as baptism had evolved, or how the word itself had come to be applied to that special washing. For the Tridentines such historical problems did not exist. Baptism was a label applied to a given and known thing, the sacrament historically received. The Catechism could thus go on at once to qualify, 'that with ecclesiastical writers it denotes that ecclesiastical use which belongs to the sacraments'.

The Reformers had no reason to question the commonly accepted definitions. Luther, as always, did evince some interest in the linguistic and historical questions, but only in order to bring out the proper theological significance. He compared the baptism of the Christian church with the ceremonial washings of the Jews, and with the rite practised by John (W.A.6 p.472). It might be said that in a sense a progressive evolution of baptism was thus seen, but Luther did not work out this quasi-historical scheme in the historical spirit. The interest of this sketch, the Disputatio de baptisme legis, Johannis et Christi habita, was theological from first to last. Luther saw a contrast between law and grace. The fulness of the Christian baptism, the baptism of grace, was contrasted with the imperfections of the Jewish washings, and of the Johannine rite. Whether one grew out of the other or not did not concern the author. What engaged his attention was the theological inter-relationship, the inter-relationship of type and signification.

The same concern to bring out the theological meaning led Luther into the linguistic field again in the great sermon on baptism (W.A.2 p.727). Luther discussed the Latin word 'mersio', and he tried to show that the root-idea is submersion, drowning in the water, death. The German 'Touffe' (Taufe) he connected with the word 'tief' (deep). Baptism thus signified a going down into the deep, or a plunging. Once again death was the meaning. But here too, it will be noticed, the linguistic study was occasioned by and subjugated to purely dogmatic considerations.

Zwingli, like Luther, turned to the New Testament in order to recover the exact meaning of the word, but he too had a theological rather than a historical aim. Zwingli distinguished four main uses of the term baptism (C.R.4 p.219). All of course had reference to baptism as practised by Christians rather than to baptism in any general sense. Some of the Anabaptists seem to have put forward the view that as a religious rite Christian baptism might be compared with the ordinary religious washings of Jews and Turks, next to which it was in no way superior. Rogers in his commentary notes that the Bannisterians held some such view as this (Rog.P.S.p.278). Such early attempts at a comparative study were decisively rejected by the great Reformers, and even the more liberal Zwingli was interested only in the theological
definitions of baptism.

Singularly little linguistic interest was forthcoming in England. There was almost no discussion at all until the Rhemish New Testament was published. A few matters were then considered, and Fulke in his Confutation took brief notice of the word baptism, although in rather a different connection. The point which Fulke wished to establish was that the Protestant non-ecclesiastical translations of some ecclesiastical terms were justified when the original meanings were considered — and that in some cases they were the only correct renderings. He illustrated his point from the word baptism, which had an ordinary sense apart from the special ecclesiastical sense, as in Mark 7: 'This word baptisma signifies by ecclesiastical use the sacrament of holy baptism, yet you are enforced Mark 7 to translate baptismata 'washings' (Fulke P.S.p.110).

It will be noticed that here again the whole discussion was occasioned by polemical considerations rather than by any pure linguistic interest. The study was conducted for the purpose of illustration and justification, not of scholarship as such.

Points which emerge from this brief survey may be listed. First, no essential doctrinal issue existed to necessitate a full historical investigation. The Reformers belonged at this point very largely to the same world of thought as their opponents. There were great theological differences in the sixteenth century, but in many basic matters there was unity: a unity all the more striking in view of the more radical differences which have emerged in Protestantism during the modern period. The Reformers certainly had very different views of baptism, but they accepted the sacrament itself as it had been handed down historically.

Second, the historical spirit which underlies almost all Protestant theological work was only in its infancy during the Reformation period. Some enthusiasts, and some opponents, have imagined that the present-day spirit dates from that century. There is of course a grain of truth in that view. But the Reformers were historical students by compulsion, not by choice. They aimed to get back to simple Scripture and pure apostolic practice. They had little historical interest as such, but history was a necessary handmaid of theology. To study baptism in its origins merely for the sake of knowing and understanding would have seemed to them a pure waste of time. The modern Protestant approach, by which Christianity is studied as a natural historical phenomenon, would have been utterly abhorrent to them. Whether the Reformers were right or wrong in this is a matter demanding separate treatment, but that the historical method is not Reformed in the strict sense ought to be noted.

2. The Ecclesiastical Use

Baptism was interesting to the mediaeval and Protestant theologians exclusively in its ecclesiastical connotation. It signified normally that sacrament which had been handed down through Christian
generations from the earliest period of the church. The definitions all pointed out that in theological discussion and in religious life this was the normal use.

A preliminary problem arises in connection with the ranking of baptism as a sacrament: a problem upon which the Anglican position stands in need of clarification. The Roman theology of the sixteenth century acknowledged seven sacraments appointed by God as special means of grace. This figure had only been arrived at after much disputing amongst the Scholastics. Everyone realised that the Fathers had used the word sacrament in a very loose and extended sense. The Reformers themselves did not dispute this wider usage. Calvin, for example, stated that the term sacrament 'includes all signs' (Inst. 4, 14, 18). The Roman theology, however, had determined that there were seven sacraments in the special sense (See Bellarmine Short Christian Doctrine). Bellarmine contended with the Tridentines that this number had been handed down and could be known by tradition (De' la S.T.B. pp. 339 f.). The Council of Trent claimed for these seven a divine institution, and insisted upon the full number, anathematising all opponents: 'If anyone saith that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord; or that there are more or less than seven, or even that any one of these seven is not truly and properly a sacrament, let him be accursed' (C. & D. Sess. 7 Bapt. Can. 1). The Catechism of Trent actually claimed that Scripture supported this number as well as tradition and the councils 'as is proved from the Scripture, is handed down by the tradition of the Fathers, and is justified by the authority of the Councils' (Cat. T. 2, 2, Qu. 14).

The Roman theologians must not be misunderstood. They asserted seven sacraments properly speaking. They did not regard these sacraments as of equal rank. Three stood out above the others as generally necessary to salvation: baptism, communion and penance. Confirmation, marriage, orders and unction were means of grace; but they were not generally necessary to salvation (Cat. T. 2, 2, 16). The Canons of Trent went so far as to anathematise any who wished to maintain a flat equality of the sacraments: 'If anyone saith that the seven sacraments are in such wise equal as that one is not in any way more worthy than another, let him be accursed' (C. & D. Sess. 7 Sacram. Canons 2 & 3).

Quite naturally, the aim and tendency was to exalt the sacrament of the altar above all the others. The Reformed limitation, however, did perhaps have its roots in this admitted theological distinction.

Luther was the first seriously to call in question the existing judgment. Earlier critics do not seem to have taken up the point. Wycliffe, for example, had spoken of the seven sacraments in the Trialogus, although one can hardly be sure whether it was the author's own opinion which was expressed (Trial. p. 156). Luther, however, boldly singled out the three pre-eminent and necessary sacraments, and contended that they alone were sacraments in the full sense i.e. sacraments of the Gospel instituted by Christ himself. The
others he would acknowledge as sacraments in a loose sense, but not in the strict and proper sense of the word. Of the three mentioned, baptism and the supper were the two chief, of higher dignity than penance. The Lutheran view was taken up by Melanchthon, and found expression in the great Confession of Augsburg (See Seeberg Die Lehre Luthers p.315).

In Switzerland Zwingli was even more radical than Luther. He judged that Christ had truly bequeathed unto us only two sacraments, and that baptism and the supper were alone sacraments of the Gospel in the full sense (C.R.3 p.761). The Anabaptists generally agreed with this judgment, although a few freer thinkers like Sebastian Franck rejected all sacraments as a mere mummerie and childish play (Dosker D.A.p.188). Schwenkfeld also fell under the suspicion of setting aside the sacraments (Rog.P.S.p.265). On the Reformed side quotations could easily be multiplied from the theologians and confessions to show how widely the opinion of Zwingli was held. Calvin, for example, distinguished between sacraments in general, and those sacraments which are by divine appointments means of grace in the church. In the special class he saw two only (Inst.4,14,19 & 21). In his Commentary on Acts Calvin suggested that Confirmation had also been a full sacrament in apostolic times, but that its proper use had ceased with the Apostles: "This laying on of hands was a sacrament....Those fell through ignorance who did continually imitate the same. It was a grace which was to last only for a time" (Comm.Acts 2,p.209). Beza recognised two sacraments 'ordained of God, having the syme, the thinge signified, the conjunction of the two and the manner of participating' (B.&.P.S.p.36). The Heidelberg Catechism (63), the Gallican (35) and the Belgic (34) Confessions all stated that there were two sacraments only. The Scotch Confession preserved the distinction between the strict and the loose senses when it asserted that there are 'twie chiefie sacramentis onelie instituted by the Lord Jesus' (21). It is perhaps of some interest that a little book published by the Romanists under the title 'Contrarietez et Contredicts' ascribes to the Reformed theologians many different views upon the number of the sacraments. Luther was supposed on some occasions to have said that there was only one sacrament; Melanchthon found two in the Commonplaces of 1522; the Apology of the Confession maintained three; the Commonplaces of 1552 four and Guillaume Postel six (p.xxviii). At any rate the various Reformers discussed the subject thoroughly, just as the earlier Scholastic had done, and in the end it was more or less agreed to restrict the term in its full signification to baptism and the supper, some exalting penance to a position only slightly inferior.

In England the doctrine of the seven sacraments had found an early defender against Luther in the King himself. The Assertio Septem Sacramentum of the old teaching against the new errors, which in effect, Henry maintained, left only baptism standing (Assertio p.46 and p.133). No advance was possible before the breach with the Papacy, but during the thirties Cranmer obviously had this question in mind. The matter came to a head in the
great debate in the Convocation of 1836, accounts of which may be found in Foxe (5 p.381) and Jenkyn's Cranmer (Cran.J.2 pp 16-17). The question then asked was this: Whether the ceremonies of confirmation, of orders and of annealing, and such other, ought to be called sacraments, and to be compared with Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, or not? Stokesley supported the full seven sacraments, and he headed a considerable party. Cranmer himself favoured only two, and he introduced the Scot Alesius as a chief speaker in the discussion. Alesius argued that these tests must be met if a ceremony was to be accounted a sacrament in the full sense: that it must be of divine institution, and that it must have a **formal** visible form and an invisible grace, which the Master of Sentences equates with the remission of sins. Alesius quoted Thomas to the effect that no man has the right to institute a sacrament. Cranmer further pursued the matter by sending out a questionnaire, in which the following questions were asked: How many sacraments there be by the Scriptures? How many there be by the ancient authors? Cranmer himself stated: 'I find not in the Scripture, the matter, nature and effect of all those which we call the seven sacraments, but only of certain of them, as baptism' (Burnet 3 p.69).

During the reign of Edward the Reformed view established itself in England. Cranmer's Catechism, as a Lutheran work, mentioned the three sacraments (p.134), but the English writers themselves inclined to the closer restriction. Nowell roundly asserted that the Lord instituted only two sacraments in his church (P.S. p.85). Hooper, as one would naturally expect, took the same view, arguing that both Scripture and antiquity gave only the two: 'whereof were two in number with the fathers in the ministry of the church, and so many yet are with us.' These two answered to circumcision and the passover in the Old Testament, and alone had their 'proper promises, proper elements, and proper commandments' (Hoo.P.R.B.R.p.215). Evidently a similar view had filtered down to the rank and file, for Foxe tells of not a few professors under Mary who would acknowledge no more than two sacraments: William Tyms, Christopher Lister, Thirteen Men at Stratford le Bow, Thomas Iveson, Seven Martyrs, Robert Denley (Foxe 7 & 8). Their answers all ran in much the same strain as that of Iveson to Bonner: 'That there be in the catholic church of Christ two sacraments only' (Foxe 7 p.307). The 'error' was evidently sufficiently widespread and important as to be noticed in the official interrogatory. Some ignorant persons were trapped, of course, as poor Elizabeth Thackvel and Kathleen Tut, who could not tell what a sacrament is (Foxe 8 p.450), but many laymen witnessed boldly and clearly to the Reformed belief.

The Elizabetban theologians readopted the Edwardian position. Jewel summed up the Anglican position in the Apology: 'We acknowledge that there are two sacraments properly so-called; for so many we see were delivered to us by Christ, and approved by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and the ancient fathers' (Jew.P.S.2.p.12). In the Treatise of the Sacraments Jewel made the same points, indicating clearly the reasons why baptism and the supper were to
be distinguished from the other so-called sacraments: 'The sacraments instituted by Christ are only two. In these two we have both the element and the institution' (Jewel, P.S. 2 p. 1103). In the light of the teaching of Jewel and of the general Continental exposition, the statement of the Article (25) is both plain and definite. It claims that there are only two sacraments of the Gospel, generally necessary to salvation. The five rites termed sacraments by Rome are sacramental in a loose sense, but not in the strict and proper sense. Some are states of life which have a sacramental aspect. Others are apostolic customs which simplified and purified have a profitable use. The use of the words 'commonly called sacraments' indicates a certain willingness on the part of the Anglicans to ascribe some sacramental significance to these rites and states, but only in so far as the Reformers generally were willing to do this. The words are certainly not a covert admission that perhaps the five disallowed are properly sacraments after all, by popular consent. The Homily wherein is declared that Common Prayer and the Sacraments etc. made the same distinction as the Article: 'And as for the number of them, if they should be considered according to the exact signification of a sacrament... there be but two..... But in a general acceptation, the name of a sacrament may be attributed to any thing, whereby an holy thing is signified. In which understanding of the word, the ancient writers have given this name, not only to the other five, commonly of late years taken and used for supplying the number of the seven sacraments; but also to divers and sundry other ceremonies... not meaning thereby to repute them as sacraments in the same signification that the two forenamed sacraments are' (Homilies pp. 244-5).

The Reformed attitude has a general importance, because it reflects their desire to check a dangerous tendency in the religious life of their time, as well as their overriding loyalty to the Bible and its authority. In one sense it is true, no doubt, that the ascription of efficacious power to sacramental rites and their performance does emphasize the initiative and the supremacy of God, who does the work. But when these acts are multiplied, and only a priestly caste can perform them, such a belief puts great power into the hands of the group and gives to them a domination over the whole religious life. The Reformers, as will be seen, did not wish to deny the efficacy of the divinely appointed sacraments as means of spiritual grace. They did insist, however, that only those rites should be treated with particular reverence which had a clear appointment and a proper constitution. Believing as they did in the need for a personal faith, they could not but resist the transforming of what they took to be Scriptural Christianity into that ecclesiastical and priestly Christianity which prevailed in their own day. The marking off of baptism and the supper, small perhaps in itself, pointed to that larger rejection of a sacramentalized religion and to that return to a personal evangelical faith.

The digression has been rather long, but necessary and
important. Baptism, in its generally accepted ecclesiastical sense, signified for the Reformers the first of the two sacraments of the New Testament. The word had its ordinary profane or secular meaning, but that had no interest and was of no importance for the theologically minded sixteenth century writers. What did matter was the meaning and nature of baptism as a sacrament. The Reformers studied baptism as it was described in the Bible and as it had come down in Christian history. They sought to understand it and to practise it, not in the light of its linguistic and historical origins, but in the light of its New Testament foundations, as a visible sign with an invisible signification and grace.

3. The Threefold Baptism

In common with other writers the theologians of the sixteenth century distinguished a twofold and even a threefold use of the ecclesiastical term baptism in the apostolic and patristic writings. Thomas had early made this distinction and defended the threefold baptism. Against the serious objection that Ephesians 4.5 speaks of one baptism he argued that there is only one sacrament of baptism in water, but that the other two baptisms, the baptism of blood and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, may supply the want of water-baptism (Thomas 3 Qu.66,11).

It could quite well be argued that the New Testament spoke of a baptism by suffering and also of a baptism of the Holy Spirit. There were also those who seized upon the mention of baptism by fire, and some Origenists were supposed to have postulated a special baptism by fire. The Catechism of Trent refuted this latter theory on the ground that fire symbolises the interior working of the Holy Ghost: the baptism by fire is thus synonymous with the baptism of the Spirit. Matthew 3.2 was not by any means to be understood of the matter of baptism, but ought to be referred generally to the work of the Spirit within, or specially to the miracle of Pentecost (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.8).

Be that as it may, the threefold distinction of baptism by water, by blood and by the Holy Ghost was an ancient and commonly accepted one. Amongst reforming writers it appeared in Wycliffe, who gave the distinction an anti-sacramentalist twist: 'ther ben three baptisingis: the firste is baptising in water, the tother baptising with blood, but the thridde baptising, moost needful and moost worth, is purging of the Hooli Goost' (Arnold 2 p.4). Wycliffe stressed again and again the paramount need of this inward baptism of the soul (Trial.p.159). Some of his successors in England seem to have carried the emphasis of Wycliffe almost to the point of denying the value of the outward sacramental act altogether. Thus Swinderby alleged that John 3.5 does not necessarily damn all unbaptised infants, 'for are not all baptised with the Holy Ghost and with fire, but yet not with material fire?'(Foxe 3 p.168). The point of the question was that just as the matter fire is not necessary to baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire, so the matter water is not necessary to baptism with the Holy Ghost and with
water. At a later date John Pyke of Colchester set aside the sacrament as quite unnecessary: 'there shuld be no such thyngs, fore there is no baptism but of the Holy Ghost' (Strype E.M.I,1 p.190). A similar teaching appeared amongst some of the early Anabaptists. Thomas Muntzer, for example, laid the whole stress upon the baptism of the Spirit (Muralt p.20).

For the most part the sixteenth century Reformers followed the old teaching. They were not sidetracked into a denial of the outward baptism of water. They brought into proper relief, however, the spiritual work of the Holy Ghost. Zwingli broke rather new ground when he distinguished the four uses of the word baptism in the New Testament. It was used first for the washing with water; second for the inward illumination of a man when he knows and cleaves to God, the baptism of the Spirit; third, for the outward teaching of salvation together with immersion in water; and fourth, for outward baptism together with inward faith (C.R. 4.p.219.)

A new thing here is the identification of baptism with teaching, a point especially significant when Zwingli came to relate the baptism of Christ with that of John. The other Reformers did not take up or develop this analysis, and Calvin was content to make the distinction between the baptism of water and the baptism of fire (Inst.4,15,8). Bullinger, expounding John 3.5, thought the text referred 'not to the outward sign of baptism, but to the inward and most spiritual regeneration of the Holy Spirit' (Bull.P.S.4 p.251).

The threefoldness of baptism received a good deal of stress in England. Tyndale, in his exposition of John, had noticed the linking up of water with blood and spirit, and he clearly had in mind the primitive distinction (Tynd.P.S.2 p.209). Becon discussed the matter in some detail. He made a basic distinction between the baptism of water and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, comparing Matthew 3 with Acts 1 and Titus 3.4 (Bec.P.S.2 p.203).

In true Reformed fashion he brought into prominence the need for the spiritual washing which is the true baptism: 'Without the inward baptism of the Holy Ghost, the outward baptism of the water profiteth nothing' (Ibid.p.218). In another place he mentioned the three baptisms, of the Holy Ghost, of blood and of water, and he added that of water. All these three the baptism of water is the most inferior (Ibid.p.225). Becon tackled the old objection that baptism is one. He replied to the objection that there is but one baptism, 'of diversely taken' (Ibid.p.225). Amongst the later writers Sandys drew out the distinction between the outward washing of water and the inward purging and cleansing of the Spirit (Sand.P.S.p.302), and Jewel referred to the three baptisms, 'Spirit,' blood and water (Jew.P.S.2 p.1107).

It was perhaps with this thought in mind that Jewel brought into relationship the water of baptism and the blood of Christ. Baptism clearly pointed to death and regeneration, and it also symbolised cleansing. In that respect it was interconnected not only with the death of Christ and the life-giving Spirit, but also with the cleansing blood (Jew.P.S.3 p.470).
A point of some importance needs to be noticed here. The Reformers do not seem to have thought of the baptism of the Holy Ghost as normally separate from the baptism of water. From the texts of the New Testament it would not be altogether unfair to make a separation between the baptism of regeneration and the baptism of spiritual power. Calvin's mention of the apostolic sacrament of confirmation could quite easily be linked with such a view. A modern school of writers, discussing the relationship of baptism and confirmation, has taken up a position of this kind (See E.C. Ratcliffe The Relation of Baptism to Confirmation in the Early Roman and Byzantine Liturgies Theology LIX no. 315). In a society in which infant baptism is the rule the result of such teaching would be to depreciate baptism at the expense of confirmation, as often happened in practice in the sixteenth century (Strype E.M. 1,2 App. No. LXXXVIII). The early practice of taking baptism and confirmation together has been brought forward as evidence in favour of the view. The theory supposes that early baptism was the combination of water-baptism (our baptism) and the baptism of the Spirit (our confirmation). The Reformers did not make any distinction along these lines, and it is lamented that none of them, not even Hooker, understood the true nature of confirmation.

What the Reformers did aim to do was to emphasise the double nature, not of baptism plus confirmation, but of baptism itself, whether of infants or of adults. Baptism had a twofold aspect. It was a human act, a washing in water. It was also a divine act, the inward washing and regeneration of the Spirit. The two acts might not always coincide when the rite was performed, but they were both necessary to constitute a Christian baptism in the full sense. This conception was the basis of the clear-cut division made by Tyndale between "those who are baptised in the flesh and those who are baptised in heart" (Tynd. P.S. 1 p. 357). Hooper expressed the same thought when he insisted that "there are two kinds of baptism and both necessary, the one interior, the other exterior" (Hoop. P. S. 1 p. 74). Cranmer, defending his view of the supper against Chedsey, argued that "when he giveth baptism, we consider not the water, but the Holy Ghost" (Cran. J 4 p. 29). Lake made the same point and urged that to be baptised with the Spirit is better than to be baptised with water (Sermons p. 174).

It was the urge to break the thraldom of a sacramentalist religious and theological system which impelled the Reformers so strongly to press the spiritual aspect. They were prepared to grant that martyrdom ranked as a baptism, but that point had little interest for them except within the context of the controversy regarding the necessity of the sacrament. What interested them was the teaching with regard to the baptism of the Spirit. According to their view, man could not be regenerated by an outward act. The passive accepting of sacramental rites was for them no guarantee of true and saving religion. The true baptism, as Wycliffe had said, was the inward work of the Holy Ghost, baptising the heart. And the Holy Ghost could not be bound.
4. The Divine Institution

The fact that baptism was an act of God and not only a human rite meant that it had ultimately a divine origin. Theologians all treated of the question of origin, but they had the aim rather of establishing the authority of the sacrament than of tracking its historical pedigree. The text-book from which they drew was of course the New Testament.

At this point, as at many others, it is hardly surprising to find that the Romanist and the Protestant thinkers were in substantial agreement. In so far as disagreement arose it was in such a detailed matter as the actual time of the institution of the sacrament by Christ. Thomas had contributed a thorough discussion of this tangled question. He had considered the favourite view that baptism was instituted after the Passion, and three arguments were seen to support this opinion: first, that baptism derived its power from the Passion; second, that it derived its efficacy from the mandate of Christ; and third, that it was only binding after the Passion. Thomas himself, however, decided for the alternative view that it was instituted at the baptism of Christ himself. Augustine had stated that as soon as Christ was plunged into the waters, the waters washed away the sins of all. Since baptism received the power of producing its effect when Christ was baptised, it is right to say that it was then instituted. Thomas allowed that baptism only became obligatory after the Passion for the two reasons that Christ's death put an end to the figurative sacraments, and that baptism makes a man conformable to Christ's Passion and Resurrection (Thomas 3 Qu.66,2).

Not every theologian went into the matter with quite the same thoroughness as Aquinas. For the most part it was thought sufficient to state a divine institution without specifying the exact time. Trent traced back all the seven sacraments to an institution by Christ, confessing 'that the seven sacraments of the New Law were truly and properly instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord' (Schaff Creeds p.207). Bellarmine in his Short Catechism asked the question: Who instituted the sacraments? and the answer was 'Jesus Christ our Lord' (Bell.S.C.D.p.31). The Catechism of Trent was more explicit. It found in the One and the same God the author of justification and the sacraments! (Cat.T.2,2,Qu.20). In reply to the question as to the time of founding, the double answer of Thomas was given, that the actual institution was at the baptism of Christ, the obligation after the Resurrection: 'The sacrament was instituted by the Lord, when he himself, having been baptised of John, gave to the water the virtue of sanctifying....After the resurrection of our Lord, he gave to the Apostles the command: Go and teach all nations, baptising them!' (Ibid.2,2,Qu.21). In support of the first statement the place of Augustine was alleged: 'From the moment that Christ is immersed in water....' The later Rituale Romanum referred to baptism as the first of the sacraments of the New Law instituted by Christ, without any discussion of or statement upon the time.
of institution. It is interesting to note that in the discussion of the time of institution in the Catholic Encyclopedia (Art. Baptism) it is suggested that baptism probably dates from the time when the disciples began to baptise. Many Fathers, however, denied that the Holy Ghost was given at that early period, including Tertullian, Chrysostom, Theophylactus and Leo. The text of Ignatius was also thought to suggest that the water received its sanctifying power only with the death of Christ upon the Cross.

The Reformers were not greatly interested in the question of the time of institution. This was probably because the majority of them saw a continuity between the baptism of John and the baptism of Christ. They did lay great stress, however, upon the doctrine of the divine institution. In different ways all emphasised the belief. Luther insisted that 'Christ, or God himself is the author of baptism' (W.A. 6 p. 530). Zwingli, in a sentence already quoted, spoke of the two sacraments bequeathed by Christ (C.R. 3 p. 761). He denied that Christian baptism was instituted with the command of Christ in Matthew 28, and saw the beginning of it in the divinely appointed baptism of John (C.R. 4 p. 258). Calvin inveighed against those who presumed to usurp the divine prerogative by adding to the sacraments which God had appointed: 'It is not in the power of any man whatever to institute sacraments. Christ enjoins that those who have submitted to the Gospel and professed to be his disciples shall be baptised.... Foolish men forge various sacraments at their pleasure, but as the word, which is the soul, is not in them, they are idle and unmeaning shadows' (Harmony and Exp. Confessions). Since John the Baptist had no more right than anyone else to institute a sacrament, Calvin claimed that John too had Christ for the author of his baptism.

The Continental Confessions made the same points in very similar terms. Augsburg traced back the sacraments to Christ's institution (9). The First Helvetic referred to a divine institution (2). The Heidelberg Catechism defined sacraments as rites appointed by God for a particular purpose (66). In the Confession of faith in the name of the Church of France Calvin beautifully described baptism as 'a treasure which God has placed in his church' (Tracts 2 p. 153). Knox insisted that the divine institution was a test of the true sacraments 'Such ceremonies as God has ordained we allow' (Knox 1 p. 198); and in the Ordoure of Baptisme he maintained that the divine mandate was the ground of the continued observance of the rite.

The English writers had nothing new to add, but they made the same points with some unanimity. Already Wycliffe had stressed the divine authorship: 'God hath ordained, in tyme of his both lawes, how men shulden have sacramentis to make him able for this travell' (Arnold inp 2 p. 258); and he too had found in Matthew 28 the ground of the continued use (Trial p. 156). In the sixteenth century a place was found for the doctrine of the divine institution in the Ten and Thirteen Articles (Cran. P.S. 2 p. 474), and also in the King's Book, which stated that 'the sacrament was instituted and ordained by our Saviour Christ in the New Testament, Matthew
Cranmer, when he was answering the Articles of the Canons of Devon, again asserted the institution by Christ: 'The water of baptism none other person did ordain but Christ himself' (Cran.P.S.2 p.176).

The other writers took the same line. Frith described baptism as 'an ordinance institute of God' (Frith B.R.p.94). Hooper spoke of its institution in the law of God (Hoop.P.S.1 p.76). Becon returned to the point again and again, ascribing the sacraments in the New Law to God and to God the Son (Bec.P.S.2 p.201). He thought that baptism had first been given through John: 'God the Father did first of all institute this holy sacrament with John' (Ibid.p.203). Bullinger denied the authority of any man to ordain sacraments, and saw in the Lord's commandment to baptise an obligation to observe the sacrament: 'Our Lord himself maketh baptism necessary' (Bull.P.S.4 p.352). The questioning of the divine authority was foreign to his whole way of thinking. At a later date Hooker too described baptism as 'a sacrament which God hath instituted in his church' (L.E.P.5,60,16).

It has already been seen that some refused Papistical baptism during the period of Roman domination under Mary, holding with Knox that Papistical baptism could not be identified with that 'tréw baptisme whilke Chryst Jesus did institute' (Knox 1 p.19). Bonner took the opportunity to urge upon such men, Thomas Haukes for example, the obligation of the commandment by Christ: 'Baptism is commanded by the word of God'. Haukes accepted the divine institution: 'His institution thereof I do not deny', although he could not agree that the Romanists were fulfilling the commandment of Christ faithfully (Foxe 7 p.99). At a latter date the Separatists found similar fault with the baptism administered in the established church. They too made it clear that they did not question the sacrament itself or the divine institution of it. One of the aims in the order of the Privy Church in London was 'to have the sacraments ministred purely, onely, and all together according to the institution and good words of the Lord Jesus' (Burrage E.E.D.2 p.13). The Puritans were naturally at one with the Anglicans in the view that the sacraments had been appointed in the church by Jesus Christ himself.

It remains only to glance briefly at the final formularies. The earlier Articles had maintained the divine institution, and in the 39 Articles (25) a similar doctrine was expressed. The Service of Public Baptism also made the position clear. It was to God's holy baptism that the child came. The words of institution were cited: 'God's most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ gave commandment to his disciples that they should go teach all nations and baptise them in the name etc.'. In the opening prayer an interesting relic of the extralat eral idea of the sacrament deriving its efficacy from the baptism of Christ may perhaps be found in the words (much disputed by the Puritans) 'who, by the baptism of thy well-beloved Son in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water to the mystical washing away of sin'. Everywhere in the service as in the Articles the impression is left that God
is both the author of the sacrament and the supreme worker in it.

The Reformers were supernaturalists in theological outlook. Modern Protestant theology has become largely empirical. Its interest centres upon the historical data. It seeks to understand Christianity in its origins and development. The supernatural activity of God has been largely (or completely) banished from the religious scene. But no support for a theology of this kind is forthcoming in the writings of the Reformers. The world in which the Reformers lived was one in which God was still thought of as active and above. Questions as to possible historical origins of the sacrament were immaterial. For the theologian it was enough that the sacrament had been divinely ordained. There was no need to justify the rite. God had appointed it, and therefore its use was an obligation, and God could be expected to work through it. It made little difference if similar ceremonies existed in the non-Christian religions. These could be explained, as devilish imitations, as adumbrations of the truth, even as ordinary customs taken over and raised to a new level by Jesus Christ. But they had no real or decisive importance.

It must be noticed that the Reformers had no thought of applying historico-critical tests to the evangelical narrative. The belief in a divine institution rested largely upon the text in Matthew 28, which was constantly quoted. The text did not stand alone, of course, and it was supported by the records of apostolic practice. But it had a special significance in that it contained both the commandment to baptise and the all-important baptismal formula. In recent times doubts have been cast upon the authenticity of the text, at any rate as a record of words actually spoken by Christ himself. Whether those doubts are justified or not is not our present concern. What is important is that such doubts did not and could not arise in the minds of the Reformers of the sixteenth century.

It is not that the Reformers were necessarily less acute or less informed scholars. Their scholarship was more rudimentary, but the root cause of the difference is elsewhere. The point is that the Reformers were mediaevalists rather than moderns. Theology was for them revelation. Their religion was the gift of a transcendent God. Man and the world of man had a definite place in the divine economy, but on the creaturely level. Half a century ago it would have been confidently affirmed by most Protestants that the Reformers were wrong, and that the moderns are right. Today powerful voices have again been raised to warn that the modern outlook is a heretical perversion of true Christianity, and to point back, not necessarily to the scholarship, but certainly to the attitude of mind of the sixteenth century.

In the present work it is not our business to decide between the two approaches. The difference ought, however, to be recorded, so that there should not be any misunderstanding of the Reformed theology. This much, too, must be said on the Reformed side. Their outlook, right or wrong, seems to be truest to the Christian faith as it has been handed down from the earliest times.
The apostles themselves and their immediate successors were conscious of the divine authority of their Master. What they taught and what they did was according to a received command. The sixteenth century theologians were the heirs of this supernaturalist outlook. In that respect, despite the sharp differences between them, they stand solidly together against the empirical Protestant theologians of more recent times.

5 The Broad Definition

The detailed discussion of the significance of baptism forms a study in itself. At this stage, however, notice must be taken of the different general terms used to define or to describe the sacrament. In a real sense these definitions do of course point to the meaning. They cover the field fairly comprehensively. As the Reformers were always insisting, the ancient Fathers commonly called the signs by the things signified. The different titles affixed to baptism indicate then the varieties of signification and effect associated with it.

Many of these definitions, drawn from the Patristic writings, have been gathered together in the Catechism of Trent. Baptism is there described as the sacrament of faith, illumination, purgation, planting, burial, the cross of Christ (Cat.T. 2,2 Qu.4). In the Greek and Russian symbols of a later date the definition was washing and the extirpation of original sin (Schaff pp.373 f.). Thomas had used the titles regeneration and enlightenment, and he too had described baptism as the sacrament of faith (Thomas 3 Qu.56). Other writers called baptism the gateway or door of the Christ life (Cath. Encycl. Art. Bapt.).

The writings of the Reformers abound in definitions of the sacrament. As will appear later, the Reformers were especially interested in the signification of the sacrament as opposed to the Romanists' interest in its effects. But quite commonly they summed up the meanings in descriptive titles used of the divine ordinance. Luther in his Catechisms first gave a definition of baptism: 'It is a conjunction of water and the word of God!' (W.A. 34,1 p.38.) But the water of baptism was no common water: it was 'the water of life which is rich in grace, the bath of regeneration' (Quoted by Wernle p.257). The Confession of Seventeen Articles described baptism similarly as a holy, living and mighty thing, a bath of regeneration and of spiritual renewal (Ibid.p.286). In another place Luther emphasised the fact that baptism is a covenant, in which may be distinguished sign, signification and faith (Seeberg p.317). He thus arrived at this general definition of baptism: that it is a divine covenant of grace given under a visible form (Ibid.p.315). Melanchthon too thought that the sacrament might best be defined as the sign of a divine promise.

Of the Swiss theologians Zwingli brought into prominence the covenantal aspect, more especially on the human side. He defined sacraments generally as pledges or oaths, the ceremonies of initiation or pledging (Wernle p.202). Baptism was the covenant
sign of the people of God (Ibid. p.204). Baptism thus served as a badge of allegiance, or public sign of profession. The Anabaptists developed and stressed this line of thought. Hubmaier taught that the external act of baptism should be taken as a public confession and witness of internal faith and obligations. He used almost exactly the same phrase as Zwingli, describing baptism as the visible sign of the whole people of God. (Zwingli C.R. 4 p.218).

It must be admitted that the Zwinglian definition, although correct enough as far as it goes, is deficient in many respects. Stressing so much the human side, Zwingli tended to rob baptism of much of its real and deeper meaning. It would be an exaggeration to say that Zwingli denied altogether a fuller meaning, but he certainly did not bring it into prominence. This is evident in his general descriptions and definitions. With Calvin, however, the position changed. Calvin undoubtedly held a much higher view of the sacraments than Zwingli. In the doctrine of the supper, for example, he occupied a position between Zwingli and Luther, somewhat after the manner of the subtle Bucer. Some critics have accused him of obscurity in his sacramental doctrine, but he certainly attempted, successfully or otherwise, to retain a true sacramental teaching while rejecting sacramentalist conceptions.

Amongst the general titles which Calvin used to describe both baptism and its fellow sacrament the supper the most common was that of visible word, or testimony of the grace of God (Beckmann p.45). The sacrament, however, was not only a testimony to grace. Calvin did not shrink from calling it 'an instrument by which God acts efficaciously' (Tracts 2, p.340). Baptism in particular was the initiatory sign by which we are admitted into the fellowship of the church. It was not only the entrance into the church, but also the symbol of our initiation into Christ (Inst. 4, 15, 1). It might then be described as the sacrament of initiation, or as the sacrament of regeneration (Beckmann pp.87 f.). Calvin would not have it that the sacraments are only the signs of something that we do. They are that: 'The ends of the sacraments are to be marks and badges of Christian profession and fellowship, or fraternity' (Tracts 2 p.214). But they are more, the signs of something that God does: 'The sacraments are not only marks of outward profession, but are testinomies and badges of the divine grace, and seals of the promise' (Ibid. p.573). The false emphasis of Zwingli was thus avoided.

Calvin was willing to go even further than this, and to refer to the sign in terms of that which in detail it signified, after the manner of the Fathers. Thus baptism was for him the outward representation of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. He could also describe it as a spiritual washing (Harm. Ev. p.385). It was the sign of regeneration, an evidence that God introduces us into his church, to make us, as it were, his children and heirs. (Tracts 2 p.183). The Reformed Confessions and the later Reformed theologians stressed the two ideas, that
baptism is the sign of the covenant and that it is the sacrament of initiation and of regeneration. Knox defined baptism as 'the syne of our first entrance in the household of God our Father, by the whilke is signifieth, that we are ressavat in league with him' (Knox 4 p.123). It was also 'a holy syne and seale of God's promesses' (Ibid. p.172). Heidigger described it briefly as the sacrament of regeneration.

The Anglican theologians gave many general descriptions and definitions, all of which were along the same lines. Tyndale had almost all the more prominent titles. 'In baptism,' he wrote, 'we testify unto the congregation our entering into Christ' (Tynd. P.S.1 p.357). Baptism was 'a witness between him and us, the bond or seal of the covenant written in our flesh' (B.R. p.407). 'a visible sign to provoke us and to help our weak faith' (P.S. 2 p.31). It was 'the sign of repentance or, if they will so have it called, penance; washing and new birth' (Ibid. p.161).

Tyndale noted, like so many of the theologians of the Reformation, that it is the common use and property of speech in Scripture to identify the sign and the thing, but he urged that in exact theological speech the proper distinction should not be obliterated (P.S.3 p.247).

One of the early writers was Frith. In his work too the main lines of thought are clear. Frith called baptism 'a token of grace and free mercy, 'a visible example of the invisible grace' 'the fountaine of the new birth' (B.R. pp.92-4). The conception of baptism as a covenental sign even appeared in the King's Book, in which baptism was described as a covenant between God and us (K.B. p.44). It would be tedious to list in detail all the definitions given by the leading Anglican writers, but a representative selection may be made for the purpose of demonstrating the general lines of teaching. Nowell stressed initiation and regeneration: baptism was a profession, 'a certain by which we are received', the sign of regeneration (Now. P.S. p.207). Philpot had the same thought of initiation: 'We are implanted in the church by baptism' (Phil. P.S. p.221); and Bradford called baptism the sign of adoption (Brad. P.S.1 p.201). This idea was not greatly developed by the others, but it was evidently a commonly accepted one, and found expression in the Irish Articles of 1615 (39).

Hooper preferred to think of the sacrament as testimony, seal, sign and guarantee: 'It is a testimony of God's promise, a sign of God's good will and favour towards us. In it the new league and covenant is signified' (Hoop. P.S.1 p.76). This was Becon's point too: 'Baptism is a most certain pledge of God's love and favour towards his people' (Bec. P.S.2 p.203). He repeated the same thought in different ways: baptism was a continual sign, an evident testimony, a sign with promises annexed, a visible word (Ibid. p.201). Pilkington too described baptism as a seal and covenant (Pilk. P.S. p.302), Jewel as a seal and confirmation (Jew. P.S.2 p.103), and as a heavenly token (Ibid.), Bullinger as an evidence and sealed charter (Bull. P.S.4 p.323).

*It is perhaps worth noting that by this concession Tyndale swallowed up penance in baptism.*
The Wittenberg exiles similarly defined the sacraments as 'substantial covenants and agreements' (Burrage E.E.D.1 p.76).

The idea that baptism was a badge or profession came up repeatedly. Bullinger may be cited: 'Baptism serveth for our confession' (Bull.P.S.4 p.400); and also Rogers: 'Baptism is a sign of profession' (Rog.P.S.274). Also common was the title regeneration, or water of regeneration. Cranmer himself used the term 'regenerating water' (Cran.P.S.1 p.150 and p.254). Becon defined baptism as the 'fountain of the new birth' (Bec.P.S.2 p.203, Ridley as 'the fountain of regeneration' (Rid.P.S.p.12), Jewel as 'life, regeneration, salvation, forgiveness of sins, the power of God to resurrection' (Jew.P.S.2 p.1105), and Bullinger as 'the fountain of water', 'a cleansing or washing away of sins', 'the water of regeneration' (Bull.P.S.4 p.251, p.282, p.441). The ideas of cleansing and regeneration naturally went hand in hand. Baptism seems quite frequently to have been alluded to as the sacrament of regeneration, and one of the martyrs listed by Foxe, Robert Smith, spoke of it in that way (Foxe 7 p.351).

A few less common definitions ought to be mentioned. Cranmer called baptism 'a receiving the Holy Ghost and putting Christ upon us' (Cran.P.S.1 p.64). In one place he equated baptism and justification, 'baptised or justified' (Cran.2 p.133), although the sentence is in the King's Book, and is probably not Cranmer's own. Becon thought of baptism as 'a seal of righteousness' (Bec.P.S.2 p.217). Whitgift, quoting Tertullian and Chrysostom, called it 'the seal of faith' (Whit.P.S.3 p.113). Bullinger combined the two thoughts, terming it 'a seal of the righteousness of faith' (Bull.P.S.4 p.323). Jewel gathered together a whole list of definitions. He quoted Tertullian to the effect that baptism might just as well be called a sacrifice as the supper (Jew.P.S.3 p.393). A connection with immolation, or martyrdom, appears at this point, but what Jewel really wished to prove was that when the Fathers spoke of the supper as a sacrifice they were using the language of type.

The Article is perhaps rather disappointing in its definition. It gives the impression of trying to say a number of things, and yet it is neither comprehensive nor precise. An analysis shows, however, that the terms are not so vague as is sometimes supposed, for all of them are thoroughly reformed, and not a few suggest the similar statements of Calvin. Baptism is a sign of profession and mark of difference - the Article is surely including rather than refuting the Zwinglian view, in spite of Stone's anxiety to draw a contrary conclusion (Holy Baptism p.61). But it is much more than that, the sign of regeneration or the new birth, an instrument to graft us into the church, and the sign and seal of the promises of forgiveness and of our adoption. Sign and seal of our new birth was the definition in the earlier versions. The term instrument is perhaps the most unusual, and controversial, but as we have already seen even this is not without a parallel in Calvin (Beckmann p.39).

One or two observations may be made upon these general definit-
-ions commonly used by the Reformers. They were for the most part the traditional definitions of the church, comparable with those found in patristic and mediaeval writers. A modern definition such as Quick's description of baptism as a sacrament of the divine Fatherhood would have wounded strangely in their wars. In application there were differences, but formally the Reformed titles were very much the same as those given in the formularies of Trent. The new feature was the much greater stress upon profession and covenant.

In the application of the titles a two-fold limit may be discerned. The first is the interpretation of the sacrament in terms of the word. In all Reformed theology word and sacrament went together. The Bible, and preaching based upon it, were the word audible - proclaimed; the sacrament was the word visible - enacted. The word might very properly be described as the word of life, because through it God brought life to the believing soul. So too baptism might very properly be termed the water of regeneration, for God used the sacrament too as a means to bring new life where there was the response of faith. A further discussion of the Reformed doctrine of the efficacy of the sacrament will be necessary later. It may be noticed now how significant for the Reformers was this conception of the sacrament as a visible word.

The second limit is the recognition that baptism is only life and forgiveness and regeneration when it is considered in its full sense, as thing signified as well as sign. The sign itself might be given the title of the thing signified, but the Reformers were careful to distinguish between the two, and to explain their meaning. Thus Bullinger pointed to the Scriptures: 'I Corinthians 6 doth make manifest, that to the sign of baptism, which is water, is given the name of the thing signified' (Bull. P. S. 4 p. 282). Bradford also took great pains to guard against any possible misunderstanding: 'Baptism is called regeneration because it is a sacrament of it' (Brad. P. S. 2 p. 271). The Reformers were able to retain the language of sacramentalism, but they used it in a purely evangelical sense. In this respect, as in so many others, the Reformers were purifiers rather than innovators. They aimed to give back to accepted terms and concepts that purity of Scriptural and patristic use which ecclesiastical theology had corrupted. If their thought must be clearly marked off from Romanism on the one hand, it ought also to be differentiated on the other from the modern innovating reconstructions of neological.

6 The Relationship with the Supper

The classification of baptism as one of the two Dominical sacraments naturally led to a comparison with the other great sacrament of the Gospel, the supper. To a certain extent, such a comparison was unavoidable. There is a theology of the sacraments in general as well as of each sacrament in particular. Certain features are common to both, or even, in the case of a Roman Catholic, to the whole seven.
In view of this obvious fact, it might be thought unnecessary to look more closely into the Reformed statement of the relationship of baptism with the supper. This relationship, however, formed a not unimportant controversial point. The controversy originated in the Romanist elevation of the supper to a position of superiority over all other sacraments. This, in turn, was necessitated by the doctrines of transubstantiation and of the sacrifice of the mass. Thus, while the supper as a sacrament still had some features in common with the other sacraments, it was of so much greater dignity that to interpret the one in terms of the other, as the Reformers sought to do, was to challenge directly the Romanist doctrines of the supper.

The Romanist position was plainly stated at Trent. To assert an equality between the sacraments, Trent taught, was heresy: 'If anyone saith that these seven sacraments are in such wise equal, as that one is not in any way more than another, let him be accursed' (C. & D. Sess. 7 Sacr. 3). That the Tridentines had as their main aim the maintaining of the excellency and the special nature of the supper admits of no doubt. Bellarmine made the position quite clear. He asserted 'a hierarchy of the sacraments, the first of all being without question the holy Eucharist, which does not contain grace only, but contains the very author of grace' (De la S.T.B.p.353). It may be noticed that Stephen Gardiner, in the controversy with Cranmer, objected very strongly to the Archbishop's coupling of the supper with baptism. 'Baptism', he said, 'differeth from the mystery of Christ's presence, and the working of the effect also' (Cran. J. 3 p. 242).

The Continental Reformers swept away all these distinctions. Even Luther, who retained his own special doctrine of the substantial presence of Christ in the supper, compared the two sacraments. Baptism was the beginning of renovation; the supper incorporation into the unity of the body of Christ (Hamel J.L.p.57). He linked up the grace of baptism with faith in exactly the same way as he linked up the grace of the supper (Ibid. p.151, & Stange p.814). Zwingli taught similarly (Wernie Z.p.66). Bucer attempted to work out a mediating view of the supper along the lines of a comparison with baptism (Hastings Falls p.72). Calvin discussed the particular point of the nature of Christ's presence in the supper, and he too found the comparison with baptism helpful: 'Since Scripture plainly declares that we put on Christ in baptism, and are washed by his blood...there is no reason why he should be said to be more present in the supper than in baptism' (Tracts 2 pp.564-5). Calvin thought that Christ called the bread his body in just the same way as we may call baptism the washing of regeneration and renovation.

In England Nowell compared the two sacraments in operation, and he thought that the one might be said to fulfil the other (Now. P. S. 1 p. 214). It was Cranmer, however, who pressed the comparison. So insistent was he in his interpretation of the one sacrament by the other that we might almost conclude that
the comparison had been instrumental in bringing him to his own understanding of the true and catholic doctrine of the supper. He granted, for example, that respect was due to the elements of bread and wine, but only the same respect as was due to the water of baptism. The presence of Christ and his showing were the same in both sacraments. In support of the comparison Cranmer urged texts of the Fathers, Emissen, and especially Augustine, who had compared the substances used in the sacraments: 'The substance of this sacrament is the bread and wine, as water is in the sacrament of baptism' (See Cran.J.3 p.10, pp.61 ff., p.242, p.339). In the Oxford Disputations Cranmer maintained this comparison, finding Christ in the supper only as the Holy Ghost was in the water of baptism (Foxe 6 pp.452 ff.). Ridley and Glyn advanced the same comparison in defence of their views (Ibid. p.311). Strype has recorded a controversy in which Watson on the Romanist side found a miracle both in baptism and in the supper, but the miracle of transubstantiation in the supper was greater. When Cheke sought to compare the one sacrament with the other from the Fathers Watson made the usual distinction: 'There is a diverse reason of baptism and the eucharist, and different effects (Strype Cheke pp.101 f.).

During the Marian persecution several interesting discussions took place upon the subject. Bradford compared the two sacraments in their operation. He was challenged by the friars; who had been sent to try to bring him to a better mind. They asked him what Scripture he had for his assertion. Bradford put them to silence by quoting I Corinthians 12 (Brad.P.S.1 p.82 and cf.p.533). Philpot too used the comparison when he was arguing before Bonner against the private mass: 'If a priest say these words over the water, and there be no child to be baptised, those words only pronounced do not make baptism. The pronunciation only is not enough, unless the words be therewithal applied to the use, as Christ spoke them. So in the supper.

Harpsfield: Nay, that is not like; for Hoc est corpus meum is an indicative proposition, showing a working of God in the substance of bread and wine.

Philpot: It is not an indicative proposition, but also imperative or commanding: Take ye, eat ye.

Morrow-Mass Priest: Many must then be baptised, if the commandment be followed.

Philpot replied that Christ gave commandment to baptise all sorts of men, and quoted the Eunuch as a Scriptural example of an individual baptism (Foxe 7 p.637). Less eminent sufferers, as Woodman before Chichester, made similar use of the comparison between the two sacraments (Ibid.8 pp.351 f.). As early as 1645 James Cobard had urged the necessity of faith for a right reception of both sacraments (Ibid.4 p.401). It is interesting that Foxe himself quotes with approval a Sermon of Aelfric, in which the bread and wine of the supper are compared with the water of baptism (Ibid.5 p.286).

During the reign of Elizabeth the comparison was used in support of Puritan views, and appeared in many strange connections.
Jewel, of course, followed the broad teaching of Cranmer, and he argued a similar presence of Christ in the two sacraments, and a continuance in both of both the accidents and the substance of the elements (Jew.P.S.1 pp.450 f.). Guest argued that the supplice alone ought to be used at all services on the ground that the sacraments were alike: 'The communion does not give higher and better things' (Gee.P.B.& O.p.39). The Puritans used the doctrine of the equality of the sacraments as an argument in favour of allowing the Anglican deacons to take the communion service, or at least as an argument against the prohibition of such a practice: 'They may minister baptism, but not the cup' (Pleasaunte Dialogue A. p.28). Cartwright made this point. In his eyes the refusal to allow deacons to administer communion indicated that the Anglicans still put a difference between the sacraments. It may be added that the Puritans did not approve of the Anglican order of deacons as such (Whit.P.S.3 p.59).

The main importance of the comparison of the sacraments lay naturally in its value in refuting Romanist views of the supper. For the most part baptism itself was introduced and studied for the purpose of illustration and confirmation. The two sacraments had admittedly been instituted for different purposes, but their use was the same. They differed in detail, but not in essential nature. The errors which had clustered around the supper were in Reformed eyes grosser, and more dangerous. The coupling with the primary sacrament enabled them to get back to a simpler and sounder understanding. The point must not be forgotten, however, that if the Reformers understood the supper in the light of baptism, they also understood baptism in the light of the supper. Their sacramental theology formed a unity. It is not possible to argue that they devoted all their attention to the purging of the doctrine of the communion, and left baptism alone. They worked out a doctrine of the sacraments in general, applicable to each sacrament in particular, or to both together, as occasion demanded. In essential nature, in status and in operation, the two sacraments could not be distinguished.

7. The Sacrament and the Gospel

One final point, incidental as it is, demands notice. The Reformers definitely asserted an inferiority of the sacrament to the Gospel itself. This question of the relationship with the Gospel only arose in some larger context, usually that of infant baptism. It had bearings, however, upon the Romanist controversy as well as the Anabaptist. The whole evangelical approach is indeed illuminated by the utterances upon this question. It ought to be made clear, of course, that by Gospel was meant not merely the preaching of the Gospel, or the Scriptures, but the general promises of God as given in and through Jesus Christ.

The subordination of the means of grace to the grace itself, or rather to the divine covenant and promise, may be seen in Calvin. Calvin distinctly ranked baptism below the covenant, of which it was the sign. 'He maintained that the gift of baptism, adoption, was
prior to baptism itself (Inst. 4, 14, 22; Tracts 1 p. 73). In England Frith had found the sacraments only efficacious within the limits set by the divine election. Since this election was free, God was under no obligation to save because a given set of conditions - the administration of a sacrament - had been fulfilled (Frith B. fc. p. 92). Tyndale had perhaps something of the same thought in mind when he made the common comparison: 'There is need for preaching as well as baptism' (Tynd. P. S. 1 p. 253). Behind both preaching and the sacrament Tyndale discerned the same promise of God upon which both depended and which both proclaimed.

Cranmer made the point in another way. For him preaching and the two sacraments had the same work, to exhibit Christ. In that sense Christ, himself the salvation of God, was the Lord of all three: 'For Christ after one sense is exhibited in all these three, in his word, in baptism, and in the Lord's supper, that is to say, spiritually' (Cran. P. S. 1 p. 156). It will be seen, of course, that the immediate aim of Cranmer was to relate the eucharistic presence and the presence in all the means of grace. But by denying a corporal or 'real' presence he brought the means into subordination to the grace, or rather to the Lord of the grace. Hooper's approach was determined by his conception of baptism as 'a sign annexed to the promise of eternal joy, for the purpose of testifying' (Hoop. P. S. 1 pp. 128-130). The promises which baptism confirmed were themselves primary. Becon too stressed the priority of God's election and of the promises: 'God doth not save us for the outward baptism, which is the washing of the body by water, but for his gracious promise. Prior to the sacrament is the free gift and mere mercy of God' (Bec. P. S. 2 p. 216, p. 221). Jewel asserted a similar priority of the covenant (Jew. P. S. 2 p. 1105).

Rogers marked off the Anglican position from the Romanist on the one hand and the Puritans, which overstressed preaching, on the other. The Papists unduly exalted the sacrament: 'None believe but such as are baptised'; the Puritans unduly exalted preaching: 'None believe but such as hear the word preached'. Rogers subordinated both means of grace to God (Rog. P. S. p. 250).

The relevance of this question to the controversy with the Romishansists emerges in a discussion of the Reformed confessor John Smith with Bishop Bonner, as narrated by Foxe. Smith himself issued the challenge: 'I pray you, my lord, show me, are we saved by water or by Christ?' Bonner: By both Smith: Then the water died for our sins... The water is unto me a preacher, not a Saviour (Foxe 7 p. 352).

The position of Smith was exactly the same as that of Calvin, who had also pointed to Christ as the true source of salvation, greater than the sacrament, and had accused the Romanists of the error of 'passing by Christ', and fixing their confidence of sanctification on the elements (Calvin Tracts 2 p. 340). No doubt the more adept Romanist theologians avoided this confusion, but the Reformers saw a definite need to make the matter clear, and to bring the sacrament into a proper subordination to Christ and to the Gospel promises.
Philpot and Bullinger both used this doctrine of the subordination of the sacrament as an argument in favour of the baptism of the infants of Christians. By Scripture they showed that such infants were the heirs of the promises. But if they had the greater thing, the promises of the Gospel, then no-one could rightly refuse them the less, the sign of the promises. Philpot put it in this way: children are not excluded from the Gospel itself, the thing signified, and therefore they ought not to be excluded from baptism, the sign, for 'the Gospel is more than baptism' (Phil.P.S.p.276). Bullinger's argument was the same; the Gospel is greater than baptism, but in the Gospel children are received of God and not refused (Bull.P.S.4 p.389). It is of interest that Calvin too argued for infant baptism in exactly the same way: 'The gift of adoption is prior to baptism. To defraud infants of their right were to exclude them from the sign which only ratifies the thing contained in the promise' (Tracts I p.99).

The point was small in itself but great issues were involved. The supremacy of God over his appointed means of working was at stake. The priority of the signification to the sign was also in question. Sacramentalist theology so exalted the means of grace that in the popular estimate they came to be identified with salvation. Anabaptism erred in another direction. Denying any working of grace in and through the sacraments, it made salvation dependent upon an individual choice rather than upon the prior election and covenant of God. The sacrament became the sign of belief, not the sign of the grace of God. The Reformers asserted the evangelical, and, they believed, the Scriptural view, that Christ and his salvation were primary, and that the sacraments were appointed means of operation. Their view was of a piece with the whole rejection of the traditional ecclesiastical teaching. But as at other points they did not let go a transcendentalist understanding and devalue both Gospel and sacrament along subjectivist or empiricist lines.
1. Dosker D.A. p. 188 'Poppenwerk und Kinderspiel'.
2. Now. P. S. p. 85 'Quot in Ecclesia sua Dominus duo sacramenta institut'.
3. Article 25 'Duo a Christo Domino nostro instituta sunt sacramenta'.
4. Muralt p. 20 'Die Kindertaufe hält Münzer für nicht erwiesen, aber auch der Erwachsenentaufe schreibt er keine Heilsbedeutung zu. Allem Nachdruck legt er auf die innere, die Geistes-taufe'.
5. Schaff Creeds (G. & Lat.) p. 207 'Profiteor quoque septem esse vere et propre sacramenta novae legis a Jesu Christo Domino nostro instituta'.
6. Rituale Romanum 'Sacrum baptisma...quod inter alia novae legis sacramenta a Christo instituta primum tenet'.
7. Luther W. A. 6 p. 530 'Der wahre Tauf ist Christus, oder Gott selbst'.
8. Ibid. 34, 1 p. 88. 'Tauf ist das Wasser und Gott's Wort dabei'.
9. Wernle p. 257 'Taufe ist gnadenreich Wasser des Lebens und Bad der Wiedergeburt'.
10. Ibid. p. 286 'Ein heilig, lebendig, kräftig Ding, ein Bad der Wiedergeburt und Erneuerung des Geistes'.
11. Seeberg p. 315 'SACRAMENTUM est pactum divinum gratiae et doni sub forma visibili traditum'.
13. Ibid. p. 204 'das Bundeszeichen des Volkes Gottes'.
14. C.R. (Zwingli) 4. p. 218 'Tauffen im wasser im dem namen des vaters und suns und des heyligen geysts...ist nicht anders dann ein offene bekantniss und zeugniss des inwendigen glaubens und pflichten. Der usser touf ist ein sichtbar Zeychen des gantzen volcks gottes'.
15. Beckmann p. 45 'Testimonium gratiae Dei, verbum visibile'.

Notes
CHAPTER II  THE SIGNIFICATION

Introduction

To a large extent the titles applied to baptism, both in the Romanist and also in the Reformed theology, give in summary form the underlying meanings of the rite. Indeed, in the case of the Romanists, very little more than this may be found. No particular attention was paid by them to the signification of baptism as such. The problem was only considered in relation to the far more important effects. Meaning and effect merged the one into the other.

This had already been so with many of the Fathers. A good example was Cyril of Jerusalem, who had summed up both meaning and effect briefly and comprehensively: 'Baptism is a ransom for the captives, the remission of sins, the death of sin, the regeneration of the soul, a bright garment, a holy and indissoluble seal, a carriage to heaven, the enjoyment of paradise, the pledge of the kingdom of heaven, the grace of adoption unto sonship' (Quoted by Cary Test. Fath.,on Art. 27). Both Lombard and Thomas had thought in the same way. Lombard regarded baptism as a being made conformable to Christ, but of course the sacrament not only signified this but also effected it (Lomb. 4, 4 Dist. 4 C). Thomas, equating water with regeneration, noted a correspondence between the sign and the thing signified. He was well aware of the significance of baptism as a picture of burial and rising again (Thom. 3 Qu. 66).

Trent too thought of baptism in terms of effect rather than of meaning, and made little contribution to the theology of the signification of the sacrament. The question of meaning was not ignored altogether, however, and in the Catechism a threefold significance of the sacraments was discerned: 'They remind us of something passed, indicate and shew something present, and foretell something future. Baptism reminds us of the death and passion of our Lord. It is a sign by which is declared the infusion into us of heavenly grace. Baptism gives no obscure intimation of eternal life also, which we are to attain thereby' (Cat. T. 2, 1 Qu. 8). The 'thereby' ought to be particularly noted, for it is indicative of the prevailing Romanist merging of meaning into effect. In points of detail the words, the matter and the ceremonies connected with baptism were seen to help towards an understanding of what the sacrament was and what it accomplished. Water, for example, possessed the power and signification of cleansing (not here cooling); the ceremonies displayed more fully and placed before the eyes the effects of the sacrament; and in another place water was seen to signify to us 'the extinguishing the ardour of the passions' (Ibid. 2, 2 Qu. 11 and 13, & 2, 2 Qu. 10).

In the writings of the Reformers, as will appear, the main emphasis shifted away from the effects of the sacrament to the signification. This was of a piece with the general substitution of an evangelical for a sacramentalist scheme. The Reformers
complained, not without cause, of the gross ignorance of the meaning of the sacrament which prevailed under the Papal regime. The common people, who knew nothing of the teaching and the distinctions of Scholastic theology, naturally attached to the sacraments a more or less magical and automatic power. They knew perhaps that something had to be done on their part, but of what the sacrament meant for them they had little or no conception. Tyndale inveighed bitterly against the widespread ignorance: 'Thou shalt see,' that they believe, How that the very plunging into the water saveth them, therefore of the promises they know not, nor what is signified thereby. Baptism is called 'voloving' in many places in England: because the priest saith, 'Volo, say ye' (Tynd. P.S. 1 p. 276). The fact that the service was not in an understandable language meant, as will be seen, that it was not self-explanatory, as might otherwise have been the case.

The Reformers themselves developed in detail and with great power the evangelical themes suggested by baptism. They loved to stress the fact that a sacrament is a significant sign, that the sign itself contains and points to the meaning. Bullinger put this well when he noted that 'the very sign resemeth the thing signified' (Bull. P. S. 4 p. 329). The matter and action as well as the words testified to eternal truths. These truths were of course the ones which have already appeared in the definitions or descriptions. Fundamentally nothing new could be added. The titles already expressed the meaning. But a good deal could be added by way of exposition, in the development of the simple points and in the interpreting of them to the different aspects of the sacrament itself. It is one thing to ascribe to baptism a title. It is another to show in what particular way this title may rightly be ascribed.

For the sixteenth century Reformers this question of the signification of baptism was probably the most important single theological issue connected with the sacrament. The exact defining of the effects was important. The defence of infant baptism claimed naturally and necessarily a good deal of attention. But the great contribution of the Reformers to the theology of baptism, that to which they devoted their full powers, was the working out at the very deepest level of the meaning of the sacrament as it was seen by them in Scripture. The various points developed in their interpretation must now be considered in order, and an attempt ought to be made to discover where the main emphasis was placed.

2. Initiation

To take it at its very simplest, baptism is a ceremony of initiation. Quite apart from its form, the ceremony itself symbolises the reception of a man into the fellowship of the church, which is the society and the family of God. That is why it is so often called the sign of entry, or the sign of the divine covenant. Of course, when infants are baptised, this aspect does not appear quite so clearly, but even the infant is formally received into the congregation at baptism. The definiteness of the step when an adult convert is baptised is clear both from the Scripture
The conception of baptism as the ceremony of initiation gave rise to two thoughts in the minds of the Reformers. The first was when the sacrament was considered on the lower human level. Baptism was thought of as the entry into a human organisation, the church, with all that that entailed both in privilege and in responsibility. This was what Nowell had in mind when he described baptism as a 'certain entry' (Now. P.S. p. 207). Something of the same idea underlay the common description of baptism as a badge or cognisance. Latimer, although he wished to go on to bring out a deeper meaning, put this clearly: 'Like as our baptism is not only ordained for that cause, to know a Christian from a Turk or a heathen' (Lat. P.S. 2 p. 133). The Thanksgiving in the Order of Public Baptism included the thought: 'That it hath pleased thee to incorporate him into thy Holy church', and the expression of the Article 'grafted into the church' will also be remembered.

On the higher divine level the initiation was into the church as the family or household of God and the body of Christ. In other words the sacramental entry taught the adoption and sonship of the believer. Those who developed the signification of baptism along the lines of entry were led necessarily to this fuller thought. Baptism could never be regarded only as the historical sign of membership of an earthly society. The Continental Reformers had laid great stress upon this spiritual initiation.

At Zurich prayer was made at the baptism service for incorporation into Christ (Kidd D.C.R. p. 423). Calvin shared with Augustine the thought of baptism as an incorporation into Christ and an entry into the divine sonship (Beckmann p. 61, Niesel p. 209). Knox developed the same idea: 'By baptism once received, is signified that we (as well infants as others of age and discretion), being strangers from God by original sins, are received into his famiile and congregation' (Knox 4 p. 172). Elsewhere Knox had described baptism as the 'syne of our first entrance in the household of God our Father' (Ibid. p. 123).

Bullinger put the matter in a phrase very like that of the English Article: 'Baptism is a visible sign and seal of our ingrafting into the body of Christ' (Bull. P.S. 4 p. 399). Of the English writers Becon developed the theme most fully: 'Baptism', he wrote, 'declareth evidently unto me that whereas before I was an heathen, I am now become a Christian, a son of God, a member of that holy congregation' (Bec. P.S. 2 pp. 203-4). The closeness of the language to the statement in the Catechism will not be overlooked. Elsewhere Becon brought out the thought of adoption: 'Baptism is a continual sign that we be by adoption the sons of God, and heirs of everlasting glory' (Ibid. 3 p. 173). The Lady Vane learned from her washing that she was a child of God (Foxe 5 p. 416), and the confessor Samuel described baptism as the sign of adoption (Ibid. 7 p. 379).
The thought of incorporation into Christ could not stand alone. It opened up directly a world of theological meaning, both on the human side - repentance and faith - and on the divine - forgiveness, regeneration, and identity with Christ in his passion, death and resurrection. These themes naturally demand a separate treatment. The vital inter-connection between the meaning might at this point be emphasised, for formal analysis tends to break down that real unity which exists. But prominence ought to be given especially to the value placed upon baptism as a key to and the seal of the love and favour of God. When the Reformers thought of adoption, they thought of it not so much in terms of man’s decision as of God’s election. Baptism was a sign appointed by God himself as a testimony to the favour of God and as an outward assurance of the election and of the promises. This is important for two reasons. It formed the key-point in the Reformed defence of infant baptism against the Anabaptists. It also marks off the transcendentalist understanding of the Reformers from current humanistic interpretations.

Wherever baptism was seen to signify adoption, it was also seen to signify the love of God, and it was regarded as an objective assurance of that love. This emerges in a passage of Becon already quoted: ’Baptism declareth evidently unto me, that God doth so dearly love and favour me....’ (Bec.P.S.2 pp.203-4). Coverdale too thought that in baptism we have ‘an undoubted true token and evidence of the grace of God’ (Cov.P.S.2 p.36); and Jewel taught that baptism signifies for us the grace of God (Jew. P.S.3 p.470). In connecting baptism with the love and favour of God upon which the salvation of the Christian ultimately rests the Anglican writers were thoroughly at one with the Continentals. Luther had stressed the fact that the outward sign is a place of refuge and a source of strength in times of doubt. We can take courage when we say ‘I am baptised’, for then we rest not upon ourselves, but upon God, and the love and favour of God. Calvin too found in the sacrament the outward attestation of the divine benevolence (Cat.of the Ch.of Gen.p.33). Many of the confessions made the same point, linking up the favour of God with the saving work of Jesus Christ (Cf.the Huguenot Confession Kidd D.C.R. p.671). The later theologians, Olevian for example, brought the adoption and the love of God into relationship with the covenant, of which baptism was the sign and seal (See Heppe R.D. Bapt.i 4

The point was this. Baptism, as an outward reception into the church, pictured the inward reception into the family of God. But in view of the sinfulness of man, such a reception was only possible as a work, or as the gift of the free love and favour of God, fulfilled in and through the Saviour Christ. Thus baptism pointed ultimately to the source of adoption, the love of God. Since that love endures, in spite of man’s doubts and weakness, the sign of baptism constituted an assurance. It was as it were the enactment in symbol of the divine promise. Baptism was more than an outward rite of ecclesiastical importance. The outward initiation had evangelical significance as a testimony to the divine favour. The conception of baptism as testimony or assurance
was one of the great contributions made by the Reformers to the understanding of the sacrament (Fast.Dict.Art.Bapt.). It had particular importance in that it linked up baptism directly with the fundamental doctrines, and found for it a high place quite outside sacramentalist schemes.

3. Cleansing

The fact that baptism pointed to the divine favour extended to sinners carried with it inevitably the further thought of forgiveness or washing. If the whole act of baptism signified initiation or adoption, the matter in particular, water and the washing with water, gave rise to the further thought of cleansing, and consequent remission. Man the sinner could never be adopted into the divine family unless he was made clean from sin, and thus fitted for the society of God. The sacrament by its very nature signified that God himself had made possible such a cleansing and purifying of the soul by the atoning work of Jesus Christ, and that this purification was accomplished in the believer.

It has been seen that the Scholastic and Tridentine theology understood baptism for the most part in this way, although of course the stress was upon the effect of cleansing rather than upon the signifying of it (See Thomas 3 Qu.66). In the later Middle Ages the reforming Wycliffe had conceived of baptism in much the same way, and had pointed out that the outward washing of the body teaches an inward washing of the soul: 'Bodily baptism is a figure, how meanis souls shuld be baptisid fro synne both originall and actual,...Bodily washing of the child is not the end of baptising, but baptisme is a tokene of waishing of the soule fro synne...bi vertu taken of Cristi's deth' (Arnold 2 p.328). The majority of the Reformed writers at some time or another fastened upon this most obvious if not most profound meaning, as was only natural.

Luther toyed with the idea that baptism signified a washing of the soul. The thought was for him always secondary, however, although of course he connected baptism necessarily with the remission of sins (See Stange p.827). The fundamental thought of Luther was that sins were remitted not so much by the washing of the soul as by the act of dying and rising again. Water carried with it a thought of washing, but the main significance was to be sought elsewhere. Melanchthon was evidently taught by Luther in this respect, for when he connected baptism with remission, he did so in terms of regeneration rather than of cleansing (C.R.21 p.471).

Calvin took the picture of washing rather more seriously. In his exegesis of John 3.5 (Comm.on Jn.) he refused to allow that the water had more than a spiritual meaning. It pointed to the inward cleansing of the soul: 'By water is meant nothing more than the purification and invigoration which is produced by the Holy Spirit'. He developed the idea similarly in the Genevan Catechism (pp.86-7), but here he saw in the water a picture of the cleansing blood of Christ: 'Forgiveness is a kind of washing.
Water is a figure of the blood that cleanses. This favourite identification of the cleansing water of the sacrament with the cleansing blood of Christ is important because it forms a point of contact between the interpretation in terms of washing and the interpretation in terms of death and resurrection. It is interesting that a recent Roman Catholic, building upon the Tridentine statement, has made this same point: 'Baptism is not any kind of cleansing of the soul, but it is a cleansing of the soul which is a burial with Christ, and which is a resurrection with Christ. Baptism is not only the present, but also the past and the future (Dom Anscar Vonier Key to the Eucharist p.22). The Reformed inter-relating of washing and death was even clearer in Beza's statement: 'The signification of baptism is the aspersion or sprinkling of the death and passion, in remission of all our sins' (B.& P.S.p.47). Perhaps Calvin's of our spiritual washing with our new righteousness (Harm.Gosp.p.385) ought also to be noticed in this connection.

Many of the Reformed Confessional statements referred to this cleansing of the soul in the blood of Christ. The Heidelberg Catechism (69) developed the idea at some length: 'Christ has instituted this outward baptism in water, and promised thereby, that just as surely shall I be washed by his blood and Spirit from the impurity of my soul, that is to say, from all my sins, as outwardly I am washed with water, which cleanses away the filth of the body.' The Gallican Catechism (38) saw in the outward baptism a picture of the inward washing, but it did not bring out the connection with the blood of Christ. The idea was fully developed, however, in the Belgic Confession (34): 'Baptism signifies to us, that as water applied to us washes away the filth of the flesh, so the blood of Christ by the Holy Spirit does the same inwardly in the soul: not that the material water does it, but the sprinkling with the precious blood of the Son of God.' Some of the Anabaptist statements included an interpretation of baptism as a sign of the inward washing (See B.R.N.4 p.44 9), and the same thought may be found in Grebel (Muralt p.34). A later Confession cited by Burrage (E.E.D.2 p.196), also Anabaptist, gave a comprehensive explanation in which the idea of washing figured prominently: 'The whole dealing in the outward visible baptism of water setteth before our eyes, witnesseth and signifieth yt Jesus Christ doth inwardly baptise the repentant faithfull man in the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, washing ye soule from all pollution and synnes by vertue and merit of his blood shed, and by ye power and working of the holy ghost the true hevenly spiritual living water clen- seth the inward evill of ye soule, and maketh it hevenly, spirituall and living in true righteousness and goodness'.

In England baptism was interpreted by many as a spiritual washing. Even Tyndale, whose exposition was very similar to and almost certainly inspired by that of Luther, did not entirely neglect this aspect. 'The inward baptism of the heart' he
declared, 'is signified by the outward washing of the body' (Tynd. E.P.S. 2 p.12). Nowell made it a key point in his interpretation: 'As the uncleannesses of the body are washed away with water, so the spots of the soul are washed away by forgiveness of sins' (Now. P.S. p.208). The link with forgiveness ought to be noticed. Hooper put the same thought very much in the same way, except that he introduced the common identification of the water with Christ's blood: 'Baptism is an outward washing done with water to signify the inward washing of the Holy Ghost wrought through the blood of Christ' (Hoop. P.S. 2 p.46).

Becon too regarded the outward washing as a witness to the inward cleansing by the blood of Christ (Bec. P.S. 2 p.199), a washing and cleansing of the soul accomplished by the Spirit of God (Ibid. 3 p.616). Cheke and Grindal, in controversy with Watson, accepted the view that 'baptism signifies a washing which God does in the soul', but they denied that there was any washing of the soul in the strictly literal and grammatical sense, as Watson wished to maintain (Strype's Cheke pp.101 f.). Not only the relating with the atoning work of Christ, but also the stress upon the fact that it is the Holy Ghost who does the inward work of cleansing ought to be particularly noticed. This stress links up with the common idea of a twofold baptism, the outward and the inward, the baptism with water and the baptism with the Spirit. Of course, the blood also had its part here. Baptism in blood had always been accepted as a substitute for water baptism, and Christ himself had spoken of his baptism which he had to be baptised with. The verse in I John which speaks of the three witnesses, the Spirit, the water and the blood (I John 5.8) probably underlay a good deal of the work done in the interpretation of the baptismal symbolism along these lines. It is not without significance that while sometimes the water is taken to represent the blood of Christ, at others, and by the same writers, it is taken to represent the Holy Spirit. The point is that the outward washing of the body in water according to the appointed formula was seen to have a spiritual counterpart to which it pointed, the cleansing of the soul in the blood of Christ and by the Holy Spirit. Where martyrdom preceded baptism in water, a literal washing in blood for the testimony of Jesus Christ supplied the necessary figure. Where the spiritual work had been done by the Holy Ghost, but death intervened before there was the opportunity of water-baptism, the reality to which baptism witnessed still remained, although there was now no outward representation.

Both Ridley (P.S. p.275) and Cranmer (J.3 p.10 & p.49) amongst the leading Anglican Reformers laid great stress upon the outward rite as a picture of this inward purgation by the Holy Spirit, and Cranmer claimed that reverence ought to be paid to the water, not of course for what it was in itself, but for what it signified and represented. At a later date Sandys taught similarly (P.S. p.275), and Jewel also thought of Baptism as a spiritual washing. Jewel linked the cleansing activity of the Spirit with his regenerative work (Jew. P.S. 1 p.474, quoting Dionysius), but he also
brought it into the closest possible **with** connection with the blood: 'The signification and the substance of the sacrament is to show us, how we were washed with the passion of Christ' (Jew.P.S.2 p.1100). 'The outward washing or sprinkling doth represent the sprinkling and washing which is wrought within us: the water doth signify the blood of Christ' (Ibid.p.1101). Many of the writers, as they brought into relationship the outward and the inward aspects, were struck by the peculiar aptness of the matter chosen by God. Bullinger is a good example. 'The very sign' he wrote, 'resembleth the thing signified. Water cleanseth filth and quencheth thirst. So also it representeth the grace of God when it cleanseth his faithful ones from their sins, regenerateth and refresheth us with his Spirit' (Bull.P.S.4 p.329). Knox, it will be remembered, had also been struck by the special lessons to be found in the chosen element: 'That lyke as water outwardlye doth wash away filth, so by baptism we are cleansed in soul' (Knox 4 p.188); and he too had found in the water a figure of the cleansing blood; 'oure synis and filthiness being washed away in his blude' (Ibid.p.123). The Anglican Articles did not contribute anything to the understanding of baptism as a washing, although of course there was the usual relating to forgiveness or remission. The Prayer Book, however, contained several interesting and suggestive phrases, which pointed to the inward cleansing by the blood of Christ and in the power of the Spirit. Prayer was made for a washing and sanctifying by the Holy Ghost; allusion was made to the water and blood which flowed from the side of Christ; and God was requested to sanctify the baptismal water to the mystical (or inward) washing away of sin. The Puritans were not satisfied with these phrases, which certainly seem to be capable of a non-Reformed construction, but in the light of the generally accepted conception of a double cleansing, and the common interrelating of the water, the blood and the Holy Ghost, there seems to be little doubt that the framers of the service understood the words against a theological background thoroughly reformed.

**Baptism as a washing linked up on the one hand with adoption, which was only possible in and through the forgiveness of sins. On the other hand it is plainly related to that work of Christ which is the basis of the forgiveness, the atoning death and the resurrection. The Scriptural usage alone would suggest this relationship. It is strengthened by the close interconnection between the water and the blood which appears when the various aspects of bodily and spiritual cleansing are compared. But the very act of baptism, carefully considered, is in itself a representation of death and rising again. As the Reformers thought of baptism along these lines, with Romans 6 as their basic text, they came quickly to profoundest and most powerful interpretation.**

4. **The Death and Resurrection of Christ**

In the sixth chapter of Romans St. Paul had directly linked baptism with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The imagery was presumably this. As the Christian believer goes beneath the waters of baptism, and emerges to a new life, so Jesus Christ gave himself to death and the tomb, and rose again, or was raised
from the dead. The baptismal act had of course a direct personal signification for the believer, identification with Christ in his death and resurrection, but first it pointed to the actual atoning work of Christ himself. Baptism represented and proclaimed the cross.

Thus understanding of baptism was old. Cyril of Alexandria, in a passage already quoted, had noted the picture, and so too had Thomas. The Council of Trent, or rather the Catechism, also saw in baptism a reminder of a past event, the death and passion of our Lord, in conformity with Patristic and mediaeval teaching (Cat. T. 1, Qu. 8). Although the theme had not been worked out in any great detail, it obviously had a well-established place in the traditional theology of the church.

On the side of those who struggled against Rome it also had a long ancestry. In England Wycliffe had laid some stress upon this aspect of baptism: 'And so this water that we ben putte inne is token of Cristis tribulacioun fro his bygynnyng to his deth... the baptising of us in this water betokeneth biryng of Crist... Oure takyng up of this water betokeneth the rysinge of Crist fro deth' (Arnold 2 p. 228). Wycliffe definitely identified the act of going under the water with the death and burial of Christ, and the act of rising out of the water with the resurrection of Christ. The water was no longer seen as a picture of the cleansing blood, although even in that capacity too it did point to the atonement, but as a representation of death. Obviously these two interpretations were fundamentally inter-related, but they demand a completely different application of the symbolism and can hardly be developed side by side.

Luther, instructed from his favourite Epistle, worked out the old theme in greater detail and with fuller power and insight. On the whole, however, Luther, with his vivid sense of the need for personal faith, was far more interested in the believer's identification with Christ in death and resurrection than he was in the death and resurrection of Christ himself, so far, at least, as the symbolism of the baptismal act was concerned. He did hint, however, at the understanding of baptism as a representation of the atoning work. Stange has severely criticised Luther's handling of this theme, on the ground that the relationship between baptism and the death of Christ which he seeks to establish is only allegorical. The Passion is as it were another type of baptism, side by side with the Flood and the Red Sea. This criticism is surely over-severe. Luther did find in baptism primarily a representation of our death and resurrection with Christ, but the death and resurrection of the believer were only possible because Christ himself had died and been raised again. Thus the Passion was not a type of Baptism, but baptism was a representation and proclamation of the Passion. At the back of Luther's thinking was surely the Scriptural conception of the Passion as the true baptism, of which the outward sacrament was the significant sign, and to which all believers must conform (See Stange pp. 800).
The Swiss Reformers too related baptism directly to the death and resurrection of Christ. Even Zwingli found in it this significance (C.R.4 p.284). Calvin, like Luther, was more concerned with the experience of the believer, but he too connected baptism and the work of Christ closely: 'We are baptised into the death of Christ' (Mut. Consent p.148). The Anabaptists had a low view of the sacraments, but they too accepted the common symbolism. The Article of Schlatten referred specifically to the death of Christ (Muralt p.35), although again rather within the context of the believer's personal experience. Little specific mention was made of the historical death and resurrection of Christ in the Confessional statements upon baptism, but again the thought of the believer's identification with Christ appeared. It was not emphasised however.

The Anglican theologians followed very closely the teaching of the Continentals. Tyndale's thought obviously derived from Luther. Tyndale did not stress so much the death of Christ as our entry into that death, but he did find a picture of the former too, at any rate by implication: 'we are to be tised to believe in the death of Christ, and to die with him' (Tynd. P.S.1 p.359). The exposition of Frith was very similar (B.R.p.93), and Becon too saw an incidental representation of Christ's work: 'Baptism doth declare unto me that I am buried with Christ' (Bec. P.S.2 p.205). Other works to which reference might be made are Cranmer's Catechism - purely Lutheran of course - and the interesting 'Reformatio Legum', which saw in the baptismal act a commendation of the death and resurrection of Christ: 'Baptism is the sacrament in which our new birth is signified to us by the external aspersion of water...By our going under the water and rising again out of it, the death and burial of Christ are commended to us, and his raising again and restoration to life' (F.L.p.23). In the Abbey Disputation shortly after the accession of Elizabeth the Protestant party contended that the two sacraments, as living words, were as it were sermons of the death and resurrection of Christ, assuring us of something that had been done for us, as well as symbolising something that we ought to do (Burnet 3.3). Of other writers Cooper saw in baptism primarily a representation of death (Pte. Mass p.203), and Hutchinson stated plainly that baptism is a figure of the death of Christ (Hutch. P.S.p.175).

We may conclude that on the whole not a very great deal of attention was paid to the idea that the death and resurrection of Christ in baptism, but that these events stood always in the background. They were the historical reality to which the subjective experience pictured in the sacrament must conform. For the Reformers baptism, like the supper, was an evangelical sign. It proclaimed the gospel. Properly understood, it had within itself the whole content of the gospel. If baptism was invitation, the sign of something which man ought to do, it was also ultimately proclamation, the setting forth of the act of God.

An objection might be made that the Reformers were reading into the ecclesiastical rite something which was not really there at all. Against this it may be stated that even accepting a
purely historical derivation, which the Reformers did not do; the association with death can hardly be escaped. The Jewish baptisms contained the idea of the end of an old and the beginning of a new life, and such rites as the Taurobolium were washings into death. The Reformers themselves did not look at the matter historically, but in the light of the divine revelation and the divine acts. Baptism was a sacrament of the Gospel instituted by God himself. It ought to be understood and could only be understood within the context of the whole Gospel, in the Old Testament as well as in the New. As Scripture had to be compared with Scripture, so the Gospel sacraments had to be compared with the word of the Gospel. Otherwise their true significance would be lost. The objection has no point for those who accept the Reformed understanding and receive the Christian religion as a revelation from God rather than as a human faith. On these terms it is both legitimate and necessary to read into the sacrament the full story of God's salvation. The ultimate legitimacy of such interpretation depends upon the basic approach to the Christian faith.

5. Conversion and Regeneration

The discussion of baptism as a figure of the death and resurrection of Christ has prepared the way already for an understanding of it as a picture of the entry of the believer into that atoning work. This was of course the insight of Romans 6, and the majority of the interpretations along such line either quote that passage directly or refer to it in an unmistakable way. The symbolism was usually worked out along the obvious lines, that submersion beneath the water represents the identification of the believer with Christ in death and burial, by an act of faith, and that re-emergence from the water represents identification with Christ in his resurrection. This theme clearly underlies the great services of adult baptism in the early church, when conversion to Christ was a definite and meaningful step out of an old life into a new. It will be noticed that for the proper enacting of the sign a full immersion into the water was required, a point so vigorously emphasised by Luther, but where such full immersion was not practicable the placing of the baptised person under water e.g. by application of water to the head did partially, if not perfectly, fulfil the sign.

This idea of identification with Christ by faith was implied in the older theology. The common description of baptism as regeneration pointed to it. Only in the Reformation period, when the doctrine of justification by faith re-emerged, did it find a full exposition. Wycliffe, however, had prepared the way, feeling after the idea that baptism stands for a vivid personal experience in those who are the recipients of it: 'The baptising of us in this water betokeneth...how we ben biried with him fro synne that rengneth in this worrld. Our takynge up of this water betokeneth...how we shulden rise goostli in clennesse of newe life' (Arnold 2 p.258). It may be noticed that where baptism was understood in this way two things were demanded from the standpoint of personal religious life: repentance and faith. Repentance corresponded to the dying to sin, faith to the rising again in newness of life. The lessons of repentance and faith
are commonly read into baptism, but they are not always brought
into relation with the death and rising again of Christ, of which
they are the counterpart, the other side, in individual spiritual
experience.

Luther, of course, was the man who seized upon this aspect of
baptismal teaching, and he related it directly to his evangelical
understanding and experience of sin, of conviction of sin, of
repentance and of faith in Christ. For Luther baptism was first
a destroying, a drowning, of sin and of the old Adam. The old
man of sin was plunged beneath the baptismal waters and done away.
But if baptism represented death, it also represented life. The
old man perished, but the new man, the man of faith, was raised
up, fashioned after Christ and capable of doing works pleasing to
God. Baptism signified then a spiritual death and a spiritual
resurrection in the grace of God: the drowning of the old man in
us, who was conceived and born in sin, and the emergence of the
new man, born in grace (See W.A.2 p.727). Of course this drowning
and raising up again was not an actual moral process which took
place in baptism: it was a spiritual death and resurrection by
faith which the sacrament symbolised. Faith fulfilled the meaning,
for by faith in Christ the old life of sin, of which the believer
repented, was reckoned dead, and the new life in grace and in the
power of God was counted as a possession. The significance for
the moral life of the Christian, which was very real, must be
considered separately.

It may be noticed that Stange in his acute analysis has discerned
different and contradictory trends in Luther's exposition. At
some points Luther appeared to think of submersion as a picture of
death in sin - the total subjection of the life to evil. In that
case the water of baptism represented sin which kills man. But else­
where submersion was a picture of death to sin, the killing off
of the old man by identification with Christ. In that case the
water represents that which kills sin, not sin itself. The contra­
diction is more apparent than real, because one of the great less­
sons which emerges from Luther's exposition is that sin is self-
destructive - in the providence of God it destroys itself. Luther
also had different conceptions of the symbolism of resurrection.
In some works he thought that it was represented in the giving of
the new name, the addressing by God and the adoption. In other
places, however, he fell back upon the more common, and in
Stange's opinion less satisfactory view that the coming out of
the water signified the spiritual renewal (See Stange pp.758 f.).

Luther's understanding found favour with the Anabaptists,
who naturally and to some extent properly identified the death and
resurrection of the soul with their experience of adult repentance
and conversion to God. Thus Grebel wrote: 'Scripture tells us
that baptism signifies...that we are dead and ought to die to
sin, and that we should walk in newness of life' (Muralt p.34).
The Council of Schlatten decided similarly that baptism should be
given to all those who walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ,
being buried with him in death, that they might also be resurr­
ected together with him.12 In the Netherlands the Anabaptists put
a similar construction upon the baptismal ceremony: 'When we are baptised, we are buried with Christ in the font' (B.R.N.4 p.44) 13

The Swiss Reformers took up the same point. Zwingli did not lay great emphasis upon this aspect of baptism, but he did not entirely neglect it, quoting Romans 6. Zwingli was more concerned, however, to bring out the moral implications, looking upon baptism as the sign which pledged to a new life (C.R.4 p.245). 14 Calvin developed the Lutheran theme with his usual lucidity and comprehensiveness. He taught that 'baptism shows us our mortification in Christ and our new life in him' (Inst.4,15,5); and he found in the sacrament an assurance 'that we are so united to Christ as to be partakers of all his blessings' (Ibid.4,15,7).

Calvin was careful to relate this interpretation to the Protestant doctrine of justification. By faith the baptised man was already dead and risen, but in experience he entered into the death and resurrection progressively: 'Baptism indeed tells us that our Pharaoh is indeed drowned and sin mortified...but only so as not to have dominion over us' (Ibid.4,15,11). Beza described baptism as 'the mortification and sepulture, or burying of our old man', finding in immersion the picture of death and burial, and in the rising out of the water the triumph over corruption and death (B.E.S.p.47). 15 Of the Confessional statements the Genevan Catechism was the fullest: 'A figure of death is set before us when water is poured upon the head, and the figure of a new life when, instead of remaining under the water, we only enter it for a moment as a kind of grave out of which we instantly rise' (p.86). A point to notice is the instantaneous nature of the death and resurrection by faith, corresponding to the transition from death to life in the Gospel of John. The Helvetic Confession noted the inward regeneration and renovation accomplished, or better signified, in baptism, but did not speak directly of a death and burial, or give any guidance upon the manner of representation.

The early Anglican interpretations bear unmistakable imprints of the influence of Luther. Especially was this the case with Tyndale, whose works some Lutheran scholars have come to regard as translations or free adaptations of the works of Luther rather than original compositions (See Jacobs). Certainly the writings of Tyndale upon the signification of baptism read like free English renderings of Luther, although of course allowance must be made for the family likeness so striking in Reformed works upon generally agreed doctrines. Tyndale connected baptism directly with repentance: 'Baptism is a sign of repentance signifying that I must repent of evil, and believe to be saved therefrom by the blood of Christ' (Tynd.P.S.3 p.171). Repentance in turn suggested a death to sin, a death which formed the connecting link between the subjective experience in the believer, repentance, and the objective reality upon which salvation rested, the death of Christ. Baptism was a picture then of the death and burial of Christ and of the entry of the repentant believer into that death and burial: 'The plunging into the water signifies that we die. And the pulling out again signifies that we rise again with Christ into that new life' (Ibid.1 p.253).
From this point Tyndale went on to discuss baptism as a picture of sanctification as well as of justification. The two naturally go together, but for the purposes of a clear presentation a formal division will be made and that aspect considered separately.

Frith had a conception of the sacrament essentially the same as that of Tyndale. He had nothing new to say, although he summed up the teaching in a neat sentence: 'We are dead with Christ from sin, we are risen with Christe from our sines' (B.R. p. 93). During the early years of the Reformation in England this Lutheran understanding laid firm hold of the reformed theology. Possibly its deep grounding in Pauline thought accounted for its ready acceptance. It may be found in the book 'The Summe of the Holye Scripture', from which many heretical propositions were extracted and condemned by Warham. The passage in question ran as follows:

'And therefore we be plonged under the water, to thintent that by the maner of spekinge we shuld be here deed and buryed, as wryteth sainte Paule' (Folio iii). It also appeared in the Book of Ceremonies quoted by Strype (E.M.1,2 pp.411 f.): 'By the same is signified the death and resurrection of Christ, and moreover that we should daily mortify our evil desires. The mystery of baptism agreeth well to the time (Easter)'. The King's Book taught similarly, quoting Romans 6 (p.45). In Cranmer's Catechism a full exposition of the Lutheran teaching was given: 'By baptism we die with Christ, and are buried (as it were) in his bloude and death, that we shulde suffer afflichions and death'. The symbolism of the sacrament was seen to be that of a death to sin, and the water was taken to represent either the blood or death i.e. that by which sin is destroyed (pp. 184 ff.).

The Catechisms and formularies had little to say along these lines. Nowell mentioned the point, but very briefly: 'The mortifying of our nature is expressed by dipping in the water, when we by and by rise again out of the water, the new life is represented!' (Now.P.S.p.208). Ponet's Catechism had a similar short mention: 'Baptism is also a figure of our burial in Christ, and that we should be raised up again with him in a new life!' (See Goode E.B.E.p.209). A fuller exposition was given in the Reformatio Legum in a passage already cited in part in the previous section. The Article described baptism as the sign of regeneration, but did not develop the theme of identification with Christ. The Prayer Book, however, had not a few passages which bring out this deep signification of the sacrament. In this respect it may be compared with the other Reformation Liturgies. The Zurich Order, for example, contained the prayer that the light of faith might be kindled in the baptised person 'whereby he may be incorporate into thy Son and with him be buried in death, and raised again to newness of life!' (Kidd D.C. R.p.423). The Genevan Liturgy had a passage in which the repentance professed was related to mortification, and the forgiveness promised to renewal of life. The exhortation in Knox's Liturgy had also something to say along these lines, but rather in connection with sanctification than with conversion. In the
English Prayer Book many passages bring out the Reformed teaching at this point with great forcefulness, especially the Prayer of Thanksgiving: 'And humbly we beseech thee to grant, that he, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin...'; and the Exhortation to the Godparents which immediately follows: 'Remembering always, that Baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him; that, as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptised, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness....'. The Collect for Easter Even, although not of the sixteenth century, brings out excellently the interconnection between baptism, the death of Christ and the death to sin of the believer, in the best Reformed tradition: 'Grant, 0 Lord, that as we are baptised into the death of thy blessed Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, so by the continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him; and that through the grave, and gate of death, we may pass to our joyful resurrection'.

Of course, in these liturgical writings the main stress is upon death to sin in sanctification (as with Knox) rather than in conversion.

The main Edwardian and Elizabethan theologians displayed a greatly varying interest in this line of interpretation. Some were content merely to describe baptism as a sign of regeneration without developing the symbolism in detail. Hooper briefly mentioned the fact that baptism 'is a sacrament or sign...that the baptised creature should die from sin' (Hoop. P.S. I p. 74). Cranmer spoke of the Holy Ghost spiritually regenerating the person that is baptised 'which is signified in the said baptism' (Cran. P.S. I p. 304). Bullinger put it in much the same way when he referred to 'the renewing of the Holy Ghost, whereof the fountain of water is a sign' (Bull. P.S. I p. 261). Sandys looked upon the sacrament as a sign of the new spiritual birth (Sand. P.S. p. 253), and Jewel related it to the blood of Christ, and to our resurrection to a clean life, although he was thinking of it here in terms of cleansing rather than of death and renewal (Jew. P.S. 3 p. 470). Rogers took baptism to be a sign or seal of the regeneration, or the new birth of Christ (Rog. P.S. p. 2876).

After Tyndale Becon was the writer who expounded the point most fully. Becon thought that we could look back to our baptism as the witness of spiritual renewal: 'Baptism doth declare unto me that I am dead unto sin...that I have crucified the old man and put off the old Adam, that I am buried with Christ. Baptism preacheth unto me (Note again the favourite concept of the sacrament as a visible word) not only the mortification of the flesh, but also the vivification of the spirit, that I should put on the new man, walk in a new life' (Bec 2 p. 205). Again, Becon wrote of baptism: 'Which water certifieth our faith in the inward washing and cleansing of our souls by the Spirit of God, a token of our regeneration, of the mortification of our flesh, of our burial with Christ; of our
resurrection unto new life' (Ibid. 3 p. 616). Cooper might also be noticed. He was not a theologian of eminence, although the Marprilate Tracts gave an unwanted notoriety to his conduct. Attacking the Private Mass Cooper had occasion to develop the favourite themes that sacraments are normally given the name of the thing signified. He took the instance of baptism, which Paul in Romans had called a burial, a death in Christ. His aim was to show that when Paul spoke of baptism as a death, he meant that the outward rite had this inward and spiritual signification (Pte. Mass p. 203).

Clearly the Anglican Reformers shared the common Reformed understanding at this deeper Pauline level. The impulse came mainly perhaps from a Lutheran source. The theme was developed most fully by those who were directly under Lutheran influence. Possibly its prominence in the Prayer Book is due in part to the very strong influence of the Lutheran Orders upon Cranmer, although of course this interpretation underlies the traditional liturgies. But the Lutheran understanding, and Luther's emphasis upon the signification of the sacrament rather than upon its effects, were common to all the Reformed bodies. Different theologians naturally gave to different interpretations a different emphasis. In the acceptance of the broad truths there was a general concurrence.

It would be an exaggeration to say that in this respect the Reformers actually opposed the teaching of Rome. The thought of baptism as a death and burial with Christ was implicit in all Christian theology. The difference was that the Reformers brought into prominence what the sacrament taught, the Romanists what the sacrament did. As will be seen later, the Reformers themselves did not deny that something was actually done. Similarly, the Romanists held that something was taught. But the difference in emphasis is important, for it indicates a fundamental difference in theological approach.

One last point may be made. In the previous section the possible derivation of baptism from Jewish or even pagan sources was mentioned as an argument in favour of rather than against the connection with death. The same holds good of the connection of baptism symbolically with an inward death and resurrection in the participant. The initiate into the Mysteries experienced an emotional if not an ethical entry into death and beginning of new life. The argument is, however, double-edged. Many modern writers have felt that baptism was originally a simpler rite - probably not practised by Christ himself at all - which Paul, with his vivid mystical experience, and possibly his knowledge of the mystery-rites, adopted and adapted along the lines familiar to converts in the early Gentile world. But a criticism of this kind would have meant little or nothing to the sixteenth century Reformers. For one thing - this was especially true of Luther - they shared the experience of Paul. They were thus able to enter wholeheartedly into his theological understanding of baptism. For another, they accepted the Biblical statements as a divine revelation. When baptism was in question, it was discussed as a divinely instituted sacrament, not as a historical rite. This sacrament had to be
understood in the light of God-given Scripture, not of historic parallels, and not even of the individual experience of a Peter or a Paul. Even from the historical point of view there is something to be said for the Reformed view. If Paul was influenced by his own experience and by his knowledge of the mysteries, he was surely influenced primarily by the Old Testament, of which he saw in Christ the fulfillment. The problem of historical derivation simply did not arise in the case of the Reformers, however, for it was settled in advance. Their interpretation of the sacrament in terms of conversion is embedded in their understanding of Christianity in terms of revelation.

6. Sanctification

The Christian life forms a whole. Theologically it is both necessary and right to distinguish various aspects or stages. Ultimately such a separation is impossible. Luther discovered this fact when he worked out afresh the Pauline doctrine of justification. The crying need of his day was to distinguish justification before God from sanctification in daily living. Upon this distinction the Reformed theology rests. But neither Luther nor the later theologians, with a few exceptions, could or would develop this distinction into the absolute one of antinomianism. Justification led on necessarily to sanctification. The faith which justified was the faith which brought forth fruits of righteousness. The Homilies and the Articles in England make this perfectly clear.

The same fundamental unity of Christian experience appears in the interpretation of baptism. Baptism was the sacrament of conversion: the act of dying by faith to sin and rising again by faith to righteousness. This act was the work of a moment. It could already be said that the believing man had passed from death to life, and baptism represented that passage. But in practical experience this act was the beginning of a process, a process worked out only over the whole course of earthly life. And baptism signified and represented the process as well as the act. It was the sacrament of conversion, but it was also the sacrament of daily mortification and renewal. It spoke of the beginning of the Christian life, the decision whereby the life of sin came to an end, and the Christian life came into being. It also spoke of continuance, the process whereby the old man was put off and the new put on. The symbolism was the same: death and resurrection. But the application was different, for now it was the whole life upon earth that was pictured. In his baptism the Christian man could learn not only how his life in Christ should begin, but also how it must develop and continue to the very day of death and judgment. The meaning of baptism could not be exhausted while earthly life remained.

Luther was pre-occupied with the doctrine of justification, but he preserved a fine sense of proportion here, one or two extravagant passages notwithstanding. In his discussions of baptism, especially in the famous Sermon, he showed how clearly he had grasped the ethical signification of the sacrament. 'The whole
of this life', he wrote, 'is a spiritual baptism which con­tinues until death' (W.A.2 p.728). He who is baptised is sentenced to death. The spiritual birth and the increase in grace and righteousness begins truly in baptism, but it goes forward until death, and indeed to the last day' (W.A.2 p.728). In the Smaller Catechism he expressed the same thought in simple and forcible language: 'Baptism signifies that the old Adam in us, with all sins and evil lusts, ought to be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and that a new man should daily come forth and rise up, living eternally before God in righteousness and holiness' (W.A.30,1 p.312). Luther worked out this theme with great power. He saw in baptism a call to discipline and consecration. Fasting, for example, was a means to further the work of baptism, by mortification of the flesh. But he also saw in it an explanation of suffering. The Christian had to endure tribulation, but in the providence of God that tribulation worked mortification, and thus furthered the work of baptism: Thus it follows that baptism makes sufferings, and even death itself useful and helpful' (W.A.2 p.734). Luther could even conclude that those who came to an early death were blessed of God, for they achieved quickly that which their baptism signified: 'The shorter the life, the more rapid the fulfillment of baptism' (W.A.6 p.535).

The Swiss Reformers did not work out this aspect with the same daring and originality, but they did with Luther interpret baptism as a symbol and representation of the Christian discipleship. Zwingli saw in the sacrament a picture both of our washing by Christ and also of our adherence to him i.e.our pledging to live according to his rule (C.R.4 p.245, and see Werhle Z.p.330). Calvin gave lucid expression to the ideas already put forward by Luther: 'We ought to hold that we are baptised for the mortification of our flesh, which is begun in baptism, is prosecuted every day, and will be finished when we depart from this life to go to the Lord' (Inst.4,15,11). A similar passage occurred in the Catechism of Geneva (Kidd.D.C.R.p.569, and cf.Zurich.Ibid.p.423). The Anabaptists also developed this aspect. Schlatten spoke of a walk in the resurrection of Jesus Christ (Murlat p.35); Grebel of a death to sin, a burial with Christ and a resurrection to new life (Ibid.p.34); and the Dutch Corte Instruction of the daily death to sin (B.R.N.4 p.44). The teaching of the Liturgies has already been seen in section 5, especially that of Knox, who taught very fully that in experience regeneration 'stands chiefly in these two points, in mortification, that is to say, a resisting of the rebellious lustes of the flesh, and in newness of life, whereby we continually strive to walk in that pureness and perfection wherewith we are clad in Baptisme'.

That baptism constituted a challenge to sanctified living - the working out practically of that which by faith was already accomplished- had already been proclaimed in England in the fourteenth century. Wycliffe had taught clearly that baptism not only pictures the tribulation of Christ, but also, 'techith how we shulden live here so' (Arnold 2 p.258). 'Sin is dead', Wyc-
Tynne proclaimed, "So shulde we kepe us fro synne after", he concluded (Ibid.). Tyndale revived this teaching in the sixteenth century, manifestly under the influence of Luther. He held that baptism was a call to die with Christ and to be raised with him, to mortify the flesh and to be revived in spirit (Tynd.P.S.1 p.245). Like Luther, he understood the tribulations which afflict the Christian in terms of the mortification which is signified in baptism: "Tribulation is our right baptism" (Ibid.p.138). Tyndale connected the process of renewal with true repentance. In that sense baptism might rightly be called a baptism to repentance: 'Baptism signifieth unto us repentance, and the mortifying of our unruly members and the body of sin' (Ibid.p.426). He learned from baptism, with its connotation of suffering and death, that the Christian life is one of serious, life-long warfare: 'Wherefore we have enough to do all our life-long to tame our bodies, and to compel our members to obey the Spirit, and not the appetites; that thereby we might be like unto Christ's death and resurrection, and might fulfill our baptism, which signifieth the mortifying of sin, and the new life of grace' (Ibid.p.500).

It is evident from the writings of the period that this connecting of baptism with the Christian life met with little opposition and made its way rapidly in England during the earliest years of the Reformation. Frith, of course, echoed Luther as Tyndale had done: 'Baptism signifies the mortification of our olde Adam, and the rising up of our new man. A Christen man's life is nothing else save a continual baptism' (B.R. pp.93 f.). Baptism in other words was a call to act as well as the ratification of a choice. It told of what God had done, and it also summoned to a complementary activity on the part of man, not only the entering into the Christian life, but the continuing in it to the very end. This point was made in the 'Summe of the holye Scripture': 'When we be baptysed, we betoken that we wyl dye with Christ, we betoken, I say, that we wyl dye as unto the lyfe passed as touching oure synnes and eyll concupiscences, and that, as sayeth S.Paul, we must walke in a newe lyfe' (Folio i). The conservative King's Book did not quarrel with this interpretation, but found a place for it, and the Book of Ceremonies also explained that we learned by our baptism 'that we should daily mortify our evil desires and corrupt affections, and so, washed from sin, walk in a new, pure and godlye life and conversation' (Strype E.M.1,2 pp.411 f.). Cranmer's Catechism introduced a purely Lutheran statement, but it added only perhaps a greater forcefulness of language and expression: 'For baptysme, and the dypping into the water, doth betoken that the olde Adam, with all his synne and evil lustes ought to be drowned and kyilled by daily contrition and repentance; and that by renewyng of the holy gost we ought to ryse with Christ from the death of synne and to walke in a neu lyfe' (p.192).

The individual Reformers did not all lay the same stress upon this aspect of baptismal teaching, but this was because other aspects appealed to them more strongly, not because they disputed this one. Nowell made only a brief mention of mortification: 'The mortifying of our nature is expressed by the dipping in
water' (Now. P. S. p. 208). Cranmer and Ridley did not mention it at all, but then they did not devote much attention to baptism as such. The same was the case with Calfhill, Sandys, Hutchinson and Coverdale, who all approached baptism rather from another angle. Jewell discussed the sacrament thoroughly, but he preferred to expound it more as a washing, not so much as a death and resurrection. In this he may be compared with Bullinger, in whose Decades the renewing of the Holy Ghost was thought of mainly as a cleansing. Rogers, tied as he was to the Article, found no scope to develop the ethical challenge implicit in the thought of baptism as the sacrament of regeneration.

Hooper may be noticed as one who did briefly touch upon the significance of baptism for the living of the Christian life. He said little more, however, than that the baptised creature should die from sin (Hoop. P. S. I p. 74). This included both the act of faith and the process of obedience. Becon was more explicit. He found in the sacrament the sign of mortification and of vivification, Baptism was a summons to battle. It put us in remembrance 'that we ought valiantly to fight against the Devil, the world and the flesh, to mortify all unclean lusts, to die unto sin, and to rise again new men' (Bec. F. S. 2 p. 508). Latimer, as a preacher of righteousness, appealed to baptism in the same way. It was for him both a token of the cleansing accomplished by God and also a call to personal cleansing: to 'away the old Adam, and to put on Christ, to receive him with a pure heart, and to study to go forward in all goodness, according unto his will and commandment' (Lat. P. S. 2 p. 133).

The Liturgy gave to this line of teaching perhaps its fullest expression — indeed it seemed always to be more prominent in the devotional and catechetical writings. The main passages from the Baptismal Service, the Thanksgiving Prayer and the Exhortation, have already been quoted, but the same teaching is found in the Sentence Prayers before the Administration: 'Grant that all carnal affections may die in them, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may die in them. Grant that they may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph, against the devil, the world, and the flesh'. The words of Reception called for a fight against sin under the sign of the cross, and the Exhortation urged finally that there might be a 'continual mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living'.

Three comments might be made. Firstly there was nothing radically new in this Reformed interpretation. The Reformers themselves would have been the last to claim, or to wish to claim that there was. They aimed always to get back rather than to go forward. This lay clearly in the Apostolic writings. It was implicit in all the expositions of baptism. What there was with the Reformers was a new and powerful emphasis, an emphasis so strong that it gave to the Reformed discussion a freshness and originality lacking in the writings of traditionalists. Secondly, the ethical teaching derived from baptism was linked up closely.
with the theological or the evangelical. This appears at other points in Reformed doctrine, but nowhere more clearly than in the discussion of baptism. Baptism presented a tremendous ethical challenge, but it was not a challenge in the void. It was a challenge upon the basis of the salvation of God, also represented in the sacrament. Baptism called forward into the Christian life because it also pointed backward to the work of Christ and to the entry into Christ by faith.

Third, Luther with his profound understanding was led by the thought of baptism as the representation of death to an ethical and evangelical interpretation of suffering. In this he outstripped the Anglican Reformers, except for those who like Tyndale largely reproduced his work. Just occasionally glimpses of this Lutheran view do perhaps appear in the Anglicans, but on the whole it was allowed to lapse. Certainly no writer developed the theme. Indeed, it is broadly true that the writers who stood most directly under the influence of Luther himself were the ones who had the most vivid sense of the bearing of baptism upon the Christian life. That is not to say that the theologians of the Reformed school did not accept the Lutheran understanding, or that they gave no expression to it at all in their works. What is meant is that they did not grasp or express it with the same fervour or boldness, at any rate within the context of the death-resurrection theme.

7. Death and Resurrection

Baptism illuminated and symbolised the Christian life both in its beginning and also in its development or continuance. Its meaning was evangelical and it was also ethical. But in experience the Christian man is called upon to undergo not only a spiritual and moral death and resurrection but also a physical. The new Christian life is begun with trust in Christ. It is worked out in daily consecration. It is only consummated, however, when the temporal gives way to the eternal. Thus, it might be said that baptism, picturing the Christian life as it dies as one of death and new life, has a meaning which extends to the end of the Christian life on earth and its fulfilment in eternity. As the Tridentines put it: 'Baptism gives no obscure intimation of eternal life also' (Cat. T. 2, 1, Qu. 8). The meaning was not only evangelical and ethical, but also eschatological.

Here again it was Luther who struck the note which all the other Reformers were to sound. And it was Luther again who developed the theme with the greatest originality and profundity. Already, discussing the moral bearing of baptism, Luther had shown that the process of mortification and renewal must last until the day of death and judgment. From this point it was but a step to the interpretation of baptism as also a sign of literal dissolution:

'The meaning of baptism, the death or drowning of sin, can never be fully worked out in this life, only with the death of the body and complete dissolution' (V. A. 2, p. 723). Baptism was thus a sign of the full and final entry into the work of Christ in the life of the resurrection. It ought perhaps to be noticed that
Stange (ut supra) accuses Luther of wavering between an ethical and eschatological view. This seems to be rather unjust, for the two are not mutually exclusive, but closely interconnected — just as the conceptions of the kingdom of God as present and moral on the one hand, future and eschatological on the other are also not exclusive but complementary. If Luther saw both aspects, even without always distinguishing clearly between them, it is a testimony to the comprehensiveness of his thought rather than to its confusion.

Luther did not stop at this point, but went on to perhaps his most illuminating thought. He learned that death too has its part in the purpose of God. It is not a master but a servant. It is the necessary result of sin, but in the providence of God it is also that which destroys sin. Because of death sin becomes self-destructive. Luther thought it wrong to find bitterness in death itself. Death was only bitter because sin did not die willingly. But when sin was fully destroyed with the death of the body, the way was open for the final entry into the life of righteousness. Sufferings and death were useful then; 'They cannot but help forward the work of baptism.... Sin does not die willingly, and that is why it makes death so bitter and horrible. But merciful and mighty is God, for sin brought death and with its own work it is itself destroyed' (W.A.2 p.734).

Zwingli never attained to this deeper understanding of his contemporary, and he had little or nothing to say upon the eschatological significance of baptism. The Swiss Anabaptists saw something of it, for Grebel took notice of the promise of resurrection contained in the sign (Mural 34). When the Schlatten article spoke of rising again with Christ it might also have had in mind the resurrection to eternity, but this is not certain. Calvin briefly formulated the teaching of Luther when he asserted that 'the work of baptism (mortification) will only be finished when we depart from this life to go to the Lord' (Inst. 4, 15, 11). Calvin did not develop the theme as Luther had done, and the deep insights of Luther are missing in his balanced and judicious statement. The Confessions found little place for the eschatological sense, referring to baptism as a spiritual washing or as a spiritual and moral regeneration. No doubt the thought of the final resurrection lay at the back of the Reformed thinking, but it seldom found open expression. Certainly the suggested interpretation of death in the light of baptism was never fully worked out.

What was true of the Continentals was true in large measure of the Anglicans as well. Even Tyndale, who followed Luther closely, emphasised the ethical teaching to the almost complete exclusion of the eschatological. One or two of his utterances could perhaps be interpreted taken to refer to literal physical death, for inst-
-ance, the assertion that the plunging in the water signifies that we die (Tynd. P. S. 1 p. 245); but here the context suggests a moral and spiritual dying only. He does connect baptism with tribulation and death in a passage already referred to (Ibid. 1 p. 138), and this time he probably did have physical death in mind as well. In other places, however, Tyndale thought of the mortifying of the sinful Adam. He never unequivocally linked up the baptism of a believer with the final death of the body and resurrection to eternity.

Becon did find in baptism an eschatological significance, for he linked it up directly with eternal life. He did not approach the matter quite from the same angle as Luther had done. Baptism contained the promise of eternal life because it was the sign and seal of the covenant of God: 'Thy baptism is a sign of this covenant, if thou wilt believe and be baptised, that he will give thee everlasting life freely, and never forsake thee' (Bec. P. S. 2 p. 573). In other words, Becon saw in baptism not so much a representation of our final destiny as a token of the divine favour by which it was assured. At one point he did approximate to the Lutheran view: when he described baptism as 'a token of our regeneration, of the mortification of our flesh; of our burial with Christ; of our resurrection unto new life' (Ibid. 3 p. 612). It is possible, however, that even here he used the three phrases—mortification, burial and resurrection to describe the three aspects of the spiritual regeneration, not the three-tenses of salvation, past with conversion, present in sanctification and future in at the resurrection of the dead.

The Lutheran view found expression in Cranmer's Catechism, but this was of course the translation of a Lutheran work: 'We are buried in Christ's blood and death' the Catechism ran, 'that we shulde suffer afflictions and death' (pp. 184 f.). At any rate Luther's view was known in England, and indeed it seems to have made some appeal to Cranmer himself. Only in one passage did Cranmer develop anything like a theology of baptism, and that incidentally, but he had clearly apprehended the eschatological significance: 'What Christian man', he asked, 'will say ... that baptism representeth not unto us the high state of our glorification, and the perfect redemption of our bodies in the general resurrection' (Cran. P. S. 1 p. 176). Hutchinson too saw in baptism an assurance of the resurrection, and he alleged in favour of this connection the old custom of baptising over graves: 'Were not many Christian men baptised over dead men's graves, in the primitive Church, in token that the dead should rise again?' (Hutch. P. S. p. 138). The Thanksgiving Prayer in the Baptism Service brought out this significance of the sacrament very clearly and forcibly, making petition that as the baptised person 'is made partaker of the death of thy Son, he may also be partaker of his resurrection, so that finally, with the residue of thy holy Church, he may be an inheritor of thine everlasting kingdom'.

It is a matter of regret that more attention was not paid by some writers at least to this interesting aspect of baptismal doctrine. There was no breach of Reformed solidarity at the
The truth probably is that for the Reformers regeneration, justification and sanctification were the controversial matters. About the eschatological significance of baptism there could be little quarrel with anyone, for not even the most rabid sacramentalist pretended that baptism effected a literal dissolution of the body and resurrection to glory. From the evangelical standpoint, however, the suggestions of Luther have tremendous value. They open up the way to an understanding of suffering and of death in the life of the Christian. In post-Reformation Protestant theology the not unimportant, but unfortunate and seemingly interminable Paedo-baptism controversies have checked the interesting theological advance which might have been possible along these lines. More recently, in England at least, a revived sacramentalism has concentrated attention upon the effect rather than the meaning. The opportunity of thoroughly weighing the eschatological bearing has up to the present time never recurred.

8. Conclusion

Some estimate of the Reformed teaching upon the meaning of baptism ought to be attempted now that the main points in it have been reviewed. One or two obvious matters call for notice first. The unity of the Reformed presentation is self-evident. Individual writers naturally developed different lines of thought. Unity does not mean uniformity. They did not develop these lines in opposition to each other. The richness of the general understanding made possible a varied presentation. Again, the close interrelationship between the whole understanding and the cardinal doctrines of grace, atonement, and justification, requires no more than a passing mention. The prominence given to the passage in Romans 6 speaks for itself. Consciously or unconsciously, all who discussed the sacrament wrote with the common doctrine of salvation firmly in mind and heart. It was perhaps this grounding of baptismal theology in the doctrine of justification which accounted for the astonishing breadth and depth of the Reformers' understanding. Luther himself was unquestionably the master here. The others followed, specialising or systematising or merely repeating, according to their talents. None went beyond, or even equalled the original interpretation.

The Reformed position might be attacked from two points of view. A sacramentalist criticism would be that it erred by focusing attention upon the meaning and minimising the effect. Gore makes this point: "the going into the water and being immersed in it...and rising out of it is an acted representation of life through death...but it is more than a symbol. It effects what it symbolises" (H.S.& the Church p.125). Constantly in their own day the Reformers were accused of reducing the sacrament to a mere sign or token. The Reformed view of the effects is big enough to require separate treatment, but here a word might be said in defence of the stress upon the signification. For the Reformers the sacrament was a visible word. Like the written word, it had meaning. Also like the written word, it had its effect. But again like the written word, it did not have its effect magically. The effect came in and through the meaning. To read the
Bible or to hear a sermon is of no value unless there is understand-
ing of the message. Similarly, to be baptised is of little val-
ue unless the meaning of baptism is understood. Infants dying in
infancy can understand neither word nor sacrament - they are com-
mited to the mercy of God according to the promise. But in those
growing to years of discretion and in adult converts an understand-
ing is indispensable. The Liturgies and Catechisms bear witness
to the Reformed desire that there should be at least an elementary
understanding. Without it the sacrament would quickly become an
empty and ineffective rite. To grasp this linking of significance
and effect is to go more than half-way towards an understanding
of the Reformed view of the effects of the sacrament. But it is
also to answer the sacramentalist criticism. By stressing the
signification the Reformers ensured a place for the Divine dover-
eignty and the personal nature of the working of the Holy Spirit
within the theology of the sacraments and their operation. The
rich teaching upon the meaning carried with it a proper balancing
of the evangelical and sacramental aspects.

A second criticism, already touched upon, comes from the
liberal side. It accuses the Reformers of reading into a histor-
cal rite allegorical interpretations, all of them subjective, and
some contradictory. The Reformed expositions are edifying. They
give good subject-matter for devotional addresses. But they
contribute nothing to a historical understanding. Their theolog-
ical value is limited because they have no basis in actuality.
This criticism has weight, as we have seen, only for those who
reject the whole world-view of the Reformers. It ought to be
pointed out at once that, strictly, the issue raised is a far wid-
er and deeper one than that of the interpretation of baptism. It
is the issue between those who hold what might be called a 'revela-
tional' view of Christianity and the world, and those who hold a
historical view.

The wider issue cannot be discussed here. It may be said,
however, that the Reformed understanding of baptism rested upon a
definite interpretation of Christianity as a whole. According
to this interpretation God himself gave the sacraments, and God
himself inspired the sacred record of the New Testament. Granted
these premisses, the criticism falls to the ground, for the
Reformed view of baptism is of a piece with the Reformed view of
Christianity as a whole. The modern writers who criticise the
view of baptism do not accept the premisses. For them Jesus
Christ is primarily the historical founder of a historical faith.
That faith has undergone considerable modification from the days of
Paul onwards. Baptism itself was a convenient rite, taken from
other religions, to which a new allegorical signification has
been given. If these premisses are substituted for the Reformed,
then of course the Reformed view of baptism is open to the most
damaging criticism.

The Reformers did stand in the line of historical Christianity.
This does not finally justify them. It means, however, that
those who wish to take another view must go back to a point beyond
the oldest written records. They must reconstruct those records
in accordance with their own ideas of what actually did, or ought to have happened, ideas which at the best can hardly be more than intelligent guesses, and at the worst may be prejudices. Fortunately, in the present work there is no need to make a decision between the Reformers and their critics. What had to be done is to make the issue perfectly clear. The Reformed doctrine of baptism stands or falls with the Reformed view of Christianity as a whole. If the major position holds, then the charge of fanciful allegorical interpretation carries no weight. Theology owes the Reformers a debt of gratitude for their profound grasp of the true meaning of the sacrament. If the major position falls, then the Reformers have mistakenly overlaid a simple and non-essential rite with mystical explanations. The choice, a spiritual as well as an intellectual choice, must be made at the deepest level.

Notes

1 Lomb.4 Dist.4 C 'Potest dici, quod qui in Christo, id est in Christi conformitate baptizantur.... Omnes qui in Christi nomine baptizantur, Christum induntur.'
2 Luth.W.A.2 p.727 'Die Tauff ist eyn eusserlich zeychen oder los-ung, die unss abgesondert von allen ungetaufften menschen';
3 Kidd D.C.R.p.671 'a fin que nous ayons une signature permanente que Jesus Christ nous sera toujours justice et sanctification';
4 Olevian 'Die Tauff... In der Tauff ermahnt uns Gott, dass wir seine Gnade in Christus glaubig annehmen...... Gott befehlt uns, dass wir uns (und unsere Kinder) taufen lassen... sollen, damit wir bezeugen, dass wir die Bundesverheissung Gottes in Christus fur uns(und unsere Kinder) dankbar annehmen....Gott besiegt denen, die so gesinnt sind, die Gemeinschaft mit Christus';
5 Melanchthon C.R.22 p.471 'Et quia signa sunt allegoricae quaedam, haec ceremonia significat peenitentiam et remissionem peccatorum, seu, ut Paulus loquitur, regenerationem';
6 Grebel Muralt p.34 'dass er beduette, dass man abgestorben sie, und sollen der sund, und wandeln in neue lebens und geist, und dass man guiss selig werd';
7 Gallican Confession (38) 'Nous tenons que l'eau, etant un ele-ment caduc, ne laisse pas de nous testifier en verite le lave-m ent interieur';
8 Belgic Confession (34) '...nous signifiant, que, comme l'eau lave les ordures du corps quand elle est repandue sur nous, laquelle aussi est vue sur le corps du baptise, et l'arroser, ainsi le sang de Christ par le Saint Esprit fait le meme interieurment en l'ame, non pas l'eau materielle fasse cela, mais c'est l'arrossement du precieux sang du Fils de Dieu, lequel est notre Mer Rouge';
9 B.R.N.4 p.44 'een wareachtighe ghethugenesse, als dat wy alle in Jesum Christum ghelooven, ghewaschen ende ghreynight zyn int.precyeus bloed des ghedoods lams Christi ons zaligmakers';
10 Heidelberg Catechism (69) 'Also, dass Christus dies eusserliche Wasserbad eingesetzt, und dabei verheissen hat, dass ich sog gewiss mit seinem Blut und Geist von der Unreinigkeit meiner
Seele, das ist, allen meinen Sünden, gewaschen sei, so
gewisse ich ausserlich mit dem Wasser, welches die Unsauber-
erkeit des Leibes pflegt hinzunehmen, gewaschen bin'.

11 Reformatio Legum p.29 'Baptismus est sacramentum, quo secunda
generatio nostra nobis externa consignatur aquae aspersione...
Dum autem in aqua demergimus, et rursus, ex illis emergimus,
Christi mors nobis primum et sepultura commendantur, deinde
suscitatio quidem illius, et reditus ad vitam'.

12 Schlatten (Muralt p.35) 'Der Tauf soll geben werden allen denen
...so wollen wandeln in der Uferstellung Jesu Christi, und
mit ihm begraben wollen sein in todt, uff dass sie mit ihm
ufferstän mögen'.

13 B.R.N.4 p.44 'ende xxxxx werden alzo met Christo begräven in der
14 Zwingli C.R.4 p.245 'Der touff ist ein anheblich zeichen, das
uns in ein nuw leben pflichte'.

15 See Beza Q. & R.C.93 'Immersio in aqua sistit ob oculos illum
gurgitem iudicii divini....quo propter mora peccata nostra sibi
imposita Christus est velutui absorptuo... Mora sub aqua quietu-
Lacunque sit, veluti spectandum nobis praebet ipsum vinculis
in sepulchro detentum. Emersio vero ex aqua, veluti viva
est picture ipsius victoriae, qua factum est ut mortuum mort-
em, sepultus corruptionem superavit'.

16 Luther W.A.2 p.728 'Dies gantz Leben ist not anders, den eyn
gestlich tauffen än unterlass bis yn demn todt. Wer getaufft
wird, der wird tuum tod vorurteilt. Die gestlich geburt,
die mhrung der gnaden und gerechtigkeit, hebt woll an yn denn
tauff, weret aber auch bißd an den tod, ja biss an jungsten
17 Ibid.301 p.312 'Es bedeut, das der alte Adam ynn / tag'.
uns durch teggliche reu und bysse sol erseufft und sterben,
mit allen sünden und bösen lusten. Und wierdumb teglich
eraus komen und aufferstehen ein newer mensch, der ynn ge-
rechtigkeit und reinigkeit für Gott ewiglich lebe'.

18 Ibid.2 p.734 'Also folget, dass die tauff alle leyden oder sone-
erlich den tod nutzlich und hulflich macht'.

19 Ibid.6 p.535 '...et quo brevius a vita absolvimur, eo citius
baptismum nostrum implemus'.

20 Vernle Z.p.330 'Die Taufe bedeutet, dass Christus uns mit seinem
Blute abgewaschen, und dass wir ihn anziehen, d.h. nach seiner
Regel leben sollen'.

21 Grebel (Muralt p.34) 'V...von den Lasteren gestorben mit Christo
mit im begraben in touff, wiederumb mitt im aufferstanden
in newerung des leben'.

22 B.R.N.4 p.44 'ende dat wy ooc na dit tydelick staerven, vernyz-
en zullen in een eeuwigh leven'.

23 Luther W.A.2 p.728 'Die Bedeutung, sterben oder ersauffen der
sund, geschicht mit volKommen yn dissem leben, bis der
mensch auch leyplich sterben und gantz vorwesse zu pulver'.

24 Ibid.p.734 'Also folget, dass die tauff alle leyden und sonderlich
den tod nutzlich und hulflich macht, das sie nur dienen mussen
der tauffe werck... die sund stirbt mit geren, drumb macht sie
sen tod sso bitter und greulich... Also gnodig ist gott und
mechtig, das die sund, die den tod bracht hat, wirt mit yhrem
eygen werck wider vortrieben'.

25 Grebel (Muralt p.34) 'dass man gwüss selig werden'. Cf.Schlatten
(p.35) 'ut cum eo possint resurgere'.

1. Types and Analogies

The consideration of the meaning of baptism leads on naturally to the topic of types and analogies. These were drawn for the most part from the Old Testament. When Reformed doctrine is studied, it must always be remembered that these writers conceived of the Bible as in the strictest sense a single book. It had been given ultimately by the one author, God. Thus it was right and proper, if a similarity between baptism and some event in Old Testament history or some aspect of Old Testament religion appeared, that a type or analogy of the sacrament should be found. Such a similarity was believed to be intentional, not accidental or incidental.

Of course, the types were not purely arbitrary. The New Testament writings themselves suggested the common analogies. Peter - the question of authorship need not concern us, since the Reformers accepted the Apostle as author - had pointed to the Ark, and Paul in I Corinthians 10 had found a parallel between baptism and the Red Sea crossing. The theologians of the church long before the Reformation had searched the pages of Scripture for similar parallels. The Reformers themselves had no new ones to contribute, nor did they go out of their way to try to discover some. What they did do was to bring the common analogies into fuller and closer relationship with the theological signification. They covered only a narrow field, confining themselves on the whole to the common New Testament types. But they treated the types chosen with a new power and profundity.

On the Romanist side the Tridentines recognised four main figures of baptism in Scripture: the Deluge, the Red Sea, the washing of Naaman, and the Healing at Bethesda (Cat. T. 2; 2 Qu. 9). Tertullian had referred to the Deluge, the Red Sea and the Rock (Dex Bap t. 8 & 9). Thomas too had found in the cloud and the Red Sea partial figures of baptism, although he insisted that they only prefigured the sacrament in certain respects. Thus the Cloud could not in any way be said to typify baptism as a profession of faith (Thom. 3 Qu. 70). Other types, some more fanciful than real, had been found in the ceremony of purification; the blood of lambs; and Jewish baptism (Cath. Encycl. Art. Bapt.). It ought to be noted that the Jewish Romanist theologians numbered circumcision amongst the figures, and also the baptism of John (So Thomas, ut supra). The importance of these two is so great that they call for separate treatment. A further point to notice is that when these comparisons were made the writers all emphasised the fact that in the figure was the shadow only, in the Christian sacrament the fulfilment. Chrysostom is an example: 'The Jewish purifications did not free them from their sins, but only from bodily defilements; ours, however, is not such, but far greater, and abounding with more grace, for it frees us from our sins, and cleanses the soul, and gives us the guidance of the Spirit' (Hom. 24 De Bapt. Christi See Carly Test. of the F. On Art. 27).

The Continental Reformers concentrated upon the two more imp-
sortant figures, the Deluge and the Red Sea. Luther did make a casual naturalistic comparison with physical generation (Stange p. 800). He was mainly interested, however, in the apostolic type, the flood. He insisted that baptism had been 'prefigured ages before in the Noachic deluge' (W.A.2 p. 729). He found in the flood a perfect illustration of his primary thought that baptism represented a dying - a drowning - a definite destruction. The Deluge had been sent by God in order to destroy the sin of an evil generation. The repentant and righteous Noah who identified himself by repentance with the judgment of God, was spared. 

Baptism has now been given as a sign of the general judgment of God upon sin, opening up a way of salvation for those who receive the sign and die with Christ to sin (See W.A.2 p. 729). The detailed working out of the image is a little complicated, but the main thought emerges clearly enough.

Zwingli was not greatly interested in types as such. He made it his main business to identify the New Testament sacrament of baptism with the Old Testament ceremony of circumcision, and to assert the unity of the baptism of Christ with that of John. Upon these points, and especially upon the former, his understanding of baptism, more particularly of infant baptism, as a sign of the covenant of God may be said to depend. However, the baptismal order of Zurich preserved a reference to the judgment and mercy of God displayed in the flood and the Red Sea deliverance: 'O almighty and eternal God, who through the flood didst by thy mighty judgment condemn the unbelieving world, and thyself deliver of thy great mercy faithful Noah; who didst drown obdurate Pharaoh with all his hosts in the Red Sea, and didst bring thy people Israel through the same dryshod, figuring thereby this bath of baptism...'(Kidd D.C.R.p.423) That the vivid types were felt to have a real liturgical value ought not to escape us.

Calvin, like Zwingli, was more particularly concerned to establish a covenantal theology, and to refute the Romanist distinction between the baptisms of John and Christ. With characteristic thoroughness he found time to bring forward the important Scriptural figures, and to the discussion of them he devoted a fairly full paragraph in the Institutes: 'The things which we have said, both of mortification and ablution, were adumbrated among the people of Israel etc. (Inst.4,15,9). Beza too turned to the Ark and the Red Sea as common types. For him the Ark represented the church shut up into Christ by baptism, and preserved from judgment. The Red Sea was a descent into the water, with a triumphant re-emergence to new life (Q.et R.C.101). The later Reformed theologians followed the same lines. The Leidener Synopsis deduced from the Cloud and the Red Sea that immersion was the proper mode of administration, but in favour of other modes was the Old Testament figure of sprinkling (See Heppe R.D. Bapt.).

In England Wycliffe had anticipated the general Reformed position by emphasising the close connection between type and fulfilment, and by finding in the Cloud and the Red Sea the most significant types. 'Believe', he wrote, 'techeth Cristene men that signes of the Olde Law weren tokenes of oure signes now, as thei ben
tokens of the bliss of hevene. The cloude that leadde them in
desert upon dales, as Goddis lawe tellith, figuride the water
of Cristls side, by whiche we ben baptisid now. Crist was
deed before that water cam of the cloude of his bodi to baptise
men' (Arnold. 2 p.268). During the period between Wycliffe
and the Reformation nothing original emerged. During the early
days of Reforma"on Tyndale took up the point, but in this respect as in
so many others he largely reproduced the teaching of Luther. For
him the two important figures were the Ark and the Red Sea with the
Cloud. 'Baptism', he wrote, 'saves us as the ship saved them in
the water, through faith' (Tynd. P.S.1 p.426); and again, 'Paul
maketh the sea and the cloud a figure of baptism' (Ibid.). Accord-
ing to Tyndale these figures had been divinely given as an aid
to the understanding. The work of God followed always the same
pattern. The historical pictures pointed to what baptism signified
in inward experience. Tyndale, however, was content to refer
to the pictures without expounding their meaning or relevance in
detail. Probably he thought the historical types self-explanatory:
revealing both the judgment of God upon sin, which the baptised man
accepts in repentance, and the work of God in redemption, which the
baptised man enters into in faith. The exact nature of the connect-
ion between the type and the sacrament he made no attempt to define.

One would have thought that Becon would have found a place for
the types in his devotional theology, but strangely enough he
seemed to be little interested in them. Hooper too only made a
passing reference to baptism as 'our Red Sea'. Philpot quoted
the Old Testament figures, the Red Sea, Jordan and Circumcision,
as arguments in favour of the baptism of infants (Phil. P.S. p.277).
He pointed out that infants as well as adults passed through the
Red Sea and Jordan. But 'the apostles did attemperate all their
doings to the shadows and figures of the Old Testament'. Thus
it may be concluded that the apostles baptised the children of
professed Christians. The argument has a incidental interest in
that it makes clear the Reformed attitude upon some fundamental
points. First, they believed in the essential unity of the Bible.
Second, they did not think of the growth of the church in terms of
unconscious organic development. The early Christians performed
baptism, for example, in conscious obedience to a divine command-
ment, and in accordance with a previously revealed and well-under-
stood scriptural pattern. At least this much must be said for
Philpot's view even from the purely historical standpoint, that
the apostles probably were consciously influenced by the well-known
Old Testament then taken as modern writers to a much greater extent than
some modern writers are willing to allow.

A further instance of the curious way in which the argument
from types could be used is found in Woodman's disputation with
Langdale (Foxe 7 pp.367 f.). Langdale had asserted that baptism
gives faith, and Woodman, anxious to prove that faith ought to
come first, asked whether 'Jacob had faith before he were baptised'.
Langdale 'You speak of the old law. Jacob was not christened,
but circumcised'. Woodman 'Peter brought in Noah's flood, which
was a long time before Jacob and Esau, to prove baptism'.
The point here is substantially the same. Woodman, like Philpot,
saw an identity between the Testaments and the covenants. Since the whole Bible came from God, the Old Testament example could be used to illustrate or to prove Christian precept or practice. The sharp difference between the Reformers and Rome upon this matter will emerge more fully when the key-question of circumcision is discussed. At the moment it will suffice to note the Reformed view.

Bullinger devoted rather more attention to the types in his Decades, which of course became a standard work in England. Taking the Red Sea as a figure, he found in the drowning of Pharaoh and his host a representation of the destruction of the old Adam (Bull.P.S.4 p.329). Calvin, it will be remembered, had described the old man as our Pharaoh. When he came to discuss water as the chosen element in baptism, Bullinger proved its aptness from the Old Testament analogies: the Flood, the Red Sea, the laver of regeneration, and set washings mentioned in the law (Ibid.p.364). Amongst the later English writers Hutchinson distinguished between the Old Testament types, which were temporal, and the Christian sacrament, which abides: 'They had circumcision, and the Red Sea, and the Cloud, for temporal sacraments: we have instead of these one continual sacrament, the laver of regeneration' (Hutch.P.S. p.219). The meaning probably was that the earlier sacraments were once-for-all happenings, or in the case of circumcision as a sign now replaced, but that baptism as the sign of a deep spiritual reality is constantly repeated and lastingly valid. The loose use of the term sacrament in relation to the Old Testament figures is worthy of notice, as is also the thought that baptism is the fulfilment of the Old Testament shadows and figures.

The Prayer Books preserved the reference to the Ark and the Red Sea common to the Zurich order and also a large number of the Lutheran orders, including the 'Pious Consultation'. The prayer in its final form ran as follows: 'Almighty and everlasting God, who of thy great mercy didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water; and also didst safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy Baptism...'. Later, the petition was made that the baptised person 'being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's Church, and... may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally he may come to the land of everlasting life...'. It is not without interest that the Lutheran reference to the destruction of the Egyptians, which had appeared in the 1549 book, was excluded from the revised book of 1552, and all subsequent editions. There does not seem to be any reason for concluding that the interpretation had altered. The reference was probably felt to be liturgically unsuitable. It might very well have been kept as a reference to the destruction of the old Adam. In the final form, however, the Deluge and the Red Sea appeared primarily as pictures of salvation. The closing petition elaborated the type rather fancifully in relation to the Christian life. It added nothing to the true significance: the picture of the death of sin and the salvation to new life.

We may summarise the Reformed use of types in this way. The
Reformers were not, generally speaking, fanciful. They did not invent new types, nor did they go out of their way to assert the greatest possible number. They were for the most part content with those apostolically given. They developed the two types, the Deluge and the Red Sea, in relation to their theology of the signification of the sacrament. Both these types spoke of the judgment passed upon sin, and of the salvation of the believing people of God. The element of water was common to both, but the message of salvation through death and resurrection was also the same in both. The family of Noah in the ark, the family of Israel at the Red Sea, the family of God in baptism came through water from an old and sinful world, judged and destroyed of God in the waters, to a new world, created of God in righteousness. The appeal of these vivid historical representations of theological and spiritual truth to the minds and imaginations of the Reformers is not difficult to understand.

Were the Reformers justified in ascribing to the Old Testament types this theological significance? The answer is again dependent upon the fundamental conception of Christianity. To the man who thinks of Christianity as a historical religion, the tracing of a connection between the semi-legendary events of the Hebrew past and the ecclesiastical institution of baptism will be a pretty fancy, devotional useful, but of no intrinsic value. The fact that such a connection derives from the earliest Christian writings will not count at all. It is merely an illustration of the evil effects of the peculiar and artificial Pauline exegesis of the Old Testament. That is one point of view. But to the man who like the Reformers accepts Christianity as the revelation of God, given by God and attested in the divinely inspired record of Scripture, the interconnection between the Israelitish past and the Christian present is both real and deeply meaningful. The divine activity of redemption moves, as it were, according to a prescribed pattern, in which past, present and future are the same, intermingling with and illuminating each other. Christ and the redemption wrought by him are at the centre. All things revolve around and return to him, deriving their form from his death and resurrection. There is even more to it than that. In all the events and the institutions of revelation-history the natural and the supernatural, the revelational and the historical, are interfused, just as in the person of Christ the divine and the human natures, and in his work the historical and the eternal elements are present together.

From the 'historical' point of view the Reformed theology, and indeed all traditional theology, cannot but meet with the harshest of criticism. It is not the purpose of this work to justify the Reformed standpoint, only to expound it. But exposition is not properly possible unless there is comprehension. The harshest criticisms have been made by those who could not, and perhaps did not try to understand the Reformed position, because it was alien to their whole manner of thought. But we must remember that the decisive question is not whether the deducing of types from the Old Testament narratives is valid or merely fanciful, but who and what God is, and how he is known. If
there is understanding of the Reformed view of God and of Christ, then it will be seen that the Reformed exposition of the signification of baptism, and of the baptismal types, naturally follows.

2. Circumcision

The profound sense of the unity of the Old and New Testaments and of the Bible covenants which the Reformers had led them to see, not only a general connection between the Old Testament types and the New Testament sacraments, but also a more intimate relationship between the two chief covenantal signs of the Old Law: circumcision and the passover, and the two sacraments of the New Law, baptism and the supper. At this point they came into inevitable collision with the sacramentalist theologians of Rome. The Romanists had the same general theological basis as the Reformers, and they were quite willing to accept and indeed to multiply types and analogies. They were not prepared to go further and to say that there was an identity between the covenantal signs of the Old and those of the New Testament. Believing as they did that the Christian sacraments were unique channels of divine grace, they could not also teach that the sacraments of the Old Testament were in any sense equal in status and dignity. Something new had come with Christ and with the Church of Christ. The old signs had been types and shadows. The sacraments were substance and fulfilment.

The Roman position had been established by the Scholastics, who had compared baptism with its forerunner, circumcision. The comparison was an obvious one to make, for both were covenantal signs and both were signs of entry and of profession. Lombard had granted that baptism replaced circumcision, but he thought that a greater excellency ought to be ascribed to it because 'it is common to all, and more perfect, and more fully charged with grace' (Lomb. 4 Dist. 1 K). Circumcision availed indeed for the remission of sins. So much Lombard would grant. But it neither gave grace to help towards good works, nor did it confer actual possession and the augmentation of virtues, as did baptism (Ibid.). It will be seen that the difference discerned between the signs was in their effect rather than in their meaning. Attention had already been drawn to the fact that the main Romanist stress was upon the effects, the Reformed upon the signification. As far as the latter went the Romanists would probably have been willing to grant that the two signs were very much the same. But for them an identity of this kind meant very little when there was so great a difference as regards effects.

Thomas too had discussed the matter. He had felt that there was very little similarity between the two signs even as signs. Circumcision was hardly a type of baptism as the Cloud was or the Red Sea. It resembled baptism only in that it was, like baptism, a profession of faith. Thomas granted that grace was conferred through circumcision so that its proper effects were accomplished, but circumcision did not work like baptism by its own power, only by virtue of the fact that it was a sign of future faith in Christ.
passion. Baptism, of course, derived its superior power and excellency from the passion of Christ now accomplished. The effects of circumcision were in any case limited because the passion of Christ was still future. Sin could be remitted thereby, but there could not be deliverance from all the debt of punishment (Thom. 3 Qu. 70).

At Trent great care was taken to mark off the sacraments of the New Law from all other signs. For this purpose three classes of signs or sacraments were distinguished: natural signs, as smoke - the sign of fire; conventional signs, as flags; and divine signs, like religious ceremonies (Cat. T. 2, 1 Qu. 6). Within the third class the sacraments of the New Law occupied a special place, because they were not only signs but means of accomplishing. In other words, they had effect as well as meaning. The Council anathematized all who asserted an identity between the sacraments of the two Laws except in points of ceremonial: 'If anyone saith that these said sacraments of the New Law do not differ from the sacraments of the Old Law, save that the ceremonies are different, let him be anathema' (C. & D. T. Sess. 7 Sacr. Can. 1). The canon seems to have provoked a certain amount of discussion at the Council. Luke 3, 3 was alleged against it, but the objection was overruled on the ground of Luke 3, 36 (See Waterworth Hist. Essay On Sess. 7). Bellarmine made it perfectly clear why the distinction was made. The Old Testament sacraments were temporal and legal only. The New Testament sacraments confer grace.

Those of the Old Law do but signify (De la S. T. B. p. 347).

Luther occupied rather an equivocal position. In his teaching upon the sacrament he laid a new stress upon the meaning. He was not prepared, however, to abandon a fairly full teaching with regard to the effects. And yet he was bound to find fault with the Romanist dismissal of the Old Testament sacraments as ceremonial signs. A three-fold scheme was projected in 'Disputatio de baptismate legis': the Jewish washings, the baptism of John and Christian baptism (W. A. 6). Luther was not prepared, however, to class circumcision with the washings. In the Babylonian Captivity he boldly asserted that the old sacraments were the same as those of the new in that they had signification coupled with effect (W. A. 6 p. 532). Seeberg still thinks that a distinction was seen, the addition to the Gospel-sacraments of promises which work and further grace (Seeberg p. 316). If this view is right, then Luther's view differs from that of Lombard only in the interrelating of effect and promise. But Seeberg must have been thinking about the ceremonial signs of the Old Testament rather than circumcision, for there can be no doubt that Luther definitely rejected the Scholastic distinction; the Middle Ages were wrong in teaching that the sacraments of the Old Testament were allegorical only, while those of the new represented the grace of God efficaciously (See Stange p. 822). The difference which Luther himself made was between the ceremonial figures, which were shadows only, and the sacraments of the Old and New Testaments, which had annexed to them the word of promise (Stange p. 823). Seeberg himself allows that Luther used circumcision as an argument in favour of the baptism of infants, a not insignificant point (Seeberg p. 322).
King Henry in the Assertio definitely understood Luther to deny that 'the sacraments of the Evangelical Law differ in any kind from those of the Mosaic Law, as touching the efficacy of grace' (Assert. p. 99). Melanchthon proved a faithful pupil of Luther in this matter, for in his Commonplaces he too rejected emphatically the Scholastic distinction, according to which justifying power was attributed to the sacraments of the Gospel (Galle p. 363). Bucer too, when he came to compare the sacraments in the two Testaments, found in circumcision the perfect parallel of Christian baptism (See Anrich M.B. p. 41).

Luther's teaching was not perhaps quite free from ambiguity, but the Swiss developed the concept of the unity of the sacraments to its logical extreme. Zwingli, face to face with the Anabaptist teaching, found his surest defence in a theology of the covenant, in which the sacraments were covenantal signs above everything else. Roughly speaking, his argument was this. In the Old Testament God entered into covenant with the family and nation. All members of the tribe were included in the covenant by birth and inheritance. They received the sign of circumcision in ratification. The covenant had been renewed and extended in Jesus Christ, covering now the new Israel, the family of God. The principles were still the same, however, so that the covenant privileges belonged by right of birth to the children of believers, as did also the new covenant sign, the sacrament of baptism.

It will be seen that Zwingli's whole understanding of Christianity, as well as his advocacy of infant baptism, depended upon the identity of the old and new covenants, and of the covenant signs, circumcision and baptism. Again and again he returned to the example of circumcision. Baptism Circumcision was for them of old time (in its character as a sacrament) what baptism is for us! 'For as circumcision is a sign of the covenant, so too is baptism' (C.R. Sem. No. 93 p. 48, p. 171). Again, circumcision was not a sign which confirmed faith, but a sign of the covenant. So too it was with baptism (Zwingli C.R. 4 p. 227). The sole difference between the two signs was in the outward element, not in essential nature (Ibid. p. 330). To prove his identification of the two signs, which was aimed against the Anabaptists rather than against the Romanists, Zwingli quite naturally pointed to the text in Colossians 2.11-12 (Ibid. p. 637).

The later Reformed theologians were greatly influenced by Zwingli's understanding. Calvin was perhaps more concerned to urge the identity of the Johannine with the Christian baptism, but he devoted several paragraphs of the Institutes, especially in the defence of Infant Baptism, to the asserting of the ultimate oneness of circumcision and baptism (See Instit. 4.14, 21; 4, 16, 3-4). Baptism marked the extension to the whole earth of the promises which had once been confined to Israel. To regard the Old Testament sacraments as mere ceremonies and not as true sacraments was a definite error. Calvin distinguished between the spiritual circumcision which remains, and the outward which has perished, but this was basically the distinction between the two baptisms,
the baptism of water and the baptism of the Spirit. But circumcision, like baptism, was a covenantal sign: the only difference being that circumcision pointed forward to something yet to be accomplished, baptism pointed backward to something already accomplished (See Inst.14,14,21; 4,16,3&4; Comm.on Coloss.2). The ideas of Calvin were basically very much the same as those of Zwingli, but he gave to them more balanced expression.

The English theologians definitely came down on the Reformed side upon this issue, although not all of them accepted the full theology of the covenant, with all its implications. Tyndale read into circumcision the same meaning as he found in baptism; indeed he used the example of circumcision to prove the lessons taught by the Christian sacrament. Circumcision was the sign of the covenant between God and man. On the one side it represented the divine promises: on the other, human obligations: 'Circumcision representeth the promises of God to Abraham on the one side; and that Abraham, and his seed, should circumcise and cut off the lusts of their flesh on the other side: as baptism, which is come in the room thereof, now signifies on the one side, how all that repent and believe are washed in Christ's blood; and on the other side, how that the same must quench and drown the lusts of the flesh, to follow the steps of Christ' (Tynd.P.S.1 p.409). Elsewhere Tyndale argued that he could borrow the example of circumcision to express the nature, power and fruit or effect of the sacrament, but he did not think that it could of itself be regarded as a sufficient commandment to baptise (Ibid.1 p.426). Frequently Tyndale alluded to circumcision as the figure or the forerunner of baptism: 'Instead of circumcision came our baptism' (Ibid.1 p.350). Cranmer stated a view very similar to that of Tyndale when he claimed that the sacraments were the same to the Patriarchs as they are to us: 'The same to them was circumcision that to us is baptism' (Cran.J.3 p.141).

Becon took rather a different line. He drew attention to the difference in function between the sacraments of the Old Law and those of the New. A basic identity was assumed: 'As in the Old Law he gave to the Jews circumcision and the passover, so likewise in the New Law hath he given to us Christians baptism and the Lord's supper' (Bec.P.S.2 p.201). But he saw an inferiority of the Jewish sacraments in this respect, that they were 'figures and shadows of Christ to come', whereas 'the sacraments of the New Law do signify, declare and set forth unto us that Christ is come' (Ibid.). The distinction was very much the same as that made by Calvin: the forward-looking and the backward-looking, but Becon stressed that although the Old Testament sacraments were the same in meaning and effect, they lacked that clarity of witness which belonged to the signs of Christ already revealed. The old sacraments were obscure intimations, not clear declarations. The fact that the signs pointed to and found their fulfilment in Christ is of a piece with the whole Reformed understanding of the prophetic revelation given by God in and through the Old Testament.
Bullinger, as one would expect, popularised these ideas in the Decades. He explained the change from circumcision to baptism in accordance with this basis thought of a double witness, first forward, then backward, to Christ. 'Circumcision', he explained, 'was a sign of the blessed seed, therefore when he came and should forthwith shed his blood, it was needful that circumcision should be changed into baptism' (Bull.P.S.4 p.353). In proof of the fundamental one-ness of the two sacraments Bullinger quoted the text in Colossians 2: 'The circumcision made without hands is the circumcision of Christians, which is baptism' (Ibid.p.293). His exposition followed fairly closely that of Calvin.

Many writers who tackled the problem of the baptism of infants felt the cogency of Zwingli's argument from circumcision. We have seen already that Philpot held that the Apostles consciously followed Old Testament models. Since circumcision was administered to infants, it was a natural conclusion that the children of Christians had a right to baptism (Phil.P.S.pp.277 f.). Bradford put forward a similar view. He urged that under the Old Law parents were commanded to circumcise their infants. Baptism has replaced circumcision, and therefore Christian parents would appear to be under a similar obligation to baptise their children: 'Baptism in Christ's church now sithen Christ's death (Note the common explanation of the change) is come in the place of circumcision in the same church afore Christ's coming...; wherein we may see that parents seem to be no less bound to offer their infant babes to be baptised' (Brad.P.S.l p.82). Bullinger made the same point in the Decades: 'Circumcision among the old people of God was given to infants. Baptism succeeded in the place of circumcision' (Bull.P.S.4 p.340).

It will be noticed that the back of the Reformed identifying of the two sacraments was the identifying of the two churches, the church of the Old Testament and the church of the New. Also behind it was the firm belief that Christ was the Saviour and Lord of all men, even of those who lived before his coming. It was because of these two convictions that the confessors could appeal to the Old Testament. Woodman quoted confidently the example of Jacob (Foxe 8 p.357). Iveson found in circumcision and baptism this common factor, that both witnessed to Christ; 'Baptism is a sign and token of Christ, as circumcision was' (Ibid.7 p.307). It was also because of these convictions that almost all the Reformers at some time or another (sometimes in quite another connection) stated that baptism had replaced circumcision. Whitgift clearly had the deeper unity in mind when, comparing the sacraments, he went on to say that 'it would be a false deduction that Levites figure the Christian ministry' (Whit.P.S.1 p.368). The Levitical ministry formed part of that ceremonial law which was only for the time. 'Circumcision and baptism were both signs of the enduring covenant of God, and witnesses of Christ. The sign had changed, in form, as also had the covenant, now extended to the Gentiles, but it was essentially the same. The principle of interpretation upon which the distinction of Whitgift rests is clearly stated in Article 7 of the Thirty-Nine Articles.
Against those who rejected the Old Testament on the one side, against those who misapplied it on the other, the Anglicans took their stand with the Reformers abroad. They maintained the evangelical as against the sacramentalist approach. Their thinking was primarily in terms of signification. They could not accept the belief that Christ instituted a new church, with new and more efficacious sacraments, mediated through a specially appointed priesthood. For them the church of God was one in all ages. The Christ presented in the Gospel now had been prefigured in the Law and the Prophets. Word and sacrament in both Testaments alike proclaimed the same covenanting mercies of God, and were alike means to the application of his grace to the individual. On the Romanist side it might be argued that to differentiate the signs of the New Testament from those of the Old preserved to Christ his prerogatives and dignity as fuller and perfector of the past. The Reformers, however, perhaps with a deeper insight, saw a uniform pattern in both Testaments. Christ was the centre around whom everything revolved. His life and work formed the dividing point, to which the Old pointed and from which the New proceeded. To exalt the sacraments and the priesthood of the New Law did not maintain but destroyed the prerogatives and dignity of Christ. An artificial differentiation between circumcision and baptism introduced confusion where God had intended unity. Circumcision and baptism each served appointed means at the appointed time, and both in relation to Christ, the one before, the other after. It was right that the one should be understood in terms of the other, for if circumcision foreshadowed baptism, its full signification only appeared in baptism. And neither could be understood at all apart from Christ.

A severe criticism of the Reformed view might be made on historical grounds, but as in previous cases the validity of the criticism depends entirely upon the basic standpoint adopted. Historians may if they choose isolate the common rite of circumcision from the Christian faith, and find for it an origin and signification quite different from that stated in the Bible. The ultimate facts, whether there was an Abraham who received circumcision from God as a covenantal sign, can in the last resort neither be proved nor disproved by history. The same is true with regard to Christ's institution of baptism. It is also true with regard to the inter-connection between the two. For those who reject the supernatural nature of the Christian faith the historical criticism will be cogent, and the historical probability will be taken to incline against a divine institution and meaning. But for those who accept the supernatural nature, it carries very little weight; for the historical study only deals with the historical side of that which is both in history and above it.

3. The Baptism of John

At first sight it may appear strange that the relationship between John's baptism and Christ's should be a crucial point in the controversy between Romanist and Reformed teaching. A modern reader is tempted to ask rather impatiently what difference it could
possibly make either way. If the baptism of John was substantially the same as that of Christ, well and good; but if not, then nothing of importance seems to have been lost.

There were two general reasons why the majority of the Reformers threw themselves so wholeheartedly into the struggle against the Roman differentiation. Negatively, they rejected the implication that the baptism of John lacked some virtue present in that of Christ. Positively, they contended for the oneness of the divine revelation. If the Romanist view were correct, then the way opened up at once for a sacramentalist system, for the difference did not lie in the meaning but in the effect. At the same time the unity of the divine revelation and working was threatened. The baptism of John had been a temporary expedient only, quickly replaced, and with no essential part in the divine economy.

The danger of sacramentalism was a very real one. The sixteenth century Romanists emphasised the difference between the two baptisms with the express purpose of exalting the baptism of Christ. It ought to be noticed that the Scholastics, although they had accepted the fact of the difference, had not dogmatised as to its nature. Lombard had laid the foundation of the Tridentine dogma when he had stated that the baptism of John was a baptism to remission only, a baptism of repentance. He quoted from John himself to the effect that John baptised only with water, not with the Spirit i.e., his baptism availed to cleanse, but not to furnish with grace. A re-baptism into Christ was thus necessary (See Lomb.4 Dist.2 B,D & F).

Thomas had stressed the need for the new baptism, and he denied that to baptise those already baptised by John was in any sense a reiteration of the sacrament (Thom.3 Qu.66,9). He found the point of difference in this, that the baptism of John was preparatory, the baptism of Christ the reality (Ibid. Qu.70). The baptism of John was not even a profession of faith, as circumcision had been. It was merely a penitential act preparatory to such a profession.

In the Reformation era the distinction was sought at the very deepest level, along the lines indicated by Lombard. The two baptisms were not equal in efficaciousness. Eck, for example, in the disputation at Baden, denied that the baptism of John was able to remove original sin (Kidd D.C.R.p.459). Trent laid it down as a dogma of the faith that the baptism of John had not the same force as that of Christ, and it anathematised all who held or taught the contrary (C.& D.Sess.7 Bapt.Can.1). The Catechism pointed to the institution as the final reason for the difference: "Baptism was instituted by Christ the Lord" (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.16). Augustine was also brought in as witness: "We rightly prefer the baptism of Christ, given even by the hand of Judas, to the baptism of John, given even by the hand of John" (Cat.T.2,1 Qu.19). Bellarmine discussed the question thoroughly, and summarised the main differences: the baptism of John was instituted by a man; it lacked the invocation of the Trinity; it was reiterable; it had no power, even according to the teaching of John himself, to remit sins; it was distinguished by John as a baptism of water.
from that baptism of the Spirit which Christ was to give (De la S. T.B.p.368). The Catholic Encyclopedia has stated the two main points of difference, that the baptism of John did not confer grace and that it did not remit sin. The Scripture proofs advanced are the statement of John himself, and the rebaptism of the disciples at Ephesus (Art.Bapt.).

The first serious breach in the Roman position was made by Zwingli. Luther and his followers did not make either a strong or a persistent attack. Indeed, Luther himself in the Disputatio de baptismate had allowed that the baptism of Christ was a definite advance upon that of John. Something new had been added, the word of promise. Luther was willing to grant that the disciples of John had been rebaptised (W.A.26 p.472). This did not mean that Luther accepted fully the Roman position. He allowed the differentiation, but for him the point of difference was an evangelical one, not a sacramentalist. Melanchthon stated the case plainly when he compared and contrasted the two baptisms. The baptism of John was to repentance, the baptism of Christ to life; but the difference was in significance, not in effect. The fact that John baptised only with water, Christ with the Holy Ghost and with fire, pointed to a distinction, not so much between the baptisms, but between John and Christ. It was not John who was the Saviour to whom baptism pointed, but Christ. A further evangelical difference was seen in this, that the baptism of John (like circumcision) pointed to the Messiah yet to come, whereas the baptism of the Apostles pointed to Christ already come. Melanchthon explained the re-baptisms in Acts in accordance with this distinction. The Christ already come was sealed to the disciples of John who had accepted the promise of his coming (C.R.21 pp.201 ff).

Zwingli, however, felt that something more was required than this expounding of the difference in evangelical rather than sacramentalist terms. Zwingli was not prepared to allow that there was really any difference at all. God had instituted baptism, whether Johannine or Apostolic, and he had not instituted two baptisms, but one. The only difference within that baptism was the difference between the external baptism of water and the internal baptism of the Spirit, but that applied to the baptism of Christ as well as to the baptism of John. As far as the outward ceremony went, the baptism of John effected nothing, but the baptism of Christ also effected nothing. This did not apply of course to that inward irrigation of the Spirit which might be present equally in and with the one or the other. If it was objected that the baptism of John was admittedly outward and formal only, a baptism of water, Zwingli answered that this was not so; for it was accompanied by the word taught. The word of John was in substance the same as the word of the Apostles, and of Christ himself, a testimony to the Saviour. John was a herald of the Messiah (C.R.3 p.766; 4 p.260).19

Zwingli was not greatly perplexed by the Scriptural proofs. Arguing from Scripture, he pointed out that Christ himself was
baptised by John, and that the Apostles themselves, according to the New Testament, were either baptised by John or not at all. Tertullian, it will be recalled, had felt this difficulty, and suggested that the experience during the tempest on the Sea of Galilee was perhaps a kind of baptism (De Bapt. 12). At any rate, there was no evidence in favour of a Christian rebaptisation of either Christ or the Apostles. The much quoted passage from Acts Zwingli dismissed as irrelevant. His explanation, it must be admitted, seems a little forced. He contended that the point at issue at Ephesus was not the actual ceremony of baptising, but unto what the persons at Ephesus had been baptised i.e. what they understood by baptism. The supposed rebaptisation was no more than a fuller instruction in the meaning of baptism in the light of Christ's accomplished work. Alternatively, by the knowing of the baptism of John, the record in Acts perhaps meant only that the disciples knew the teaching of John, without wishing to imply that they had actually undergone the ceremony of baptism at the hands of John or his followers. On this explanation, they did receive Christian baptism from the Apostle, but had never been baptised before (See C.R.4 p. 271).

The attitude of the Swiss Anabaptists was interesting. It shows how much a doctrine could be influenced by polemical considerations rather than by principles. Grebel on the one hand thought that the baptism of John was one with that of Christ. He deduced from this that infants ought not to be baptised. John had administered baptism only to responsible adults who repented of their sins. So it should be with Christian baptism (Zwingli C.R.3 p. 369). Hubmaier on the other hand thought that a differentiation ought to be made. The ceremonies were the same, but they had not the same signification. The baptism of John brought men to the depths of hell, as a baptism of repentance. The baptism of Christ raised them up again, as a baptism of faith (Ibid.4 p. 603). For both baptisms Hubmaier found a place within the divine economy.

Calvin did not always use the same arguments as Zwingli, but he accepted the general principle for which the Zurich Reformer had contended. The position was made clear in the Institutes: 'The ministry of John is the very same as that which was afterwards delegated to the Apostles. Both baptised unto repentance, both for the remission of sins, both in the name of Christ' (Instit. 4, 15, 7). His exposition of difficult Scriptures was more elaborate, and on the whole more convincing than that of Zwingli, although not everyone will find his denial of a rebaptisation in Acts wholly satisfactory. Of Matthew 3 he wrote: 'John merely distinguishes between himself and other ministers of baptism on the one hand, and the power of Christ on the other. To men has been committed nothing more than the administration of the outward and visible sign. The reality dwelleth with Christ alone' (Harz. Evang. p. 198). This passage clearly reveals the concern of Calvin to exalt Christ rather than the sacrament or its minister. John 1:26 was expounded in a similar way. Calvin urged that the contrast was not between the outward baptism of John and the outward baptism of the Apostles, but between the outward baptism of both and 'that
inward baptism which only Christ can give'. This spiritual baptism of Christ was not expressly contrasted with the physical baptism of John, but with all physical baptism: 'John claims nothing for himself but what he has a right to claim, because he has Christ for the author of his baptism, in which consists the truth of the sign; and he has nothing but the administration of the outward sign, while the whole power and efficacy is in Christ alone' (Comm. on Jn. 1.26).

When he came to discuss the Ephesian episode, Calvin rejected at the outset the idea that the baptisms of John and of Christ were diverse, so that the reiteration of the former was permissible the idea which led men to think that 'it was no inconvenient thing for them of Ephesus to be baptised again, who were only prepared with the baptism of John, and which thus opened a way for the doctrines of rebaptism' (the old taunt of Anabaptism). 'That diversity', Calvin added, 'is falsely and wickedly by them believed. John's baptism was a pledge and token of the same adoption, and of the same newness of life, which we have at this day in our baptism. Is it lawful to repeat the same? Furious men in this our own age, trusting in this testimony, went about to bring in baptising again. I deny that the baptism of water was repeated, because the words of Luke import no other thing save only that they were baptised with the Spirit' (Comm. on Acts 2.209). Calvin apparently identified the baptism of the Spirit with the Apostolic laying on of hands, the imitation of which in later times he condemned as an error of ignorance. His meaning was presumably this, that the men of Ephesus had received the outward rite of baptism, and that in so far as the outward rite was concerned that sufficed. When they received the Gospel, however, and the Apostles laid on their hands, they received inward spiritual baptism. In that sense they were baptised into Christ, but not baptised again.

Later theologians of the Reformed school were one with their master in their insistence upon the unity of the baptism of John and that of Christ. Thus Beza referred to the administration of the sacrament first by John, then at the commandment of Christ (Q. & R.C. 115).23 Coccejus later held that there was identity in 'divine institution, in matter, in significance and in grace' (Heppe R.D. 13 p. 462).24 The preaching and the name were also the same. Heidegger in a full comparison claimed that they were alike 'in efficient cause, external matter, internal promise, form, end and effects' (Heid. 25, 24).25 The abolition of the concept of grace ex opere operato carried with it the obliteration of all possible distinctions, and led to the attempts to explain away apparent Scriptural difficulties. It was felt that the whole evangelical understanding of the sacraments, and of the Christian faith, together with the belief in the unity of the divine work of redemption, was at stake at this point.

The attitude of the Anglicans is of particular interest in view of the importance attached to the question, and the divergences between the Lutheran and Reformed groups. Tyndale did not deal with the matter. Possibly he would have favoured an evang-
-elical differentiation after the Lutheran pattern. Becon, however, took the Reformed side: 'It was God the Father who first of all instituted baptism. He did it through the baptism of John. The baptism of Christ was the same as that of John,' since there is but one baptism' (Bec. P. S. 2 p. 203). An interesting application of the doctrine of the identity of the two baptisms was that of the martyr Denley, who attacked the Roman administration on the ground that it did not conform with the pattern laid down by John: 'The sacrament of baptism is altered and changed. John Baptist used nothing but the preaching of the word, and the water' (Fiske 7 p. 333). Bullinger naturally stated the Swiss view. His chief reasons for identifying the two baptisms were that in each case the water and the doctrine are the same. He thought that the baptism of Christ by John was an acknowledgment of the latter's authority: 'Christ did sanctify with his body the baptism of John' (Bull. P. S. 4 p. 354). The expositor Fulke was interested in the alleged rebaptism of Acts 19. For his part, he denied that there had been any repetition of the sacrament: 'John's baptism and Christ's are the same.' In Acts 19 the baptism of John was confirmed by the imposition of hands rather than disgraced by reiteration — the explanation of Calvin. Fulke stressed the case of the Apostles themselves, who 'were either not baptised at all, or else baptised only with John's baptism' (Fulke P. S. pp 453-4).

No less an authority than Archbishop Whitgift adopted the same interpretation. His remark upon the Acts passage is interesting, because it states rather naively a principle sound in basis, but obviously open to abuse in detail, that the exegesis of single passages must conform to the general principles of Scriptural teaching. Whitgift put it in this way, 'that it is dangerous to understand that place of the sacrament of baptism, lest we should seem to admit rebaptisation' (Whit. P. S. 3 p. 17). Exegetes will treat a statement of this kind with caution if not with suspicion. Be that as it may, Whitgift was too convinced a Reformer to take the path of separating the baptism of John from that of Christ. Not unnaturally, the text in Acts exercised quite a number of the Anglicans, and Hutchinson too discussed it, concluding with Calvin and many others 'that the baptism mentioned is nothing but giving of the Holy Ghost by laying on of hands.' (Hutch. P. S. pp. 114).

It is interesting to notice that even during the following century Anglican theologians maintained the substantial identity of the two baptisms, although distinctions in non-essentials were now drawn. Hackett, for example, gave five reasons for ascribing to the baptism of John the same virtue as that of Christ: that it was a baptism of repentance, that it was a true washing of the Spirit, that the disciples had no other baptism but John's until they were baptised with fire, that Christ was baptised with it, and that 'John baptised at the same time while the disciples of Christ did baptise'. But he added: 'On some less principal respects, the baptism of John doth exceed the baptism of John.
- and he lists the following, the form of words, the wider applica-
tion to nations and persons, the degree of efficacy, and the
nature of its necessity (see Anglicanism 12). At the
turn of the century Andrewes had described the water baptism given
by John as a barren element compared with the fuller baptism in
water and the Spirit given by Christ, but the view was not alto-
gether unevangelical, for he claimed that it was of no avail to
receive even Christian baptism without receiving Christ (see Goode

The reason why the Anglicans took sides so strongly and solidly
with the Reformers abroad is clear enough. They were one with
the Continentals in the desire to exalt Christ by the substitution
of an evangelical for a sacramentalist understanding. What they
objected to in particular in the Romanist scheme was the stress
upon the efficacy of Christian baptism as compared with that of
John. By identifying the two baptisms, they safeguarded the
evangelical nature of the baptism of Christ. At the same time,
they were able in the same way to preserve a unified interpreta-
tion of the divine revelation and redemption. They could also defend
themselves against the Anabaptist contention that the inferior
and purely external baptism (Johannine or infant) ought to be re-
placed by the fuller and truer baptism (Christian or adult).

From the modern historical standpoint the whole controversy
is of course quite artificial. The doctrine of historical evolu-
tion leads naturally to the conclusion that Christian baptism was
a development of the Johannine rite, in response perhaps to the
needs of the new communities, and with additions in ceremonial
and signification from Gentile sources. The Reformers could not
and would not accept such a position. They believed firmly that
baptism, Johannine or Christian, was supernatural in origin.
They believed firmly in its supernatural efficacy. They would
not go on to believe that that efficacy was automatic, so that
the performance of the rite ensured the spiritual benefits. The
sacrament worked freely and evangelically. The rite as a rite was
external only. As an external rite, neither the baptism of
John nor that of Christ could accomplish anything. The true and
spiritual work was inward, the uncontrollable operation of the
Holy Ghost. That work could take place whether the baptism was
that of John or that of the Apostles. The Reformers understanding
was dialectical. In the sacrament, as in the word written,
there was the human element and the divine: a reflection, as it were,
of that hypostatic union of the two natures in the one
Person of Christ. This dialectical approach obviously opened
up the way to a wider and deeper and purer supernatural understand-
ing of the work of God in and through the sacraments. On the
surface, perhaps, the theological and exegetical battle for the
identity of the two baptisms has all the appearance of futility,
but at a deeper level vital principles were involved.

4. The One Baptism

Frequently in the previous section there had been occasion to
notice incidentally the insistence upon the essential one-ness of
at any rate Christian baptism. It was a cardinal principle with all parties that baptism was to be given and received once only, and never repeated. The question of re-baptism - settled generally when the opinion of Cyprian was finally rejected - was re-opened in the sixteenth century when the Anabaptists began to baptise as adults those who had already been baptised in infancy. For their part, of course, the Anabaptists denied that there was any rebaptisation, on the ground that infant baptism was not baptism at all. Romanists and Reformers alike rejected this argument, and accused the Anabaptists of repeating that which ought only to be done once. The Reformers were not entirely one with the Romanists, however, for they thought that the Romanists themselves allowed rebaptisation when they argued that the disciples of John at Ephesus were baptised as Christians. A further issue arose when the Puritans suggested that baptisms irregularly administered were not true and valid baptisms, since this denial also seemed to open up the way to rebaptisation.

The Romanist position was perfectly plain. It had been held consistently since the great Cyprianic controversy. In the writings of Thomas it was argued thoroughly, and the later theologians developed it to meet all possible contingencies. The basic contention was this: that once baptism in water and in the Triune name had been given, even by a heretic or an unbeliever, true baptism had been administered, and there was to be no repetition. Objections considered by Thomas were these: that sins are iterated, and therefore new cleansing is required; and that the disciples of John were baptised again, and also the Paulianists. But Thomas pointed out that the proper significance and effect is regeneration, which can only take place once. If then there was to be correspondence between the sign and the effect and meaning, there could only be one baptism. Again, baptism conferred an indelible character, and the Passion of Christ, the basis of spiritual cleansing and renewal, had only been suffered once. John's baptism Thomas did not accept as an equivalent of Christian baptism and the Paulianists were rebaptised because the form of their baptism was defective. Baptism, Thomas concluded, is our birth, and birth only takes place once (Thom. 3 qu. 66,9). Trent reaffirmed the Thomistic teaching: 'If anyone saith that baptism which was true and rightly conferred is to be repeated, let him be anathema' (C. & D. T. Sess. 7 Bapt. Can. 11). In favour of the same teaching the Catechism cited Augustine's dictum: 'There is no returning to the womb' (Joann. Tract. 2). Where there was doubt, it allowed a conditional form of rebaptism, but insisted that this form should be used only with great care (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 54). Bellarmine explained that the main reason against reiteration was that baptism had an effect which could not be augmented (De la S.T.B. p. 350).

The Continental Reformers had no quarrel with the principle of non-reiteration. Indeed, they proclaimed it with great rigidity. They did quarrel, however, with the reasons given, and with the exception of the Lutherans they did not agree that the disciples of John could be, or were in fact, rebaptised. Luther himself insisted that baptism itself is given once only, but
he claimed that its significance and operation could never be exhausted in this life. He thought it right that Christian baptism should be added to that of John, because the word of promise and of life had been added (W.A.6 p.472). Melanchthon shared that view. The sign, he argued, ought not to be reiterated, because reiteration accomplishes nothing further, and the sign once given is a permanent mark and testimony. John’s baptism, however, had only pointed to Christ, whereas Christian baptism bore witness to Christ. On that ground the rebaptisation of the disciples of John was both right and necessary (C.R.21 p.471).26

Strong support for the doctrine of one-ness may be found in the writings of Zwingli, although the main interest of the Zurich Reformer was to defend the identity of the Johannine and Christian baptism. He found the main reason against repetition in the signification of the sacrament, that it witnessed to the death of Christ, which had taken place once only (C.R.4 p.284).27 An obvious weakness in this argument is that the supper also witnesses to the death of Christ, and yet it is constantly repeated. Apart from this, Zwingli had nothing new to add. Calvin attacked the Romanists for allowing that the disciples of John had rightly been baptised — this opened up a dangerous loop-hole for the Anabaptists (Inst.4,15,18 & Comm.on Acts 19). A particular problem which caused the Reformers much heart-searching was posed by Knox: Had the Reformers themselves, baptised under Papistry, received true baptism or not? The reply shows how firmly embedded was the principle of non-iteration, for Knox decided that no rebaptism was necessary. He hastened to add that this did not mean that it was a matter of indifference which baptism, Reformed or Romanist, was received, 'God avert us from that wilfull and foulische blindness'. The baptism in Papistry had been due to ignorance: 'Our fathers baptised us papist in ignorance' (Knox 4 pp.119 f.). Later theologians endorsed this conclusion of Knox, on the ground that all baptism rightly given is valid, so long as the essential features are observed (Wolleb 106).28 It was stressed, however, that the significance, not the effect, forbade repetition (Coccejus 13, 449).29

The English church had naturally inherited the principle enshrined in the Tridentine statement. Hart has collected several ancient and mediaeval British canons which bear on the question. Amongst the canons of St. Patrick was one which forbade the rebaptising of anyone who 'had received the tradition of the creed from any person'. Ecgbert laid down the rule for doubtful cases: 'Where proper witnesses of their baptism cannot be found and they are too young to answer for themselves, let them be baptised without scruple' (Hart p.191). Further examples could be quoted from the synods and councils after the Conquest to show that the English church conformed to the generally accepted principle and practice. In the sixteenth century the Articles of 1536 insisted that baptism is given once only, and the King’s Book raised the matter again, forbidding the rebaptisation of either infants or adults (p.43). The teaching was obviously aimed against Anabaptist propaganda. It was perhaps due to the fear of Anabaptist
the subject of iteration of baptism was frequently introduced in
the examinations of Protestants under Mary

The Anglican Reformers were themselves active in the denunci­
ation of the Anabaptist practice. Becon claimed that baptising
again was a transgression of the word and institution of God:
"Whosoever is once baptised, of whatsoever age he be, according
to the institution and word of God, which abideth for ever,
he ought not to be baptised again" (Bec. P. S. 2, p. 226) - The
sentence is not quite clear, and possibly Becon meant that all
those who are validly baptised, ought not to be rebaptised; Phil­
pot used the principle of non-iteration as one of his arguments
in favour against Anabaptism. He asserted that to baptise again
was contrary to the Scripture, that there was no record of even
the greatest of sinners being rebaptised, and that since the
signification of baptism is death, a repetition of the sacrament
involves a confusion of the meaning: "Verily, that men once
christened ought not to be baptised again, doth not the whole
Scripture declare, which maketh mention of none that was re-
baptised after his fall?... Now if that baptism and washing doth
represent unto us death, it is not to be taken again, lest so
high mysteries be confounded" (Phil. P. S. p. 380). Bullinger too
was particularly concerned to refute Anabaptism. He asserted
strongly the one-ness of baptism as a sacrament divinely ap­pointed.
He was quite prepared to accept heretical baptism as valid, be­cause
heretics 'baptise not in the name of any man, or into the
society of their errors or heresies, but baptise in the name
of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' (Bull.
P. S. 4 p. 22). Later, arguing more particularly against re-bap­tisation, he recalled the disputes of early days, and the condem­nation of the practice. He drew attention to the imperial law made
against re-baptisation by Honorius and Theodosius: "To rebaptise,
he argued, was an offence against the law of man, but far worse,
it was an offence against the law of God: 'And verily they which
rebaptise and are rebaptised, they both defile the name of God,
which was called on over the baptised in the former baptism,
and cast from them the institution of God as vain and vicious.
Therefore it is an horrible offence to iterate the ceremony of
baptism, and it is without example' (Ibid. 4 p. 393).

Bishop Ridley in his examination was questioned upon the valid­ity of baptism administered in a tongue not understood. The quest­ion was subtle, for Ridley naturally held on principle that every
man had a right to the services in his own language. But on the
other hand, he could not let go the principle that baptism once
administered with the correct matter and form was valid. He re­plied then that 'it is not only not needful, but also not lawful,
for any man so christened (i.e. in Latin) to be christened again'
(Foxe 7 p. 420). The same topic arose in the discussions be­
tween Bradford and Harpsfield, but this time it was introduced by
the Reformer. Harpsfield had contended that only the true church
had the true sacraments. Bradford answered: 'If heretics have
baptism, and do baptise, as they did in St. Cyprian's time,
you know that baptism is baptism, and not to be reiterate'. Harpsfield had no reply (Ibid. p. 169).
Fulke was another Reformer who referred to the Cyprianic controversy, but in quite another connection. He had as his aim the refutation of the Romanist Martin's contention that difference of opinion was a proof of heresy. His argument was that the Africans plainly held a different opinion upon the matter of rebaptism, but the disputants were not on that account all to be condemned as heretics: 'It were hard to condemn them both for heretics, and least of all them that held the truth, just because there was a difference of opinion (Fulke P.35). Hutchinson brought in the doctrine of the non-iteration of baptism in his exposition of the difficult passage in Hebrews 6. He thought that Paul here denied 'that he which is baptised can be christened': 'We can repent without baptism before and after, but renewed unto repentance we cannot be, without this noble sacrament. St. Paul in thist place forbiddeth all iteration of baptism, not of repentance!' (Hutch. P. S. p. 114). Possibly Hutchinson's exegesis would not appeal to many scholars, but the passage illustrates how firmly the doctrine of one baptism was held by the Reformers.

A fresh turn was given to the question in the long and bitter controversy between Cartwright and Whitgift, a controversy reproduced very fully in the Parker Society edition of Whitgift. Cartwright advanced the opinion that baptising by a layman was not valid baptism: 'On this point, whether he be a minister or no, dependeth not only the dignity, but also the being of the sacrament. I take the baptism of women to be no more the holy sacrament of baptism than any other daily or ordinary washing of the child' (Whit. P. S. p. 525). In support of this extreme view Cartwright alleged a doubt of Augustine. The point was this, that if laybaptism could not be accepted as valid baptism, then all persons supposedly baptised by laymen still stood in need of the sacrament. Whitgift seized upon this point as one of the dangerous points of doctrine found in Cartwright: 'Then numbers are not baptised that are supposed to be baptised, and it must of necessity fall out that they ought to be rebaptised' (Ibid. p. 552). In the Sermon at Greenwich Whitgift traced back his opponent's views to Anabaptism: 'The which questions spring out of the school of the Anabaptists, and tend to the rebaptisation of all, or the most part, of them that this day are living' (Ibid. p. 576). Whitgift employed a similar argument against Cartwright's insistence upon the absolute necessity of preaching at baptism: 'If that baptism be without life at which the word of God is not preached, then can it not regenerate or be effectually to those that were therewithal baptised; and it must of necessity be iterated that it may be lively' (Ibid. 64). This apparently academic discussion is important when we remember that it arose out of a major attack upon the validity of baptism administered by laymen and Papists, and that the Separatists took part in the struggle as well as the Puritans. Thus Barrowe found himself face to face with the damaging accusation that he had denied the Queen herself to be validly baptised. Penry found himself in a quandary upon the point. On the one hand he could not approve of baptism by laymen or dumb ministers; on the other he felt the force of Whitgift's argument against rebaptisation. He found refuge in a doctrine of election,
urging that the elect and converted are truly baptised spiritually no matter who the minister, and could therefore derive no benefit from rebaptisation (On Penry's views see Pierce's Penry pp.188 and Penry's Exhortation p.27-28). Whitgift's opponents found it very difficult to counter his clever use of the principle of non-iteration in these controversies with regard to the minister.

The Anglican teaching was finally summed up by Hooker. Hooker argued that re-baptism was only permissible where the previous baptism was obviously defective. Otherwise the Scriptural principle of one baptism was opposed. The very meaning of baptism, he claimed, pointed to the absurdity of iteration, for baptism is a spiritual birth, and a man cannot be born twice: 'They which have not at first their right baptism must of necessity be rebaptised. Iteration of baptism once given hath been always thought a manifest contempt of that ancient apostolic aphorism 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism'. How should we practice iteration of baptism, and yet teach that by baptism we are born anew?' (Hooker L.E.P.5 pp.24 f.). Hooker made the pertinent observation that all that iterate baptism are driven under some pretext or other to make the former baptism void. In the Book of Common Prayer care was taken to see that in cases of private baptism there had been a proper administration, a conditional form of fresh baptism being allowed, but only where there was good cause for doubt that the previous form had been defective: 'If thou be not baptised already, I baptise thee etc.' Even at the public service the preliminary question, derived from the mediaeval orders, was addressed to the sponsors: 'Hath this child been already baptised, or no?', in order that there should not be any rebaptism by mistake.

To the doctrine of the one baptism the Reformers contributed little essentially new. They differed from the Romanists mainly in the fact that they stressed the argument from signification rather than the argument from effects (and, of course, in the identifying of the baptism of John with Christian baptism). But basically they agreed with the theologians of Rome that baptism was a sign with a divinely appointed place in the Christian life, and that it must be administered only as instituted. From the historical angle it matters very little whether a person is baptised once or a score of times. Nothing vital is at stake. It so happens that the rite has by custom and as the result of circumstances come to be administered once only. The meaning has adapted itself accordingly. There is no point in seeking to overturn a venerable custom to which theological significance has been attached. But for one baptism or a plurality of baptisms no binding transcendental authority can be found.

The Reformers, like their opponents, did not look at it in that way. For them baptism was of divine institution. The meaning of it was evangelically determined by the truth of the revelation given by God in Jesus Christ. To repeat a rite which derived its origin and meaning from God, and which in accordance with that origin and meaning ought to be given once only, was to run counter to the will and prerogative of God.
The point has been made because again it brings us to that fundamental cleavage between the Roman-Reformed transcendental world of the sixteenth century, and the Liberal Protestant non-transcendental world of the modern age. The arguments of Whitgift and Cartwright - to take only one example - read rather strangely perhaps in contemporary ears, but that is because of the change in the attitude and approach to God in relation to the world and to man. In the sixteenth century the problem of iteration was simple enough. God had commanded one baptism. The doctrine of baptism in Scripture implied one baptism. No thinker after the Cyprianic controversy had dared deny it. The church had always observed it. What more was there to say? Historic origins or parallels were completely unimportant and indeed irrelevant, for Christian baptism came directly from God. To God the church which preserved and used the sacrament and the ministers who gave it were responsible. The Reformers and the Romanists differed, and differed seriously, in points of detail, but in broad outline they stood on the same side of that gulf which marks of the theology of the sixteenth century from so much of the Protestant theology of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Perhaps the sixteenth century thinkers and writers were wrong. But it would be well not to ignore altogether the possibility that they were right. After all, if they did happen to be right, then what a tragedy it is that time should be squandered upon the historical non-essentials, when the underlying truths are neglected and despised.

The antithesis ought perhaps not to be put so baldly as that. The present age, even granting that the Reformers were right, has at least contributed to the study of the divine revelation on its human and historical side. Possibly the divine side asserted and explored by the Reformers was and is the more important. But the two ultimately must go together. The sacrament, like the Bible, and like the Word made flesh, has its place amongst the phenomena of human history. To that extent it is a proper subject for historical enquiry. The divine institution does not rule out the possibility of human antecedents and parallels - even the Son of God had a genealogy. If an over-exaggeration of the human origins obscures the final fact of the divine appointment, then perhaps there is need that the antithesis should be presented sharply. If there is to be an order of importance, then surely the divine side should come first. But in a balanced theology room can and ought to be found for both.

Notes
1. Luther W.A.2 p.729. 'Disse Tauf ist vortzefft en angetzjgt yn der syndflut Noe'.
2. Ibid. Stange p.301. 'Nun ist die Tauf weit ein grossere Sündfluss...Dann jene hat nit mehr dann eins Jahr's Menschen ertrankt; aber die Tauf ertrankt noch durch die Welt allerlei Menschen'.
3. Beza Q. et R.C.101. 'Sic quod Noe servatus est ex aquis, et per aquas ipsas in arca, typus fuit baptismi, quo Ecclesia in Christo veluti conclusa servatur...Sic. Israel transiens per medit mare etinde saluus emergens etc.'
Idea autem mutata est circuncisio baptismum: quia sanctum communis est et perfectius, quia pleniori gratia accumulatum. Ibi enim peccata solum dimittebantur, sed nec gratia ad bene operandum adjutrix, nec virtutum possessionem augmentum ibi praestabat, ut in baptismo.

De la S.T.B. p. 347 'Nos sacramenta conferunt la grace: ceux de la loi ancienne ne faisaient que la signifier'.

Luther W.A. 6 p. 532 'Utraque aequaliter significabant'.

Seeberg p. 316 'Gott hat ihnen besondere Verheissungen gegeben, die Glauben wirken und fördern'.

Stanzer p. 322, quoting Luther 'Error enim est, sacramenta novae legis legis novae sacramentis veteris legis penes efficaciam significat... a signis novis et vestuis... quod legales figure non habent annexum verbum promissionis'.

Galle p. 363 'Er nennt die ersten Aufgaben seiner Loci die Sacramenten nicht anders als signa... und verwirkt mit Nachdruck die Unterscheidung der Scholastiker zu'.

Anrich M.B. p. 41 'Taufe ist genau so unumgänglich wie das alttestamentliche Sakrament der Beschneidung, dessen neutestamentliche Parallele sie bildet'.

Zwingli C.R. No. 93 p. 48 'Circumcisio priscis (quod ad rationem sacramentalem adtinet) id fuit quod nobis baptismus'.

W.Luther W.A. 6 p. 472 'Videtur Christus baptisma Johannis non evacuasse, sed verbo vitae seum promissionis perfecisse'.

De la S.T.B. p. 368 'l'institution d'un homme... l'invocation de la Trinite n'y a pas de place; le baptême de Jésus n'est pas réitérable; Jean n'a jamais revendiqué pour son baptême la vertu de remettre par lui-même les péchés; il distingue entre son baptême d'eau et le baptême de l'Esprit que confère Jésus'.

W.Luther W.A. 6 p. 472 'Videtur Christus baptisma Johannis non evacuasse, sed verbo vitae seum promissionis perfecisse'.

'Mem.C.R. 21 pp. 207 f. 'Sed Joannes aqua baptisat quod ipse non sit in quem credatur, qui salvet. Christus, cum sit salvator, baptisat spiritu sancto et igni'.

Zwingli C.R. 4 p. 766 'Nihil efficiebat Joannes tinctio... nihil efficit Christi tinctio... loquimur autem hic de aquae baptismo nō de irrigatione interna, quae per Spiritum Sanctum fit. Nihil efficet Christi tinctio, nam Christus baptismo Johannis contentus fuit'.
sunder ein harfürzyer her des heilands....Joannes hat nun den
touff der leer und des wassers ggeben den die junger ggeben
habend. Das predgen Joannis ist dem predgen Christi und der
aposteln glychförmig!

20 C.R.4 p.271 'Nit..Worinn sind ir getoufft, sunder woruf sind
ir. Touffen wirt hie fur leeren genomen'.
21 Grebel in Zw.C.R.3 p.369 'Wie nun Joannes getoufft alein die,
als die sich bessertend, die bose frucht fliehende, gut that-
end, also habend och die apostel nach der uffart Christi vor-
her von Christo ein bewelk genomen, als er sprach derhalben,
So gond hin und lerend alle volker und touffend sey'.
22 Hubmaier in Zw.C.R.4 p.603 'Gott furst durch Joannem hynab in
die hell; und durch Christum wider auffher'.
23 Q.et R.C.115 Baptismum a Joanne primum, deinde ex mandate
Christi administratum'.
24 Heppe R.D.13 p.462 'mandatum divinum: materia, significatio,
25 Ibid. Heidegger 25,24 'Nam Johannis aeque et Christi baptismi
causa efficiens, Deus instituens; materia externa, aqua;
interna promissio, gratia remissionis peccatorum et regener-
atio spiritalis; forma, testificatio et obsignatio gratiae elius
per aquam at ritum ablusionis, necon promissionis cum hoc
elemento et ritu eius copulatio; finis, confirmatio baptis-
atorum de gratia Dei; effecta. quae omnia baptismus Joh-
annis obsignavit'.
26 Mel.C.R.21 Loci C' Ceterum ipsum signum non debet iterari;
quia iteratio ceremoniae nihil prodesset, et signum semel
acceptum est perpetua nota et perpetuum testimonium'.
27 Zwingli C.R.4 p.284 'Christus Nun ist Christus nur einst ge-
28 Heppe R.D. Wolleb 106 Baptismus semel susceptus, /storben'.
29 Ibid. Cocceius 13,449 Coccejus 'Quare baptismus non repetatur
ratio non ex charactere, sed ex significatio petenda est'.

In the discussion of baptism, as of any other doctrine, the various topics merge the one into the other. The separation demanded for the purpose of analysis is formal only, and often artificial. This is particularly the case when the topic of the necessity of baptism arises, for all sorts of other questions are involved, sometimes indirectly, sometimes directly. Thus the doctrine of necessity derives on the one hand from the doctrine of the origin of the sacrament, on the other from the doctrine of its effects. The theologian who accepts a divine institution will obviously have a different view of the necessity or otherwise of baptism from that of the man who pleads for a purely human derivation. So too the theologian who thinks that God does a work of grace automatically, and solely, through the sacraments in those who receive it, will necessarily take a far more serious view of the omission to perform the rite than the man who does not agree that sacrament and grace are tied in that way.

There are further ramifications. The view held upon the necessity will to a large extent determine the standpoint upon the question of private baptism, and of laybaptism, whether by men or women. Where salvation or damnation depends upon the administration of the rite, baptism will be thought of as a matter of the utmost urgency. Delay even for the sake of order will be a breach of charity. But where no such conception is held, the urgency is not so great. If private baptism is retained at all, it will be only for the sake of assurance. There is no longer an absolute necessity. To administer baptism where practicable is the better course, but it is not the indispensable means to salvation.

In the study of the necessity of baptism a good deal of overlapping will then be necessary. Subjects sufficiently important in themselves to warrant separate treatment must be touched upon, in so far as they are relevant. The lesson which ought to be learned from this inter-relatedness is that of the unity of theological thinking. The Reformers attacked the Romanist system, not because they found a fault here and a fault there, but because they rejected received doctrine at a central place. Once the breach had been made at the centre, the attack quickly spread to the outlying sectors. It was hardly more than a step from the doctrine of justification by faith to the rejection of the sacramentalist conception of baptism, the very heart of the Romanist theology of the sacrament. The reconsideration of the teaching upon the meaning and operation of baptism led naturally to a review of the doctrine, first of the necessity of baptism, second of private and lay baptism. This theological unity is a factor which those who study the theology of the church, and particularly those who seek to reconstruct it upon a new basis, cannot afford to ignore.

In respect of the necessity of baptism the prevailing view in
the sixteenth century was clear and consistent, and of a piece with the whole sacramentalist theology of the time. It rested ultimately upon the text John 3.5, which was taken to mean that regeneration was impossible without a literal baptism in water. Augustine did a good deal to develop this interpretation - his famous dictum with regard to the fate of unbaptised infants will be recalled. Augustine regarded baptism as necessary to salvation, ordinarily, in an absolute and final sense. The necessity was not merely one of precept - that Christ had commanded to baptise, and his commandment ought to be obeyed. It was the absolute necessity of means (See Beckmann p.100).

The Scholastics took over the teaching of Augustine and developed, or rather elaborated it. Lombard cited John 3.5 in favour of an absolute necessity. He admitted certain exceptions to the rule. The baptism of martyrdom was a substitute for water-baptism, for then the Christian received the thing signified (death), although he did not receive the sign (Lomb.4 Dist.1 D). In certain cases, too, a miraculous baptism of the Spirit took the place of water-baptism, especially where true faith existed without the opportunity of receiving the sacrament. Cornelius was an example of a man who received the Spirit before he was baptised with water (Ibid.2). In the Middle Ages, however, infants were the normal recipients of baptism, and since these could not suffer as martyrs or enjoy the baptism of the Spirit by personal faith, only water-baptism could avail. Prior death meant certain damnation. Neither the faith of the church, nor the desire of the parents made the slightest difference (Ibid.E). This was thoroughly in line with the traditional doctrine handed down through Augustine.

Thomas was equally dogmatic. He claimed that the law of John 3.5 binds all. Baptism is incorporation into Christ, and without Christ there can be no salvation. Prior to Christ's coming circumcision was the mode of incorporation, before circumcision simple faith. Faith is still necessary, but it is now shown in baptism. The baptismal character can only be imparted by baptism itself. Thomas was willing to allow the recognised exceptions in spite of the objection that John 3.5 makes no exceptions at all. Martyrs were in a class of their own, and an invisible sanctification of the Spirit could supply the need of baptism where the desire was present but for necessary reasons the reality lacked (Thom.4 Qu.68). Thomas refused to accept the harsh judgment that catechumens could not enjoy eternal life even though they died in their good works. If the desire of baptism was present when sudden death robbed of the opportunity, there might be a temporary but not a final exclusion from eternal life (Qu.68).

The Tridentines did little more than repeat Thomas' statement. The Canons taught that the sacraments of the New Law (or the desire for them) are necessary for the obtaining of the grace of justification: 'If anyone say that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto salvation, and that without them, or without the desire thereof men obtain of God (through faith alone) the grace of justification, let him be anathema' (C.& D. Sess.7 Sacr. Can.5). Baptism was specifically stated to be necessary to salvation in Canon 4 on Baptism. In the Catechism a special
warning was issued to parents, and to converted infidels: "The faithful are earnestly to be exhorted to take care that their children be brought to the church as soon as it may be done without danger" (Cat. T. 2,2 Qu. 23). "Infidels converted are admonished not to defer the sacrament of baptism beyond the time subscribed by the church" (Ibid. Qu. 34). It was granted that a true desire might suffice in the case of unavoidable accident: "In cases of accident their intent and determination to receive it and their repentance for their previous illspent life will suffice them to grace of justification" (Ibid. Qu. 34). To receive baptism was better, however, since the sacrament was in itself a test of intention. Where there was any risk, the reception of the sacrament ought on no account to be delayed (Ibid. Qu. 36). To cover the possibility of emergencies the Rituale Romanum plainly stated that baptism was lawfully anywhere and at any time. Adults under instruction were to be baptised at once if there was any danger to life. It is interesting to note in passing that the Eastern churches assert a similar absolute necessity, using the same text John 3.5 as the scriptural proof (Schaff G. & L. p. 423).  

A special problem arose in connection with the punishment of infants dying unbaptised. Infants were guilty only of birth-sin, not of actual sin, and many theologians felt that they could not properly be classed with the rest of the damned. Augustine, with all his rigour, had hinted at a milder form of punishment. Everyone was agreed that the punishment consisted primarily in the deprivation of the vision of God. They suffered a negative pain of loss. The milder school would allow no more, denying that there was any positive pain of sense. Indeed some felt that in the special department of the nether regions reserved for them they might even achieve a certain measure of happiness, although this was far below the bliss of heaven. This was the view of Bellarmine. Bellarmine took a strict view of the necessity of baptism. Even ignorance of the precept did not excuse its violation. Martyrdom or a perfect conversion (where baptism was impossible) might supply the want of it in special cases, but ordinarily the necessity was so absolute that baptism by a heretic or an infidel was preferable to no baptism at all. Unbaptised infants could not plead that they were innocent, for only God has the right to judge, and they are in any case culpable in respect of original sin. They do not suffer the full pains of the lost, however, but go to the special limbo in which they are deprived of the full delights of Paradise (Short Christian Doctrine). On Bellarmine's position see De La S.T.B. pp. 358-361. Even the rigorists who insisted upon a full damnation usually suggested that the physical pains of infants would be of a smallness proportionate to their smaller sensibility (On this question see the Cath. Encycl. Art. Bapt.).

It is obvious that the ignorant and ill-instructed populace would understand this doctrine of an absolute necessity superstitiously. That this was the case is proved by many popular writings. Manning's selection in verse and prose from the age of Wycliffe illustrates the meaning of the doctrine in popular belief and practice, and helps us to understand why Wycliffe and the
Reformers attacked the traditional teaching so vigorously. Thus in the poem 'Handlyng Synne' it was taught that all persons were under judgment by reason of original sin until the moment of christening: 'Adam's synne was so grefe, That thyr was to God none That he xfe toe shulde to helle gone, / so lefe, But he wasse in the fonte stone'.

Hilton pointed out that original sin had destroyed 'the god-likeness of man and that baptism was necessary to restore it: 'A soul of a child that is born, as is not christened, by reason of original sin, hath no likeness of God'. The usual exceptions were allowed, since baptism could be 'in water, in chedyng blod, and in fayth (e.g. the Patriarchs), but the idea advanced by a few that Jews and Turks by keeping of their own law may be saved, though they believe not in Jesus Christ' was denounced as a vicious error (Myre: See Manning P.E.). The writers of these works no doubt realised the doctrinal implications, but it may be doubted whether the ordinary people of the time did. All that they knew was that a child was under penalty of eternal damnation until the performance of a rite by which the soul was cleansed. Since that rite was in a language familiar no doubt but not understandable, it carried with it no clear meaning, and could hardly be thought of in any other way than as a powerful charm. Attempts on the part of Wycliffe and his followers to substitute a more spiritual view accomplished little except to call down episcopal denunciation. The opinions that 'the sacrament of baptism is not necessary to salvation of any who die in infancy', and that in respect of infants who die after baptism 'catholics may doubt whether they be saved or damned' were condemned as heretical in Langham's Mandate (Hart p.365), and at a later date Wycliffe 'of damnable memory' was specially attacked for the conclusion 'that it is presumptuous to say, that infants dying without baptism will not be saved' (Ibid.p.336). Against the opinions of Wycliffe the stock arguments were used, that Augustine, and the church by custom taught the absolute necessity of baptism, that the promise of salvation was bound up with the sacrament, and that it had never been permitted to bury the non-baptised in holy ground (See Woodford Fasciculus Rerum).

The protest of Wycliffe fell largely on deaf ears, and in the sixteenth century superstitious views persisted. The Romanist clergy did not hesitate to stress that failure to be baptised meant eternal ruin even where there had been no conscious thought of evil. Pierce has quoted a typical passage from Gruffydd Robert 'Drych Cristianogawl', in which the Welsh Romanist seeks to impress upon 'catholics' their high calling and privilege 'among the thousands that have gone and will go to hell for want of baptism. Know', he continues, 'that there are thousands of thousands of little children in hell, without hope of mercy, who never have thought any evil, and yet are lost because they never received baptism to cleanse them from the sin they received from Adam' (Pierce Penny p.140). Apart from these blood-curdling flights of eloquence, the official formularies of the early Reformation period maintained strongly an absolute necessity of the sacrament. The Ten Articles spoke of baptism as a sacrament 'necessary for the attaining of everlasting life'. The King's Book (p.42) went
further: 'The sacrament of baptism is necessary for the attaining of everlasting life,’ according to the words of Christ (John 3.5). The reason was given that salvation is only within the church, and that incorporation into the church is by baptism only: ‘Therefore seeing that out of the church neither infants nor no men can be saved, they must needs be christened and cleansed by baptism, and so incorporated into the church’. The King’s Book, however, did not go so far as the Bishops’ Book of 1537, which had definitely pronounced upon the salvation of baptised infants and upon the damnation of unchristened: ‘Insomuch as infants and children, dying in their infancy, shall undoubtedly be saved thereby, and else not’. This sentence actually reappeared in the King’s Book, but the final phrase ‘and else not’ was significantly omitted. In the amended form the phrase found its way into the Revised Prayer Books, first in the Confirmation Service, and later in the baptismal order itself. (See Daniel p.432, Proctor p. 414 n.1). It is perhaps not illegitimate to conclude that the harsh teaching of an absolute necessity was beginning to weaken under pressure of Reformation teaching. A similar discreet silence with regard to the fate of the unchristened children of Christians’ was maintained in Cranmer’s Catechism, although here it was stated unreservedly that the children of heathen parents dying without the sacrament were destined to everlasting wrath (p.50). The old text John 3.5, was the basis of this judgment. Salvation was only by the second birth given by the water of baptism. Neither by the sacrament nor by covenant promise could the children of Jews and Turks receive the Holy Ghost and be born again. They had thus no hope of attaining to the Kingdom of God (pp.131-6). The traditional teaching obviously did not die easily; for even in the First Reformed Prayer Book, the first prayer contained the petition that the children to be baptised might be received into the ark of Christ’s church, and so saved from perishing. The latter part of the petition, which followed closely that of the Consultatio (‘that being separated from the number of the ungodly, he may be kept safe’ etc.), was struck out in 1552, together with the reference to the destruction of Pharaoh and his hosts.

Throughout the Reformation period the Romanist party in England strove earnestly and bitterly to maintain an absolute necessity of the sacrament, and while they held power they sought to check the development of a contrary opinion. As early as 1530 a number of heretical articles were condemned under Warham, among them the covenantal view of the position of infants, attributed to Tyndale, ‘that infants be holy and clean, though they have not received baptism, because their parents be holy and clean’ (Foxe 7 p.433). When John Lambert was examined, an enquiry was made into his views upon the necessity of baptism and the legitimacy of lay-baptism (Foxe 5 p.182). One of the points urged by the Men of Devon in their revolt against the changes in worship in 1649 was that the demanding of a public service of baptism excluded sick children from salvation—evidently they had not read or not understood the book which provided for private administration at any time in emergency (Strype’s Cranmer p.96). When the Romanists regained power with the accession of Mary they made a special point of enforcing both the doctrine of an absolute nec—
-essity and the practice of lay-baptism in emergency. Article 20 of Bonn*r's Visitation Articles dealt with the latter question, directing the clergy 'diligently to move and exhort their parishioners how and in what manner their children should be baptised in time of necessity' (Burnet 2, p.15). The insistence upon the doctrine is clear from the examinations of heretics, especially of those 'summoned for failure to have their children baptised after the Roman fashion - Anabaptism was of course suspected, but usually incorrectly. Thomas Haukes, for example, was warned by Harpsfield of the great risk he ran by delaying baptism: 'Admit your child die unchristened: what a heavy case you stand Haukes. I admit that: If it do, what then? / in. Harpsfield How is original sin washed away?'

When Haukes replied that the promise of 1 Corinthians 7 covered the child, Bonner himself retaliated by quoting John 3.5: 'Do ye not know that Christ said: Except ye be baptised, ye cannot be saved' (Foxe pp.103 f.). The argument between Bonner and Smith was similar. Bonner asserted his belief that 'if they die before they be baptised, they be damned'. To give weight to the statement Mordant confirmed it by an oath, and gave it a personal application, hypothetical or real: 'By our Lady, sir, I believe that if my child die without baptism, he is damned' (Ibid. p.352). Langdale in his examination of Woodman used Mark 16 as his proof-text, but this had certain inconveniences, for it asserted a need of faith as well as baptism, and did not actually state that a lack of the latter meant damnation. Langdale, however, boldly claimed that 'all that be not baptised, be damned' (Ibid. 8 pp.356 f.)

The evidence could easily be multiplied from the many sources available, popular, theological and liturgical. Enough has been said, however, to give a clear picture of the Romanist position, and to show with what tenacity and rigidity it was held. In normal cases the sacrament of baptism was so absolutely necessary that without it damnation was inevitable. The scriptural teaching upon original sin and the need for regeneration formed the basis of the belief. Exceptions were allowed, but only in extraordinary cases, and in clearly defined circumstances. Humanitarian considerations led to a softening of the conception of the punishment endured by unbaptised infants not guilty of actual sin. But even if the unbaptised infants escaped the full rigours of the damned, there could be no question as to their state, which involved the deprivation of the Blessed Vision and the loss of the delights of Heaven. A thing apparently so small as the performance of a rite determined the eternal destiny of the soul. For that rite was the instrument chosen by God for the conveyance of the divine grace which alone could save.

When the protest came, it was not against the fundamental position, that grace alone can save. It was not even, or at least not altogether against the idea that the sacrament is an instrument of grace. The protest was against the rigid tying of the grace to the sacrament, against the assumption that the author of both grace and sacrament, God himself, was bound by the means appointed. The nature of that protest will take us a long way towards the understanding of the relative conceptions of baptism held by the Reformers and the Romanists, whether in England or overseas.
2. The Reformed View

The revolt of Protestantism against the tying of grace to the sacraments is understandable when we remember the broad evangelical conception which the Reformers had of Christianity as a whole. Within the reformed understanding there could hardly be place for an absolute necessity of this or that sacrament, even when the sacrament was acknowledged to be a divinely appointed means of grace. Of course the protest was not new in the sixteenth century. We have seen in the previous section how Wycliffe and his followers opposed a sacramentalist teaching of necessity. But the broader and clearer and fuller understanding of justification gave to the protest an added point and weight. For the first time in the sixteenth century the doctrine of an absolute necessity was challenged, and in the minds of a large body of Christians overthrown.

It is perhaps a matter for surprise that Luther himself did not state his position very clearly upon this issue. Luther was more concerned to find a right place for the sacraments than to oust them from a wrong place. He wished to assert definitely a general necessity of baptism, as in the Augsburg Confession (See Winer C.V.), without either maintaining or denying an absolute necessity. Probably Luther's anxiety was to mark off his own teaching from that of the Anabaptists, who denied, in the case of infants, not only the necessity, but the validity of baptism. Luther himself retained a very high view of the two Dominical sacraments. His semi-Romanist conception of the supper is well known, and he thought baptism sufficiently important to warrant private baptism in cases of sickness. If pressed, Luther would hardly have taught that lack of baptism, except through wilful contempt, would exclude the children of Christians from salvation. His final conception was evangelical, not sacramentalist. But the emphasis of Luther was always upon the ordinary necessity of the sacrament as a divinely appointed means, not upon its non-necessity in special circumstances. The difference of emphasis between Luther and the Reformed theologians was sufficiently striking to call for notice in the 'Controversiae', in which Luther was reported to hold that the baptism of water is necessary, as opposed to Bucer and Calvin, who denied it (p. xxix).

With Zwingli the matter was otherwise. Zwingli too defended the baptism of infants against Anabaptist attacks. For that reason he found it necessary to urge the importance of the sacrament. The very argument with which he defended infant baptism, however, the argument from the covenant, led him inevitably to a denial of the necessity of baptism to salvation. The children of Christians were included within the covenant. They had then their right to the covenant sign. But being within the covenant, they were already within the divine mercy. The sign did not work salvation, but signified a covenant relation already existing. Even if the sign lacked, the covenant remained. This teaching was clear and consistent, but it obviously laid itself open to misinterpretation and misunderstanding. This came from two sides.
On the one side the Anabaptists could seize on the denial of an absolute necessity as an argument against infant baptism. If children were already within the covenant and saved, then baptism could be postponed until there was a personal confession. Zwingli had then to make his meaning clear. First, he regarded the teaching of the condemnation of the unbaptised as a less acceptable belief than that of their salvation. Second, he thought that only the children of Christians were within the covenant of grace. Third, he admitted that we have no certainty since the final judgment is with God. Fourth, he thought that the Romanists erred wickedly by announcing a sentence of damnation and refusing full Christian burial. He did not agree that baptism ought not to be given at all, since if children have the thing signified, they ought also to have the sign (Zwingli C.R. p.454). On the other hand, of course, the Romanists could not accept Zwingli's teaching, for it seemed to detract from the dignity of the sacrament as a means of grace by reducing it to no more than a sign. Certainly, Zwingli did approach to a complete denial of any effects of the sacrament, for elsewhere he argued against the necessity of the sacrament to salvation on the ground that no guilt attached to original sin in the case of the children of Christians (C.R. p.307-310). This was an approximation to the full Anabaptist teaching, the denial of the reality of original sin, and the denial of the efficacy of the sacrament. Of course, some Anabaptists did hold fast to a doctrine of original sin. Hubmaier, for example, thought that we could not be certain as to the fate of any infants, although the mercy of God might bring them to salvation (Ibid. p.624). Hubmaier rejected infant baptism solely because he denied the efficacy of the sacrament. Of itself it could not cleanse from sin. If it could, then it ought to be given to infants (Ibid. p.617). The majority of the Anabaptists held, however, no doctrine of original sin (Dosker D.A. p.172). They could not see how guilt attached to infants, and in any case they pleaded that the grace of God in Christ availed to save them without the sacrament (B.R. 4 p.418). Grebel made this point in a letter to Muntzer: 'We believe that all children who have not yet come to know the difference between good and evil are saved by the sufferings of Christ, the new Adam' (Kidd D.C.R. p.452). It is clear that neither Zwingli nor the Anabaptists regarded baptism as a necessary means, but Zwingli gave to the sacrament a necessity as a sign of the covenant, whereas the Anabaptists looked upon it as little more than a mark of personal repentance and faith. The Anabaptists had no occasion to discuss the necessity of the sacrament to infant salvation, since such a problem did not arise for them.

Calvin took up the thought of Zwingli. He worked it up into a full and logical denial of any absolute necessity. Since the Reformed position was established largely by him, and he was quoted as an authority in subsequent English controversies, his teaching ought to be considered fairly fully. Calvin did not deny a certain necessity of the sacrament. It was, however, a formal necessity, not an absolute necessity of precept, not the necessity of efficacy. Christ had commanded that baptism should be administered, and had annexed to it certain promises.
It was a means of grace, the willful contempt of which meant contempt of the divine author and of the grace: 'If any one of his own accord abstains from the use of these sacraments...he contemns Christ, spurns his grace, and quenches his Spirit' (Tracts 2 p.85). Calvin expressly warned against moving from one extreme to the other: 'Although the Lord occasionally to prove that his virtue is not tied to any means, performs without sign what he signifies by sign, it does not follow we are to cast away anything which he ordained for our salvation, as if it were superfluous' (Ibid. p.236). A real necessity existed; that of 'not refusing the sign of the grace of God' (Harm. Gosp. p.387). The sacrament had its place within the divine economy as a divinely appointed seal.

This did not mean, however, that there could be no salvation without the sacrament, and Calvin repudiated fiercely the Romanist view. He poured scorn upon the ridiculous debates to which the idea of an absolute necessity gave rise: 'Whether an infant, at the point of death, if water is not at hand, ought to be plunged into a well, rather than committed to God to wait the event', or 'whether in the absence of ordinary water an infant ought to be baptised with lotion, or with artificial or distilled water', or 'whether, in a case of necessity, it be true baptism to spit in the face' (Tracts 1 - 73). Calvin could not allow baptism to be so absolutely necessary that all who have not obtained it must perish. Those who held such a view failed to understand the true nature and purpose of baptism: 'It is not added to faith as if it were the half of the cause of our salvation, but as a testimony' (Harm. Gosp. p.387). Since there was no absolute necessity, Calvin would not countenance any irregular administration. Where the lawful use was denied, it was better to omit it rather than to profane it (Tracts 2 p.319). In the Institutes Calvin argued that if the outward rite was absolutely necessary, 'then Christians are worse off than Israel: 'Our condition becomes worse than that of God's ancient people'. We concluded that if in omitting the sign, there is neither sloth, nor contempt, nor negligence, we are safe from all danger' (Instit. 4,15,20-22).

The texts of Scripture alleged by the Romanists naturally called for consideration. Discussing the famous John 3.5, Calvin denied flatly that an absolute necessity could be deduced from it except by misinterpretation. He blamed Chrysostom for expounding the word 'water' as water-baptism, and traced back the whole doctrine to this false exegesis. Calvin himself held that 'the word ought not to be pressed so closely as to imagine that John confines salvation to the outward sign'. He admitted again that by neglecting baptism we exclude ourselves from salvation, but thought it absurd to tie together salvation and the sign (Comm. on Jn. 3.5). Calvin argued that the water in the text was no more than a point to the Spirit. 'By water and the Spirit! meant for him 'by water, that is, the Spirit'. The true sense was then that 'without the inward purification which it is the office of the Holy Ghost to accomplish (signified in water) it is impossible to enter the Kingdom of Heaven'. Calvin defended this interpretation by pointing to the parallel phrase 'with the Holy Ghost and with fire'.
in which the word fire described the inward operation of the Spirit. No responsible theologians understood it to mean that there must be a physical immersion in fire (See Comm. on Jn. & Instit. 4, 16, 25).

The teaching of Calvin left a deep impress upon the later Reformed theology. In Scotland Knox repeated the master's doctrine. Against the Anabaptists he urged the danger of despising that which God had ordained: 'Without injury infants cannot be debarred from the common synod of God's children' (Knox 4 p. 186). Against the Romanists he pointed out the error of a superstitious regard for the sign, claiming that the mere performance or non-performance of an ecclesiastical rite could not affect the eternal destiny of the soul: 'Neither yet is this outwärde action of such necessitie, that the lacke thereof shulde be prejudicial to their salvation, if that prevented by death, they may not conveniently be presented to the church' (Ibid.). The Book of Discipline decided against the practice of private baptism: 'partlie to remove the gross error by the which many deceived think that children be damned if they die without baptism' (Ibid. 2 p. 239). Beza used language very similar to that of Knox. He too saw a need to extoll and magnifie the dignitie and lawfull use of the sacraments (B. & P. S. J. 35): There can be no greater error than to think that the Reformers depreciated baptism and the supper. To despise the sacraments was an act of infidelity, and those who were guilty of it fell into condemnation: 'The necessity of the sacraments extendeth thus farre'. But Beza denied that the necessity was so absolute that those who died in faith without the opportunity of receiving baptism were doomed to eternal wrath: 'Those which have faith and yet have not the means to be partakers of the sacrament, shall not be despised, nor excluded from the salvation' (Ibid.). An extraordinary work of the Spirit supplied the lack in the case of infants (Q. et R. C. 124). Writing to Grindel Beza complained that the Romanist view made salvation dependent upon human whims and external contingencies: 'If salvation comes not from the covenant of God, but from seals annexed unto the covenant, it is dependent on the diligence or negligencies of ye parents' (Quoted in Frere and Douglas P. M. p. 53).

The later theologians discussed the necessity of baptism largely in relation to private baptism. The general conclusion was that there was no such necessity as justified a violation of the normal rule of public administration. Heidegger, for example, brought up the argument from an absolute necessity, but replied, first that no such necessity existed, and second - a curious application of the doctrine of election - that even if it did, we have no warrant to disturb the divine ordinance, and to try to save men against the declared will of God (Heppe K. B. Heid. 25, 29). The teaching of Polan is similar (Ibid. Polan 6, 55).

It must be stressed that the Reformed objection was not aimed at baptism as such. Baptism was a means of grace ordinarily to be used. What Calvin and his disciples objected to was the magical or mechanical conception of this means, and the consequent obscuring of the author of grace by the instrument. The Reformers would
not have it, that the grace of God came corporally as it were to
every recipient of the sacrament by virtue of the actual administra-
tion. The obedient observance of that which God had commanded was
right and proper. It was an obligation. The sacraments had their
work, to testify to the salvation of God and to increase faith.
But the grace of God and salvation were not determined by so out-
ward a chance as the observance or not of a rite. God was not
bound in any given instance to work through the sacraments. He was
not unable to work without the sacraments. Many might receive
baptism outwardly, and resist the work of God within. Others in
special cases might be recipients of the favour of God even though
they never had opportunity of baptism. At the back of Calvin's
view there stood of course the assertion of the free election of
God. God could not be tied either by sacrament or by word. With
or without them the elect were brought to salvation, while the
reprobate only received them to condemnation.

In favour of the Romanist view in its theological form certain
points must be stressed. The prior position of God as the author
of grace was safeguarded. Man could contribute nothing except the
administration, which in its essentials was simple enough, and
could ordinarily be accomplished without difficulty. Again, an
orderliness of the divine rule was preserved. Only well-defined
exceptions were allowed. Third, the divine working was accord-
ing to a sacramental principle common in Scripture and capable of
a not unreasonable presentation (See Stone Holy Bapt. pp. 192 f.). By
the Holy Ghost God used a material instrument and a physical act
to accomplish a spiritual result. The principle of Incarnation
was basically the same.

On the Reformed side, however, it could be countered that
to concentrate the power of God in a physical form inevitably leads
to the magnifying of the instrument at the expense of the author.
The Incarnation was not like, for Christ the man was also God,
whereas baptism is an instrument of God, but not actually God.
Again the orderliness preserved tended to become an ordinariness of
ecclesiastical discipline, rather than the proper ordinariness of
the divine institution. As for the sacramental principle, the
Reformers contended that the physical action of baptism, divorced
from its meaning, could bear no relationship whatever to spiritual
grace. Only as the sacrament was understood could it be used of
God, for the relationship of God and man in salvation is personal
and spiritual. At a deeper level still it might be argued that
the Romanists had failed altogether to interpret rightly either
the meaning or the effects of baptism. For them baptism was one
stage only in a process of salvation, essential, but not complete
in itself, except in the case of the baptised who died in infancy.
Baptism was the first plank to save from spiritual shipwreck, but
another plank was necessary. For the Reformers baptism was the
sign of the whole redemption of the Christian. The Reformers had
perhaps a lower view of the necessity. But they had a higher
view of the true meaning and value.

3. The Anglican View

The Anglican Reformers were the heirs of a long tradition of oppos-
tion to the generally accepted doctrine of an absolute necessity.
Wycliffe in the fourteenth century had joined issue upon the question. Like the Reformers after him, he was willing to allow a necessity where circumstances permitted (Trial, p. 160). The doctrine of an absolute necessity he could not accept without a query. Phronesis posed the question, quoting the stock text from John; but Alithea raised a doubt, the disproportionateness of the means to the end, and the implied limitation of the divine mercy; and Phronesis conceded that since the true work of baptism is spiritual, the physical circumstance of baptism gives us no true indication of its performance: 'Phronesis how necessary this sacrament is to the believer may be seen by John 3.5. Alithea: Cannot God save an infant unless an old woman or someone perform this ceremony of baptism? If the child in failure of water...is not baptised, and meanwhile dies by the visitation of God, it seems hard to assert that an infant will be lost....Where is the compassionate bounty of the Divine Christ in this?

Phronesis: I think it probable that Christ might, without any such washing, spiritually baptise, and by consequence save infants. Since spiritual baptism is invisible, it is presumptuous and unwise to decide thus on the salvation or damnation of men simply from the circumstance of their baptism (Ibid.).

The text John 3.5 Wycliffe himself expounded rather fancifully. He thought that it meant that no man can enter the Kingdom except he be baptised with the water that flowed from the side of Christ on the Cross (Trial, pp. 156-160). The basis of Wycliffe's objection to an absolute necessity was his refusal to allow that God could be tied to ordinances which he himself had appointed: 'God is not so oblished to sensible sacraments that He may, withouten them, gyve a man his grace' (Arnold, 1 p. 329).

The belief of Wycliffe made no headway in official circles, but he made many disciples. Even amongst more orthodox contemporaries disused with corrupt practices helped in a way to undermine the doctrine of absolute necessity. Myre, for instance, thought lack of baptism preferable to 'baptism by symonie', the want being supplied by the sufficient 'baptym of the holy goost' (Manning, P.F., p. 52 f.). Foxe has listed not a few who adopted the full teaching of Wycliffe. Walter Brute could not accept the absolute necessity of the sacrament. He brought against it three arguments, the divine covenant, the possibility of a spiritual faith in infants, and the savageness of infant damnation: 'Therefore I greatly marvel at that saying in the decrees which is ascribed to Augustine, that little children that are not baptised shall be tormented with eternal fire, though they were born of faithful parents; that wished them with all their hearts to have been baptised...as though the sacrament of baptism with water were simply necessary to salvation, when nevertheless many Christians are saved without this kind of baptism, as martyrs. If that kind of sacrament be not necessary to one of elder years, how then is it necessary to an infant born of the faithful? Are not all baptised with the Holy Ghost and with fire? But yet not with material fire; no more is the lotion of water corporally necessary to wash away
sins, but only spiritual water, that is to say, the water of faith. The faith, therefore, is necessary, which faith the infant hath in his faithful parents, although he be not washed with corporal water. ... I believe that he is saved by virtue of the passion of Christ, in faith of his faithful parents. Therefore, seeing the faith of Christ is not manifest unto the infant departing before baptism, neither hath he denied it, how shall he be damned for the same? But if God speaketh inwardly by way of illumination of the intelligence of the infant, as he speaketh unto the angels, who then knoweth save God alone, whether the infant receiveth or not receiveth the faith of Christ? (Foxe 3 p.168). Thomas Arundel in 1409 seemed to be of the same mind as Brute, for he was then compelled to abjure certain articles, amongst them this one, 'that the infant, though he die unbaptised, shall be saved' (Ibid. p.249). In 1429 some people at Norwich were accused of denying infant baptism altogether because of their opposition to the doctrine of an absolute necessity. 'In speaking against the christening which the midwives use in private houses, against the opinion of such as think such children to be damned who depart before they should come to their baptism, they are falsely reported as though they should say, That Christian people be sufficiently baptised with the blood of Christ, and need no water; and that infants be sufficiently baptised if their parents be baptised before them' (Ibid. p.589). By the sixteenth century the Lollard movement had spent its force, but Lollard groups lingered on, and it was probably under Wycliffite influence that John Browns and the five blessed martyrs of Kent denied the necessity of baptism and confirmation to salvation in 1511 (Ibid. 5 p.648). Many in England were thus prepared to accept the new views from the very earliest days of the Reformation.

The spread of Luther's ideas gave a new impetus to the revolt against the dogma of necessity. Tyndale and Frith were the first to give expression to anti-Romanist opinions. Tyndale found in the covenant a basis for the belief that unbaptised infants would be saved: 'The covenant made between God and Abraham saved the man child as soon as it was born. It follows that the infants that die unbaptised of us Christians are in as good case as those that die baptised (Tynd. P.S. 1 p.350). Tyndale also allowed that a Turk, believing in Christ and living a Christian life, might be saved without the sacrament (Ibid. p.351), a belief shared, but expressed rather more loosely by Bainham: 'If a Turk, a Jew or a Saracen, do trust in God, and keep his law, he is a good Christian man, though he be not baptised (Foxe 4 p.703). Frith thought that the Romanists erred by putting so great confidence in the outward sign, that without discretion they condemn the infants which dye or they be baptised into everlastinge payne (Book p.91). It might be noted that one of the opinions for which the early Scottish martyr Hamilton suffered was the denial of the absolute necessity of baptism: 'The said Master Patrick himself doubteth whether all children departing incontinent after their baptism are saved or condemned' (Foxe 4 p.560). A denial of the necessity was implied in this doubt, for the efficacy of the sacrament was called in question.
The later Reformers in England discussed this problem at some length, for they realised that a vital theological principle was at stake. Hooper gave the Reformed teaching. He acknowledged a general necessity (Hoop. P.S. I. p. 74), but thought that the children of all Christians came within the covenant, and indeed he held out good hope for all infants who died in infancy: 'It is ill to condemn the infants of Christians that die without baptism, of whose salvation we are assured: 'Ego Deus tuus et semini tui post te'. I should likewise judge well of the infants of infidels who have none other sin in them but original' (Ibid. p. 129). Hooper was evidently not too certain about the latter point, for in his 62nd article of belief he based the salvation of the infants upon the faith of the parents: 'I doubt not in the salvation of little children which die without baptism, but that the same are saved in the faith of their parents. But this only do I understand of the children of the faithful, unto whom the promises of God do appertain, and not to the infidels and reprobate' (Ibid. 2 Art. 62).

Cranmer, like Luther, was more concerned to stress the need to observe the sacrament than the possibility of dispensing with it. To the Devonshire rebels he pointed out that no one 'letted' the administration of private baptism where necessity compelled (Strype Cranmer 2 p. 96). He complained bitterly when the Romanists sought to prove infant baptism only from tradition, not from the commandment of Christ: 'O what a gap these men open both to the Donatists and to the Anabaptists' (Cran. P.S. 2 p. 60). Cranmer hardly anywhere argued that salvation was possible without the sacrament, an interesting point in view of the retention of a private administration. The Reformatio Legum, however, makes it clear that he did not tie grace to baptism, nor attribute to the outward rite a magical efficacy: 'We ought also to consider as impious the scrupulous superstition of those who so entirely confine the grace of God the Holy Spirit to the elements of the sacraments as to affirm that no infants of Christians will obtain eternal salvation, who shall have died before he could be brought to baptism, which we consider to be far otherwise' (R.L. Tit. 16). It is clear from this passage that the necessity which Cranmer saw was not absolute, but a necessity of precept only.

Becon argued out the matter at length. He supported the Reformed view. The commandment to baptise, he thought, ought to be observed. 'Were any to "cast away baptism", it meant that they 'has no portion in the inheritance of God' (Beec. P.S. p. 215). But of the two baptisms, the outward material and the inward spiritual, Becon found the latter alone absolutely necessary, the former necessary only by precept (Ibid. p. 203). Becon argued that it is the divine promise which saves, not the ceremony (Ibid. p. 216). To base salvation upon the contingency of baptism was inconsistent with a belief in the divine election (pp. 221-2). The case of martyrs proved that there could be exceptions (p. 217). Under the Old Law the covenant had not been overthrown by lack of circumcision (p. 223). 'God could fulfil his promise even where the ordinary means failed; 'The Holy Spirit is not so bound to the water that it cannot work his office where the water wanteth' (Ibid. 3 p. 617).
Upon the fate of the unbaptised, Becon would not dogmatise. He left them to the judgment of God 'to whom they either stand or fall' (Ibid. 2 p. 214). He thought it possible, however, that 'even among the Turks, and other heathen, there are many spiritually baptised, and so are saved' (p. 221). Becon always hastened to stress that salvation without baptism ought to be regarded as the exception: 'The sacrament of baptism...ought with all reverence to be embraced both of old and young. For he that despiseth, despiseth not the sacrament only, but the author of the sacrament, which is Jesus Christ the Lord' (Ibid. 3 p. 617). The text in John 3 was applied by him to 'such as may conveniently be baptised, and yet notwithstanding contemptuously refuse baptism', and he quoted Bernard (Epist. 77), Ambrose (De morte) and Augustine (contra Donat. 1.4) in favour of this interpretation (Ibid. 2 p. 224).

Bullinger's statement of the matter in the Decades did not differ greatly from that of Becon. He too thought that the rite ought to be observed, but he claimed from the example of the thief that sanctification was possible without it (Bull. P. S. 4 p. 347, also 375 etc.). Like Becon, he cited the old covenant, and he argued especially from the position of women: 'If it were not dangerous for women children to die uncircumcised, neither verily shall it be damnable for men, being not baptised, to die at the point of necessity' (Ibid. 4 p. 372). Bullinger applied the text John 3.5. simply to 'the inward and most spiritual regeneration of the Holy Spirit' (p. 378). Against Augustine, Bullinger brought the charge of failure to convince: 'He doth not satisfy, no, not himself, in all and every point'. The hesitation between condemning infants outright and finding for them a middle state was reflected in the arguments of later theologians and in the practice of burying unbaptised infants in a middle place - 'in coemiterio innocentium' (p. 380). The objection that to deny an absolute necessity meant that baptism engaged Bullinger's attention, and he had little difficulty in countering it. First, he taught the baptismand of infants, and that baptism was 'not to be delayed negligently or put off maliciously' (p. 375). Second, the Anabaptists denied original sin: 'We affirm that infants are born in original sin and ought to be baptised.' The Pelagians (Bullinger presumably meant the new Pelagians) gather clean contrary: They have no sin, therefore they are not to be baptised (p. 376). When he came to consider how binding was the necessity of precept, Bullinger leaned heavily to the Reformed side, disapproving strongly of private baptism (Z.L. 1 p. 358).

The later Anglicans were mainly concerned to defend the retention of private baptism. Their views will call for notice in the next section. It ought to be noticed, however, that they still contended against the Romanists that there was no absolute necessity. Rogers refused to accept the common Romanist criticism - 'the runagate Hill's report,' that the Protestants denied infant baptism. As Palmer the martyr had maintained against Jeffrey, it did not follow that baptism was denied because an absolute necessity of it to salvation was denied: 'Jeffrey Ye have forgotten yourself, i wis; for ye write, that children may be saved
without it.

Palmer  So I write, and so I say.

Jeffrey Then it is not necessary to be frequented and continued in the church.

Palmer Your argument is not good, master doctor (Foxe 8 p. 216). But Rogers, like Palmer and others, strongly maintained that there could be salvation without baptism, condemning the opinion 'that without the sacrament (the seal of the covenant), there cannot possibly be salvation' (Reg. P. S. p. 249, 278). Jewel was impressed by the argument, that God cannot be bound by his instruments, and by the historical examples, the dying thief and the martyrs (Jew. 2 p. 1107). Bradford had used the former argument: 'I will not tie God where he is not bound', and had wrung from Harfield the concession that God might show mercy to infants whose parents desire baptism for them, and may not have it (Foxe 7 p. 168). Fulke taxed the Papists and Augustine with grave error in excluding the unbaptised children of Christians from salvation, and he claimed that John 3.5 related solely to the working of the Spirit 'with or without water' (P.S. 2 p. 392).

Hooker threw a certain amount of doubt upon the Anglican position by insisting against Calvin that John 3.5 must be taken literally. It might be as well then to quote briefly from a few representative lesser writers of the Elizabethan age. Haddon denied that 'we affix the grace of God of necessity to these signs' (See Goode E. B. 11. p. 356). Some dealt with the matter in his Treatise of the Sacraments. He concluded that 'without partaking of the sacrament (so as contempt be absent) we may be saved.' To assert an absolute necessity led to two absurdities, first, 'salvation should rest, not upon God's covenant, but upon the seal which is put to the covenant; second, salvation and damnation of infants should rest on the diligence or negligence of their parents' (C 8). The question might be asked, why then baptise infants at all? Some replied that there was a necessity of precept, and that spiritual benefits do accrue: 'God's commandment must be fulfilled. The godly prayers of the minister do greatly profit the infant, and the congregation...receive some instruction touching their salvation' (D2 - D5). Bridges, the target of much of Marprelate's satire, made a soundly Reformed distinction between an absolute necessity and a necessity 'of consequence, of condition and of convenience.' 'Christ', he said, 'did institute baptism under flat commandment, therefore there is a necessity, and an important necessity of it'. Bridges quoted Zanchius 'We believe that baptism is a sacrament altogether necessary in the church, a sacrament instituted of Christ, and which the church can so little want that where it is not, when it may be had, there we may not acknowledge the Church of Christ' (Bridges Def. p. 564). Bridges was careful to make it clear that in stressing this necessity of precept he was not favouring an absolute, simple and inevitable necessity of either sacrament' (Ibid. p. 587).

Barlow, in his Defence of the Articles of the Protestant Religion, taught similarly. 'Where death does not condemn where there is no contempt' (Ibid. p. 1107). Sparke too urged a general necessity while guarding carefully against a doctrine of automatic grace. Rejecting the false deductions made from the
rubric upon the salvation of baptised infants dying in childhood, he argued that 'salvation is not so absolutely and simply tied to baptism, that whosoever once is outwardly baptised cannot but be saved (p. 72-73). Babington in his Notes on Genesis argued back to the divine election: 'Some unbaptised are elect, some unbaptised cannot be damned' (p. 72-73). Clearly the doctrines of the covenant and of election had been deeply impressed upon the ecclesiastical and theological leaders of the time.

We may conclude that with the exception of the retaining of private baptism, the Anglican view as a whole differed not at all from the Reformed. Throughout the reign of Elizabeth, however, the position was to some extent obscured by the battle which developed around the retained practice of a private administration. Of course, other questions were involved, the question of the minister, and the question of the place, the question of the authority of Scripture, but at the back of the struggle there lay this deep theological issue, the nature of the necessity of baptism, and the compass of the necessity of precept. Out of the battle the Anglican party emerged with an altered emphasis, both ecclesiastically and theologically. It is of the utmost importance then that the true point at issue be discerned. Otherwise it might easily if carelessly be imagined that the struggle was merely a renewal of the sacramentalistic-evangelical battle, with the Elizabethan Anglicans protagonists of the traditional view and the Puritans the champions of the Reformed. Later events give perhaps a certain plausibility to such a reconstruction. In actual fact however, nothing could be further from the truth. An examination of the two points of view will show not only what the real difference was, but what a vast gulf separated both parties from the Tridentine belief.

4. The Puritan View

The Puritans derived their teaching upon the necessity of baptism directly from Reformed sources. In this respect they hardly differed from the Anglican leaders except that there was a slight Lutheran admixture in the official teaching. Neither party wished to uphold an absolute necessity. Both claimed a general necessity, the necessity of precept. The difference arose with regard to the urgency and compass of this ordinary necessity. On the one side the Anglicans took the commandment of Christ to be so binding that all infants ought to be baptised without fail. Thus, if there was danger, it was better to keep Christ's law by baptising privately - lay-baptism was allowed, although not enjoined - than to risk a dereliction of duty by waiting for the opportunity of a public administration. The Puritans, on the other hand, contended that baptism by its very nature and institution was a public rite of the church. To baptise privately could only be described as a violation of the divine rule, and an overthrowal of the true nature of the sacrament. Such necessity of precept as did exist was not weighty enough to justify so radical a departure from normal practice.

At the back of the Puritan objection there undoubtedly lurked the fear that after all the older belief in an absolute necessity
would be fostered by the retention of a private administration in urgent cases. This fear was not altogether groundless. Many of the clergy who had accepted the Reformation Settlement probably did still believe in an absolute necessity, and popular opinion could not be expected to move so quickly as the official theology in favour of the Reformed view. On the other hand, as we have already seen and will see further, the Anglican leaders could not justly be charged with holding or seeking to propagate the traditional dogma.

The quarrel dated at least from the time of the Frankfurt controversies, when the service of private baptism was one of the points urged against the 1552 Prayer Book (See Whittingham F.C.). Bullinger and Calvin, of course, supported the objection. It was not until the return of the exiles, however, that the struggle reached its full intensity, and during the early years of the reign the issue was not so acute as the vestiarian issue. However, Cartwright emerged as a leading exponent of the Puritan standpoint, and in the Admonition and the subsequent defences and replies he stated the case for the opposition. Against Whitgift, he argued that the custom of baptising privately had only arisen as the result of a false conclusion as to the necessity of the sacrament: 'Baptising by women and in private houses...first arose upon a false interpretation of the place of St. John (i.e. Jn.3.5). Secondarily, this error came by a false and unnecessary conclusion drawn of that place. For although the Spirit should say that none should be save but those which have the Spirit of God, and are baptised with material and elemental water, yet ought it to be understood of those which can conveniently and orderly be brought to baptism... And hereupon St. Augustine concludeth that all that are not baptised are condemned. Upon this false conclusion hath arisen the profanation of the sacrament of baptism being ministered in private houses, and by women and laymen'(Whit.P.S.1 p.521). Cartwright developed the objection to the extreme point, that even if the salvation of infants were in question, (which, of course, he did not believe), the violation of an orderly ministry would still not be justified: 'Although that the infants which die without baptism should be assuredly damned, (which is most false), yet ought not the orders which God hath set in his church to be broken after this sort'(p.537).

The treatises of Cartwright were only one part of an enormous mass of Puritan propaganda upon this point. It was objected by some that the Prayer Book 'makes baptism a thing of absolute necessity to salvation'(2nd P. of a R.1 No.78). The rubric with regard to the salvation of baptised infants dying seemed to others to imply that a Popish doctrine of the automatic conveyance of grace was taught (Ibid.No.131). In a controversy at Lambeth, Whitgift was directly accused of doubting whether a person can be saved without baptism. When Whitgift appealed to Calvin, who had urged upon the Anabaptists the need to baptise, Travers sought to distinguish between the necessity proclaimed by Calvin and that enjoined by the Archbishop (Ibid.No.173). Elsewhere, in his Defence of the Ecclesiastical Discipline (p.13), Travers thought that in a perfect book there ought to be no place for a private service

*Cartwright did not write the Admonition, but he made it his own by his defence of it.
administration of the sacraments, nor 'cases of necessitie of them', both of which implied the 'erroneous doctrine of the conference of grace by them'. He saw the usual distinction between a simple or absolute necessity and a need not to condemn or neglect what was commanded (p.69). To allow a child to die unbaptised where there was no opportunity of a public administration did not in his eyes constitute neglect.

It will be seen that the real point at issue was not the nature of the necessity, but the nature and the compass of the necessity of precept. It is astonishing how the Puritans, either through fear of Romanism, or for controversial purposes, either could not or would not see this, but accused the Anglicans of misunderstanding the necessity as such. In their defence it might perhaps be urged that the population as a whole did not appreciate the difference between an absolute necessity and a necessity of precept. To retain a private administration did no doubt foster the belief that want of baptism meant inevitable damnation.

The situation was further complicated by the Barrowist statement of the case. Barrowe refused to admit that any sacraments were true sacraments unless administered in a pure church; this meant in effect that the majority of Englishmen were not in his eyes baptised at all. Barrowe would not allow his followers to accept Anglican baptism, but he could hardly go further and order a rebaptisation en masse of almost the whole population. This meant that either the majority had to be left to punishment and perhaps damnation for not receiving the true sacrament, or else baptism had to be found dispensable, at any rate in their case. The logic of the position drove Barrowe and his followers to a difficult choice. Either they themselves were the only elect and saved, or else there was not even a necessity of precept, on the practical ground that baptism 'could by no means be had' (See Pierce's Penny p.349).

The Anglican defence against Puritan objections makes clear beyond all possibility of doubt what the official position was. Ridley had stoutly upheld the practice of private baptism against the rebels at Frankfurt. He did not allege an absolute necessity, but he challenged his opponents to prove by Scripture that no baptism was preferable to private baptism: 'But where solemn baptism, for lack of time and danger of death, cannot be had, what would he in that case should be done? Peradventure he will say, it is better to let them die without baptism. For this his better, what word hath he of Scripture? And if he hath none, why will he rather not follow the which the sentences of the old ancient writers do allow?' (Rid. P.S. p.534). The appeal to patristic authority as an adjunct to, not a rival of Scriptural authority will be noted. The Puritans themselves set little store by such authority except for polemical purposes.

When the struggle reached its height under Elizabeth Whitgift emerged as the champion of the official standpoint. The works of Whitgift will be searched in vain for evidence that he held an
absolute necessity in the Romanist sense. Against Travers he expressly claimed that the Articles showed baptism not to be absolutely necessary to salvation (2nd P. of a R. I No. 173). The Schedule to Langworth and Worley dealt with the objection to the Rubric on baptised infants dying, answering that it had not the meaning of an 'ex opere operato' conference of grace (Strype's Whit. I p. 257).

Replying to Cartwright Whitgift repudiated indignantly even the suggestion that he held sacramentalist views. What he was contending for was the Reformed conviction that willful contempt, including the neglect of private baptism where necessary, brought damnation: 'Although the necessity of salvation is not so tied to the sacraments, that whosoever hath the external sign shall therefore be saved, yet it is so tied to them, that none can be saved that willingly and wittingly is void of them' (Whit. P.S. 2 p. 537). Whitgift cited as authorities for his alleging of a general necessity Zwingli, Bucer and Calvin, and he referred to the judgment that lack of baptism was 'a probable sign and token of reprobation' (Ibid. p. 538). Cleverly, he pointed out that all the arguments used against the Anabaptists might be used with equal force against those who refused private baptism (pp. 521-3).

Whitgift's point was this. The sacrament is not mechanically necessary. It has been commanded, however, and must not be neglected. Failure to baptise privately (where possible) constitutes neglect. Even if lay-baptism is forbidden, there can only be one excuse for failure to accomplish so simple a rite as baptism, the absence of a minister. The commandment itself is more binding than the circumstances of its fulfilment, so that irregular administration is better than complete omission. To urge that a child is saved in any case is an unlawful extension of the field of allowable exceptions, and points to a contempt of the sign. It was the latter part of the argument which the Puritans could not accept. They agreed that willful contempt brought under divine wrath. They did not agree that failure to baptise privately could be construed as contempt or neglect. For them private baptism was not a fulfilment of the divine commandment and institution, which they argued, had implied a public ceremony. The exception extended then to all cases where a regular administration was not possible.

The controversy came to a head at the Hampton Court Conference. Bancroft, now the spokesman on the Anglican side, went beyond the Reformed position in some respects. He was willing, for example, to allow private baptism by women. But he held fast by the main Reformed contentions, that there was no conveyance of grace ex opere operato, and that God was able to save without the sacrament. He justified private baptism on the ground that baptism constituted an evident assurance of salvation (upon the basis of the divine promise), and that this assurance lacked in the case of the unbaptised. It was thus better, Bancroft urged, to bring to baptism as speedily as possible, so that there might be the certainty of a sealed promise rather than the mere possibility of a secret mercy. 'But the case put, that the state of infants dying unbaptised was uncertain, and dying baptised, there was evident assurance that it was saved, who having any religion in him would not speedily by any means procure his child to be
baptised, and rather ground the action upon Christ's promise than his omission thereof upon God's secret judgment! (Strype's Whitgift 2 pp. 494-5). It is perhaps fair to say that the teaching of Bancroft has not quite the authentic Reformed ring, but it would be difficult to fix upon any particular which was definitely 'unreformed'. Arguments of a similar nature had been used by all the Reformers against the Anabaptists. What is noteworthy in this slight shift in the Anglican defence is that the question of salvation and damnation had once again come to the fore, and that of the divine precept receded. Of course, all agreed that if private baptism did constitute neglect, then damnation threatened. But Bancroft emphasised the uncertainty of the fate of the unbaptised in a new way. In that respect he was not quite in the true line of succession from a Jewel or a Fulke, who had confidently left the accidentally unbaptised to the divine mercy. Logically, no doubt, Bancroft was right: refusal to baptise privately meant for him neglect of the sacrament where it could be had, and prior death might justly be taken as a sign of reprobation, for Bancroft does not seem to have challenged the doctrine of election. But the Puritan neglect of private baptism on principle was hardly the wicked contemning of which the earlier Reformers had spoken. The logic of Bancroft was not uninfluenced by his prejudices. At the same time, to be quite fair, Bancroft too did feel that an important principle was at stake. Neither party in the controversy could avoid misunderstanding and misrepresenting the position of the other. That is perhaps the deepest tragedy of the whole bitter and unfortunate conflict.

Hooker, the greatest of the Anglican champions, went even further than Bancroft. He denied flatly that John 3.5 could be taken in any but a plain and literal sense. A spiritual interpretation, which rendered water-baptism readily dispensable, he condemned in unequivocal terms: 'Nothing', he said, 'is more dangerous than this licentious and deluding art' (i.e. spiritualising). Hooker could find in the text no sense at all unless it taught the necessity to regeneration of both Spirit and water, 'the one as cause, the other as means: 'Unless as the Spirit is a necessary outward cause, so water were a necessary outward means to our regeneration, what construction should we give unto those words wherein we are said to be new born' (L.E.P. 5, 58, 4). Hooker was sufficiently reformed not to return to the full Romanist doctrine. He would pass no sentence upon the unbaptised. He asserted no necessity in the older sense. What he did was to use the Scripture (Jn. 3.5) as an argument against laxity, a laxity inevitably encouraged, as he thought, by the Puritan position. The unbaptised must be left to God. Our task is simply to see that so far as in us lies no-one eligible for baptism is deprived of it: 'It is not for us to examine him, whether unbaptised men may be saved, but seriously to do that which is required' (Ibid.). The Anglican view, that the necessity of precept overrides all other considerations, thus received from Hooker its final shape, if slightly altered, by the restoration of baptism to its place as the only normal means of grace according to the literal interpretation and application of John 3.5.
The Anglican position is open to criticism from many sides. Romanists, naturally, cannot accept the denial of an absolute necessity, although they may applaud the anxiety to see that all have an opportunity to be baptised. From the Tridentine point of view the serious weakness in the Anglican teaching is this: that it has no proper conception of baptism as a means of grace, and therefore fails to understand its position in the Christian life. If baptism and baptism alone, except in the rare cases of martyrdom and a special illumination where death precedes, if only baptism can effect a primary justification, then the Anglican refusal to pronounce upon the fate of the unbaptised is unwarrantable, and the defence of private baptism loses its point. On the Anglican view there really is no urgency. An inner contradiction brings the system to the ground.

From the Puritan standpoint the Anglicans err in a different way, by over-emphasising the necessity of precept at the expense of order and regularity. The difference is not so serious as that which divides the Anglicans from Rome, but it has its serious aspects. Anglicans feel that the Reformed and Puritan party does not give sufficient consideration to the command of Christ. Anxious to avoid superstition, it secures regularity, but neglects a plain duty: to make baptism available to all that are eligible. The Puritans, for their part, feel that since there is no absolute necessity, no good reason can be given for the breaking of order. To allow private baptism, even on a sound doctrinal basis, serves no good purpose, and may lead to a re-establishment of erroneous beliefs.

More modern writers of liberal inclinations may also attack the Anglican position. They would agree that there is no absolute necessity. But they would also deny that there is any necessity of precept, at any rate of divine precept. Baptism does not derive from God, but is a custom approved by the church. Because it has been enjoined by the church, and found to be religiously useful, it ought to be retained. In the last analysis, however, it could just as well be abolished. A writer like Quick, feeling the force of such arguments, is driven to the not very convincing defence, that baptism may not be necessary to any one person in particular, but that it has been found to be, and remains necessary to mankind as a whole (Christian Sacraments p.177). Two points may be made. First, the modern Western world does not find the question of infant salvation or damnation so acute as in the sixteenth century world, when the very heavy infant mortality rate meant that a high proportion of the total population was lost in childhood. The whole question has thus become more academic and speculative. Second, the modern position is obviously that of an age with little sense of the sovereignty of God, the gravity of sin, and the problem of redemption. The particular criticism derives, as always, from the basic rejection of the foundation of belief common, more or less, to all the sixteenth century writers.

We may conclude that upon that common supernaturalist basis the Anglicans sought to define and defend a necessity of baptism which would exclude sacramentalism, and yet retain the sense of
urgency to do that which is commanded. A concession was made to Puritan scruples, (willingly by many), in that lay-baptism was, as we shall see, finally prohibited, although of course it continued to be recognised as valid. But the Anglican leaders felt for the most part that the dignity of the sacrament and the authority of Christ's commandment could only be safeguarded if provision were made for the baptism of all, in public where possible, in private where necessary. In doing this they had no evident intention of abandoning the main Reformation position. Burnet has well summed up the attitude of the Anglican Reformers upon this matter: 'The Reformers steered a middle course; they judged the sacraments necessary, where they could be had, as appointments instituted by Christ; and though they thought it more expedient to have all baptisms done in the church at the fonts than in private houses... yet since our Saviour had said, That where two or three are gathered together, he will be in the midst of them, they thought it savoured too much of a superstition to the walls or fonts of churches, to tie this action so to these, that where children, either through infirmity, or the sharpness of the weather, could not without danger carried to the church, they should be denied baptism' (Burnet 2 p.159-160).

Notes

1 Lombard 4.Dist.4 D'Quae enim effundunt sanguinem pro nomine Jesu, etsi non sacramentum, rem tam accipil qu.  
2 Ibid.Dist.4 E Parvulis enim non sufficit fides ecclesiae, sine sacramento; qui si absque baptismo fuerint defuncti, etiam cum deferentur ad baptismum, damnabuntur.  
3 Rituale Romanum 'An licet, urgentne necessitate, ubique baptizare nihil impediat.....'  
4 Ibid. 'At vero, si quis instruitur, in mortis periculu incitat, baptizarique voluerit, habita ratione periculi, vel necessitatis, baptizetur'.  
5 Schaff G.& L.p.423 Synod.Jerus.16 'Credimus sanctum baptismum esse summe necessarium. Etenim sine illo salvati nemo potest juxta Domini sententiam Jn.3.5.'  
6 De la Serv.T.B.pp.358-361 '... une nécessité de telle sorte que celui qui n'est pas baptisé, quand bien même l'ignorance l'excuserait d'avoir viole le précepte, sont condamné à périr'.  
7 Ibid.'Perfecta conversio, ac Poenitentia, recte Baptismus dictur, et Baptismum aquae, saltam in necessitate, supplet'.  
8 Short Christian Doctrine 'E'pero chi muore senza Baptesmo, va el Limbo ed è privo in perpetuo della gloria del Paradiso'.  
9 Zwingli C.R. Gen.No.89 p.454 'Von ungetoufften kindlinen hab ich etwann gepredget: es sy gloublicher, dat sy nit verdampt werdind, weder das sy verdampt werdind. Darumb habend mich die kappenzüfler wellen fressen. Doch hab Ich allweg in ein' bollwerck furgehacht, darüber sy nit hand mögen kommen. Denn ich hie allein geredt hab von den kindlinen, die von christlichen vatter und muter geborn sind; ouch daby allein geredt; es sy gloublicher; und hab nit geredt, es sye sicher also, dass sy sälig werdind; denn die urteil Gottes sind uns unbekant. Und
sind aber etliche fürwener so ungeschickt, das sy die armen menschen, nachdem inen, ein solcher anfall ze handen gegangen, erst mit verschaffen küm tend, lassend sy ire kind in iren gewychten kilchhof legen, unnd straffend erst über das urteil Gottes':

Ibid.C.R.4 pp.307-310 ...die Erbsünde ist nutz anders weder der präst von Adamen her....mangel, nit eign verdamliche sünd.... so ist klar wider alle theologen, dass die kind der glöubigen umb der erbsünd-willen, all sy das gesetzt nit wissen, nit mögen verdampt werden!

Ibid.p.624 (Hubmaier) 'Gott möge sy durch syn gnäd wol sälig

Ibid.p.617 (Hubmaier) 'Vermag er die sünd abwäscgen, / machen' so soll man inn allermeaist den kinden geben!

B.R.W.4 p.418 ('Nachtmal Christi!Berich Adami Christiani and die stend der Augspurgischen Confession') 'Und nebdid disem ist auch zu wissen, dass die salägmachende gnade Gottes noch vil weyter reichet dann die Sacrament, namlich an unsre jungen kindlein die ungetauft sterbend, wie offtmal geschicht....'

Heidegger 25, 29 'Unicum fere in necessitate absoluta bi praesidium adversarii collocant. Nox autem infra non absolutam esse confirmabimus. Si tamen absoluta esset, quae temeritas foret, propterea ordinem divinam turbare, et nolente atque invitó Deo homines humana prudentia salvare velle'.

Reformatio Legum De Bapt.(Haeres.) 'Illorum etiam videri débet scrupulosa superstition, qui Dei gratiam et Spiritum Sanctum tantopere cere sacramentorum eleménto colligant, ut plane affirment, nullum Christianorum Infantium salutem esse consecutum, qui prius morte fuerit occupatus, quam ad Baptismum adduci potuerit: quod longe secus habere judicamus!

Bullinger refers to Augustine Epp.136,27; Epp.217,22; C.Jul.Pelag. 5,44; Serm.294,3; De pecc.mör.et remiss.1,16-23; De lib.arbit. 3,66-67. (See Bull.P.S.4 p.380, & Editor's note).
PART II  THE PERSONS

CHAPTER V  THE REGULAR MINISTER

1. The Divine Minister

Baptism in the Reformed theology was a washing in water, divinely appointed, having a definite purpose and meaning, and generally although not absolutely necessary to salvation. The question naturally arose: Whom did this rite concern? When this question was asked and answered, it had to be done so with a twofold reference. First, who were the persons commissioned to administer the rite? Second, who were fit and proper persons to receive it?

For the writers of the sixteenth century the question as to the persons qualified to administer baptism was not merely one of ecclesiastical discipline. Naturally, disciplinary questions were involved. But the discipline itself had its basis in the divine institution. Thus it was accepted that no person ought to presume to administer unless he had a commission from God, established by lawful calling either by bishop or congregation. It was more than a matter of order. It was a matter of divine appointment. For those in the Romanist camp question of the grace of orders were also indirectly involved.

At the same time, since baptism was regarded as necessary to salvation, whether absolutely or generally, the question of a proper administration was an important one. Amongst those who pleaded an absolute necessity it was of decisive importance: hence the problem of an irregular ministry. In every case there was also the problem whether a minister properly qualified technically, but deficient morally could administer validly. The proper baptism, if not the eternal destiny, of thousands of people depended upon the answer to these seemingly academic questions.

To many thinkers at the present time the issue must of necessity appear irrelevant. If baptism is only an historical rite which developed naturally in the church, then no vital point of theology is at stake when its administration is discussed. Argument remains on the purely human level. It is a practical matter of order, tradition and expediency. Transcendental reasons in favour of or against this or that conclusion cannot be found. In the sixteenth century, however, the case was far otherwise. The schools did not agree in their conclusions. In the face of the completely different understandings of the sacrament agreement could hardly be expected. But there was agreement upon the fundamental fact that the sacrament, being of divine institution, must be administered according to divine appointment. Tradition weighed only in so far as it agreed with the original commission, or bore marks of the guidance of the Spirit of God. Rightly or wrongly the discussion was thus lifted up to a higher level than that of history or of ecclesiastical order or convenience.

In harmony with this deeper understanding is the common
assertion that the true minister of the sacrament is not the human instrument but the divine author himself. The belief that God is the prime mover and the true baptiser was of old standing in the church. It tended at times to be obscured, but it was never formally challenged. The exact relation of God the author to the human minister his instrument did call for statement, and gave rise to differences in opinion. But the ordinary need for both the divine minister and the human was admitted by all. In the early church the question had arisen naturally in relation to the problem of the validity of baptism administered by heretical ministers. Cyprian rather curiously made much of the argument that God himself is the true baptiser. He alleged that the Spirit must be present, otherwise water cannot cleanse sins and sanctify a man: 'Wherefore either the Spirit must be there or the washing is not baptism'. But how could the Spirit be present in a heretical church which was not the true church of Christ? (See Ep. 73, 10-11). It will be seen, however, that the depreciation of the human minister as instrument could very easily be turned as an argument against the position of Cyprian, as indeed it was by those who took the opposite view. But even at this time the principle that God is the first and final minister was acknowledged by all.

Lombard discussed the matter in this same connection. He pointed out that the power of the sacrament does not really lie with man, but with God. God alone can forgive sins. God does choose, however, to work with and through his servant. This means that the minister cannot work without God, but it also means that God does not work without the minister. The correct view is that God works with and through the minister. Thus the operation may rightly be ascribed to both. God supplies the invisible grace, the minister the visible sign by which it is mediated (Lomb.4 Dist.5 A)

Aquinas' statement, which is important because the later Romanist theology used it largely as a basis, differed only in definition. Thomas saw two causes, the principal and the instrumental. The Blessed Trinity was the principal cause of baptism, and the appointed minister the instrumental cause (Thom.3 Qu. 67, 5). The Catechism of Trent took a similar view, ascribing both justification and the sacraments ultimately to one and the same God in Christ (Cat.T. 2, 1 Qu.13). Bellarmine expressed it in this way, that God alone can give the grace of baptism, even the Apostles acting only as ministers, whose virtue or faith could add nothing to the effect of the sacrament (De la S.T.B. pp338, 342). The Catholic Encyclopedia follows Thomas in distinguishing between the principal cause, God, who conveys the inward grace, and the instrumental sign cause, the minister, who conveys the outward sign.

Luther on the Protestant side emphasised afresh the fact that God alone is the true author of the sacraments. Upon this fact he grounded his confidence in the efficacy of the sacrament for the believer. Because of it baptism had for Luther a very high value as a testimony to the promise and to the work of God. Baptism came by the hands of a man, but it did not belong to or come from men. It came from Christ, from God. Thus man could be said both to baptise and not to baptise. He baptised in so far as he performed the outward action. He did not baptise in so far as he acted not upon his own authority but upon the authority of God.
God the true baptiser acted through the human agent ('... p.530). Luther returned again and again to the assurance there was in this fact. The baptismal promise could be believed because God himself baptised us (W.A.30,1 p.213). 'God as it were pledges his own honour in baptism, and puts forth his own power and might' (Ibid. p.214). The German Reformer did not enter into the complicated question of the relation of the divine and human causes. In so far as he touched upon the matter it was to set aside the misleading Scholastic distinction between outward work by man and an inward by God in favour of a view that God ought properly be said to do both (See Hirsch p.222). The important thing is that he read into the old teaching of the divine authorship an evangelical message of assurance. For him baptism was the divinely appointed seal of the divine promise, divinely given in order to assure the inward work. Here as always the doctrine of justification determined Luther's understanding.

Calvin too was concerned to stress that God is the true author of baptism. He gave a new thrust to the doctrine by using it as a prop for his identifying of the baptism of John with that of Christ. Calvin saw in Matthew 3.11 a distinction, not between Johnnine and Christian baptism, but between the outward rite administered by man and the inward reality given by Christ alone: 'John merely distinguishes between himself and other ministers of baptism on the one hand, and the power of Christ on the other. To man has been committed nothing more than the administering of the outward and visible sign. The reality dwells with Christ alone!' Harm. of Evang. on Matt. 3.11). When John claimed little for his own rite he displayed that humility which ought to mark all human ministers. Yet he still had Christ as the author of his baptism, and with Christ the true power and efficacy lay. Calvin interpreted the phrase of Scripture 'laver of regeneration' in accordance with this same thought: 'When Scripture speaks of the laver of regeneration, it joins the power of Christ with the ministry of man' (Ibid. The connections with the doctrine of a twofold baptism and the bearings upon the doctrine of the effects of baptism are clear, and need not be labourered here. Beza took up the same line of teaching when he came to speak of the internal operation of God, which is true work of baptism i.e. that forgiveness and regeneration to which the outward sacrament points (q.et ...C.107).

It was upon this same point that Cranmer in England fastened when he came to expound the presence of God in the sacraments and the working of God through them. Cranmer was speaking primarily of the supper, but he used baptism for purposes of illustration. He found a 'real presence' of Christ in the first sacrament. But 'Christ is present in baptism to clothe and apparel us with his own self' (Cran.P.S.1 p.356). But the presence was a spiritual presence. Christ was present as the author, the true minister, the invisible worker, not materially by an incomprehensible transformation of the element. His presence consisted in fact in his spiritual operation in the believer, renewal and regeneration (p.223). The close approximation of this teaching to that of Calvin, at any rate in underlying thought, calls for notice. Bucer too had a very similar view of the working of God in and through the
the administration of the word and sacraments by those appointed to that work (Anrich M.B. p.128). 7

Apart from the incidental discussion by Cranmer the Anglicans hardly seem to have dealt with the matter, except, of course, in so far as it bore directly or indirectly upon the question of the validity of baptism by an unworthy minister, or upon the effects of the sacrament. The 1549 Catechism gave strong expression to Luther's teaching: 'When we be baptised in the name of God; that is as much to say, as God himself shoulde baptise us. We ought not to have an eye only to the water, but to God rather, which did ordaine the baptisme of water' (p.186). This central truth although always held as a basis, tended to be obscured in the later Elizabethan writings by the disputes as to the efficaciously of baptism by Papists or non-preaching ministers, and by the endless controversies as to the regularity and validity of lay-baptism. If not explicitly stated, it was always assumed, deriving naturally and necessarily from the divine institution.

One point might be noticed. Romanists and Reformers agreed that there was a double working, an outward by the minister, and an inward by God. The difference then lay in the conception of the relationship between the ministries and the working. On the one side the relationship was thought of as fixed and static. Where the minister worked - the special question of intention will be considered later - God also worked. No separation was possible. The Reformers, however, thought of the relationship differently. It was for them living and dynamic. As with the word, so with the sacrament, God remained the Lord. Men could hear the word and yet not receive Christ. So they could receive baptism, and yet not experience its inward truth. In a true and full baptism both God and man worked. But baptism by the minister did not necessarily mean that true and full baptism which God alone could ensure. This did not mean that the Reformers separated the ministries altogether, denying any working of God in the sacrament. It did mean, however, that they rejected that static inter-relation of them which gave rise to the belief in a spiritual 'ex opere operato'.

2. The Threefold Ministry

God was the main author and minister of baptism, but the instrumental administration had been committed to men. Hence arose the question of authorisation: what person or persons had the right to give Christian baptism in the divine name. The older theologians, believing as they did that God himself had instituted the sacrament, could not believe that God had left this question of commissioning to be settled haphazardly, either by ecclesiastical enactment or by a process of historical development. They held that certain people within the Christian community had been definitely appointed and authorised to do the work. In special cases, where urgent necessity required, the commission might perhaps be extended, as some believed. But normally the privilege and responsibility of administering baptism, on its human side, belonged to a definite class in accordance with God's appointment.
In the early church it had quickly been accepted that the task of administration had been committed to the apostles, and through them to their successors. Rightly or wrongly, the bishops were taken to be the apostles' successors. To them therefore the work of baptising primarily belonged. The patristic evidence in favour of this view has been most carefully collected by such older scholars as Waterland and Bingham, and is available in many modern works. To repeat it in detail in this present study would be tedious and unprofitable. It might perhaps be noted that it rested largely upon the basic statement of Ignatius of Antioch, that without the bishop it is not lawful to baptise or to celebrate the eucharist (Ep. Smyrn. 8 etc.).

By delegation from the bishop, however, the priest also had the right to baptise. This was clearly stated by Tertullian, who ascribed the right first to the chief priest, the bishop, and in the next place to the presbyters and deacons, yet not without a bishop's authority (De Bapt. 17). A rather fuller authority seemed to be ascribed to priests in the Apostolic Constitutions, which did not permit the rest of the clergy to baptise, only bishops and priests (1.8, 12), but it was understood that the right of the priests was derived from the primary right of the bishops, whose representatives they were. As the practice of infant baptism gradually replaced that of the adult baptism of pagan converts, the importance of the ceremony declined, private and hurried baptisms became more numerous, and priests came more and more to be entrusted with the work. By the time of Thomas the original distinction had been almost forgotten in the West. The bishops had taken on a new ecclesiastical status as feudal overlords, but apart from the special prerogatives of ordaining and confirming, they had ceased to be distinct from their representatives in spiritual function. This point emerges clearly in the discussions of Aquinas.

Thomas considered the arguments which might be urged against the right of the priest to baptise. First, preaching properly belonged to the bishop only, but the commission conjoined preaching and baptising. Second, baptism is an admission, and clearly the chief pastor ought to admit into the congregation. Third, the bishop alone is allowed to consecrate, yet baptism is greater than consecration. Against these objections Thomas argued that the priest was ordained to celebrate the sacrament of the body of Christ: he could hardly then be denied the right to administer the sacrament of initiation into the church. If baptism in itself was more important than ordination, it yet admitted only to the lowest rank in the Christian community. The relic of the earlier view appears in Thomas' assertion that the bishop might be said to baptise vicariously through the priest at consecration he was required to act in person. "The main drift of Thomas' argument is however that the priest is authorised to baptise, not by delegation from a bishop, but by virtue of his own office (Thom. 3 Qu. 67 2)." In this respect he differed hardly at all from Lombard, who also, on the authority of Isidorus, linked bishops and priests together as authorised ministers of the sacrament (Lomb. 4 Dist. 6 A). 8

The sixteenth century Romanists did little more than repeat
the Scholastic statements. The distinction between bishop and priest had by this time been completely obliterated. The Catechism of Trent, for example, claimed that the work of baptising belonged to both: 'To bishops and priests it hath been given to exercise this office, not by any extraordinary power, but by their own right' (Cat. T. 2.2 Qu. 23). Bellarmine stated simply that the ordinary minister was the priest (De'la S. T. B. p. 363). The parish priest was stated in the Rituale Romanum to be the ordinary minister. This was in accordance with ancient canons, which laid down that the parish priest ought to baptise, although any priest might do so in an emergency: e.g. the Capitula under Aethelred, 'If anyone shall bring a sick infant to a priest, to whatsoever priest's district he may belong, let him instantly baptise him' (Hart p. 198). In strict theory it might still be urged that the priest had this authority only by delegation from the bishop, but for practical purposes the authority was the same. The priest could act on his own initiative, without the special authorisation either of episcopal permission or of an extraordinary necessity: although it was usually recommended that adult converts should where possible receive solemn baptism at the appointed time in the cathedral at the hand of the bishop. The Catholic Encyclopedia claims that the ordinary ministers are the bishop and priest, as successors of the Apostles, and by office (Art. Bapt.).

The Roman teaching was not challenged at the Reformation, in principle at any rate. Luther was more concerned to argue the primacy of God as the real minister. He accepted the commonly held view. The Swiss Reformers bent their energies mainly in the direction of checking irregular baptisms. They had, of course, a very different conception of the ministry from that of the Romanists. They agreed, however, that a definite commission to preach and to baptise had been given to certain persons, in the early church to the Apostles, in later times to the pastors. Only to those who by inward and outward calling had this commission did the ministry of word and sacrament belong. The historic but newly emphasised coupling of preaching and baptism was significant, and in Elizabethan England it gave rise to bitter controversies as to the validity of baptism administered by a non-preaching minister. The Anglican position was essentially the same as that of the Reformers, except that the historic threefold ministry was retained. The Article (23) and the Ordinal make this sufficiently plain.

The only groups which opposed the common view that a definite commission to baptise was required were the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists seem to have claimed that it was the prerogative of any believer to administer the word and sacrament, and they freely baptised each other. Thus in the first rebaptism at Zollikon there was no attempt at an orderly ministry (Muralp p. 42). Sometimes pastors were appointed by consent, but with no particular form of authorisation, and upon the basis of the universal priest hood of believers. The Separatists in England did not accept the validity of baptism administered by Papists or Anglicans, but only because they regarded their ministry as unlawful. They did
not deny the need for a regularly appointed minister of baptism. While opinions differed then with regard to what constituted a lawful ministry, there was almost universal agreement that the sacrament belonged only to those properly commissioned to fulfil the apostolic functions.

The case of deacons was not quite so plain, for there was doubt even from the earliest times, renewed at the time of the Reformation, whether they were called to the ministry of word and sacrament. In the early church the general view was that the deacon could ordinarily baptise, but only by special authorisation. The Apostolical Constitutions made it plain that they deacons were inferior to bishops and priests in this matter: 'We do not permit the rest of the clergy to baptise, only bishops and presbyters, to whom the deacons are to minister' (1.3, c.11); 'A deacon does not give the blessing...he does not baptise without special authorisation' (1.8, c.23). This was the common view, upheld in many later councils, as at York in 1195: 'Let not the deacon baptise except in very urgent necessity' (Hart E.R. p.204).

So much for ordinary cases. Opinion was divided upon the power of the deacon in extraordinary cases. Some rigorists demanded that even in extreme necessity deacons ought not to act without special permission, but a laxer view grew with the development of normal infant baptism and the doctrine of the damnation of the unbaptised. Chrysostom claimed that deacons were enjoined to baptise in case of necessity (Hom.61), and the decree of Gelasius, which warned deacons not to presume to baptise, allowed them to do so when bishops and priests were far absent and an extreme necessity compelled (Epist.9 c.7). This was the view of the York Council cited above, and of London about the same period: Deacons may not baptise, unless the priest should be absent, unable or foolishly unwilling, and the child in danger of death (Can.3 Hart p.204).

The scholastics and Tridentines followed the lines already laid down in earlier days. Lombard was content to cite Isidore, allowing the deacon to baptise in the absence of the priest and in necessity (Lomb.4 Dist.6 A). Thomas examined the question with some care. In favour of an ordinary administration by deacons he argued that they had a twofold duty, to teach and to cleanse, and that St.Lawrence had baptised. Gelasius had prohibited any ordinary administration, however, and Thomas could not but conclude that deacons could only baptise in necessity, and when priests were not at hand (Thom.3 Qu.66 5). The Catechism of Trent referred to the many decrees limiting the rights of deacons, but of course allowed the case of necessity: 'For deacons, numerous decrees of the holy Fathers testify it is not lawful without the leave of the bishop or priest to administer this sacrament. In case of necessity all etc.' (Cat.T.2.2 Qu.23). The Rituale gave preference to a deacon if a priest was not available, but of course there was no regular authorisation.

The Reformers evinced no great interest in the topic, except in respect of the validity of the baptism performed by a deacon. For the most part it was discussed in relation to ecclesiastical order and to the doctrine of the ministry, not to baptism as such. Luther was content to take over the older teaching. The Church of
England, retaining the ancient structure of the ministry, maintained similar ground. In the Ordinal the work of the deacon was stated to include baptising infants in the absence of the priest. The details of the Reformed remodelling of the ministry need not concern us, except that the deacons were restored to their Apostolic task of caring for the sick and poor, and normally forbidden to take upon themselves the dispensing of the word and sacraments. The attempts of the Puritans to establish a similar order in England, and their criticism of the Anglican ministry, naturally brought to a head the whole matter of the validity of administrations by deacons.

Cartwright stated the Puritan case clearly. From one point of view he allowed that the Anglicans were right to let deacons baptise. The reasons given were of course advanced for purely controversial purposes. Under the Anglican system, Cartwright maintained, a deacon was not a deacon at all in the Scriptural sense, but a minister in the full and true sense of the word. All ministers had the task of administering both word and sacraments: 'As for the baptism of deacons, I hold it lawful... a deacon is, as then he was in the elder times, a minister; and not a deacon... the principal part of his function... is preaching and ministering of the sacraments in certain cases (Whit.P.S.2 p.525). From this virtual identifying of deacon and presbyter Cartwright deduced, first, that the Scriptural office of deacon had been corrupted, second, that it was perverse not to allow the deacon to administer the supper as well; an artificial 'sundering of two sacraments conjoined by divine institution' (Ibid.3 p.59). Against this argument Whitgift pleaded that no single example could be found of any author old or new using deacon as an equivalent of elder or priest. He dismissed the whole construction as a 'stop-gap invention' of his adversary (Ibid.2 pp.525 f.).

Cartwright's true view of the matter emerged when he came to discuss the office of the deacon in the light of Scripture. Already in the Admonition it had been urged that there was need to 'enjoyne deacons and midwives not to meddle in ministers' matters' (Frere and Douglas P.M.). In the original and scriptural sense, then, a deacon was not for Cartwright a minister at all, but a man appointed to relieve ministers by undertaking temporal responsibilities. As a deacon he had no right either to preach or to administer the sacraments. The custom of allowing them to do so he condemned as a corruption. As the Pleasant Dialogue put it, deacons in the established church 'were made to other purposes than Scripture appoynteth' (Arber P.D.p.32).

Against the Puritan criticism the Anglicans were able to bring the powerful argument that both Philip and Stephen preached, and that Philip also baptised (See Whit.P.S.3 pp.58 f.). Cartwright, facing this argument, took refuge in evasions. He argued that Stephen never actually preached a sermon; he engaged in disputat-

ion, and made an apology, but did not preach. He could not deny that Philip both preached and baptised, but claimed that he performed these functions of a minister in his capacity as evangelist, not in his capacity as deacon. Whatever may be thought of this explanation, the point which the Puritan wished to make is
clear: the deacon did not exercise a spiritual ministry, and therefore he had no right to baptise. Whitgift and the main body of Anglicans held by the traditional view that the deacon, although inferior to the priest and bishop, was a true minister, and therefore authorised to preach and to administer the sacrament within the limits set by Scriptural precedent and ecclesiastical discipline. The status of the deacon was as it were midway between that of ministers fully commissioned and that of the laity. This point is important in view of the Hampton Court debates and the final restriction of baptising to the 'lawful minister'. The problem will arise again in connection with irregular ministers, but it may provisionally be asserted that in Reformed usage the 'lawful minister' could only mean the Christian lawfully called, according to Article 23, to the administration of word and sacraments. A deacon in the Church of England had this calling, although in a subordinate capacity and subject to conditions and restriction. All other persons, including those in minor orders in the Roman church, had not. If they did take it upon themselves to exercise a spiritual ministry, they did so without proper authorisation, and their ministrations, if not invalid, were highly irregular.

3 The Unworthy Minister

A further problem arose, a problem which was especially acute during the Middle Ages, when standards of clerical life were low. This was the problem of the unworthy minister. Thoughtful men began to ask themselves whether sacraments administered by men of low standards of moral life could possibly be honoured and blessed of God. The problem was a new form of the dispute about heretical and schismatical baptism, and it was part of the contention of the rigorist parties in the early church, the Donatists, for example, that the sacraments administered by unworthy priests, apostates and others, had no validity. Fathers such as Chrysostom (In Johann.Homil.36) and Augustine (De Bapt.c.Donat.) had then defended the validity of such administrations, and been ready to recognise the baptism administered by schismatics and heretics, within broad limits. At the time of Wycliffe, the question was again to the fore. The fitness of clergy, living in gross sin, to perform a spiritual function was doubted in some quarters. No-one, in theory at any rate, disputed the scandal of low moral standards in the clergy. But the question cut deeper than that. The underlying question was this: Could a sacrament divinely appointed be invalidated by the misconduct of a man who at the most was only the instrumental and not the principal minister? The broad principle applied in the Cyprianic and Donatist controversies, that the sacrament is finally God's, was seen to have a direct bearing also upon this problem of the unworthy minister.

The position of Wycliffe himself it is difficult to determine. Some writers maintain that he thought and taught that the sacrament administered by an unworthy minister is null and void (Cf. Daniel P.B.p.638). He was certainly alleged against him in the Articles of 10 Friars in 1382: 'That if a bishop or priest be in mortal sin, he doth not ordain, consecrate or baptise' (Art.4 Foxe 3 p.21). But Wycliffe's own writings bear ample testimony to his orthodoxy upon the point. He attacked these who falsely charged his follow-
Sickerly here is feyned thing, put on pore men, that a priest in dedly sinne cannot give the sacramentis'(Arnold 3 p.485).
The sacrament depended, not upon the worthiness of the priest, but upon God first, and second, upon the worthiness of the recipient: 'But Cristen men sayne, that a preyste beynge in dedely sinne may make and gyve sacramentis to salvation of hem that worthily receyven hem and consenten not to the prestus synne'(Ibid.). Wycliff did certainly insist that the prayers of a priest in deadly sin could not profit. He also thought that to minister the sacraments when guilty of deadly sin brought damnation to the minister: 'It be to his dampnynge'. But his evangelical understanding of sacramental grace forbade him to tie that grace either to the act itself or to the minister of it.

The case was perhaps otherwise with some of his followers. In his own day doubts had been cast upon the value of baptism by simony: 'Though he were in perjil of dethe he shulde rather die without baptysme of water thanne he shulde be baptised by symonie' (Dives and the Pauper 7,9). It is not quite clear why this objection was lodged, but possibly the intention of the minister might have been regarded as defective, particularly if the simony referred to the demanding of a fee by the minister, and not to the general purchase of office. The testimony in this case is not very clear, but Huss certainly was charged, rightly or wrong­ly, with the teaching that baptism by an unworthy minister was invalid. The difficulty in the case of many of the earlier Reformers is to decide whether or not the charge was a misinterpre­tation or a misrepresentation. Foxe maintains that the martyr­rs were misrepresented, but that still leaves us with the possibility that the martyr­olgist wished to bring the views of his heroes into line with the later findings of the Reformers. If Foxe's account is quite trustworthy Swinderby certainly followed Wyckliff, and did not question the validity of the sacrament administered by an unworthy minister. He had to face the accusation of teaching that a child was not truly baptised if the priest that baptised or the god­father or godmother were in deadly sin. In his Protestation he claimed that this was a conclusion 'that friers and priestes putten upon me falselie....But this I said, and yet I say, that the prayers that an euill priest prays (living in lecherie or other deadlie sinne) over the child when it shall be halowed, ben not acceptable to God, as ben the prayers of a good priest'(Foxe 3 pp.115-116). Brute too denied a similar charge, claiming that what mattered was a worthy reception, not a worthy administration: 'Wherefore, although a vicious or a naughty priest doth baptise any man, if he that is baptised or his parents (if he be a child do ask with faithfull meaning baptism, and do mean faithfully hereafter to observe the words of baptism, he is as well baptised, as if he were baptised of ever so virtuous a priest'(Ibid.p. 135).

The traditional view had of course been clearly defined by the Scholastics, with Augustine's masterly refutation of the Donatists as a basis. Lombard maintained that neither the goodness nor the badness of the minister could affect the sacrament. The baptism of Judas was just as good as that of Peter. Christ was the true baptiser in all cases (Lomb.4 Dist.5 A).12 The Catechism of Trent
stated the same view in rather a different way. The minister acted as the representative of Christ, and he was thus holy by reason of his sacred function. Moral defects on his part could not invalidate the consecration or administration duly performed: 'Representing as they do, in their sacred function, not their own person, but that of Christ, the ministers of the sacrament, consequently, be they good or bad, validly consecrate and confer them' (Cat. T.2.1 Qu.19). The Catechism stressed, as Wycliffe had done, that the unworthy administration is a grave offence which unrepented of merits eternal perdition: 'To them who administer them with impure hands the sacraments bring eternal perdition and death' (Ibid.). The Canons of the Council anathematised any who held the contrary view, that ministers, being in mortal sin, could neither effect nor confer the sacrament (C. & D. T. Sess. 7 Sacr. Can. 12).

The Continental Reformers accepted the traditional doctrine, except that they criticised severely the Romanist loop-hole in false intention. Luther argued like Augustine from the supremacy of God as the true minister. Baptism was given in the name of God, not in the name of the minister. The human instrument was of no importance except as an instrument. Luther was even ready to press this argument to the paradoxical extreme that a faithful reception in the divine name is sufficient to ensure validity even where an impious minister does not give the sacrament in the name of God (W. A. 6 p. 531). This was carrying the orthodox view to the lengths of unorthodoxy. The Augsburg Confession gave more sober statement to the Lutheran view, and its judgment seems to have formed the basis for many of the later confessional statements of the Reformation. Calvin devoted a section of the Institutes to the question. He supported the commonly held view with his usual lucidity and vigour (Instit. 4, 15, 6). His opinion may be briefly summed up in a sentence: 'If the baptism administered by a man is Christ's baptism, it will not cease to be Christ's baptism, whoever be the minister' (Harm. Evang. on John Baptist). Of the Reformers abroad only the Anabaptists were suspected of a contrary opinion.

When we turn to England again, we find that at this period the catholic view reigned undisputed. The King's Book, although reactionary in some points, stated the accepted doctrine: 'Although he which doth minister the sacrament be of a sinful and evil conversation, yet the virtue and effect of the sacrament is thereby nothing diminished' (p. 44). A selection of quotations, easily multipliable, might be given from the Reformed writings and the martyrs' confessions to show with what unanimity this doctrine was held. Becon, for example, put it in this way: 'If the institution of Christ be observed, a minister's wicked life and ungodly conversation hindereth not baptism at all' (Bec. P. S. 2 p. 226). Bullinger in his Decades naturally took the same line. Attacking Cyprian, he wrote that 'he might have understood that sealed evidences may be published as well by an evil minister as by a good' (Bull. P. S. 4 p. 349). The baptism of Judas he thought to be as good as that of the apostles because 'the Lord of his goodness, for his truth's sake, not for Judas' sake, wrought in the faithful' (Ibid.). There is an obvious and not unnatural similarity between these arguments and those used by Calvin. Of the Anglicans
proper Cranmer may be cited. In his discussion Cranmer defended the validity of baptism by the unworthy minister upon the oneness of the sacrament instituted by Christ: 'Baptism is all one... (i.e. it is the same baptism, and therefore the matter is indifferent)... whether the minister be good or ill, or whether he minister it to good or ill' (Gren J. 3 p. 123). Amongst the confessors under Mary Clements maintained an orthodox position: 'If a child be baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Sonne, and of the Holy Ghoste, it is trulye baptised and sufficientlye baptised, though the minister be never so wicked... or never so great a Papist' (Strype E. M. 3. 2. p. 219). The tendency to equate wicked ministers and Papists was general with the martyrs - not perhaps without cause - but all insisted staunchly that the wickedness of the minister did not affect the baptism given in the Triune name (Cant. Letter or Apology of the Martyrs in Foxe 3 p. 155). Woodman is a further example of a Protestant who granted that there could be true baptism in spite of the 'wickedness of the minister in life or learning' (Burrage E. E. D. I. p. 53).

The Article upon the matter (26) finally summed up the Anglican teaching. It derived originally from the Augsburg Confession, and had appeared both in the Thirteen Articles and the longer Confession of 1553. In its final form it argued the possibility of wicked ministers remaining in the visible church, according to the parable of the wheat and the tares. It defended the validity of their ministries on the ground that they acted in Christ's name and with his commission. To faithful recipients the effects of the sacraments dispensed by them were in no way diminished. The Article concluded, 'like the Tridentine Catechism, with a warning to the ministers themselves, demanding an enquiry into cases of evil living, and ecclesiastical punishment even in this life either by deposition upon conviction.

It is of interest to notice that in both the sacramentalist and evangelical schemes the minister, although he was required to be duly authorised, formed none the less the least important link in the sacramental chain. The Romanists stressed supremely God's work and the proper observance of the form. The Reformers agreed in stressing the divine part, but the form was less important, although not of course variable at will. They pleaded instead the need for true reception. If pioneers of the Reformation, in the heat of their protest against the wickedness of the clergy, were moved by their indignation to questions their ministrations, this was not in accordance with the deepest evangelical understanding. Naturally no party wished to use this doctrine as an excuse for laxity. Naturally too no party doubted that evil clergy could exercise a harmful influence upon the lives of their people. But rightly none could allow that the value of the divinely appointed means of grace might be augmented or diminished by the virtue or vice of the officiants.

4. The Papist Minister

A special issue which arose in the Reformation period was that of sacraments administered by Romanists. The issue was a very practical one, for almost all the earlier Reformers had themselves
been baptised under the old regime. If this baptism did not stand, then rebaptisation ought to be sought. If it did, opponents of the Papacy feared that there might be given an impression of acquiescence in Romanist practice and teaching.

To this discussion the same principle applied which had governed the debates upon heretical baptism and baptism by unworthy ministers. Luther, with his strong sense that God was the true baptiser, hardly felt the difficulty. The form of baptism had been observed, and the commandment of God fulfilled. God then would do His work. The sin or error of the human minister could make no difference. Some of the Reformed school, however, felt the problem acutely. The difficulty might be put in this way. Under the Papacy baptism had been outwardly administered, but it would hardly be thought of as having a spiritual effect, because the proper apprehension of it was lacking. Could it then in any real sense be described as true and proper baptism?

On the one side the Anabaptists jumped to the conclusion that it was not true and proper baptism, but of course it would have been inadmissible to them in any case, as infant baptism. On the other side Calvin maintained the general principle that the baptism is Christ's: the opinions of the minister thus could not affect it. He freely admitted that 'we for a long time did not hold the promise which was given us in baptism', but insisted that the promise itself, being God's promise, remained fixed and firm and true. Apprehension of the truth meant an entering fully into baptism by the embracing of the promise (Instit. 4, 15, 16-17). Knox dealt with the problem in the same way. The baptism administered by the Papists was valid but not efficacious. God's preservation of the integrity of the form in the midst of corruption was a miracle of grace, and through that form the Holy Spirit could still work once the darkness of ignorance and error had been dispelled: 'In verie deed, the malice of the divill would neither altogether abollish Chryst's institution, for it was ministred unto us, In the name of the Father of the Son, and of the Holy Gaist.' I confess...it did not profit us...but now the Sprit of Chryst Jesus illuminating our hartis, hath purgeit the same be faith, and maketh the effect of that sacrament to work in us without any iteratibuja of the externalle syne' (Knox 4 pp. 119-121). The confessions a similar doctrine was stated. The Huguenot Confession, for example, considered Papist baptism valid on the ground that the efficacy and virtue of the sacrament do not depend upon the minister: in this case, it will be noticed, the possibility of efficacy was not denied (Art. 28).

The question arose in England, as indicated in the previous section, during the Marian persecution, when many confessors were apprehended for refusing to allow their children to be baptised after the Romanist fashion. From a casual reading of these cases, it might easily be imagined that these men (Woodman, for instance) were Anabaptists, or that they denied the validity of Papist baptism. A more careful reading shows, however, that both inferences are false. In the Martyrs' Letter or Apology, for example, the baptism of Romanists was acknowledged to be true baptism, the malignity of the minister notwithstanding. Woodman's position was
similar. It seems that Woodman contrived to have his child baptised privately at home by a midwife during his own absence. He did not object to infant baptism, but he preferred private baptism by a woman to Papist baptism. It was not that he questioned the validity of Papist baptism, but that his conscience would not allow him to assent to it. The Confession makes his position perfectly plain: 'I do believe yt those children yt have bené or shalbe baptized of ye papisticall mynisters, be truly baptized. Howbeit thys I do confesse and beleve, yt no christian man oughte to bringe or dende his child to the papystical churche to reqyre baptysme at their handes (M.S. Conv. & Caius Press M.M 223) Anglicans and Puritans concurred in accepting the validity of Romanist administrations, but the Separatists espoused the Anabaptist opinion. As has been noticed, Barrowe was charged with denying the lawful baptism of the Queen, and it was upon this ground that Papist baptism was not valid according to his doctrine (Burrage E.E.D.2 p.56). At a slightly later date, John Smith, a father of the Baptist movement, noteworthy for his advocacy of se-baptism, took up a similar position: 'Baptisme in Popery is false baptisme, and so in the Lorde's account no better than Pagan washing' (Tbid. 1 p.48).

Against these heterodox views, already spreading in the latter years of Elizabeth, some claimed that Papist baptism was valid so long as the Triune formula remained intact. A controversy with Penry ensued, in which Penry denied that the validity could be made dependent upon the utterance of words: 'To lay stress upon the recital of the words is a charming' (Pierce's Penry p.202). Penry does not seem to have grasped the distinction between validity and efficacy. Indeed, his own views were not at all clear, for in his Answer to Fifteen Slanderous Articles (Art.6), he confessed 'with the French Church, who have published yt, that they which are baptised in Papisticall assemblies need not be baptised a second tyme'.

In spite of these words, written shortly before his death, Penry seems definitely to have identified himself with Barrowe. Barrowe himself, however, did not wish to press his opinion to the point of demanding the rebaptisation of the Queen or of any particular person, and he contented himself with the assertion that to have been baptised under the Papacy was a sin for which there ought to be repentance (Burrage E.E.D.2 p.56). It seems that the Separatists did not properly understand what was meant by validity.

The case of the Separatists was further complicated by the fact that they classed the Anglican ministry with the Romanist as unscriptural and unlawful. It is interesting that in Frankfurt there had been an objection by the Reformed group to baptism by the Lutherans, although the validity of such an administration was not questioned (Strype's Cranmer 3 p.162). The Barrowists similarly objected to Anglican baptism. It was this objection rather than the Anabaptism of which they were suspected which made them reluctant to have their children baptised in the parish churches. When Barrowe claimed that 'it was unlawfull to baptise children amongst us', he did not mean simply to baptise them, but to baptise them according to the Anglican rite, the rite practised amongst 'us' (i.e. the Anglicans). Penry made this clear in the Answer to the Slanderous Articles when he lumped together Anglican and Papisticall assemblies. The Articles charged him with the opinion that the
sacraments 'as they are \textit{now} administered now in' the Church of England, be not true sacraments' (Burrage E.E.D.2 p.20). That this question of the validity of Anglican sacraments was seriously debated by the Separatists is beyond question. Francis Johnson propounded the question in his Treatise (Device) of the Ministry: 'Whether the sacraments (being seals of righteousness which is by faith) may be administered ... in any other Ministerly and manner that is prescribed by Jesus Christ the Apostle and High Priest of our profession? And whether they be not otherwise administered in the Cathedral and parishionall assemblies of England at this day (Ibid. p.139). It is noticeable, however, that when pinned down, the rebels hesitated (not unnaturally) to accept all the implication of a negative answer.

On the Anglican side such questionings were of course treated as absurd. No men can be expected to doubt the validity of his own ministry. But on purely abstract grounds, quite apart from any particular doctrine of the church or ministry, the Anglican theologians did not regard the questioning as legitimate. Granted the Separatist contention that the Church of England was not a true church, the Separatists had the right and duty to refuse Anglican baptism, as Woodman had sought to refuse Roman. The Anglicans did not accept the contention, and therefore refused to concede them the right. But even granted the contention, the Separatists still erred by suggesting that the validity of the sacrament might be dependent upon the instrumental ministry. The Reformers would agree that a heretical minister had no lawful commission, and that therefore his act was irregular. They would even agree that where error prevailed the sacrament might fail of its effect. But they were clear in their own minds that so long as the outward form remained, the sacrament had been validly performed, and might in the providence of God some day be brought to spiritual fulfilment.

5 The \textit{Non-preaching Minister}

A further issue which arose in England during the course of the Puritan controversy was that of the sacrament administered by the non-preaching minister. In theory the Anglican Reformers agreed with Calvin that a presbyter was called by his office to be a minister of both word and sacraments. This ministry included preaching as well as the reading of Scripture. In practice, however, the Elizabethans found the ideal impossible of attainment. For purely practical purposes it was found necessary to ordain quite a number of men who had no qualifications and could not be licensed to preach.

The troubled times had naturally left a dearth of educated men. In spite of the efforts of Cranmer and others, the numbers graduating at the two universities had sunk very low by 1559. Some of those who were qualified could not be trusted to preach, for a large number of the clergy revealed Romanist sympathies in the convocation of 1559(Cf.Zur.Lett.P.S.1 p.85,92). During the later years of the reign many of the trained men took up the Puritan cause, so that the position improved only slowly. The step had to be taken then of admitting non-preachers to a large number of cures,
unless the parishes were to be left without a minister altogether.

Efforts were of course made, in the Injunctions of 1559 for example, to enforce a minimal level of educational attainment: the New Testament in Greek and Latin, the Paraphrases of Erasmus, and the knowledge of Comfortable places and sentences to meet the spiritual needs of the people (Gee and Hardy N. Inj. Arts. 6 & 17). Provision was also made for exhibitions at the universities in order to hasten the recovery of learning (Art. 12). The Homilies were to be read where the minister had no license (Art. 27), and the Decades of Bullinger and Foxe's 'Martyrs' were also used as reading material. These standards were not consistently kept in the early years. The deficiency was so great that many persons were ordained who had no qualifications at all; often ignorant artisans, who partly by their light behavior and trade of life were very offensive to the people (Collier E.R. 6 p. 334). The case of Aylmer's ordination of his porter, in order to provide a kind of retiring pension, is well known from the prominence given to it in the Marprelate tracts. However, constant attempts were made to raise the standard, as in the Subscription Act of 1571, and Whitgift's Articles of 1583, and as the reign progressed the position certainly did improve.

Now no-one can deny that the actual situation was far from ideal, and it may be that the authorities (partly perhaps for fear of the Puritans) were not so active as they might have been in building up a preaching ministry. Indeed, many of those fully qualified fell into disfavor. On the other hand, the members of the Puritan or Precisian group were perhaps more than a little unfair in their strictures upon the temporary measures taken to fill the gaps in 1559. They applied the criticism of a doctrinaire theory to a situation in which its application was at first literally impossible. The choice was one between a partly non-preaching ministry and no ministry at all, and the Anglicans chose the former, seeking to make it as profitable as circumstances permitted.

The assessment of the choice made is not our immediate concern, but the choice does concern us because it gave rise to the issue: the validity or invalidity of sacraments administered by the non-preacher. The Puritans looked at it in this light. For them the proclamation of the divine Word was an 'essential' part of the ministry: essential in the very strictest sense: without proclamation there could be no ministry. By proclamation they meant not only the reading of Scripture, and certainly not only the reading of Homilies, but the preaching of the Gospel. If a man was not a preacher he neither was not could be a true minister. He had then no authority to administer the sacraments, and if he did so, his action could only be regarded as the usurpation of a layman.

Two conclusions were drawn from this teaching. The first was the curious conclusion of Cartwright already mentioned, that since all commissioned ministers had authority to dispense both word and sacraments, no distinction could be drawn in the Church of England ministry between presbyters and deacons. The second was more serious, and led to a heated and tangled controversy. Baptism by
non-preaching ministers, as unauthorised lay-baptism, was taken to be completely without validity.

The whole issue merged naturally into that of lay-baptism, but for the Anglicans it constituted a separate question. Many of the church leaders were willing to go half-way and more upon the subject of baptism by lay-men, and especially by women. They could not compromise upon that of baptism administered by 'dumb' ministers. The reason was that they could not allow the Puritan contention that these men had no lawful commission. In any case, they disputed the opinion that a usurped or even a lay-baptism lacked validity.

The opposing views emerged clearly at the Conference held at Lambeth. Travers stated the case for the Puritans. Asked by the Lord Treasurer 'what Scripture there was that he that should minister the sacrament must needs be a preacher', he answered: Matthew 28, Go forth, preach and baptise, which Christ having so joined together, it was not lawful for men to separate put another (2nd P. of a R.1673). Against this the Anglicans contended that until the time came when there were sufficient qualified preachers, the reading of Scripture and of godly sermons did constitute a minimum preaching of the Gospel. It was not all that could be desired, but it was at any rate better than complete and utter silence.

The Puritans went to extreme lengths in the propagation of their views. Amongst those imprisoned by the authorities there were many who were charged amongst other things with the denial of the lawfulness of baptism by a dumb minister, Settles, for example, committed to the Gatehouse at Westminster (Ibid. 2 194). The Separatists lent strong, but not always welcome support. Penry, originally a Puritan, roundly condemned the administration by dumb ministers, and he not only advised against resorting to them, but thought it a sin to do so. He was sufficiently acute a thinker, however, to realise that it was dangerous to dismiss such administrations as completely invalid: 'The sacraments', he said, 'are still true as to their substance' (Pierce's Penry pp. 188 f.).

The Anglicans did attempt, as we should naturally expect, to defend the temporary expedient of appointing non-preachers, but their main defence was by invoking the commonly accepted principle, that the validity of a properly administered sacrament stands in spite of the person who administers it. A charge of irregularity would have provoked only a defence of the expedient, but the suggestion of invalidity constituted a challenge to the rule quoted (if misapplied) by Whitgift from Calvin himself: 'That nothing is added or taken away from the dignity of baptism by him by whom it is administered' (Whit. P.S. I p. 526). In their anxiety to secure a 'pure' ministry, the Puritans tended to lose sight of the distinction between the regularity of a sacrament and its validity. The practical argument used by Cooper in his Admonition to the People of England (p. 89), 'that if baptism ministered by one that is no preacher be no sacrament at all, what is become of them that were never baptised otherwise', was not of great doctrinal force, except for those who believed in an absolute necessity of
baptism, but it put the actual alternatives clearly and forcibly:
either baptism by non-preachers had to be acknowledged, or mass
rebaptisation enforced.

One final matter ought to be mentioned... Bancroft, who had
attempted a not very successful proposal for the baptism of non-preachers on
the ground that deacons, who were not normally allowed to preach,
had Scriptural precedent for baptising, *triumphed* tried to turn the	

tables on his Puritan adversaries by asking what was the position of doctors under the new discipline. Calvin apparently had thought	
that doctors ought to be allowed to administer the sacraments: 'Doctors have neither to deal with the discipline, nor the administration of the sacraments' (Bancroft, Survey p.120). But this, Bancroft urged, was contrary to the rule of Cartwright that the ministry of the Word and sacraments cannot be pulled in sunder. Of course, Bancroft himself was not interested in the status of doctors. But he was interested controversially, first, to drive a wedge between the Puritans and their Genevan master; and second, to justify the Anglican separation of the ministry of Word and sacraments - the sacraments, but no Word - by the Genevan separation in the case of doctors - the Word, but no sacraments. In the last resort the Anglicans and Puritans were of course agreed that Word and sacraments ought to go together; however, and the final issue was that of validity and invalidity. The whole bitter controversy with regard to lay-baptism, as we shall see, narrowed down ultimately to this same point.

6 Comments

Against the background of their transcendentalist understanding the
Reformed doctrine of the administration is perfectly logical, but it is open to one very serious criticism: the Reformers did not base their views of what constituted a lawfully commissioned ministry upon sufficiently solid ground. Attacks upon their position may be made from three sides. First, Biblical criticism calls in question the divine commandment and commission in Matthew. Second, even if the commandment and commission were given, proof is needed that it was meant to be passed on, and that it was meant to be passed on to any particular body of people. Third, the Romanists allege that if transmission can be proved, then it is a transmission only to those who can prove that they inherit the commission by a historical apostolic descent.

A discussion of these points would lead us far away from the doctrine of baptism. It belongs properly to the consideration of the ministry. But since the two come together at this point, a few general considerations may be advanced, more particularly on the Reformed side. As regards the cutting away of the text in Matthew, the Reformers would probably have been willing to consider any well-grounded objection, but they would have demanded good textual proof. And even if they had seen difficulties in it, they might still have argued, either that it was based on a genuine utterance of Jesus, or that its presence in the Canon evidenced its divine authority. As far as the limitation and extension of the commission is concerned, the Reformers could see no need to look beyond the world's continuing need of the Gospel, and the histori-
-ical continuance of the apostolic ministry. Within the Anglican church itself the question of a historical descent hardly arose, since the retention of bishops carried with it a continuity with the historic ministry. Where that continuity had been broken, however, the Reformers looked directly to the Scripture for confirmation of their thesis that an inward calling and an outward commissioning by the church constituted a sufficient authorisation to preach and to administer the sacraments, especially in that extraordinary situation in which the historic ministry had fallen into moral and theological corruption.

The point is that according to the evangelical interpretation the final authority of the minister and his acts did not lie in and was not based upon a historical sequence, but in and upon God and the calling of God. For the sake of order an orderly commissioning was necessary, for although the inward authority of the minister derived from God, the public ratifying and acknowledging of his vocation gave to his work an external authorisation, and added weight and dignity. But since both Word and sacraments also came from God, as well as the commission to dispense them, the final validity of the Word and sacraments could not be said to depend upon the human agent. All that could be said was that the church had a right to demand that only those persons properly commissioned by God himself and the people of God should presume to act as the agents of God.

Considered historically, the question of lawful ministry has no more than a temporal importance. Theologically considered, against the background of the Reformed transcendentalist view of God and the world, it has a 'final' importance. What is at stake is that the means of grace should be administered to salvation and not to damnation. No pains ought then to be spared, first, to see what constitutes a solid calling, second, to make sure that those who are called should be worthy of their calling, and third, to define the position of those who receive the Word and sacraments at the hands of those who have no regular ministry. The Reformed view was double-edged, and that is why a bitter controversy between men so akin fundamentally as the Anglicans and the Puritans became possible. On the one hand, if the sacraments were God's, then there was assurance of their validity quite apart from the commission of the minister, or his worthiness. On the other hand, and for the very same reason, that the sacraments were God's, none ought to presume to undertake their administering without a lawful calling and a striving after sanctification of life.

Perhaps the most distinguishing mark in the Reformed understanding and discussions is the fact that God was always central, whatever the approach and whatever the conclusion. A slightly different emphasis upon this centrality of God could lead to differences so wide as those which separated Anglicans and Puritans, but the starting-point was the same. For good or for evil, the Reformers could never be 'humanists' or 'empiricists'. They were theologians' first and last. It was because of this 'theological' bias, this God-centredness, that they were able to give to all
their doctrinal work a fulness and a power which it could not otherwise have had. Even at a point comparatively so unimportant as that of the lawful ministry of the sacrament their derived from and constantly lead back to the whole 'revelational' conception of God in relation to the world and to man.

Notes

1 Lomb. 4 Dist. 5 A. 'Nec melior est baptismus qui per meliorem datum' B 'Potestatem enim sibi Dominus retinuit'. C. 'Potestas dimittendi peccata, quae in Deo est, Deus est.... Potuit dare servo potestatem dimittendi peccata in baptismo, id est, ut in mandatione interiori servus cum Domino operaretur; non servus sine Domine, nec Dominus sine servo, sed Dominus cum servo. Unde et Dominus dicitur sanctificare, et servus; sed Dominus invisibili gratia, servus visibili sacramentum'.

2 Luther W.A. 6 p. 530 'Homo enim baptizat, et non baptizat. Baptizat quia perfect opus, dum mergit baptizandum. Non baptizat quia non fungitur in eo operi sua auctoritate sed vice Deo. Non enim hominis est, sed Christi et Dei baptismus'.

3 Ibid. p. 530 'Autor et minister diversi sunt, sed opus idem utriusque, immo solius auctoris per ministerium meum'.

4 Ibid. p. 213 'Denn ynn Gottes namen getauft werden ist nicht vom menschen, sondern von Gott selbs getauft werden'.

5 Ibid. p. 214 'Gott selbs setzet seine ehre hynan, sein kräftf und macht legt daran'.

6 Hirsch p. 222 'Mithin hüte dich, die Taufe also zu unterscheiden, dass du die äusserliche dem Menschen, die innerliche Gotte schreibst. Schreibe sie beide Gotte allein, und nimm die Person des, der sie austeilt, nicht anders dann als ein stellvertretendes Werkzeug Gottes'.

7 Calvin Harm. Evang. On Matt. 3. 11 The French runs: 'La verité du baptesme vient et procede du Christ seul'.

8 Beza Q. et R. C. 107 'At ille qui interius Spiritu.... baptizat long aliadivina nimimum prorsus, ac caelestia, solus perficit (quamvis interventente ministerio), nempe peccatoru remissione et gratia imputatione et regenerationem, quae est effectum Spiritus sancti in nobis inhaerens et sensim in nobis peccatum abolens'.

9 Anrich M.B. p. 128 'Gott wirkt alles in allen, richtet es aber durch seine Diener, die Wort und Sakrament ausspenden'.

10 Rituale Romanum 'Minister Legitimus quidem Baptismi est Parochie'.

11 Hart E.R. p. 204 Council of York 'Ut non nisi summa et gravi necessitate diaconus baptiset'.

12 Ibid. A 'nisi his procul absentibus, ultima languor is cogat necessitas'.

13 Ibid. Dist. 5 A 'Nec melior est baptismus qui per meliorem datur, nec minus bonus per minus bonum, nec malus qui per malum datur. Quos baptisavit Judas, Christus baptisavit,'
etiam si impius minister non det in nomine domini, vere baptismum esse in nomine domini.

14. Huguenot Confession Art 23 'que l'efficace et vertu du Baptême ne dépend de celui qui l'administre.'
CHAPTER VI  IRREGULAR MINISTERS

In the previous chapter we have seen that all the sixteenth century writers (Anabaptists apart) believed firmly in the existence of an orderly ministry, to which alone the ordinary dispensing of word and sacraments belonged. The question must now be asked whether there might not be extraordinary cases in which non-ordained persons could lawfully execute the office and functions of the ministers.

Several doctrinal principles of great importance underlay this matter of ecclesiastical discipline. For one thing, those who thought baptism absolutely necessary to salvation would naturally argue that urgent need justified a breach of normal order. Again, the principle that God is the true author had an obvious bearing. On the one hand, it could be urged in favour of irregular administrations - for the human agent is of little importance. On the other, the fact that the sacrament is God's could be used to prove that only the minister appointed by God ought to administer it. The question whether there was any distinction between the validity and the regularity of a sacrament correctly administered (in respect of matter and form) called for investigation and answer.

Divergent views emerged as the Reformation progressed. Between the Romanist and Reformed parties the issue was clear-cut. The Lutherans and Anglicans, however, occupied a central (although not necessarily a mediating) position, which led to a tangling of the issues. In England especially there was a tendency on the part of the Puritans to confuse validity and regularity. The Anglicans themselves were not altogether innocent of a practical confusion of the two, excusing irregularly on the ground of validity.

Generally speaking there was little controversy with regard to the older types of irregular administration, such as heretical baptism. The debate centred mainly upon the baptism given by lay-men, and more especially women. The other cases might well be considered, however, for they help to clarify the principles which had to be brought to bear upon the more immediately important issue.

1. Supernatural Beings

The Romanist theologians, following the Scholastic tradition, frequently raised abstract questions with little or no relation to reality. These have a certain value in that they allow of a quite dispassionate application of basic principles. It might not be amiss then to mention suggested cases of baptism by supernatural agents.

Bellarmine, for example, posed the question of the validity of such administrations. Since there do not appear to be any trustworthy examples of them, he could balance his arguments without prejudice. He dealt first with angels. On the one hand it might be argued that they had no commission. To the apostles and their successors had been entrusted the task of baptising. On the other hand an angel was not a free agent. Baptism by an angel could only take place in accordance with a command of God, an extraordinary command designed to meet a particular case. Thus
the validity of such an administration could be safely assumed (De la Serv. T. B. p. 340).]

What then of baptism by the Devil? If God could work through a wicked human agent like Judas, could he also be said to work through the Devil himself? Bellarmine did not think so. The Devil might carefully observe both form and matter, but in no circumstances could he baptise by divine commandment. Thus God could never be the author and true minister of the Devil's baptism. Such a baptism would be only a baptism of usurpation or of deception. The Devil had neither power of himself nor mandate from God (Ibid. pp. 340 f.).

The Reformers, of course, were little interested in such academic questions. Their theology was not abstruse and theoretical, but living and practical. They could hardly refuse, however, to take notice of the principles involved: the supremacy of God in his sacrament, the need for authorisation of some kind, ordinary or extraordinary; the valuelessness even of a correct form without God. These were all principles which applied when the more concrete problems of heretical and lay-baptism had to be faced.

2 Heretics and Schismatics

The validity of baptism administered by heretics and schismatics had been fully and hotly debated in the early church, and the arguments for and against had been worked out in detail. Against the reality of heretical baptism Tertullian had already suggested that the God of heretics was not the same God as the God of Christ and the church, the baptism could not then be the same (See Bingham 8 pp. 53 f.). This was the argument which Cyprian developed when he took his stand for the rebaptisation of schismatics and heretics. The true God could not be said to be present in non-catholic administrations, and they were therefore invalid (Ibid.).

Against this view, the church as a whole decided that what mattered was the retention of the correct form and the Triune formula, for the minister in himself was unimportant. When Athanasius sought to content the validity of Arian baptism, for example, urging that the Arians had no true belief in the Trinity, the church could find no fault with the Arian form and formula, and could only acknowledge the validity of their baptism. The Montanists, on the other hand, had not kept the form pure, and therefore their baptism could not be recognised. The Paulianists had similarly corrupted the formula. How decisive this matter of correctness was is shown by the fact that Augustine could not refuse to allow Marcion's baptism to be true baptism, for although corrupted with false and fabulous doctrines, it had maintained the traditional form.

Of course, the fact that a sacrament was regarded as valid did not mean that it was acknowledged as efficacious. Augustine maintained strongly that heretics could only administer the outward sacrament. Those baptised by heretics were baptised of water only, and to destruction. Where there was false faith and evil life there could be no grace of the sacrament. The only exception made
was in favour of true Catholics who could find none but heretical baptism. Innocent taught similarly: a departure from the Catholic faith meant a forfeiture of the Holy Spirit, and therefore of all possibility of receiving him in baptism. Leo found in heretical baptism the form, but no grace. Heretics returning to the true church had no need of further baptism, because they had the form. They did need to be confirmed, however, even re-confirmed, in order that the defect in their baptism might be made good. In case of emergency the priest was permitted to administer confirmation to returning heretics.

The refusal to grant that baptism by a heretical minister could be efficacious is important. It marks off such baptism from that administered by an unworthy or heretical minister within the true church. In the one case, (except in those rare instances in which a Catholic was forced to accept heretical baptism for lack of any other), the person baptised shared in the errors of the baptiser. Thus God’s baptism was administered, but God himself was not present to work in and through it. In the other case, the baptism was fully God’s, in effect as well as in institution. The baptised person, not sharing the errors of faults of the baptiser, did not in any way suffer through them.

The distinction drawn was not one which could be fitted too easily into a sacramentalist system, especially where it was a matter of infant baptism. In the sacramentalist scheme a valid administration implies, or ought to imply an efficacious administration. The proviso was always made, however, and this solved the problem, that an obstacle might check the inflow of grace. Where adult heretics were baptised the error itself constituted such an obstacle. Where the infants of heretics were baptised, the error of the parents or of the church formed the dam or bar. Only when that obstacle was removed could the sacrament already administered have its effect.

In the evangelical understanding the position was simpler, and less artificial. Sacrament and grace were not indissolubly united, even within the orthodox church. A man baptised under Papistry or even in Reformed churches, received a valid outward baptism. But only when he came to a true understanding of the Gospel did he enter inwardly and spiritually into that which his baptism signified. In the case of heretical baptism the chances of a true understanding of the Gospel were correspondingly fewer, and in almost all cases the baptism remained an outward baptism only. It could always be accepted, however, as a valid administration. At bottom the evangelical conception was very much the same as the sacramentalist, but the misleading artificial formulation had been set aside.

The Fathers had covered the ground so thoroughly that the Scholastics and Tridentines had little more to add upon the subject. Lombard restated the accepted view, that there need be no repetition of a baptism correctly performed in the Triune name, whether by a heretic, a schismatic or a degraded priest (Lomb.4 Dist.6 A). The Catechism of Trent reaffirmed the Patristic teaching that even a Catholic might receive baptism from a heretic where no other alternative presented itself (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.23). The Council anathemat-
ised all who denied the validity of baptism, 'even given by heretics, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost', although lack of intention was considered to be a lawful cause of invalidation (C.& D.T.Sess.7 On Bapt.Can.4). The Rituale Romanum repeated the teaching, pointing out that in an emergency even the simplest form of baptism, in any tongue and by any person, would avail, subject again to the laws of intention.

The Reformers were not directly interested in the question, except in so far as baptism by the Papists themselves was concerned, and their teaching upon that question has already been discussed. For the most part they accepted without question the traditional doctrine. They denied any efficaciousness in any case except where the recipient truly believed, but if the ordinance was carried out according to the Dominical institution they accepted its validity. Thus even within an apostate and heretical church true believers, or those who later came to true faith, might be said to receive full and true baptism. A distinction was made between baptism by a single heretic within a church essentially sound, and baptism by a minister within a church wholly heretical, but the form of soundness was usually taken to have been preserved if the form and the formula of baptism had remained intact (Cf.Riissmen Heppe R.D. De Bapt.-Riissen 17,33).

The Anglicans had also no direct interest in the problem. Whitaker introduced the matter, but largely for the purpose of showing that Augustine proved Cyprian to be in error not from tradition, but from Scripture. It seems that the validity of heretical baptism was one of the stock points of doctrine supposed by the Romanists to be demonstrable only from tradition, and this is what Whitaker wished to combat (P.S.pp.506-7). Cox mentioned the question in the same connection in a letter to Bullinger. He did not himself deny the doctrine (Zur.Letters 2 78). Cartwright also had occasion to refer to the matter controversially, deducing from it a distinction between validity (or even efficacy) and legality, a distinction which the Puritans for the most part forgot. The argument of Cartwright was to the effect that heretical baptism might be valid or even efficacious, but it still remained unlawful: 'For there is no man doubteth but that the baptism which is ministered by an heretical minister may be effectual: and yet I think that Mr.B.Doctor (Whitgift) will not say that therefore an heretical minister may baptise, and that it is lawful for heretics to baptise in the church (Whit.P.S.2 p.532).

Perhaps the fullest and most careful discussion was that of Hooker. Hooker laid down the common rule that 'heresy in the minister can in no way evacuate the force thereof', provided always that the form remains intact. He pointed back to the controversy between Cyprian and Augustine, controversy in the sense that the two fathers best represented the opposing standpoints. Augustine seemed to him to have had the better arguments: 'the denial that 'heresy can...deprive men of the power to baptise'; and the insistence that 'even if heretics did lose the power, it followeth not that baptism by them administered without authority is no baptism'. Hooker applied the arguments, of course, in favour of the validity of baptism by laymen. He took up the same point as Cartwright had done, but applied it as it were in the reverse direction. The heretic had
perhaps no right to baptise and he ought not to be permitted to do so. But if he did baptise, then in respect of validity no fault could be found with the sacrament administered by him, and if the recipient had received in true faith then it stood even in respect of efficacy. Naturally neither Hooker himself, nor any one else, wished to claim, as the Puritans seemed to suggest they did, that heretics, schismatics and degraded priests ought to be granted lawful authority. They did contend that the act correctly done there was no call to baptise again (Hooker L.E.P. 5 72,17).

3 Laymen

Heretical ministers, by virtue of their orders (in some cases at least), could be regarded as in some sense true ministers, even though they had been divested of all authority to exercise their functions. Lay-persons could not claim either ministry or authorisation even in this way. Yet the practice of baptism by lay-men in time of urgency was of long standing in the church. It could hardly be said to have any Scriptural basis, either by way of precept or of example, except in so far as all New Testament baptisms were lay-baptisms, as some wish to maintain. But at least as early as Tertullian's day the right had been established. It grew to a large extent out of the sense of the necessity of baptism: 'Let it suffice assuredly in cases of necessity to avail yourself of that rule' (De Bapt. 17). Tertullian defended the practice by what became a stock argument, that what is equally received can be equally given. We may notice in passing that this principle never seems to have been applied to the supper, although there of course the same cases of emergency did not arise.

The later theologians and canonists reaffirmed the teaching of the African father. Sometimes qualifications were demanded: the Council of Elberis restricted the right to baptise to laymen who had been fully baptised - probably non-clinically, or baptised without any subsequent lapse - and to those monogamists (Bingham 9 pp. 32 f.). Jerome and Augustine repeated the argument that what has been received may be given, and approved the practice. Basil, quoting Cyprian as authority, wished to limit the right to those who had been confirmed within the catholic church, but the general feeling was against a restriction of this kind. Even where it was thought that in baptising the laity unlawfully usurped the priestly function, or when lay-men were found to have baptised without sufficient cause, the sacrament was recognised as valid in respect of the person baptised, although not in respect of the baptiser (Cf. The Apostolic Constitutions). In favour of this decision Optatus quoted the 'Forbid him not' of the Gospel narrative, and reminded the church that baptism derives its power primarily from the name of the Trinity. Naturally the canons forbade unauthorised meddling in the work of the ministry, but there was no questioning of the validity of 'usurped' baptisms.

The Scholastics did not advance upon this view: their opinions were of course determined in advance by the Augustinian doctrine of the absolute necessity of the sacrament to salvation. Lombard claimed that in an emergency not only deacons but also the faithful
laity had full authority to baptise (Lomb. 4 Dist. 6 A). Thomas considered the objections to this view with his usual thoroughness. First, he pointed out that baptism is properly the work of the priest; second, the laity are not allowed to teach; third, they have no authority to absolve. Why should they take upon themselves one of the tasks of the priest when they are debarred from others? Thomas himself fell back upon the conclusive authority of Isidore and Gelasius. He was also greatly impressed by the extreme necessity of the rite, which over-rode all other considerations. It was because baptism was in the last resort the most necessary of the sacraments that a latitude in the administrators was permissible: no-one could be suffered to lose his salvation for the simple lack of an official baptiser. The sacramental rites which accompanied full and solemn baptism could at a pinch be omitted. Even penance, Thomas argued, was not so necessary as baptism (See Thom. 3 Qu. 67, 3).

At Trent the laity were expressly forbidden to exercise ministerial functions in ordinary circumstances (C. 6 T. Sess. 7 Sacram. Can. 10). This canon was clearly aimed at the Reformed doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, as applied in particular by the Anabaptists. It was also aimed, of course, at Reformed ministries not recognised by the Roman church. But the specific exemption in favour of lay-baptism in emergency was still made. The Catechism stated plainly that in case of necessity all, even of the laity... whatever sect they may profess, may lawfully baptise (Cat. 2 3. 23). Bellarmine defended this teaching (De la S.T.B. p. 353). The Rituale Romanum drew up a full order of precedence: in the absence of the priest, first a deacon ought to baptise, in the absence of a deacon, a sub-deacon, then a clerk, then a layman, then a lay-woman last of all, except that in certain cases, an administration before the completion of birth, or where the woman was better acquainted with the form, the lay-woman might be preferred to the lay-man. It is interesting that in the Greek church there was some opposition to the doctrine of lay-baptism, but the majority of writers decided in its favour (Bingham 9 pp. 33 f.).

Amongst the Reformers Luther accepted the common teaching, and so also, rather curiously, did Zwingli. Luther saw the matter quite clearly. He had a strong sense both of the value of baptism and also of the high status of the laity as a universal priesthood. It was only natural then that he should retain lay-baptism in cases of imminent death. Addressing the Christian nobility of Germany, he stressed the fact that all Christians are priests. Should the need arise, with castaways on a desert island, for example, laymen could elect one of their number to minister the sacraments, and he would be validly ordained. That is why, he added, 'in cases of necessity, every man can baptise and absolve - (not an insignificant addition) - which would not be possible if we were not all priests (Kidd D.C.R. p. 64). The Lutheran church-orders preserved a service of private administration of baptism, and authorised the laity to perform the rite in the absence of the minister (Cf. Kidd D.C.R. p. 227). Bingham has quoted Brockmond of Copenhagen as a theological representative of Lutheranism in this question. Treatment of baptism in his Systematic Theology, he asserted that any Christian man may lawfully baptise in extraordinary cases, where death is imminent, and no ordained minister can be had (Bingham 9 pp. 33 f.).
The position of Zwingli is not quite so easy to understand as that of Luther, especially in view of the later Reformed attitude to lay-baptism. Zwingli obviously derived his view from the traditional practice, but he himself can hardly have been influenced to any extent by authority as such. The point is probably this: that for Zwingli the whole issue arose only within the context of the larger question of infant baptism. It was Zwingli's aim to defend the validity of the baptism already received against the Anabaptist clamour for rebaptisation. Zwingli was thus led to assert the validity of all baptism received, even baptism by lay-men, so long as the correct form had been observed. If he did not do this, then he granted a case for rebaptisation in certain circumstances. The doctrine of the primacy of God in the sacrament provided Zwingli with the necessary argument in favour of his view (Zwingli C.R. 4° p. 298).

The later writers of the Reformed school approached the matter from a different angle. They had as their main aim the overthrowal of the idea that there can be no salvation without baptism. They started from the refusal to admit that there could be any extraordinary cases if there were no absolute necessity. Thus the need for an extraordinary ministry could not and did not arise. This being the case, lay-baptism was completely unlawful; not in any circumstances could the layman be described as the lawful minister of the sacrament. The fact that death threatened and no commissioned minister was at hand did not in any sense justify an illicit usurpation; for no eternal issue, salvation or damnation, was involved. Calvin, putting forward this view, claimed that 'the charge to baptise was expressly given to the Apostles, along with the preaching of the word'; and that therefore none might lawfully administer baptism but those who were also ministers of the word (Harm. Evang. p. 385). The Reformed orders and confessions forbade any but properly authorised persons to interfere in the work. Thus the Constitutions of Geneva enjoined administration by ministers only (Kidd D. C.R. p. 587) and when it was asked in the Genevan Catechism whether the command to baptise was given indiscriminately to all, the reply was an emphatic negative. The Reformers linked up baptism with the supper in this respect (Ibid. p. 614).

If by any chance a person had received lay-baptism, did it in the Reformers eyes count as true baptism? The Reformed party hardly considered this question. They thought it their main duty to see that such irregularities did not occur. If the question were pressed, however, they had to answer it, and the answers varied somewhat. Calvin himself seemed committed to the view that since the sacrament is Christ's, it can make no essential difference who the minister is (Harm. of Evang. pp. 144-5). Many of the Reformed churches took this line (See Bingham 9 pp. 83 f.). Others, however, went to the extreme and denied the validity of an irregular administration. The Synod of Poitiers, for example, declared such a baptism null and void. The later Reformed theologians displayed little interest in this hypothetical question, concentrating attention upon the prohibition and the denial of any possible justifying emergency. By doing this they cut the ground from under the feet of the defenders of validity, for in a true and pure church the validity of an irregular administration ought to belong strictly a
and indeed solely to the realm of speculative not practical theology.

The two principles, the Lutheran on the one hand and the Reformed on the other, found a battlefield in the English Church of the Elizabethan Settlement. It has been seen that the Anglicans as a whole rejected any idea of an absolute necessity of baptism. The Prayer Book, however, had been revised as conservatively as possible, and largely on Lutheran models. Private baptism had been retained, and lay-baptism, if it had not been expressly enjoined, had certainly not been prohibited and might very well be thought implied by the Rubric: 'And then one of them shall name the child, and dip him in the water etc.' As will be seen in more detail when the narrower question of baptism by women is discussed, the Elizabethan leaders were for the most part ready, as a point of church-order, to suppress lay-baptism altogether. The Puritans and Separatists were not content with this, however. In their anxiety to condemn and to abolish the practice, they threw doubts upon the validity of such administrations, thereby complicating the doctrinal issue.

Throughout the Middle Ages, the Church of England, in common with all the pre-reformation churches, had recognised both the validity and the lawfulness of lay-baptism in time of necessity. The Saxon Council of Cealchythe, for example, when it had demanded baptism according to the canons, and not at any other time, had made the usual exception in favour of emergency administrations (Hart p.194). The Council of Westminster, confirming the point, was even willing to allow father or mother to baptise, without prejudice to matrimony i.e. without bringing themselves within the prohibited degrees through the spiritual relationship supposed to be established by the act. Lombard had discussed this latter point, and decided that emergency gave a special dispensation. During the sixteenth century there can be no doubt that lay-baptism was very common in England, especially as the infant mortality rate was heavy, and it seems to have been defended even by some of the earlier Reformers. Tyndale, for instance, had justified it on the two-fold ground, that lay-baptism (granted its necessity) is an act of charity: 'I answer, if baptism be so necessary as they make it, then 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' doth teach women to baptise' (Tynd.P.S.3 p.98); and that although not all are called to exercise the functions of the ministry, all Christians are priests: 'This wise is no man priest, but he that is chosen, save as in time of necessity every man baptiseth' (Ibid.1 pp.25-6). It ought to be noticed that both the grounds were controversial arguments rather than real reasons. Tyndale here was urging the received practice of lay-baptism as a point in favour some quite different doctrine: that of the proper rights of the laity in relation to the priesthood. He also found it possible to insinuate a doubt as to the absoluteness of the necessity of baptism. Had he been discussing lay-baptism in itself, it is possible that he might have come to some quite different conclusion.

Cranmer had all the caution of a scholarly and pacific nature. He hesitated to make changes in doctrine or practice except where
deep conviction impelled. In the matter of lay administration he seems to have reasoned very much as Luther. He obviously accepted the common practice, and even used it as an argument in some quite different connection, as for example, when he wished to demonstrate the superfluity of the ceremonies used in baptism: "Children in danger of life are christened by the midwife, or some other woman, without any of these ceremonies" (Cran.P.S.2 p. 58). When the matter had to be decided in relation to the English Service-books, Cranmer retained a private administration, and left without authorising the laity to baptise, lest it be gathered that it was their duty to do so where no minister could be had. In order to prevent abuse, the rubric warned against resorting even to private baptism "without great cause and necessity". Cranmer himself, like Luther, had a high sense of the value of the sacrament, and an exalted conception of God as the chief minister. In spite of an already growing opposition to baptism by laymen he could see no reason to regard the orderly administration as more important than the administration itself.

The opposition undoubtedly had begun to grow even before the Marian persecution and the Continental exile. Hooper was one of the first who looked to Geneva rather than to Wittenberg, and repudiated the teaching of Luther in favor of that of Calvin. He adopted the full teaching of Calvin: "That whereas such take upon them as be not lawfully called unto the ministration of the sacraments... it is a profanation of the sacrament, and not to be suffered" (Hoop.P.S.1 p. 131). Hooper found the root of this corrupt practice in the false notion that lack of baptism endangered the soul's eternal salvation. The writings of Bullinger, although they exerted their main influence under Elizabeth, naturally helped to spread this view. Bullinger himself, in the Decades, stated clearly that "only the minister of the church, being lawfully ordained, ought to baptise" (Bull.P.S.4 p. 369). It ought to be noticed that in Hooper there was no actual doubting of the validity of lay-baptism, once given, but rather the attempt to secure official prohibition of the practice.

The reign of Mary saw an intensifying of the opposition. The conflicts of that period undoubtedly prepared the ground for the later controversies, and made the Elizabethan compromise quite impractical. On the one hand the triumphant Romanists restored the full doctrine of an absolute necessity. They insisted that all lay-people, and especially midwives, must be ready to baptise when the situation required. Bonner in his Visitation Articles demanded of his clergy whether or not they had 'diligently moved and exhorted their parishioners how and in what manner their children should be baptised in time of necessity' (Burnet's Collection 2, 2, Art.20). The injunctions of the Archbishop of York contained explicit instructions with regard to the 'wordes and forme of baptisme', so that there should be no possibility of mistake (Tbid.57). The Romanists feared, no doubt, that a certain laxity had crept in during the apostasy of Edward's reign, and they took great pains to enforce a proper observance of lay-baptism where necessity required.

That was the one side. On the other side, however, the
Protestant exiles, not excluding a good number of those who remained substantially loyal to the Edwardian Prayer-Book, came more and more under the Reformed influence. The Puritan element went to the extreme of objecting to private baptism altogether, no matter who was the minister. Naturally, the main objection was against private baptism as administered by lay-persons. Two representative documents may be cited to show how strong the opinion was amongst the exiles, the 'Paper of other things complained of besides the heads,' and a letter of Bullinger and Gualter to Grindal and Horn (Ibid. 79 and 82). The members of the Prayer Book party were prepared to defend the private administration properly conducted, but even they found it difficult to defend the regularity of lay baptism. Grindal himself, for example, became a convinced opponent of lay-baptism.

The accession of Elizabeth saw a readoption in 1559 of what was virtually the Second Prayer Book under Edward, with the same order or private administration of baptism, and the same indecisive rubrics with regard to a lay ministry. The retention was an immediate cause of the Puritan revolt against the Settlement. It is well known that Grindal and Sandys amongst others were opposed to lay-baptism, and there is good reason to think that the vague phrasing was allowed, not as an authorisation, but as a concession to unreformed elements, still very powerful in the early years of the reign. It may also have been retained partly at the behest of the Queen herself, who had to consider her not very stable political position as well as the convictions and scruples of the Protestant party. At any rate, when the rubric came under discussion at Hampton Court, Whitgift claimed that the rubric had never been intended to permit private baptism by women (See Barlow S. & S.); and Babington of Worcester alleged confidently that the rubric had been left vague in order to secure the easier passage of the book through the not yet so convincingly Protestant Parliament (Strype's Whit. 2 pp. 494-5). Matthew Hutson, too, denied that the book was intended to allow lay-baptism, on the ground that those who had framed it were opposed to the practice, 'but would not lay it down in plain words, lest it might hinder the passage in the Parliament: tantae molis erat Romanum tollere ritum' (Ibid. Append. 3 44). In fairness, it should be noted that this explanation did not go unchallenged at Hampton Court. James himself, 'who utterly disliked that any but a lawfull minister might baptise,' urged and pressed that the words of the booke, that they could not but intend a permission, and suffering of women and private persons to baptise (Barlow S. & S. p. 14). The Bishop of Winchester, who defended lay-baptism, although thought that the book and common custom favoured the old view - 'to deny which were to crosse all antiquity' - and Bancroft of London, and soon afterwards of Canterbury, claimed that letters of the Reformers established which proved that by the forecited rubric they did intend a permission of private persons to baptise in case of necessity (Watterland 6 p.129). Whatever the reasons, and whatever the intentions, the one undoubted fact is that the indecisive and rubric of Cranmer did remain, giving rise to constant battles of interpretation and Reformed principle through the whole years of Elizabeth's reign.

The actual practice during the reign seems to have varied. B Sandys made an early attempt to abolish lay-baptism. In his Advice
concerning the Rules and Ceremonies he demanded the deletion of the service of Private Baptism, on the ground that it 'has respect unto women, who by the Word of God cannot be minister of the sacraments, or any one of them' (Sand. P. S. p. 433). It is evident from this Advice that laymen did take advantage of the rubric, with open or tacit connivance of the bishops, and the rejection of Sandys' plea testifies to the continuance of the practice. Grindal made a further attempt to bring it to an end with his Articles touching the Clergy introduced into Convocation in 1575; amongst other things he laid down that 'the said private baptism, in case of necessity, is only to be ministered by a lawful minister or deacon, called to be present for that purpose, and by none other' (Grind. P. S. p. 188). The Queen refused to sanction this article (Daniel p. 433), and even after 1575 the Puritans could object that some bishops licensed midwives to baptise. It is obvious that constant attempts were made to limit or to end the practice by some bishops. Whitgift could claim that women had no authority to baptise (Whit. P. S. 3 p. 493), and the Archbishop of York could also state that he had forbidden the practice (Farte of a R. 2 No. 193). It is equally obvious, however, that in many parts lay-baptisms were still the rule in emergency cases.

The Puritan objections, based of course upon Reformed writings, were stated most clearly by Cartwright and Travers. Their arguments rested upon the prior assumption that the Prayer Book did permit lay baptism, and that advantage was in fact taken of this permission. The first argument was that the only possible excuse for administration by a layman was the superstitious belief in an absolute necessity. The second argument was that there was for it no warrant in Scripture. Cartwright put these two points plainly:

'And as for the baptising by laymen, considering that it is not only against the word of God, but also founded upon a false ground, and upon an imagined necessity (which is none indeed), it moveth me nothing at all, although it be very ancient' (Whit. Ext. P. S. 2 p. 525). Sandys, Grindal and even Whitgift would have agreed with Cartwright up to this point. He then went on to develop a third argument, however, that administration by a minister belonged to the original Scriptural institution, and was therefore the essence of the sacrament: 'Forasmuch as the substance of the sacrament dependeth chiefly of the institution and the word of God...of which institution this is one, and of the chief parts, that it should be celebrated by a minister' (Ibid.). But this was a dangerous argument, for it led necessarily to the conclusion that since the validity of the sacrament depends upon the full observance of all its parts, baptism by a layman, even by water and in the Triune name, is no baptism at all. 'For although part of the institution, that the name of the Trinity is called upon, be observed, yet if the whole be not, it is no more a sacrament than the papists' communion was' (p. 529).

The opponents of Puritanism were quick to see that this conclusion conflicted with the great catholic and Reformed principle that God is the true minister and that the human agent is not essential to the sacrament. Whitgift himself found many reasons in favour of lay administration: the fact that there was no clear
veto in Scripture, the consent of the Fathers (e.g. Tertullian, Ambrose and Jerome), the statement of Zwingli, the principle enunciated by Calvin (Whit. P.S. 2 pp. 507 f.). Yet as a point of ecclesiastical order he was willing to fall in with the Puritan demands and prohibit the administration by laymen. What he would not and could not do, however, was to allow that the sacrament administered by a layman, however irregularly, even in defiance of established order, did not constitute a valid sacrament: 'I say that baptism ministered by women is true baptism, though it be not lawful for women to baptise' (Ibid. p. 532).

Hooker sided with Whitgift in this refutation of the Puritan extreme, and he examined the Puritan arguments very thoroughly. He thought that lay baptism might be excused as an act of charity: 'To do it is either no fault at all, or if any, a very pardonable fault' (I of E.P. 5, 62, 17). To argue, as many Puritans did, that unauthorised baptism was invalid because it was like a stolen seal illicitly used did not in his opinion 'help their cause anything', for God alone was the giver of the grace of baptism: 'The grace of baptism cometh by donation from God alone. That God hath committed the ministry of baptism unto special men is for order's sake in the church' (Ibid. 19). The Anglicans were not necessarily defending the regularity of baptisms by laymen, but they could not concede that the minister was of the essence of the sacrament: it was therefore possible in their view for the sacrament to be validly and efficaciously administered without him.

The position of the Separatists is interesting, for with them, largely through the pressure of circumstances, the Anabaptist view that lay-baptism was lawful found new expression. In ordinary course of events the Separatists would not champion the legality of such administrations. They were forced to choose, however, between accepting orderly baptism in churches so erroneous that their ministers were not regarded as true ministers, and the alternatives of foregoing baptism, or accepting lay-baptism, because pure Separatist ministers were not available. Of the two alternatives to the abhorrent Anglican administration, Francis Johnson, who discussed this dilemma, decided that lay-baptism was to be preferred: 'I did never acknowledge yt that it was lawfull for private persons to baptise when there were true churches and ministers... one lie... seeing ther was no church to whom we might joynne with a good conscience (to have baptisme from them) therfor we migh baptise ourselves' (Burrage E.E.D. 1 p. 241). Johnson, it will be noted, carefully marked off his position from the freer one advocated by Helwys, who thought that 'any two or three persons might baptise' even when a true church and ministry existed. Johnson argued that such a view rested upon a wrong limitation of the apostolic commission to the first generation and would lead to the permanent establishment of private baptism. The opinions of Helwys perhaps found a logical conclusion in the se-baptism of John Smith (The Character of the Beast p. 58).

The main Puritan controversy came to a head at the Hampton Court Conference, when the King emerged as the main Puritan champion. Barlow tells us that James utterly disliked, that any but a lawfull
minister might baptise 'and 'grew something earnest against the baptiz­ing by women' (S. & S. p. 14). The King would not have it that the Book did not permit lay-baptism, but he himself virtually if not actually denied its validity. Winchester pleaded that the minister was not of the essence of the sacrament, but James retaliated that he was of the essence of the right and lawful ministry of the sacrament (p. 15). This amounted in fact to the same thing, for the sacrament is nothing apart from its administration. Eventually, after much discussion, the King willed that the words 'They baptise not children' be amended to 'They cause not children to be baptised', and the words 'Then they minister it' to 'The curate, or lawful minister present, shall do it'. Ecclesiastical lawyers can plead that since there was no express repudiation of the earlier practice lay-baptism is still irregular, and some commentators on the Prayer Book even maintain that the layman is regarded as a lawful minister in time of emergency, but there can be no doubt from the historical point of view that these alterations, retained in the Restoration Prayer Book, were designed deliberately to put an end to lay-baptism.

It might be noticed, however, that James did not press his views upon the invalidity of lay-baptism to the point of demanding the rebaptisation of those so baptised. The irregularity of lay-baptism was now established: so far the Puritans triumphed. But the weight of opinion still favoured the validity of such baptism. Taylor, Abbott, Sparrow and Bramhall all defended the validity of lay administrations (See Waterland 6 pp. 129 f.). In fact the Conference did achieve that compromise which the Reformers had been seeking. By withdrawing an implied permission it took a step towards the sup­pression of a deeply rooted practice. Yet it avoided the Puritan extreme of condemning as invalid that which was no more than irregular. Thus the orderly performance of the rite was secured, without prejudice to the vital principle of the primacy of God himself in the sacrament.

4. Women

To a large extent the question of baptism by women is bound up with the more general one of lay-baptism. In fact, lay-baptism normally meant baptism by women, especially by the midwives. Most emergency baptisms took place in the earliest hours of the child's life, when only the midwife was present. This fact is important, since it underlies the opposition to lay-baptism as a whole. Lay-baptism fell under the Puritan ban not merely because it was a usurpation of the ministerial office, but because it was a usurpation by women, in flat contradiction to the Scriptural prohibition.

The case of baptism by women deserves a certain separate consideration, because on the whole the objections to it were more soundly based than those against lay-baptism in general. In the very earliest times rigorists like Tertullian, who had been willing to allow lay-baptism in emergency, pleaded that no circumstances might be said to justify an administration by women (De Bapt. 17). The Fourth Council of Carthage in a famous Canon also forbade women to baptise (Bingham 9 p. 49). There were doubts as to the validity of baptism administered by women, and even Augustine himself was not free from them, although his stress upon the primacy
of God in the sacrament inclined him to allow the validity (Bingham).

During the Middle Ages the opinion of Augustine prevailed, reinforced by a decision of Pope Urban II. Lombard considered the objection in the Canon of Carthage, but he evaded it by presuming that no absolute prohibition was intended, only a restriction to the most urgent cases where a man could not be present (Lomb. 4 Dist. 3 A). Thomas investigated the matter with great care. He stated the objections fully: the Canon of Carthage, the New Testament prohibition, the fact that the administrator becomes a spiritual father. Against these objections he quoted the ruling of Urban, and the fact that Christ himself is the true baptiser. He concluded that since the human minister is only an instrument, a woman might validly perform the ceremony. He emphasised the fact that no woman ought to presume to baptise publicly and solemnly, only privately and of necessity, and insisted that a man ought to be given the preference where available (Thomas 3 Qu. 67 4).

The Councils of the Middle Ages endorsed this view. Cashel, for instance, allowed emergency baptism by anyone, 'without distinction of sex or order' (Mart. E. X. p. 202). Westminster permitted father or mother to baptise, in spite of the presumed spiritual relationships contracted (Ibid. p. 204). By the time of Wycliffe the right of midwives to baptise had been firmly established, so that Wycliffe himself could refer to the belief that 'when any old woman or despised person duly baptises with water, God completes the baptism of the Spirit along with the words of the sacrament' (Vaughan 4 p. 160). It was a duty of the priests to instruct midwives and others in the essential parts of the sacrament, and to be sure that they understood what was necessary (See Manning P. P. quoting Handlyngg Synne 9613). When birth was expected, water was always to be at hand in case of need (Wilkins Concilia p. 2 p. 293).

The prevalence of baptism by women, due of course to the high incidence of infant mortality, may be judged from the urgency with which the Marian bishops impressed upon their clergy the need for diligence in the instruction of midwives (Foxe 3 p. 298). Trent reaffirmed the right of women to baptise in accordance with the Thomistic teaching. It was laid down, however, that they were only to do so in the absence of men, except where midwives were more familiar with the form and less likely to make a mistake than men present (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 24). The Rituale Romanum incorporated this teaching into its rubrics upon private baptism, again granting midwives the preference in cases where they were better acquainted with the form, or where baptism was judged necessary before the completion of birth.

The early Reformers did not challenge the accepted practice. Protests had of course been made, even before the sixteenth century. Brute, for example, speaking of 'the use received in the pope's church for women to baptise, which cannot be without remission of sins', asked 'why women may not as well administer the Lord's Supper in like case of necessity' (Foxe 3 p. 179). Luther, however, had no doubts as to the validity or even the
rightness of baptism by women, and the Lutheran orders, the order of Hesse for example, retained private baptism administered where necessary by midwives (Cf. Kidd D.C.R p.227: also Jacobs L.M. in Eng. pp.252 r.y.). The Pious Consultation, which so greatly influenced Cranmer in his liturgical work, contained a rubric setting out the duty of the pastor, first to warn people to exercise discretion in the use of emergency baptism, and second, to instruct them with regard to its proper administration where necessity required. Zwingli was not greatly concerned with this matter, but as we have seen already he was satisfied that even baptism by women was valid if the correct form had been observed (C.R.4 p.230).

In England the custom of administration by women found a defender in Tyndale. Tyndale took up the argument of Brute, but turned it in another direction. Women had just as much right to teach and to administer the supper as they had to baptise, under pressure of emergency: 'Do not our women now christen and minister the sacrament of baptism in time of need? If a woman were driven into some isle, where Christ was never preached, might she not there preach him, if she had the gift? And why might she not, by the same reason, minister the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ?' (Tynd.P.S.3 p.18). It might be noticed in this connection that Brute had been more concerned about the artificial distinction between the sacraments than he had about the actual baptism by women, and this was really the point which engaged Tyndale's attention: In defence of the baptism by women he invoked the law of charity which justified all lay-baptism. He regarded the command 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' as an 'all-inclusive rule, licensing to minister not only baptism, but all the other sacraments' (Ibid. p.29). Here again, however, he was more concerned to counter the Roman argument that baptism by women depended for justification solely upon tradition than he was to defend midwives' baptism as such.

Cranmer was of much the same mind as Tyndale. In his Answer to the Men of Devon, he asked what there was in the 1549 Book to hinder a private administration at home in urgent cases (Strype's Cran.2 p.96). He was referring here more particularly to private baptism by ministers, but a private administration by women was not excluded. Cranmer himself undoubtedly preferred the public administration, but there can be no doubt that he envisaged the possibility of baptism by midwives in necessary cases without undue concert.

Calvin turned the scale once more to the advantage of the rigorists. He had two main counts against baptism by women, and First, it carried with it the implication of an absolute necessity of the sacrament (See Instit.4,15,20). Second, it was against the plain command of the Scripture, that women should keep silence in the church i.e. should not exercise the ministerial function. Of the permitting private persons in general, and especially women, to baptise, Calvin thought that there could be 'nothing more at variance than with the ordinance of Christ' (Harm of Evang. p.385). In addition to his main arguments Calvin mustered all the Partistic evidence which he could in condemnation of the practice, the denials of Tertullian, Carthage and Epiphanius, and the doubts of Augustine. He considered the famous example of Sephora brought forward by many as an Old Testament precedent, but
dismissed it as irrelevant: 'What a foolish woman did is ignora-
ently drawn into a precedent' (See Instit. 4, 15, 20-22). The views
of Calvin gained ground quickly. They were enforced upon Geneva
in the Memorandum of the Ministers of 1537 (Kidd. D. C. R. p. 568),
and on the return of Calvin embodied in the Ecclesiastical Con-
stitution (Ibid. p. 569). The Reformed Confessions took particular
notice of the point, as witness the Second Helvetic (22). Bull-
inger presented the ease in favour of exclusion of women in the Dec-
ades. As baptism was a sacrament of the church, and women were
forbidden to minister in the church, 'Therefore they neither can
nor ought to baptise, as they are by no means permitted to

The teaching of Calvin began to make its way amongst the Anglic-
ans during the Marian exile. Even those who remained loyal to the
Prayer Book found it difficult to resist the Reformed pressure.
Hooper had been a pioneer. He had singled out the action of the
sage femme, or midwife, as a particular profanation of the
divine ordinance (Hoop. P. S. 1 p. 31). When the 1552 book came un-
der the scrutiny of the extremer party and their Reformed allies, one
of the major grievances was that authority was given to the mid-
wife to baptise infants privately at home. Humphrey and Sampson
were amongst those who mentioned this as a blemish (Zur. Lett. P. S. 1
No. 71). Horn defended the rubric on the ground that it only gave
permission to baptise 'the infant who is like to die' (Ibid. Appen-
dix), but Bullinger expressed his disapproval, and later wrote to Grindal
and Horn about the point (Ibid. I Appendix).

The Anglican leaders as a whole needed very little convincing.
Sandys was firmly opposed to baptism by women, which he took to
be neither 'prescribed nor permitted' (Sand. P. S. p. 448). Grindal
took active steps to see that only lawful ministers administered
private baptism. Rogers condemned as Papist the free license to
baptise: 'A woman, be she young or old, sacred or wicked, every
male, that hath his wits, and is neither dumb, nor so drunken
but that he can utter the words... may baptise' (Rog. P. S. p. 236).
Fulke too attacked the permitting of women
to baptise (P. S. 2 p. 391), and Dr. Some, the later champion against
the Puritans, at first thought that the Book of Common Prayer was
at fault in that it sanctioned baptism by midwives (2nd P. of a P.
No. 72). Marprelate, of course, was quick to seize upon the
inconsistency: 'But Dr. Some, one of their affinitie now, and a
non-resident, he calleth the Archbishop of Canterbury an absurde
heretike, because he holds baptism administered by women to
be the seale of God's covenante, page 5 of his booke against
Master Penri' (In 'Minerall' and Metaphysical Schoolpoints).
Whitgift himself, replying to Cartwright, did not attempt to defend the baptism of women. He denied 'baptising by women to be expressed in the book' (Whit. P. S. 1 p. 495; 3 p. 546). All that Whitgift sought to do was to show that the question was a little more open than his opponent allowed, and to maintain the validity of the baptisms administered by women irregularly. To show that the question was more open, Whitgift denied the assertion of Cartwright that Pope Victor first sanctified the practice (Ibid. 1 p. 507) quoted the authority of Zwingli (pp. 511, 526), cited Sephora as an example of a woman administering the sacraments (p. 524), and gave the amended form of the Canon of Carthage, that women must not baptise, except in urgent necessity. Whitgift confessed that he was in doubt as to the lawfulness of administration by women, but denied that there was any doubt as to its validity. He stated his personal view clearly and fully in the Answer to Meanes how to settle... (It is a question whether yt be lawfull for women to baptise or no, in tymne of necessitie, and it is certain that we women in that case did circumcise.... But that baptism ministered by women is lawful and good, howsoever they minster yt lawfully or unlawfully, so that the institution of Christ touching the words and element be dulle used, no learned man ever doubted untill now of late some one or two (Strype's Whit. 3 App. No. 16).

The Puritans were not satisfied with statements of this kind, for they saw that in fact they left the way open for the practice, in accordance with the vague wording of the rubric. The persistent attacks upon lay-baptism were fundamentally attacks upon baptism by women. The arguments were designed to show the unlawfulness of this type of lay-baptism in particular. In the campaign the support of foreign Reformers was enlisted. Thus in 1566, the year of the scare about the Advertisements, Beza wrote to Grindal: 'It is reported moreover (which is much grever) that women are permitted to minister baptism' (Frere & Douglas P. M.). In almost all the Puritan pamphlets and protests baptism by women was singled out particularly. Many Puritans found in women's baptism a reason for non-subscription. To this the Anglicans replied that 'the book did not name women when it spoke of private baptism, thus subscription to baptism by women was not required' (2nd P. of a R. I No. 58). The Meanes how to Settle, a typical Puritan document, demanded that 'all baptising by midwives and women, (which is a cloak of Popery....), may from henceforth be inhibited, and declared void, and that no bishop, or any of their officers, in the admitting of midwives, do give them any such authority to baptize, as heretofore hath been accustomed' (Strype's Whit. 3 Append. 16). In both the Millenary Petition and the Hampton Court debates the Puritans pressed strongly for the absolute prohibition of baptism by women,

The arguments used by the Puritans were most clearly stated in the Admonition to Parliament, and in Cartwright's subsequent defensive treatises. Cartwright first showed that the book did allow the practice, and that women did baptise with episcopall authority: 'Mister Doctor requirseth, that it should be proved unto him, that by private baptism is meant baptism by women. First, it is meant that it should be done by some other than a minister...
Secondarily, I would gladly ask who they be that are present where the child is so shortly after it is born in great danger of death.... Magistrates allow of the daily practising by women in baptising children (Whit. 2 p. 496). Cartwright then proceeded to show how unscriptural the custom was. He alluded in particular to Matthew 28 and I Corinthians 14, 35. Women, he pointed out, have not more right to baptise than they have to preach, since the two go together. It was only by the commandment that our Saviour our Christ gave him to preach that St. Paul undertook also to baptise (Ibid. p. 497). The example of Sephora Cartwright would not allow. He thought that in any event her case was a particular case; and he would not allow that Sephora did right to take the law into her own hands: 'She did it before her husband, not of a mind to obey the commandments of God, or for the salvation of God but in a choler only' (Ibid. 1 p. 524). Cartwright then traced back the practice to a Papal origin, and brought against it the weight of the best Reformed opinion. Finally Cartwright saw a strong theological objection to it, in that in the last resort it rested upon the false conclusion of Augustine - who himself had no great clearness upon women's baptism that without the sacrament there can be no salvation (Ibid. p. 539). Cartwright concluded that the private baptism administered by women was utterly unlawful, and suggested that it had probably been borrowed, (with a number of other profanations), from the heathen, who had recognised priestesses (Ibid. p. 521).

The issue really narrowed itself down to the question of lawfulness in relation to validity. Almost all were agreed upon the unlawfulness in itself. Cartwright and the Puritans, however, went further, and denied that the unlawful administration could constitute valid baptism: 'I take the baptism of women to be no more the holy sacrament of baptism than I take any other daily or ordinary washing of the child' (Ibid. 2 p. 325). They probably feared that to maintain a contray opinion would be to give away their case, and to perpetuate the custom. The Anglicans resisted this extreme. Hooker summed up the Anglican case. He gave the arguments which might be used in defence of the practice; the sanction of antiquity first, second the pressure of necessity, which created an extraordinary situation: 'To women's baptism by occasion of great necessity, the reasons that only concern ordinary baptism in public are no great just prejudice'. Hooker then distinguished between the validity of women's baptism and the necessity of the sacrament, for he saw that the denial of the latter did not at all carry with it the denial of the former: 'It standeth with no reason that baptism by women should cease to be baptism, as oft as any man will gather that children which die unbaptised are damned'. Finally, he contended that the validity remained irrespective of the lawfulness or unlawfulness: 'The administration of this sacrament by private persons, be it lawful or unlawful, appeareth not as yet to be merely void' (L. E. P. 5, 62, 3).

Cartwright made a point of the statement of Augustine that in necessity parents 'should haste to carry their children unto the church' rather than take it upon themselves to administer the sacrament.
In their anxiety to suppress baptism by women the Puritans had undoubtedly pressed their arguments too far. At Hampton Court, thanks to the support of James, they gained their point, but quite a number of the leading Anglicans were in full agreement upon the disciplinary aspect of the problem. The error of the Puritans was that they allowed their detestation of the irregular practice to lead them to challenge an essential theological principle upon the matter of validity. To the excessive conclusions of Puritanism we may ascribe a good deal of responsibility for the Anglican reaction towards a more 'churchly' theology, and the slow but sure dissolution of Reformed beliefs and principles in the subsequent history of Anglican thought.

5 Infidels

A final question might be mentioned, not important in itself, but valuable in that it illustrates the principles which determined thinking upon the administration and validity of the sacraments. The question, which was not a live issue in the time of the Reformation, was this: Could a believer receive valid baptism from a pagan in the absence of any other Christians, lay or ordained? In favour of this practice it could hardly be argued, as in the case of lay-baptism, that what had been received may be given. But if God is in fact the author of the sacrament and the true baptiser, why should it not be valid when outwardly performed by an infidel, so long as the form is correct and there is no manifest intention to scoff?

The Romanist theology, at any rate, decided that such baptism would be perfectly valid. Thomas discussed the matter with some fulness. He stated the objections: none can give what he has not; it is more to give than it is to receive; the pagan does not belong to the church, but the sacrament does. Against these objections he urged the authority of Isidore and Nicholas, the principle that the Holy Ghost baptises and Christ is the true baptiser, and the fact that person who performed the rite willing to do what the church does belonged in intention to the church (Thomas 3 Qu. 46, 5). Trent accepted the ruling of Thomas. It stressed, of course, that only in very extreme circumstances should baptism be accepted from an infidel, but allowed Jews and Turks to perform the ceremony in an exceptional emergency, and declared that such baptism was valid so long as there was no defect in form or intention (Cat. T.2,2 Qu. 23). The doctrine of the absolute necessity of the sacrament undoubtedly impelled to this conclusion, but a certain control was exercised by the important but not very clear doctrine of intention.

In Reformation countries the question was purely hypothetical, and it did not engage the attention of Protestant scholars. The Reformed group, which did not accept the validity of baptism by the Christian laity, naturally could not agree that any circumstances justified a resort to infidels, and these did not think that an administration by pagans could be pleasing to God. Rogers in England, for example, poured scorn upon the Papist opinion (Rog. P.S. p. 236). It was one thing to accept as valid the baptism administered by a heretical or even an infidel minister, for such a minister
had made an outward profession of faith, belonged formally to the church, and had been lawfully set aside by the church to do the work of the ministry. It was quite another thing to accept as valid a sacrament administered by open infidels, who in no sense belonged to the church or enjoyed the authorisation to the church to perform the rite. Technically, perhaps, baptism so administered might be valid, but in the Protestant view the situation ought never to arise, for Christians might just as well remain unbaptised as seek baptism at pagan hands. Ultimately only the false doctrine of an absolute necessity could give rise to so anomalous a situation as a Christian baptised in the name of the Trinity by an unbeliever.

Looking at the question of the validity of irregular baptisms as a whole, we find that several contradictory principles interacted. As one or other received prominence, a different conclusion was reached. On the Romanist side two principles were supreme: the absolute necessity of the sacrament, and the primacy of God or Christ as the true baptiser. These combined to make any baptism valid for the Roman church, and the baptism of Christians in time of necessity lawful and good. The Reformers retained the doctrine of the divine primacy, but they cast off the dogma of an absolute necessity. The result was a contradiction. On the one side there was no need to resort to emergency baptism. On the other as Luther well saw, if God was supreme in baptism, then it was a matter of indifference who administered it outwardly. The validity of baptism by laymen, who were after all priests, in the New Testament sense, could not then be questioned.

Calvin, however, gave to this argument a different turn. He started from the same point, the assumption that God is the author of the sacrament and the true baptiser. He moved on to quite a different conclusion, that if God is the author of baptism, then God alone has the right to appoint its human dispensers. Thus only that baptism is God's baptism, and valid, which is administered by the ministers of God's appointment. The rights of the laity were thus set aside completely, and since Calvin could not allow an absolute necessity, there could never be any good reason why the divine order should be broken. Some later Calvinists, stressing the doctrine of election, were even ready to argue that if baptism were absolutely necessary (which it was not), then to die without the opportunity of the regular administration would be a mark of reprobation, and the attempt to give the sacrament privately a rash assault upon the divine decrees.

In churches organised after the Genevan pattern the problem of the validity of lay-baptism did not arise as a practical problem, for steps were taken to see that all irregular administrations ceased. In England, however, private baptisms did continue, and the theologians, who largely accepted Reformed teaching, were forced to weigh the different principles, and to thrash out this whole question of validity and invalidity. There were few who openly adopted the Romanist view of an absolute necessity, and few prepared to defend even the lawfulness of lay-administration. The Lutheran principle of the universal priesthood of the laity definitely dropped into the background from the reign of Edward onwards. It
was a straight fight between those who held that the primacy of God in the sacrament guaranteed the validity of all baptism correctly administered, and those who held that the primacy of God in the sacrament forbade absolutely any administration except by the divinely appointed minister.

There can be no doubt that theologically the Anglicans had the better case. To tie God to a ministration only through a particular class of persons was to impose a new and oppressive legalism upon God and his church. Undoubtedly excessive laxity did help to foster superstitious views of necessity, but when it came to the push and concrete cases were brought forward, even the Puritans hesitated to demand rebaptisation on the ground that a former lay-baptism had no validity.

Ecclesiastically, however, the Puritans had much reason on their side. Only too frequently the bishops winked at, or even allowed lay-baptism, and excused it on the ground of validity. Whatever the intentions of the framers, the Prayer Book did permit of lay-baptism, by implication if not by clear direction. It may be true, theologically, that a sacrament is valid no matter who administers it, but good order in the church demands that irregular administrations should be promptly and efficiently suppressed, except in the most extraordinary circumstances, Luther's desert island, or a complete collapse of civil and ecclesiastical government.

The Puritans and Anglicans were at one in underlying principle. They differed in the application to the contemporary situation. The gravest feature of the dispute was that for controversial reasons extremist positions were taken up, which both clouded the theological issue, and also emphasised the points of difference rather than the substantial agreement. The effect upon later theological and political development was in every way unfortunate.

Notes
1 De La S.T.B. pp.340 f., quoting Bellarmine 'Quia certum esset id factum esse divina dispensatione extraordinaria'.
2 Ibid. 'Quia diabolus nec habet ex se potestatem nec peculiares Dei dispensatione acciperet, sed sibi usurparet, aut falleret'.
3 Birnham pp.53 f., quoting Tertullian 'Quia non idem Deus est nobis et illis; nec unus Christus, id est, idem; ideoque nec baptismus unus, quia non idem,...non habemus'.
4 Ibid. 'Quia Paulianistae in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti minime baptisabant'.
5 Ibid. 'Nec Spiritum Sanctum eos habere ex illo baptismate illisque mysteriis arbitramur: quoniam cum a Catholica fide eorum auctores desciscerent, perfectionem Spiritus quam acceperant ami sermonem'.
6 Ibid. qu. Leo 'Manus autem impisitio non sicut baptismus repeti nor'
7 Lombard 4.Dist.6 A 'Sive haereticus, sive Schismaticus, sive facinorosus quisque in confessione sanctae trinitatis baptiset, non valet baptisatus est a bonis catholicis rebaptizari, ne confessio et trinitatis invocatio videatur annulati'.
8 Ibid. 'Quaeppe peculiari Deo dispensatione acciperet, sed sibi usurparet, aut falleret'.
Nam vel 'solus minister illa haerési infectus est, vel cum eo tota ecclesia; si posterioris negamur verum esse baptismum; si prius, baptismum ratum esse credimus, quia sacramentum est pecúlium ecclesiae'.

Bingham p.32 Coun.Eliberis c.38 'Placuit peregrè navigantes, aut si ecclesia in proximo non fuerit, possè fidelem, qui lavacrum suum integrum habet, nec sit bigamus, baptisare in necessitate infirmitatis positum catechumenum'.

Ibid. qu.Jerome Dial.c.Lucifer c.4 'Ut enim accepit quis, ita et dare potest'.

Ibid. August.Apud.Gratian.de Consecrat.Dist.4 c.21 'In necessitate, quam episcopi aut presbyteri aut quilibet ministrorum non inveniuntur, et urget periculum eius qui petit, ne sine isto sacramento hanc finiam vitam, etiam laicos solere dare sacramentum quod accéperunt solumus audire'.

Lomb.4 Dist.6A 'Quod etiam laicos fidelibus permittitur'.

Ibid. p.32 Coun.Eliberis c.38 'Quo vero crassam, putidam hanc sacraminii profanationem'.

Ibid. p.614 'M. Promiscue ne ad omnes pertinet tam Baptismi quam Coenae administratio? P. Ne quaquam...P. Baptizandi quidem mandatum Christus peculiariter Apostolis dedit (Matt.28.19)'.

Bingham, quoting Synod of Poictiers 'Le baptême administré par celui qui n'a vocation aucune est du tout nul'.

Ibid. Coun.Carth.737 'Mulier...baptizare non præsumat'.

Lomb.4 Dist.6A 'Lombard cited the canon in the enlarged form, 'Mulier...præsumat, nisi necessitate cogente'.

Kidd D.C.R.p.597 'Qu'il soit administré seulement par les ministres ou les coadjuteurs'.

Ibid.p.614 'M. Promiscue ne ad omnes pertinet tam Baptismi quam Coenae administratio? P. Ne quaquam...P. Baptizandi quidem mandatum Christus peculiariter Apostolis dedit (Matt.28.19)'.

Ibid. p.222 Ref.Ecclesiæ Hassiae Cap.11 'Quod si quis parvulorum ab obstetricibus aut aliis quisvis secundum Christi instituptionem in partus periculo fuere baptizatu, nullatenus rebaptizentur'.

Zwingli C.R.4 p.290 'Dann es kann ein yedes wyb sehs tauffen'.

Kidd D.C.R.p.568 'Que l'on defonde aux femmes obstétrices de ne baptiser point'.

Ibid.p.597 'Qu'il soit administré...(as Note 14).'

Confess.Helv.Post.20 b'Docemus, baptismum in ecclesia non administrari debere a mulierculis vel ab'obstetricibus'.

Beza Q.et R.C.139 'Apæge vero crassam et putidam hanc sacri ministerii profanationem'.

8 Riissen 17,33 'Nam vel solus minister illa haerési infectus est, vel cum eo tota ecclesia; si posterioris negamur verum esse baptismum; si prius, baptismum ratum esse credimus, quia sacramentum est pecúlium ecclesiae'.

9 Bingham p.32 Coun.Eliberis c.38 'Placuit peregrè navigantes, aut si ecclesia in proximo non fuerit, possè fidelem, qui lavacrum suum integrum habet, nec sit bigamus, baptisare in necessitate infirmitatis positum catechumenum'.

10 Ibid. qu.Jerome Dial.c.Lucifer c.4 'Ut enim accepit quis, ita et dare potest'.

11 Ibid. August.Apud.Gratian.de Consecrat.Dist.4 c.21 'In necessitate, quam episcopi aut presbyteri aut quilibet ministrorum non inveniuntur, et urget periculum eius qui petit, ne sine isto sacramento hanc finiam vitam, etiam laicos solere dare sacramentum quod accéperunt solumus audire'.

12 Lomb.4 Dist.6A 'Quod etiam laicos fidelibus permittitur'.

13 Rituale Romanum 'Sed si adsit Sacerdos, Diacono praefatur, Diaconus...Subdiacono, Clericus laico et vir foeminae, nisi pudóris gratia deecessit foemnam potuiss, quam virum baptisare infantum non omnino editum, vel nisi melius foemina sciret formam et modum baptizandi'.

14 Kidd D.C.R.p.597 'Qu'il soit administré seulement par les ministres ou les coadjuteurs'.

15 Ibid.p.614 'M. Promiscue ne ad omnes pertinet tam Baptismi quam Coenae administratio? P. Ne quaquam...P. Baptizandi quidem mandatum Christus peculiariter Apostolis dedit (Matt.28.19)'.

16 Bingham, quoting Synod of Poictiers 'Le baptême administré par celui qui n'a vocation aucune est du tout nul'.

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21 Kidd D.C.R.p.568 'Que l'on defonde aux femmes obstétrices de ne baptiser point'.

22 Ibid.p.597 'Qu'il soit administré...(as Note 14).'

23 Confess.Helv.Post.20 b'Docemus, baptismum in ecclesia non administrari debere a mulierculis vel ab'obstetricibus'.

24 Beza Q.et R.C.139 'Apæge vero crassam et putidam hanc sacri ministerii profanationem'.
CHAPTER VII. THE SUBJECTS

The divine authorship of the sacrament carried with it an obligation to see that baptism was administered not only by the right ministers but also to the right persons. If we understand the sacrament of baptism only historically, then the question of subjects is one of ecclesiastical tradition and usage. Even on this view the administration cannot be haphazard and indiscriminate, for baptism is acknowledged to have a positive significance and value. But transcendental considerations do not arise. Indeed, it may be admitted without a qualm that the modern usage does not and need not at all points conform with the practice of the Apostles. In the sixteenth century the matter was approached necessarily from a different angle. The sacrament was God's sacrament, appointed by God himself as a means of grace. It had to be applied therefore only in accordance with the will of God as revealed in the institution and in apostolic practice.

In a very real sense this question of the subjects is far more important than that of the ministers. In the eyes of all theologians the role of the minister in baptismal administration was very small. He was the instrument, necessary as an instrument, but not in any deeper sense. In the last resort the regular minister could be dispensed with. He had his importance only by virtue of the sacrament's outward order, not by virtue of its inward essence. But with the subject the case was far otherwise. The subject, as the recipient of the grace conveyed in and through the sacrament, was essential to the very constitution of the sacrament. There can be no washing with water in the Triune name unless some particular person is washed. And the efficaciousness of the washing might truly be said to depend upon its administration to those persons who according to the divine institution have the right to receive it. If persons who did not answer to the divine requirements were baptised, then the sacrament was not only rendered useless but also brought into disrepute. Of course, it may very well be argued that in the last resort no-one but God himself knows whether this particular man is a worthy recipient. But the church has still the duty, first, to see that only the right classes of people do in fact receive baptism, and second, that particular individuals within those classes do outwardly at least fulfil the essential conditions.

On the whole there had been agreement as to who constitute the proper subjects of baptism in lands where the gospel is preached for the first time, apart from the views of some of the wilder sects, and abuses which crept into the church during the Middle Ages. But the practice in lands already evangelised and christianised had given rise to serious controversies, controversies which were already stirring in the sixteenth century. Two of these call for particular notice: the Anabaptist questioning of the whole practice of Infant Baptism; and the Puritan doubts upon what has come to be described as indiscriminate baptism, the administration of the sacrament to all and sundry within a Christian land, irrespective of the life and beliefs of the parents. In the present treatment a statement will
first be given of the Reformed and Anglican practice in relation to traditional and contemporary views. In a further chapter particular attention will then be devoted to the attacks of Anabaptists and the Protestant defence of the baptism of infants.

1. Adults

The commission to the Apostles in the New Testament laid upon the church the duty of evangelising all nations, and baptising them in the Triune name. Recent doubts cast upon the authenticity of the Matthean text do not affect our present study, since the theologians of the sixteenth century all accepted it as genuine, and used it as the starting point in their teaching. Examples from the rest of the New Testament further showed how the Apostles interpreted and fulfilled the command. They went everywhere preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and where men received their message, repenting and believing, and making perhaps some simple confession of faith, they received them by baptism into the fellowship of the church.

It ought to be noticed at the outset that the divine command was not limited by any natural restrictions. Women were proper subjects for baptism as well as men. People of all ages, drawn from all walks of life and from all nations, could receive the sacrament. Clearly in the first missionary days it was necessary that the persons who received baptism should be of age to understand the message of the Apostles. Otherwise they could hardly repent and believe. Clearly, too, hearing implied understanding and receiving. Limitations were imposed, that only those should be baptised who made the response of repentance and faith. All nations were to be baptised i.e. it was open for any man of any race to be baptised, but not all individuals in all nations would be proper subjects for baptism, only those who complied with the spiritual conditions. Once those spiritual conditions were fulfilled, however, there were no natural or external conditions to debar from the sacrament.

So long as Christians remained a minority in pagan society, the baptism of converted adults i.e. of those who from among the nations had received the apostolic message, remained the normal and regular custom of the church. The early baptismal orders were clearly designed for adults rather than for the infants of those already Christians. Quite early the church laid down rules of testing and of procedure. Certain persons were excluded from baptism by virtue of their professions, because those professions were inconsistent with a true repentance and faith. Thus heathen priests, idol-makers, astrologers, gladiators and others could only be baptised if they testified to a true conversion by a change of profession. Again, in order that there might be a genuine understanding and belief, the church insisted upon a long catechumenate. It will be noticed that these conditions, although seemingly outward, were in reality spiritual: the long catechumenate had as its aim the ensuring of a true faith, and the exclusion of idol-makers, was designed to make impossible inconsistencies of life and Christian profession (On early liturgies etc. see Liturgy & Worship pp.410 f.).
Although certain outward limitations grew necessarily out of the spiritual conditions, the church resisted attempts made by some bodies to impose more stringent and purely artificial limitations upon candidature for baptism. The Marcionites, for example, wished that baptism should be refused to all married persons, and administered to 'none but persons single, virgins, widows and women divorced from their husbands' (Rogers P.S.p.274, quoting Tertullian, Contra Marc.4,11). Restrictions of this kind had no basis in the teaching and practice of the New Testament, and were rejected by the church as a whole.

With the passage of time the baptism of adult converts became rarer, and with the conversion of the invading tribes in Europe meant a virtual although never a complete cessation of missionary work. The Scholastic theology, however, always accepted the principle that baptism belongs first and properly to adult converts. Lombard laid down the rule clearly (Lomb.4 Dist.4 A), and Thomas discussed adult converts first when he came to consider who ought to be recipients of the sacrament. He stated that it should be given to adults after instruction and upon profession of penitence and faith (Thom.3 Qu.68). In the sixteenth century a certain amount of missionary work was still being done, and indeed within the Roman communion a new epoch in missionary endeavour opened up with the extension of the Spanish and Portuguese possessions overseas and the formation of the Society of Jesus. The problem was not theoretical only when it was discussed at Trent, and in the Catechism of Trent adult baptism remained the norm except in lands where Christianity had already been established (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.30).

Heretical opinions began to flourish again during this century. The Anabaptists, of course, thought that baptism ought only to be administered to adults upon profession. Zwingli claimed that they tried to go further, denying baptism to all but those capable of a sinless life. This was perhaps a misunderstanding, although some Anabaptists did teach a sinless perfection of true believers (Zwingli C.R.4 p.229). Another curious view which developed during the century was that since Christ was baptised at the age of 30, no-one ought to be baptised before attaining that age. Rogers attributed this theory to the Family of Love, quoting as his authority the book Displaying of the Family (Lond.1579 Fol.H 7 a, in Rogers P.S.p.280). The Socinians went further and denied that any but converts from heathenism should be baptised. The children and descendants of those already baptised were baptised in the parents, and thus had no further need of the sacrament. This was not a live issue when the Reformers wrote, but it merits a passing mention (Winer Comp.View p.736).

Against these heretical limitations old and new the Reformers, both Continental and Anglican, maintained the traditional view, although with an evangelical stress upon the need for a true turning to God. To a large extent the question was theoretical only, for the Reformed churches had no great opportunities for missionary work, and did not always display great zeal to undertake it. They had no doubt, however, that where Jews and Turks did respond to the
Gospel, they were proper subject for baptism. Calvin, arguing against the application of some New Testament parallels to the question of infant baptism, acknowledged that the sacrament belonged properly to those of adult age who, previously alien to the covenant, made a profession which satisfied the church (Instit. 4, 16, 24). The command in Mark 16.15-16 was similarly applied by Calvin to missionary preaching, 'to which baptism was added as a kind of appendage' (Ibid. 27). Calvin agreed then that in heathen lands baptism ought to be administered to those who are capable of hearing and who are moved by the preaching of the Word to repentance and faith. He strongly denounced the doctrine of a sinless perfection, and dismissed as irrelevant the circumstance that Christ himself was baptised at the age of 30 (Ibid. 28).

Beza, like Calvin, found a place for the baptism of those adults who, brought up in heathenism, made profession of faith (Beza Q. et R. C. 118). Bullinger summed up the Reformed position in the Decades when he stated that baptism belonged to all those 'whom God acknowledgeth for his people'. In answer to the further question, 'Who be the people of God?', he gave the following definition: 'The people of God are acknowledged either by men's confession of the Christian faith (in the case of adults) or else by the bountiful promise of God (in the case of believers' children) (Bull. P. 5. 4 p. 332). Luther and Zwingli taught similarly. Like all the Reformers, however, they were more concerned to defend the baptism of infants than to assert the rights of adult converts to the sacrament.

One or two statements in the Anglican writings deserve brief notice. Evidently adult baptism was not envisaged in practice, for the Reformation Prayer Books provided no service of Adult Baptism — the present order was added in 1662 for the sake of those who had missed baptism during the Rebellion, and for the benefit of natives converted in the plantations overseas. The Formularies, however, took notice of the baptism of adults. The 1536 Article, for example, spoke of the remission of sins and grace of Christ offered to infants and to adults in baptism. In the case of adults remission was promised to those 'who, having the use of reason, came thereunto perfectly and truly repentant' (Strype's Cranmer 1 p. 85). Henry himself in the Assertio had rather rashly denied the need for faith in reception. Anxious to combat the stress of Luther upon faith, he suggested that 'it was rather to be wished for than exacted, and that many obtain salvation by the sacraments who can promise no more to themselves of their faith' (p. 103).

Henry, however, had infant-receivers in mind when he made this statement, rather than seen adult converts from heathenism. The Bishops' Book, and later the King's Book, emphasised that the sacrament had a general application as the means of entry into God's kingdom: 'The sacrament of baptism is necessary for attaining of salvation and everlasting life, according to the words of Christ. For which cause it is offered and pertaineth to all men' (K. B. p. 41). This clearly meant that all adults who professed faith, together with the infants of believers, were eligible for baptism. The Catechism put forth under Edward mentioned the fact that the sacrament ought first to be given to the convert: 'to him that believeth in Christ, professeth the Articles of the Christian religion, and mindeth to be baptised (to speak now
of them that be grown to years of discretion) (P.S.p.51c).

The same points were taken up in different ways by the individual writers. Becon showed pointed to the universal application of baptism. For him it was 'a holy sacrament...reverently to be received of all degrees and estates' (Bec.P.S.2 p.215). In connection with this universality a curious argument developed between Philpot and a 'Morrow Mass Priest'. The point at issue was the private mass, and against it Philpot had argued the words in the institution 'Take, eat'. The priest retorted: 'Then the sacrament of baptism is no sacrament, where there is but one baptised, because Christ said to his disciples: 'Go, preach the gospel to all creatures, baptising them in the name....' Philpot pointed out that Christ here gave commandment to baptise all sorts of men, and in order to clinch the matter he gave an example of individual baptism, that of the Eunuch (Foxe 7 p.63). Rogers condemned all those who tried to restrict baptism to certain classes. In the case of those brought up in unbelief, repentance and faith were the only qualifications (Rog.P.S.2 p.265). Bradford too had stressed that faith was the only condition in the case of the adult, the divine election in the case of the infant (Brad.P.S.2 p.290).

During the Elizabethan period Whitgift obviously could find little practical use for services of adult baptism. He defended administrations without a sermon on the ground that preaching could not avail infants, to whom the sacrament was now always given. For this parochialism he was called to task by Cartwright, who asked: 'Is there no cause, or may there not be, when they that be of age may be baptised, Jews and Moors in noblemen's and gentlemen's houses?' (Whit.P.S.3 p.134). Cartwright himself does not seem to have had in mind any large expansion of the church overseas, but of course the two champions were here concerned more particularly with the usage within the nominally Christian England itself. Neither denied the rightness of adult baptism to believing converts, but neither saw any wide need for such administration.

The Reformers had a considerable controversial interest in adult baptism. It provided an excellent parallel from which to draw arguments for the combatting of the teaching of an automatic efficaciousness, and of a literal feeding upon Christ, in the case of the supper. No Scholastic or Romanist theologian had dared suggest that baptism ought to be administered to those who were neither repentant nor believing, or that in cases of feigned repentance and belief the sacrament could be efficacious. The Reformers argued: then that if repentance and faith were necessary in the one sacrament, adult received, they were equally necessary in the other, when adults also received. Into the intricacies and ramifications of this quite separate controversy it is not necessary to go. It ought to be remembered, however, that the Reformed adherence to the teaching of an adult baptism in the case of repentant and believing converts had this general doctrinal importance, irrespective of its relation, or lack of relation to everyday practice.
2. Special Cases

1. The Insane. In addition to the ordinary adult cases, when converts were baptised upon profession of faith, there were certain extraordinary cases demanded discussion. To these not a great deal of attention need be given, for the Reformers were not greatly interested in such matters, and added little or nothing to the older statements. Their main contribution was in the matter of baptism vicariously for the dead, but here, as we shall see, their interest was mainly polemical. They aimed to attack masses for the dead by means of the condemnation of vicarious baptism.

The first and obvious extraordinary case was that of adults not in possession of their rational faculties. Some of the earlier canons had allowed the administration of all the holy offices to idiots (e.g., the Excerptions of Ecgbert of York, B.P., p. 192). Thomas discussed the matter at some length, and laid down rules of procedure in such cases. He saw many objections to the baptism of imbeciles: that they lacked desire and intention; that they were on a level with the brutes, lacking reason; that they could not be compared with persons asleep or unconscious, who were usually allowed baptism where a desire was known to exist and death threatened. But against these objections Thomas had the authority of Augustine, who had mentioned the case of a friend baptised in this state. He argued that the insane are not irrational in the sense that the brutes are; it is only that they have lost the use of the rational faculty. They possess a soul, which marks them off clearly from the animal creation. Thomas concluded that the insane had at least a right to baptism. He did not think that all the insane ought to be baptised. The procedure varied with the individual case. Those who had expressed a desire for baptism before the onset of the affliction might be baptised without further ado. Those who enjoyed lucid intervals might make profession of faith and receive the sacrament during such a period. The permanently afflicted might be ranked as infants, and be granted baptism if they belonged to a Christian household, or if proper sponsors could be found for them (Thom. 3, Qu. 68, 12).

The sixteenth century writers did not dissent. On the Romanist side the Catechism of Trent more or less repeated the teaching of Thomas: 'The insane, if without a desire previous to their insanity, are not to be baptised unless danger to life be imminent; then, only if they give intimation of a wish to that effect. If they were never under the mind's control, they are to be baptised in the faith of the church (Cat. T. 22, 2 Qu. 38). On the Protestant side there was no great interest. Infant baptism was the rule, and those who proved to be insane, or fell into insanity, had already received the sacrament. The point had no practical or polemical importance. The only references to the question in Anglican writings are to be found in Jewel and Hooker. Jewel had been arguing against Harding the importance of repentance and faith in absolution: i.e., that the priest could only declare absolution to the penitent, not pronounce it upon all. He foresaw an objection, that this would exclude the insane, contrary to the received practice of the church and the example of baptism. Jewel granted that
men might be baptised in madness or in sleep (quoting Augustine as his authority), but he denied that any general principle could be deduced from these admittedly exceptional cases, and he did not think that we ought even to dogmatise upon the correct procedure but to treat each case as it arose (Jew, Hooker, P. S. 3 p. 368). Hooker did not himself follow the wise ruling of his former patron, but attempted to use the custom of baptising 'deaf and dumb men, and furious persons' as proof that these might be lawful occasions upon which baptism could be administered 'without the exacting of a personal confession, a duty sufficiently discharged by others' (L.E.P. 5, 64, 4). Hooker was here justifying the baptism of infants upon the vicarious profession of the sponsors.

In spite of the lapse of Hooker the words of Jewel sum up the Reformed attitude perfectly. The Reformers saw no value in arguing about cases which obviously conformed to no general rule. Their attack upon the various aspects of Romanist doctrine was an attack based upon broad principles, and aimed at general doctrines. Details of current teaching and practice could in many cases be accepted. In any case, the correct doctrine could not be and ought not to be deduced from the exceptional case. Exceptional cases ought to be treated as they arose, and as seemed most consistent with basic principles and with charity. It may be said that the Reformers lacked the same thoroughness of systematisation so conspicuous in the Scholastics, but it may be urged in reply that they had a better sense of what was truly scriptural and Christian theology demanded.

The Dead. The difficult words of Paul in I Corinthians 15 have been a fruitful source of contention, in practice as well as in interpretation. Many commentators take the view that the Apostle did actually allude to a definite practice of vicarious baptism on behalf of those already dead. Whether the Apostle approved the custom, or whether he only mentioned it in order to illustrate the deep inward belief in a resurrection is a disputed point. However that may be, the fact is that in the early church certain heretical sects either did (or were reputed to) adopt the practice. The Novationists in particular were accused of vicarious baptism of the dead, and some sixteenth century writers thought that the Marcionites were also supposed to have practised it.

Possibly these charges had no real substance, but they did at least give the orthodox an opportunity to speak their mind upon the subject and to attempt a more satisfactory exposition of the text in question. Some took the line that Paul was referring to a real practice of vicarious baptism, but that the practice itself was corrupt and not approved by Paul. Others suggested that it might refer to the baptism of the dying, or that the Apostle was merely bringing out the significance of the sacrament, as a baptism to death and resurrection. It was denied absolutely that there was any reference to the literal baptism of corpses, as supposed to have been practised by the Cataphryges (See Cath. Encycl. Art. Bapt.). Throughout the centuries Catholic theologians repudiated any idea of a vicarious baptism.

The whole question aroused considerable interest amongst the
Reformers, partly because of the exegetical challenge, but mainly because of the obvious interconnection with vicarious masses. Of course, there was no suggestion that the Romanists practised or favoured vicarious baptism. In any case, since infant baptism was the rule, immediate infant baptism in the Roman church, the circumstances seldom arose in which it would be necessary. The question was purely one of exegesis, important theologically only for controversial purposes.

Calvin considered the Corinthian text in his commentary on I Corinthians. He could not believe that the Apostle was silently countenancing vicarious baptism, or even bringing forward as an argument 'a horrible sacrilege by which baptism was polluted, and converted into a mere magical abuse'. He alluded to the attractive suggestion that the Apostle referred to the wide meaning of the sacrament, but himself preferred the view that baptism for the dead meant either a reckoning dead in baptism, or baptism with a view to profit in the future life rather than in the present, i.e. in the case of catechumens who had fallen into disease and were in manifest danger, thus having little hope of a Christian life in earth.

Of the Anglicans, Rogers was the one who dealt with the question most fully. Expounding the Articles, he condemned the practice of administering baptism to dead persons, either actually or vicariously. He cited Tertullian (Contra Marc. 4) to show that the Marcionites had been guilty of this abuse, although he appears to have misunderstood the passage in question. He also connected the Novations with the abuse (Rog. P.S. p. 266). Rogers did not attempt to expound the verse in Corinthians. Hutchinson too had occasion to refer to the matter. He found in the verse an allusion to an early custom of baptising over the graves of the dead, with a view to encouraging faith in the resurrection, which baptism typified: Were not many Christian men baptised over dead men's graves in the primitive church, in token that the dead should rise again? (Hutch. P.S. p. 138). This was clearly an attempt to link up an actual practice with the spiritual significance of the sacrament as a baptism to new life.

It was quickly grasped in England that to deny vicarious efficacy to the one sacrament was a strong argument against the attributing of such efficacy to the other. Thus in a series of questions on some abuses of the mass it was asked whether the sacrament of the altar was instituted to be received of one man for another, or to be received of every man for himself? And many bishops, in their replies, drew the obvious comparison with baptism. Salisbury, for example, granted that the sacrament of the altar was not instituted to be received of one man for another, any more than one man to be christened for another. He defended private masses, however, on the ground that the grace received by the one person is available and profitable to the whole mystical body of Christ: thus the priest communicating alone can be a means of grace either to the church as a whole or to one member in particular. In answer to the further question, whether the sacrament received by one man doth avail and profit any other, the conservative bishop could thus maintain the affirmative. The Reforming divines,
however, pressed the parallel with baptism, and gave a negative answer. Tyler thought that a vicarious mass might profit so much as the christening of one man profiteth another, which after my opinion profiteth nothing' (See Burnet 2.2 Collection No.25 for a full account of the discussion, which took place under Henry). The ancient practice of vicarious baptism was not actually alluded to by the contestants, but it was undoubtedly present at the back of their thinking.

Philpot gave a different turn to the same discussion. He too attacked private masses, but on the ground that a subject was necessary as well as form and words and minister: 'Though ye speak the words of baptism over water never so many times, yet there is no baptism, unless there be a Christian man to be baptised' (Foxe 7 pp.637-638). Philpot also used the earlier argument, however, that baptism is only baptism to such as be baptised, and to none other. He thus came back to the old objection against the private mass, that a priest's receiving can profit only himself (Ibid.). This was the line which Cooper took in his discussion of the private mass at a later date. He argued mainly from the foolish and absurd conclusion, that granted the benefit of a private mass, one man's baptism may profit another that is not baptised (Ag the P.M.p.115). The latter part of the sentence is important, and it was here that the Romanists found their loop-hole. Baptism could not in their eyes profit the non-baptised, because the non-baptised were not part of the church. Cooper argued rather differently, that the one sacrament only benefits the recipient. This is the case with baptism, and it also applies to the supper. Although it is true that the supper is often repeated, yet only those can benefit from any particular administration who themselves receive

It was Jewel in the controversy with Harding who seized upon the old corrupt practice in the one sacrament and used it as a weapon against what he considered to be the modern corrupt practice in the other. Neither the one sacrament nor the other, he thought, could benefit any but those who received it. In his opinion private masses that could profit the living and the dead had probably derived from the earlier vicarious baptisms condemned by the church: 'As Chrysostom saith, the old heretics called Marcionitae used to baptise some that were living in the behalf and stead of others that were dead' (Epist.I ad Cor.Hom.40) (Jew.P.S.2 p.744). Jewel thus added to his theological objections to private masses the damaging identification with a particularly obnoxious heresy. Of course, the Reformer can hardly have meant that there was a historical connection in the strict sense. He did claim, however, that there was a theological affinity. In both cases a theory of vicarious reception underlay the error. As in the one case that theory was universally condemned, so it could hardly be sustained in the other.

3. Infants

A special problem arose in the church with regard to the progeny of those converted to the Christian faith. It is easy to see why this should be so. In the ancient world religion was to a large extent an affair or family and even race rather than of the individual. Thus the children of those who became Christians would naturally be
thought of as Christians themselves, at least so far as outward profession went. Obviously, too, such infants enjoyed the special privileges of Christian instruction in faith and life from their earliest years. Since it was customary for the household to embrace the faith of its head, it might very well be asked why children should not at once enter into open membership by baptism, and enjoy the very real benefits conferred by the sacrament.

The question is not one which found a ready answer, for historically the custom of the first centuries admits of doubt: possibly, indeed, it varied in different places. Harnack has pointed to the obscurity of the earliest period, although he takes it that the practice of baptising the infants of Christians was well established by the time of Irenaeus and Tertullian (Hist. of Dogma pp.142 f.). The fear of a post-baptismal lapse formed a restraining influence, as appears in the treatise of Tertullian, who advised delay and careful consideration except in emergency cases. The suggestion has been made by some writers (Cf. Liturgy & Worship pp.410 f.) that baptism might have been administered at the age of six or seven upon a simple profession of faith. Wall has collected the passages from earlier writers, Justin and Polycarp, in his exhaustive dissertation, but although these hint at the possibility of infant baptism, it must be granted that there is no certainty until the late second and early third centuries. Even then, of course, adult baptisms were still the common rule as the church extended its influence throughout the pagan world.

The Pelagian controversy focused attention upon the subject of the baptism of infants. By that time it was possible for orthodox champions like Augustine and Jerome to point to the practice as well-established and traditional and they explained its theological necessity in terms of original sin and the need for regeneration. Even Pelagius made no attempt to overthrow the common custom, although his doctrine of sin seemed to Augustine to render it superfluous. Possibly it would have been to the advantage of Pelagius if he had been able to overthrow the practice, but he was content to explain it as a necessary means of entry to that Kingdom of heaven which the natural man, however innocent, had no right to enjoy. The majority of schismatics and heretics in the first centuries, apart from those who denied water baptism altogether, seem to have been content with the practice of baptising infants (Wall 1 pp.265 f. & 262 pp.72 ff.)

The mediaeval theologians accepted a practice already securely grounded both historically and theologically. Lombard claimed that baptism belonged to Christians' children as well as to believing adults (Lomb.4 Dist.4 A). Thomas discussed possible objections, which will call for notice in the next chapter, but he himself accepted the apostolic origin and commended the practice (Thom.3 Qu.68, 9). There is some ground for thinking that during the Middle Ages infant baptism had again become a living issue: at any rate historians of Anabaptism usually trace back the movements to the heretical sects of that period, notably the Petrobusians, and their orthodox opponents charged some of the sects with the denial of baptism to infants (Wall quotes Peter of Cluny's Epist. c.Petrobus-fanos Wall 2 Chap.7; Cf. Smith Hist. Anab. p.26). It is always possible, however, that refusal to accept baptism within the church
was in many cases confused, as at a later date, with the denial of baptism to infants altogether. Wycliffe in the fourteenth century does not appear to have been affected by these unorthodox views, for he maintained both the right of infants to receive the sacrament and the benefits of administrations to infants.

The revolt against the custom broke out openly and in earnest in the early days of the Reformation. First the Zwickau prophets, then the extremists at Zurich rejected and attacked what they took to be an unscriptural practice. Storch and the men from Zwickau caused consternation in Wittenberg during the absence of Luther (Ul-linger p.165); and Melanchthon found himself hard put to it to defend the traditional custom. Bucer had similar trouble at Strassburg; Capito inclined to the Anabaptist view (Anrich M.B.pp.38f.). Luther himself had no doubts upon the subject. Apart from his general refuting and dismissing of the 'prophets', he defended the right and even the extreme value of the baptising of infants (W.A. 6 pp.526-7). In the Loci Melanchthon exerted himself to fashion a defence, elaborating his points in successive editions. The Augsburg Confession taught plainly that infants ought to be baptised.

Not all the early radicals opposed infant baptism consistently, for Munzer, more of a demagogue than a theologian, seems himself to have made use of a form of baptism of children. In a letter to Oecolompiadius, cited by Kidd from Herzog's biography (D.C.R.p.452), he supported the traditional custom, although elsewhere, in his correspondence with the Swiss Anabaptists, he seems to have condemned (See Muralt). It was the Swiss who launched the most powerful attack, the most powerful because thoughtful and scriptural, and without the extravagant fanaticism of the Zwickau men. Manz and Grebel were no fanatics, but earnest students of the Scriptures. They argued that no warrant would be found in the Bible for the baptism of any but adult believers. At first Zwingli was attracted by their teaching, as Hubmaier later reminded him, and he even agreed that infants should not be baptised until instructed in the faith (Muralt p.20). He himself later admitted: 'The error misled me some years ago, so that I thought it were much better to baptise children after they were come to a good age (Kidd D.C.R.p.451; see too Smith p.168). The Anabaptist group made a determined bid for power in Zurich, but Zwingli, returning to a belief in infant baptism, carried the day with the Council, and was able to silence his opponents. Many of Zwingli's writings were devoted to the refuting of the Anabaptist error. The Anabaptists defined their position clearly in the Articles of Schlaften, the first of which laid down that baptism ought only to be administered only to instructed and professing believers.

The later Reformed theologians followed Zwingli in rejecting Anabaptist teaching. Calvin devoted a special chapter of the Institutes to the question (Instit.4.16). He claimed in the Tracts (2 p.153) that all church-members had a right to partake of the sacrament, and that 'the little children born of Christians were of this number'. Beza stated the position similarly, and Knox too claimed that 'our children appertain to God by the covenant' and that therefore 'without injurie they cannot be debarred from the
from the common syne of God’s children (Works 4 pp. 186-7). The later theologians, Heidegger and Keckerman for example, repeated the statement that baptism belonged to the people of God, which included both believers and their offspring (Heppe R.D. Bapt.).

The Romanists were at one with the Reformers in repudiating the Anabaptist heresy and reaffirming the traditional belief and practice. The Catechism of Trent thought that the law of baptism applied not only to adults but also to infants. The Council of Trent anathematised those who refused to administer baptism to infants, together with those who denied original sin in infants, and the grace of remission (Sess.7 Bapt. Can.13 & Sess.4 Can.4). Bellarmine developed the defence of the received doctrine (De la S.T.B. p.363).

Anabaptism found a profitable field of expansion in Holland (See Dusker D.A.P). and from Holland it reached out, although not with any great success, to England. The Dutch Anabaptists were at first of the visionary and revolutionary type, but later Menno Simons reorganised the movement along quieter and more Scriptural lines. All groups agreed in rejecting infant baptism, which was dismissed as no baptism at all. Melchior Hoffmann traced it back to a Satanic origin. Philips was content to look upon it as an invention of the Popes (Nicholas), although in Anabaptist eyes this amounted to much the same thing. Whatever the origin, the practice was regarded as unscriptural and unapostolic.

It has been seen in the Introduction that Anabaptism never made any headway amongst the English. The existence of the movement, however, forced the different parties to define their position and to work out a defence. The official formularies took pains to emphasise the rejection of Anabaptist views. The Articles of 1536, for example, taught that infants ought to receive baptism (Stype’s Cranmer I p.35). The later Articles all retained some such statement. The Bishops’ Book and the King’s Book (p.42) both alluded to the matter, and claimed the universal consent of the church in favour of the baptism of infants. Cranmer’s Reformatio Legum also took up the point, arguing in full Reformed fashion that the children of Christians belong to the church, and therefore have the right to the sign and seal of church-membership. To deny baptism was stigmatised as a cruel impiety (Sect.18).

All the leading Anglican Reformers at some time or other touched upon the subject. Many of them defended infant baptism at length. It will be our task to analyse the arguments in the next chapter. Here we may review a representative selection of statements. The Romanists took the opportunity to plead that infant baptism rested solely upon the authority of tradition (cf. Cat.T.2,2 Qu.31, where the argument from tradition is given pride of place). Deny the authority of tradition, and Anabaptism inevitably followed. This gave rise to considerable controversy. The Reformers, Cranmer for example, claimed that for the baptism of infants they had the sanction of plain Scriptures (Cran.P.S.2 p.60). Hooper and Ridley both marked off the Reformed from the Anabaptist position. The former complained bitterly of those who would exempt and defraud the young children of baptism (Hoop.P.S.2 p.87). The latter
counted the Anabaptist opinion as a 'pestilent and heinous heresy' (Rid.P.S.p.275). The martyrs, Clements and Woodman for instance, disclaimed tendencies towards Anabaptism, and accepted the baptism of infants as a custom 'both good and godlye, and agreeable to the worde of God' (Strype E.M.1.2 p.484; Foxe 3 pp.358 f.). Some of the prisoners in Newgate do seem to have professed Anabaptist opinions, and a frie friends of Philpot appealed to the Reformer for advice on the matter. Philpot defended infant baptism in a long letter, noteworthy for the principle that where there was doubt upon the interpretation of Scripture the general views of the Fathers ought to be preferred to private judgments. Peter Martyr joined in the struggle against Anabaptism, urging pointedly that even those who baptised only adults could not and cannot know that all who profess faith are true believers' ('In nom.' Basel 1569). Many refutations of Anabaptism were published in England under Tward, notably Veron's most necessary Treatise of Free Will, Milton's Confutation, and Turner's Inaerative Preservative, or Tricade against the Poyson of Pelagius. These were either translations or free adaptations of the works of Zwingli, Bullinger and Calvin.

During the Elizabethan period the same unanimity prevailed. Jewel thought it conclusive that infants are 'heirs of the promise, and do pertain unto the people of God' (Jew.P.S.2 p.1104). Whitgift defended private baptisms very largely upon the ground that the baptism of infants is a thing commanded, and he thought that Cartwright's questioning of the validity of such baptisms was a step in the direction of Anabaptism (Whit.P.S.2 p.553). Cartwright himself was quick to clarify his position: 'We allow of the baptism of children' (Ibid.1 p.99), and he attacked the Anabaptists more particularly in his Treatise of the Christian Religion. Hooper devoted a full section of his Laws of the Question, fairly stating the Anabaptist case and answering it point by point. Even the Separatists had no objection to infant baptism in principle, although they did not approve of Anglican administrations in practice. A lively debate took place amongst them when certain banished members of the sect fell into Anabaptism in Amsterdam, and Francis Johnson himself issued a treatise containing some grounds and reasons against the two errors of the Anabaptists. A whole series of treatises and counter-treatises followed in the early seventeenth century.

In some parts of Europe, the Anabaptists grew rapidly and were able to maintain themselves in spite of fierce persecution from all sides. But they were always a minority. It may be granted that a good deal of their unpopularity was due to the unfortunate political and social fanaticism of the revolutionary branch. But after the initial successes in Wittenberg and Zurich even those who appealed to the Scriptures were never able to convince the main Protestant body of the truth of their main contention, and their espousal of Pelagian and even Christological and Uninarian heresies brought them into theological disrepute. The arguments used against them varied considerably, but there was remarkable unanimity in opposition.

The Anabaptists were not without a cogent Scriptural case. They failed however, for three reasons. Ecclesiastically, their idea of a particular rather than a national church was quite unacceptable to the Protestant leaders. Exegetically, they could
appeal to single texts and passages, but they had no very solid answer to the Reformers' exposition of Scriptural principles. Theologically they stood condemned because their denial of baptism to infants derived from a defective sense of original sin. The Reformers were quite prepared to do battle upon all issues, historical, exegetical and ecclesiastical. In the last instance, infant baptism was retained because it was in accord with the scriptural and theological understanding of the Reformation, and fitted easily and naturally into the Protestant conception of the nation-church.

4. Special Cases

With infants as with adults doubts arose with regard to the limits of application. The defining and distinguishing was again very much the work of the canonists and theologians of the medieval church. In some of the doubtful cases, when no deep theological principle was at stake, the Reformed thinkers were not greatly interested. In a few instances, however, controversy arose either between the Romanist and Protestant parties, or within the ranks of the Protestants themselves. A brief review of the main cases will not be altogether out of place.

I Pre-Natal Baptism A first question which agitated the Scholastics considerably was the exact definition of an infant. Monstrosities were obviously excluded, although a provisional form of service was usually provided for use where there were doubts as to whether the creature born could be termed 'human' or not (See Rituale Romanum: Si tu es homo). The main problem, however, was that of the exact time when independent life could be said to have begun. On the one hand there were those who claimed that it began in the womb, and where necessary a child ought to be baptised in the womb, even if it meant hastening the death of an already dying mother. As against this there was a powerful school which held that life could only be said to have begun at the completion of birth.

Thomas had discussed the matter pretty fully. In favour of pre-natal administrations he urged the absolute necessity of the sacrament, and the higher importance of the spiritual life of the child than the physical life of the mother. Against the practice he found many convincing arguments. First, the child before birth may be said, even if alive, to share the baptism of its mother. Second, it is a general rule that to do evil even to accomplish good is wrong. Third, Augustine had denied that regeneration can precede generation. Fourthly the child before birth is not yet subject to human action, and therefore cannot be expected to be baptised. The concession was made that the head or any member which emerged might properly be baptised before the completion of birth, and this rule has been commonly adopted in the Roman communion (Thom.23 Qu.68,11). It is noteworthy that pre-natal baptism is plainly forbidden in the Rituale Romanum, but the Catholic Encyclopedia sanctions the extraction and baptism of a living child from a dead mother (Art.Bapt.), and the history of the Roman church contains many records of pre-natal baptisms, with special instruments for the purpose.

Of the Reformers Luther alone considered the possibility of the baptism of a hand or foot or other member before the completion
of birth, and even he did not attempt to defend pre-natal baptism in the strict sense (W.A.6 pp. 526 f.). The Swiss Reformers did not discuss the matter in detail. In point of fact they cut away the ground upon which the practice rested by their rejection of the absolute necessity of the sacrament to salvation. Granted the truth of the absolute necessity, the point merited serious consideration, for souls were at stake. Establish the falsity of the doctrine, and the discussions became absurd and futile. In England private baptism was retained, but in all circles the rejection of an absolute necessity had the ascendancy. Thus neither in rubrical directions nor in doctrinal discussions were extreme measures either advocated or even considered.

11 Foundlings The re-baptism controversies of the third and fourth centuries had made the church very sensitive about the one-ness and once-for-all-ness of baptism. Re-baptisation in any circumstances was felt to be a slight upon the ordinance and upon its divine author. Obviously, however, cases could arise in which there would be doubt as to whether a child had been baptised or not. In private baptisms there was always the possibility that the correct form of words had not been used. A more serious difficulty in relation to foundlings, to whose baptism (or to the want of it) there were no witnesses to testify.

At first it seems that the full service was administered as usual in such cases, but on the assumption that there had been no previous baptism. Many felt that this solution was not entirely satisfactory. Eventually, then, a form of conditional baptism was developed, such as that prescribed by Boniface of Mainz in his Statutes (Circa 730): 'I do not re-baptise thee, but, if thou art not yet baptised, I baptise thee in the name...' (Daniel p. 434). The councils in the Middle Ages varied in their judgments. Some prescribed after the earlier manner, some after the later. In England, for example, the Legatine Council of York (1195) ordered that 'wheresoever a child whose baptism is not certainly known shall be found exposed, whether with salt or not (it is conjectured that the salt might have been placed by such children for the purpose of signifying that baptism had taken place), let it be baptised; Cum non intelligatur iteratum, quod nescitur fuisse collatum' (Hart E.R. p. 203). A Council at Oxford, on the other hand, ordered the by now more common conditional baptism: 'If thou art not baptised, I baptise thee' (Ibid. p. 205). The conditional baptism of foundlings and others whose baptism is not certain has become the accepted custom in the Roman church.

The Swiss Reformers from the time of Calvin on found a different solution. They agreed that baptism once given ought not to be repeated. They insisted, however, that baptism could only lawfully be given only publicly and by the ordained minister. The abolition of private baptisms by unauthorised persons meant that doubtful cases could never arise, except in the most extraordinary cases. Thus the problem found an easy solution. Indeed, it was a complaint of the Reformers that the Papal corruption of the pure institution of Christ gave rise quite unnecessarily to all the confusions and uncertainties of special cases which so intrigued and delighted the theologians and canonists.
In England the retention of private baptism, with the consequent possibility of irregular administrations, left the problem in being. The theologians, however, were not greatly concerned about the matter, since the doctrine of an absolute necessity had been dropped, and baptism was no longer a life and death affair. The revisers of the Liturgy took good care to avoid any rebaptisation. The 1552 book directed the priest at the public baptism of infants to inquire whether the children be already baptised or no. In the case of the public reception held for those privately baptised and surviving, the rubric laid down that the priest should examine and try whether the child be lawfully baptised or no. A final rubric provided a conditional form for use in cases of uncertainty:

"But if they which bring the infantes to the church do make an uncertain answer to the Priests questions... then let the priest baptise him in form above written concerning public baptism, saving only that at the dipping of the child in the font he shall use this form of words: If thou be not baptised already, N., I baptise thee...." No actual instructions were given with regard to the procedure in the case of foundlings whose baptism was not known, but the minister could presumably use the conditional form or act on the presumption that no baptism had taken place, at his own discretion. There was in any case no extreme urgency in the matter.

iii Infants of Unbelievers In consequence of the belief in the absolute necessity of the sacrament, and the cognate assertion of its efficacy, the question came to be asked by the mediaeval thinkers whether the children of unbelievers should not be taken and baptised, by force if necessary. The infants of Jews living within Christian states were the main problem, although the Crusades also provided opportunity for the forcible baptism of the children of Turks and others. It was not only a question of private kidnapping for the enforcement of baptism by public rulers was also considered.

Thomas stated the arguments in favour of enforced baptism with his usual lucidity and fulness. Unbelievers' children were under threat of eternal perdition. Rulers had a responsibility for the spiritual welfare of all their subjects. The claims of God were higher than any other. Thomas decided, however, that the counter-arguments were stronger. The decretals had forbidden enforced baptism. Heathen parents, as the proper guardians of the child, had the right and responsibility of choice. They could ask baptism for their children, but must not be compelled. To rescue from death, however laudable and desirable in itself, was not right if accomplished by illegal means. Rulers were only charged to care for the civil welfare of their subjects. The reason of the child was the reason of its parents (Thom. 3 Qu. 68, 10).

Despite the theological repudiation of the practice, the kidnapping of the children of Jews undoubtedly went on. In Wycliffe's day there were further protests: 'It is an abuse if Criste men stele yong childe of Jewes and of hethen peple and baptise them agens the wyl of ther fader and moder' (Manning P.F.p. 53). In the latter part of the fifteenth century orders were passed in Spain
and Portugal that all Jews should be *baptised, adults and infants, with expulsion as the punishment for non-compliance (Cf. Latourrette Hist. of Expans. of Christ. 3 p. 56). The Council of Trent gave no official sanction to the use of force, for it laid down that 'to persons born of infidel parents faith is to be proposed' (Cat T. 2, 2 Qu. 34). Kidnappings, however, went on until the eighteenth century, side by side with more genuine missionary activity. At the present time official Roman Catholicism still condemns the baptism of the children of unbelievers against the will of their parents (Cath. Encyc. Art. Bapt.), and practice now conforms more closely with theory.

On the Protestant side Calvin took the lead in opposing forced baptisms. In his letter to Knox upon discrimination in the use of the sacrament he stressed the danger 'of the profanation of the sacrament, which is certain to be the case if it is promiscuously allowed to strangers, or if anyone is received without proper sponsors'. He distinguished between the baptising of the children of Papists, which might be allowed, and that of the children of infidels, which could not be considered apart from the conversion of the parents. Calvin expressly condemned the 'wicked and insane superstition of Popery to steal and carry off children from Jews and Turks, and immediately hurry them to baptism'. His condemnation rested upon the general principles, that there is no absolute necessity of the sacrament to salvation, that it belongs only to the faithful people of God, and that infants can belong to that number only by virtue of the covenant with their parents (Knox 6 pp. 95-6). At a later date Valthus codified the distinction in this way: 'The children of Jews and others ought not to be baptised, because there is for their baptising neither command, promise nor example in any part of the New Testament; because to us is committed only judgment within the church; God reserving the right to judge those that are without; because the Apostle expressly distinguished between the holy seed of the faithful and the unclean of the believing; and because baptism is a sacrament of the church' (Hepp e R. D. Chapt. Bapt.).

The matter attracted little attention in England, where the problem hardly existed. Most of the Anglicans accepted the broad principles laid down by Calvin. When they spoke of the baptism of infants they clearly thought of infants of parents who were Christian at any rate in formal profession. Cranmer made the distinction in the Reformatio Legum: 'The children of Christians belong to God' (Sect. 18). It is clear from their statements that they did not envisage the extension of the sacrament to the children of the unbelievers, either in response to the very unlikely demand of the parent, or by force.

iv Infants of Papists and the Ungodly The Reformers raised in another form an old problem, whether the children of heretics were to be granted baptism should the occasion arise. For the Reformers the heretics were of course the Papists, and it was the baptism of their children (in lands which had become Protestant) which was the issue. The Romanists for their part returned the compliment and debated whether the children of the Protestant heretics are eligible
for baptism. The decision has gone against them except where there is the guarantee of a Roman Catholic upbringing (Cath. Encycl.).

The problem of the baptism of Papists' children seems first to have risen amongst the followers of Calvin. Apparently contradictory answers were given. Hooker quotes a letter from Calvin to Farel in which such baptism was forbidden, but if this truly reflected his own views, Calvin must have modified his attitude. The classical discussion of the question is Calvin's reply to Knox when the Scot raised the general question of discrimination in the dispensing of baptism. Calvin's starting point was the principle that the covenant of God extends not only to believers and to their immediate offspring, but to all the descendants of a believer, even to a thousand generations. A wicked, apostate or heretical generation could not 'abstract the virtue and efficacy of baptism.' The progeny of holy and pious ancestors, although their grandfathers and parents may have been apostates, belonged notwithstanding to the body of the church (Knox 6 p. 96).

This did not mean that Calvin advocated the administration of the sacrament to all and sundry, with no adequate safeguards. It did mean that so long as Christianity 'had not wholly perished and became extinct' in a land, infants, even the infants of papists, idolaters and excommunicate persons, were 'deprived of their right if they were kept from the common symbol' (Ibid.). But Calvin insisted too that proper sponsors - the parents or others - must be forthcoming to pledge their faith, and to be responsible for the Christian instruction of the child. Otherwise the sacrament would be reduced to a farce, and baptism 'profaned.' Broadly speaking, the solution of Calvin on the one side was not very different from that of the Romanists on the other. So long as there was both willingness to allow the child to be instructed, and a proper provision could be made, no discrimination was exercised against those who, although papists, the children of Papists, or the ungodly, nevertheless could claim a Christian descent. Calvin added that the wicked and idolatrous parents ought themselves to be sharply reproved (Ibid.). Beza taught very much as Calvin had done, claiming that the children of persons excommunicate, abiding yet in the church, can by no right be 'debarred from baptism, in case a meet surety be had' (Quoted by Whitgift P.S. 3 p. 144).

The problem of the children of Papists and the ungodly became a central issue in the struggle between the Anglicans, and first the Puritans, later the Separatists as well. Cartwright stated the Puritan objections to indiscriminate baptism clearly and forcibly. Exercised, no doubt, by the admittedly low and indisciplined state of the church in Elizabeth's reign, he went far beyond the Genevan master in strictness of discrimination. There can be no doubt that what he and the other Puritans aimed at was the erection of the Calvinistic discipline - that is why the point was so important controversially. Baptism, Cartwright contended, belonged properly only to the children of the faithful and to adult converts. To apply it indiscriminately to all children was to 'make of the church an inn for passers by rather than a household.' Cartwright would concede that if one parent made an open profession and was neither a
drunkard nor adulterer, the child might be baptised. He would even grant that if both parents were sinners, but not obstinately so, baptism might be administered. The child of unknown parents could be baptised so long as sponsors were forthcoming. But the children of papists or condemned heretics ought not to be received. And those of the completely and obstinately wicked were to be treated as children of Jews and Turks, and not granted baptism 'unless their faith doth at first appear by profession'(Whit.P. S. 3 p. 137).

The Separatists went a step further, denying baptism absolutely to the children of notoriously wicked persons, the Brownists to children of open sinners generally, the Barrowists 'to the seed of whores and witches' (Rogers P. S. pp. 265 f., quoting Barowe's Discovery of the False Church p. 9). The professed aim of the Separatists was to erect congregations of pure Christians after the Anabaptist pattern, and therefore they could be more severe than the Puritans, who wished to maintain the state church, but presbyterianised and disciplined. The stricter discrimination of the Separatist groups derived logically from their conception of the church.

Against both Puritan and Separatist views Rogers, Whitgift and Hooker championed the latter Anglican practice. Rogers condemned contrary opinions in his usual fashion, but gave no arguments in favour of the orthodox position. Whitgift contributed several arguments. He denied that the iniquity or hypocrisy of the parent necessarily harmed the infant. He challenged his opponents to prove their capacity to judge the worthiness of infant recipients. He claimed that the baptism of heretics could not be reckoned valid and at the same time baptism refused to the children of the excommunicate. Even the excommunicate 'kept still their baptism', so that there was no good reason 'to justify the excluding of their children from being baptised'. The statement of Beza rounded off Whitgift's case, and the Archbishop was also able to use effectively a dictum of Zwingli, 'that when we only add external signs, and administer only the external doctrine, we must also be content with external confession' (Whit.P. S. 3 p. 137). Hooker discussed the matter largely in the light of the statements of Calvin and of the answer to Knox. He concluded that 'we may not deny unto infants their right by withholding from them the public sign of holy baptism, if they be born where the outward acknowledgement of holy baptism is not clean gone and extinguished' (L.E.P. 3 1, 12).

The problem of a discriminating use of the sacrament is one which recurs constantly in nominally Christian lands. It comes up with particular acuteness in ages of religious decay, when the majority of baptisms appear formal and ineffective. During the present century there has grown up in England a strong and widespread movement of protest against indiscriminate baptism, in which churchmen of all shades of opinion have joined. The argument is that the majority of sponsors are now no longer Christian in belief or practice, and that the baptisms are therefore meaningless. The church at home has just as much right to demand of sponsors the same high standard of profession as is normally demanded of adult converts on the foreign mission field. If the sponsors who come forward do not reach the necessary standard, then either satisfactory sponsors must be provided by the congregation or baptism refused altogether.
Theology can ill afford to neglect the work done in past generations. In the sixteenth century the Reformers distinguished clearly the main points at issue, and we may gather from their discussions the choices which must be made. Whenever the question of discrimination arises, we learn from their works that two vital rights must be balanced the one against the other: the right to baptism of the child born within the Christian tradition, the right of the Church to demand that when baptism is given there should be satisfactory guarantee of instruction in faith and morals. On the one hand it is true that so long as even a nominal profession of Christianity continues a child of baptised parents has a claim to the privileges of baptism, quite irrespective of the opinions or standards of life of the parents. On the other hand it is true that the Church has a duty to see that the sponsors provided satisfy certain minimal requirements. The problem really is not one of discrimination in baptism, but of discrimination in sponsorship. It is a problem of discipline.

In tackling the problem some very important choices have to be made. The first is this: Whether, in an age of religious decline, the Church is to continue a national Church of nominal adherents (with the hope of a future revival of faith), or whether it is to take the Anabaptist and Separatist way, and become a particular church of true professors. If the latter course be adopted, then a further choice must be made: What degree of apostasy constitutes the real overthrow of the Christian religion? But if the former course is taken, and it is decided to exercise more discrimination in the admission of sponsors (which would in practice involve a certain discrimination in respect of the infant subjects), then a choice has to be made: What standards of fitness may reasonably be exacted? Obviously no body can decide as to the ultimate inward fitness of sponsors. Only God knows the hearts. Only outward standards can be erected. These can hardly be more - although they could not well be less - than baptism, the ratification of the baptismal vows in confirmation, an agreed minimum of attendances at Christian services, and freedom from open condemnation as a notorious sinner. Now already, in the Prayer Book and Canons, the Reformers have provided a machinery of discipline of this kind, which only needs to be applied, with perhaps some modifications to suit changed conditions. The Puritans did not agree that the standards were high enough or the machinery sufficient. Possibly some would agree, although the imposing of too high a standard would lead in the long run to particular churches. But at any rate the application of such discipline as there is would eliminate the worst abuses of indiscriminate baptism, and clarify the position so far as church-members are concerned.

Those who advocate more drastic measures, the restriction of baptism to the children of regular communicants, and the treatment of all others as sub- or post-Christian, would do well to ask whether such a course is more justified now than it was in the time of Elizabeth. Even to prevent forbidding baptism to the children of open unbelievers and sinners, deeming baptism for their offspring and providing sponsors, was a step which the Anglicans hesitated to take. For if sponsors are provided, and opportunities of Christian instruction are available, in church, Sunday-school or day-school if not
in the home, then so long as the Christian profession remains there does not seem to be any real case for an excessive discrimination. What there does appear to be a case for is greater care in the admission, and more zeal in the instruction, of those who do undertake responsibility for the Christian upbringing of infant members of the church, with the rejection on clear and recognised grounds of those who are manifestly unsuitable. Hooker summed up the whole controversy in the sixteenth century with the wise and pertinent question: 'Were it not against both equity and duty to refuse the mother of believers herself, and not to take her in this case (i.e. that of the natural children or the children of the accursed) for a faithful parent?' (L.F.P. 564,5). While that final possibility remains, the case for discrimination in baptism has still to be established.

5. Inanimate Objects

During the early Middle Ages it had become customary in the church to apply a form of baptism to bells, and sometimes to flags and ships, when they were consecrated to Christian use. According to this form the bells received names, were sprinkled with water and oil, and received episcopal blessing. There is a record of the prohibition of such 'baptisms' at the time of Charlemagne, but by the time of John XIII, often credited as the first to name bells, the practice had become well-established (Schaff-Hertzog Relig. Encycl. Art. Bells). The service at such functions developed into a most elaborate one as the years passed. A bishop performed the ceremony, the name of a saint was given, the bell was signed with the sign of the Cross, and the Triune formula was repeated over it. Sponsors appear to have been appointed. The bell itself was specially draped. All the usual baptismal rites, holy water, salt, cream tapers, figured in the ceremony. The bishop offered prayer that God would sanctify the bell with the Holy Spirit, 'pour upon it his heavenly blessing...and infuse into it the dew of his Holy Spirit, that the devil may always flee before the sound thereof' (A form given by Hart E.R.p.246).

In fairness to the Roman theologians it must be pointed out that they never pretended that this baptising of bells was a baptism in the full sense. The term baptism was applied to it only by extension and figuratively (Cath. Encycl. Art. Bapt). There was perhaps in the prayers a suggestion of the conveying of grace, but it was 'not grace in the sense of remission of sins and regeneration, as in the sacrament properly speaking. On the other hand the fact that bells were dedicated with so much pomp and circumstance, more so than in the case of infants, naturally gave rise to superstitious notions amongst the general populace, and led to the loss of a right proportion. In addition the bishops, who reserved to themselves the sole right of conducting these ceremonies, often abused their position by exacting quite extortionate fees.

There was strong feeling about this abuse at the time of the Reformation. Amongst the complaints of the Germans at the Council of Nuremberg was one to this effect: 'Also the suffragans have
invented, that no other but themselves, may baptise bells for the laypeople; whereby the simple people, upon the affirmation of the suffragans, do believe that such bells so baptised will drive away evil spirits and tempests. Thereupon a great number of god-fathers are appointed, especially such as are rich, who, at the time of baptising, do hold the rope wherewithal the bell is tied, the suffragan speaking before them, as is accustomed in the baptising of children, they altogether do answer and give the name of the bell; the bell having a new garment put upon it, as is according to be done unto the Christians. After this they go to a sumptuous banquet....Yet doth not this suffice, but that the suffragans also must have a reward'(Foxe 2 p.311).

Here attention was concentrated more upon the financial scandal, but we may note the reference to superstitious beliefs fostered, and the suggestion that the true baptism of Christians was profaned.

Luther derived from this corrupt practice an argument against the private mass. The baptism of bells, he contended, could not be counted as true baptism because there were no living recipients of grace. The presence of the bishop, the affusion of water, the correct pronouncing of the words: all these did not avail to make a genuine baptism without persons to receive. Even the Romanists themselves did not seriously contend that the inanimate objects supplied the want of personal subjects. But just as there could be no baptism without human recipients, so there could be no mass if there were no communicants. It will be seen that Luther himself did not approve of the baptising of bells, indeed, he condemned it as ridiculous (Cf.Audin L.p.145). As one might expect, the Anabaptists joined forces with the Reformer in this attack. They did not see any need for elaborate argumentation, but pointed out simply that it was unsynoptical and unapostolic (B.L.N.4p.11).

Of the Anglican Reformers Hooper was one of the first to denounce the corruption. He pointed out that the words of institution limited the sacrament to rational creatures. 'The word sheweth...that only men, reasonable creatures, should be baptised. So it condemned the gentility (gentilism?) and superstition that hath been used in the christening of bells'(Hoop.P.S.1 p.533). He objected against the practice the fact that bells can neither receive nor use the thing signified by baptism, therefore it ought not to be applied to them (Ibid.2 p.47). Becon went further in his condemnation. He regarded the baptising of bells as a wicked profanation of the holy ordinance instituted by Christ: 'Moreover how wickedly did the papists apply baptism to dumb creatures, as to the christening of bells etc....a plain mocking of God's ordinance and a very profanation of this sacrament'(Bec.P.S.1 p.11).

To say that no true baptism was intended, far from excusing the practice, made clear that holy things were being despised by foolish and wilful profanation. On the other hand, if true baptism were intended, it was a plain misapplication. Calfhill made much the same point in his answer to Martial. He contended that true baptism belonged only to believers. To baptise bells with the same ceremonies and solemnities was to act in the Devil's name, not in the name and according to the institution of Christ (Calf.P.S.1 p.15).

Rogers finally summed up the Reformed case in England when he accused of serious error all who abused the sacrament: 'So abused
is baptism', he wrote, 'by them who baptise things without rea-
on, yea sometimes without life or sense.' So have the Papists
baptised both bells and bables. Rogers quoted from Valera the
famous instance of John XIV (probably in error for XIII) baptising
the great bell of St. John de Lateran, and giving it his name', and
from Morison that of the Pope baptising in 1568 the Italian and Span-
ish standards (Rog. P. S. p. 266). 15

The controversy was comparatively unimportant, but it illustr-
ates the totally different outlook of the Romanist and Reformed
parties. The Romanists, with all their stress on the sacraments,
did not hesitate to alter or improve upon that which God had appoint-
ed. Indeed, their emphasis upon the outward sign led them to
ascribe a spiritual value even to the consecrating of bells. To
supply the want of Scriptural authority for these extensions of law-
ful baptism the church and her ordinances could be invoked. The
Reformers, on the other hand, brought to their theology and to
their ecclesiastical practice a high sense of the transcendence of
of God. The result was a stress upon the need to observe strictly
what they believed God himself had ordained. They had no belief in
an automatic efficacy. They could not be tempted then into ascrib-
ing a superstitious power to the mere act of washing in the Triune
name. The sacrament had its power only if that was done which had
been commanded. To turn God's ordinance to the other uses than
those for which they had been appointed, even with the very best
intentions, constituted a breach of the divine prerogative. It
could serve no profitable end. It could only lead to evil.
It brought the perpetrators of the abuse under the charge of
mockery and sacrilege, and exposed them to the just judgment of
God.

Many modern theologians would join in the condemnation, altho-
ugh sometimes on rather different grounds. It is not always felt
or believed now that baptism is a divine institution, except per-
haps in a general and loose sense. A priori then, there is no reason
why bells should not be baptised as well as men. But serious crit-
icisms may be made of such a practice: first, the criticism that
it fosters superstition, second, that it is based on a false view of
the operation of the sacrament, and third, that it is an extension of the scope of the sacrament not justified in
the light of the historical origins of baptism. Although the
Reformers' teaching perhaps contained within it the seeds of this
newer understanding, and although there is complete concurrence in
the opposing of the Romanist abuse, it need hardly be emphasised
that ultimately this type of criticism is based upon an understand-
ing quite alien to the transcendentalism of the early Protestants.

Notes
1 Zwingli C. R. 4 p. 229 'Hie sprechend die toufflögner, der touff sy
sein solch zeichen, dass es niemals nemen solle, er wisse denn,
das er one sünd leben mög'.

2 Beza Qæt I. C. 118 'Quos igitur baptisandos censes? Omnes qui mi-
hi Foederis tabulas rite exhibuerint, quibus obeignandis Baptism-
us est institutis. Adultos igitur nullos admiseris, nisi
fidem rectam disertè professos? Nullos!'
Cat. of Ed.P.S. 'Qui in Christum credit et religionis Christiani articolos profiteetur, et vult baptizari (de adultis jam loquor) nam parvulis parentum aut ecclesiae professio sufficere potest), hunc minister pura et simplici aqua intingit aut lavat.

Ellinger p.165 'Ausserdem vermissete er ein bestimmtes Zeugnis für die Berechtigung der Kindertaufe; es unterstüitze nach seiner Meinung die Einwürfe der Wiedertaufzer, dass die Kirchenväter wie Augustin und andere über diese Frage nicht zu einer sicheren Entscheidung gelangt waren'.

Anrich M.B. p.33 'Zuerst waren sich Bucer und die Strassburger Prediger über die Kindertaufe nicht durchaus klar gewesen'. In 1528 Capito questioned the wisdom and even the scriptural soundness of infant baptism. This led Bucer to defend it in his Commentary of John (Anrich p.38).

Luth. W.A. 6 pp.526-7 'verum ubi virtutem Baptismi in parvis non potuit Sathan extinguere'.

Augsburg Conf. 'De Baptismo docent...quod pueri sind baptizandi'. Muralt p.20 quotes Grebel's description of infant baptism as 'einen unsinnigen, gotzlesterigen gewel wider alle geschrift'.

Heppe K.D. 'Fos distinctionem facimus inter infantes infidelium et infantes fidelium atque in ecclesia gremio natos: The former were not to be baptised for these reasons: 1. Quia nec mandatum, nec promissio, nec exemplum illus exstat in toto Novo Testamento; 2. Quia nobis tantum judicandis sunt, qui sunt intra ecclesiam, qui vero extra sunt, judicabat Deus; 3. Quia Apostolus expressè dicit infidelium liberos esse immundos fidelium solos sanctos; 4. Quia Baptismus est sacramentum Dei et elis...'

Reformatio Legum Sect. 18 'Nec enim minus ad Deum et Ecclesiæiam jam pertinent Christianorum infantes, quam liberi quondam Hebraeorum pertinebant....'

Audin L. p.145 'Si quelqu'un baptisait, quand il n'y a personne à baptiser, comme si quelque évêque, selon la coutume ridicule... baptisait une cloché ou une sonnette, ce qui ne doit ni ne peut recevoir le baptême, dis-moi, serait-ce la un vrai baptême? Il est palpable qu'il n'y a point, quoique les paroles de baptême soient prononcées, ou que l'eau soit répandue, parcequ'il y manque une personne qui puisse recevoir le baptême'.

B.R.N. 4 p.191 'De Apostelens hebben oich gene kloekent geëndiêt'.

Rogers P.S.p.266 quotes Cyp.Valera Two Treatises (Trans;Lond.1600) 'Of the Lives of the Popes' p.55 'He (John XIV) it was that baptised the great bell of St. John de Lateran, and gave it his name; and Meresin: Papatus, seu.Deprav.Religi.Orig. Edinburg 1594 pp.23-24 'en anno 1668 Papa baptismat vexillum Italorum et Hispanorum qui regi Hispanorumitarum militabant in Flandria, vocavitque Margaretam; quae postea ut fertur vicit in acie diabolum collatis signis'.
1. The Romanist Doctrine

The early writers of the Church had found little cause to defend the baptism of infants, for there were very few actively to dispute the matter. Origen, in his reference to infant baptism, had confirmed and explained it by his teaching upon original sin: 'For this reason also it was, that the Church had from the Apostles a tradition to give baptism even to infants. For they... knew that there is in all persons the natural pollution of sins'. Tertullian had connected the practice of giving baptism to persons of all ages with the fact that the Incarnate Son went through all the stages of human life. Tertullian produced strong reasons for delaying baptism, but he evidently accepted infant baptism (where necessary) as a practice handed down from the earliest times. When St. Augustine developed his powerful theological defence of the baptism of infants, he did so incidentally, as it were, as a weapon in the controversy against Pelagius.

The contention was that if original sin were denied, then there was no point in the ancient and apostolic custom of administering baptism to infants. Pelagius himself made no attempt to dispute the custom, but tried rather to find for it some other theological value and meaning (See Wall, Harnack, Liturgy and Worship).

The formulation by Augustine of the clear-cut doctrine of original sin did provide once and for all a theological raison d'être of a practice already universally acknowledged by reason of its presumed apostolic origin. The importance of Augustine's contribution became clear when in the Middle Ages certain sects challenged the baptism of infants, and the theologians looked around for arguments in defence of it. Three main lines of defence came to be adopted: Scripture, tradition and the theological necessity. Lombard laid great stress upon the latter point. For salvation we must either have faith or the sacrament. But infants cannot have individual faith, and the faith of the church does not avail to save them unless they are also baptised (Lomb.4 Dist.4 E). Thomas investigated the matter more fully, but his conclusions were much the same. He saw three main objections to the baptism of infants: first, that infants have no intention; second, that they have no faith; and third, that they have no conscience. But against these he brought the counter-arguments: that infant baptism derives from the Apostles (upon the dubious authority of Dionysius); that infants are under the condemnation of original sin, and need salvation; that they are not debarred from divine grace, but may receive it upon the faith of others or of the church ( Thom. 3 Qu.68.9). In the Middle Ages, 'as later in the sixteenth century,' were driven logically either to deny the reality and guilt of original sin, or to assert the necessary damnation of all infants. A few seem to have inclined to the latter conclusion, although it is possible that their opponents charged them with this logical deduction for controversial purposes (See Wall 2 p.144).

In the sixteenth century the Romanist position did not change
in essentials from that taken up by the Scholastics, except that in opposition to the Reformed teaching of the sole authority of Scripture attention was concentrated upon the argument from tradition. Indeed, many Romanist controversialists adopted the Anabaptist argument that it was impossible to bring forward clear Scriptures in support of Infant baptism. They concluded that the custom must be accepted upon the sole authority of tradition, and that therefore tradition ranks as a second authority side by side with Scripture. Developing this line, Harding, the opponent of Jewel, even went so far as to say that in the matter of the subjects of baptism, the Church altered and rightly altered the original practice. He thus concluded that the Church had the right to alter other practices, even in defiance of the Scriptural and Apostolic rule. Cranmer, Jewel and Whitgift all refuted these arguments (Cf. Jewel I pp. 226-4).

Not all Romanists went to these extravagant lengths. The famous Eck, disputing at Baden, defended infant baptism on theological grounds. The children of Christians, he urged in one of his theses, are born in original sin, and the baptism of Christ, but not of John, avails to cleanse from it. He too stressed the connection between original sin and the baptism of infants. Indeed, the Catechism gave the threefold argument, from tradition, Scripture and theology. It claimed that the following texts indicated infant baptism: Matthew 9.14; Mark 10.16; I Corinthians 10.16; Acts 2.38; Romans 5.17, and the example of circumcision in the Old Testament (Cat. T. 2.2 Qu. 31). The theological argument from original sin was plainly stated: 'Through the sin of Adam, children have contracted original guilt...with still greater reason may they attain grace and righteousness, through Christ, to reign unto life, which indeed can by no means be effected without baptism' (Ibid.). The Catechism claimed that although infants had no faith when they were baptised — thus excluding Luther's theory — yet they may be baptised upon the strength of the faith of others, and indeed receive the 'mysterious gift of faith in baptism': 'Not that they believe already by the assent of their own minds, but because that want is supplied by the faith of the parents, if their parents be of the number of the faithful: if not (to use the words of St. Augustine) by the faith of the universal society of the saints' (Ibid. 1.32, quoting Aug. Epist. 23 ad Bonif.).

The point made by the Romanists was this. Infant baptism was accepted primarily because it had been handed down from the Apostle. When that descent was challenged, however, it could also be proved Scripturally and theologically. This fact emerges clearly in Bellarmine, who claimed first the universality and apostolicity of the practice, but also brought forward arguments from the household baptisms in Acts and from John 3.5. Against the common objection that infants are not admitted to communion Bellarmine urged that milk is the proper food of infants, bread and wine of adults (De la S.T.B. p. 363). Luther's claim that infants have actual faith Bellarmine dismissed as absurd (Ibid.). Infants do receive habitual faith as an infused gift, but they have actual faith only by virtue of the act of baptism itself or by virtue of the faith of others (Ibid.). The same threefold argument, tradition, and...
Scripture and the doctrine of original sin, is used in the Catholic Encyclopedia, which also follows the Catechism of Trent and Bellarmine closely in its statements upon the faith of infants. Vicarious faith is defended on the ground that there is vicarious sin: HE who believes by another who has sinned by another (Art. Baptism).

Anabaptism did force the Romanists in the sixteenth century to come to grips with the matter. So too did the doubts cast by the Reformers upon the absolute necessity of the sacrament. Upon the basic presuppositions they were able to present a sound and convincing case. Neither the Anabaptists nor the Reformers shared these presuppositions, although the Reformers accepted the doctrine of original sin and were willing to find some efficaciousness in the sacrament. Both denied, for instance, that John 3:5 taught an absolute necessity of water-baptism. Both denied too that tradition could be cited as an independent and absolute authority. The Reformers, who wished to maintain the practice of infant baptism, were forced then to examine the question more radically and to seek reasons for the custom consistent with their own basic principles. Since the Anabaptists and the Reformers to some extent occupied common ground, the struggle between these two parties was the more fierce. It will be necessary then to study more closely the Anabaptist attack, as directed more particularly against the Reformers whom they must have hoped for a short time to win over to their views. The Reformation reply will then demand a more extended and detailed discussion.

2. The Anabaptist Attack

The Anabaptists have been well described as the left-wing of the Reformation. Some groups, of course, like the Zwickau prophets, went far beyond the original principles of reform. They rejected the authority of the Bible as well as that of the Church. In the place of external revelation they wished to put an inward illumination of the Spirit. Free-thinking Anabaptists like Denck adopted similar views, although they did not identify the illumination quite with the visions and utterances of Storch and his disciples. The more sober groups, however, took as their starting point the Protestant principle that the Bible is the sole rule of faith and practice. They set aside entirely the authority of the historic Church, which they regarded as an utter perversion of the true Church of Christ. They aimed at a radical reconstruction of the doctrine and organisation and ethical life of New Testament days, applying the principle of the authority of Scripture with all its rigour. They could find no precedent for a state-church in the New Testament, and therefore they rejected the Lutheran and Reformed 'compromise'. They followed out strictly the rules of the New Testament with regard to oaths, offices, non-participation in war, communal life, withdrawal from the world, the ministry. One outstanding difference from the Reformers might be noticed in this connection. The Anabaptists tended to accept only the New Testament as binding and authoritative. As a whole - there are exceptions, as amongst the extremists at Munster, who justified polygamy on Old Testament models - they set aside the Old Testament as inferior in status and preparatory only. The Reformers, of course,
were able to press their own acceptance of the authority of the whole Bible (as stated in the Confessions—Article 7 of the 39 Articles, for example) to their advantage in disputing Anabaptist conclusions. They could claim that their opponents failed to interpret Scripture by Scripture, and they could bring against Anabaptist radicalism Old Testament precepts and examples.

It was in accordance with the principle that Scripture is the sole rule of faith and practice that the Anabaptists challenged the practice of the baptism of infants. They dismissed the plea of tradition as irrelevant from the very outset. They demanded of those who wished to continue the custom clear Scriptures: either commandment or example. They claimed boldly that nowhere did Christ teach that infants should be baptised, and nowhere in the New Testament is it recorded that the Apostles practised such baptism (Grebel in Zwingli C.R. 3 p. 369). Arguments from the Old Testament they were able to parry by arguing that the New Testament is the authoritative Christian book. The fact that infant baptism did appear early in the church, which of course did not in itself constitute any reason for its continuance, they explained by the theory that the Pope was able very quickly to deceive the people of God and to corrupt the pure practice of the first days. Satan and the Popes were indiscriminately charged with introducing the custom (Dosker D.A. p. 176).

In their appeal to the New Testament the Anabaptists had a double task, a destructive and a constructive. The first and destructive was the easier. It was to prove that there is a lack of clear guidance from Christ and the Apostles with regard to the baptising of infants. A second and more difficult task was constructive, the substantiation of their claims by proving that infant baptism is not only not commanded, but also positively forbidden. As is well known, the argument from silence cuts both ways. The Reformers were quick to see this. Faced with the Anabaptist demand for clear Scriptures, and finding none, they in turn asked for clear Scriptures in condemnation of the practice. The Anabaptists were hard put about to furnish them.

The happier part of their task was the overthrowing of the texts brought forward by their adversaries in support of infant baptism. As far as the Romanists were concerned the main battle was fought around John 3.5. For the Romanist this text implied that water-baptism is necessary to salvation. To deny it is infants is then cruelly and impiously to exclude them from the kingdom. The Anabaptists for their part refused to allow that the text had any reference to water-baptism at all; not, at any rate, in the sense of an absolute necessity (See Chapter IV). In so far as it did refer to baptism, it covered only those who had had the opportunity of hearing the Gospel, and who made the decision to be baptised or to refuse baptism in accordance with their response (See the exposition in B.R.M.2 p. 191).

There was also a good deal of discussion, both with the Romanists and the Reformers, about the records of household baptisms in Acts. Naturally these baptisms gave some support to the
view that there was at least a probable baptism of infants by the Apostles. This the Anabaptists would not allow. They argued that there is no express mention of children. They pointed out that the circumstances were always such as to preclude the possibility of the presence and baptising of children. In all the records, they claimed, the reference was either to a household in which there would not be any children, or specific mention was made of all the members of the household believing. It was thus impossible to establish the baptism of infants from these examples (See Zwingl. C.R. 93 pp48 f. for extended arguments, stated and answered).

In controversy with the Reformers the Anabaptists had to consider the favourite argument from the Old Testament sign of circumcision. Against this argument they lodged various objections. They did not agree that the same principles were common to both testaments. They distinguished then between the two covenants, the family covenant of the Old Testament, signed and sealed by circumcision, and the individual covenant of the new, signed and sealed by believer's baptism (See Calvin Instit. 4. 16). Even if it could be granted that the children of believers did belong to the covenant, this did not in Anabaptist eyes constitute a claim to baptism. Under the Old dispensation only boys had been circumcised, not girls. And yet girls were included within the covenant as well as boys. From this it might be concluded that the sign was not strictly necessary, and second, that Christians ought to follow the example of Abraham, who circumcised the only as God had commanded, and not according to his own fancy (In the Grüninger Eingabe, attacked by Zwingli C.R. 93 pp48 f.).

It was hardly sufficient, however, to demolish the Scriptural case of the Romanists and Reformers. The Anabaptists were themselves challenged to prove that the New Testament excluded infants from baptism. In their attempt to do this they turned first to the words of institution in Mark 16. The problem of a lost ending of Mark did not trouble them and they pressed Mark to Matthew for reasons which will appear. This command of Christ in Mark they interpreted as a command, first to teach then to baptise those who had been taught. Great stress was laid upon the order. Hubmaier, in his careful analysis, showed how significant it was. First, the disciples were to go. Then they were to preach or teach. Then they were to baptise those who believed, the belief and baptism ensuimg salvation. The Apostles did not receive any command to baptise the young children of believers (Zwingl. C.R. 4 pp576 f. Cf. Hoffmann in E.R. 5 p155).

Next, the Anabaptists argued from the records of Johanne and Apostolic baptisms in the Gospels and Acts. John baptised the repentant: this meant that children, who were not capable of repentance, could not have been baptised by him (Grebel in Z.C.R. 3 p369). Similarly, it was argued, all those who received baptism at the hands of the Apostles first made a profession of faith (Ibid.). When the Eunuch wished to be baptised, the Evangelist questioned him first concerning his faith. Not until a satisfactory answer had been given could the sacrament be administered. In all the cases recorded in Acts the Apostles baptised converted adults, not infants incapable of belief (Cf Instit. 4. 16).
A final passage which the Anabaptists pressed in their favour was that section of Romans 6 in which the Apostle related baptism to the death and resurrection of the believer. To ascribe to infants this experience of entry into the work of Christ they thought both absurd and unscriptural. Spiritually, infants could not die and rise again, for they could not repent and believe. Morally, they could not undertake the mortification of the flesh and renovation of life, for they could have no understanding of the obligations of Christian baptism. They could then only be baptised in respect of the future physical death and resurrection, and that limitation emptied the sacrament of its spiritual content and meaning. Baptism administered to infants ceased to be that significant sign which it had been when given by the Apostles, according to Christ's commandment, to believing adults (Grebel in Zw.C.R. 3 p.369).

The Scriptural arguments were the ones upon which the Anabaptists concentrated, but they could not altogether ignore the theological aspect. Here, however, they were at a disadvantage. They stressed the literal interpretation and application of the New Testament texts, but they lacked the Reformers' grasp of the theological principles which underlay the New Testament, and indeed the Bible as a whole. In a word, they could not see the wood for the trees. Their isolation of the New Testament from the Old, with the consequent devaluation of the latter, was at this point a drawback. In addition, the Anabaptists were not in the strict sense theologians. They were lovers of the Bible, with the ordinary plain understanding of intelligent and spiritual men—we are thinking now of the sober and not the fanatical groups. It may be doubted, however, whether they realised the implications of many of their conclusions. The denial that Christ took flesh of the Virgin, a tenet which seems to have come down from some of the mediaeval sects, is hard to understand except on the assumption that they knew little or nothing of the Christological controversies, and had no grasp of what was required in a satisfactory theology of the incarnation.

The first theological argument used by the Anabaptists was this: that faith is a necessary requirement in baptism, according to Christ's institution, and that the sacrament itself cannot confer faith. They rejected, of course, Luther's suggestion that infants may and probably do actually believe, but many Reformers and all the Romanists agreed in condemning this teaching. The Anabaptists, however, disputed the Romanist claim that at the baptism of infants habitual faith is infused. If that were the case, why, then, they asked, should not the children of Turks and heathen be baptised? On what grounds were the benefits of baptism restricted to the children of Christians? Theoretically the only valid Romanist answer would be this, that the unbelief of the parents constituted a bar to grace, but practically, of course, the unwillingness of the parents, to whom the guardianship of the children belonged, was a sufficient obstacle to such a practice (See B.R.N. 2 p.130).

The question of original sin was more tangled, and here the
Anabaptists were sorely pressed. Like the Reformers, the Anabaptists did not think that infants would come into eternal perdition because they lacked faith or baptism. But they then had to face the Reformed contention, that if original sin was pardoned to infants i.e. if they enjoyed a main grace of baptism, how could the sign itself be denied them? In their attempts to escape this argument the Anabaptists were driven inevitably to deny original sin or guilt, and to assert a freedom of the will of each man in respect of sin and of salvation. On this view infants stood in no need of remission. Even if a tendency to sin might be discerned, no real sin, either original or actual, could be ascribed to them. Thus they neither needed nor enjoyed the grace of baptism, and could have no title to the sign. The obvious counter-arguments will be considered in the discussion of the Reformed reply.

A final argument deserves brief mention, the argument from the likeness of the two sacraments. Admit infants to baptism, and they ought logically to be admitted to the supper. If baptism initiated into the church, then all those baptised had surely the right to partake of the church's meal of fellowship. It was both illogical and absurd to say that infants belonged to God's covenant people, and had a right to the seat of their church membership if at the same time they were forbidden the common table of the people of God. The Romanist reply to this argument has been noted already, and the Reformed answer will be considered in a later section (On this point see Calvin Instit.4,16).

In the theological weakness is to be found the secret of the Anabaptist strength, a strength which should not be under-rated either quantitatively or in the quality of Christian life. The Anabaptists came to people who had received the Bible in their own tongues, and who had been taught that all may read and understand the Word of God. They claimed that doctrine and practice ought to be established only on the basis of plain texts (Zwinglei C.L.33 pp.43 f.). theological principles confused rather than helped. It might even be claimed that the simple and unlearned were better equipped to understand the Scriptures and to receive the truth than those whose minds had been clouded by theological instruction (Cf. Kidd D.C.R. p.103). Questions of exegesis were largely irrelevant. Naturally large numbers of the common people found this doctrine both convincing and intoxicating. Jack was now as good as his master and better. When the arguments from plain texts were brought under more acute analysis, however, they proved not to be so strong as at first sight appeared. It is probably true that Luther and Zwingli opposed the Anabaptists very largely for ecclesiastical reasons. But whatever the motives the Reformers were still able to build up a solid scriptural and theological case in favour of the baptising of infants.

3. The Historical Reply

Even a casual acquaintance with Protestant thought suffices to show that the Reformers did not accept tradition as an absolute and binding authority. It would be a total misunderstanding, a
however, to imagine that they had no respect for tradition at all. They saw that at many points traditions had corrupted the practice and even the doctrine of the earliest days. But they saw that traditions could and did throw light upon matters not immediately clear, or confirm doctrines and practices unjustly doubted.

The practice of infant baptism came into the latter class. For the Reformers tradition was not the sole or even the main argument in favour of infant baptism. They disputed the Romanist contention that it was. Cranmer, for example, urged that the Fathers had themselves given Scriptures for baptising infants. Augustine had argued from John 3.5. Cranmer thought it most wicked to say that observation of baptism was necessary to salvation and yet to claim that such observance was not enjoined by the Bible. This type of argument led directly to an Anabaptist rejection: '0 what a gap these men open both to the Donatists and to the Anabaptists' (Cran. P. S. 2 pp. 59-60). Whitaker discussed the same point. He granted that Augustine had described baptism of infants as an apostolic custom and tradition. Yet he argued that Augustine did not mean an oral but a written tradition. Although it was true that infant baptism (and original sin too) 'were not pronounced directly and in set terms in the Bible, yet they may be inferred from it by the strictest reading' (Whit. P. S. p. 506). Whitaker dismissed the curious argument of Bellarmine that infant baptism as held by Catholics may be proved from Scripture (i.e. John 3.5), but not infant baptism as held by the Lutherans and Calvinists. He quoted Origen in support of his main point, that the baptism of infants is based upon a written tradition, and is patient of easy proof from the Scriptures (Ibid. p. 587).

The Reformers were clearly not prepared to base infant baptism entirely upon tradition. They felt nevertheless that the strong and constant tradition which there was did help considerably to substantiate their case. Melanchthon on the Lutheran side could argue that all the ancient writings testified to the custom (Mel. C. R. 2 p. 295). Zwingle too was ready to make use of this weapon, and he quoted the stock passage from Origen (C. R. 4 p. 186). Calvin preferred to meet the Anabaptists on their own ground, and to subject the matter to the sole arbitrament of Scripture. He had, of course, no superstitious reverence for the Fathers or for ancient practices, but he had also no scruples against referring to them where occasion required. He felt it necessary to refute as 'a shameful falsehood' the Anabaptist claim that there was in the first centuries a long period when only adult baptism was practised (Instit. 4, 16). Beza and Bullinger were both confident to claim that the custom of baptising infants derived from the Apostles. Its continued use in the Church constituted a link between the Christianity of the day and that of primitive times. Bullinger cited Jerome and Augustine in refutation of the Anabaptist assertion that baptism of infants was a late invention in the Church (Bull. P. S. 4 p. 329).

The earlier English works like the King's Book made a great deal of the argument from tradition and from universal consent.
The King's Book stated plainly that 'infant baptism is proved by the universal consent of the churches in all places and of all time' (K.B. p. 43). Cranmer himself resisted strongly the Romanist exalting of tradition, but he set great store by the authority of the Fathers. In that respect he may be called a father of Anglican theology, which has to a great extent sought to interpret Scripture in the light of the earliest writings. Cranmer himself did not base his case for the retention of infant baptism upon tradition or antiquity, but it is significant that in the Articles stress was laid upon the universal observance of the custom. In the final Thirty-nine Articles infant baptism was to be 'retained' in the church (Art. 27).

Becon seems to have drawn his arguments mainly from Lutheran sources. He stressed the arguments from Scriptures and from theology, but he also added testimonies from the earliest writers. Jerome, Ambrose, Austin and Higinus (Bec. P. S. 2 p. 210). Philip open his defence of infant baptism with a reference to its 'more antiquity' (Phil. P. S. p. 274). He claimed that he could declare out of ancient writers, that the baptism of infants hath been continued 'from the apostles' time unto ours'. Origen, Jerome, Austin and Cyril were cited in substantiation of this claim (Ibid. p. 278). Jewel, perhaps the most learned and extensively read of the Anglican Patristic scholars, found himself in rather a peculiar position, for his opponent Harding pressed the Anabaptist argument, that there is no Scriptural proof, and attempted to erect the practice solely upon a foundation of post-apostolic tradition. Jewel, then, could not himself appeal very strongly to the argument from tradition or history, and he was forced for controversial reasons to argue his case more particularly from Scripture. Rogers, however, could make the usual appeal to universal consent. He branded the Anabaptists as innovators and revolutionaries who oppugned a truth known and held by all Christians from the very earliest days (Rog. P. S. p. 279).

We may conclude that the Reformers were willing to make use of the appeal to historical usage and tradition as a subsidiary argument. As a whole, however, they found themselves unable to exploit that appeal — for two reasons. In the controversy with the Romanists they had declared the Scriptures to be the supreme and indeed the sole court of appeal. Infant baptism, with its disputed Scriptural foundations, became one of the test cases. Obviously the Reformers had to be careful not to use too lavishly the argument from tradition, however strongly it favoured them. That would be to play into the hands of their Romanist enemies. They were equally tied, however, in the controversy with the Anabaptists. The Anabaptist demand was for a direct proof from Scripture Citations from the Fathers or proof of the practice of infant baptism from the most primitive times were of no avail to convince the Anabaptists of their error. The Reformers had no choice of battleground. Their own principle of the sole-sufficiency of Scripture decided the battleground from the outset. Their main effort had then to be directed towards the building up of an impregnable Scriptural and doctrinal position. This is perhaps
less interesting from the modern point of view, when so many scholars are interested rather in the development of a religious rite than in the observance of a divine institution. A thorough investigation of the historical practice of infant baptism would have been more to the modern taste. But the Reformers had to deal with the situation as they found it, and their Scriptural and theological discussions are not without their interest and value.

4. The Scriptural Reply

1. Circumcision In their justification of infant baptism from the Bible the Reformers turned first of all and quite naturally to the Old Testament example of circumcision. Conscious or unconsciously, they acted at this point with maximum tactical brilliance. By stressing the unity of the Testaments, and the consequent identity in substance of the old and new sacraments, they both disclosed the error of the Romanists, the differentiation between the sacraments of the old law and those of the new and they also brought into prominence the Anabaptists' setting aside of the Old Testament; to the disadvantage of their Anabaptist appeal to Scripture. The argument from circumcision also provided the Reformers with Scriptural warrant for a covenantal theology, by which infants of Christians could be accorded a well-defined status within the company of God's people, and the national church also defended. In every way the argument from circumcision redounded to their advantage.

Luther, with his strong sense of the covenant-membership of children (Great Catechism 74), clearly appreciated the value of the appeal to circumcision (Seeberg Die L. L. p. 322). It is all the more strange that for the most part he developed his defence from Scripture along other lines. Melanchthon too pursued a different track. It was in Switzerland that the argument from circumcision came into prominence, and Zwingli, its first great exponent, was the one who both popularised it and also himself worked it out in the fullest detail. Zwingli started from the point, that the children of Christians are no less God's than the children of the Israelites. The latter received the sign of circumcision in token of their covenant-relationship with God. The former then have the same right to the Christian sign which has replaced circumcision, in token of the same covenant-relationship (C. R. 2 p. 207; esp. 93 pp. 48 f.). Of course only boys had been circumcised, but this Zwingli dismissed as a detail of administration of no vital importance. It could be explained simply by the fact that the calling of the 'old people' of God was through the male seed. It could not affect Christian baptism which by its nature and institution belonged to male and female equally. Zwingli further strengthened his case by an appeal to the Old Testament type of the Red Sea Passage. Here the whole people of God, male and female, adult and infant, received the figurative baptism as they passed into and through the waters (Ibid. 4 p. 71).

Calvin took up the argument, not developing it in any greater detail, but presenting it with perhaps greater lucidity and force.
For him too baptism was the covenant sign of the new people of God, just as circumcision had been the covenant sign of the old. It applied in exactly the same way, to the faithful and to their posterity (Instit.4,16,3-6). The favour of God descended from parent to child, so that infants might be said to be addressed in and through the parents (Harm.Evang.p.386). This did not mean that all infants of believing parents were themselves necessarily elect, as Beza explained. It did mean, however, that they could be reckoned amongst the elect people of God as heirs of the promises: 'Such we presume justly to be the children of God, all those which be issued and descended from faithful parents' (Beza P.and P.S.p.48). Many of the Reformed Confessions emphasised this correspondence between the two signs (e.g.Belgic 34). Bullinger gave it a high place in his defence of infant baptism (Bull. P.S.4 p.390), and most of the later Reformed theologians incorporated it into a covenantal theology (Meppe R.D.,Polan 6,55).16

Cranmer made use of the argument in its full Zwinglian form in the Reformatio Legum. He pointed out with Zwingli that the infants of Christians belong to God no less than the infants of the Jews did, and the latter had been granted the sign of the covenant (K.L.Sect.18).17 In his own discussion, arguing for infant baptism from 'plain scriptures' in opposition to the Romanists, Cranmer pointed first to 'the figure of the old law, which was circumcision', and to the accompanying promise: 'I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed after thee' (Cran.P.S.2 p.60). Even in the King's Book recourse had been had to the Old Testament example: 'The infancy of the Hebrews in the Old Testament did not let, but that they were made participants of the grace and benefit given by circumcision' (K.B.p.43). Bacon mentioned circumcision, but he did not stress it so strongly: his discussion took a more Lutheran turn (See Bec.P.S.2 p.207). Philpot, however, accepted the Reformed teaching, and thought the argument from circumcision strong whether circumcision were regarded 'evangelically' as a full sacrament or in sacramentalist fashion as a type and shadow of baptism. Philpot argued from the fundamental proposition that in all things the New Testament fulfils the Old: 'The apostles did temper all their doings to the shadows and figures of the Old Testament: therefore it is certain that they did temperate baptism according to circumcision, and baptised children' (Phil.P.S.p.278). He argued with Zwingli that the type of the Red Sea justified infant baptism: 'For the people of Israel passed through the Red Sea, and the bottom of Jordan, with their children' (Ibid.). In view of the fact that circumcision and baptism were usually identified, it is not surprising that this line of argument became popular with the Anglicans as with Reformers abroad. Dean Nowell in his Catechism (P.S.37), Jewel in the controversy with Harding (P.S.2 p.1104), and Rogers in his Exposition of the Articles (P.S.279) all referred to the Old Testament example.

The strength of the argument depends upon the estimate of the Old Testament and the approach to the divine revelation as a whole. Amongst those who accepted implicitly the authority of the written word there were many who differentiated between the Old Testament and the New: the Romanists in the one direction, the Anabaptists
in the other. Many modern writers have made a similar differentiation, but, without the implicit trust in the Bible as a revelation, and on quite different grounds, that the Old Testament represents the development of a religious people and the New the fulfilment of that development. Now the Reformers themselves were well aware that a good deal of the Old Testament was transitory. They distinguished between the moral law and civil and ceremonial precepts. They found a tropological rather than a literal message in many passages, notwithstanding their rejection of the Scholastic scheme of interpretation. But behind it all, looking at and accepting the whole Bible as the Word of God, they discerned common promises of God and common theological principles: promises and principles fulfilled in the New Testament, but basically the same. If the Bible is approached from that angle, then the Reformed argument for infant baptism carries with it considerable force. If it is approached from the historical angle, and circumcision appears only as an outmoded rite, then it may be granted that circumcision did perhaps, historically, influence the development of baptismal doctrine, but the tracing of a common premise and principle will seem excessive and extravagant.

The Gospels The Reformers usually argued first from circumcision, but their case did not end with the Old Testament. From the New Testament itself they were able to bring forward passages which seemed to their eyes at least to support the questioned custom. The first of these passages, and the most important, was that in which Christ received infants to himself. The words of institution were also quoted in this connection. It is worth noticing, perhaps, that the stock Romanist text, John 3.5, did not find any place in the Reformed presentation, although it was used in the King's Book. That is perhaps why Bellarmine could claim that the Romanists could prove infant baptism from Scripture, but not the Protestants.

The blessing of the children by Jesus, and his pronouncement, 'Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,' naturally attracted the most attention. Melanchthon derived from the incident the assurance that infants do actually belong to God's kingdom and are heirs of the divine promises. He argued, however, that since there is no salvation outside the church, to which is committed the administration of the word and sacraments, then infants must belong to the church, and belonging to the church they have the right to the sign of initiation (Mel. C. R. 21 p. 295). Zwingli focused attention not so much upon the positive statement with regard to the status of children as upon the divine invitation, 'Suffer little children.' The former did, of course, support his view that infants were within the covenant. The latter, however, blamed those who sought to keep the children from Christ. Zwingli could see no other way of following the injunction of Christ than by granting to children the sign of membership of Christ (C. R. 3 p. 298). Calvin too turned to this passage. We unequivocally related the invitation and the pronouncement of kingdom status. The Anabaptist objections, that the infants must have been of an age to respond, and that in any case not infants themselves, but those who are like infants are said to pertain to the kingdom, he dismissed contemptuously as quibbles (Instit. 4, 16, 7).
The Anglican writers for the most part followed the arguments of the Lutherans and the Swiss fairly closely, and many of them alluded to the story of the blessing of the children. Cranmer himself laid considerable stress upon the incident, quoting it as a Scriptural proof of infant baptism, and linking it up with the warning, 'See that ye despise not one of these little children'. Cranmer applied this warning to those who refused to administer the sacraments to infants (Cran. P.S. 2, p. 20). The account of the blessing was retained as the Gospel passage in the revised service of Public Baptism, the only change from the Sarum Use being that Mark's account was substituted for that of Matthew. This seems to have been done in imitation of the Lutheran orders, but the underlying reason was perhaps the greater fulness of the version in Mark (Daniel p. 419). Amongst other writers Neale cited the story as an illustration of the calling of infants by Christ (p. 87), and Philpot asked what essential difference there was between the bringing of the infants to Christ and the bringing of infants to the sacrament of baptism: 'What do they nowadays else, 'that bring their children to baptism, than they did in time past, which brought their children to the Lord?' (Phil. P.S. p. 277). Like Cranmer Philpot related the text 'Suffer the little children' to the warning that it is not the will of our heavenly Father that the little ones should perish. He concluded that we have every reason to gather that he receiveth them freely unto his grace, although as yet they confess not this faith', and challenged his opponents to say 'why the sign of the promise, which is baptism in water, should then be withdrawn from children' (p. 275).

Bullinger no doubt helped to popularise this line of argument in Elizabethan England, for in the Decades he used the text 'of such is the kingdom of heaven' to prove infant discipleship: 'He manifestly calleth the little ones, not yet able to confess, believers' (Bull. P.S. 4, p. 385).

A second text to which the Reformers devoted considerable attention was that at the end of Matthew which contained the words of institution. They found themselves directly challenged by the Anabaptists, who subtly emphasised the version in Mark and deduced from it that teaching must always precede baptism. They also had to face the objection that the commandment of Christ contained no specific mention of infants. Zwingli took up the second point. He argued that the commandment was not particular, to baptise individuals or individual classes, but universal, to baptise all nations, or all sorts amongst all nations. Since a proportion of the population in the nations consisted of infants, he felt justified in concluding that infants came within the general scope of the commission (C.R. 3, p. 211). Melanchthon replied to the objection in much the same way, again arguing from the general to the particular, and concluding that the commandment to baptise all contained within itself the commandment to baptise children; especially since there was no prohibition of children (C.R. 21, p. 285). The attractiveness of this argument was that it threw the burden of proof - the proof of a specific prohibition - upon the Anabaptists.

Calvin answered the first objection. He pointed out first that baptism had been instituted before the commission in Matthew
was given. He next showed how easy it was to set against the order in Mark the Matthean account, or John 3.5, if important doctrines were to be deduced from or based upon grammatical constructions. Calvin pointed out, however, that the whole difficulty disappeared if sound rules of exegesis were followed. The commission was a commission to preach to the heathen. In missionary work preaching and teaching and the profession of faith do and ought to precede baptism. It is only in lands where the gospel has already been set up that the further step can be taken, the baptising of the infants of believers. Calvin claimed with Zwingli and Melanchthon that the commandment itself allowed of an extended application (Instit.4,16,9).

As far as the text in Matthew was concerned the Anglican case for infant baptism followed that of the Continentals very closely. Becon thought the universal commandment a sound argument in favour of the baptism of infants (Bec.P.S.2 p.207). Philpot argued similarly that infants are necessarily included in the nations: 'The Lord commanded his apostles to baptise all nations, therefore also children ought to be baptised' (Phil.P.S.27). In the Decades Bullinger put the same point in almost the same words: 'The Lord commanded to baptise all nations, and therefore infants' (Bull.P.S.4 p.339). Philpot at the close of his discussion dealt with the argument that teaching and faith ought to come first. Like Calvin he pointed out that this applied only in missionary work, and claimed that the rule could not be so strictly generally turned as to exclude the baptism of the children of believers: 'Gentiles must first be taught and confess; but not the children of believers. It is a general rule, He that doth not labour must not eat; but who is so barbarous, that might think thereby that children should be famished' (Phil.P.S.282). The Reformers realised, as perhaps the Anabaptists sometimes failed to do, that even plain texts must be correctly interpreted and applied.

Two further Scriptural proofs were supplied from the Gospels. Both of these had to do with John Baptist, the first with his baptism, the second with his person. For the most part the Anabaptists did not set great store by the identity of the baptism of John and that of Christ. Grebel, however, probably for polemical purposes, urged that identity as an argument against the baptismism of infants. He contended that John baptised only those who repented and brought forth fruits meet for repentance, which excluded infants (Zwing.C.R.3 p.339). Against this view two quite different defences were constructed. Zwingli claimed that John did in fact baptise both adults and infants, on the ground that all Judaea and the region round about Jordan and Jerusalem went out to him. This did not mean, he explained, that every single individual in these parts was baptised by John, but it did mean that all classes of people - including infants - received the sign of water baptism (Ibid.p.242). A different defence was that of Whitgift, who, arguing against Cartwright over quite another matter, claimed that the identity of John's baptism with Christ's does not commit us to following the Johannean administration in all its details. What Whitgift wished to prove was that preaching was not necessary, but he pointed out
cleverly that to enforce the details of John's practice would commit us to "baptising only in the river Jordan, and none but those that be of age" (Whit.P.S.2 p.508). Whitgift admitted the Anabaptist claim as far as John's baptism was concerned, but he denied the relevance of John's example to the practice of Christian baptism in land already evangelised.

The final proof from the Gospels was the example of the person of John, who like. Jeremiah was called of God and filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. The great argument of the Anabaptists was that only persons who had been baptised inwardly with the Spirit ought to be baptised outwardly with water, and that infants could not possibly be reckoned amongst this number since they could neither repent nor believe (Zwing.E.K.3 p.242). Zwingli retorted that adults who professed repentance and faith often did not belong to the number any more than infants, and he challenged the Anabaptists to prove either that any given adult had or that any given infant had not received the inward baptism of the Spirit. To God alone is it given to see into the heart.

All that man can do is to administer the sacrament to those who by profession or descent belong outwardly to the covenant, and the rest must be left with God (Ibid.4 p.502). Calvin reinforced this argument of Zwingli with the Scriptural example, notably John, which he used as the basis of his contention that elect infants dying before they have opportunity to believe may enjoy an interior illumination of the Holy Ghost (Inst.4,16). Calvin did not of course believe with Luther that infants do actually believe as the result of an inward work of the Spirit. Nor did he accept the teaching of Melanchthon, with its distinctly Romanist flavour, that infants ought to be baptised because the Holy Ghost is given them in the sacrament to incline them to God. What he did recognise was the possibility of a direct work of the Holy Spirit, as in the case of John, which made many infants more worthy and lawful recipients than some adult professors.

The argument was much the same as that of Irenæus, who had argued from Christ's own sanctification in infancy the will of Christ to sanctify his elect in himself at any age without distinction.

Quite a number of the Reformed writers referred to this example of John, some giving it a Lutheran, some a Reformed sense. Abroad, Beza argued that it was very unlikely that infants could have faith, but he would not preclude the possibility of an extraordinary work of the Spirit of some kind: "It is not likely that you have faith except God work in them extraordinary" (B.F.S.48). He held that we could presume some such work in elect infants who died in infancy (C.P.124). In England, Becon took the Lutheran side, stating categorically that infants and speechless children do have faith, not of course in the ordinary way, but by the Holy Ghost (Bec.P.S.2 pp.211-2). Becon argued that they must have faith, for without faith they cannot please God, and if they have the Holy Ghost faith is the work and fruit of the Spirit (Ibid.p.214). Becon brought forward the examples of Jeremy, John and Jacob to prove that infants do, or at least can have the Holy Ghost, and therefore they do or can have faith. Indeed he went so far as to claim that all children born within the covenant are "endued with the Holy Ghost even from their cradles!" (p.207). The
martyr Woodman seems to have been of the same opinion, for in his refutation of the Romanist view that baptism confers habitual faith he cited the examples of John Baptist and Jacob as proof of the existence of faith prior to baptism even in infants (Rege 8 p.352).

The Lutheran view gradually dropped away in England. Philpot, in his exhaustive letter on infant baptism, did not deal with this question of an early gift of the Spirit at all. At a later date, Cartwright, arguing against interrogatories administered to infants, repudiated the Lutheran teaching, stating bluntly that 'children have not, nor cannot have any faith, having no understanding of the word of God.' Cartwright added, however, that he did not deny that children might have the Spirit of God (Whit. P. S. 3 p.115). At the end of the century Hooker stated a view not unlike that of Melanchthon and approximating to that of the Romanists, that in baptism 'the Holy Ghost might truly be said to work,' giving that grace which is the first and most effectual cause out of which our belief grows.' Hooker could thus find in children the first degree of ghostly motion towards the actual habit of faith' (L.E.P. 5, 64 pp. 45 f.). It is obvious that this interpretation could be harmonised with that of the Calvinists, but the presentation is clearly in terms distinctly reminiscent of the Scholastics and Tridentines theologians.

iii The Apostolic Church. In addition to the texts produced from the Gospels the Reformers brought many passages which illustrated (at any rate to their satisfaction) the belief in and practice of infant baptism in the apostolic Church. They attached particular importance, as may be expected, to the household baptisms recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. They did not think, of course, that infant baptism stood or fell by their ability to prove that infants were actually baptised on these occasions. They saw, however, that if they could produce a concrete instance, upon which an apostolic practice of baptising infants might be erected, it would greatly strengthen their hands against their Anabaptist critics.

Zwingli examined the relevant passages in Acts most laboriously and with a good deal of dialectical skill. The main contention of Zwingli was that the family in at least one case must have involved children, and that the less is included within the greater. Thus if we read that households were baptised it is a fair presumption that children either were or ought to be baptised in the absence of information or commandment to the contrary. He allowed that word 'all' was often used in Scripture figuratively, but he maintained that where that was the case it always denoted 'all classes.' It stated in Acts 18, 8, of course, that all believed and were baptised, but since infants were capable of neither belief nor unbelief the first part of the passage could not refer to them and certainly did not imply that only those who believed were baptised, except in the sense that of the adults only those who believed were baptised. In Zwingli's exposition everything depended upon the principle that although infants were not expressly mentioned they were comprehended within the family unless expressly excluded. He explained the stress upon the profession of faith by the fact that the adult converts were the most important part of the household, and of them a
profession of faith was naturally expected (C.R.93 pp.48 f.).

Calvin did not think the examples in Acts so important. To him infant baptism was self-evident and needed little arguing. In the records of Apostolic baptism he granted that there was no specific mention of infants, but in the light of general Scriptural principles he could see no reason for their exclusion. He claimed therefore that the burden of proof rested upon innovators. For the rest, he was convinced that a household meant children, and indeed persons of all ages, even if in the particular cases recorded in Acts there did not happen to be any children (Instit.4,16,8). Beza felt bold to claim the apostolicity of infant baptism upon the basis of the household baptisms (B.F.S. 48), and Pullinger too thought it a reasonable inference that the Apostles baptised children as well as adults: 'They baptised whole houses or families, unto which children belong'(Pull. P. S. 4 p. 391).

The Anglicans varied considerably in the use which they made of this argument. Some writers, Nowell and Rogers for example, made no mention of it at all. They thought the argument from the covenant and circumcision sufficient, strengthened by Christ's gracious reception and blessing of the children. Becon, however, found a place for the argument from household-baptisms: Moreover 'do we not read that the apostles baptised whole households?' (Dec P. S. 2 p. 203). He linked up the household baptisms with the patristic witness to the apostolicity of infant baptism. Philpot made similar allusion to the matter, displaying a delightful feeling not over common in sixteenth century writers: 'Also the scripture telleth us, that the apostles baptised whole families or households, but the children are comprehended in the family or household, as the chiefest and dearest part therin' (Phil.P.S. p. 278). Like Becon, Philpot related this Scriptural witness to the early tradition. At a later date Cartwright, indignantly repudiating the charge of Anabaptist leanings, asked 'what stronger hold we have, to prove the baptism of children and young infants, than circumcision in the Old Testament, and the example thereof in the New Testament', for that the apostles baptised whole families, 'where by all likelihood there were children'(Hit.P. S. 2 p. 363). It may be freely allowed that the Reformers could not decisively establish the fact that the apostles baptised a single child; indeed, they themselves were aware of this difficulty. But they pressed the reasonable probability, and the fact that the Anabaptists for their part were not able to establish the contrary.

The main text brought forward from the Epistles was the place in I Corinthians 7 (verse 10): 'Else were your children unclean, but now are they holy'. Calvin discussed the meaning of this passage at some length. He combated the view that the Apostle referred here only to civil sanctity, or legitimacy, on the ground that the text implies a special privilege granted only to the children of believers. The interpretation favoured by Calvin was that the children of believers are in a real sense holy to God. They belong to the people of God, and on that account they have a right to the sign of the divine adoption (Comm. I Cor. 7, 10). Knox made a
similar use of the text, deducing from it the covenant status of the infants of Christians, and their consequent right to baptism (Works 4, pp. 186-7). Many Anglicans referred to the text in their proof of the Scriptural nature of infant baptism. Cranmer included it amongst his plain Scriptures (Cranmer J. 4, p. 222), and the martyr Hankes based upon it his view of a vicarious faith (Foxxe 7, p. 103). The text really provided an additional confirmation from the New Testament of that doctrine of the covenant which underlay the whole Reformed defence of the baptism of infants.

A final passage of Scripture ought perhaps to be mentioned briefly. The Anabaptists had argued from Romans 6 that to baptise infants is to empty the sacrament of its meaning. 'Baptism, according to that passage, was a death, burial and resurrection with Christ. But that was an experience of which infants were not capable. The Anglicans did not take up this objection, but Calvin had found a forcible answer: 'For by this the Apostle means not that he who is to be initiated by baptism must have previously been buried with Christ, but he simply declares the doctrine which is taught by baptism, and that to those already baptised so that the most senseless cannot maintain from this passage that it ought to precede baptism' (Instit. 4, 16, 21). To this reply nothing further could be added.

A fair amount of attention has been paid to the Scriptural answer because the Reformers, like the Anabaptists, acknowledged the Bible as the final court of appeal. On their own principle infant baptism stood or fell with the Scripture. A few comments might be made. First, the Reformers can hardly be said to have established the historical fact of the baptism of infants in Apostolic times. The question remains open, of course, for their adversaries did not establish the historical fact of baptism of infants. It is clear enough that adult converts were baptised upon the profession of renunciation of sin and of faith in Christ. That did not prevent the application of a different rule in the case of the infants of converts, but it did not in itself lead necessarily to infant baptism. It is clear too that the Apostles baptised households, but it cannot be proved that there were infants in the particular households baptised, nor can it be proved that the members of households were baptised irrespective of the belief or the unbelief of individual members. It cannot even be proved that household baptism was the normal rule.

In the grasp of the doctrines of Scripture the Reformers had better success. They had a good grasp of the unity of Scripture. They had a more balanced understanding of the teaching of the Bible as a whole. Those who approach the Bible from the exclusively historical standpoint will not be impressed by the Reformed interpretation. Not accepting the Reformed principle, that Scripture must be interpreted in the light of itself, they will feel that many verses are wrongly expounded, or that more is extracted from them than they may legitimately be said to contain. Thinkers of this kind will not, of course, find any great urgency in the matter, for in the last resort they feel under no obligation to follow the teaching and example of Scripture. Early practice has for them no more than an antiquarian interest, at
the most an interest of expediency. They have the advantage of being able to judge between the Reformed and the Anabaptist teaching from a detached standpoint, at least so far as the facts are concerned. Where they fail is that they are not able to think themselves into the central doctrine of the sixteenth century writes, because they do not share the sixteenth century approach.

We may state two conclusions. To understand and appreciate the arguments of the period it is necessary to adopt the presuppositions of the contestants. And adopting the presuppositions of the Reformed and Anabaptists, at any rate so far as they were identical, it is obvious that the Anabaptists had superficially the more straightforward and appealing case. It is also obvious, however, that in solidity and depth of doctrinal understanding, if not always in immediate exegesis, the Reformers far surpassed them. As a result of that greater solidity and depth they undoubtedly stated what was ultimately the more convincing case.

5. The Doctrinal Reply

The arguments from Scripture were themselves to a very large extent doctrinal arguments rather than historical. The main outlines of the doctrinal defence have thus become clear in the previous section. It will be helpful, however, to set out these points separately and in order. Perhaps some writers who discuss the Reformed retention of infant baptism are not sufficiently aware of the fundamental, we might say the crucial nature of the issue from the point of view of Reformed theology as a whole. All the doctrines involved were central doctrines. The Reformers were not merely battling about texts when they opposed the Anabaptists. They were not only defending a convenient ecclesiastical custom. In the last resort they were not even fighting only for the state-church. As they saw it, the Anabaptists were attacking the whole structure of sound Christian dogma, as well as the social and ecclesiastical fabric of the age. The Reformed defence was ultimately a theological defence, in the double sense, that it was a defence of the Christian theology, and that the defence took the form of the assertion of fundamental theological principles. How true this is will appear as the individual principles are studied.

i. Election

The ultimate basis of the Protestant retention of infant baptism, and this applied particularly, of course, in the case of the Reformed school, was the doctrine of election. This is another way of saying that infants had the right to baptism because by birth they belonged to the covenant people of God. The idea appeared in Melanchthon, who argued that baptism is the sign of the divine promise (C.A. 21 p. 235), but it was Zwingli who developed it and laid the stress upon the covenant rather than the promise. When the Anabaptists claimed that only believers ought to be baptised Zwingli stated plainly that not faith but the election is the first ground of adoption into the divine family. An elect man is already a son of God even before he has faith. It is then nonsense to say: "Infants do not believe and therefore they are damned." For Jacob was elect even when he did not believe; it does not follow then, to say: he does not believe, therefore he is not elect! (Zwingli C.A. 4 p. 177).
By their Christian descent the children of Christians were known as at least outward partakers of the election. As far as the inward election was concerned, no more could be known of them than of adults baptised on the profession of faith. "Being the outward mark of election," believers' children were thus entitled to the covenantal sign (Cf. Ibid., p. 232).

Calvin and all the later Reformed theologians presented the doctrine similarly. It underlay Calvin's interpretation both of circumcision and also of the blessing of the infants. Infants, he taught, did not become children of God through baptism; but because, "in virtue of the promise," they are heirs of the adoption, therefore the church admits them to baptism. The gift of adoption is prior to baptism (Tracts, I, p. 73). In all his discussions Calvin interconnected baptism and the election. He undoubtedly thought that in elect infants of believers, especially in those who died before attaining years of discretion, there took place in and through the sacrament a special work of the Spirit, so that these infants were presented to God justified and sanctified. He held, moreover, that all the children of Christians belonged outwardly at least to the elect people of God, as did all adults who out of heathenism made a profession of faith. Since it is not given to men to know the inward and secret election, he claimed that all such children had the right to the sacrament by virtue of the favour of God bestowed upon their ancestors. In contradistinction to the individualistic Anabaptists Calvin, like Zwingli, had derived from the Old Testament a very strong sense of the solidarity of the family and even of the nation: the unit chosen by God was not the individual man, but the group. In addition he had the strong sense of the supremacy and primacy of God in redemption as in creation: thus no man or group could choose God unless that man or group had first been chosen.

The arguments of the Swiss seem to have made a considerable impression in England. Bullinger, of course, popularised them. His first answer to the 'Babbling objection' that infants cannot believe, and that therefore the sacrament cannot profit them was 'that the baptism of infants is grounded upon the free mercy and grace of God' (Bull. F. S. 4 p. 343). Infants belonged to the people of God not by virtue of their faith but by virtue of 'the bountiful promise of God'. Bullinger related this to the circumcision of the Israelitish children and to Christ's statement that infants are of the kingdom of God. Philpot put forward what was substantially the same argument. He did not hesitate to assert plainly that 'infants are in the number or scroll of God's elect' (P. S. p. 276). The people of God, he contended, were not to be judged only by 'the confession of faith', but also by 'the free and liberal promise of God'. From the promise in the Gospel we may gather that God 'receiveth infants freely unto his grace' (Ibid.). With the exception of Philpot few writers developed the theme, but the popularity of the argument from circumcision, and the importance attached to it show how widely the idea of the covenant and the election had been disseminated. It was this strong Calvinistic view which Bradford had in mind when he thought that the real reason for the birth of Christian parents was the prior election.
in Christ (Brad.P.S.2 Letter 43), and Coverdale too stated briefly the the baptism of adults is grounded in faith, that of infants in the election (Cover.P.S.p.268).

Perhaps a hint of this teaching appears in the Prayer Book Service, when prayer is made that the child may ever remain in the number of thy faithful and elect children. Some commentators have drawn from this phrase the inference that the framers of the Book believed in a general but defectible grace. All were elect in baptism, but some might fall away in adult life. A view of this kind can not unfairly be read into the words, but the verb remain need not imply more than the Calvinistic doctrine, that all infants of Christians, like all professors, are reckoned amongst the elect people of God, although only those who are effectively called according to the secret election will in adult life show themselves to be truly of that number (Cf. Beza B.P.S. 48).

ii Original Sin Baptism is the sacrament of remission and regeneration. It pertains by its very nature to sinners, at any to sinners as they are comprehended within the promise of God.

The Anabaptists, denying baptism to infants, were forced either to deny that they were sinners or to deny that they could be forgiven. This was the dilemma into which they were driven: the denial of original sin, or the denial of infant salvation. The majority preferred the former denial, and thus from the very first the Anabaptists espoused the Pelagian cause.

The Reformers, like the Romanists, were quick to exploit the advantage which they saw at this point. They claimed that infants belonged to the people of God because they were included within the divine redemption. True, they had not committed actual sin. They stood condemned before God, however, because they shared the universal sin and guilt of the race. Without the grace of God according to John 3,5 (interpreted either of water-baptism or the baptism of the Spirit), infants could not enter into the kingdom of God. Only of the free mercy and forgiveness of God could they be saved. It might be argued that God did not forgive them, since they could not believe, but if he did, as might be gathered from their birth of Christian parents, then there could be no good reason to deny them the sign of remission, the water of baptism.

Melanchthon made much of this point. He repudiated the Anabaptist teaching upon original sin (C.A.21 p.225). He contended that Christ died for all sinners, infants as well as adults (Ibid 22 p.466). Against the Anabaptist argument that infants ought not to have the sign because they cannot know the work, he argued that they do know the work, in the remission of original sin (Ibid.21 p.295). The Defence of the Augsburg Confession made the same point. Infants of Christians were included within the divine promise. Baptism was to them a sign of the remission of original sin, by non-imputation. It is surprising, perhaps, that Zwingli, notwithstanding his clear doctrine of the election, was not by any means so clear upon this matter of original sin.
He himself in some places tended to suggest that no guilt attached to original sin in the children of believers, being driven to this position by his anxiety to combat a doctrine of the absolute necessity of baptism. Perhaps Zwingli's less guarded statements underlay the common Romanist charge that the Reformed school denied the existence of original sin in elect children. What Zwingli probably meant was that sin existed but was not imputed, and that baptism was given precisely because of this non-imputation. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt as to the position of Calvin. Calvin stated clearly that baptism is given because of the remission of sins. It belongs to infants as well as adults because all are under sin: "We are born sinners, and we stand in need of forgiveness and pardon from the very womb! (Instit. 4.16 21). To deny the existence of original sin is to deny that salvation is only by Christ. Since, however, by the promise extended to believers and their seed, the children of Christians are assured of the divine forgiveness, they may and indeed ought to be granted the sign and seal of remission, which is baptism. Pullinger followed the same line of argument in the Decades: 'Infants are born in original sin... the same infants ought to be baptised (Pull. P. S. 4 p.376). He went too far, perhaps, when he accused Pelagius himself of denying baptism to infants, but then he saw with Augustine that theologically Pelagius ought in denying original sin to have denied infant baptism also. If baptism is not to infants the sign and seal of the remission of original sin, then it has no real meaning at all.

The English Articles of 1536, perhaps following Augsburg, argued the baptism of infants from original sin (Strype E. M. 2,1 p.454) and the King's Book repeated the argument: 'Infants, because they are born in original sin, have need and ought to be christened' - the King's Book, of course, made the necessity absolute (p.43). The Prayer Book itself put the matter in much the same way: 'Forasmuch as all men be conceived and born in sin, and that our Saviour Christ saith, none can enter into the kingdom of God except he be regenerated and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost, I beseech you therefore...'. This statement might easily have been taken to imply an absolute necessity, especially in view of the reference to John 3,5; but it does not seem to have dissatisfied the Reformed party. To then it probably meant no more than that infants are naturally in sin, and deserve wrath and judgment, but that thanks to the covenant mercies of God, signed and sealed to them in water-baptism, they have remission of sins and spiritual renewal.

The Anglican writers did not elaborate this defence. The Articles, of course, mentioned it, with a specific repudiation of the Anabaptist doctrine of free will in the earlier draft. Turner made quite a good deal of capital out of the Anabaptist Pelagianism in his 'Preservative', and Jewel put the Reformed teaching plainly: 'For this cause are infants baptised, because they are born in sin, and cannot become spiritual but by this new birth of water and of the Spirit' (Jew. F. S. 2 p.1104). The language of Jewel, like that of the Prayer Book, might suggest a sacramentalist conception of the relationship between baptism
and the remission of original sin. This could hardly be the case, however, for Jewel rejected the absolute necessity, and he made the usual distinction between the sign and the thing signified. Rogers stressed as Melanchthon had done the universality of Christ redemption: 'Christ hath shed his blood as well for the washing away the sins of children as of the elder sort' (F.S. p. 279). In the case of infants the sins remitted were not actual sins, but 'that birth-sin of which all are guilty'(Ibid.). Whitaker plainly had in mind the connection between infant baptism and original sin when he pointed out that 'neither is propounded directly and in set terms in the Bible, and yet they may be inferred from it by the strictest reading'(Whit. P.S. p. 515). The doctrine of original sin did not form a subject of dispute amongst the Reformers. It was universally accepted, and formed one of the strongest doctrinal bulwarks against Anabaptism. Care was need, however, to mark off the Reformed presentation from the Scholastic and Tridentine, which was the same in substance, but very different in its details, and in its ramifications.

iii Faith The Anabaptists claimed not only that infants had not the thing signified, remission, but they also objected that infants could not have the qualification of true reception, faith. Against this argument Rome urged that infants are baptised in 'the actual faith of their god-parents, or the church, and that in baptism the Holy Ghost infuses into them habitual faith. The Reformers, with their very strong emphasis upon and exalted conception of faith, felt this problem keenly. They agreed with the Anabaptists in rejecting the Romanist solution, but they found it difficult to agree upon an alternative. The Lutheran and Reformed groups were sharply divided upon this issue.

Luther's teaching is not altogether consistent. The commentators are divided in their opinion as to what his true view was. Sometimes he used the language of pure Scholasticism, admitting a vicarious faith of the god-parents and of the church (Hamel p. 157), and speaking of an infusion of faith — habitual rather than actual — into the infants (W.A. 6 p. 528). At other times he repudiated most strongly the idea of vicarious faith, and asserted boldly that the faith of infants in baptism is actual faith. To the immediate objection that infants have no self-awareness, he answered that adult Christians do not lose their faith when they sleep, or do not consciously think upon spiritual matters (Christiani p. 290). To the further objection that infants cannot believe Luther retorted that no adult can believe — without God. But if God could soften the hard hearts of unbelievers, why should he not be able to work faith secretly in unresisting infants, the prayers of the god-parents assisting? (W.A. 6 p. 528). The suggestion that baptism might be given in respect of a future faith and repentance Luther would not allow on the ground that without faith there can be no freeing of the child from sin and the devil (Ibid. 17, 2 p. 81).

There were many in England who followed Luther. Becon, like Luther, thought that an actual faith might be ascribed to infants. They believed, 'not by preaching, but by the Holy Ghost'. Becon
appealed to the examples of Jeremy and John Baptist (Bc.P.S.2 pp. 210-211). He also argued from the parallel of the sleeping adult: 'As with Paul in sleep, even so likewise dwelleth faith in children through the secret ministry of the Holy Ghost' (Ibid. p. 214). Asked to produce the tokens and fruits of infant faith of this kind, Becon admitted that there were none: 'For lack of time and age it can as yet show no good works'. Those who grew up to a life of wickedness presented a particular problem, and Becon took up the view - not unlike that of the Romanists - 'that Christians which yet lead a life spotted and defiled with all kinds of wickedness... are fallen from the grace which they received in their baptism, and have lost the Holy Ghost' (p. 206). This doctrine was hardly consistent with the more usual Reformed doctrine of the indefectibility of saving grace, although it may be noted that Bullinger spoke of the possibility of a falling away from the grace of the Gospel received in baptism, and of 'a receiving of it again by faithful repentance' (Bull.F.S.4 p. 323). It could not doubt be argued even from the Reformed standpoint that there was a general grace apart from the indefectible grace granted to the elect. The views of Becon were not uncommon, especially in the earlier days of the Reformation, when Lutheran influence was still paramount, and they appear in very much the same words in the martyr Woodman, to take but one example (Foxe 3 pp. 538 f.).

Other writers, however, clung to the older view, sometimes repudiated by Luther and sometimes defended, that infants have faith vicariously, by their sponsors or by the church. The order of 1549 appears to favour this interpretation, although the matter is extremely tangled. In this first draft the questions were addressed directly to the child, and the godparents answered. For the school of Becon this might mean that the child was supposed to have actual faith, and that the sponsors made the profession on its behalf. But it also, and more naturally, suggested that the infant was baptised in the actual faith of the sponsors, who represented the church. The more zealous Reformers, and Martin Bucer too, severely criticised this addressing of the questions to the child, whether it suggested an actual faith in the child or a vicarious faith of the godparents. We ought to remember, however, that the distinction between a vicarious faith and the guarantee offered by a personal profession on the part of the sponsors is very difficult to draw. In the Catechism under Edward, for instance, the sponsors' profession was said to suffice in the case of infants (C.P. Short Cat. p. 71), but this might be taken in all sorts of ways. Hooker spoke of 'leave been given to infants that in the matter of profession they might sufficiently discharge by others', another ambiguous statement (C.P.5, 4, p. 43). Evidently there was considerable doubt in the minds of the Reformers in England, for Jewel put the plain question: 'Are children baptized by the faith of the parents?', but he could find no plain answer. The fathers', he said, 'seemed to be of that opinion'; but he added, 'How truly I will not say. The just man shall live, not by the faith of his parents, but by his own faith' (Jew.F.S. p. 430). Of course, the faith of the parents helped, but
The Reformed party rejected both the Lutheran views. Calvin stated that it was absurd to speak of an actual faith in infants. He granted a spiritual illumination of elect infants who died in infancy. He also, that baptism might act as a seed, 'which, when thrown into the ground, though it may not take root and germinate at the very moment, is not without its use' (Instit 2 p. 341). He did not agree, however, that infants had actual faith, whether personally or vicariously. The baptism of infants had its ground in the divine promise and the divine adoption. In the case of the elect, repentance and faith followed as they were effectually called. Infants were baptised then in respect of a future faith and repentance (Instit 4, 16, 19-20). Beza summarised the teaching of Calvin, denying the existence of an actual faith in ordinary cases. Knox was of a similar mind, and although he retained the baptismal questions, they were now addressed directly to the godparents, who made a personal profession as a guarantee (Works 4 p. 180).

The Reformed teaching carried the day in England. Fucer in his Picus Consultation had replaced the older questioning of the infants by interrogatories addressed to the sponsors, and he joined in the criticism of the 1549 Book at this point. In 1552 the questions were addressed to the godparents, and they answered them in their own name, although with the suggestion from the exhortation that they were making the promises in behalf of the child. Cranmer attempted to solve the puzzle of infant faith by a doctrine that infants believe sacramentally. By this he seems to have meant neither an actual faith nor an infused faith, habitual or actual, but the reckoning of infants as believers by virtue of the Christian descent (as witnessed by the sponsors' profession) and the open acknowledgment in the sacrament (Cranmer P.S.1 p. 124: On Fucer's view of the 1549 Book see Furse 2 p. 320). Many writers stated the Reformed view in less equivocal terms. Philpot refused to allow that infants would make any profession (P.S. pp. 274 f.). Whitaker quoted Bellarmin's criticism of the contention of Luther: 'The Lutherans say there is need of faith, with which the scriptures do not teach us that children are endowed.' He thought that Bellarmin misrepresented Luther's doctrine, but in any case he disassociated himself from it and left the Lutherans to defend themselves (P.S. p. 540). Rogers flatly dismissed the Lutheran teaching as an error: 'Others are of the opinion that none are to be baptised which believe not first.' Hence the Anabaptists: Infants believe not, therefore they are not to be baptised. Hence the Lutherans: Infants do believe, therefore they are to be baptised (p. 281).

The Puritans of course took up the Reformed teaching with vigour. Cartwright stated that children have not, nor cannot have any faith, having no understanding of the word of God (Whit. P.S. 3 p. 115). Pressing this view, the Puritans objected strongly to interrogatories in the Prayer Book even in the amended form, on the ground that they were really ministered all the time to
to the infant. The question Wilt thou be baptised in this faith?, apparently overlooked in the revision, gave weight to the Puritan objection, for the adults obviously could not ask for that which they already had, but would only be asking for the baptism on behalf of the child. The revisions which had been made seem to support the view that the difference between Anglicans and Puritans was not large, and that the Book was no longer intended to teach either actual or vicarious baptism. The Puritans, felt, however, that the situation demanded a more thorough and ruthless revision, and that all traces of older erroneous opinions must be obliterated. The later Anglicans, with the possible exception of Hooker, can hardly be shown to have taught a different doctrine but they thought the Puritans over-scrupulous in their objections to the prescribed liturgical use.

iv Infant Communion The objection that infants ought to be granted the second sacrament if they receive the first need not detain us, since nowhere did the Anglicans discuss it. Zwingli and Calvin had given as a reason for the discrimination the clear rulings with regard to the supper given by Paul in I Corinthians 11,28. This seems to have been regarded as sufficient (See Zwingli C.R. 4 p.186; Instit.4,16,30). At any rate, it was the line taken by Jewel when he did have occasion to refer to the matter in some quite different connection. Jewel mentioned that there had been an early custom of granting communion to infants, but he rejected the practice as contrary to plain scriptures (Jew.P.S.1 p.230). It is interesting to remember that the Romanists themselves did not meet the Anabaptist objection by appealing to and reviving the early custom. Two more general points might be made. First, the argument from the text in Thessalonians, that rulings which apply only to adults ought not to applied to infants, could be turned with equal force against the attempt of the Reformers to find a definite prohibition of the supper to infants. Second, the Reformers appear to have overlooked the possible defence that as baptism is a sign in which the subject is passive it is naturally more suitable for infants than the sign of communion, in which both outward and inward activity on the part of the subject is an essential and indeed an indispensable part.

Several points of importance emerge from the whole discussion of the Anabaptists attacks and the Reformed reply. A first one is that the Anglicans followed the Continentals almost slavishly when they came to deal with the matter. They contributed no new arguments; they added nothing to the old arguments in their expressing and stating of them; they seldom if ever repeated the arguments in full. The reason probably is that Anabaptism never afflicted England as it did the countries, and especially the Protestant countries, of Europe. The problem did not press, and when the issue did crop up the well-proved answers sufficed. Indeed, we might add that the foreign Reformers had dealt with the subject so thoroughly that there literally was nothing new to say.

Second, we notice that as the century progressed the Romanist type of defence, still prominent in the Henrician formularies, rapidly fell into disrepute. The argument from tradition continued to be used, but as a buttress rather than as a foundation.
Emphasis was still laid upon the connection with original sin, but baptism was retained not as the cause of remission, but as the sign and seal. No appeal whatever was made to the absolute necessity of the sacrament alleged by the Romanists.

A third point is that in England, especially under Edward, disciples of both the Lutheran and the Reformed schools existed side by side, finding much common ground, of course, and apparently mutually tolerating each other. Under Elizabeth a small Lutheran faction remained, but thanks to the Marian exile the Reformed group had definitely gained the mastery both in numbers and in influence. The tendency in Anglican theology was towards a full acceptance of the Reformed position, an acceptance quickly and perhaps tragically shaken by the Puritan controversies and the consequent High Church reaction.

Finally, it might be asked whether the Reformed arguments in favour of infant baptism are still of value. As far as the historical argument is concerned, the answer is that there is no absolute proof either way. Infant baptism was certainly practised at an early date, but whether the apostles baptised infants can neither be proved nor disproved. Scripturally, too, the evidence is inconclusive. The most that can be said is that there are some good reasons for believing infant baptism to be, in the old phrase, agreeable to the Word of God. Theologically, the Reformed case depends entirely upon the prior attitude to the Reformed theology as a whole. In the world of a transcendent God, of original sin and of the divine revelation and covenant of grace, a logical and even a necessary place for infant baptism can be found. In a world of immanence, development, and religion which is the product of the faculties of man, it may be retained as a useful religious sign, perhaps of the universality of the divine love, but it has no essential place, and except in so far as retention or rejection helps forward the achievement of the highest religious form, it is a matter of indifference whether it remains or is discarded. The man who understands and in substance accepts the Reformed world view in which judgement on the understanding of God and the world can appreciate the force and the relevance of the theological reply which the Reformers made to infant baptism. Without that understanding its effect will be very largely lost.

Notes

1 Lombard & Dist. & 'Farvulis enim non sufficit fides ecclesiae sine sacramento'
2 De la S. P. 2.3.26b, quoting Bellarmine 'quare ipse Dominus, ut indicaret Eucharistiam non esse pro infantibus institutam, noluit eam in lacte constitui, sed in pane et vino, quod est imicum infantium alimentum, sed in pane et vino, quod ad solos adultos proprie pertinat'
3 Ibid. 'Infantes non habent actualen fidelici' 'inient'.
4 Zwingli C.N. 3 p. 369 'Von Christo wird es nicht gelernt sein, Kinder zu taufen, ooch von den Aposteln nicht gebraucht'.
5 Matt. 2 p. 191 'Dann en is tot gheenen kinderen gesprochen, maer
totten hoorenden.

6 Zwingli C.R. 93 pp. 48 f. 'omnia testimonia, qua familiarum mentionem faciunt, infantes excludunt'.

7 Ibid. 'Gott gab Abraham die pschindung, das er die kindle geschnitte an achten tag, und die mieltli mit. Nun würden die mieltli eben als wol in der verheissung als die knebli. Nun merckend ir eiftalgen herzen, wie Abraham gott gehorsam zu was, also sollend wir Christus gehorsam sein, der da sprich, man solle vorlieren, und wer da glaube, den soll man tauffen!

8 Ibid. 4 pp. 576 f. (a) Gend (b) Preding (c) Wer-da glaubt (d) und taufft wordt (e) der wtird selig: 'Mit gend hin und tauffind die jungen kindlin der glübarigen'.

9 Ibid. C.R. 3 p. 369 'Die apostel niemands getaufft haben dann all-ein die gelehrten Christentum'.

10 Ibid. 'tot und auferstehung, welcher dingen ietzterzeit den kinderen zuschreiben' ohn alle und wider alle geschriiff ist'.

11 Ibid. 93 pp. 48 f. 'Propter consirationem, opinibnem aut sententiae hominis nemo debet aut baptizare aut aliud quid agere, sed propter disertam scripturam...'

12 Melanchthon C.R. 21 p. 295 'Nam vetustissime scriptores ecclesiastici probant baptismum infantum'.

13 Luther Gter Catechism 74 'Die jungen Kinder, sowohl als die Alten, gehören in den Bund Gottes'.

14 Zwingli C.R. 33 pp. 48 f. 'Christianorum liberi nihil omminus dei filii sunt quam parentes'; Cf.Z. 2 p. 207 'Sind aber die Christenkindernicht weniger Gottes als die Israelitenkinder, wie sollte man ihnen verbieten, taufen zu werden'.

15 Ibid. 93 p. 71 'Omnés in Mose baptizati sunt. Non ergo soli adulti tunc in Mose baptizati sunt, sed infantes quoque'.

16 Heppe R.D. Polan 6,55 (Quia etiam in foedere veteri infantes circumsicebantur...)

17 Reformation Legum 18 'Nec enim minus as Deum et Ecclesiam pertinent Christianorum infantes, quam liberi quondam Hebraeurum pertinebant, quibus in infantia cum circuncisio adhibetur, nostri etiam infantibus debet baptizaturn adoveri, quoniam ejusdem promissionis et foederis divini participes sunt, et a Christo sunt etiam cum summa humanitate suscepti'.


19 Zwingli C.R. 3 p. 298 'Wo konnend aber die kind anderst zu Christkumen, weder mit dem pflichtzeichen des volcks Christi'.

20 Ibid. 211 'Wir bryreffend unter den völckeren und menschen auch die kinder!

21 Melanchthon C.R. 21 p. 295 'Nam mandatum est universale: Baptizate omnes gentes. Ergo et pueros complectitur'.

22 Zwingli C.R. 3 p. 222 'Nun habind aber die kinder den heiligen geist nät; darumb solle man sy nit touffen'.

23 Ibid. 4 p. 632 'Wir mögend nit inn's herz sehen...Wir müssend uns des unserenn verjahens benügen, undnd den für einen pundtsmann oder gläubigen in dem val der beschnydung und touffs rechnen, der die synen wil beschnydend oder touffen -This passage was primarily directed against discrimination.
The Anabaptists argued from the premise: 'Baptismus est pactum quo promittimus mortificationem cernis...'. Melanchthon answered: 'Sed maior ex errore nascitur. Baptismus enim principaliter est pactum gratiae sua promissionis divinis erga nos, qua nobis remittit peccata...'

Zwingli C.R. 93 p.177 'Electus enim erat Jacob, cum nondum crederet; sed neque hoc sequitur; non credit, ergo electus non est. Qui crediderit, credit...quia ad eternam salutem electus ac destinatus est'.

Ibid. 'Negant peccatum originis'.

'Ibid. 'Habent autem opus infantes in remissione peccati originis'

Zwingli C.R. 93 p.177 'Electus enim erat Jacob, cum nondum crederet; sed neque hoc sequitur; non credit, ergo electus non est. Qui crediderit, credit...quia ad eternam salutem electus ac destinatus est'.

Melanchthon C.R. 21 p.295 'Negant peccatum originis'.

Habent autem opus infantes in remissione peccati originis'

Habent opus infantes in remissione peccati originis, habent opus remissione illius peccati. Probamus igitur sententiam Ecclesiae, quae de damnatione Pelagianos, qui negabant infantibus esse peccatum originis'.

A Hamel L. p.129 'Der Glaube der Eltern ist für den Glauben des Kindes einzutreten'.

Luther W.A. 6 p.538 'Auch den Kindern gießt Gott den Glauben ein'

Cristiani p.290 'Comment prouver que les enfants n'ont pas la foi? Est-ce que parce qu'ils ne parient pas et ne montrent pas leur foi? Très bien, mais alors combien d'heures serons-nous chrétiens, quand nous dormons ou faisons autre chose?'

Luther W.A. 6 p.538 'Hic dico, quod omnes dicunt, sicut fide aliena parvulis succurrerit illorum, qui offerunt eis. Sicut enim verbum dei potent est, dum sonat, etiam impii cor immutare, quod minus est surdum et incapax quam ullus parvulus, ita per orationem Ecclesiae offerentis et credentis, cui omnia possibilis sunt, et parvulus fide infusa mutatur, mundatur, et renovatur'.

Ibid. 27,2 p.31 'Es hilft sie auch nicht die Ausrede, das sie sagen, die Kinder tauft man auf ihren zukünftigen Glauben. Denn der Glaube muss vor oder ja in der Taufe da sein, sonst wird das Kind nicht los vom Teufel oder Sünden'.

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CHAPTER IX PREREQUISITES

1. The Minister—Intention

In the discussion concerning the proper minister of baptism it was seen that the sixteenth century Romanists insisted upon the need of a correct intention on the part of the minister for the ensuring of the validity of the administration. Strictly, there was need of a two-fold intention, on the part of the minister, to administer Christian baptism as the Church understands it, and on the part of the recipient to receive such baptism. It is with the former that we are now concerned.

The doctrine of intention had little support in the Fathers. Indeed, in a well-known case there had been a willingness to grant that even baptism in jest constituted true baptism provided the proper form and matter were observed. Even in the Middle Ages the doctrine was not securely established. At Trent itself a minority party, alleging the authority of Catharinus, objected strongly to the stricter statement finally adopted. They contended that an outward seriousness ought to be accepted as proof of intention, quite irrespective of inward dispositions. (Session 7).

The Scholastic studies of intention had led to no decisive judgment. Lombard had discussed the case of baptism administered in jest. He thought that the observance of the form guaranteed sufficiently the intention of the minister (Lomb. 4 Dist. 6 E). Thomas, too, asked for little more than a general outward intention. The minister acted in baptism as a representative of the whole church. In the words which he uttered he expressed the intention of the church. This sufficed to the perfection of the sacrament unless the minister or the recipient outwardly confessed a different intention (Thom. 3 Qu. 64, 8). Obviously those who openly mocked the Christian rite could not be said validly to baptize: to that extent the Scholastics thought a doctrine of intention necessary. But Lombard and Thomas shrank from enquiring into the inward disposition of those who outwardly administered baptism as the church demanded. No man could truly know the heart of man. To base the validity of the sacrament, and with it the eternal salvation of souls, upon an unknowable factor would reduce everything to uncertainty and confusion.

It was this latter point upon which the Reformers seized, although without the teaching of an absolute necessity, when they faced that more developed form of the doctrine of intention sanctioned by the Council of Trent. The Tridentines asserted a far stricter doctrine of intention than that met with in Lombard and Thomas. They maintained that there must be in each minister of the sacrament a personal intention of doing what the church does (C.D.T.Sess. 7 Can. 11). When Bellarmine defined and defended this teaching he argued, as against Catharinus, that it is not sufficient evidence of intention to perform the rite.
approved by the church. What was need was an intention to do what the church does i.e. meaning by the action the same thing as the church means. What the church does Bellarmine took to be an equivalent of what Christ instituted. By 'church' he did not only mean the church of Rome, but the true church whatever it may be (Cf. De la S. T. B. p. 342). This latter definition made possible the concession that even the minister who erred concerning the church might still administer a valid and efficacious baptism; even he who intended to do what the church of Geneva does could still be said to do what the church universal does (Disput. de Centrev. De Sacram. In Gem. 1, 27).

The generally accepted doctrine that schismatics and heretics may administer valid baptism made it necessary not to press too closely the definition 'what the church does'. Upon this score the Reformed party could not have any particular quarrel. The mischief in the Tridentine view was in the insistence upon a personal intention rather than upon an outward and corporate. To insist that baptism is only valid when there is evidence of a desire to do what Christ wished to be done and not something quite different is reasonable enough: although in normal cases such an insistence might appear to be superfluous. But to make the individual intention of the minister the test is quite another matter, for tests of intention, if they are to be real tests, can only be outward and general.

Calvin went quickly to the point when in the Antidote he attacked the Tridentine position. He saw two fundamental objections to the Romanist view. It thwarted the primary purpose of the sacrament, the ministering of assurance to the believers. And it subordinated the will of God to the will of man: 'This, though not intolerable, would be less grievous, if it did not utterly overthrow whatever solid comfort believers have in the sacrament, and suspend the truth of God on the will of man: for if the intention of the minister is necessary, none of us can be certain of his baptism.... I was baptised... if it so pleased the priest, whose good faith is no more known to me than that of any Ethiopian' (Tracts 3, Antidote to Trent 7 Can. 11).

The phrase 'doing what the church does' Calvin dismissed as meaningless and silly. What Calvin evidently feared was that the doctrine of intention had as its aim the enhancing of the power of the priesthood at the expense of the rights of the laity, and of Christ. Applied in other directions (marriage, for example) it might become the source of endless legal difficulties, shifts and evasions.

Jewel found it necessary to deal with this question in his Reply to Harding. He found a sufficient answer to the teaching of the need for inward intention in the inescapability of the human heart, and the resultant uncertainty introduced into the minds of recipients: 'The heart of man is unsearchable. If we stay upon the intention of a mortal man, we may stand in doubt of our own baptism' (Jew. P. S. 1 p. 139). With Jewel as with Calvin there is the suggestion that a strict doctrine of intention encroaches upon the prerogative of God as the true author and minister. Hooker discussed the matter further, and
he stated a view which was very largely that of Thomas. An individual intention ought not to be required: 'What a man's private mind is, as we cannot know, so neither are we bound to examine' (L.E.P. 5, 58). So long as outward appearances were satisfied, an intention might legitimately be presumed. Even if the minister subsequently revealed himself to have been a hypocrite and infidel, his acts remained valid if the correct form had been observed and the minister had not stated his true mind at the time: 'Therefore in these cases the known intent of the church doth suffice, and where the contrary is not manifest, we may presume that he which outwardly doth the work hath inwardly the purpose of God' (Ibid.).

In England as elsewhere the Reformers resisted all attempts to carry the doctrine of intention beyond this obvious and on the whole somewhat superfluous generality. To go further could only introduce uncertainty and doubt where there ought to be confidence and assurance.

The question of the intention of the recipient was another matter altogether. The recipient was a primary person in the sacrament, whereas the minister was only an instrument of the true baptiser, Christ. The Reformers aimed to deflate the ministry, and to that extent they thought the intention of the minister relatively unimportant. But they also aimed to replace a sacramentalist conception of the relationship of man with God by a dynamic and personal. To that extent they were bound to take seriously the intention of the recipient, as regards the efficacy of the sacrament if not as regards its validity. This question of the intention of the recipient merged, however, into that wider question of the general prerequisites for the reception of baptism, whether in adults or in infants. These prerequisites will be the subject of the following section. It is enough at the moment to notice that in the two questions, that of the intention of the minister and that of the intention of the recipient, different issues were involved, and different principles came into play. It was only natural, then, that there should be a difference of approach and of emphasis.

2. The Adult - Instruction

In an earlier chapter we say that baptism is not to be administered indiscriminately to all adults, but that adult converts i.e. adults who repent and believe at the preaching of the Gospel form the proper subjects. In the last resort, of course, God alone knows the heart of the recipient as God alone knows the heart of the minister: thus He alone can tell whether this or that person is a proper subject. From earliest times, however, the Church has taken seriously its duty of ensuring so far as it is able that those who do receive the sacrament are persons of true penitence and faith. 

For that reason certain essential prerequisites have always been recognised. The first of these prerequisites is a proper instruction in Christian belief and life, with a view to an adequate if simple understanding.

In New Testament days the instruction given seems often to have been of the briefest. Cornelius and the Eunuch are good
examples. A good reason for the brevity of the instruction was no doubt that the persons to whom the Gospel was first addressed already had, either as Jews or god-fearers, a good knowledge and understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures. No more was needed than a narration of the facts of the life and death of Christ, and his resurrection, and the relating of these facts to the Messianic prophecies, together with the presentation of the main teaching of Christ as the fulfillment of the teaching of the Law and the Prophets. If the hearer accepted the Messiahship of Jesus on receiving this simple instruction,—and a mere or less immediate decision could be expected,—then he was ready at once for Christian baptism.

The constant widening of the field of evangelism meant that the Gospel came to be addressed more and more to those who lacked the foundation of an Old Testament knowledge. In these circumstances it was only natural that a need should be felt for thorough instruction in order that there might be a proper preparation for baptism and to guard against unreal professions of repentance and faith. In response to this practical need the catechumenate developed, varying of course in different centres, but one and the same in purpose and principle. The course of preparation included not only intellectual instruction but also such rites as exercisms, washings, fastings, laying on of hands and oaths. In the Hippolitan rite there were well-defined stages: the preparatory stage, when the catechumens were mere 'audientes', the more advanced stage when they were acknowledged as 'eleti' or 'competentes'. The whole period of the catechumenate reached its climax during the Lenten period preceding the Easter baptism (See Liturgy and Worship: Baptism).

With the conversion of Western Europe infant baptism tended naturally to replace the baptism of adult converts, and baptismal instruction ceased to be a main activity of the Church, except in areas in which missionary work still continued. It was still acknowledged, however, that instruction was necessary before an adult convert could be admitted to the sacrament. Thomas defended the catechumenate against the possible objection that life (given in baptism) ought to come before teaching (Thomas 3 Qu.71 1). He cited Rabanus as an authority, and pointed out that faith comes by hearing, and that the rational mind is not obliterated in conversion. Thomas saw four main types of instruction: that elementary instruction which leads to faith, which might be given by any Christian; the fuller instruction in belief, which the priest ought to give; the instruction in Christian living, for which the sponsors are responsible; and the higher instruction in the profound mysteries of the faith which only the bishop was qualified to impart (Ibid.2). Thomas defended exercisms, against which three arguments might be brought: that not all are exercumexns, that baptism itself breaks the power of sin and of the devil, and that holy water is the recognised remedy. He claimed in his defence that exercisms were useful and indeed necessary to remove obstacles which might impede the effectual operation of baptism; that all are subject to demons; and that although holy water is indeed efficacious, it is only so against the demons.
which are without, not against those which are within. Trent reaffirmed this teaching, demanding in the Catechism a proper instruction of adult candidates, with the time-honoured catechising and excercising (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.35 & 64). Except in cases of extreme sickness or other danger a long delay was advised, so that there could be a full instruction and a thorough testing. The Rituale Romanum laid it down that adult converts should be diligently instructed in faith and manners, according to the apostolic rule. The great expansion of missionary work with the opening up of the Americas and the Indies gave opportunity for the observance of these rules.

The Reformers had neither the opportunity nor perhaps in some cases the interest to do extensive missionary work, and their interest in the subject of adult baptisms was correspondingly low. The Anabaptists, of course, demanded pre-baptismal teaching, and in the communities which they established candidates were usually trained with care and fullness. The Reformers themselves did succeed in winning over some adults, mainly Jews or Lapps, and they accepted without question or discussion the need for instruction. The matter was not of great practical interest, and no controversial points were involved, so that it receives scant notice in their writings. It is significant that Jewel in England referred to the 'warning of them that were called catechumeni to prepare their hearts that they might receive baptism' as belonging to the old times (Jew.P.S.I p.119). Indeed, the matter was so theoretical in England that the Prayer Books made no provision for an Adult Baptism. The present office, which provides for a preparation of instruction and fasting, was added only at the Restoration, when the growth of Anabaptism under the Commonwealth, the general religious confusion, and the simultaneous extension of English possessions abroad had created a demand for such a service. What the views of the Reformers would have been had the issue been to the fore may be inferred from the prominence given by Lutheran and Reformed groups alike to the need for a proper understanding both of baptism in particular and of the Christian faith as a whole.

3. The Adult - Profession

A second prerequisite in the case of the adult recipient was the public renunciation of the former life and the public avowal of faith in Jesus Christ. This was usually accompanied by the expression of a desire for the sacrament, by which, of course, the intention of the recipient might be known. The demand for an open profession had as its aim the final testing of the fitness of the candidate, who had already been instructed in the implications of that profession, both intellectual and moral. The profession usually took place when the sacrament itself was administered. Obviously, it could not be taken as a perfect guarantee of the inward conversion to God, but it was a safeguard which the Church had a right to insist upon, as at least an outward guarantee of good faith on the part of the person baptised.

The public confession of faith seems to have developed out of New Testament examples. In some cases in the New Testament,
when there was a manifest outpouring of the Spirit, a profession of faith was superfluous. In others, however, the Ethiopian eunuch for example, baptism was preceded by the expression of a desire for the sacrament and a simple acknowledgment of faith in Christ. It was probably out of this simple acknowledgment that the baptismal creeds grew. A rather fuller confession was naturally expected in the case of Gentiles who had to receive a fuller instruction. A more explicit factual statement became necessary with the spread of heresies.

The early baptismal rites provide ample evidence of the importance attached to the profession of faith in the early centuries. There was always provision for at least one, and sometimes, as in the Roman rite, for three renunciations of Satan and professions of faith in Christ. In addition there were the interrogatories, in which the candidate had further opportunity of testifying to his forsaking of the works of the devil, his embracing of the Christian faith, and his desire for baptism. The pattern of all the later baptismal offices, not only the Roman, but also the Lutheran, the Anglican and even the Reformed, clearly conforms to that of the primitive offices, and the provision for a profession of penitence, faith and the desire for the sacrament remains (See Liturgy and worship: Baptism).

In the Middle Ages Thomas displayed particular interest in the question of the intention of the recipient. He considered three arguments which might be used against the need for an intention: first, that the baptised person is patient i.e. his role is purely passive - the tendency to an automatic rather than a personal understanding is very pronounced in this objection; second, that if intention were necessary, reiteration might become necessary in cases where lack of intention had invalidated a previous administration; third, that baptism is primarily for the forgiveness of original sin, for which there is no active responsibility. Thomas thought these objections outweighed by other considerations. First, he pointed out that intention and the desire for baptism are equivalent, but no-one ought to receive baptism unless he desires it. Second, he thought that true penitence demanded a positive will to repent. Third, he argued that although the recipient is patient, yet the passiveness is voluntary. Against the objection that rebaptisms might become necessary, he urged the suggestion that where a subsequent lack of intention was subsequently disclosed, a conditional form of baptism might be used (Thom. 3, Qu.68, 8).

Trent reaffirmed the traditional teaching. The Catechism required of adult candidates 'intention and determination to receive the sacrament, together with repentance for their previous ill-spent life' (Cat.T. 2, 2 Qu. 35). The usual questions were to be put at the service, and the usual profession of faith made (Ibid. Qu. 42). Adults were required to answer and profess in person (Ibid. Qu. 43). We may notice at this point that the demand for a profession on the part of adults checked the growth of Romanist doctrine to a sacramentalist extreme, in which a magical efficacy might be asserted even in the case of adult unbelievers. Converts remained the only proper adult subjects, and the outward
profession continued to be exacted as the guarantee of conversion.

Of the sixteenth century Reformers the Anabaptists were the ones who laid the greatest stress upon the requirement of a confession of faith in baptism. All baptisms were for them adult baptisms, and the sacrament itself in their thinking was not very much more than an outward mark or sign of individual conversion and entry into the Church. The confession of repentance and faith was almost the most important part of its administration. All the Reformers were at one, however, in demanding the usual outward profession on the part of adults who presented themselves to be baptised. Calvin taught that the right use of baptism consisted in faith and repentance (Tracts 2 p. 87). As against the Anabaptists he did not think that repentance and faith need come before baptism in all cases - the children of Christians, already within the covenant by birth, were an exception. He did think, however, that they ought to be required of those whose age made them capable of both (Ibid.). Beza made the same demand, and he thought that adults who could not give a proper account of their faith ought to be excluded from the sacrament (Q.R.C.119). The Reformed discussions were very largely theoretical rather than practical, and their teaching upon this question did not receive very great prominence.

The Anglicans made affirmations similar to those of the Swiss. Frith taught that faith was necessary in adult candidates (E.R.p.92). In the 1536 Article the benefits of baptism in the case of adults were made conditional upon 'their coming thereunto perfectly and truly repentant, confessing and believing all the articles of the faith, and having firm trust and credence in the promises of God adjoined to the said sacrament' (Strype's Cran.l p.35); the approach to a fuller Lutheran conception of faith in this passage is of interest. The King's Book made the same point in a different way. It defined baptism as a covenant. The obligations which the human recipients undertook were belief, service and the forsaking of sin (p.44). Henry himself in the Assertio had argued against Luther that faith was not absolutely necessary to the efficaciousness of the sacrament, although highly desirable, but he clearly had no thought of dispensing with the traditional profession of it on the part of adults (p.83).

Other writers who dealt with the matter were Nowell and Hooper, both of whom mentioned the need for faith and repentance in adults (Now.P.S.p.87 5; Hoop.P.S.1 p.74). Becon related the outward profession to the outward sign, pointing out that only an outward profession can be made, but that 'ungodly and wicked hypocrites, which feign repentance and faith, only receive outward baptism' (Bec.P.S.2 pp.224-5). God knows the heart, and he truly and inwardly baptises those who have inward penitence and faith. Bullinger, describing a pure baptismal service, saw a need to state the two sides of the covenant: 'It is lawful to recite the promises of God, to rehearse the belief and require faith of them that are to be baptised, being of perfect age' (Bull.P.S.4 p.358). In favour of the common twofold vow of abnegation of the devil and of faith in Christ
Bullinger cited such authorities as Tertullian (De Cor. Mil. 3) and Augustine (Contra Pel. et Cel. 2, 40). Jewel thought it reasonable and right to demand of converts 'the acknowledgment of the error in which they lived, and the seeking forgiveness of their former sins' (Jew. P. S. 2 p. 1105). Hooker too thought it most fitting that there should be a profession of faith 'on the receipt of the first sacrament of faith', and he quoted Isidore upon the double covenant of the Christian, 'concerning the relinquishment of Satan, and touching obedience to the faith of Christ' (Isid. De Offic. Eccles. 2, 24, quoted by Hooker L. E. P. 5, 63, 1).

In view of the covenantal nature of the sacrament Hooker thought the Church had a right 'to exact at every man's hands an express confession of faith' (Ibid. 5, 64, 4).

Enough has been said to show that although the Reformers did not deal with the topic in detail, for they were practical and controversial theologians rather than theoretical and speculative, yet they thoroughly approved the practice of the primitive Church, by which all adult candidates had to make a personal profession of repentance and faith. They recognised, of course, the imperfection of this requirement as a test of genuine inward repentance and faith. But in man's ignorance of inward disposition, they accepted it as the best possible guarantee of sincerity, charitably ascribing true faith (and consequent grace) to all who made such a profession and did not openly renounce or disregard it. We may notice at this point that the inter-relating of the sacrament and personal faith was in accord with the deepest principles of evangelical doctrine. Less stress was laid upon intention, or the expression of a desire for baptism, but of course the Reformers approved the principle that the sacrament should only be administered where there was a voluntary desire for it. The question did not arise as a controversial issue, for the Romanists themselves never carried their sacramentalist views to the point of forcing baptism upon unwilling infidels - the actual instances were officially disavowed - or of claiming that such enforced administrations could have beneficial effects.

4. The Infant - Sponsors

An obvious difficulty in the case of infants who receive the sacrament of baptism is that they are not capable of fulfilling the conditions which are exacted of adults and which ought to be exacted of all candidates. The retention of infant baptism does not depend upon the answer made to this objection, but the objection itself does require an answer. The answer almost unanimous answer has been that in the case of infants the Church is satisfied with the testimony of sponsors or god-parents. Disputed points are who those sponsors ought to be and what exactly they do or do not do on the child's behalf, but there is general agreement among paedobaptists that the confession of sponsors replaces personal confession in the case of the children of Christians.

The custom of allowing godparents to represent infants cannot claim to be Scriptural, but it can claim to be of great antiquity, going back to a very early period in the history of the Church. Some scholars think that it derives from the Jewish demand
for three witnesses at the ceremony of proselyte-initiation (Daniel p.412). This may well be, since adults had sponsors as well as infants, although in their case the function was more purely one of witness. Whatever the origin, sponsors were soon required, and their was the responsibility of guaranteeing the sincerity of the candidate, witnessing his profession, and undertaking his instruction in the new life. When infants were baptised, they had the more onerous task of pledging their own faith for the child, guaranteeing at least a future repentance and belief on the part of the child, and engaging to give that instruction which would in due time lead to conversion and consecration.

In the earliest times it appears that parents themselves normally stood as sponsors for their children (Hart p.202; Wall 1 p.137). Indeed, Augustine argued that the child 'believed in the parent' i.e. they shared the one faith. Others acted on occasion, of course, masters on behalf of infant-slaves, virgins on behalf of foundlings (Wall 1 p.137). The extension of this latter practice to all cases has been traced by many to the persecutions, which made it necessary to make provision for the Christian upbringing of the children in case of the martyrdom or apostasy of the natural parents (Daniel p.412). The number of sponsors in the first centuries was not fixed, but there were seldom if ever more than the Jewish three.

During the Dark and Middle Ages the various church-councils passed many laws with regard to sponsors. A revolutionary step was the forbidding of parents to act on behalf of their children. This step was taken, in defiance of all antiquity, at the Council of Mentz in 815 (Hart p.202 Can.55). In the Penitential of Egbert we find it laid down that in the case of girls a man should receive from the font, in the case of boys a woman (Ibid. p.194). A strange regulation was that the baptiser should not eat in the same house with those whom he has christened, and that he should not kiss them - perhaps there was a hint here of the later theory of spiritual relationships contracted in the sacrament. The Council of York definitely restricted the number of those who received from the font to three, 'two men and one woman for a boy, and two women and one man for a girl' (Hart. p.202). The Sarum Use allowed two sponsors. They were warned to take special care of the child, preserving it from evil, up to the age of seven. They also had the task of teaching the child the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ave (Liturgy and Worship). The Eastern and Roman churches came to consider one sponsor sufficient, but they did not forbid two (Daniel p.412).

Perhaps the most curious development in the teaching upon godparents was the working out of a theory that those who took part in the sacrament contracted a spiritual relationship with the child and with one another which brought them within the prohibited degrees (Hart p.202). Theologians and canonists defended the prohibition of parents upon this ground - it has already been noted that in cases of extreme necessity they had a special dispensation to baptise. The solid foundations of this extraordinary theory of spiritual relationships are hard to discover. Cynics might perhaps be excused thinking that it was largely developed
by canonists who were anxious to extend the sphere of their operations, and to create a wider demand for papal dispensations. Whatever the origin the theory established itself firmly. The Catechism of Trent endorsed the theory, stating that there must be no contracts of matrimony between those who have affinity in baptism (Cat.T.2,2, Qu.26).

The Catechism laid down detailed rules with regard to sponsors and clearly defined their duties. Every Christian, it stated, 'requireth a nurse or instructor' (Ibid. Qu.25). This demand for a sponsor was based upon the two authores Dionysius and Hyginus. Only one sponsor was necessary, but two were permissible, one of each sex (Qu.29). The sponsors had a twofold duty: to exercise vigilance over their spiritual children, and to teach and admonish (Qu.27). Parents were forbidden to undertake the office on behalf of their own children on the ground that there ought to be some mark of difference between the spiritual and the carnal upbringing (Qu.28). Heretics, Jews and infidels were quite naturally and wisely forbidden to enter upon the office. The Rituale Romanum summarised this teaching in its paragraph of instructions with regard to sponsors: 'one or two at the most, never two of the same sex, nor the parents, nor excommunicate, heretics, infidels, lunatics or ignorant persons.'

The office of godparent survived in Protestant lands in spite of the natural objections of Anabaptists and some scruples on the part of Puritans. The Lutherans took over the traditional teaching very largely as it stood, demanding only that the sponsors should be intelligent and should themselves understand the faith. Greater care was taken, for example in the Orders themselves, to instruct the godparents in their responsibilities and duties. The use of the vernacular made such instruction possible. Many of the Lutheran addresses to godparents, in Osiander's Order of 1524, the Brandenburg-Nuremberg of 1533, and the Cassel Order, for example, bear strong resemblances to those in the later English order, which was obviously based to a large extent upon the Lutheran models (See Jacobs Luth.M.in Eng.Chap.Baptism).

The Anglicans approached the matter of sponsors very much as the Lutherans did. Early writers like Frith and Tyndale stressed the duty of godparents to teach, to the displeasure of the then ecclesiastical authorities. Frith approved of the principle of sponsorship, but he protested that there was need for 'parents and godparentheses alike to know their office and to do it' (B.R.p.95). Tyndale complained bitterly of the ignorance and slackness of godparents, and of the lax standards in the admission to confirmation, which were the root of the trouble: 'Because the labour seemed too tedious and painful to oppose the children one by one, they (the bishops) asked the priests that presented them only, Whether the children were taught the profession of their baptism? And they answered, Yea; and so upon their words, they confirm them without apposing. So when they no longer apposed, the priests no longer taught them, but committed the charge to their godfathers and godmothers, and they to the father and mother, discharging themselves by their own authority, within half an hour. And
the father and mother taught them a monstrous Latin paternoster. And in process, as the ignorance grew, they brought them to confirmation straight from baptism, so that now oft times they be volommed and bishopped both in one day; that is, we be confirmed in blindness to be kept in ignorance for ever (Tynd.P.S.3 p.72). The objections of the authorities to a restoration of purer practices are difficult to understand, except on the supposition that the people would be instructed in Lutheran and anti-traditional theology. The opposition was real enough, however, for among the articles gathered out of the book 'The Summe of Scripture', and condemned, was the seemingly praiseworthy request or statement that 'godfathers and godmothers be bound to keep their children, that they be put to school, that they may understand the gospel, and the epistles of S. Paul' (Foxe 5 p.592).

Becon too approved of the practice of godparents, which he described as 'no less commendable than ancient', but he too stressed that it was only commendable so long as the sponsors fulfilled their office: 'If the godfathers and godmothers satisfy their promise' (Bec.P.S.2 p.228). One new trend appeared in Becon. He could not definitely ask that parents should be admitted as sponsors, but he did not see why they should not be. He utterly discommended the case, as the case in his day: 'I utterly discommend this use, that fathers cannot be suffered to be present at the baptism of their own children'. Perhaps the Anglican attitude up to the time of Edward was best summed up in the rather conservative Prayer Book Orders. Three sponsors were now allowed, two men and one woman for a boy, two women and one man for a girl. Parents were not allowed to undertake the office, and they were neither enjoined nor forbidden to attend the service. The duties of the sponsors were set out clearly and forcibly in the different Exhortations. The sponsors became responsible for the virtuous and godly upbringing of the child, and had to see to it that the child had all that was necessary for spiritual instruction. A short catechism was appended in order that the child might be instructed out of it in the rudiments of the Christian faith.

The Reformed group was not satisfied by any means with the conservative Lutheran and Anglican revisions. A bitter and sharply contested battle developed around the exclusion of parents, who in the earliest days of the Church had unquestionably stood for their own children. Calvin demanded that parents, far from being excluded from the service, should be forced to be present, and indeed to be the chief sponsors (Knox 6 p.97). Knox took up a similar position. In his order he required the father and one other suretie to give an account of their faith (Ibid.4 p.190). The Puritans in England, not content with the compromise of Becon, adopted the full Calvinistic teaching, and demanded a revision of the office at this point. Articles cited in the Zurich letters (P.S.1 106) claimed that the father ought always to answer for his child. The Admonition to Parliament made the same claim, asking that normally 'Parents should make
rehearsal of their faith', but allowing 'other of the congregation who knew the good behaviour and sound faith of the parents' to deputise 'if upon necessary occasions and business they be absent' (Frere and Douglas P.M. p.14). The Puritan programme had of course a distinct disciplinarian intention, in accordance with the desire for a greater discrimination in admission to the sacrament. Cartwright made the point even clearer: 'It were convenient, seeing the children of the faithful only are to be baptised, that the father should and might, if convenient, offer and present his children to be baptised, making an open confession of that faith, wherein he would have his child baptised' (Whit. P.S. 3 p.138). Some of the Puritan clergy seem to have taken the law into their own hands, as is not unusual with groups which feel strongly and can secure no legal satisfaction, for we read that the Person of Eastwell (Nicholls) was cited in 1584 for the irregularity of admitting a father as godparent (Strype's Whitgift 1 p.277).

The Separatists carried the Puritan movement to its extreme point and abolished sponsors altogether (Burrage E.E.D. 1 p.143). There is always the possibility, however, that when the Separatists called for the abolition of god-parents, they did not mean that there should be no sponsors at all, but only that there should be no sponsors after the Romanist and Anglican fashion. The Puritans themselves were accused of seeking to do away with god-parents altogether when what they really aimed at was the substitution of parent-sponsors for outsiders (Cf. Strype on the Plumbers Hall congregation, in his Grindal 1 p.117, & 2nd P. of a R. 2 p.70). Separatists and Puritans were certainly united in attacking the Anglican practice of sponsors who were not parents.

The Anglicans themselves seemed to have attempted a compromise between traditional practice and Reformed principle along the lines already suggested by Becon. Parker stated the official view in his Advertisements. He continued to refuse to allow parents to answer for their children, and he advocated liberty in the wider matter of the attendance of the parents at the service: parents should be allowed but not forced to be present (See Gee and Hardy: Advertisements Articles for Administration 9). The abuse of children acting as sponsors was corrected by a requirement that only those who had received the communion should be admitted to answer (Ibid. 10). The Anglican party maintained this position against constant Puritan attacks, dismissing the demands of their opponents on the general ground that they 'betrayed a useless and over busy fondness for innovation (See Zur. Lett. P.S. 2 No.94). The Canon of 1604 finally ratified and enforced the judgment of the Advertisements.

It may be asked why the Elizabethan hierarchy clung so tenaciously to the conservative practice. On the face of it the Puritan demand seemed irresistible. It had antiquity in its favour. It accorded with the plain fact that the parent is by nature the one most fitted to care for the welfare of the child. Where the parents were manifestly unsuitable special arrangements could be made. It also fitted the Lutheran principle that there
ought to be a clear understanding of the meaning and obligations of baptism, and a sincere attempt to enforce the implementing of the baptismal vow. It had in addition the support of the teaching and example of 'all the best Reformed churches'. Perhaps an ideal solution which the Church of England might have adopted would have been to have one parent-sponsor and one other to guarantee a Christian upbringing in case of the failure of the parent through death or back-sliding.

The Anglicans resisted for a variety of reasons. Possibly they feared that to give way at one point would be to admit the Puritans at all points. They saw that behind the smaller demands there was the wider demand for the erection of the full Calvinistic discipline and order. The uncompromising nature of the Puritan attacks no doubt helped to stiffen the opposition. It must be remembered too that the Queen was not kindly disposed toward any tampering with the religion now uniformly established, if not uniformly observed, and the Queen, not without reason, hated and feared the Calvinistic system with its plain threat to the Royal Supremacy. Thus the Church of England resisted Puritan pressure and retained the old system with one or two slight modifications. The idea of a spiritual affinity dropped away, and there was a new emphasis upon the need for the godparents to understand what they were doing and what their responsibilities were. The issue was small, but trifling as it was in itself, it helped to heighten the tension between the Puritans and the hierarchy, thus contributing to the final catastrophe of war and schism.

5. The Infant - Interrogatories

In the preceding section the general duties of sponsors were set out as agreed upon in the main by all parties. Such division as arose concerned the qualifications and numbers of sponsors rather than their responsibilities, who they were rather than what they did. Everyone granted that the god-parent, as the representative of the church or in his own person, had the duty of seeing to the Christian education of the infant baptised. The Protestant party, anxious to make religion more living and personal, stressed this side of the matter. But the sponsor did more than undertake the instruction of the child, as we have seen in the discussion of the baptism of infants. He also made a guarantee of faith. In Reformed circles this guarantee gave rise to very complicated discussions. Everyone agreed that there ought to be this guarantee. What the guarantee signified, and what its implications were, was quite another matter. The discussions of this point are important because they revealed yet another small but not unimportant divergence between the Puritan and the Anglican parties in the English Church.

The whole issue narrowed down to the question of the interrogatories as administered to infants. In the early church no person had been baptised unless he had first given a satisfactory account of his repentance, faith and desire for the sacrament. The interrogatories had been drawn up in order to give the opportunity for making a final public profession. Now it is clear that infants could not possibly answer the questions in person, and it
is equally clear that they could not be assumed capable of fulfilling the necessary requirements. Either then the standards had to be relaxed in the case of infants-perhaps it would be better to say waived as inapplicable - or else parents or other Christians required to come forward and answer the questions on the child's behalf. Perhaps the most sensible course would have been the former, with the provision of a special form of service suitable to infants. But the course actually chosen was the latter, and thus from very early times a primary office of the godparent came to be the answering on the child's behalf of the usual baptismal interrogatories.

But what did that answering imply? The question is not by any means an easy one, and various answers could be given. It might imply that the child was taken to have a real faith, by the inward work of the Spirit, which it had not as yet the means to express. It might imply that the child shared the faith of the sponsor or of the Church, not being as yet capable of any motions of belief or unbelief. It might also imply that the sponsor was guaranteeing a future faith and repentance on the part of the child, or the goal of the instruction in faith and morals for which the sponsor took responsibility. It might imply that the sponsor was confessing his personal faith in proof of the child's right to the sacrament by covenant-membership of the people of God. In the early Church there was no very clear discussion of the problem, but Augustine seems to have leaned to the second of the four main views. He asserted strongly the necessity of interrogatories and responses even in the case of infants, and he spoke of one faith in the parents and in the child (See Wall l.p.137). Infants, he said, are reckoned penitents when by the words of the bearers they do renounce the devil and the world; they enter, as it were, into the penitence of the sponsors. Augustine did suggest the possibility of an activity of the Holy Spirit in infants, but he did not think that infants could properly be said to have faith on their own account.

The school-men approached the problem rather differently. A cardinal principle in their teaching was that the sacrament has its effect so long as there is no positive bar or obstacle to its working. The question of a positive faith in infants thus became much less important, for lack of faith could not in itself constitute an obstacle i.e. so long as there was no positive unbelief. No more was needed in the case of infants than to assert the right of the children of Christians to baptism as against those of infants. For this purpose the faith of the parents was all-important, and thus Thomas could speak of sponsors making a profession of their own faith which availed also for the child - rather perhaps in the Augustinian sense. Whether any very hard and fast distinction between this view, with its suggestion of a vicarious faith and profession, and the Calvinistic and Puritan view of a personal profession which guarantees the right of the child to baptism is open to question (See Thomas 3 Qu.71,1).

In the sixteenth century two points had become clear. First, whether the sponsors answered for themselves or for the children, the questions were definitely addressed to the children. Thus
there could be no avoiding the definite suggestion of a vicariousness of faith. Second, in the persecutions the Protestant heretics were frequently charged with false dealing in relation to their god-parents who in their baptism had professed on their behalf the catholic faith (Foxe 8 p.111, 142,450 etc.). The confessors denied, of course, that they had been pledged to Romanist beliefs, but the point is this, that the beliefs of the sponsors were plainly held to suffice for the child, partly by a vicarious imputation, partly by the assurance of future instruction. In this connexion an interesting point was raised by Woodman (who himself inclined to a Lutheran view), when he asked Langdale what faith infants were baptised into if the godparents were at heart unbelievers. Presumably the answer would be that the godparents act on behalf of the whole Church, and therefore even if they themselves have no personal faith they profess in baptism the true faith of the Church (See Wall 1 pp.137 f.). The Catechism of Trent did not enquire into these questions, but it laid down the rule that if the baptised person be an infant the sponsor must answer the questions asked (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.

Luther, of course, claimed that infants do have a real faith by the secret operation of the Spirit. By reason of age they cannot make personal profession, and therefore the sponsors make vicarious profession. The faith is the child's own, the profession alone is vicarious. On this view it was right and proper to address the interrogatories to the child in person, for although the godparents must answer, the repentance and faith professed were truly those of the child. Quite a few English writers took the Lutheran view, notably Becon. Even Calvin allowed that there might be a special work of the Holy Ghost in elect infants who died in infancy, but he did not think it proper to speak of faith in infants, nor did he think it right to make a vicarious profession of that which by its nature could not be known. The existence of Lutheran shades of thought is not unimportant however.

The main Anglican interpretation seems to have been different. The Anglicans taught for the most part that the sponsors make on the child's behalf a profession of future faith and repentance, which binds and engages the child as it grows to years of discretion. The godparents are spiritual guardians who enter into a covenant, and guarantee to see that it is kept. They thus make a profession on behalf of the child, as the child's representatives. On this view the questions ought properly to be addressed to them, but they ought to answer them not in their own name but in that of the child, with their own known faith as guarantee. Hooper seems to have had this in mind when he said that 'the testimonies of the infant to be christened are examined in the behalf of the child, of faith, what they believe of God' (Hoop. P.S.1 pp.129-130). This view is clearly and forcibly set forward in the ENGLISH Prayer Book Catechism, with the complementary assurances that the child inherits the promises of the covenant upon the sponsors' profession so long as it is willing to undertake the obligations when it arrives at years of discretion.

The publication of the 1549 Prayer Book gave rise to the
first clash of opinion upon the subject. In this Book the interro-
gatories were still addressed to the child, although answered, of course, by the sponsors. The underlying doctrine was meant to be it is difficult to say: possibly the Lutheran, that the sponsors make a vicarious profession; possibly the traditional, that the infants believe in the sponsors or in the Church; possibly even the Hamp that of Hooper, as the Catechism strongly suggests. Whatever the doctrine, there was considerable dissatisfaction on the part of the more radical group that the questions were asked of children who neither could nor did believe. Even granting that they believed in the sponsors, it was still the faith of the sponsors which was really in question. And if the sponsors made a guarantee of future faith, it was they and not the child who must make the profession. The mal-
contents had the powerful support of Bucer, to whom the Book was submitted for criticism, and in 1552, and all subsequent revisi-
ons, the questions have accordingly been directed to the sponsors, who makes reply on the child's behalf. The latter point is important: the sponsors answer in their own name, not in that of the child. Taking the questions in conjunction with the Catechism and the Confirmation Service it is not unfair to con-
clude that the underlying doctrine was that stated by Hooper. The infants believe neither in themselves nor in the sponsors, but they are pledged by their sponsors to a future repentance and faith, and on the strength of the pledge made the they are reckoned already inheritors of the promises and privileges of the covenant. The Lutheran could still accept the service, however, for it is clearly patient of explanation along Lutheran lines.

The Puritans of the Marian Dispersion were not satisfied with this revision. They came into contact with the more advanced Reformed teaching and learned from their Swiss masters to regard all forms of infant interrogatories with suspicion. As Beza was to put it, the interrogatories were 'needless and trifling', and they owed their origin 'to the negligence by which the same form was retained in the baptism of infants, which in the be-
ginning was used in that of the adult catechumens' (Strype's Grindal 1 App. 41). The custom which the Reformed churches favoured was that of exacting from the parent a confession of faith in his own name, for the purpose of ensuring a discriminate use of the sacrament. A desire was expressed for the granting of baptism to the child, but it was the desire of the parent. The Anglican service was not acceptable, partly because of the popish associations of the traditional form, partly because of the suggestion of vicarious action in the phrase 'in the name of this child'. Rather strangely some Puritans objected to the questions and answers not only because they were useless but also, or so at least we learn from Grindal, because the promises were too hard to be performed by the sponsors themselves (Grind.P.S. p.340 Letter to Zanchius).

During the reign of Elizabeth the Puritans pressed their demand for the abolition of interrogatories. Even Grindal, who defended the status quo on grounds of expediency, agreed
with the Puritan policy as an ideal: 'We receive, it is true, or rather tolerate, until the Lord shall give us better times, the interrogatories to infants' (Zur. Lett.1 No. 75). The Puritans were able to enlist the support of Beza, who wrote to Grindal protesting strongly against the demanding of a profession of faith from the child, which tended to promote Anabaptist notions, and also to suggest that the child had no covenant right to the sacrament (F. & D. Pur. Man. p. 48). The 'Means how to settle' suggested a specific form of revision: 'That in the ministation of the said sacrament the words 'Dost thou believe', may be pronounced 'Do you believe' to the godfathers, seeing the rubric is, that the minister shall turn to the godfathers and not to the child' (Strype's Whitgift 1 pp. 386 f.).

The arguments against the interrogatories were most fully stated by Cartwright in the controversy over the Admonition. In answer to the authority of antiquity Cartwright alleged that the interrogatories administered to infants were brought in by Hyginus. He dismissed Dionysius as a late forgery and therefore valueless: 'It may appear that Mr. Doctor's Dionysius, being a counterfeit and start-up, these interrogatories and demands ministered to infants have not so many grey hairs as he would have us believe' (Whit. P. S. 3 p. 110). Whitgift had also appealed to Augustine, but Cartwright denied that the great Father had favoured the Anglican abuse of the godparent answering in the child's name and person. Augustine was guilty rather of the teaching that 'it is lawful for those that present the child to say that it believed' (p. 113). Theologically Cartwright condemned the interrogatories as a foolish misapplication: 'They profane baptism in toying foolishly, for that they ask questions of an infant which cannot answer, and speak unto them as was wont to be spoken unto men'. He granted the possibility of faith, or at any rate of the a work of the Holy Ghost in children, but he denied that such a faith or work may be known: 'It can no more be precisely said that it hath faith, than it may be said precisely elected' (Ibid. p. 114). Even if the faith of the infant were known, Cartwright could still see no sense in the interrogatories, for everyone knew that the child itself could not answer. If the faith were known, then the only sensible thing to do would be what Augustine seemed to recommend i.e. to ask those that presented the infant, and not the infant, whether it were faithful; so that the sponsors may answer in their own persons and not in the child's, that it was faithful' (p. 118). A further argument pressed by Cartwright was that it did not lie in the power of the sponsors to fulfil the promises which they made on the part of another - indeed the whole polemic was against the vicarious aspect in all its shapes and forms. Cartwright commanded of course the disciplinary measure of exacting a confession of faith from the sponsors themselves (p. 138).

The strength of the Puritan opposition may be gauged from the frequency with which the point was raised in Puritan tracts. The 'Means how to settle' has been already mentioned. We may also quote Marprelate who scoffed at the bishops' English 'My desire is
that I may be baptised in this faith, to their understanding and in their dialect is after this sort, My desire is, not that I myself, but that this child, whereunto I am a witness, may be baptised in this faith' (Pierce's Marprelate Tracts p. 373). The Ministers of Suffolk joined in an united protest against the interrogatories (2nde P. of a R. I p. 152), and John Hall of Bury St. Edmunds went further and altered the vows, for which he was 'indited' in 1581 (Ibid. p. 111). At the Lambeth Conference the matter came up and Travers acted as Puritan spokesman. Penny also joined the fray, taking the Puritan side (Burage E. E. D 2 p. 70). Mr. Settles was committed for not using the prescribed form (2nde P. of a R. I p. 138). The question of the interrogatories was raised at the beginning of James' reign in the Millenary Petition and also in the debates at Hampton Court.

Against the Puritan arguments and against non-conformist practices Whitgift and Hooker were the main Anglican champions. Whitgift condemned the request in the 'Means how to settle' as 'unsound smelling of divers errors, contrary to the use of the primitive church, impious also.....the direct way to that heresie of the Anabaptists' (Strype's Whitgift 3 Append. No. 16). This was mostly abuse, and the suspicion of Anabaptist tendencies an attempt to discredit the Puritans, but Whitgift had a theological defence as well: that the abolition of the interrogatories would mean the sealing to infants of the promises of the Gospel without any corresponding obligations on their part (Ibid.). In baptism the sponsors represented the infants, undertaking for them the human side of the covenant which they themselves would later accept in person when they came forward for confirmation. Without this pledging by the sponsors of a future repentance and faith on the part of the infants, baptism would cease to be a covenant in the strict sense, for there would no longer be any human side to the bargain. There would be the testimony to the divine promises, but the important if secondary human response would be lacking.

Whitgift himself did not show very great skill in developing this argument, and his counter of Cartwright's criticisms was for the most part very feeble - indeed he did little more than appeal to antiquity (Whit.P. S. 3 p. 109). Hooker, however, in his answer to the Puritan charge of foolish toying, saw at once the importance of the argument from the two-sided nature of the covenant. He claimed that the church had no right to baptise any person unless either that person himself or his representatives accepted the usual terms upon which baptism was offered. Even in the case of infants the conditions could not be waived, but must be accepted for the infants by their spiritual guardians, the god-parents (L. E. P. 5, 64, 4). Possibly Knewstubs had this same thought in mind when, defending the interrogatories at Hampton Court, he quoted the saying of Austin 'baptizare est credere'. A different line was taken at the Conference by the Bishop of Winchester, who returned to the idea of a vicarious faith: the infant sinned vicariously and could believe vicariously. This view is interesting, since it points to a survival of older ideas which tended to reassert themselves in opposition to militant
Puritanism (Barlow S. & S. P. 65). Curiously enough, this opinion amounts fundamentally to the same thing as the Calvinistic contention that the Christian's child has a covenant-right to baptism by its descent. The only real difference was that the Calvinists objected to the ascription of any type of faith to the child, and wished its baptism to stand entirely in the faith of the parent.

The differences between the Anglicans and the Puritans were really very slight. The majority were agreed that there was no actual faith in infants, not at any rate a faith that could be known, for the secret faith of the Spirit in elect infants dying remained hidden from man. All agreed too that in some sense the faith of the parents or of a Christian ancestry availed for the child; and all believed that at baptism some kind of profession of faith ought to be made. The parents did believe and profess vicariously even if only in the sense that their faith and profession guaranteed the infant's right to the sacrament. No Anglicans sponsored the abuse of this doctrine, that such a vicarious faith and profession avails instead of a personal conversion on the part of the child. On the contrary, all thought that the child was baptised to a future repentance and faith. The only substantial disagreement was upon this question, whether the parents or sponsors could act as the child's representatives and make in its name a pledge of the future repentance and faith. The Puritan party apparently thought not; in spiritual matters the issue must be settled personally between the soul and God, the infant enjoying the covenant privileges within the parent until it came to maturity. The Prayer-Book party took the opposite view: in spiritual things as in temporal the parent may act for the child which has not yet come to years of discretion. By a recalling of the pledges and of the attendant promises of God the personal conversion of the child in later life may be helped forward, finding open expression in the ratification of the vows at the service of Confirmation.

There is no need to make a choice between the two views. We ought to be clear, however, that in defending interrogatories the Anglicans had no wish to associate themselves with Romanist or even Lutheran views. There are of course points of contact, and these views, especially the Lutheran, may be read into the present office, and were probably held by many of the Elizabethan clergy. But the leading Anglicans accepted the main Reformed positions: the supremacy of the election and promise of God, the acceptance of infants within the covenant, and baptism in respect of future repentance and faith. They retained interrogatories, partly because they were ancient, partly because they set out the conditions attached to baptism, partly because they tightened the bond between sponsors and sponsored, and provided a starting-point for instruction in Christian life and doctrine. Nothing is more regrettable than that so small an issue should have been worked up, for mainly controversial reasons, into a great centre of conflict, with the consequent misrepresentations of basic opinions, and accusations of irrelevant errors. Such a conflict could only make more tangled a tangled issue, and contribute not to understanding but to misapprehension and confusion.
Notes

1 Lomb.4 Dist.6 E 'Nam in hoc est in aliis sacramentis sicut forma est servando; ita et intentio illud celebrandi est habenda'

2 De La S.T.B. p.342 'non seulement de vouloir accomplir et d'accomplir de fait, le rite extérieurement comme le veut l'Eglise, mais de faire ce que fait l'Eglise'.

3 Rituale Romanum 'Si quis adultus sit baptizandus, debet prius secundum apostolicam regulam, in Christiana fidei ac sanctis moribus diligenter instrui'.

4 Beza Q.R.C. 'Adultos igitur nullos admiseris, nisi fidem rectam disertè professos? Nullos

5 Nowell P.S.p.87 'Rectus ergo baptismi usus, quibus in rebus sit situs, brevitè edissere. In Fide et Poenitentia.

6 Rituale Romanum De Patrinis 'Unus tantum, sive vis, sive mulier, vel ad summum unus et una adhibeantur. Sed simul non admitterantur duo viri, aut duae mulieres, necque baptizandi pater, aut mater'.

7 Barlow S.& S.p.65 'Qui peccavit in altero, credat in altero'.
CHAPTER X THE FORM

1. The Water

Baptism naturally implies water, or at least a liquid of some kind. It might be thought then that no dispute could arise with respect to the matter or element. Water has from the very first been the liquid used. John the Baptist baptised in water. The Apostles baptised in water. Christians throughout the centuries have concurred in accepting water as the fundamental constituent. Many theologians have pointed out how suitable water is for the purpose of the first sacrament of the faith. Thomas discussed possible alternatives: fire, which enlightens, oil and wine, blood, exorcising, or a simple blessing. Water was more fitting than any of these, he thought, because it corresponds most closely to the effects of the sacrament, and is easily obtained in almost all places (Thom. 3 Qu. 66 3). The Catechism of Trent stressed the ready availability, so important in view of the supposed absolute necessity of baptism (Cat.T. 2, 2 Qu. 7). The Reformers tended rather to emphasise its correspondence with the signification. Beza, for example, thought water 'most meet to figure and represent the blood of Christ' (B. P. S. 47). Latimer, however, thought the simplicity of baptism and the ubiquity of the water important; 'What is so common as water? Every foul ditch is full of it. There we begin' (Lat. P. S. 2 p. 127). Apparently he drew from it the lesson which Naaman the Syrian had to learn, that God asks simple and easy things of those who seek spiritual health.

In the face of this unanimity no very striking differences of opinion are to be expected with regard to the matter, but variations did arise at various points. There are, first, minor questions with regard to the water, or type of water used. In the New Testament the question did not receive any particular attention. The earliest baptisms were probably in running water, as for example in the river Jordan - hence the insistence upon running water in some places (Cf. Macdonald, pp. 174 f.). It is hardly likely, however, that all the earliest baptisms took place in this way; in the case of the thousands at Jerusalem baptism in living water was probably not practicable. Thus quite early all types of water came to be accepted without question. Justin referred only to some place where there is water (Neill & Whilloughby p. 380), and Tertullian defended the view that it makes no difference whether a man be washed in a sea or a pool, a stream or a fount, a lake or a trough (De Bapt. 4). Baptism in streams undoubtedly persisted, especially in missionary districts, but in the larger centres it tended to be replaced by baptism, first in the baptistery, later, and especially with the growth of infant baptism, in the font (Liturgy and Worship Art. Bapt.). In the sixteenth century the Roman church still taught that any type of water suffices (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 7) so long as it is true and natural water (C. & D. Sess. 7 Bapt. Can. 2). The Reformers had no great interest in the matter, stressing the meaning of the action rather than its practical details and accepted the common teaching. It is perhaps worthy of note that the Puritan Penry was accused of holding that baptisms ought only to take place in
A more serious question is that of the definition of water, and of the possibility or otherwise of substitutes in case of emergency. The early custom of adding a little wine to the water gave point to the problem. The pressing of the doctrine of absolute necessity lent an additional urgency, since it became of imperative importance to baptise the infant at the point of death correctly. The admixing of wine was clearly of ancient date, and it was early condemned as improper. The Exceptions of Ecgbert condemned the practice on the ground that Christ did not enjoin baptism with wine but with water (Hart E.R. p. 192). A rather different practice was discussed at a Council of Cashel, that of baptising in milk, but this was naturally forbidden and baptism in pure water enjoined (Ibid.).

Thomas discussed the matter of the definition of water and the limits of permissible use thoroughly and systematically. He noted that sea-water was used by some, which contained salt, and he also noted that the common practice of adding chrism seemed to be contrary to the insistence upon pure and fresh water. It was asked too whether the water on the Cross would have been counted as true water, and whether baptism could lawfully be administered in lye, the water of baths, rose-water, rainwater and similar liquids. Thomas laid down the general rule that any water may be used (i.e. salt or fresh), changed either naturally or artificially (this allowed the admixture of chrism), except where the species water was destroyed, as in chemical solutions. Rosewater and chemical waters could not be allowed (Thom. 3 Qu. 66 4). Trent adopted a similar position, defending the addition of the holy chrism on the ground that it helped to declare more clearly the effect of the sacrament (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 11). The question of the definition of water and the limits of permissible use did not cause great agitation amongst the Reformers, except that they objected most strongly to the addition of the chrism, and asked that clean and fair water only should be used: 'Whatsoever is added', as Hooper put it, 'oil, salt etc., be the inventions of men' (Hoop. P. S. 1 p. 533).

Whether or not substitutes might be permitted interest the Reformers, and especially Luther, far more. Everyone agreed, of course, that in all normal circumstances water ought to be used, for water was the element divinely appointed. But supposing exceptional circumstances arose in which no water was available: ought baptism then to be withheld, or could it be lawfully administered in some other liquid? A case of this kind seems to have arisen in the early church, for there is record of a dispute about the baptism of a Jew in the desert when in the absence of water sand was used (See Whitgift P. S. 3 p. 528). The traditional teaching, followed by the Scholastics and Tridentines, rested upon the dictum of Augustine, that without water there is no baptism (Daniel p. 409). Thus Lombard stated plainly that baptism must be in water and not in any other liquid (Lomb. 4 Dist. 3 R). This insistence upon the letter of the
institution seemed to Luther, however, to impose upon the church a new legalism. As he saw it, the importance of baptism lay in the meaning, not in the matter. Baptism was a washing, or better, a drowning. Water was the natural and ordinary element, but if water was not to hand, then any liquid, even beer, as Luther extravagantly put it, would serve the purpose just as well (See De la S.T.B. p.356). Of course, Luther was speaking rhetorically, for normally water was just as likely to be available as beer, even in Germany. The Reformers took his point: the stress must be, not upon the details of administration, but upon the living spiritual significance. They wasted no time in inventing or defending possible substitutes. The Tridentines, however, seem to have taken Luther seriously, and there were solemn debates amongst the Romanist theologians as to whether beer was permissible. Bellarmine found serious theological objections (Ibid.), and an official decision was given against this unusual matter in a letter of Pope Gregory IX to the Archbishop of Trondhjem (Cath. Encycl. Art. Bapt.). The Romanists insisted not only upon an absolute necessity of baptism, but also upon an absolute necessity of water to constitute baptism.

A far more important and controversial question was that of the consecration of the baptismal water. In this matter the Romanist and Reformed parties came into headlong collision, with the Lutherans and Anglicans attempting some form of compromise. The custom of hallowing the water of baptism had antiquity on its side. Tertullian had spoken of an invoking and inviting of the Holy Spirit through the words of benediction (De Bapt. 4). The early baptismal orders all had forms of consecration or benediction of the water. Of course, in these early days the consecration did not necessarily imply anything more than the setting aside of the water for its special and holy use, together with the invoking of the Spirit to work in and through the appointed means of grace. The language of the Fathers is often loose, but certainly the thought of a magical change in the water as the result of consecration had no place.

The Scholastics were divided upon the issue. The doctrine of an absolute necessity of the sacrament meant that lay-baptism in unconsecrated water had to be recognised as true baptism. Perhaps this was the reason why the theory of transubstantiation could never be applied to the sacrament of baptism as it was to the sacrament of the supper. At any rate, Thomas had to admit that there was no need of a special blessing of the baptismal water. Yet even in lay-baptisms the feeling persisted that somehow the water was different. For one thing, baptism in unconsecrated water tended to be regarded as inferior - this dated, of course, from the early prejudice against clinical baptism. For another, special regulations were drawn up with regard to the disposal of water used in a lay-baptism. At Durham in 1220 it was ordered that such water was either to be burnt or put in a font, and the vessel which had held it destroyed or given to the church (Hart E.R.p.192). Thomas maintained that consecration added solemnity to the sacrament (Thom. 3 Qu. 66 3).
The absolute necessity prevented the development of a rigid theory of consecration, but in all regular baptisms hallowed water had to be used, and the hallowing naturally came to be associated with the grace supposedly conveyed through the sacrament. The custom seems to have been to fill and bless the font on the Saturday before Easter, the Saturday before Pentecost, and other special occasions, leaving the water thus consecrated in the font until it was replaced, or until it became unfit for use and a new consecration became necessary (Neill and Whilloughby p.382).

The sixteenth century English clergy, faced in the reign of Henry with the spread of Lutheran opinions, insisted strongly upon the need for this hallowing of the water. We read for instance that the Lower House of Canterbury raised a protest against the prevalent errors: 'That it is as lawful to kryson a child in a tubb of water at home, or in a ditch by the way, as in a founte of stone in the church (i.e. on ordinary occasions); that the water in the founte stone is alonly a thing conjured; that the water runnyng in the charnell or common rywer is of as grete vertue as the hale water' (Strype E.M.1 2 App. No 73). The book the Sum of Scripture was similarly condemned for the opinion that 'the water of the font hath no more virtue in it self than the water that runneth in the river of Rhine' (Foxe 5 p.49) - the use of the term virtue is significant, as is also the comparison with the German river rather than with the Thames. The new Prayer Books interrupted the old customs, but during the reign of Mary Pole restored the hallowing, ordering 'the fonts to be come­ly kept, and holy water to be always ready for the children to be christened' (Ibid. 8 p.298).

That the Protestants should object to the hallowing of the water is not difficult to understand. The objection derived from the fundamental evangelical conception of the sacrament. A ceremony of consecration could make no difference to what was essentially a spiritual matter. Indeed, it gave rise to the superstitious notion that some grace or virtue was imparted to the water for conveyance to the recipient in and through the act of administration. Luther, of course, would have gone further: in the last analysis not merely the consecration, but the water itself was unnecessary. Luther himself did not draw the conclusion which some Anabaptists did, that we may dispense with the sacraments altogether. Indeed, in practice, he was quite content to retain a ceremony of consecration, as a thing indifferent. But Luther did raise a protest against the alleged necessity of consecration, and against the idea that consecration added something to the water used. The Reformed groups took up the initial objection and aimed at the abolition of consecration altogether.

In their discussions three main arguments were developed: that the consecration is unnecessary, that the mediaeval church had abused it, and that there is no trace of consecration in the baptisms recorded in Scripture.

With regard to the first point the sentence quoted above from the Sum of Scripture is typical. For the Reformers all water was equal and consecration could make no difference. The rank and file in England clearly grasped this truth, indeed, it had
been propounded as early as 1511 by Agnes Grebil in Kent, who had 'believed, taught and defended that baptism was no better in the font that out of the font' (Foxe 5 p.650). The martyrs under Mary consistently opposed the hallowing of the water, and Bostom those who like Woodman refused to allow their children to receive baptism in the churches had this point in mind. Even in the persecution after the passing of the Six Articles Bostom had repeated the old objection, now in English style, that 'the water of Thames had as much virtue as water hallowed by priests' (Ibid.5 p.448). The Anglican leaders were of much the same mind as these humbler champions of the reforming movement. Cranmer wished to retain a benediction of the water. In the first Prayer Book he had drawn up a service of consecration very much after the Romanist pattern: 'The water in the font shall be changed every month at least and afore any child be baptised in the water so changed, the Priest shall say at the font....

This form came in for very severe criticism, however, and it was omitted altogether in the 1552 book. Many of the Reformers went much further than the timid and cautious Cranmer. Becon attacked consecration strongly. He saw no reason why a baptism should not be counted perfect if the water were not first or all hallowed with their papish benedictions and other trifling additions' (Bec. P.S.1 p.11). Bullinger naturally helped to spread the conviction that no consecration was necessary, 'nor preparation with enchantments, breathings and crossings' (Bull. P.S.4 p.380), and Calchill traced the error back to Tertullian, 'who would not have the element of water sufficient to baptise withal, unless it be consecrate.......then a little oil to boot' (P.S.p.213). Cartwright, as a true precision, fault even with the 1552 revision, on the ground that it retained 'childish and superstitious toys' like 'the sanctifying of the flood Hordan and other waters by the blood of Christ', an approach to the doctrine and practice of consecration (Whit. P.S.3 p.381).

The Anglicans denied the necessity of consecration but they were more concerned about the second point: the Romanist abuse of consecration and the underlying erroneous doctrine. As we have seen, Cranmer, and with him quite a number of others, favoured the retention of some form of benediction. The consecration, properly used, served to mark the setting aside of the water for sacramental use. Cranmer contended that in a very real sense the water of baptism was holy: it was holy because of the holy use to which it was put (J.3 p.38). A change might even be seen in the water, but it was a sacramental change, not a real and substantial change: 'the change into the proper nature and kind of a sacrament'(Cran. P.S.1 p.180). It was in accordance with this conception of a proper use of consecration that Cranmer attempted to retain the benediction, and even in the amended 1552 Book left those phrases reminiscent of a benediction which later proved offensive to the Puritans. Jewel and Whitgift seem to have taken up Cranmer's teaching in this matter. Whitgift, for example, defended the offensive phrases on the ground that the sacramental water points to 'the mystical washing away of sin, which is proper to the work of God in the blood of Christ'; this being true only of water put to a sacramental use, and not
of water in general (Whit.P.S·3 p.382). Even Bullinger was willing to allow that 'the water of baptism is in very deed holy...

in respect of God's constitution ofit, the holy use, and the prayers of the godly (Bull.P.S.4 pp.363-4). Once that was granted, there could be no real objection to the true use of consecration, a simple but not indispensable setting apart of the water according to prescribed liturgical form. Indeed, many churches of the full Reformed school retained some such simple form of consecration.

What Cranmer and the Anglicans did object to, in company with Protestants abroad, was not consecration as such, although even that was in a strict sense unnecessary, but rather the abuse of consecration which they found in the unreformed church. At this point Cranmer and his disciples were willing to protest just as wholeheartedly as Calvin, who censured the magical incantations of the mediaeval church in the severest terms (Tracts 1 p.138). Cranmer himself dismissed summarily the idea that the Holy Ghost and divine virtue enter as it were into the water: 'The Holy Ghost', he maintained, 'is given in the ministration, not in the water or font' (Cran.P.S.1 p.148). There could be no change in the element, only a change in the recipient. The true baptismal transformation was 'that wonderful change which God Almighty by his omnipotence worketh really in them that be baptised therewith' (Ibid. 2 p.180). Now of course the Romanist champions themselves could not categorically assert a transubstantiation of the water as the result of consecration: that was the advantage which Cranmer gained when he chose to launch his attack upon the Scholastic doctrine of the supper from the stronghold of the theology of baptism. His opponent Gardiner was driven either to find some fundamental difference between the sacraments or else to deny the efficacy of baptism in unconsecrated water. The latter course was impossible, for it would have involved a departure from basic principles of baptismal doctrine. When Gardiner attempted to argue in favour of a divine virtue inherent in the water of the font - connected by the ignorant almost necessarily with the act of consecration - there was a certain thinness about his teaching. He could never contend for more than a spiritual presence of the Holy Ghost and of the divine nature of Christ in the baptismal water, and this of course was just what Cranmer desired in his attempt to establish a spiritual and sacramental, not a real and substantial presence in the supper. Nowell used the same arguments as Cranmer, and for the same purpose. He contended that consecration could not produce a substantial change in the water of baptism (P.S.p.91), and of course the Romanists were not very well able to oppose this contention. From this he argued that there could be no substantial change in the parallel sacrament of the supper. The Reformers seem to have been well aware of the difficulties of their opponents upon this matter, but it is also plain that they had to face an attempted approximation to eucharistic teaching even in the case of baptism, the ascribing to the water of special spiritual properties in consequence of the hallowing. This approximation very quickly degenerated into a magical conception in the popular mind, and against this debased
Quite a number of other writers followed the lead of Cranmer. Calfhill protested against the false consecration, the devising of which he ascribed ultimately to the devil, who had desired to imitate and to corrupt the true consecration by the word: 'And because that, through water consecrated by the Word of God sins are remitted... the Devil would have his consecration of water' (P.S. p.16). Jewel and Grindal developed the point in greater detail. Like Cranmer and Nowell Jewel turned to the theology of baptism in order to refute error in the theology of the supper. He admitted a real sanctification of the water in the sense of a setting apart for a holy use (Jew. P.S. 2 p.450). He denied, however, the possibility of thinking of this sanctification as a miraculous change. Jewel did not mince matters. He alluded to the alleged case when the baptismal water had displayed remarkable properties: 'When one Deuterius, an Arian bishop, would have baptised a man after his blasphemous sort, suddenly the water was shrunken away, and the font stood dry!... This miracle was a token that God, when he is denied, departeth from us'. Admitting the truth of the incident, then we may conclude, Jewel thought, that God did do a miracle to show his displeasure. But we may not go on to deduce from the incident that the baptismal water has undergone a miraculous change and become God: 'Yet may not M.R. conclude hereof, that the water of baptism was therefore Lord and God!' (Ibid. p.761). The argument of Grindal was to the same effect: that there is in the water of baptism no power or grace or virtue, either by consecration or in any other way, really to do in the soul what the element and the action symbolise (See Strype’s Cheke pp.101 f.). The Holy Spirit may and indeed does use the water of baptism, but we have no right to localise Him in the element. Towards such a localisation the older practice and language of consecration undoubtedly tended, with the deplorable result that those who could not understand the niceties of theological statement came to look upon the priest as a kind of magician and the hallowing of the water as a conjuring. The fact that in the long run the Romanists themselves could not maintain a transubstantiation of water - and they were prevented by the absence of a scriptural 'word' and by the lack of a substance for the water to be changed into, as well as by the overriding necessity of the sacrament, did not prevent the common people from drawing these conclusions, but it did give the Reformers a point of advantage from which to attack the transubstantiation of the elements in the case of the supper.

Like all the Reformed protests, the protest against the consecration of the water rested ultimately upon the teaching and practice of Scripture. With the simpler people the pattern of the Scriptural baptisms sufficed: a man like Denby could state simply that in his New Testament, during the ministry of the Baptist, or in the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch, he could find no trace or suggestion of any consecration of the water (Foxe 7 p.333). The Book of Scripture had drawn attention to what became the stock example of the eunuch, 'whom Philip baptised not in hallowed water, but in the first water they came to
The theologians, of course, knew that the matter could not be settled in quite such a summary way as that. The church had the right to ordain godly and profitable ceremonies, and these ought normally to be observed. But they too found in this case great strength in the direct argument from Scripture. The point was that consecration could be shown not to be essential to the sacrament as originally instituted and practised. Such significance as consecration had must therefore be ceremonial and not theological. Frith took the favourite example of the eunuch, and from the absence of a consecration of the water he drew the conclusion that the Romanist ceremony was 'unprofitable and unedifying' (B.R.P. 95). Becon repeated the argument: 'There was no hallowed font when the Eunuch was baptised' (Bec.P. S. 2 p. 207). Bullinger used wider examples from the ministry of the Baptists and all the Apostles: 'The Scripture telleth us that John Baptist and the Apostles and faithful disciples of Christ baptised with water not consecrated' (Bull. P. S. 4 p. 363). The martyrs, when pressed concerning their contempt for the 'bonjuried water', almost always cited the instance of the eunuch. It might be argued, of course, that the silence of Scripture does not prove that the Apostles did not in fact consecrate the water, but for those who regarded the Bible as the supreme rule of faith and practice the lack of mention certainly demonstrated the non-essential nature of the ceremony. Consecration belonged to the things indifferent left to the ordering and discretion of the church. The error of Rome consisted in making of it a thing essential and in ascribing to it theological meaning and importance.

The discussion of this rather small point has taken up a good deal of space, but the Reformers' views upon this smaller matter help to illuminate their exposition of larger theological points. After all, from the theological standpoint, the whole doctrine of the supper was also at stake. The doctrines of the effects of baptism and of the mode of operation were also involved. 

Minimality. From the historical standpoint the discussion has this value too, that it helps to make clear the position of the Anglicans, who retained a general verbal consecration, but who clearly shared the Protestant objection to contemporary corruptions. From the whole discussion we see clearly the main cleavage, the cleavage between evangelical and sacramentalist conceptions of baptism. If the Anglicans were conservative in their respect for ancient forms and traditional order, there can be no doubt on which side they stood in fundamental theological issue. Pure and simple water was the matter of the sacrament, according to the divine institution. No oil was to be added, and if a consecration was retained, the retention was solely on grounds of ceremonial and liturgical order, and without doctrinal significance.

2. Washing

Water is the primary element, but baptism is more than water. It is water applied to a certain use: not the drinking of water,
but a washing in water. Just as there is no supper unless the bread and wine are received, so there is no baptism unless the water is applied to the person baptised. The action forms the proper matter as well as the element. This is of course an simple and obvious fact upon which there can be no disagreement. But here again, as with the primary element, opinions have varied considerably in points of detail. The most important problem is that of the mode of application. Even before the rise of the Baptists, with their dogmatic insistence upon one mode of application, this problem received considerable attention, and during the centuries various rulings have been made. During the Reformation period it did not constitute an urgent problem, but the matter has a certain interest in that the Reformation did coincide, in England at least, with a considerable change in the regular and normal practice.

It is probable, although not by any means certain, that immersion was the general rule at the first. Many passages in the New Testament suggest it, especially Romans 6 with its vivid symbolism. The suggested practical difficulties of immersing the Jerusalem converts hardly constitute a valid, or at any rate a convincing argument against the regular rule of immersion. On the other hand some very early post-Apostolic documents and inscriptions do suggest that affusion was from very the most primitive times recognised as a legitimate alternative; the Didache is the most famous example (See C.F. Rogers Baptism and Christian Archaeology for a fuller discussion). The earliest liturgies prescribed immersion, and in the towns baptisteries were provided for the purpose, but an exception was almost always made in cases of clinical baptism (Liturgy and Worship Art.Bapt). By the time of Tertullian it had become the custom to baptize immer se three times, presumably to mark the Trinity, and thus a further issue arose, single or trine immersion. In such great liturgies as those of Cyril and Hippolytus trine immersion was the rule, and it established itself in the Roman and of course in the Sarum use. The replacements of baptisteries by fonts did not necessarily mark a transition from immersion to affusion, for the early fonts were large enough for full immersion (See Hart E.R.p.245). Indeed, immersion was still enjoined; at Caelchythe in 816, for example, presbyters were ordered 'not to pour water upon the infant's head', for 'the infants should always be immersed in the font' (Ibid.p. 192). That trine immersion was practised is proved by the strange assertion at that Council that the Son of God afforded an example to all believers when he was three times immersed in the river Jordan (Ibid.). The persistence of immersion is proved by the insistence upon it at Cashel in 1172, when a strange custom was condemned, that of leaving out the right arm of a boy in the hope that he might grow up valiant in war. This custom not only reflects a famous racial characteristic, but it also points to some uneasiness of the Christian conscience, even in that rude age, with regard to martial pursuits. It shows clearly, however, that a full immersion was still normally demanded.

The Scholastics were not so dogmatic as the councils, but of course they were considering the question from the doctrinal
point of view, not from the disciplinary. Lombard, for instance, hesitated to assert a theological necessity of trine immersion (Lomb.4 Dist.3 I). Thomas considered the question of full immersion. He recommended immersion, but did not disallow other modes. In favour of immersion he alleged the oneness of the sacrament i.e. if some immerse, then all ought to do so, and the fact that every part is affected by original sin. As against this, however, he pointed out that washing might imply sprinkling and pouring as well as bathing. Immersion is the best symbol, but the other modes do not do violence to the signification. Thomas insisted that in all cases water must be applied to the head, which is the principal part (Thom.3 Qu.66,7). When he came to discuss trine immersion, Thomas took up the same position as Lombard. He saw many reasons in its favour: the example of Augustine's baptism, Pelagius' attributing of it to Christ, and the awkward fact that if trine immersion were not correct the person baptised in that way had really been baptised three times. Against these reasons he could quote Gregory, who had thought the matter unimportant. The early insistence upon trine immersion could be explained by the need to defend the doctrine of the Trinity. The problem of a possible three immersion baptism caused no real difficulty, for the minister had only intended to baptise once even if he immersed three times (Ibid. Qu.66,8).

Thomas' defence of other modes as well as immersion points to a gradual replacement of immersion by affusion and sprinkling now being effected in many Western countries. The Eastern churches retained full immersion, and in a few Western lands, notably England, dipping continued to be the rule. But the Western church no longer insisted upon immersion (except in clinical cases), and first France, then Italy and Germany, and finally all the Western churches abandoned it. Trent formally sanctioned the departure from primitive custom, accepting affusion and sprinkling as valid (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.17). The Tridentines repeated the Scholastic teaching with regard to trine immersion. What was absolutely necessary was that the baptismal water should be applied to the head, 'the seat of the internal and external senses' (Ibid. Qu.19). Other points were indifferent from the theological point of view, although liturgically and ceremonially the Roman church demands trine immersion (Rituale Romanum): a threefold pouring of water upon the head of the child baptised. The Catholic Encyclopedia (Art.Bapt.), dating the abandonment of immersion from the twelfth century, lays it down that the head must be laved and the water must flow (although not on the clothes). Trine immersion is not regarded as essential.

The Protestant theologians approached the question of mode from different standpoints and came to different conclusions. On the one side Luther insisted strongly upon the fact that baptism is by its very nature a dipping (Tauf oder mersio) (W.A.6 p.531; 2 p.727). As he saw it the symbolism required a full immersion, the type of the drowning; the death and burial of sin and of the man of sin (Ibid.6 p.535). Time and time again Luther pointed back to the term used, with its suggestion of a plunging into the water. Whether there should be a single or a trine immersion
Luther dismissed as unimportant. What was important was that immersion alone safeguarded, and aspersion destroyed the inward signification of the rite.

The other Reformers saw the matter differently. They followed Luther in the exposition of the meaning. They attached more importance to the meaning itself and comparatively less to the action, at any rate to the details of the action. What was signified was more important that the mode of signification. Even the Anabaptists, who thought it so necessary to return to the full Apostolic rule, seem to have been content with aspersion. The first re-baptism at Zollikon was by aspersion (Muralt p.30), and it is noted as somewhat exceptional, if highly praiseworthy, that Wolfgang Uolimann, when he met Conrad Grebel on the way to Schaffhausen, was so highly instructed in Anabaptism that he would not simply have water poured upon him from a dish, but, entirely naked, was thrust down and covered over in the Rhine (Kidd D.C.R.p.455, from Kessler, Sabbata). If the Anabaptists saw no necessity to readopt immersion it is hardly likely that their opponents would do so. The Swiss Reformers expressly stated that the mode of baptism was of no account. Calvin admitted with Luther that the 'term baptise evidently meant to immerse', and that immersion was the mode used in the primitive church, but he still contended that 'immersion or sprinkling, once or thrice' was not of the least importance (Instit.4,15,19). Calvin did in point of fact oppose trine immersion (In a letter to Somerset, see Toplady. 1 p.350), but he had no theological arguments against it, and his ruling was purely ceremonial and disciplinary. Beza followed Calvin, forming describing the details of the mode indifferent matters (B.P.S.47). The later Reformed theologians were of the same mind, as may be seen from Heidegger or the Leidener Synopsis (Heppe R.D., Heid.25,21; Leid.Syn.64,19).

The matter was complicated in England by the fact that the dipping of infants in the water survived right up to the Reformation period. The Sarum Manual (Manuale ad Usum Sarum 1530) enjoined a trine immersion: 'First dipping the right side, Second the left, The third time dipping the face toward the font', and Erasmus could refer to aspersion on the Continent but to immersion in England ('perfunduntur apud nos, merguntur apud Anglos', quoted by Vasquez In tert.disput.145,2). Lutheranism influences in the earlier period of reform made for the retention of the customary use. The book the Sum of Scripture came out strongly in favour of a full immersion (Burrage E.E.D.1 p.59), and Tyndale spoke of dipping or plunging as the true sign (Tyn.P.S.3 p.247). Tyndale, however, saw that a rigid insistence upon immersion might easily breed superstition: 'If ought be left out, or if the child be not altogether dipt in the water...how tremble they, how quake they' (Ibid.1 p.277). Thus even in the first years we may see the newer approach to the matter which was to lead to the gradual abolition of the old practice.

Cranmer himself evidently saw no good reason to change the established use, although he attached no superstitious importance to it. In 1549 and again in 1552 dipping was retained, although
discretion and wariness were enjoined, and if the child was weak it was regarded as sufficient to pour water upon it. Trine immersion was also retained in 1549, but abandoned in the later and more radical revision. Cranmer himself gave the matter of trine immersion careful consideration. He recognised its antiquity, but he saw too that it had no theological significance i.e. in the sense of being a necessary part of the sacrament. Against its recommendation by Tertullian and Jerome he could set the Spanish custom of dipping but once, as enjoined at Toledo (Cran.P.S. 2 p.56).

The period which followed 1549 saw a definite movement away from the older and Lutheran views in the direction of the Reformed. This movement combined with social influences to bring about a complete abandonment of immersion or affusion, in defiance of the rubric of 1552, which was reenacted in 1559. Becon adopted the Reformed opinion and counted the matter as amongst things indifferent. He admitted the antiquity of immersion, and indeed of trine immersion: 'it appeareth by the writings of the Ancient fathers, Tertullian, Damasus, Cyril, Austin, Basil, Theophylact and divers others, that in times past the custom was to dip...thrice into the water' (Bec.P.S. 2 p.227). He granted too that plunging better expressed the signification (Ibid.). But he contended for the 'sufficiency of pouring the water upon the head or face', on the ground that 'Christ left the manner of baptising free in the church' (Ibid.). 'It is all one matter', he concluded, 'whether the whole body, or some part thereof, as the head (the tendency still to regard the head as the principal part will be noted) be washed' (Ibid.). Nowell in his Catechism came out on the Reformed side, defending sprinkling as well as dipping (p.228). The writings of Bullinger helped to popularise the Reformed standpoint. Bullinger, maintaining a freedom either to dip or sprinkle, found the following arguments in favour of sprinkling: that 'it seemeth to have been used by the old fathers, that honesty and shamefacedness forbiddeth to uncover the body, and that the weak state of infants cannot away with dipping' (Bull.P.S. 4 p.364). Bullinger attacked the trine immersion as a late addition. In favour of the simple washing he quoted the fourth council of Toledo, canon 5 (Ibid.).

Opinion seems to have hardened rapidly against immersion, and against the already abandoned trine immersion, with the return of the exiles from the great Reformed centres abroad. Calfhill dismissed trine immersion as a later invention of the age of Tertullian (P.S. p.213). Whitaker insisted that sprinkling sufficed in the case of infants, and against Basil's injunction to dip thrice he set the Toledo canon (P.S. p.592). The matter did not end there, however, for the Puritans took up the cudgels not only in favour of aspersion but also against baptism in fonts. The Puritans aimed to replace dipping in fonts by affusion from simple basins, as in the Anabaptist and Reformed communions. Many clergy took the law into their own hands and substituted basins for fonts on their own authority. In these circumstances the observance of the rubric became not only indifferent but impossible. The objections against the font were stated by Cartwright. He argued that he could find no mention of a font in Scripture, and that fonts
were offensive because of their associations with Romanism (Whit. P.S.3 p.109). As Cooper complained, for the Puritans everything old and papish was wrong (Admnr. to the People of England p.80).

The Anglican party defended fonts not from the theological but from the disciplinary point of view. Parker in the Advertisements ordered curates 'not to remove the font, nor to baptise in parishes churches in anye basions, nor in any other forme than is already prescribed' (Gee and Hardy Advertisements). Whitgift attacked Cartwright's position, asking pertinently where we read in Scripture of the use of basins (Whit.P.S.3 p.123). To this Cartwright could only return the weak answer that there must have been basins in the houses of Cornelius and the Philippian jailor, since there could hardly be 'any river or common water there'. Whitgift also claimed that the font was in no way a more reprehensible piece of church furniture than the pulpit - a dig at the Puritan emphasis upon preaching (Ibid.p.126). The main argument of Whitgift, however, was the argument shortly stated in Article 34 and magnificently expanded by Hooker, that the church has the right to take order in things indifferent, and that so long as what is ordained is not contrary to Scripture, it ought to be obeyed by all. Neither Parker nor Whitgift made any very convincing attempt to enforce dipping, which was now rapidly becoming obsolete. The authority of Geneva and possibly the revolt of the refined ladies and gentlewomen, as Wall puts it, combined to overthrow the traditional custom, and within two or three generations dipping had been almost completely abandoned. The Prayer Book rubric remained even after 1662 as a witness to the earlier use.

3. The Word

In a sacrament properly speaking theologians have discerned not only a divinely appointed element and action, but also a divinely appointed word or formula. The sacrament of the supper is more than bread and wine and the receiving of bread and wine. It is the receiving of bread and wine accompanied by the Dominical formula: This is my body, This is my blood, Do this in remembrance of me. Baptism too, as a sacrament of the gospel, had its evangelical word, equally necessary with the matter to its proper constitution as a Christian sacrament. Historically the formula has been handed down in the form of the familiar phrase, 'baptising in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost'. Some modern scholars have attempted to prove that these words were a later ecclesiastical accretion, but in the sixteenth century neither the Romanists nor the Protestants doubted their authenticity. It was taken for granted that the form in Matthew was ordained by Christ himself as the proper baptismal word.

The Scholastics attached great importance to the word. They narrowed down that word to the recitation of a set formula, in a language which the majority of the people barely understood. But they insisted that without the word there could be no sacrament. The definition of baptism given by Lombard is interesting in this connection. It is a corporal washing accompanied by the
prescribed form of words (Lomb.4 Dist.3 A). In Lombard's discussion two problems were dealt with: first, the baptisms in the name of Christ recorded in Acts; second, unwitting corruptions of the formula through ignorance of Latin. As regards baptisms in the name of Christ, Lombard claimed that the name of the One Person included the whole Trinity. As regards corruptions, he did not think that errors due to ignorance invalidated the sacrament (Ibid.Dist.6 C).

Thomas' standpoint did not differ from that of Lombard in any important particular. Thomas stated plainly that the element only becomes a sacrament when the word is added. To that extent the power may be said to be in the word rather than in the water (Thom. 3 Qu.66,1). Thomas discussed the phrasing of the formula carefully. He considered objections against the form 'I baptise thee': the fact that the action is Christ's, the unnecessary nature of the statement - it merely says what is obvious - , and the contention that when many are baptised it would be more logical to say 'I baptise you'. Thomas also considered wider objections against the whole formula, the failure to mention the Passion, and the claim that since the name signifies property baptism in the Triune name involves three properties. Thomas defended the traditional formula vigorously, although he was willing to concede the validity of the passive Eastern form, 'Be thou baptised'. His arguments were as follows. First, the formula ought to express the cause. The principal cause of baptism is the Trinity, expressed in the Triune name, the instrumental cause, the minister, expressed in the subject, 'I'. Second, the formula is necessary not merely for the purpose of signification, but also for that of efficacy, and for this the singular subject and object are better, since baptism is ministered individually. It would not invalidate the sacrament to say, 'I baptise you', but the singular is more correct. Third, Thomas considered the essential name in the formula to be one only, although three names are mentioned, the three general titles, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Since it the divine power which works in baptism pertains to the essence of the Trinity, the name is singular, and the objection of three properties falls to the ground (Ibid. Qu.66,5). Thomas devoted a certain amount of attention to the old problem of the baptisms in the name of Christ. He thought that baptism in the name of Christ sufficed if that name implied the whole Trinity, but saw no general liberty to adopt this formula, for Christ has now bound the church by his institution, and the Apostles must have gone outside the prescribed form by special revelation (Ibid. Qu.66,6).

The Tridentines had little to add to these full discussions. They did express doubt as to whether the Apostles did in fact use the phrase 'In the name of Christ' in the actual baptisms. This was perhaps a general descriptive phrase to show that the persons baptised were baptised into Christ (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.16). The importance of the formula was again stressed at Trent. The words had this purpose, 'to signify more fully and clearly that which is being done (Ibid. 2,1 Qu.11). Some of the words were counted so
necessary that their omission would invalidate the sacrament, but others, like 'ego' were not so absolutely necessary (Ibid. 2, 2 Qu. 14). Bellarmine, countering the heresies of Luther, laid it down that the words are not in the strict sense an explanation, but are simply a formula - for that reason the use of the vulgar tongue is not necessary (De la S.T.B.p.335). He opposed Luther's permitting of variations in the formula on the ground that there ought to be no addition, subtraction or change of that which Christ has instituted (p.337). The perpetration of Latin 'howlers' by ignorant priests was still held not to invalidate the sacrament. Jewel gives us an amusing instance of such a perversion, quoted from 'Pope Zachary, who said that in his time a priest baptised a child by these words, 'In nomine patriae, et filiae, et spiritu sancta' (Jew. P.S.1 p.316). The Romanist stress upon the importance of the word might at first sight appear to be praiseworthy from an evangelical point of view. It did mean at least that the crassest materialism of a grace given in and through the element alone was avoided. A little thought will show, however, that the very stress upon the formula, and upon the minute observance of it, helped to foster the understanding of the sacrament as an act of magic rather than as a means of grace, even more so, in fact, than the obnoxious ceremony of conjuring the water by consecration. The grace came into the water, as it were, by the mumbling over the water of an ill-understood phrase which had its importance as a formula and not as a meaningful statement. The suggestion of magic, and of magical incantations and spells, was far too strong for the ignorant and superstitious mind not to form a totally corrupt and perverted conception of the sacrament and its operation.

The Reformers too laid great stress upon the word and upon the power of the word. But the Reformers realised from the outset the fundamental truth that words have no virtue in themselves. Even divine words are powerful only by virtue of their meaning. The words given by God in Scripture and in the sacraments are especially powerful, because the Holy Ghost applies those words to the individual mind and soul. But even the Holy Ghost does his work in and through the meaning of the words. Luther could stress the value and power of the baptismal formula, but the formula had power and value because it was an assurance of the justifying presence and activity of God. Luther laid hold of the truth in the Scholastic teaching, that the true secret of baptism lay in the word. The water of baptism was not water alone, but 'water enclosed in the word and commandment of God, and thereby sanctified' (W.A.30,1 p.213). It was not water that saved, but the word (Ibid.). At bottom the word was even more important than faith itself, for the presence of the word gave to the sacrament its power, and faith could only receive (Ibid. p.213). But to be powerful, the word had to be intelligible. The mere repetition of sounds did not give the sacrament its power. Hence the demand of Luther for the use of the common tongue of the people. Latin served very well for those who understood Latin, but the ordinary people needed to hear the divine word in a language which they too understood. As the Lutheran orders complained, it was useless and unreasonable to repeat the word of God in a strange tongue. As to the exact
phrasing of the formula Luther was not so scrupulous. Henry could find fault with him on this score: 'He cares not much for the form of words, though the word by which the water is signified ought to be of no less moment than the water itself' (Assertio p.99). What Luther cared about was the meaning: words only had value in so far as they conveyed the right meaning. It was far more important that the people should understand than the minister should repeat exactly the traditional form. (On the Lutheran orders see Jacobs L.M. in E. pp.252 f.; also Kidd D.C.R. p.227)

Zwingli and the Swiss Reformers followed Luther closely in this new stress upon the word and its meaning. A significant development may be noticed with Zwingli. Zwingli identified the baptismal formula word not only with the formula but with the whole doctrine which baptism proclaimed. The baptism of John was the teaching of John (Zwingli C.R. 2 p.218). Of course, in practice all the older services had added to the simple administration the reading of Scripture and exhortations. Luther had gone a step further by putting these again in the language of the people, so that all might understand what was done. The Swiss adopted the vernacular too, but they went a step further still and insisted that the word of baptism consists in reading and preaching as well as in the formula. John Baptist was the obvious Scriptural example. Calvin stated the Reformed position clearly. He pointed out that the function of the word is to illuminate and explain (Beckmann p.47). Without the word the sacrament becomes an act of pure magic ('Schädliches Gaukelerwerk'). But the word itself is more than 'mutterings of a magical character made by some exorcist between his teeth' (On Luke 3,3). The word was an explanation of the advantages of baptism, the sounding of the voice of heavenly doctrine (Tracts 2 p.201). In support of this view Calvin could quote Matthew Mark 16, in which baptism had been connected with doctrine 'by a sacred bond'. For Calvin the sacrament was not complete without the sermon, and in the Genevan orders it was laid down accordingly that baptism should always be preceded by the public proclamation of the word (Kidd D.C.R. p.581). Beza attacked the Romanist conception of the word in accordance with this teaching: 'Where the word is not preached and expounded, but only lifted up and ministered in an unknown language, it is an horrible pollution' (B.P.S.33). Without the ministry of the word there could be no lawful administration of the sacraments (Ibid. 35). Knox had the same conception in mind when he laid it down that the word and declaration of the promises ought to precede (Knox 2 p.187). As far as the actual formula was concerned the Swiss retained the traditional form, but they wished the words to be pronounced clearly and in such a way that they should be understood by all (Kidd D.C.R. p.620).

The English Reformers followed closely the teaching of the Continentals. In the early days their utterances had a pronouncedly Lutheran ring. Tyndale demanded the use of the English tongue (Tyn.P.S. p.253), and he contended in Lutheran fashion that 'the washing without the word helpeth not, the word being
the promise that God hath made' (Tyn.B.R.p.143). Alesius probably had some influence during the first period of reform, and he held with Luther that 'the word of God is the principal thing, and as it were the very substance and body of the sacrament' (Foxe 5 p.383). Even the King's Book laid similar stress upon the word (p.44), and under Edward the full Lutheran view was stated in Cranmer's Catechism (p.186). Lutheran ideas were predominant in the 1549 Prayer Book, in which the service of baptism was put in the vernacular, and also placed within the framework of a full liturgical service, following immediately after the public reading of Scripture. The ground gained in 1549 was maintained in 1552 and all subsequent revisions, although the ideal of a full public baptism was seldom realised in practice.

We may note that the Anglican leaders adopted without reserve the Lutheran and Reformed opinion that the use of the popular tongue is essential to the proper administration of the sacrament. Cranmer himself defended the use of the mother-tongue in his Preface to the new order. Ridley, when pressed, admitted that baptism in Latin was valid, and he would even grant that 'the use of English was at the baptism of infants (who could understand neither Latin nor English) was not so necessary, although he would wish it - as at the supper' (Rid.P.S.p.140). But Latimer thought this statement rather too half-hearted, and he broke in: 'When you say, 'I would wish', surely I would wish that you had spoken more vehemently, and to have said, 'It is of necessity...for the edifying and comfort of them that are present. Notwithstanding', he added, 'that the child itself is sufficiently baptised in the Latin tongue' - a point which he could not very well contest (Ibid.). The Elizabethans maintained the same Protestant opinion concerning the use of the vernacular, as we may see in the 1559 Disputation and in the Book of Homilies. In the Disputation the use of English was defended on two grounds: first, that the Apostles used the common speech, and second, that 'since the sacraments are sermons of the death and resurrection of Christ, they must be had in such language as the people may perceive, otherwise they should be had in vain' (Burnet 3,3 Collection). The Homily upon the subject brought in a whole array of authorities: the injunction of Paul that all be done to edifying, the witness of Justin, the use of the Amen which is profitless if the people do not understand, sentences from Basil, Chrysostom and Ambrose, and the order in the constitution of Justinian, 'that all bishops and priests do celebrate the holy oblation, or the prayers used in baptism, not speaking low, but with a loud and clear voice, that thereby the minds of the hearers may be stirred up with great devotion' (Homilies pp.245 f.).

The Prayer Books, with their introduction of Exhortations in the vernacular, and their placing of the office within the service of Morning Prayer, had certainly done a good deal to make the word more prominent in the Protestant sense. During the Marian persecution, however, the Protestant leaders had
found more powerful theological inspiration in the Swiss centres, and the demand for an actual preaching of the word came to be heard increasingly as the years passed. Hooper had been a pioneer. He had asked that at all baptisms there should be a proper 'preaching of the good and merciful promises of God's goodness' (Hoop.P.S.1 p.533). The Anglican theologians had not stressed the need for preaching quite so strongly, being content with the rendering into the common speech of the formula and of exhortations. Evidently they had not wished to identify the baptismal word so narrowly and closely with preaching. This was true of Becon, who had done little more than condemn the administration 'in a strange tongue' (Bec.P.S.1 p.11). It was also true of the less advanced Reformers who returned at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth. Grindal in the 1559 Disputation was more concerned about the formula than about preaching. He made the familiar point that all the words must be spoken in order, since only then are they meaningful: 'Neither doth baptism consist in the word 'Ego' or in 'Baptizare', or in the word 'te', or in these words 'in nomine etc.', but in all these words spoken in order' (Grind.p.197). Jewel, too, was concerned rather with the baptismal formula, arguing for the Protestant understanding against Romanist perversions and corruptions. He thought that the Romanist literalism led ultimately to a very light view of the formula. Baptism would be valid for the Romanist even if to the correct form the words 'et diaboli' were added (Jew.P.S.3 p.444). Jewel also had occasion to discuss the Apostolic formula 'in the name of Christ', from which his opponent Harding had deduced a power of the church to alter at its will the original institution: 'The Apostles sticked not for a time to alter the very form of words'. Against this dangerous deduction Jewel did not plead, as he might have done, that the Apostles used this form by special revelation, but he denied that any alteration took place: neither do these words in the name of Christ import that baptism was ministered in the name of Christ only, and in none other name besides'. Jewel thought that the phrase 'in the name of Christ' meant simply 'according to the order, institution and commandment of Christ', and he instanced the parallel phrase 'the servant of Christ' which meant the servant not of Christ only but of the whole Trinity (Ibid.1 pp.223-5). It is worth noting that even Bullinger in the Decades discussed the formula as the baptismal word, and he made the reasonable request that anything added to the original institution, prayers especially, should be 'moderate and short, not of a great length and tedious'. Bullinger justified the Apostolic variation of the formula on the familiar ground that 'in the name of the Lord (Acts 19)' includes the whole Trinity' (Bull.P.S.4 p.357).

It was left to the Puritans to take up in earnest the identification of the word with preaching as well as with the formula and the reading of Scripture. Now it may be noted that if the strict Prayer Book order was followed there was provision for a sermon, after the baptism if not before it. The problem arose partly through the failure to adhere strictly to the order, but more particularly through the existence of a large number of nonspeaking ministers qualified to administer the sacrament but not to deliver a sermon. But for the Puritans a proper
administration of the sacrament was impossible without preaching, for word and sacrament belonged together; and the word meant not only the formula, or a set exhortation, or a passage of Scripture, but the living proclamation of the Gospel. Thus Travers demanded in the Defence of Ecclesiatical Discipline that 'preaching were joyned alwayes with the ministerie of the sacramentes', according to the best Genevan models. Challenged to produce Scriptural evidence for the invariable preaching of a sermon at baptism, the Puritans found themselves rather at a disadvantage. They could point to the conjoining of teaching and baptism in Mark, but this did not necessarily mean that the two were to be simultaneous. The example of John, who both preached and baptised, seems to have carried more weight, and Cartwright felt justified in supposing that John delivered an address upon the occasion of the baptism of Christ himself (Whit. P. S. 3 p. 19). The Anglicans sympathised on the whole with the Puritan demand, but they were not prepared to concede the unlawfulness of the ministrations of the non-preachers, nor could they concede that the word in baptism must be identified with preaching in the narrower sense. Whitgift stated the case against the Puritans. He pointed out that in the baptism of infants an evangelical address is less important, for the infants themselves cannot understand the word preached (Ibid. 3 pp. 15-16). This was an argument the force of which Gualter felt, although Gualter thought a public service and sermon commendable none the less (Zur. Lett. P. S. 2 No. 94). Whitgift urged further that it was a very dangerous doctrine to make the life of the sacrament depend on the preaching of the word' (Whit. P. S. 3 p. 533). This was the crux of the matter. In Puritan eyes the sacrament could not exist alone, for preaching formed a part, indeed the major part of the sacramental word. But for the Anglicans, although preaching was a commendable adjunct, although word and sacrament were closely allied as the two means of grace, it was possible to have the sacrament without the word - for the sacrament had and was its own word - just as it was possible to have the word without the sacrament. The combination of word and sacrament was the ideal, as the Prayer Book itself testified. But it was not an absolute standard without which there could be no sacrament at all.

In all fundamentals Anglicans and Puritans, indeed all Protestants were one. And against the prevalent Romanist conceptions there can be no doubt that they had right on their side. It may be conceded that the Scholastics and the Tridentines guarded against purely magical conceptions in the strict sense. But the common people had no grasp of the niceties of theological definition. They were taught, perhaps, that the power resided in the word. But the word itself was a mumble of sounds, a formula of little meaning. By the correct pronouncing of this formula the baptismal water became the vehicle of divine grace. Of the meaning of what was said and done they had only the slightest inkling. The aim of the Protestants was to dispel the prevailing ignorance and superstition by putting the word into its right place, not as a formula which could endow the water with mysterious virtue, but as a proclamation of grace which had power in and through its meaning. To put the word into its right place
they did two things. They put the formula itself into the tongue of the people, so that all could understand; and they amplified it, either by exhortations or by sermons, so that all could grasp what the sacrament signified. From a sacerdotal and sacramentalist point of view the attack upon the notion of a mysterious virtue and efficacy was perhaps unfortunate, but from the point of view of pure religion it undoubtedly brought pure gain.

It is comparatively easy to judge between Romanists and Protestants, but in the lesser controversy between Puritans and Anglicans the decision is more difficult. On behalf of the Anglicans it must be pointed out that they accepted the ideal set up by their opponents, but that they had to face a practical situation in which, at first at any rate, that ideal could only partially be realised. To make preaching indispensable in all cases was obviously going too far. But there is much to say on the Puritan side. For one thing, the practice of holding public baptisms in the course of Morning Prayer could easily be evaded — in fact it fell fairly quickly into almost complete disuse. Again, the reading of exhortations could not fully take the place of the living sermon. The language of one age cannot meet the needs of all ages, and historically the very perfection of the Prayer Book phrasing has tended, in the long run, to obscure rather than to bring out the meaning of what is done. Moreover, to shrink from enforcing the ideal because of immediate practical difficulties leads only too frequently, by the justifying of the second-best, to the final abandonment of the ideal. The idealist is often the true realist.

Where the Puritans failed was in their militant and legalistic dogmatism. Had they been content to work more quietly and from within, they could hardly have failed to carry the day. At the outset of Elizabeth's reign they had the sympathy of almost all the leading church-men. What the Anglican leaders objected to was not the Puritan demands as such, but the Puritan insistence upon the absolute Scriptural and theological necessity of that which was demanded. Out of this dogmatism, and the inevitable reaction which it provoked, the deep and wide gulf of differences developed, especially the difference in the relating of Scriptural practice to the living ceremonial of the church. Deep and wide as the differences became, they were not at first fundamental differences theological, and their width and depth were due in large part to the exigencies of the ecclesiastical and theological conflict. Had the Puritans on their side been less rigidly dogmatic, and the Anglicans on the other side more independent of the civil power, a peacable settlement, in this as in greater matters, might easily have been achieved.

4. The Name

Closely connected in many ways with the baptismal word was the giving of the baptismal name. The origin of the name-giving is obscure: it probably derived, as many students think, from the similar Jewish custom. Whatever the origin, it undoubtedly dates back from the most primitive times, and Christian baptism can seldom, if ever, have been administered without it.
The giving of the name helped to make of the sacrament: the address by God to the individual, Be thou baptised, or I baptise thee; the entry into a new life by virtue of that address; the adoption into the covenant people of God, or the divine family. No great or urgent problems have arisen with regard to the name giving, but at one or two points there has been a certain amount of useful discussion.

The first point concerned the names given. In early days these names had usually some spiritual significance, and many of the favourite names in later times had some Godward meaning. Alternatively, the newly baptised might be named after outstanding characters in the New or Old Testament, or after outstanding figures in the early history of the church. Naturally, the rule that names should be spiritual and godly was not always strictly kept, but the church never lost sight of its duty to advise in this respect. The Catechism of Trent laid down the general rule that 'the name should be taken from someone who, through his eminent piety and religion, has obtained a place in the catalogue of the saints' (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 75). On the Reformed side hearty approval was forthcoming for the attempt to make Christian names spiritually meaningful and valuable. Jewel, quoting the words of Chrysostom on the subject, laid down the principle that 'our names should teach us, that whether we write them or utter them, or hear them spoken, they should put us in mind of Christian duty and godliness' (Jew. P. S. 2, p. 1109). The Puritans seized upon the point, and in their usual excess of zeal, carried the principle to extravagant and ridiculous lengths. A certain Snape of Northampton, for instance, refused to baptise 'the child of Hodgkinson, because it was to be called Richard, not a godly name' (Strype's Whit. 2, pp. 9-10). This was only one of many complaints lodged at various times against heathenish names (See 2nde P. of a R. I p. 186 etc.). The Puritans themselves made earnest efforts to revive the old custom of giving names descriptive of Christian virtues or emotions. Dudley Fenner, for example, gave such pious appellations as Joy again, From above and More Fruit (Strype's Whit. I, p. 24), and the unfortunate children of Penny, so tragically orphaned in their tenderest years, received similar names. The Puritan type of name enjoyed a considerable vogue during the seventeenth century, and it is still occasionally met with, especially in New England (On Puritan Names, see C. W. Bardsley Curiosities of Puritan Nomenclature London 1880).

A more serious if less entertaining question was that of the significance of the name giving. At this point the young Luther had an interesting and suggestive thought. In his brief theses upon the three baptisms, he related the giving of life in the Christian sacrament to the giving of the new name rather than to the emerging from the water. The thought seems to have been this, The sinner is forgiven and restored as he is addressed by the divine word of promise. For Luther the name would thus be almost a necessary part of the formula, included in the 'thee' but necessary to mark off the one particular 'thee' from all oth-
Undoubtedly this stress upon the name-giving derived from Luther's larger desire to emphasise the lifegiving power of the divine word, and perhaps the personal nature of the divine activity. In his later writings Luther did not follow up the suggestion, and the later Reformers seem not to have been attracted by it. The inter-relation of the name-giving and the entry into new life in the power of the word is, however, an idea which opens up exciting vistas. It gives especially valuable insights at a time like the present, when theology is vitally concerned with the personal I-Thou relationship between God as Subject and Man as Object. It contains within it, too, the very modern stress upon the importance and value of the individual personality in the sight of God. The love and power of God are not extended to humanity in general, but also to each man in particular. The fact that Luther as it were tossed off these suggestive thoughts incidentally, and that even his great contemporaries failed to see their ultimate significance is proof of the magnificent theological vitality and originality of the German Reformer. If Luther lacked the gift of systematic and lucid theological exposition which Calvin so liberally enjoyed, he had in superabundant measure the ability to conceive and vividly to express new ideas almost inexhaustible in value. The Reformed and Anglican schools drew apart from the Lutheran in many ways, but in the doctrine of baptism, and in all other doctrines, the whole Protestant world of the sixteenth and of succeeding centuries owes to Luther a debt which can never fully be estimated.

Notes

1 Lomb.4 Dist.3 H 'In aqua, non in alio liquore: quod aqua significationavit quae de latere Christi manavit, sicut sanguis'.
2 Nowell P.S.p.91 'In utroque rerum externarum non mutatis, sed accedente Divino Verbo, gratiaque coelestis' est efficientia'
3 Lomb.24 Dist.3 I 'Vel semel, vel ter, pro vario more ecclesiae'
4 Rituale Romanum 'Sacerdos vasculo seu circeo acipit aquam baptismalem et de ea ter fundit super caput infantis in modum Crucis'.
5 Luther W.A.2 p.727 'Das wortlin tauf herkommt vom wort tief, zu Latein, mersio, das ist, wan man etwas gantz ynns wasser taucht.... das man tieff ynns wasser sencket, was man tauft'
6 Ibid.6 p.534 'Hac ratione ....baptisandos penitus in aquam immergi, sicut sonat vocabulum et signet mysterium'.
7 Muralt p.30 'Neme also ein getzi mit wasser und touffe ihn inn namen gott vaters, gott suns, und gott helgen geists'
8 Heidegger 25,21 '....quo per aspersionem et ablutionem aqua...
9 Leidener Synopsis 64,19 'An vero una an triuna immersione sit baptismandum, indifferentem semper judicatum in ecclesia Christiana: quemadmodum etiam an immersione an vero aspersione us- endum, cum illius expressum mandatum nullum exstet et ex- empla aspersionis non minus quam immersionis in Scripturis possintprehendens, sic multa millia uno die in ipsa urbe Jerusalem dicuntur fuisse baptizata'.
10 4th Council of Toledo Can.5. The Canon maintained that the
single immersion showed forth the unity, the formula the
Trinity:......'Unitatem, dum semel immergimus; Trinitatem,
dum nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti baptizamur'
11 Lomb.4 Dist.3 A 'Baptismus est intimctio, ablutio corporis ex-
terioris, facta sub forma &x verborum praescripta'
12 Ibid. 'Sed in hoc nomine tota Trinitas intelligitur'.
13 Ibid. Dist.6 C 'Si ille qui baptizavit, non errorem inducens
vel haeresim, sed pro sola ignorantia Romanae locutionis,
 infringendo linguam baptizans dixisset; non possum consent-
ire ut denuo baptizetur!'
14 Luther W.A.30,1 p.213 'nicht ein bloss schlecht wasser, sondern
 ein wasser ynn Gottes wort und gepot gefasset und dadurch
geheiligt'.
15 Ibid p.215 'Lauter wasser künde solchs nicht thun, aber das
 wort thuets'.
16 Ibid.p.218 'wenn das wort bey dem wasser ist, so ist die Haufe
 rechtt, ob schon der glaube nicht dazu kümpt'.
17 Wingli C.R.4 p.2199 'Joannis touft nit allein im wasser, sunder
 er fürat die leer damit'.
18 Beckmann p.47 'Das verbum ist notwendig als deutendes, erklär-
endes'
19 Kidd D.C.R.p.6205' quoting the Genevan Liturgy 'Horum nihil
 nisi clara voce pronunciaturx linguaque patria omnia nun-
cupantur'.
CHAPTER XI  CEREMONIES

1. The Traditional Ceremonial

During the Apostolic period the practice of baptism seems to have been quite simple. An immersing in water in the Triune name, or in the name of Christ, possibly upon a profession of faith, constituted the whole sacrament. If other ceremonies did take place they were not essential; they were not even of sufficient importance to be worthy of mention in the New Testament record. At a very early date, however, the Christian church began to add to the simple primitive rite. Quite apart from such obvious matters as a fasting preparation (Didache 7) and trine immersion (Ibid.), there began to develop a new and strange symbolical ceremonial, borrowed to a certain extent no doubt from current practices in the Mystery religions, but also based upon New Testament teaching and imagery.

Tertullian gave a vivid picture as of baptism as it was administered in his day. Four main ceremonial additions may be noticed: unction (De Bapt. 7), the laying on of hands (Ibid. 8), the feeding with milk and honey, and the prohibition of washing for a set period (Ibid. 7 & 8: See also Hastings Dict. of Rel. & Eth. Art. Baptism). Harnack has pointed out that these symbolical rites had no signification independent of that of the sacrament as a whole. To that extent they were not additional sacraments. But they had been added for two reasons: to provide a fit accompaniment for the sacrament, and to symbolise Christian experiences and virtues (Harnack Hist. of Dogma 2 p.141). The first point is sufficiently obvious. The added ceremonial made the simple baptismal rite more solemn and impressive. With regard to the second, Tertullian himself explained the symbolism. The unction represented the anointing with the Holy Spirit; the laying on of hands, blessing; the milk and honey the spiritual food of the new life in Christ. The fact that all these ceremonies have a basis in Scriptural usage or imagery is not unimportant.

The ceremonial grew more elaborate and complicated with the passage of years and the increase of the church. In the fully developed Liturgies of Hippolytus and Cyril we read of exorcism, breathing, and the giving of the new robe (Lit. & Worship, Baptism). Here again the underlying aims seem to have been to provide a solemn accompaniment, and to make the sacrament more meaningful by means of concrete symbols drawn from or based upon the Scriptures. Exorcism naturally represented the driving out of the unclean spirit of wickedness and error, and the white robe stood for the innocence and righteousness with which the person baptised into Christ was spiritually clothed. The Roman rites went much further, enjoining a complicated series of baptismal ceremonies. In addition to the old established unction, exorcism and white robe, the following rites came to be demanded: insufflation, salt, signing with the cross, the effeta, the anointing of the back and breast.
(Lit. & Worship, Bapt.). The Sarum Use also included the ataper (Ibid.). Hart has given a full list of rites which were in use during the Middle Ages: blowing, crossing, salt, saliva, exsufflations, unction, chrismale, wax taper; and he also mentions a number of other Patristic rites such as shoes and a garland, ten siliquae (to remind of the Ten Commandments), and a waxen image of the Agnus Dei (Hart E.R.p.175).

The Romanist theologians did not pretend, of course, that these ceremonies were in any way essential to the sacrament. Thomas discussed the value of the rites in some detail. He considered the objections which might be brought against the ceremonies current in his own time: the fact that there is only one matter of the sacrament, water, not oil; the fact that the clothing makes no difference to baptism itself; and the generally admitted superfluity of the ceremonies, which could always be dispensed with in time of emergency, without prejudice to the validity of the sacrament. Thomas defended the ceremonies, however, on these grounds. He thought that they belonged to a certain solemnity of the sacrament. He held that they had a value to edification, in that they helped to arouse and to instruct and were also a hindrance to the Devil. Considering the individual rites, he ascribed to exorcism, breathing, blessing, salt and spittle the special value of removing obstacles to grace and salvation, and to oil a strength-giving virtue and power (See Thom.3 Qu.66, 10; Qu.71,2).

The Tridentines had nothing new to say upon the subject, but in the Catechism they explained the symbolism in great detail. The exorcism and breathing had the same aim: that the baptized person may expel the power of the old serpent, and may catch the breath of lost life. The salt 'imported...that he should be delivered from the corruption of sin, experience a relish for good works, and be delighted with the food of divine wisdom'. The cross signifies 'the opening of the senses', and the spittle taught that 'the efficacy of the divine ablation is such as to bring light to the mind to discern heavenly truth'. The unction pictured, as we have seen, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the chrism (oil) the 'uniting of the member to Christ his head'. Finally, the white garment pointed 'to the glory of the resurrection, and the brightness and beauty with which the soul is adorned in baptism, innocence and integrity; and the waxlight, or taper, symbolised faith, which was inflamed by charity, and needed to be fed and augmented by the pursuit of good works' (Cat. T.2,2 Qu.64-74).

These ceremonies were recognised not to be absolutely obligatory - they could be dispensed with in private and emergency baptisms - but the canons of the Council anathematised those who said that 'the received and approved rites of the catholic church may be contemned...and omitted, or changed into other new ones' (C. & D. T. Sess.7 Bapt. Can.13).

Before going forward to consider the attitude of the Reformers, it might be as well briefly to summarise review the grounds upon which the Romanists would defend the general imposition of these elaborate ceremonies. They could not postulate an absolute
necessity, for the exigencies of private baptism prevented the too close relating of the ceremonies to the essential form. They could, however, find many good reasons for demanding the use of the ceremonies on all normal occasions. The want of justification in Scripture was supplied by the practice of antiquity, and the continuing use of ceremonial through the centuries. The ceremonies could also be justified as suitable to the high and holy nature of baptism, for which they provided an impressive liturgical background. In defence of the particular rites commended, it might be argued that they all had behind them a definite spiritual meaning and message, and that they were therefore of particular value to an ignorant populace which could see better than it could read. In any case the rites were for the most part modelled upon the actions of Christ or upon the familiar images and symbols of the New Testament. A final point was this, that the church had the right to ordain such rites and ceremonies as it thought useful to the promotion of true religion. It was not for any private individual to set his own private opinions or practices against the considered judgments of the Christian body as a whole.

2. The Reformed Objection

The Reformers belonged to a world in which the baptismal ceremonial was well established, with centuries of approval and use behind it. Even before the sixteenth century there had, of course, been objections in some quarters to these additions to the simple primitive institution. To take a single example from England, in 1429 some men of Norwich, probably influenced by the Lollards, made a protest against the 'superfluous additions' then used in baptism, 'as salt, oil, spittle, taper, light, chrism, exorcising of water, with such other like, accounting them as no material thing in the holy institution of baptism' (Foxe 3 p. 589). It is worth noting too perhaps that through the centuries the Piedmontese 'would not receive oiling and salting except the same might be proved by the Holy Scripture' (Ibid. 4 p. 511). But those who had made the protest had been few in number that their influence had been of little account. They had been either suppressed altogether or contained within comparatively narrow limits, and they had appeared to the majority merely odd and perverse. Certainly they had not been able even to shake let alone to destroy the ordinary and deeply-rooted practice.

Luther himself, particularly in the early days of the Reformation, was not greatly concerned about the details of ceremonial. His primary aim was to reform the church, not by physical force and not by ecclesiastical and liturgical reconstruction, but by the living word. Luther realised that only after many years of intensive evangelisation and education would the masses of the people be ready for sweeping change. In liturgical matters he moved slowly. It was essential that the services should be put into the vernacular, for without that there could be no education, but it was not so essential that all the old ceremonies should be abolished. In the new services many of the old ceremonies were retained, notably exorcism and the sign of the cross.
Luther himself seems to have been well aware of the value of many of the rites for the imparting of spiritual lessons, and he could speak of 'the beautiful white christening robe which we are given, cleansed from all taint and spot of sin' (W. A. 66 p. 175). The principle which the Lutherans adopted in their retention or rejection of ceremonies was this: that those which appeared to be useful and profitable were retained, those which were merely trifling and superstitious were rejected. The Brandenburg-Nürnberg order listed the blessing of the font, oil and spittle amongst the latter, but the cross, exorcism and the chrism, together with such godly customs as prayer and the reading of the Gospel were numbered with the former (See Goode E. B. I. Appendix II). Bucer included a form of exorcism similar to that of Brahdenberg-Nürnberg, in the projected order for the Archbishop of Cologne (‘Go out, thou unclean spirit’...’). The distinction between profitable and unprofitable ceremonies became an important one in Lutheran thinking, for when the victorious Roman Catholics attempted a full restoration of the baptismal ceremonial in the Augsburg Interim there was considerable dissatisfaction over the point amongst the Protestant leaders (Kidd D. C. R. p. 359). On the whole the Lutheran attitude had been cautious and conservative, but in Switzerland a more radical spirit quickly developed. Zwingli himself did not at first take any very decisive steps. The old ritual was retained in the first Zurich revision, in order that the weak should not be needlessly offended. Oil, spittle, exorcism, the crossing, anointing and the chrism all had their place (Kidd D. C. R. p. 423; Zwingli C. R. 4 p. 707). The meaning of the symbols was stressed after the Lutheran manner, as in the prayer for righteousness and innocence which accompanied the giving of the baptismal robe. The Anabaptists were not satisfied with these timid measures. They examined the Scriptural records and found no trace of these ceremonies. They condemned them as human additions to the sacrament instituted by God. Zwingli himself was inwardly of the same mind, and he regarded it as one of the points in favour of the Anabaptists that they set no store by the traditional rites and sought to sweep them away at one decisive stroke (C. R. 4 p. 245). Calvin completed the work which Luther and Zwingli had begun. He saw clearly that if the work of reformation was to be done at all then it must be done thoroughly and decisively, no matter how great the initial cost. Towards the ceremonies practised in the Romanist church he displayed from the first uncompromising hostility. He had several arguments to bring against them. They had been added, not to an ordinance of man, but to the ordinance of God (Tracts 2 p. 118). They were even on the admission of the Romanists themselves superfluous (Ibid. 1 p. 137). Far from teaching valuable spiritual lessons they obscured the sacrament itself and its real signification. Being pompous and foolish in themselves, they detracted from rather than added to the solemnity of the divinely appointed sacrament. In a scathing phrase in the Institutes Calvin called for the complete abolition of this adventitious farrago of added ceremonies: spittle
and other follies' (Instit. 4, 15, 19). The Genevan liturgies preserved not a single one of the old ceremonies, unless we count the use of prayer and sponsors amongst the things added to the original institution. The disciples of Calvin naturally followed his teaching at this point, and although they had nothing new to say, they seem to have attempted, although without marked success, to emulate the severity of his condemnations. Knox forcibly dismissed 'spattill, salt, candill' as 'Papistic-all inventions' (1st Scots Confession 22), arguing that those who used them implicitly charged the Lord Jesus Christ with an imperfect institution: 'Quosoever presumeth in baptism to use oyl, salt, wax, spattill, conjuratioun or crocing accuseth the perfyte institution of Christ Jesus of imperfectioun' (Works 2 p. 186). Bullinger complained of the endless multiplication of the baptismal ceremonies, and concluded that it was best to stick closely to the original institution: 'At this day other of this kind innumerable new devices are added to baptism: therefore the safest and surest way is to build upon the first foundations of the blessed apostles' (Bull. P.S. 4 p. 362).

The two main Protestant groups differed in policy rather than in principle. Duther on the one side did not think it practicable or even necessary to abolish the ceremonial at a stroke. Indeed, he was ready to apply the more edifying symbols to his own purpose, the creation of a pure and instructed spiritual religion based upon the word. Calvin on the other side declared for a radical reform as in the long run the only sure means of attaining the desired goal. He thought it unnecessary and unwise to add new ceremonies with new meanings when there was such a breadth and depth of meaning in the simple appointment of Christ himself. The difference is important, for in England both the Lutheran and Reformed influences were at work, and at this point, as at so many others, they came into inevitable collision.

3. Anglican Views

We have seen already that during the first tentative period of reform in England Lutheran influences were predominant. At first then the English Protestants approached the baptismal ceremonial from the Lutheran angle. Frith may be taken as an example. He objected strongly to the superstition which seems to have been prevalent that the ceremonies were indispensable: 'Theye think if a drunken priest forget to put spittle or salt in y childes mouth that y child is not christened' (B.R. p. 91). But he thought too that discrimination and charity ought to be exercised concerning the use of the traditional rites: 'We must behave ourselves wisely, as charitie teacheth'. On the one hand it might be urged, as he allowed, that the Ethiopian eunuch - once again the favourite example - was baptised without ceremonial: 'there was neither fonte, nor holy water,....candle, creame, oyle, salt'. But on the other hand some of the rites had a profitable signification, and they could very well be kept in the church. Others which had no value ought to be abolished without scruple (Ibid. p. 95).
Cranmer himself was very much of the same opinion as Frith. Like Frith he opposed the notion which seemed to be prevalent that the rites were necessary to salvation: a further witness to the existence of this mistaken popular view was Gilpin, who complained that many people thought baptism 'not effectual because it wanted men's traditions' (Strype E.M. 2, 2 p. 28). Cranmer considered the main argument in favour of the ceremonies: the authority of the Fathers, and especially of Tertullian. But he asked pointedly: 'Why should we then believe Tertullian against so plain Scriptures?' (Cran.P.S. 2 p. 56). Against the superstition of an absolute necessity of the ceremonial he had two objections: first, that John Baptist did not use the ceremonial, and second, 'that children in danger of life are christened of the midwife, or of some other woman, without any of these ceremonies' (Ibid. pp. 57-8). Cranmer could conclude then that the ceremonies were additions which added nothing essential to the simple basic rite. He did not go on to the further conclusion that the ceremonies ought on that account to be abolished altogether. Cranmer favoured a middle course, as is plainly stated in his Preface to the Book of Common Prayer. As much as possible of the accustomed use was to be kept, and only those things omitted 'whereof some be untrue, some uncertain, some vain and superstitious'.

The Lutheran phase culminated in the 1549 book. In the Order of Public Baptism of that year there was retained not only the sign of the cross but also exorcism ('I command thee, unclean spirit'), the chrismom ('and the minister shall put upon him his white vesture commonly called the chrismom'), and of course, the hallowing of the water.

Already, however, opinion in England had begun to harden against the ceremonies. The 1549 order did not meet with a very favourable reception in reforming circles. Attention had already been called, textually, by Frith, for instance, and also in 'the Sum of Scripture' (Foxe 5 p. 592), to the complete absence of any Scriptural warrant for the baptismal ceremonial. The spread of Reformed teaching gave prominence to this fact, and helped to create a demand for a more thorough-going revision. Bucer was now in England, and he too now favoured more drastic measures. He criticised the retention of the hallowing of the water and the criticism chrismom on the ground that these rites were too scenical (Burnet 2 p. 320), and although he was willing that the cross should be kept he had now turned against exorcism (Smyth p. 237). How much weight Bucer's criticisms had it is difficult to estimate, but what is certain is that Cranmer himself was won over to more radical views. Whether Cranmer had ever been a Lutheran in the strict sense (e.g. in his doctrine of the supper) is open to question, but there can be no doubt at all that in the latter half of Edward's reign he came out definitely on the Reformed side. The result was the rejection of almost the whole of the traditional ceremonial in the 1552 Prayer Book. Only the marking with the cross remained, and that was now placed after the baptism, not before it.

By this time the majority of the Anglicans, both writers and martyrs, had abandoned the principle of a discriminatory use.
They now vied with the continental Reformers in the severity of their denunciation of the ancient rites. Becon was particularly savage, attacking all the rites as unauthorised inventions: "They added moreover of their own brain, without any authority of God's word, certain exorcisms and conjurations, to drive the devil out of the silly simple poor infant" (Bec. P. S. I p. 11), and calling attention to the resultant superstitions amongst the ignorant: "Neither was it counted a perfect baptism if any of these beggarly ceremonies wanted" (Ibid.). The example of the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch was brought in in proof of a primitive and apostolic simplicity (Ibid. 2 p. 207). In a particularly biting passage Becon rejected the whole Romanist service as an idolatrous profanation, a contemptuous attempt to improve upon that which God himself had appointed and instituted: "For Baal's priest bewitcheth the child, shutteth the church door, conjur- eth the devil out of the poor young infant, bespumeth the child with his vile spittle and stinking slaver, putteth salt in the child's mouth, smeareth it with greasy and unsavoury oil... Do these papists, by adding beggarly ceremonies, any other thing than set the Son Christ to school, and advance their own fleshly imaginations above the wisdom of the Lord Christ" (Ibid. 3 p. 231). The martyrs of the Marian persecution, even the humbler amongst them, had learned the lesson well. When the topic of the baptismal ceremonial arose, they could make all the usual points: the blasphemy of Christ by such 'mingle-mangle' (Smith in Foxe 7 p. 361); the simplicity of the baptism of the chamberlain in Acts 8 (Denley, Ibid. p. 354); and the general uselessness and ineffectiveness of the human additions to the sacrament. In connection with the latter point there was an interesting passage at arms between Haukes and Harpsfied when the latter attempted to justify the ceremonies Scripturally on the ground that they were for the most part modelled upon the actions of Christ. The reply of Haukes was devastatingly simple and effective:

'Haukes: I deny all things invented and devised by men: your oil, cream, salt, spitting, candle.

Harpsfield But Christ used ceremonies. Did he not take clay from the ground, and spittle?

Haukes But Christ did never use it in baptism. If ye will needs have it, put it to the use that Christ put it unto' (Foxe 7 p. 99). Foxe gives no record of the reply of the Romanist champion and inquisitor.

Little purpose would be served by setting out in detail the many and sometimes fairly full pronouncements of the Anglican leaders upon the matter. In order to show their unanimity a brief list of representative references might be given. Hooper, as one would naturally expect, opposed the ceremonies. They were 'human inventions' (Hoop. P. S. I p. 533), and 'suchlike baggage should be omitted' (Ibid. 2 p. 46). Grindal enforced the prohibition of the old ceremonial. In his Visitation Articles at York he made enquiry 'Whether you parson use an oil or chrism, tapers, spittle, or any other popish ceremony in the administration of the sacrament of baptism' (Grind. P. S. p. 160). The drawing up of the Advertisements led to rumours both at home and abroad that oil, spittle, clay and tapers were to be reintroduced into the service, but Grindal and Horn assured their anxious friends...
at Zurich that the rumour were without foundation, and that the Church of England had entirely given up these practices (Zur.Lett. P.3.1 App.106). Jewel thought it rather ironical that Harding should complain against the Anglicans for 'plainly and simply ministering this sacrament, as Christ commanded' (Jew.P.S.3 p.445).

Whitgift censured the Papists for the 'corrupt and superstitious ceremonies of them used in baptism' (Whit.P.S.3 p.87), and he thought that the church had 'just cause for refusing oil' (Ibid. p.131). Calfhill found for salt and other ceremonies a devilish origin (Calf.P.S.1.p.16). He pointed out that the Papists were inconsistent in their appeal to the authority of tradition, for they themselves had allowed to lapse, and made no attempt to revive the ceremony of milk and honey which Tertullian had described as Apostolick (Ibid. p.270). Hooker was more concerned to defend the one ceremony which the Church of England did retain, but he granted with all the Anglicans that the rites are at best 'accessory...and that baptism may tolerably be given without them' (L.E.P.5,58,4).

The evidence is surely conclusive that Edwardian and Elizabethan Reformers alike agreed substantially with the teaching of Calvin and of the Reformed school. The only exception was in the attitude to the ceremony retained in the 1552 book, the signing with the sign of the cross. Since the retention of this rite formed a principal subject of contention between the Church party and the Puritans, it calls for a separate and slightly more detailed study. Of course the issue was in itself, like so many of these issues, small and trifling, and many modern students and theologians will find the controversy tedious and pettifogging. But the difference of opinion with regard to the cross pointed to that deeper and wider cleavage to which reference has already been made. A full consideration of this question will help to make even clearer what it was that divided those who from a purely theological point of view ought without doubt to have been united. It will also show how it was that issues which a little commonsense and a sincere conciliatoriness would have settled in a single discussion contributed to that tragic separation of the English church into militant and irreconcilable factions.

4. The Puritan Revolt

Not without reason Hooper has often been described as the father of English Puritanism. Almost alone amongst the Edwardians he adopted without reserve or qualification the teaching and the practice of Geneva. His attitude to the supplice - the Babylonish rag - is well known. His opposition to lay-baptism, and especially to the baptising by women, has already been mentioned. In relation to the sacrament of baptism Hooper added to his protest against the continued permission of lay-baptism a further protest against that ceremony which the majority of his compatriots and fellow-reformers were willing to retain. 'Whatsoever is added', Hooper declared, 'oil, salt, cross, lights and such other, be the inventions of men' (Hoop.P.S.1 p.533). What Hooper desired was the original institution, baptism as it had been practised in the primitive church, with no additions of any
kind, however godly: 'washing in clean and fair water, in the
Triune name, and with a suitable profession of faith and
prayer to God' (Ibid.). Anything more than that was a superflu­ous, unauthorised and indeed presumptuous addition to the
divinely appointed order.

Hooper stood almost alone during the reign of Edward, but the
continental exile did much to direct the opinion of the leading
English Protestants into more radical channels. At Frankfurt,
and later at Geneva, a strong Reformed group developed, which had
as its main objective the completion of the English Reformation
along Genevan lines. For this group the second Prayer Book, far
from being a perfect and final revision, as Cox and Jewel main­
tained, was no more than a step towards a fully reformed order,
imperfect and even papistical in several important respects.
The retention of the signing with the cross in baptism was one
of the blemishes to which attention was drawn. It is significant
that when the Prayer Book was submitted to the Ministers at Geneva
a strong complaint was lodged against this ceremony, which was
thought not to tend to any profit, but rather to foster superstition:
'As for the crossing of babes, whatsoever practice there
hath been in time of old, yet it is most certain that it is
truly, in these days, through so late greeness of the super­
tition, so most abomiable, as that we judge those men to have
done assuredly well, that have once driven this rite out of
the congregation: whereof also we see not what the profit is
(Whittingam p.245). With this judgment the Genevan party
was in full accord.

The thorough-going Reformers returned to England during the
years 1558 and 1559 determined if possible to carry through their
programme of further revision. They had many influential sup­
porters, and many of those who took episcopal office, Sandys and
Grindal, for example, were in sympathy with them. In all the
attempts which they made, from the demands in the early convoca­tions (e.g. 1560 and 1563) to the final conference at Hampton Court
the abolition of the signing with the cross was one of the main
points in their programme of reform. A few examples will show
with what relentlessness and pertinacity the Puritans waged their
campaign, and how they made use of every possible weapon
which might serve to the accomplishment of their purpose.

The first weapon used was that of constitutional action,
through demands in convocation, petitions laid before Parliament,
and direct petitions to the sovereign. The motions of Sandys
(Prothero p.191), the Admonition to Parliament, and the Millen­
ary Petition are all examples, and in all these the abolition of
the cross was demanded. A second weapon was that of polemical
writing. Cartwright, perhaps, stated the case most fully in his
Replies to Whitgift, defending the Admonition, but there were
various other pamphlets, as for example the Dossen Points in
Controversy (2nd P. of a R. 1 p.131), Udall's State of the Church
of England laid open, and the Pleasant Dialogue. Public dispu­tation formed a third weapon. Travers, for example, stated the
objections to the cross in the conference at Lambeth (Ibid.1, p.173)
and the Puritans were not slow to make their grievance heard at Hampton Court when the opportunity was given. Another weapon was the enlisting of the aid of foreign reformers and churches. Humphrey and Sampson approached Bullinger upon the matter (Zur. Lett. P.S.1, 71), as did also their opponents Grindal and Horn, who wished to justify, or at least to excuse the Anglican practice (Ibid.75). Bullinger in his reply explained set out the reasons which had led his own church to abandon the cross, the non-apostolic derivation and the superstitious associations. Beza too played a part in the controversy. He condemned the sign of the cross as an execrable and novel superstition 'quite without profit' (Strype's Grindal Append. p.40). Another weapon was that of simple abuse. In this many of the pamphleteers excelled. Gilbert thought the enforcing of the cross could not be excused as 'mere policy' but ought to be condemned as 'manifest impiety' (2nd P. of a R.1, 93). The View of Polish Abuses described the cross as 'a childish and superstitious toy' (Frere & Doug. P. M. No 8). There was the usual competition to find the most uncomplimentary terms with which to describe either the thing itself or those who insisted upon its use. The final weapon was sheer non-conformity: the refusal to do that which was commanded. Quite a number of cases occurred, especially under Whitgift, in which parsons were cited for omitting the signing with the cross in public baptism. Nicoll the person of Eastwell was one of the offenders (Strype's Whit. I p.277). Others were Johnson of St. Clement's London (2nd P. of a R.1, 70), Hill of Bury St. Edmund's (Ibid.111), Settles (Ibid.2, 194) and Wilson (Ibid.236). A Brownist schoolmaster Robert was also prosecuted for asking that the cross should be omitted when he stood as a god-parent (Peel Brownists in Norfolk & Norfolk p.3). Marprelate, of course, used another and less creditable weapon which was peculiarly his own: that of blackmail. He threatened to continue his exposures of the infamies of the Bishops unless they accepted his conditions of peace, one of which was the abolition of the cross in baptism (Pierce Mar. Tracts p.80).

It is clear from this review that the campaign was waged bitterly and aggressively. It must now be asked what the arguments used by the Puritans amounted to when they are sifted out from the mass of controversy and abuse. The first argument was from the example of the Reformed churches, a new form of the argument from authority or tradition. The Anglicans could cite Bucer, of course, but Cartwright could oppose to Bucer 'men of as great authority, yea, the authority of all the reformed churches' (Whit. P. S. 3 p.125). Against the plea that the cross had antiquity on its side, Cartwright could turn the argument of Calvhill, that if antiquity alone mattered then we ought also to have milk and honey as well as the cross, for they were equally ancient (Ibid.). Gilbert expanded this argument, urging that the defence of the cross on grounds of antiquity meant also the defence of 'oyle and chrisme and many other toyes' (2nd P. of a R. 1, 93). A third argument was the superstitious association. Cartwright granted that the cross might have been a good thing as first used, for 'when men lived amongst nations which cast them in the teeth and reproached them with the Cross of Christ, then the sign had its value as a testimony. But the abuse
of the cross under the Papacy, as, for example, in the sacra-
ment of baptism, had brought about a new situation, which necess-
itated a new attitude, and the discontinuance of the old pract-
ice: 'We live among papaists...we ought now to do clean contrari-
wise to the old Christians, and abolish all use of these cross-
es: for contrary diseases must have contrary remedies' (Ibid.).

Reynolds developed this line of argument at Hampton Court. He
cited the Old Testament example of the brazen serpent: once good
and profitable as a means of healing, but later an occasion of
superstition and even of idolatry. James replied, perhaps rather
frivolously, that there was no resemblance between a serpent and
a cross (Barlow S. & S. pp. 67 f.). What he probably meant was
that the brazen serpent might be compared to wooden crosses,
which had been abolished, but not to the immaterial signing
with the cross, which had no continued existence.

Many of the Puritans took up the older argument that the in-
sistence upon the ceremony gave rise to the superstitious notion
that without it the sacrament was incomplete. Langworth and Wor-
ley enquired about this point: 'Whether thereby (i.e. by the rub-
ric enjoining the cross) the sacrament were of the child were
made an additional ceremony to the sacrament as part thereof;
and as though baptism were imperfect without it?' (Strype's
Whit. I p. 258). The answer given in the Schedule was an emphat-
ic negative: 'the Book had no such meaning' (Ibid.). Such neces-
sity of the cross as there was was not a theological necessity, de-
rising from the divine appointment, but a necessity of discipline
deriving from ecclesiastical ordinance.

Perhaps the most serious argument used was the contention
that the enjoining of crossing meant in effect the institution
of a new sacrament, 'which is proper to Christ only' (Whit. P. S. 3
p. 128). Cartwright saw clearly the dilemma in which the Anglican
found themselves, and he pressed home the advantage. If they
argued that the crossing had no signification, then they had no
good ground for insisting upon its continued use. But if they
argued that it had a profitable signification, then the crossing
became a significant sign, in other words a sacrament, and
the ecclesiastical authorities were encroaching upon the divine
prerogative. A variation of the argument was that all the cerem-
onies may be found to have signification, and therefore there
was no more reason to retain the cross than the others: 'I see
not', said Cartwright, 'why oil may not be brought into the
sacrament as well as crossing (i.e. granting the validity of
the Anglican arguments) (Ibid. p. 129). Travers too made use
of the main argument, that the crossing became an additional sac-
rament: 'It is not lawfull for the church to institute mysticall
rites and ceremonies, that is, with signification of doctrine
attached unto them, this being a kind of sacrament, which no
man can institute' (2nd P. of A. R. 1, 173). Knewstubs took up
the point at Hampton Court, challenging the right of the church
to add 'an externall and significant sign, where Christ had al-
ready ordained one' (Barlow S. & S. pp. 67 f.).

The final argument which Cartwright used was that it was
wrong to attempt to enforce a ceremony admittedly unnecessary and unscriptural. The Anglicans, he pointed out, were forced to admit that baptism could be validly dispensed without the cross, and they could find for the cross no shadow of justification in the New Testament records. What ground had they then to insist upon this 'drawing of two lines on the forehead, to put us in mind remembrance of our Christian profession' (Whit. P. S. 3 p. 128); especially when they had consented to the abolition of the material crosses of wood and stone? Behind this dilemma there stood of course the Puritan contention that the church has not the right to decree any ceremonial for which there is no warrant in Scripture, a principle discussed and refuted by Whitgift and Hooker. But at Hampton Court the Puritans pleaded from the unnecessary and unscriptural nature of the ceremony a right to freedom of conscience. The crossing, being unnecessary, was a thing indifferent. Its use was lawful for those who had no scruples in the matter, but it ought not to be required of weaker brethren, the Puritans, who could not use it without doing violence to their tender consciences. To this plea James replied, not without truth, that the Puritans gave very few signs of being weaker brethren (Barlow S. & S. pp. 67f.), and the bishops could very well answer that things indifferent ought to be submitted to the judgment of the church as a whole, not of private individuals.

Such then was the Puritan case as it was presented, sometimes more moderately, sometimes more violently, in scores of books, pamphlets, sermons, petitions and disputations. A case so fully and forcibly presented obviously called for serious consideration and a convincing theological answer. It was not enough merely to attempt to bring to conformity by force. Perhaps in itself the matter was so trivial that it hardly merited detailed discussion. But as a focal point of disagreement it has a historical importance out of all proportion to its real significance. And behind the clash in practice there was the clash in important ecclesiastical, exegetical and theological principles. Some attempt must be made then to state and to understand the Anglican defence.

5. Anglican Replies

During the early days of the Elizabethan Settlement the Anglican leaders had very little real defence to offer against the Puritan objections. Men like Sandys and Grindal were themselves Puritan in sympathy, and there was nothing they desired more than the completion of the Reformation in England on Reformed lines. Sandys himself supported the demand for the abolition of the cross in the convocation of 1563. It was Elizabeth herself who stood in the way of further reform, and Elizabeth constituted an obstacle which they were not able to evade or to remove. Leaders like Sandys and Grindal had to choose then between refusing office altogether (and perhaps forfeiting much of the ground already gained), or giving way on such matters as unwanted and unnecessary but fundamentally indifferent ceremonies in the hope that time would eventually work in their favour. The militant Puritans
favoured the former course, but many of the leading Protestants took the latter. With what motives and with what hopes some of them made the concessions appears plainly enough in the letter of Grindal and Horn to Bullinger and Gualter: 'We receive, or rather tolerate, until the Lord shall give us better times... the sign of the cross' (Zur. Lett. P. S. I, 75). The actual use of the sign could only be justified, and that rather half-heartedly, on the plea that it was an indifferent matter.

But for the obstacle of Elizabeth and her policy it is possible, and indeed probable that the Puritans would have carried the day, for they had considerable support in the Commons and amongst the ministers. At the same time it must not be forgotten that there were those amongst the returned exiles who, while agreeing with the Reformed churches in all doctrinal matters, were not prepared to go to extreme lengths in ecclesiastical and liturgical reconstruction. Cox and Jewel had headed a not inconsiderable Prayer Book party at Frankfurt, and they had been powerful enough to drive the more radical leaders out of the church and city. These men stood firm for the 1552 revision, resisting all attempts to reform it further. There were then churchmen prepared to endorse and defend in the main the policy of Elizabeth, in spite of scruples at certain points. Jewel himself, preoccupied as he was with the controversy against Rome, had little time to devote to the Puritan objections. He was content to point out that the Church of England did not teach an indispensability of the cross: 'It made nothing to the virtue of the sacrament, not being any part thereof' (Jew. P. S. 2 p. 1106), without taking pains to defend the ceremony and its retention against detailed objections. There can be no doubt, however, that had great respect for the 1552 book, which in its boldness in fundamentals and conservatism in details struck a happy balance not achieved by the more zealous but less discreet Reformers abroad.

Out of the practical requirements imposed by the policy of Elizabeth and the loyalty to Cranmer's conception of a church and liturgy reformed on specifically Anglican lines there grew up in the second half of the reign an Anglican group which was prepared to do battle with the Puritans upon every issue raised. Whitgift, the university rival of Cartwright, emerged as the first and for a time the leading theological champion of the established order. Whitgift took up the arguments of the Puritans and answered them in detail. In order to prove the Reformed nature of the Anglican retention of the cross he quoted Bucer, who had not cavilled at the sign, but had found it fitting and profitable (Whit. P. S. 3 p. 123). He could even claim, in controversy with Travers, that Beza himself had hesitated to condemn outright those who continued the use of the cross, although there could be little doubt, as Travers maintained, that Beza's private opinion was 'clere with usm that the cross ought to be abolished' (2nd P of a R. I, 173). Against the argument that other ceremonies used by the Papists might just as well be retained as the cross, Whitgift contended that the use of crossing was pure, whereas the other ceremonies were corrupt and superstitious (P. S. 3 p. 87). The sign of the cross was of long
standing in the church, and its use had been continuous through the centuries: in that respect it differed from the feeding with milk and honey which the Puritans attempted to put on the same footing (Ibid. p. 126). Whitgift denied that oil might just as well be used as the cross, and he also denied that there was any real resemblance between the signing with the cross and the forbidden cross of wood or stone, 'which remaineth and continueth', thus provoking a superstitious reverence (Ibid. p. 131).

Whitgift was thus prepared to answer the Puritan objections in detail, but his case for the defence rested not so much on these petty dialectics as on two serious principles. First, he contended that the church had the right to take order in things indifferent, and that the details of the church's worship are committed to the church's disposition (Ibid. p. 208). Whitgift did not claim, of course, that the church could alter the fundamental structure of a sacrament, for the essentials of the sacrament had been ordained by Christ himself. What he did claim was that Christ had ordained only the fundamental structure and not the liturgical circumstances and accompaniments. Thus the law of Scripture did not extend to the details of the service of administration. Within reasonable and Scriptural limits, which the Church of Rome had transgressed, the national or territorial church could add to the basic structure, at its own discretion and in accordance with prevailing circumstances and needs. This conception of the authority of the church in matters of ecclesiastical and liturgical order carried with it the implication that the church could at any time adapt or alter the service, so long as it did nothing contrary to the Scriptures and avoided any rash and ill-considered departure from traditional practices. In indifferent matters the initiative lay with the church, while the Scripture played as it were the negative function of a censor and court of appeal.

The second principle grew out of the first, that the Church of England had retained the use of the cross because it considered it to be a suitable accompaniment of the sacrament. Its suitability consisted in the fact that it conveyed a profitable signification to the people of the age and country. Quite rightly the English Church had rejected the complicated Romanist ceremonial, for that ceremonial nurtured superstition and obscured rather than illuminated the true meaning of the sacrament. But the crossing presented sharply to the recipient of baptism the moral and spiritual obligations undertaken in the profession (Ibid. p. 128). The Puritan taunt that the ordaining of a new sign was equivalent to the institution of a new sacrament Whitgift dismissed as ridiculous: 'every ceremony betokening something is not by and by a sacrament' (Ibid.). The Puritans were in fact inconsistent, for on the one hand 'they were wont to find fault with dumb ceremonies' and on the other 'they blamed those that had any significance' (2nd P. of a R. I, 173). The Church of England had every right to take order in this matter of the ceremonial, and it had retained the cross for the good reason that it was a profitable rite: it remained therefore for the individual members of the church to submit in this indifferent matter to the order taken.

The work which Whitgift had begun was taken up and completed
by the greatest of the Anglican apologists, Hooker, who defended the continued use of the cross both in general principle and in points of detail. Hooker made his position clear when he declared, with all the Reformers, that such rites were accessory only... and that baptism may tolerably be given without them (L.E.P.5,58,4). He defended, however, the church's right to take order in things indifferent upon which the Scripture does not legislate: this being the subject of his masterly dissertations in the earlier books of the Laws. A detailed presentation of the argument would take us far afield from either the cross in particular or baptism in general. Coming to the particular matter in which the judgment of the church was disputed Hooker took the familiar line that the cross had been rightly retained because of its meaning and value: it was 'a sign of remembrance to put us in mind of our duty, and a means to work our preservation from reproach' (Ibid.5,65,5). Hooker granted that the sign of the cross had been abused under the Papacy, but on the authority of Goulart he denied that the fathers had used it superstitiously (Ibid.10). Like Whitgift, Hooker contended that 'between the cross which superstition honoured as Christ, and that ceremony of the cross which serveth for a sign of remembrance, there is a plain and marked difference' (Ibid.16). It was a non sequitur to say as Cartwright did that 'because we live amongst such as adore the sign of the cross... we ought to take away all the use thereof.' The proper remedy for abuse was not abolition, but the restoration of the right usage, and this was what the Church of England had sought to accomplish: 'Their course which will remedy the superstitious use of things profitable in themselves... is not still to abolish utterly the use thereof... but rather if it may be to bring them back to a right perfect and religious usage' (Ibid.21). Since Hooker had previously shown that the marking with the cross was a profitable ceremony, unlike the rites which had been discontinued, it naturally followed that the church had the right and indeed the duty to restore it to a pure and superstitious use.

Whitgift and Hooker were the leading champions, but others entered the lists on behalf of the Prayer Book, Cooper and Bridges for example. They had nothing to add to the arguments already considered. A paper of Matthew Hutton on the subject has some points of interest, although it too contains little that is original. Hutton seems to have been impressed by the antiquity of the ceremony: 'It is a very old ceremony used by the best fathers, both without baptism and with baptism'- Augustine, Tertullian, Chrysostom and Cyprian were quoted (Cardwell pp.151 f.). The Papist abuse and the ultimate dispensability could both be granted, but neither the one nor the other forbade a proper use such as the Church of England had sought to establish: 'We say also that it may be well used, and is well used in the Church of England' (Ibid.). The question of the cross was argued out at some length at Hampton Court, but the contestants merely went over the familiar ground, and often seemed more anxious to score good debating points than to establish sound principles. It was evident, however, that...
the Anglicans had every desire, if possible, to overcome the Puritan scruples, and they did their opponents the honour of including in the 1604 Canons am long justification of the use of the cross, and of inserting in the Prayer Book a rubric which referred those who had doubts upon the point to this 'true explication thereof, and the just reasons for the retaining of it'.

The Canon (30) summarised in comparatively brief compass all the detailed arguments by which the retention of the cross was defended: its continual and general use, its appropriateness as a mark of outward profession, the possibility of its lawful use in spite of Romanist abuses, its retention 'by those reverend fathers and great divines in the days of Edward the Sixth! The ordinary and necessary safeguards against misunderstanding were made: 'The Church of England doth hold and teach still that the sign of the cross used in this sacrament is no part of that sacrament'; 'the infant baptised is, by virtue of baptism, before it be signed with the sign of the cross, received into the congregation of Christ's flock, as a perfect member thereof, and not by any power ascribed unto the sign of the cross'. Not a great deal of attention was devoted to those great principles which Whitgift and Hooker had developed, and upon which the Anglican case finally rested, but in the concluding paragraph grounds upon which conformity was demanded were briefly summarised: 'Since the ceremony is a thing indifferent, it is the part of every private man, both minister and other, to retain the true use of it, prescribed by lawful authority: considering that things of themselves indifferent do in some sort alter their nature, when they are either commanded or forbidden by a lawful magistrate, and may not be omitted at every man's pleasure contrary to the law, when they be commanded, nor used when they are prohibited'. The legitimacy of the church's taking order in things indifferent was here assumed rather than argued, and to that extent the canon might be said to be an evasion of the point at issue. But granted this right and duty of the church, there can be little doubt that ecclesiastical order demanded the submission of the private conscience to the judgment of the church.

6. Conclusion

As between the Romanist and Protestant groups on the one hand, the Anglican and Puritan on the other, the modern Protestant finds it by no means easy to arrive at a balanced judgment. The temper of the present age is one of toleration. A primary difficulty is to summon up sufficient sympathy with those who could raise so great controversy over issues apparently so trifling and unimportant. The whole matter appears in the last resort to be one of religious taste and temperament rather than of serious theological principle. Some individuals are so made that they prefer a service replete with ceremonial, and find that ceremonial so inspiring and instructive that it fulfils a real need in their religious life. Others not only cannot see any positive value or meaning in ceremonies but find the ceremonies a hindrance and a stumbling-block to true devotion and understand-
-ing. But since the difference is temperamental only, surely there is no good reason for the two groups to quarrel bitterly in an attempt to force a common mode of worship upon all. Those who find value in the ceremonial could use it and yet consent to its omission by others, while those who find no profit in it could abstain and yet consent to others using it.

It would be a serious error, however, to think that in the sixteenth century the controversies over the baptismal ceremonies arose purely and simply out of differences in temperament and taste. At the back of the repudiation of the traditional ceremonial there lay the theological protest against those ignorant and superstitious notions to which that ceremonial was then in fact giving rise. The Reformers had a simple doctrinal aim in their liturgical revisions, the restoration of the sacrament itself to its proper place as a meaningful sign, understood within the context of the whole evangelical message. The traditional ceremonies, even those which had had behind them some valuable point of teaching, now served to confuse rather than to emphasise the essential message of the Gospel. What was worse, they definitely misled the ignorant into thinking that they were in themselves valuable and efficacious. It was no mere matter of temperament that led the Reformers to reject the ancient ritual, but the overriding desire that Christ alone should be exalted and that the Gospel of Christ should be clearly proclaimed in the sacrament. Of course, there was something to be said on the Romanist side too, for the ceremonies were not a matter of taste only for those who wished to retain them. The Romanist could argue that in the strict sense no efficacy ever had been ascribed to the ceremonies, and that the right way to counter superstition was to bring out, as at Trent, the true and beautiful symbolism. Against that the Protestants would reply that the ceremonies were not after all essential and that there was no trace of them in the baptisms recorded in Scripture, or in the words of the divine institution. But at once another doctrinal issue of the first rank was raised, the issue of authority, the authority of the Scripture in relation to the real or pretended authority of the church and of tradition. Whether we give our decision with the Romanists or with the Protestants will depend upon our estimate of the value of the ultimate theological principles for which the Romanists on the one side, the Protestants on the other contended. To dismiss the ceremonial controversy as pettifogging and unimportant is betray a serious lack of historical perspective.

The Anglicans and the Puritans were agreed for the most part in their opposition to the Romanist position. What are we to make then of their superficially absurd haggle about the cross? First, even the most devoted Anglican must admit that there was a certain illogicality about the Anglican position. Many of the other ceremonies had a profitable signification and had been no more abused than the cross, but these had been abandoned and the cross alone retained. The Puritans naturally demanded solid reasons for the exception which had been made. The answer given was not really an answer at all - for the detailed replies to Puritan objections were hardly more than dialectical.
excuses - but the statement of a principle which, however right and valuable in itself, did not meet the main attack. Briefly, the argument ran as follows. The church has the right to ordain or to forbid ceremonies. It was decided under Edward, and again on the accession of Elizabeth, that the cross should be retained. Members of the church, or of a party within the church, have the right neither to oppose the ruling nor to question it, but must simply submit.

To return to the question which the sixteenth century apologists can hardly be said adequately to have answered: On what grounds had the Edwardian church retained the cross? The answer seems to be that they retained it in accordance with the principle of the Lutheran reforms: that as much of possible of the old ought to be retained within the framework of the new, and that liturgical reforms ought to be made only in so far as they were necessitated by doctrinal changes. In the communion service the reforms were inevitably radical, but in the service of public baptism there was no need of drastic revision, for the doctrine of baptism had not reached the same depth of corruption, and its purification did not demand so far-reaching changes in the office. In 1549 Cranmer had tried to retain quite a few of the old ceremonies, following out the principle of balance between the innovations demanded by doctrinal reform and conservatism in matters indifferent. Reformed opinion had gone against the more cautious revision, and in the 1552 book the cross was the only ceremony which remained, approved, of course, by Bucer. It is important to notice, however, that the retention of the cross does not bear witness, as the Puritans suggested, to a confusion of thought on the part of the Anglican revisers. It testifies rather, and this is its real justification, to a deliberate and consistently applied policy, the policy of retaining the forms and ceremonies hallowed by use except in so far as they were inconsistent with the Scripture or with a Scriptural theology. It may be, of course, that what policy was itself fundamentally wrong and impracticable. It may be that historical by it has proved disastrous in that it has helped to make of the Church of England a church which is neither fully Reformed nor fully Romanist, but comprises within itself irreconcilable factions, all laying claim to the title of loyal churchmen. But the point which matters is that behind the retention of the cross and the abolition of the other ceremonies there was this dangerous if carefully considered plan, a plan which derived ultimately from Luther and the Lutheran churches, but which suited thoroughly the cautious and conservative Cranmer, and fitted excellently the tortuous foreign and domestic policies of the Supreme Governor Elizabeth.

A final question remains to be asked: What of the argument of Whitgift and Hooker, that the church has the right to take order in things indifferent, subject, of course, to the general guidance and control of the Scriptures? Up to a point the Puritans themselves, with all their emphasis upon Scripture-precedent, were quite willing to act upon this principle. Nowhere in the New Testament do we read that prayers and Scripture-readings formed an essential part of the administration
of public baptism, yet the Puritans were prepared to insist that these 'additions,' dispensable in the last resort, were normally both right and necessary. The power of the church to make additions was not questioned, only the power of the church to make additions which could not be found in Scripture in any context at all. Prayers and Scripture-readings, although not prescribed specifically for baptism, were in themselves Scriptural forms; signing with the cross was undoubtedly ancient, and it might even be of profit, but it fell because there was no mention of it in the word of God. The ultimate distinction between the Puritans and the Anglicans in relation to the power of the church lies at that point. Neither party insisted upon the strict following of Scriptural precedents, but the Puritans would allow the church to appoint only that for which warrant could be found in Scripture, the Anglicans would grant a power to ordain that which was not contrary to the Scripture. This distinction was all-important, for it meant that the Puritans could not agree that the cross was a thing indifferent. It was something wicked, superstitious, unedifying and unscriptural, and in attempting to enforce it the church exceeded its proper competence and authority. This refusal to allow that the cross could be numbered amongst things indifferent underlay the very proper plea at Hampton Court that in this matter the Puritans were weaker brethren who could not use the ceremony without violence to their conscience: a plea to which the witty retort of the King, though it was in certain respects, formed no real answer.

Apart from the relation of the authority of the church to the final authority of Scripture, three other issues were involved. The first arose naturally out of the Puritan disagreement of opinion, and it concerns the extent of the authority committed to the church. When the church ordains a ceremony which the majority find good and proper, has it the right to enforce that ceremony upon a minority which has towards the same it a serious objection of principle and conscience? But there is a second issue in the long run no less important, and that is, what or what constitutes the church which takes order in these things? In Tudor days the will of the church tended only too frequently to be the will of the sovereign, or the will of the bishops and clergy. The Puritans could rightly claim that they had a fair measure of popular support, and that the representatives of the laity in the Lower House of Parliament strongly supported their demands for more radical religious reform. At this point, of course, the issue ceased to be one of doctrine and became one of ecclesiastical and constitutional government. The appeal to the rights and authority of the church necessarily raises the question of the church's constitution and order. A final issue is that of the power of the church to alter ceremonies which a previous generation had ordained. In the present controversy the Anglicans constantly appealed to the decisions made under Edward the Sixth, but granted the authority of the church in things indifferent, the Puritans might very well claim that decisions taken under Edward was no more binding than order taken under the Papacy, especially if it had no final sanction in the Scriptures.

A full discussion of these governmental matters would take
us far from the doctrine of baptism and of the baptismal ceremonies, and would hardly be relevant to our present purpose. It will be clear, however, from the brief mention of them that some very deep and very modern problems underlay the surface-controversy, problems which in the long run brought the Anglicans and the Monarch on the one side, the Puritans and Parliament on the other into open conflict, and which even then failed to find any real or adequate solution. It will be clear too that in the light of their fundamental principles, and of the commonly accepted ideal of a church in which there was theoretically a perfect conformity, without the possibility of tolerated dissent, the Anglicans and the Puritans were bound to come into active collision over the ceremony of the cross and the issues which underlay that ceremony. Only had there been as much of the spirit of conciliatoriness, toleration and forbearance as there was of self-sacrifice, pertinacity and devotion to principle, could the long and bitter and disastrous controversy have been avoided.

Notes

1 Jacobs Luth. Movemt. in Eng. pp. 352 f. The Lutheran exorcism of 1523 ran as follows: 'Darum du leidiger Teufel, erkenne dein Urtheil'.

2 Luther W. A. 66 p. 175 'Das rechte, schöne, weisse Westerhemd, rein von allen Sünden, wird uns hie gegeben'.


4 Zwingli C. R. 4 p. 245 'das erste ist, das man die menschlichen Zusätze, als: beschweren des kinds mit geyfer psudein, salzinat strychen, hiemit harfurgebracht hat, das sy nuts wardt sind'.

5 Hooker 5, 65, 10, quoting Goulart 'Quamvis veteres Christiani externo syno crucis usi sunt, id tamen fuit sine superstitione' Goulart himself rejected the sign, but on the ground that its use was indifferent, and therefore unnecessary. Hooker would grant the legitimacy of this view. Other churches might reject the sign if they chose, but not the private members of a church which approved it.
1. Early Customs

It has been seen what views were held, first with regard to the substantial points in the administration of the sacrament, and second with regard to the accessory. A further question must now be asked: What did the various theological groups teach concerning the circumstances of the administration, the when and the where of the sacrament? In this matter as in other details of administration and ceremonial the New Testament had little concrete guidance to offer. As far as can be gathered the most primitive custom was the straightforward and practical one of baptising converts at the earliest possible moment after their profession of faith, and in the nearest water available at the required time, whether indoors or out. Cornelius is a good example. He was baptised by Peter when it became evident that the Holy Spirit had descended upon him, possibly in his own house, or at any rate in the nearest adjacent water. The Ethiopian eunuch is another case in point. He asked that the evangelist should baptise him in the first water to which they came by the way, and Philip asked only for the assurance of faith, not for compliance with some regulations governing the circumstances of administration.

Obviously this spontaneous and rather haphazard method of administration could not continue indefinitely. It was in itself the result of the particular conditions in which the Christian mission was first conducted. The growth of the church, especially in the great centres, and the more formal organisation of the church and its worship, made more orderly methods of sacramental administration increasingly necessary. The careful instruction and testing of proselytes was the solution of one problem, the problem of insincere or superstitious conversions for unworthy reasons. But apart from this need of instruction there was the parallel need that the ceremony itself should be conducted at the most convenient and impressive time and in the most suitable and fitting place. The very nature of baptism as an initiatory rite by which the convert was incorporated into the church led of itself to the conception of baptism as a public rite, something in which all the members of the church had an interest, and which they ought to have the opportunity of attending. Hence the need for the fixing of a definite time and place for the administration of the sacrament.

So long as the church was small and comparatively unorganised, the fairly haphazard administrations continued, although the non-recognition and persecution inevitably conditioned the mode adopted. Justin, for example, mentioned only some place where there is water, although he does seem to have envisaged a public ceremony (Apol.1,61). The Didache spoke of baptism in living water where possible, and again there were no details with regard to time or place, although the inference
is that the administration would be a public one (Didache 7). By the end of the second century, however, more careful consideration was being given to ceremonial points, and the time and place of baptismal administration came to be discussed. Tertullian laid it down that if possible the sacrament of baptism ought to be given at the two seasons of the Passover and Pentecost, for these were the two seasons with which baptism was most intimately connected both in its meaning and in its effects (De Bapt. 12). Tertullian did not wish to insist upon these times, for he could grant that every day was the Lord’s. He did think, however, that baptism administered at other times lacked in solemnity, if it did not lack in grace. In accordance with the setting apart of these seasons for public baptisms, the course of catechetical instruction usually culminated in the special period of Lenten preparation (See Liturgy and Worship: Baptism).

The building of regular churches for purposes of worship led inevitably to the transferring of the rite of baptism from any place where there was water to the specially appointed baptistery. Thus in the early Liturgies which date from the third century it is laid down that baptism shall take place publicly at a solemn service at Easter, on the satisfactory completion of the catechumenate with the special Lenten course of teaching and fasting (Neill and Whilloughby pp.390 f.). An exception was made in the case of emergency, or clinical baptisms, which could be given at any time and in any place. The feeling existed amongst many that since there was no public confession at a clinical baptism, such baptism was in some respects inferior to public and solemn baptism. How strongly it came to be held that baptism should be given only at the proper time or in the proper place is seen in Augustine’s reference to the carrying of infants in danger of death to church for private baptism: the public ceremony in church, even out of the appointed season, was evidently preferable to a private administration in the home.

Quite early then the circumstances of baptism came to be fixed both in respect of time and also of place. The proper place was the church, so that all the congregation might be present. The proper time was the the great feast of Easter or the feast of Pentecost – the Epiphany too seems to have been allowed in the East. There were of course no theological reasons for confining baptism to these seasons or to the church, except the general ones that such circumstances were most agreeable to the meaning and solemnity of the sacrament. The rules were never in the strict sense absolute, and exceptions were always allowed where necessity demanded.

2. The Mediaeval Practice

During the Middle Ages the theory with regard to the circumstances of baptism underwent little change, but in the Christianised land of Western Europe the practice altered very considerably. A first and obvious practical development, although not one of very great importance, was the substitution of the font for the baptistry (Ibid.). The font was usually situated at the door of
the church, to mark the entry of the baptised person into the Christian congregation (Daniel p.410). A far more important change was the virtual abandonment from about the eighth century onwards of the old custom of baptising only at Easter and Pentecost. The reasons for this step were purely practical. Almost all the baptisms that now took place were baptisms of infants. Since the rate of infant mortality was high, and baptism came to be thought of as absolutely necessary to salvation, it was imperative that newly born children should receive the sacrament with the minimum of delay. Where immediate death threatened, the infant would be baptised privately at home. Where there was no emergency, it would be brought to the church at the earliest possible time, and baptised, often in semi-privacy, but openly and with the full ceremonial, by the priest. In Saxon England legislation was passed at various times making it an offence, punishable with a fine, to delay the ceremony of baptism beyond specified periods, usually about thirty nights (Hart E.R. p.192). The Northumbrian priests allowed only nine days, obviously with the model of circumcision in mind (Ibid. p.196). Indeed, it is probable that the Old Testament example played quite an important part in the justifying of rules for the early baptism of children, in defiance of primitive custom. Sick infants brought to the priests were ordered to be baptised at once (Ibid. p.198).

There were of course many who wished to apply the old rules concerning catechumens to the infants of Christians as well, except in cases where necessity left no choice. In the old canons of St. Patrick it had been laid down that infants should be baptised only on the Festivals: 'On the eighth day (Note again the parallel with circumcision) they are catechumens; after that let them be baptised on the Lord's Festivals (probably Easter and Pentecost and perhaps the Epiphany) (Hart p.191). Lanfranc attempted a return to primitive custom but he was forced to make the usual exception in favour of those who were 'in danger of death', and there does not appear to have been any general restoration of public baptisms of infants at Easter and Pentecost. The Council of Winchester made an attempt at enforcement of the reform, laying down that baptism should be administered only at Easter and Pentecost unless there be danger of death (Ibid.). But again the reform came to nothing, for Cardinal Otho in his constitutions of 1237 complained not merely that the canonical days of baptism, the sabbaths before Easter and before Pentecost, were not observed, but that 'some, deceived by the devil, suspected danger if their children were baptised on those days' (Ibid. p.204).

The point is that the mediaeval church was attempting an impossibility when it sought to combine ancient and canonical practice, the baptism only in church and at appointed seasons, with the rigid doctrine of an absolute necessity of the sacrament. When priests and people alike believed that the eternal salvation of the child depended upon the performance of the rite, when there was obviously no need or possibility of a long catechumenate as in the case of adults, and when exceptions were made every day in favour of those in danger of death, there was
obviously no sense in delaying the administration of baptism beyond the minimum period merely for the sake of an ecclesiastical order or of traditional practice. Life was far too uncertain and the stakes were far too high.

The theologians themselves were acutely conscious of the dilemma. The ancient rule and practice were clear and ought not to be abandoned. To preserve a public service was one thing, however, and to insist upon an appointed season quite another. All that could be done was to state the rule, and then to allow the exceptions, which, far from proving, actually became the rule. Thus Lombard could speak of the two proper times for baptism (Lomb.4 Dist.6 R), but he hastened to add that baptism might still be administered at any season in the case of infants. Thomas too stated the case in favour of the limitation of baptisms to the traditional seasons of Easter and Pentecost. The Jews had had a fixed time for the ceremony of circumcision, a short period after birth. Leo had testified to the correctness of administering baptism only on the two festivals. A deferred baptism had greater value in that it secured the remission of a greater number of actual sins (Thom.3 Qu.38,3). But as against this Thomas could point to the exception always made in favour of those in danger of death: where necessary baptism could be administered without the full rites and privately (Ibid. Qu.65,11).

By extension, the public ceremony could also be administered at any time in the case of infants, on the two grounds, first that there was always peril of death in their case, and second, no fuller conversion could be looked for in infants within the space of a few months, so that there could be no possible advantage in delay (Ibid. Qu.68,3). Lip-service was thus paid to tradition, but the ancient practice was set aside in practice.

By the sixteenth century the custom of holding solemn baptism only at the two seasons had fallen into almost complete disuse. Infants were baptised privately at home in the many cases of emergency. Otherwise they were brought to the parish church for public and solemn baptism, but without any appointment of a proper time. The Council of Trent, far from attempting a reform, accepted and regularised the position. Adults, of course, were still to defer their baptism to a certain time, for then their intention could be better examined, they could be given fuller instruction, and a greater respect was paid to the sacrament by its administration with solemn ceremony on the appointed days of Easter and Pentecost only (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.35). Even adults could be baptised at any time if necessity required and they had received a certain amount of instruction (Ibid. Qu.36). The case of infants was quite different. Their baptism was on no account to be deferred: indeed the faithful were earnestly to be exhorted to take care that their children be brought to the church as soon as it may be done without danger, and baptised with solemn ceremonies (Qu.33). In emergency the baptism was to be administered privately and without ceremonial. The Rituale continued to pay lip-service to the older practice, laying down that baptism ought to be administered only at Easter and
Whitsuntide, and in the cathedral. A practicable concession to ancient custom was the order that the benediction of the water should take place on the two festivals. Adults, too, ought to be baptised only on these days, with full solemnities, 'if possible by the bishop, otherwise by the priest.' Infants, however, could be baptised at all seasons, the only proviso being that the ceremony should take place in the church or baptistery, except in cases of necessity. The Romanists have never been able to discover any workable means of uniting the dogma of an absolute necessity with the ancient usage of the church, and modern practice is in conformity with the Tridentine compromise.

3. The Reformed Attitude

Amongst the sixteenth century Protestants various opinions were held with regard to the proper time and place of baptism. Luther continued to allow private baptism in cases of emergency. For him the circumstances of the administration were of little account compared with the sacrament itself. On the other hand one of the primary aims of Luther was to bring before the people the evangelical meaning of the sacrament, and to enforce upon them the practical demands which baptism made of the Christian in belief and conduct. With that aim in mind, Luther thought it of the utmost importance that baptism should normally be given as publicly as possible. It should be administered in a public place, the church, and at a public time, when the congregation was assembled for worship, on Sunday or some other Holy Day.

The Lutheran Orders all reflect this point in Luther's policy. The Orders of Säwabach-Hall and Cologne both referred to primitive custom: the appointment in the first churches of two times for baptism, the great festivals of Easter and Pentecost. Cologne pointed out that it was no longer fitting or practicable to limit baptismal administration to these seasons, but as an alternative ordered that 'holy baptism, if the children be not sickly, and there be anxiety about deferring it unto the holy day, must not be given until the holy days, when the people and the church of God are together.' Nassau similarly insisted that baptism should be given only before the assembled congregation on the festival days. The Saxon Visitation Articles commended this usage. In all these orders provision was made for private baptism at all times and in all places as necessity required, but Cologne ordered that the sick child should be brought to the church if possible, and baptised elsewhere only on extreme necessity (On the Lutheran Orders see Jacobs Luth. Movement in Eng. pp. 252 f.).

There were two main reasons for these regulations. First, and chiefly, it was felt that the baptismal service afforded an excellent opportunity for instruction and admonition. All Christians could be put in mind, both orally and visibly, of the profession which they themselves had made in baptism, of the promises of God held out and of the duties enjoined. Second, there was the feeling that since baptism marked the public entry of the child into Christ and into the church of Christ, it was
most fitting and proper that it should be publicly administered. A good deal has been made in some circles of the individualism of Protestantism, but at this point as at many others the Protestants should have a very strong sense of the inter-relatedness of Christians as a result of the prior relationship with Christ. The Romanist argument that a public administration lent solemnity to the sacrament received little mention, but the Reformers too probably did feel that the public service added to them weight and dignity of the rite, as opposed to the hurried private administrations, which left the impression that in spite of its necessity it was of small account.

The Lutheran regulations were adopted in many of the Swiss churches, Zurich, for example (Zwingli C.R.4 p.707), and also Bern (Kidd D.C.R. p.556). Two groups, however, were not satisfied, the Anabaptists on the one side, Calvin and his disciples on the other. The Anabaptists aimed at a restoration, not of the custom of the early centuries, but of the practice of the New Testament itself (Muralt p.27). They insisted upon no special time for baptism, the moment of a professed conversion was the proper time. A public service was unnecessary: so long as there were believing brethren present as witnesses of the acknowledgment of Christ the administration was a public act (Dosker D.A.pp.151 f.) Similarly, the Anabaptists did not insist upon any proper place. Like the Christians of the most primitive time, they baptised anywhere, in private houses or by streams and rivers. Of course, their private baptisms were not comparable with the private baptisms of the Roman church or of the Lutherans. The question of a private baptism of infants in case of sickness did not arise. The Anabaptists consciously imitated the practice of New Testament days. Like the Christians of the New Testament they were to some extent driven to this imitation by proscription and persecution, for they found little opportunity for public meetings, and had to meet when and where circumstances allowed. It is noticeable that where the Anabaptists did succeed in settling down in regular communities, more regular, if simple, methods of worship tended to arise quite naturally amongst them, as they had done with Christians of the earliest centuries.

The Calvinistic churches approached the matter quite differently. Far from advocating a return to the more haphazard methods of New Testament days, they made the attempt to enforce a common rule of baptism only in the congregation. Calvin himself, unlike the Romanists, was helped in this respect by his theological convictions. For one thing, he rejected the absolute necessity of the sacrament. Thus there was no good intellectual or sentimental reason for demanding a breach of the established order in special cases, whether of sickness or even of imminent death. Again, Calvin believed that the sacramental word included both the public reading of Scripture and public preaching. A private service which allowed of no such public proclamation of the word was incomplete: it was not in the full and proper sense an administration of the sacrament which Christ had instituted. Again, Calvin had a very strongly developed sense of the corpor-
ateness of the Church's life within the covenant of grace. The covenant itself was a covenant with families and nations, and the grace of the covenant united maximally the soul not only with God on the one side but with all fellow-partakers of the grace on the other. The divinely appointed sealing of the covenant by the baptismal sign, and the public entry into the covenant-people of God signified thereby, were thus matters of urgent concern to all those who inwardly or outwardly had a place within the divine covenant.

In accordance with these theological principles Calvin advocated a public administration and strongly opposed the continued permitting of private baptisms or communions. Calvin and Farel made an attempt to enforce public baptism when in 1538 they laid down the rule that baptism should always follow the sermon (Kidd D.C.R. p. 581). The rule was incorporated in the later Ecclesiastical Constitution of Geneva, which forbade baptism except at the time of public preaching (Ibid. p. 597). This did not mean, of course, that baptisms had always to be on Sundays, but it did mean that they had always to be at a time of public assembly, usually on Sunday or on other days. The Genevan Order of Service stressed this rule: It is particularly necessary to know that infants are to be brought for baptism either on the Lord's day, at the time of catechising, or at public service on other days, that as baptism is a kind of formal adoption into the church, so it may be performed in the presence and under the eyes of the whole congregation (Tracts 2 p. 113). The disciples of Calvin took up the point with zeal. Beza argued that baptism must always be in public because the ministration of the word (which is part of baptism) ought always to be public (B.P.S. p. 35). Knox expressed his views of the matter similarly. He used the additional argument that the private performance encouraged superstitious notions: 'It is evident that the sacraments are not ordained of God to be used in privat corners as charms or sorceries, but left to the congregation' (Works 4 p. 186). In the Exhortation at the service itself Knox laid great stress upon the value of public attendance at a baptism, very much in the style of Luther and of the Lutheran Orders. The time prescribed was 'whenever the word is preached, the Sunday or the day of prayer is, only after the sermon' (Ibid. 2 p. 239). The later Reformed theologians joined in the condemnation of private administrations, demanding a public service in order that there might be instruction in the doctrine and signification of the sacrament (Cf. Heidegger 25, in Heppe R.D., Baptism).

In this as in other matters the Reformed school adopted a more radical and thorough-going policy than that of Luther. No concessions were made to current practice. The theological principles emerged strong and clearcut, and they were applied with ruthless and vigour to ecclesiastical and liturgical procedure. Naturally the two policies could not be held concurrently. Wherever they met, in the individual or in the church, they came inevitably into collision, and a choice had to be made. Nowhere does that fact emerge more clearly than in England, where the attempt to apply the Lutheran policy under Edward and Elizabeth
brought the moderate and the radical groups, the Anglicans and the Puritans, into irreconcilable conflict.

4. The Situation in England

It must be stressed at the outset that no basic theological differences divided the two parties which emerged in England. Neither side believed in an absolute necessity of the sacrament to salvation. Both sides accepted in principle the doctrine that there ought to be an administration of the word together with the dispensing of the sacrament. There was perhaps a minor theological difference with regard to the necessity of the sermon, but that could hardly be described as a major issue. The disagreement was not so much a disagreement in basic theology as a disagreement in the balance of theological principles as they were applied to contemporary liturgical practice. More than anything else, it was a disagreement in policy and strategy. Theological issues are involved, because, quite naturally, both sides did their utmost to prove that the policy adopted was backed by the soundest doctrinal principles.

During the earliest years of English reform the theology and the policy of Luther had naturally played the dominant role. Tyndale had called attention to the urgent need of instruction (Tynd. P. S. 3 p. 72), and for that reason he had argued that baptism should be administered both in the vernacular and at a public service. The very act of baptism publicly performed was in itself a testimony to the congregation (Ibid. p. 171). Baptism might still be given in private in emergency cases (Ibid.), but in all normal cases it should be as public as possible. Ridley was very much of the same mind as Tyndale. He could not superstitiously believe that want of baptism would condemn, but while commending the public service, he thought that the sacrament ought always to be dispensed if at all possible, and like Luther he would allow private baptism 'where solemn baptism for lack of time and danger of death could not be had' (Rid. P. S. p. 534). Cranmer's attitude is best reflected in the Prayer Books, taken and in his defence of the 1549 books against the complaints of the Devonshire Rebels. Following the Lutheran Orders, the Anglican books commended the ancient practice of administration only at Easter and Pentecost. Since the restoration of this custom seemed impracticable, the books ordered that baptism should take place in church, and on Sundays or Holy Days. The usual exception was made in cases of necessity, but parents were strictly warned not to use the privilege of private baptism 'without great cause and necessity'. Sundays and Holy Days were chosen for the public service for the express purpose of allowing the most number of people to come together to witness the ceremony and to be reminded of their own baptism. These provisions do not seem to have been well understood by the men of Cornwall and Devon, for they made the surprising demand that 'curates should minister the sacrament of baptism at all times of need, as well on the weekdays as on the holy days' (Rid. Cran. J. 4 p. 222). Either they had misread the book, or else what they wanted was permission for baptism in church at any time in case of sickness. At any rate Cranmer was able to make
a convincing answer. He pointed out first that there was nothing in the book to prevent the curates administering privately in case of need: 'Our book teacheth you the contrary, even in the first leaf, yea the first side of the first leaf of that part that treateth of baptism'(Ibid.). Second, he defended the rubric on the ground that it was an attempt to restore at least the spirit if not the letter of the ancient liturgies, 'in which baptism could be administered twice a year only'(Ibid.).

It is evident from the writings so far considered that the first Anglican Reformers aimed to do precisely what Luther had done to make the service public in all normal circumstances, as it ought to be, but to allow of exceptions, presumably on the ground that the sacrament itself was more important than the details of its administration. There was no very great stress upon the exception, which was regarded very properly as an exception and not as the normal use. At a later date the Anglican leaders were forced to expend most of their energies upon the defence of the exception, but in the earlier days they could give themselves more fully to the proclaiming of the normal use. Becon, for example, stated in the strongest possible terms the need for a normal public administration. He referred as usual to the ancient custom. He complained bitterly of the Romanist ministry 'in private corners'(Bec.P.S.1 p.11). He thought that baptism, being 'a sinew and bond between Christian people', ought to be administered only 'when the faithful do most assemble and meet together'(Ibid.2 p.200).

During the Marian Reaction many of the martyrs seem to have preferred a private service, even by a midwife, to the public baptism in Papist fashion (Cf. Woodford in Foxe 8 p.355). But the circumstances were then altogether exceptional, and the receiving of baptism at Papist hands was tantamount to a submission to the Roman church. Certainly when Protestantism again regained the ascendancy the Reformers made haste to reinstate the ruling of a public service in all normal cases. Even during the struggle with the Puritans the leaders still held fast to the principle that baptism should normally be public in respect both of time and place. Whitgift stated categorically that he had no wish to speak against baptising in the church, but 'did greatly commend it as a thing most convenient'(Whit.P.S.2 p.509). The Decades of Bullinger enjoyed great popularity in England, and these stated the full Reformed case: 'Comeliness itself requir-eth to baptise openly in the church'(Bull.P.S.4 p.365). Bullinger admitted, of course, that there was no express command to baptise publicly in the New Testament itself, and he could concede that there might be circumstances in which some freedom in time and place might be necessary. Imminent death was not one of these circumstances, and Bullinger warned against the abuse of this liberty (Ibid.pp.365-6). So strongly did some of the Anglican leaders feel about the need for the public administration that that shared with the Puritans the opinion that private baptism ought to be abolished altogether. Thus Grindal and Sandys pressed for the abolition, although Strype's suggests that the real reason why they did this was not because they object-
ed to the private service as such, but because they objected to its common and flagrant abuse by women (Strype's Grindal p.23). If this was the case, then Whitgift's views were similar, and the alterations in the Prayer Book which followed the Hampton Court Conference achieved the desired result, retaining private baptism but insisting that it be administered by a minister.

It will be seen that Anglicans and Puritans concurred, as did the Lutherans and Calvinists, in demanding that baptism should on all normal occasions be administered in the church and during the time of public worship. What divided the moderates and the radicals and brought them into conflict was whether there might be any exceptions to this rule. The Puritans could accept the general rubrics relating to public baptism with a good will, but they desired the further provision, that only public baptism should be allowed. It was not only against baptism by laymen and midwives that they protested. In that protest they were supported by many of their opponents. What they protested against and sought to abolish was the service of private baptism as such, irrespective of the person who administered it. The deletion of the service of private baptism formed one of the main Puritan objectives in their campaign for the further reformation of the English church. The majority of the Puritan pamphlets made reference to the matter, usually within the context of the attack upon baptisms by women. Although these two issues were often and quite naturally confused, there can be no doubt that they were also seen apart. The work Divers Abuses, for example, claimed that even ministers ought not to be permitted to administer the sacraments privately (2nd P. of a R. 1, 16). In the disputations, too, the demand for universal public baptism was made. Sparke at Lambeth made a comprehensive objection to private baptism, whether in respect of place, persons or doctrine (Ibid. 177). The usual public protests were made, as by the ministers of Suffolk (Ibid. 152), and in this matter, as in that of the cross, many of the Puritan ministers took the law into their own hands, refusing to officiate except at the public service. This clearly appears in one of the articles devised by Whitgift against the Puritans: 'that you have bene sent unto, and required divers tymes, or at the least once, to baptise children, or some one child beinge verie weake; and have refused, neglected, or at the least so longe differed the same, till such children or child died without the sacrament of baptisme' (Strype's Whit. 3 Append. 4).

The main grounds upon which the Puritans objected to the private baptism call for notice. The Admonition stated the case briefly, and Cartwright elaborated it in the ensuing controversy with Whitgift. The first argument was from the Scripture and from the example of the best Reformed churches abroad. Cartwright realised plainly enough that the New Testament seemed to favour the administration in private places, but he would not allow this deduction from the Scriptural narratives. True, baptisms were administered 'in the houses of private men'. But the rule still held that they ought to be ministered, and they were ministered, 'in the presence of all the congregation'. Thus it could not properly be said that 'there was either private
preaching or private baptism' (Whit. P. S. I p. 208). Cornelius, for example, was baptised in his own house, but because that house was for the time being the place where the church assembled, it was not to be counted a private place, but the place of public meeting. During the period of persecution gatherings had necessarily to be held in private houses, but they were not held in private places, for those houses which received the congregation were not for the time being to be counted private houses' (Ibid. 2 p. 512). The argument was not a very convincing one, for it left the way open for the immediate reply, that when sickness necessitated baptism in a private house, that house too became the place of assembly, the congregation being represented by the sponsors and other witnesses. The quarrel was not then a quarrel about private baptism, not even about the smallness of the congregation (which could be defended on the basis of the two or three gathered together in Christ's name), but about the validity of sickness as an excuse for holding the service in a house and not in the ordinary place of assembly. The other Scriptures appealed to helped the Puritans very little better, for although John the Baptist preached and baptised in 'open meetings' (Ibid. p. 208), there seems to have been a marked indifference as to the place of these meetings. Indeed, if John's example was to be followed strictly, baptisms ought not to take place in buildings at all, whether private or public. The typological association of baptism and teaching in Matthew 28, 19, appealed to in the work 'Popish Abuses' (Frere and Douglas P. M. pp. 20 f), proved possibly that some instruction ought to be given on the occasion of a baptismal service. It had little to do with the place of baptism, or in fact with the provisions for private baptism. The Prayer Book ordered a service of public reception for such children as were baptised at home and 'did afterwards live', thus giving the usual opportunity for public teaching.

The Puritans found themselves hard put to it to prove their case from Scripture, but they were on much surer ground when they appealed to the example of the Reformed churches. Clear and undisputed passages could be quoted from such great leaders as Peter Martyr (In prior ad Corinth. II), Beza (De Coena Dom. p. 150), and of course Calvin himself (Instit. 4, 15, 21-2). Had this array of authority not sufficed, then Bullinger's view was well known (Z.L.P.S.E App. No. II), and Gualter too had commended a public service, 'on a certain day in every week appointed for baptism': the proper order being the preaching of a sermon, 'after which as many infants as have been born during the week are baptised' (Ibid. 2 No. 94). The Anglicans for their part could appeal to Bucer and Zwingli, but in the contest for continental authority there can be no doubt that they had the worst of the argument.

The Puritans had two further objections to urge against the private service, both of them theological. First, a private administration destroyed the corporate nature of the sacrament. Baptism was a public entrance, a matriculating of us into the bodie of the church, an enrolling of us into the number of the citizens of the holie citie' (2nd P. of a R. 1, 180). To
administer privately a sacrament which by its very nature was public was illogical and contradictory. Second, the private administration, being based upon a presumed necessity, carried with it the implication of an *ex opere operato* working, the erroneous doctrine of 'the conference of grace for the deed done' (Travers D.E.D.p.25). If the Anglicans had no wish to defend this doctrine, then there could be no sense in retaining the hurried administration of the sacrament in private which undoubtedly preserved and even fostered it. The basic principles of a truly reformed theology demanded that there should be no administration of either sacrament except in the public assembly and in the presence of the whole people of God.

The Anglicans were to some extent hampered in their defence of the private baptism by the necessity to make clear that they accepted the Reformed view of the necessity of the sacrament and of the regularity of administration only by ministers. What their views upon these subjects were we have already seen: they claimed a necessity of precept, and they doubted the regularity, although not the validity of lay administrations. Their defence of private baptism rested ultimately upon the principle that the assumed necessity of precept took precedence over the rules of convenience and order, the difficulty about this view being that the stress laid upon the necessity of precept made possible a confusion with the more absolute necessity laid down by the Romanist. The point which the Anglicans sought to make was this: that if a choice had to be made between the normal public administration and a failure to administer the sacrament at all, then the normal public administration must be set aside and the commandment of Christ fulfilled. Whitgift made the issue perfectly clear. He at the outset the possible conception that he was defending a ceremony private in respect of the minister ('Upon which he suspended judgment') (Whit.P.S.2 p.540). He also made it plain that he was not urging an absolute necessity of the sacrament to salvation, a doctrine which he thought inconsistent with reformed Anglicanism (In answer to Sparke at Lambeth, 2nd P. of A.R.1,177). What Whitgift did contend was that the circumstances of the sacrament's administration were incidental only, and not of primary importance. The Puritans erred by making that which was convenient into something 'of necessity to the sacrament' (Whit.P.S.2 p.509). Normally baptism ought to be given in the public congregation, for this was necessary to good ecclesiastical order. But it was wrong to go further and to tie the sacrament absolutely to administration in these circumstances, for on certain occasions it would be right and necessary to administer otherwise. Obviously Whitgift had no wish to give a general dispensation from the normal rule. He insisted upon a strict limitation of private administrations to 'extreme necessity of sickness, peril, death and such like' (Ibid.2 p.513). But he did argue that special circumstances demanded a special form of administration, the sacrament itself being far more important than the rules for the dispensing of it. Answering the arguments of Cartwright in greater detail Whitgift made much of the private administrations in New Testament days which illustrated perfectly his contention that to do what Christ commanded was more important than to do it in the way which the church found normally to be most fitting.
Against the weighty authorities quoted by the Puritans Whitgift quoted the example of Zwingli, who had allowed irregularities in both time and place (Ibid. p. 511). The arguments of Whitgift were taken up and expanded by Hooker, but Hooker had little new to add, except that he made an appeal to the general consent of the church from the very earliest period (L.E.P. 5, 61, 2).

The discussions at Hampton Court served to emphasise the difference between a baptism private in respect of time and place and a baptism private in respect of the administrator. James himself, as we have seen, supported the Puritans upon this issue, and after a long disputation he secured the prohibition of baptism by laymen: 'For the private baptism it held three hours at the least, the king alone disputing with the bishops so wisely, wittily and learned, and with that pretty patience, as I think never man living heard the like. In the end he won this of them, that it should only be administered by ministers, yet in private houses, if occasion required' (Montague, quoted by Cardwell, Hist. of Conferences pp. 138 f.). Thus the reform which Sandys and Grindal had desired was at last achieved, yet without the sacrifice of the special provision for emergency cases. The amendment of the rubric did at least help to clear away some Puritan misconceptions, or misgivings, especially the inter-relating of private baptism and baptism by women. It also helped to clarify the Anglican position. But it was not in any strict sense a compromise between the Anglicans and the Puritans over the issue of private baptism. The compromise, such as it was, was between the more moderate and more reformed parties within the ranks of the Anglicans themselves. The Puritans for their part were just as strongly opposed to the permitted baptism by ministers in private houses as they had been to the now illegal and irregular lay-baptisms in private houses. The central objection, to the private baptism as such, had not been met. Nor was the issue a dead one, for the irksome duty of administering private baptism as need arose still rested upon the Puritan ministers. The painful conflict between theological conviction and loyalty to the established order was heightened when in the 1604 Canons (Canon 69) penalties were laid down for the failure, refusal or of set purpose, or of gross negligence, to administer baptism privately to all infants weak and in danger of death! Not perhaps without irony, dissenters who sought to maintain congregations outside the establishment were forbidden by Canon 71 to preach or to administer the communion in private houses. A consistent Puritan, refusing to conform, would thus find himself hampered in any attempts to continue his ministry by the application of his own principle.

5. Remarks

To a very large extent the opinions held with regard to private baptism were determined by the same principles and policies as decided the attitudes to the prayer of consecration and the baptismal ceremonial. The Romanists stood for the established order, finding their basis in tradition and in their sacramentalist conceptions. The Reformed churches aimed at a complete and thoroughgoing revision, applying systematically their
basic evangelical principles and ignoring a tradition which tended to corruption and superstition. The Lutherans and the Anglicans sought a middle way in which doctrinal reform should be accompanied by the minimum of ecclesiastical and liturgical alteration. That innate conservatism which prompted Cranmer and those likeminded with him to preserve a form of prayer of consecration and the ceremony of marking with the cross also inclined them to retain a service of private baptism in accordance with the long-established usage.

In this matter of private baptism, perhaps the theological principles determined the course of action even more than policy or strategy. Thus the Romanists retained and encouraged private baptism not so much because it was ancient - clinical baptisms had been disliked and despised in the early church - but because it appeared necessary in the light of the doctrine that hell-fire waited those who perished without the sacrament. The circumstances of the administration of baptism, time, place, even minister, were trifling matter compared with the eternal destiny of a human soul; and that was what was thought to depend upon whether the sacrament was administered or not. If the basic premise be granted, that baptism is of absolute necessity to salvation, then clearly the Romanist practice has reason and charity in its favour.

The Reformed party dismissed this notion of an absolute necessity as a superstitious fiction. They could find then no convincing theological grounds upon which to justify the retention of a private administration. On the contrary, very good theological reasons could be advanced to justify its abolition. The preaching of the word was thought to form a vital part of the sacrament; hence the defective nature of a private administration in which there was no opportunity for public preaching. Again, baptism by its very nature was an initiation, or public entry. To allow that entry to take place in private was a contradiction. Granted these underlying principles, the position adopted by the Reformed churches is both reasonable and justifiable.

Clear doctrinal principles underlay the action of both the Romanists on the one side and the Reformed group on the other. A more intricate question is whether any such principles underlay the action of the Anglicans, who shared the theology of the Reformers and yet retained the practice of the Romanists. At first sight it might appear that that the Anglican policy was one of sheer conservatism, a tardiness to reform, or a desire to make the reform as little disruptive as possible. At first there was no doubt something of that in it. Certainly the retention of the private baptism did not derive from any theory of an absolute necessity, for that theory was expressly repudiated. Nor did it derive from a rejection of the Reformed view that word and sacrament ought, normally at least, to accompany each other, or of the conception of baptism as a public entry into the church. Upon these two points the Anglicans made their position clear beyond any possible doubt. The only
apparent explanation is that the Anglicans were led into their illogical half-way position of Reformed doctrine and Romanist practice by their zeal for a mediating policy of non-destructive or conservative reform.

Superficially the evidence would suggest this, and certainly the Puritans and the more Puritanical Anglicans believed this to be the case. A more careful study shows, however, that under Elizabeth at any rate there were many who believed that the compromise, far from doing violence to, accorded with sound doctrinal principles. The difference between the Anglicans and Puritans lay in the application and balance of principles. On one side there was the pushing of the principles to logical extremes; on the other the more judicious balancing of principles with principles. Both Puritans and Anglicans approved of preaching within the administration of the sacrament. The Puritans pushed their approval to the point of saying that without preaching there could be no sacrament. The Anglicans hesitated to bind word and sacrament with so indissoluble a bond. Both parties desired an orderly administration in the most fitting and edifying circumstances. The Puritans went further and said that the sacraments might be dispensed only in these circumstances except for very extraordinary reasons, persecution for instance. The Anglicans could not agree that the circumstances were the lord of the sacrament in that way. The circumstances were made for baptism, not baptism for the circumstances. Good ecclesiastical order required that on normal occasions the sacrament should be given at a public time and in a public place. But the law of Christ was more binding than the ordinance of the church, and if necessity required then the sacrament must be given even if the normal pattern could not be followed. Of course, the Puritans for their part were convinced that the ecclesiastical ordinance itself rested upon divine authority. The Anglicans, however, could argue that the New Testament evidence was not conclusive, and even the Puritans themselves must have felt on occasion that they were guilty of special pleading.

As between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant views few modern Protestants would have any difficulty in choosing. To return to the doctrine of an absolute necessity is impossible. It may be granted freely that the consignment of the unbaptised to hell is not due to any particular hardness of heart, but to sincere theological conviction. Yet evangelical religion has as one of its basic tenets the belief that God's power and love are not limited by man's performance or non-performance of religious rites, however valuable and necessary those rites may be in a general way. From that belief there can be no swerving if Protestantism means anything at all. Private baptism in the Romanist sense, the rite hurriedly performed as a means to the eternal salvation of a soul otherwise doomed to perdition, that form of that form of private baptism can never be accepted except by those who assent to the Romanist foundation and profess the Romanist faith.

To decide between the Anglican and the Puritan understanding
is not quite so easy. Those who incline to more liberal views ought perhaps logically to favour the Puritan side, on the ground that baptism itself is no more than a man-made rite, and therefore not in any way more binding than the circumstances of its administration. On the other hand the moderns have an instinctive distrust of anything that savours of ecclesiastical legalism. On that account they would perhaps favour the freer practice still allowed in the Anglican communion. The time and place are in themselves of no particular importance and therefore it is wrong to make them binding in any absolute way. For those who profess the traditional Protestant beliefs the position is much more complicated, and far more vital. Historically, the Puritans seem to have been justified this far, that the liberty allowed in the Anglican church did degenerate into licence and laxity, and left the way open for the return of Romanising doctrines. The failure to enforce a public administration strictly has led finally to the almost complete abandonment of a public service in the full sense, and the defeat of the avowed intention of the Reformers as expressed clearly in the opening rubric. On the other hand the abuse of liberty is not necessarily an argument in favour of a strict legalism. And legalism itself had the disadvantage that it can and often does lead to formalism, and a consequent distortion of the true religious perspective.

The truth seems to be that the Reformed group and the Puritans chose the most practicable and the obvious way of achieving the overthrow of mediaeval errors. By stressing ecclesiastical order, and enforcing a strict rule of public administration, they ensured a solemn and edifying service, adding thereby to the dignity and significance of the sacrament. They left the impression, however, that the 'accidents' of the sacrament, to adapt a Scholastic term, were in their eyes of relatively greater importance than the 'substance'. To that extent the sacrament itself suffered at the expense of ecclesiastical order. The Anglicans declared for what was in every way a more dangerous method of combating the prevalent falsities and superstitions. The method offered immediate practical advantages, for priests and people were at first very largely unreformed in sympathies, and there is always a limit to that which can be enforced by law. But it also preserved better the balance between the true necessity of the sacrament and the rule of order and edification. The method was not without its dangers, however. Failure to enforce the minimum changes made could easily lead to evasion, with grave loss to the doctrine of the sacrament as well as to its administration. Abuses of a liturgical character were serious enough, but the reintroduction of discarded doctrines might well prove disastrous to the reformed character of the church.

From the point of view of Protestant statesmanship there can be little doubt that the Puritans were right. The firm and sure establishment of the reformed faith, and the securing of the reformation against disintegration and collapse depended upon the vigorous and ruthless reorganisation of the church on Protestant principles. Significantly, the Calvinistic churches have
as a general rule been the most militant and the most securely
grounded of the Reformation churches. If there had been a time
for compromise or caution in the days of Cranmer, ' that time had
gone by, religiously if not diplomatically, in the days of Eliza-
beth. From a theological point of view, it might be argued, have
seen, that the Anglican ideal if not the practice of the Anglicans
preserved the better balance: a loyalty to evangelical principles
and a restraint and discrimination in the application of those
principles to the ecclesiastical and liturgical forms which were
a legacy from the past. Historically it might be said with
some truth that the attempt to retain a private service within a
reformed framework failed. But it might also be said that that
attempt, even in the minds of the sixteenth century apologists,
did stand for something fine and worth-while, something which
Puritanism with all its logic and its conviction would undoubtedly
have destroyed. For that reason the Anglican attempt lays claim,
not to sympathy only, but also to respect.

Notes

1 Lombard 4 Dist.6 F. 'Qui vero necessitate mortis vel periculi
urgentus, omni tempore debent baptizari'.
2 Rituale Romanum 'Adulatorum Baptistis, ubi commode fieri potest,
ad Episcopum deferatur, ut si ille pius placuerit, ab eo
solemnius conferatur, aliquomin Parochus ipse baptizet, statis
ceremoniis. Decet autem hujus modi Baptismum, ex Apostolico
instituto, in Sabbato Sancto Paschatis vel Pentecostes solemn-
niter celebrari'.
3 Ibid. 'Ac licet, urgente necessitate, ubique baptizare nihil
impeditat: tamen proprius Baptistae administrandi locus est
Eclesia, in qua sit Fons Baptismalis, vel certe Baptistarium
prope Ecclesiam. Itaque necessitate excepta, in privatis
locis nemo baptizari debet'.
4 Kidd D.C.R.p.556 Edict of Reformation for the Pays du Vaud,
Dec.24 1530 'Touchant le Baptême ordonnons que tous les jours
on puisse baptiser les enfants, toutefois nous semblerait
convenable que en une chacune paroisse les enfants fussent
baptisés le dimanche après le sermon'.
5 Ibid.p.597 'Que le Baptême ne se face que à l'heure de la préd-
ication'.
6 Heidegger 25,34 (Heppe R.D. De Bapt.) 'Cum elemento aquae Script-
ura verbum jungit: Christus tradidit se pro ecclesia, ut eam
sanctificaret mundatum lavacro aquae in verbo...A baptizante
igitur repetenda sunt verba institutionis Christi et doctrina
de mysterio baptismi...'. 
The previous chapters were concerned with issues which were for the most part trifling in themselves, but which had nevertheless a very considerable historical and doctrinal importance. Behind the answers to minor questions of ceremonial and circumstances stood important ecclesiastical policies and major theological principles. The discussions of the lesser issues has thus helped in many ways to clear the ground for the consideration of the deepest problems of all, those associated with the moral and spiritual effects of the sacrament, or the sacramental grace. Already the fundamental difference of approach between the Romanists and the Protestants has emerged at several points: in relation to the signification and the necessity of baptism, in relation to baptism by laymen and private baptism. Already, too, it has become fairly clear that in spite of a conservatisim in liturgical matters and a difference of emphasis in the application of principles, the Anglicans stood on the evangelical and not the sacramentalist side in all questions of importance. With this cleavage already clear, the task of analysing and understanding the various opinions held and taught upon the effects of baptism is a much more straightforward one than it might otherwise have been.

Two preliminary points ought to be made. First, the Christian church has from the very earliest days associated with baptism certain moral and spiritual results. These results have not been attributed only to the psychological impact of the rite and of its attendant circumstances, but more directly to the inward and in the last resort supernatural activity of the Holy Ghost. In the New Testament writings baptism certainly seems to have been more than a symbol or naked sign. The sign itself was so closely bound up with the thing signified, the grace of the sacrament, that it was almost identified with it. In Christian history very few groups, and certainly not the Protestants of the sixteenth century, have denied a certain efficaciousness of the sacrament. Disputes have arisen, of course, but they were dispute about the mode of working rather than about the working itself, or disputes about the nature and extent of the effects rather than about the reality of them. Second, the Reformed theologians on the whole preferred to speak about the signification of baptism rather than about its effects. They did not mean thereby to deny the efficaciousness of the rite, but at the back of their minds there was probably the desire to avoid any suggestion of an automatic efficaciousness in virtue of the due performance of that which was commanded. They liked to describe not so much what baptism did as what it meant, or ought to mean. Yet when the occasion arose they did not hesitate to attribute to the sacrament real effects or benefits.

Before proceeding to investigate the disputes about the
mode of the sacrament's working it is our first task to ask what were the effects ascribed to baptism by the various theological groups. These effects fall into two broad groups, the moral effects, which were for the most part psychological, and the inward and spiritual, which were in the last analysis miraculous. The first group may be treated briefly, although it did give rise to some serious and not unimportant problems. To the second group rather more attention must be paid, and the various spiritual effects must be studied separately and in detail. First then we turn to the moral and psychological working.

1. The Christian Profession

The early Christians understood baptism as an ending of the life of sin and unbelief and the beginning of a life of righteousness and faith. The sacrament itself marked the individual decision for Christ and the entry into grace. Thus very simply and very obviously it pledged a man to live out that which he had professed. Baptism was the constant challenge and the constant reminder which provoked a man to be in fact that which he already was by faith. This seems to be the first and most obvious sense of the famous passage in the sixth of Romans, in which the Apostle is exhorting his readers to die to sin in ordinary moral life as a fulfillment of their profession of death in the sacrament. Primarily the operation of baptism as a challenge to Christian life is psychological, but of course as the Apostle understood it the power of the challenge derived finally from the operation of the Spirit.

During the early centuries and the Middle Ages the moral effect of the sacrament did not attract a great deal of notice. It was obvious perhaps, and it appeared uninteresting and insignificant compared with the great spiritual operations ascribed to baptism. The strict limitation of the scope of baptismal grace also tended to direct attention away from such a long-term efficacy. The teaching did appear in a new and more supernatural form amongst the Scholastics, for the mediaeval theologians laid it down that baptism does produce moral results. Thus Thomas claimed that at baptism the soul is endued with real virtues (Thom.3 Qu.69,4). Against the objections, that cleansing is the true signification, that some baptised persons, Cornelius for example, are already virtuous, and that virtue is a habit, he could appeal to the Scriptural texts, Titus 3.5-6 and John 1.16, plead that the clearness of the water symbolises the splendour of grace and virtues, and argue that the fulness of virtue will be achieved at a later date. In another section Thomas defended strongly the view that a certain fruitfulness in good works may be regarded as an effect of baptism (Ibid.5). If anyone objected that it is wrong to ascribe varying degrees of grace and virtue to the operation of a sacrament which was essentially one, Thomas had his answer ready, that the essential or real effect is the same, but the accidental effects vary according to the reception and use of the grace offered and given (Ibid.8). The Trid-
noble train of all virtues' (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 50).

It may be noticed that the teaching of Paul in Romans and the formulations of Thomas and of the Tridentines had at least this in common, that they ascribed to baptism certain moral effects. But with Thomas and the Tridentines everything was lifted from the psychological to the supernatural plane. The thought that baptism and the profession made in baptism served as a constant spur to moral living found no place in their teaching. Baptism had moral effects because in and by the sacrament so much habitual righteousness was as it were infused into the soul. The baptised person had, of course, some say in the matter, because he could decide what use was made of the infused gift. But there was no free and living relationship between the individual soul and the sacrament itself, or the Holy Ghost who worked through the sacrament. And in any case this moral effect was comparatively unimportant in view of the tremendous spiritual results.

The Reformers, under the primary inspiration of Luther, returned directly to the Pauline teaching. Luther himself could still speak on occasion of an infusion of grace at the very moment of administration. The work of baptism was the reconstitution of the sinful man in righteousness (W. A. 2 p. 730). But such infusion of grace as there was was only the beginning of the work of renovation or sanctification. And in the continuance of that work baptism had still a great part to play, for it served as a constant call to the life of mortification and renewal. In baptism the Christian man had pledged himself to renunciation of sin, to faith in Christ, and to obedience to God. This threefold baptismal vow was higher and more binding than any ecclesiastical or monastic vow, and it extended to the whole life of the Christian (Ibid. p. 736). The attack upon the monastic vows quite naturally provoked indignant refutation and anathematising at Trent, on the ground that it would lead many people 'to throw off the precepts of holy church and the vows of monastic life' (C. & D. Sess. 7 Bapt. Cans. 3 §96). The Lutheran Catechisms laid great stress upon this aspect of baptism: the Christian man was pledged and challenged by his baptism to a life of holiness and faith (See Jacobs Luth. Movemt. in Eng. pp. 314 f.). Of course Luther saw other and perhaps more important effects of the sacrament, but he revived with great force and power the Pauline understanding of baptism as a means to moral renewal. The charge of antinomianism (as in Henry's Assertio 'O most impious doctrine... p. 97) reads rather strangely in the light of this clear and energetic teaching.

The Reformed theologians did not perhaps stress the baptismal profession so much as Luther had done. The reason probably was that they were more concerned to work out the difficult question of the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament. The ground occupied by Luther was not abandoned however, and Calvin took up the point in the Institutes. Calvin preferred to speak of the benefits of baptism, not of its effects. One of the benefits of the sacrament was that it showed to us our mortification with Christ and our new life in Him. In so doing baptism bound us to the Christian life which we professed when
we received it (Inst1t. 4, 15, 13). It may be noticed that Calvin carefully avoided any mention of an infused grace or virtue. This did not mean that he denied a more than psychological working, even in and through the challenge of the baptismal profession. It meant that he denied an effect which was so miraculous as to be pure magic and so invisible that it might with justice be suspected of being no more than a fiction. The Reformed school joined heartily in the attack upon monastic vows as superfluous human additions to the all-sufficient vow made by every Christian in his baptism.

In England the early disciples of Luther made a good deal of the moral effects of baptism in and through the Christian profession made. Tyndale regarded the fulfilment of baptism and its meaning and obligation as the 'lifelong job of a Christian' (Tynd.P.S.1 p.500). What was needed to produce the effects of righteousness was conviction and instruction: 'to have the profession of baptism in the heart', to have 'the knowledge of the law of God', and 'to know the promises of mercy which are in our Saviour Christ' (Ibid. 2 p.136). Tyndale's stress upon the duty of imparting to the people an understanding of the sacrament had at the back of it the desire to free baptism to do its sanctifying work in the soul. The moral effect was psychological to this extent, that without an understanding of the baptismal profession even the Holy Spirit would not accomplish a moral effect in righteous living. The book 'The Sum of Scripture' emphasised the binding nature of the great baptismal vows: 'and we be moche more bound unto the promyse made at the baptisme, than any religyous unto his professyon. For we make no promise unto man, but unto God'(Folio 7). The first working of baptism, in the moral sphere, is the working of the solemn vow and obligation, but on a higher level, because the undertaking is to God and not to man.

Amongst other writers who stressed this effect of the sacrament Becon and Latimer may be mentioned. Becon pointed out that in baptism 'we Christians openly confess and profess that we utterly reject and cast away all strange doctrine and all false religion' (Bec.P.S.2 p.200). Since those who made the profession 'ought to answer and to live agreeable to their baptism', baptism had its first moral effect by binding and summoning us to a life of faith and good works. Latimer, the preacher of righteousness, naturally exploited this aspect of the matter. Understandably, he put it in terms of the Christian response to the challenge rather than in terms of the effect of baptism in and through the challenge. Latimer called for a submission to the sacrament and its meaning: 'to receive him with a pure heart, and study to go forward in all goodness according to his will and commandment' (Lat.P.S.2 p.133). He asked that there should be a careful consideration of the promise of renunciation made in baptism: 'to renounce Satan, his works, his pomps'(Ibid. p.342). He roundly declared that there could be no baptismal grace but only judgment where there was resistance to the work of the Holy Ghost and a refusal to fulfil the obligations made: 'such fellows' as refused to live according to their profession were 'worse than the Turks and heathen'(Ibid. 1 p.346). Latimer's
preaching itself affords an excellent of the way in which the sacricemt may be used, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to bring about moral and spiritual results.

It would be easy to multiply references to this same thought from the other Anglican Reformers. One or two representative passages will suffice. Bradford described baptism as the sacrament of 'sanctification and holiness' to be wrought of Thee (God) ...by thy grace and holy Spirit' (Brad. P.S. 1 p. 122). Writing to his 'dear sister' Joyce Hales, he put her in mind of her profession made in baptism, 'to deny herself and to take up her cross' (Ibid. 2 p. 203); and he put it to Hall and his wife that they had 'of their own head and free will...according to their profession in baptism, forsaken the world, and all earthly things' (Ibid. p. 217). Pilkington discussed the value of monastic and ecclesiastical vows, and found them to be worthless and even wicked when placed alongside the 'solemn vow to the Lord our God made in baptism'. 'All vows following, which are contrary to that', he wrote, 'not only may and ought to be broken, but it is wicked to keep them' (Pilk. P.S. p. 621). Coverdale issued the challenge to righteousness of life, asking 'where was that abjuring and forsaking of the world and the flesh, which we sware in our baptism' (P.S. pp. 223-4). Bullinger brought the sacrament of baptism into the relationship with the whole Christian life, for which it was 'sufficient and effectual' (Bull. P.S. 4 p. 398), and he deduced the duties of godliness from a remembrance and consideration of the mysteries of baptism: 'to deny ourselves and the world, to mortify our flesh, with the concupiscence of the same, and to be buried with Christ in his death, to love our brethren as our members, to remain in the bond of concord, and in the unity of the church, constantly and valiantly to fight against Satan' (Ibid. p. 400). The early passages in the Catechism, which followed closely the Lutheran patterns, drove home this same lesson. Children baptised in infancy had made a Christian confession, had been marked off as followers of Christ, and had undertaken the promises of the believer. When they came to years of discretion they were to be inspired and stimulated by a remembrance of their baptism to the fulfilment of that which the sacrament signified.

Of course, this effect of baptism could very easily be thought of as purely psychological. It would be possible to argue that a religious rite like baptism can and does work for good along these lines in quite natural fashion. Those who reject the divine institution and the divine efficacy of the sacrament would be prepared to defend its very real religious and moral usefulness on some such grounds. As a public profession baptism does commit a man, and thus provides that incentive to faith and righteousness which is given by a public and solemn avowal. The Reformers themselves, in exhortation and instruction, made the most of the psychological appeal, and rightly so. But they did not attribute the moral efficaciousness solely or even primarily to natural and psychological causes. If baptism worked mortification and sanctification in the Christian sense, it was for supernatural as well as for natural reasons. The
Holy Spirit used the outward means to achieve an inward and spiritual result, a result which was only possible in the grace and the power of God. The words of Bradford will be remembered: 'sanc­
ctification and holiness to be wrought of thee... by thy grace and holy Spirit'. A place was thus kept for the miraculous and supernatural in the moral operation of the sacrament.

Already at this first point the Reformers were feeling after a dynamic and spiritual view of the relationship between the natural and the supernatural in sacramental operation. The moral effect was neither purely natural, as the modern Liberals might insist, nor was it purely supernatural, as the Scholastics tended to assert. It was not natural-supernatural, by virtue of the activity of the divine power within all natural activity. It was both natural and supernatural, having its place in the world of man, and yet understandable finally and fully only as an act of God. The sacrament had its psychological effect like any religious rite, but in the believing or the elect the Holy Ghost applied that operation to the accomplishment of a special and more than psychological result. If It is of the utmost importance to grasp what the Reformers were after at this point. This dynamic understanding of the Holy Spirit’s work in the sacraments, or for that matter in the word, is the key to their understanding of the spiritual effects of baptism, and of the nature of operation of God in it and through it. The idea was not always clearly expressed; often indeed it was felt after rather than stated. But undoubtedly it underlay the whole sacramental theology of the Reformation.

2. The Forgiveness of Sins

We turn now from the moral benefits of baptism to the more directly spiritual effects. First and obviously we must take notice of that spiritual grace with which baptism has been inseparably connected through the centuries of Christian theology, the remission of sins. The connection between baptism and forgiveness is clearly stated in the New Testament itself. The baptism of John was for the remission of sins, and the idea of a baptism for forgiveness was carried forward into the Christian preaching (Acts 2.38 and 22.16). The very act of baptism, a washing with water, pictured forgiveness, or the inward cleansing of the soul from the pollution of sin. In and through baptism the Holy Ghost sealed to the believer that which outwardly was symbolised, applying the benefits and power of the blood of Christ in his death and passion. In the early church, as Harnack claims (Hist. of Dog. 2 p. 140), the forgiveness of sins was universally considered to be the primary result or effect of the sacrament.

The Fathers made a great deal of the connection between baptism and remission (Stone has gathered a comprehensive list of references in Holy Baptism pp. 43-50). Baptised and cleansed came to be regarded as almost synonymous terms, for the Fathers, as the Reformers frequently noted, vividly described the
thing signified in terms of the sign. With the passage of years
the symbolism inevitably came to be applied more concretely,
and thus baptism was frequently thought of as accomplishing an
inward washing corresponding to the external ablution. Thus the
believer was forgiven, but he was forgiven in the sense that
his soul was actually washed clean from sin by the Holy Spirit.
And this inward cleansing was accomplished at baptism; thus,
as Harnack says, the pardon sealed or granted at baptism was
supposed to 'effect an actual sinlessness, which was now required
to be maintained' (Ibid.). Origen, for example, could refer
to the taking away in baptism of the pollution of original sin.
This point is important in many ways. It led to the loss of
concept of forgiveness as a non-imputation of sin. It gave rise
to the disastrous descriptions of the baptismal cleansing in quasi-
material terms. It resulted in the strict limitation of the
forgiveness effected to original sins and to actual sins committ-
ed before the administration of the sacrament i.e. those which had
already polluted the soul. Tertullian had this latter point in
mind when he strongly advised the postponement of the weighty
matter of baptism. Augustine rather quaintly suggested that if
there were a logical time for suicide, then it was the moment
after baptism, 'for then, being cleansed by the washing of holy
they have remission of all their sins': the same idea of a quasi-
material washing of the soul, which removes all prior
pollution and restores to pristine purity (Cary: Test. of the Path.
Art. 27). Even Pelagius, who denied any cleansing from original
sin, found a real baptismal grace in the washing away from the
souls of adults those actual sins into which they had fallen prior
to the administration of the sacrament. Connected with this idea
of a real effect in the soul is of course the common conception
of a driving out of the devil, enacted symbolically in the cere-
mony of exorcism.

The idea of remission maintained its prominence with the
Scholastics, but the conception of a quasi-material cleansing
had now hardened, and what had previously been to a large extent
picturesque and forceful language now became the exact statement
of dogmatic formulation. Lombard now thought of the grace of
forgiveness in this way: it was an actual purging of the soul,
with the accompanying remission of eternal penalties (Lomb. 4
Dist. 4 E). Thomas, in his discussion of the effects of bapt-
ism, dealt with the cleansing from sin and the remission of pen-
alties first. He considered carefully the objection that logically baptism has no power to wash away original sin.
Three reasons might be advanced in favour of the objection: that
only that sin which comes by carnal generation can be dealt with
by spiritual generation, that penance avails to cleanse from
actual sins, and that different sins need different remedies.
Against these objections Thomas brought many arguments: texts
from Scripture (Ezekiel 36. 25 and Romans 6. 3), the claim that
the gift of Christ exceeds the sin of Adam, and the conception
of baptism as a universal remedy for sin. Thomas also considered
carefully the question of the remission of penalties, and he
claimed that in baptism, by a communication of the passion of
Christ, and by divine grace, all eternal penalties are complete-
ly remitted. The details of Thomas' discussion, and his distinc-
tions between the eternal and the temporal penalties, which
were not remitted, are not important for our present purpose.
What is important is that Thomas, like Lombard, saw cleansing
from sin and the remission of sin as two separate things, or at
any rate as two very different aspects of the same thing. The
baptised person was cleansed i.e. his sins were completely removed,
and therefore he could properly be said to be freed from the
eternal penalty of sin i.e. to be forgiven. The perhaps it would
be going too far to say that Thomas thought of the remission as
resting upon the basis of the cleansing, but he certainly conceived
of the baptismal grace of forgiveness in this twofold way. The
recipient of the sacrament started with a clean slate both judic-
ially and in actual moral and spiritual life. His soul had been
purged and his guilt had been remitted. A work had been done
within him as well as for him.

The quasi-material conceptions gathered strength with the
passage of years, and amongst the ignorant the most superstitious
notions naturally flourished. Although the theologians always
understood that the grace of the sacrament proceeded from the
death and passion of Christ, the cleansing and remission came
quite easily to be associated with the performance of the rite -
the necessary vehicle of grace - quite independently of Christ's
atoning work or the personal apprehension of spiritual truths.
A typical popular presentation is that of the fourteenth century
Hilton, who described the unchristened infant as 'nought but an
image of the fiend and a brand of hell', and attributed to
baptism the power of bringing about a remarkable transformation
by virtue of the mere administration (See Manning: People's Faith).
The theologians of the sixteenth century expressed the doctrine
with greater theological nicety, but they were equally in bond-
age to quasi-material terminology. Baptismal was the instrument-
al cause of justification, a justification which was a making
just and not a mere reckoning just, and it had its effect by
virtue of the performance of the rite, except where some obstacle
prevented it. Trent put it in this way: 'By the admirable
virtue of the sacrament is remitted and pardoned sin, whether
originally contracted from our first parents, or actually
committed by ourselves' (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.41). This pardon extend-
ed only to actual sins which had been committed prior to the admin-
istration of the rite, so that in the case of infants its value,
although absolute so far as it went, was strictly limited in its
compass. The Canons of the Council anathematised all those
who held or taught contrary opinions (C. & D. Sess.7 Bapt. Can.10).

It will be noticed that the Catéchism and Canons of Trent
did not specifically refer to an inward cleaning of the soul from
sin and its stains, but the various Romanist and writings and
disputations leave no doubt that this idea was basic to the whole
understanding of the baptismal forgiveness. Henry VIII, writing
against Luther, quoted Hugo de Sancto Victore to the effect that
'the sacrament of baptism cleanses internally' (Assertio p.100).
Gardiner ascribed to baptism as he did to the supper a miraculous
transforming power. In the supper the miracle was the change in
in the elements, in baptism the change in the recipients (Cran. J. 3 p. 523). The function of baptism was to dispense to those who received it the effects of the cross (Ibid. pp. 566-7). This teaching involved Gardiner in a contradiction, of which he himself does not seem to have been altogether unaware, for in order to distinguish between baptism and the supper he denied the presence of the manhood of Christ in the primary sacrament. Christ was truly present in baptism, but as God, not as man: and by virtue of this presence the water of baptism had all the efficacy of his 'most precious blood' (Ibid. p. 240) - notwithstanding the fact that the blood belonged to his humanity. An extreme Romanist view was stated by Watson in the disputation with Grindal. Watson attempted to sustain the thesis that baptism literally accomplishes in the soul that which it symbolises: i.e. the soul is literally washed clean from the defilements of original sin and of actual sins committed prior to the administration (Strype's Cheke pp. 101 f.). In all these cases the scope of the forgiveness or cleansing was strictly limited. Only those stains could be washed away which were already there. Thus Shetler, speaking with reference to the baptism of infants, preached plainly and bluntly that 'baptism taketh away but only original sin' (Strype's Cranmer 1 p. 237).

The Reformers too maintained that baptism availed for the remission of sins and the cleaning of the soul, but they used the phrases with a completely new, and perhaps more Scriptural meaning and reference. Luther's expressions were sometimes so nearly akin to those of his opponents as to be scarcely distinguishable from them. He referred to remission as an effect of the sacrament (W. A. 30, 1 p. 215). He spoke of that original innocence to which a man is restored by baptism (Ibid. 46 p. 15). The phrases were still those of the traditional theology, but what mattered was not so much the phrases used as the meaning attached to the phrases. And there can be no doubt that at bottom, and inevitably, Luther thought of the baptismal remission not so much in terms of an actual cleansing of the soul as of the non-imputation of sin (Ibid.). That is why the symbol of cleansing received comparatively little attention in his writings, and that of a death and resurrection predominated. Hamel points to this significant change in Luther's whole conception in his acute comparison of the doctrine of Luther with that of Augustine. He suggests that Luther derived from Augustine the basic understanding of the remission as a non-imputation of sin, but that he added to it the further thought, that the believer becomes righteous, or is reckoned righteous, not by an actual cleansing of the soul from defilement, but by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ (Hamel Der J. Luth. u. Aug. pp. 86 f.). Luther thus escaped enslavement to the common quasi-material terminology which he used, and was able to extend the scope of the baptismal forgiveness to all the sins of the believer, whether committed before the administration or after. The close connection with the fundamental Lutheran teaching, that of free justification, will not pass unnoticed. Augustine had seen a free justification by non-imputation for all sins committed prior to baptism, but after baptism a process of
curative justification became necessary. Luther, by introducing the positive idea of an imputed righteousness, deepened the whole conception of the baptismal remission, and extended its application so that the whole life of the believer came within its scope. By restoring the work of baptism to the spiritual plane, and bringing it into relationship with faith, Luther undoubtedly gave to the sacrament a far deeper significance for the Christian life.

Zwingli made a negative rather than a positive contribution, and in this he may be compared with the Anabaptists. Zwingli attacked strongly the notion than an inward cleansing of the soul could be accomplished by the administration of the outward sacrament. He asserted roundly that no element in the world, and no outward thing can wash the soul (C.R. 2 p. 320; 4 p. 627). Baptism had no real power to wash away sin. The Anabaptists were at one with Zwingli in rejecting the traditional view, and were commended by Zwingli himself for their stand at this point (Ibid. 3 p. 248). The Anabaptists, however, had nothing positive and constructive to put in the place of the false teaching. They ascribed the whole work or forgiveness to the blood of Christ to which the water of baptism pointed (B.R.N. 2 p. 280; 4 p. 44). Baptism had its place not as a means to apply the cleansing power of the cross and passion of Christ, but as a symbol of the divine work of redemption and more especially of the conversion of the individual to Christ (Smith p. 37; Muralt p. 40). The question naturally arises: Did Zwingli himself share this view? History has ascribed it to him, and it may be said at once that Zwingli was always more anxious to dispel false views than he was to state constructively a true one. It must be remembered, however, that Zwingli saw baptism as a two-fold thing: an outward rite and a spiritual doctrine and work. Considered solely as an outward rite, baptism could not have any spiritual effect, and for those who received it as such it remained such. But baptism in the true sense was more than the outward rite, and where there was the conjunction of the material and the spiritual baptism, there the spiritual effects naturally followed. If Zwingli erred it was not so much by denying any spiritual power and reality to baptism at all as by divorcing too harshly the two constituent elements in the whole sacrament. His unfortunate expressions may be attributed almost entirely to his failure to solve the problem of the relationship of the human and the divine 'natures' of the one baptism.

The later Reformed theologians steered a more careful course, avoiding the blatant assertions of Romanist materialism on the one hand, and the misleading and perhaps excessive denials of a Zwinglian sacramentarianism on the other. Calvin started from the axiom 'confessed by all the pious, that in baptism the remission of sins, as well as the grace of the Holy Spirit, is offered and exhibited to us' (Tracts 1 p. 73). He pointed out that the Apostle Paul himself had 'conjoined the substance and effect with the external signe' teaching thereby what is the verity of baptism rightly received' (Comment. on Romans p. 148). When he came to discuss the question in the Institutes Calvin express-
ed himself with great caution, breaking away as far as possible from the traditional and now misleading phraseology. He spoke now of the benefits of the sacrament, not of its effects, and thought it more proper to speak of baptism giving to us the personal assurance of 'the deletion of all our sins', not the deletion itself (Instit.4,15,1 f.). The forgiveness of which we were assured in baptism had respect to all sins, and not just to original sin and those actual sins committed prior to reception (Ibid.3). Beckmann has drawn attention to the important distinction which Calvin made between the true doctrine, that baptism is a means of grace, and the false notion, that baptism is itself the gift or work of grace (Beckmann p.59). The use of the term benefits might be attributed to an anxiety to fix the mind upon the major causes of forgiveness, the work of Christ and the activity of the Holy Ghost, and to direct it quite away from what was after all only the minor instrumental cause, the sacrament itself.

The disciples of Calvin made much the same points. Beza stressed the fact that the signs must not be thought of as 'naked and empty', for 'in them were offered those things which are outwardly represented by them' (B.P.S. 38). It is important to notice that now the benefits are said to be offered rather than given: the offer becomes the gift or work only in the elect or in those who receive with true faith. In the more figurative statements of the Liturgies traces of the mediaeval language may be found, but care was always taken to guard against misconceptions, and the Confessions make it clear that the phrases were used with devotional rather than doctrinal intent. Knox, for example, could speak of 'the purging of our souls in baptism from that corruption and deadly poison wherewith by nature we were infected', but in true Reformed style he went on to relate this purging, not to the baptismal water, but to the blood of Christ (Liturgy Bapt.). The Scots Confession showed beyond doubt that the cleansing and remission were understood in terms of imputation and not of a work done: 'We are ingrafted in Christ Jesus, to be made partakers of his justice, by whilk our sinnes are covered and remitted' (21).

The position in England was complicated. In the earlier official formularies the language hardly differed from that of the mediaeval theology. The King's Book referred to the forgiveness of sins as the 'effect and virtue' of the sacrament (Lloyd p.233). It spoke of the 'taking away and purging of all kind of sins, both original and actual, committed and done before baptism' (Ibid). The Prayer Book service itself, carelessly read, might easily leave the impression that it reflects a similar teaching. Even the later Article (27) used fairly definite language with regard to the work of the sacrament. It described baptism as an instrument, and numbered forgiveness amongst the benefits associated with or conferred by it. Yet against these statements there is ample evidence to show that from a fairly early period the Anglicans began to understand the baptismal forgiveness only in the Lutheran and Reformed sense and not in the Romanist. The King's Book was perhaps the only formulary in which the mediaeval doct-
rine was unambiguously stated, and that was admittedly reactionary in several important respects.

We may glance first of all at the evidence of the formularies themselves. The Article of 1536 naturally mentioned forgiveness as a gift of the sacrament, but it ascribed the gift directly to God, in and through Jesus Christ: 'God the Father giveth unto them, for his Son Jesus Christ's sake, forgiveness of all their sins...'(Lloyd: Ten Articles). Similarly, the Baptismal Office, although it spoke boldly of the effects of baptism, carefully related these effects, not to the outward ceremony, but to God himself. Prayer was first offered that God would grant remission of sins; the promises of God in the Gospel were plainly rehearsed and expounded; a thanksgiving to God for his gift was appended. The association of the grace with the means of grace was subordinated to its association with the author of grace, who was Lord of the means. The same emphasis is discernible in the Homilies. Baptised infants could be described as 'washed from their sins', but the washing was in virtue of the sacrifice of Christ and not of the sacrament (Homily of Salvation, p. 25). The Article properly defined baptism as an efficacious sign, but its efficacy was that of the instrument only: it does not wash from sin, but signs and seals promise of forgiveness of sin. The true work is not the work of the sacrament itself, but the work of God in the soul, which the sacrament symbolises and seals.

The writings of the individual Reformers confirm the testimony of the formularies. Tyndale spoke of baptism in Lutheran fashion as a real 'purging of the soad heart', but the inward work was for him the spiritual work of the Holy Ghost, not the operation of the outward rite (Tynd. P. S. I p. 424). Becon too referred to the work of baptism in the traditional terms as a 'purging from original sin', and all other that we have committed before' (Bec. P. S. I p. 336). He made it clear, however, that it was the blood of Christ which did the cleansing work, and that that blood availed after baptism as well as before it (Ibid.). Elsewhere Becon showed that he understood the baptismal forgiveness as an imputation of Christ's righteousness, not as a real washing of the soul from defilements: 'We take Christ upon us (in baptism) with all his holiness and righteousness' (Ibid. 2 p. 201). It was because he thought of it in this way that he was able to extend the forgiveness to post-baptismal as well as pre-baptismal sins. The relationship between free justification and baptism in Becon's thinking is clearly expressed in the fine phrase: 'Baptism is a removing from that fierce judging place into the court of mercy and the throne of grace' (Ibid. p. 635).

The connection between baptism and remission was emphasised by almost all the Anglican writers. Nowell, Coverdale, Jewell, Hutchinson, and the anglicised Bullinger may all be quoted. But all these writers were at pains to make it clear that the inward grace did not proceed properly speaking from the outward rite. Nowell spoke of a secret and spiritual grace (P. S. p. 36).
Coverdale related the effects directly to Christ himself: 'having once forgiveness through the grace and gift of Christ' (P. S. 1 p. 410). Jewel saw in baptism a 'means to assure to us the death and merits of our Lord and Saviour Christ' (P. S. 2 p. 1106). Hutchinson ascribed the efficacy of the sacrament to the activity of the whole Trinity: 'In that bath of holy regeneration baptism we are regenerate, washed, purified, and made the children of God, by the workmanship of the three persons (P. S. p. 11).

Bullinger granted that baptism as the sign might very well be given the name of the thing signified, as was customary amongst the Fathers, but he argued against the confusion of the two, which was the fundamental error of the Romanist theology (P. S. 4 p. 282).

A few further testimonies will show how completely the Reformation leaders had abandoned the traditional quasi-material conceptions. Cranmer himself saw a twofold work of baptism, the one outward and the other inward. The perfect and complete baptism comprised both: 'Through baptism, in this world, the body is washed, and the soul is washed: the body outwardly, the soul inwardly: the work is one' (Foxe 6 p. 457). The work of remission could not be accomplished except where there was a turning to God in repentance and faith, but since it was by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, and by imputation, it 'availed to wash from sin both in baptism and after baptism' (P. S. 2 p. 128). The point that the forgiveness is by imputation rather than by an actual cleansing was made strongly by Hooper: 'baptism is a seal and confirmation of justice, either of our accession into the grace of God: Christ his innocence and justice by faith is ours, and our sins and injustice by his obedience are his: whereof baptism is the sign, seal and confirmation' (P. S. 2 p. 88). The arguments against those who would restrict the application of the baptismal remission to pre-baptismal sin will be considered more fully in a final chapter, but we may notice that upon the basis of this conception of remission as imputation the Anglicans strongly favoured an extension of the benefits to the whole life of the Christian. Rogers list of those who erred at this point included: the Messalians, that only sins past are by baptism cleansed; the Pelagians, that original sin is not pardoned in infants; and the Papists, that baptism serveth to the putting away of original sin only' (Cf. Shetley ut supra) (Rog. P. S. pp. 277-8).

We may sum up the Reformed teaching in the following propositions. First, the Reformers preserved the historic and Scriptural connection between baptism and remission of sins. Secondly, they agreed, the Anabaptists apart, that in some sense the forgiveness was an effect or benefit of the sacrament, and not merely a truth symbolically represented in it. At this point many modern thinkers might be tempted to follow the Anabaptists lead: baptism, as an enacted assurance of the divine forgiveness and a testimony of the divine love, conveys psychologically to the soul the benefit of a sense of the all-embracing compassion of God and of the removal of the power and the guilt of sin. But such a view is at variance not only with the teaching of the
Fathers and the Scholastics, but also with that of the Reformers; and it seems to fall short of that which is required by the testimony and teaching of the Scriptures themselves. Third, the Reformers, although agreed with their adversaries upon the objective reality of the forgiveness, differed from them radically in their conception of that forgiveness, and in both as regards its nature and as regards its extent. On the one side it was an actual cleansing from pollution, accomplished by the water by virtue of the divine energy and the merits of the passion of Christ. On the other side it was a non-imputation of sin and an imputation of the righteousness of Christ, a real work, but a cleansing only in a figurative or metaphorical sense. On the one side it availed only for those sins which had been already committed, for it is not possible to cleanse away stains which are not yet there. On the other side it covered the whole life of the believer, for the free mercy of God exceeded all limits, and the eternal God saw the end of the Christian life from the beginning. Fourth, the Reformers had a completely different conception of the mode of operation of the sacrament. It will be our task to examine the different views upon this question in the next chapter. For the moment it may suffice to point out the basic distinction which has already emerged. The Romanists spoke of the working of baptism in quasi-material and mechanical terms, as though the outward rite and the divine grace were statically related, and thus could not fail, except where there was some insuperable obstacle, to accomplish the inward work of cleansing and renewal. The Reformers, on the other hand, had always at the back of their thinking the dual nature of the sacrament: it was an outward sign and an inward grace and work, the two elements forming not a static but a dynamic unity. In favour of the Romanist view it may be said that it preserved a definite sense of the value of baptism as something divinely instituted and divinely used. Properly understood, this view pointed both to the power of God, who could use so mean and common a thing as water to the accomplishment of spiritual ends, and to the utter dependence of man upon the miracle of the divine grace and the divine power. On the Reformed side, however, it may be granted that the static relating of the sign to the accomplishment of spiritual ends, and to the utter dependence of man upon the miracle of the divine grace and the divine power. The Romanist teaching was erroneous because it failed to preserve the proper tension between the divine and the natural elements in the sacrament. It obliterated the natural element on the one side as the Anabaptist and Neological view obliterated the divine on the other. The Reformers, with their dynamic conception of the unity of sign and grace, were able to speak in high terms of the sacrament and its work, and yet to look always beyond the means to the true author and worker who made use of the means, God himself.

3. Regeneration

As baptism signified not death only but also resurrection, so too it was regarded as effecting not only the remission of sins but also the new birth to a life of righteousness. This point has already been noted in connection with the baptismal profession
and the grace of sanctification, for it was the regenerate and righteous life to which the baptised person was pledged. The matter has sufficient independent importance, however, to merit a separate treatment. Indeed, the grace of regeneration has commonly been regarded as the supreme gift of baptism. The regeneration effected in and through baptism had, of course, been interpreted in many different ways, but the connection between the two has always been maintained.

In the New Testament the new life in Christ and baptism in the name of Christ stood everywhere in the closest possible relationship. A passage like the famous text of John (3,5) referred directly to a baptismal as well as a spiritual regeneration. At its very lowest baptism meant entry into the outward fellowship of the church, but entry into that fellowship carried with it the idea of the adoption into the family of God: the new birth. Passages could easily be multiplied to show that the New Testament writers thought of themselves as men who had entered into a new phase of being, a new life, or rather a new quality of life. Baptism into Christ marked the transition from the old state of life to the new. Indeed, in some very real way it was used by the Holy Spirit to effect that transition. The regenerate life began with Christian baptism.

The early church took up the thought, identifying regeneration and baptism so closely that the two came to be thought of almost as the same thing. Tertullian is in some respects an exception: he seemed to separate the washing with water, which was the preparation, from the coming of the Holy Ghost, which was the fulfilment (De Bapt.6-8). Yet even with Tertullian the washing and the descent of the Spirit combined to form the full and complete baptism. Others Fathers connected the washing itself with regeneration, or the reconstitution of the divine image. Thus Gregory Nazianzus could describe the sacrament as the rectifying or amendment of our formation (Wall 1 p.82), and Basil referred to it in very much the same way as the rectifying of our former birth (Ibid. p.111). For a fuller list of quotations, see Stone: Holy Baptism pp.43 f.). One point ought to be noticed: the tendency to link baptism with an actual spiritual cleansing, of limited application, carried with it almost inevitably the emptying of the concept regeneration of its positive moral content. Especially was this the case when adult baptisms became fewer, and infant baptisms became the rule. The newly born infant was deformed or polluted by original sin. The sacrament of baptism remedied the deformity and cleansed away the pollution. Thus the infant started life again, as it were, freed now from the bondage to original sin, adopted into the divine family, and granted the assistance of the grace of God. The regeneration did not necessarily carry with it any positive moral renovation. Apart from the implanting of habitual virtues it was conceived of negatively, in relation to the former life, not positively, in relation to the living of the new life in Christ.
The Scholastics retained the traditional connection between baptism and regeneration, but with them the regeneration remained very much in the background. The idea of a quasi-material cleansing of the soul had now gained so complete a hold that there was very little room for a positive doctrine of the new birth. For the most part regeneration was thought of negatively as a setting right of the nature corrupted by original sin. Of course on the positive side it did mean incorporation into Christ, which was effected in and through the sacrament (Thom. 3 Qu. 69, 5). It also meant an entry into the kingdom of heaven, by the removal of the obstacles of sin, guilt and death (Ibid. 5). Apart from the infusion of habitual virtues, however, there was no question of any moral reconstitution of the baptised person, and if the recipient fell again into mortal sin and the soul was again defiled, then the benefits of the baptismal regeneration were forfeit until further sacramental graces were received.

The writings of the sixteenth-century Romanists reveal clearly how poverty-stricken the traditional conception of regeneration had become. Naturally all the controversial and credal statements spoke of the grace of regeneration which the sacrament conferred. The Catechism of Trent, however, had great difficulty in defining regeneration. Indeed, the concept only emerged incidentally, as it were, in the long list of the effects of baptism: we are given 'as it were the germs and materials of virtue' (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 47), 'our soul is replenished with divine grace' (Qu. 49), and 'we are constituted heirs to eternal salvation' (Ibid.), and 'we are united and joined as members to Christ our Head' (Qu. 51). The impression left is that the thought of regeneration has been so emptied of meaning as hardly to be worth mentioning separately. The baptised person began life afresh, enjoyed certain special gifts of grace, and entered provisionally into a state of eternal blessing. Neither in spiritual standing nor in moral life could he be said to be regenerate in the full New Testament sense of the term. Some controversialists seem almost deliberately to have underestimated the baptismal regeneration in order to maintain a distinction of nature and efficacy between baptism and the supper. Thus Watson attempted to work out a twofold regeneration, the baptismal and the eucharistic. Baptism regenerates us by the Spirit, and the Eucharist, which is the true substance of Christ's flesh, quickens the flesh. This comparison broke down because Watson's opponents enquired after the fate of those who never had opportunity to receive the Eucharist (Cheke Strype's Cheke p. 107), but the speculation is interesting in that it shows how attenuated the doctrine of baptismal regeneration had become on the positive side. Indeed, in some respects the positive regeneration of baptism tend to merge into the not easily definable baptismal character, and only the doctrine of an infusion of habitual graces preserved it from complete obliteration.

It was Luther who restored to regeneration much of its original meaning, stressing it as the supreme baptismal grace. Luther still used the traditional terms: baptism was a cleansing
of the soul from sin, and the restoration of it to the state of original innocence (W.A.46 p.175). But the thought of Luther went far deeper than that, for he related the cleansing directly to the atoning work of Christ and the restoration to his resurrection. The baptised man was a cleansed man because by virtue of Christ's death and his entry into it sin was not imputed. Christ had borne his sin, he who knew no sin being made sin for us (II Cor). He was also a restored man because by virtue of the resurrection of Christ and his entry into it the life of Christ and the righteousness of Christ had been imputed to him. *Grafted* He was 'alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord' (Romans 6.11). Regeneration had for Luther both a negative and a positive content. It was negative: the entry into the death of Christ and the destruction of sin. It was also positive, the entry into the resurrection of Christ and the new life of righteousness. The meaning and the grace of baptism were the full engrafting into Christ, not that the believer became Christ himself, as some seem to have supposed (Cf. Warham's condemnation in Hart E.R. pp.397-8), but that he entered into the work of Christ and the benefits procured thereby, applied to his soul by the Holy Spirit. The grace of baptism regeneration was far more than a removal of the defilements of original sin and the endowing with a little supernatural help. It was the reconstitution of the soul in positive righteousness by the application of the work of Christ and the conversion of the soul to God in repentance and faith.

The other Reformers did not always express themselves quite in the same way as Luther, but there can be no doubt that they shared his teaching. Peter Martyr reversed the Scholastic understanding completely. He did not place regeneration within the context of remission, but remission within the context of regeneration: 'Baptism is a sacrament...whereby we are regenerated and engrafted into Christ for the remission of sins and eternal salvation' (Quoted by Goode E.B.in I.p.175). The forgiveness was not of course a cleansing from pollution by the application of the baptismal waters, but a non-imputation of sin by entry into the death and resurrection of Christ. Calvin made the same point. He claimed that in baptism Christ himself with all his gifts is offered to all in common (Tracts 2 Mutual Consent 18). The man who received baptism rightly received Christ himself, and in him the new life of righteousness and the forgiveness of all sin (Ibid.). The new life in Christ was one of the benefits of baptism listed by Calvin in the Institutes (Instit.4,15,5), and Calvin stated again that the divine effects held forth in baptism are found in Christ alone (Ibid.). The true reception of baptism meant a true reception of Christ himself, with all the blessings not only of his death but also of his resurrection. Beza saw both the negative and the positive aspects when he described remission and regeneration as the two principal benefits of baptism (Q.R.C.109-110), and the Reformed Confessions all referred either to the benefit of regeneration itself or to the parallel benefit of engrafting into the church and into Christ (Cf. Belgic Confession 34).
Many of the earlier statements in England did little more than repeat the traditional teaching. The 1536 Article had one interesting point: it stated that "all by baptism have remission of sins and the grace and favour of God offered them". The word 'offer' reveals a definite reforming trend. Apart from this, however, the account of the benefits of baptism, except perhaps for the word 'favour', is definitely in the mediaeval tradition, and there seems to be little or no positive doctrine of the grace of regeneration. The King's Book discussed the working of baptism exclusively in terms of effect and virtue (p.41). It summarised the effects as the forgiveness of sins and the grace of the Holy Spirit: a very meagre account of the work of regeneration. New influences were already making themselves felt during the reign of Henry, however, although as yet they had not been able to affect the official formularies to any appreciable extent. Tyndale himself had not a great deal to say about the effects of baptism. Indeed, he tended to a denial that the sacrament accomplishes anything at all apart from 'testifying and exhibiting to our senses the promises signified' (Tynd.P.S.1 p.357). But the relating of the sacrament to the doctrine of justification by faith, and the understanding of its work in the light of its signification prepared the way for a better and deeper understanding of the grace of justification. The book the Sum of Scripture indicated the right path when it explained the grace in terms of the meaning, in accordance with Luther's teaching (Folio 5).

The death of Henry made possible a thorough and radical rethinking of the doctrine. Especially important was the translation popularly known as Cranmer's Catechism, in which the Lutheran teaching was clearly and forcibly expounded. In this work baptism was related directly to the regenerating activity of the Holy Ghost: the Spirit wrought 'in faith and baptisme' to make us 'new men agayne' (p.122). Forgiveness and the pouring out of the Spirit were seen to be the complementary parts of the baptismal work, and both were identified with the symbolism of the sacrament (p.186). The benefits of baptism included not only the negative putting away of sin, but the positive imputing of 'the whole righteousness of Christ'. Like the Cross itself baptism was a victory over the forces of evil and a renewal in the power of righteousness: 'it delivereth from death and the power of the devil, and giveth salvation and everlasting lyfe to all them that believe' (p.189). How thoroughly the Lutheran doctrine had influenced the Anglican leaders appeared in the Prayer Books and confessional and catechetical statements of Edward's reign. In the revised baptismal orders regeneration was stressed as the chief effect or benefit of the sacrament, the negative aspect, forgiveness, being understood within the context of the positive, the resurrection to righteousness. In addition to the prayers for the granting of the Holy Spirit and spiritual regeneration, the revision of 1552 provided a new form of Thanksgiving for the blessings of new life, adoption and incorporation, with further prayer that the baptised might enter into the death and resurrection of Christ by mortification and renewal. The form and content of
the new prayer make it plain beyond all doubt that it derived from the fuller Reformed understanding of regeneration, although in effect it brought the Anglican teaching into line with the earlier Patristic as well as the New Testament teaching. The same emphasis which we find in the Prayer Book may be found also in Ponet's Catechism and in the Article, which was first drafted during the reign of Edward. In Ponet's Catechism baptism was primarily the sacrament of regeneration rather than that of forgiveness. It pointed to the new birth by the Spirit of God and to the membership not only of the outward church but also of the communion of the saints (B.R.p.72). The Article 627 described baptism as the sign of our new birth and grafting into the church of Christ. To the sacrament itself was ascribed an instrumental value in the effecting of that regeneration, a fact which has resulted in a tremendous amount of confusing and sometimes confused commentating by the partisans of different schools. The greater stress upon regeneration almost marks off the statement at once as Reformed in origin and intention. A certain amount of positive teaching may also be found in the Homily, which thought of baptism in terms of an adoption into the family of God and an inheritance of the kingdom of heaven (p.25).

The individual writers of the Edwardian and Elizabethan period expressed themselves in a similar way. Becon regarded baptism as the sacrament of deliverance: 'we receive manumission and freedom so soon as we are regenerate and born anew by the honourable sacrament of baptism and the Holy Ghost' (Bec.P.S.1 p.178). Bradford too stressed the fact that in baptism we are adopted as well as forgiven (Brad.P.BS.1 p.121), and in prayer to God he referred to the positive side of the baptismal grace and work: 'As thou, 0 God, dost regenerate us, and as it were engratn us into the fellowship of the church, and by adoption make us thy children ...'(Ibid.p.260). Nowell linked together regeneration and remission as the two main effects of baptism (P.S.p.86), and Hutchinson too saw the two aspects: 'In that bath of holy baptism we are regenerate, washed, purified, and made the children of God' (P.S.p.11). Jewel quoted Chrysostom to the effect that Christ by the sacrament of holy baptism 'hath made us flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones' (P.S.1 pp.140-1); and he found the same positive teaching in Augustine, who had maintained that men 'being baptised, are incorporate into Christ and made his members' (Ibid.).

The prominence given by the Anglican Reformers to the regenerating work of baptism calls for notice, and perhaps a further word of explanation. It marked a definite return to the Scriptural and also to the Patristic understanding. It pointed to a flat rejection of the specifically Romanist teaching that the main work of baptism is a quasi-material cleansing of the soul from the pollution of sin. Not a few commentators have attempted
to show that the close inter-relating of baptism and regeneration implied a retention of automatic views of the efficacy and operation of the sacrament. The elements of truth and error in such a contention will need to be sifted in the next chapter. For the present it may be confidently asserted, first, that this inter-relating did undoubtedly imply a rejection of ex opere operato views in the Romanist sense, and second, that it was thoroughly in accord with the teaching of the Continental Protestants, both on the Lutheran and also on the Reformed side.

A further point may be added. The inter-relating of baptism with the regeneration of the soul rather than with its cleansing resulted in effect in a far more spiritual and a far less material conception of the working of the sacrament. Of course many Romanists, Gardiner for instance, had themselves attempted to make the primary sacrament less material in its operation, in order that they might do the greater honour to the supreme mystery of the sacrament of the altar (Cran.J.3 pp. 566-7). The Reformers rejected the distinction between the two sacraments, but they also went much further, banishing quasi-material conceptions altogether. They could not allow that in baptism there took place a literal washing of the soul and filling of it with new graces. What took place was the giving of a new life by adoption into Christ in the power of the Spirit. The forgiveness or cleansing was by imputation, the renewal to righteousness by the entry of faith into the resurrection life of Christ. From first to last the transaction or work was spiritual, the term cleansing being used metaphorically to describe the spiritual effects of adoption into Christ in forgiveness and renewal. The replacement of the Scholastic emphasis upon cleansing by the new emphasis upon regenerating is thus of the greatest importance to the Reformed doctrine of the effects of baptism, and especially of the mode of efficacy. It gives us preliminary warning that any interpretation of the Anglican position which reintroduces ex opere operato conceptions, or depreciates the meaning and value of regeneration, or sets the doctrine of baptism in opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith is a priori likely to be an erroneous one.

A final point; it must be emphasised that when the Reformers spoke of regeneration they mean't nothing less than a definite incorporation into Christ, with all the attendant benefits. Many commentators have laboured to show that the phrase 'regeneration' can only bear the lowest of meanings, and must be sharply distinguished from renovation or conversion. The Reformers themselves undoubtedly distinguished between spiritual regeneration and moral renovation, for the reconstruction of the life is more than the spiritual birth, although in a real sense it is contained within it. But regeneration as they understood it can hardly be explained as a mere change in spiritual status, or a formal uniting with Christ; conceptions which hardly amount to more than the illusory baptismal character. To reduce the value of regeneration undoubtedly helps to solve certain problems, especially for those who wish to fly in the face of experience and assert some form of regeneration of all the baptised. But the Reformers themselves do not seem to have used the term except in the very highest sense. The regeneration which they related to
baptism was the deep, inward working of the Holy Spirit, which resulted not merely in an ontological change, but in the renewal of the whole life in Jesus Christ. Using the term in this sense, the Reformers were truer both to Scripture and to experience. If they had to face the difficulty that not all those who received baptism could honestly be described as spiritually re-born, they avoided that reduction of the term regeneration to a meaningless phrase, which necessarily resulted from the attempt to maintain a static connection between sacrament and grace.

4. Other Effects

The three main effects of baptism have already been discussed - the challenge to a moral life, or actual endowment with virtues; the forgiveness of sin, or the cleansing of the soul from its defilements; and regeneration, or the restoration of the soul to innocency and the infusion into it of divine grace. In addition to these greater effects, various other lesser benefits of baptism have been seen by different writers. Chrysostom maintained that baptism procured to the soul a thousand benefits, and he himself listed ten of these in addition to the main blessing of remission (Wall i pp.118-120). Theodoret, too, thought of baptism not only as a razor to cut off sins, but also as a means to many other graces. The majority of the effects mentioned by these writers were subsidiary and supplementary, and had little or no direct bearing upon the controversies of the Reformation period. They do not then require individual discussion.

One effect mentioned by the Scholastics might be given rather greater attention. That was the special, but not in any sense necessary gift of physical healing. Thomas discussed this question in relation to the alleged equality of the effects in all those who received baptism. One of the objections against such a doctrine was the fact that some were granted a restoration to bodily health in and through the sacrament, while others were not. Thomas would allow that baptism may on occasion confer physical as well as spiritual healing, but he pleaded that this was a miraculous and extraordinary benefit and not an ordinary and essential baptismal grace (Thom.3 Qu.69,8). The relating of the sacrament to physical restoration naturally gave rise to the grossest of superstitions: that it is 'unlucky' not to have a child baptised, and that babies thrive only after they have received the sacrament. Behind these beliefs, which still persist in some parts, there is of course the real truth that the physical and the spiritual in man are closely inter-related, so that spiritual and physical health do to some extent accompany each other. As commonly held, however, these beliefs rested upon purely superstitious notions of the sacrament and its operation. They found little favour with the Reformers, whose main objective was the restoration of the conception of sacramental grace to the spiritual level.

A further effect which merits more detailed consideration is the presumed infusion of faith. This effect was of
greater importance in the case of infants, however, and it will be better discussed in that connection. The very fact that it applied more specifically to infants points to a non-psychological understanding, and distinguishes it from the parallel but very different Reformed doctrine, that Baptism, as an outward testimony to the divine mercies, strengthens and confirms faith. Calvin devoted two paragraphs of the Institutes to this aspect of the baptismal working. Baptism was for him 'a sealed instrument to assure us of the deletion of all ours sins' (Instit. 4, 15, 1). It had been appointed 'to elevate, nourish and confirm our faith' (Ibid. 14–15). The Reformed Confessions used similar expressions: baptism was the sealed instrument, or the seal and witness of its effects, provoking in those who received it a stronger and more active faith. The Anglican Reformers, while rejecting the Scholastic conception of an infusion of habitual faith, attributed to baptism this power of awakening and more especially of confirming faith in the recipients. Cranmer's Catechism thought it the work of baptism 'to quieten the conscience and to make us glad and merie' (pp. 186–7). Tyndale, Hooper and Rogers all took up the point, and the Thanksgiving introduced into the Office of Public Baptism might very well be explained as an application of it: we give thanks to God for the blessings received because the sacrament emboldens us to believe that God can and will do that which in the Gospel he has promised to do. The Article summed up the Anglican teaching when it declared that 'the sacraments are sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace... by which he doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our faith in him' (Art. 25).

The conferring of character or a spiritual impress was the final effect urged by the Scholastics and Romanists and contested by the Protestants. The doctrine seems to have been built up upon the distinction made by Augustine between those who receive the gift of the Dominical character and the elect who receive the inward graces (See Beckmann p. 75). Following up this thought, Thomas contended that baptism conferred upon the souls of all recipients an indelible mark or character, which marked them off for ever from those who had not been baptised. Thus even an unbeliever like Simon Magus had something which the unbaptised unbeliever did not have: he was marked off for Christ even in his inward soul. Should such an unbeliever at a later date repent and believe, then the inward graces of the sacrament could be conferred upon him without any repetition of baptism (Thom. Qu. 66, 9). As the Catechism of Trent put it: 'By baptism we are sealed with a character that can never be effaced from the soul' (Cat. T. 2, 2 Qu. 53). Bellarmine pointed out that this character is an impress made upon the substance of the soul, whatever that may be, and he insisted with the Scholastics and Tridentines that it is indelible (De la S. T. B. p. 349).

It is not easy to state in so many words what this doctrine implied. The term 'substance of the soul' in itself defies definition, and the word 'impress' can hardly be applied in any strict sense to a substance, especially when that substance has no visible or tangible 'accidents'. On the other hand
the Romanists clearly would not be satisfied with the rather obvious simplification, that all recipients of baptism are marked off as possessors sacramentally if not actually of the benefits proffered. They wished to teach that in all cases baptism did do something in and to the soul. Even if it did not cleanse it from sin (i.e. where some obstacle prevented), it did at least mark it with a divine stamp. In that limited way baptism always and in all persons could be said to accomplish, ex opere operato, a real effect.

The revolt against the doctrine of a baptismal character began at least as early as the time of Wycliffe. Wycliffe could have little use for such a teaching, since he preferred normally to speak of baptism as a token or symbol rather than as an instrument or cause. He saw in baptism a two-fold activity, the outward work and the inward, the latter being accomplished in the penitent and believing alone (Trialogus pp.157-9). The thought of an ex opere operato impress upon the souls of all had thus no meaning. In the theology of Luther there was obviously no place for this quasi-material conception. The Reformed theologians rejected it out of hand as meaningless and artificial, refusing to grant that any such idea underlay the prohibition of a repetition of baptism (Cf. Coccejus 13). Perhaps the nearest approach to the doctrine in English writers was Cranmer's teaching that all who receive baptism are changed 'sacramentally', unless, of course, we hold that the baptismal regeneration (in its lowest sense of change in status) amounted to very little more than this stamp or impress upon the substance of the soul. Browne's defence of an Anglican doctrine of universal regeneration in baptism (Articles pp.615-6) reads very much like an attempt to state the Romanist doctrine of character in a more intelligible way, and Stone seems to equate character with the new life which may be turned either to good account or evil, according to the use or misuse of the divine gifts (Holy Bapt. p.94).

It is perhaps significant that the majority of the Anglican writers rejected the Romanist doctrine of character by simply ignoring it. Such a teaching did not find any place in their theological understanding. Tyndale summed up the Protestant attitude when he described 'character' as one of the 'feigned words with which the Papists make merchandise' (Tynd. P. S. I p.342). The only character received in baptism was when the soul was truly washed by the Holy Ghost, inwardly and spiritually (Ibid. 2, p.12). Calfhill discussed the similar teaching in relation to orders, and scathingly rejected the Scholastic notion (P. S. p.230), but he did not refer to the indelible character imparted by baptism. The other Reformers ignored the doctrine completely.

There can be no doubt that the doctrine of character, at any rate in its sixteenth century form, had in its favour neither Scripture on the one side nor reason on the other. The best that can be said for it is that the sacrament does formally mark off a man as a professed believer and an outward inheritor of the baptismal promises. To call this formal marking an impress upon
the soul's substance is to introduce phrases which have no clear meaning but can only cause confusion. It may be legitimate to equate this character with a baptismal or sacramental regeneration, so long as care is taken to make it plain that the word regeneration is used only in a very limited and formal sense. But on the whole it seems a pity that so fine a word should not be given the deep and full scriptural connotation which it bears in Scripture itself and in traditional evangelical theology. And if it must be used, then it ought perhaps to be used with some qualifying word, formal, or ecclesiastical, or sacramental, in order that it might be distinguished clearly from the true regeneration which is the miraculous inward work of the Holy Ghost.

Could the word character be retained to cover something more than that, the change in spiritual status, or ontological change which some thinkers would like to presume of all those who receive baptism? The difficulty here is to see what change other than a formal or ecclesiastical can be brought into so close a relationship with the sacrament. Spiritual status implies a change in spiritual status before God and an ontological change means necessarily a change in being. Now all baptised persons receive a new status before men, and may be presumed to have received a new nature, but this is formal or hypothetical, according to the limits of human knowledge and understanding. Before God the new status and the new being must be real: a definite movement away from the state of sin into the state of righteousness. Even the Scholastics and the Romanists acknowledge that a change of this kind cannot in any circumstances be presumed of all those who receive the sacrament, for this means an entry into the full baptismal grace of forgiveness and regeneration, which is impossible for those who place a bar in the way. The only alternative is to say that the change is to a potential new status and new being, but that is to say something which really means nothing at all. The Gospel is of universal application, and thus the unbaptised too could be said potentially to have a new spiritual status and a new being. If character means something which all those who are baptised received, but not the unbaptised, then it must mean more than something potential, and it must also mean less than something real.

A clear choice confronts us, if the doctrine of baptismal character is thought to be worth preserving at all. Either the term must be used in the full Romanist sense, with the inevitable associations of a quasi-material conception of the soul and a quasi-material understanding of the operation of the sacraments. Or else the true and simple idea which perhaps lies at the bottom of the doctrine must be carefully sifted out, the idea that the outward fact of baptism does in all cases make an outward and formal difference in the status of a man before his fellow-men and before the church. If the latter course is chosen then it is to be recommended that the misleading terms character and regeneration should be at all costs avoided, and the doctrine expressed in language which conveys a clear meaning and cannot give rise to confused and superstitious notions.
1. Luther W.A.30,1 p.730 'Gott...hebet von stund an dich new zu machen...geust dir eyn seyn gnad und heyligen geyst'.
2. Ibid.p.736 'Kein hoher, besser, grosser gelubd ist, dann der tauff gelubd'.
3. Lomb.4 Dist.4 E 'A macula peccati purgatos, et a debito aeternae poenae absolutos'.
5. Ibid.46 p.175 (quoted and modernised by Hirsch p.233) 'Die Wirkung, welche ist, dass der Mensch aus der alten, verderbten, Geburt und der Teufelshaut erlost und herausgezogen, und in den Stand der ersten Unschuld gesetzt wird. Christus zeucht uns aus Ungerechtigkeit, Verdammmis, Bosheit, Tod, und zeucht uns an durch die Taufe Gerechtigkeit, Leben, Gutheit'.
6. Wernle, Zwingli p.320 'Er (Zwingli) bestreitet, dass die Sakramente irgendwie Gnade mit sich bringen (conferre, adferre, dispensare)'. Cf.Zwingli C.R.4 p.627 'Die seel mag ghein element oder usserlich ding in diser welt reynigen...Der touff mag keyn sund abwaschenn'.
7. Ibid.3 p.248 'Der wassertouf mag vermag ndts zu abwaschen der sünd'
8. B.R.N.2 p.280 'Sy Jacques was asked: 'Hoe werden die kinderken ghereynicht, ist dat nit door het Doopsel engeschiert? - to which he replied: 'Sy zyn ghereynicht door het bloet Cristi'. Cf.Ibid.4 p.44 'Wanneer wy dan ghedoopt werden, zo ontfanghen wy een warachtige ghethugenesse, als dat wy alle die in Jesum Christum gheloven, ghwasschen ende ghereynight zyn, int precyus bloed des ghedoods lams Christi ons z alightmake'.
9. Beckmann p.52 'Das Sakrament ist nicht die Gnadengabe / -urs. selbst, sondern ein Gnadenmittel'.
10. Nowell P.S.p.86 'Acarna et spiritualis gratia duplex est, remissio videlicet peccatorum et regeneratio'.
11. Belgic Confession (34) 'Par lequel nous sommes reçus en l'Eglise de Dieu'. Cf.the Scots Confession (21) 'be Baptisme we ar ingrafted in Jesus Christ, to be made....'
12. Beckmann p.75 'Die eigenartige Taufgabe ist der character dominicus, nämlich im Sinne rechtlicher, prinzipieller Zugehörigkeit zu Christus, zu seinem Corpus'.
13. Coccejus 13 (In Heppe R.D. Bapt.) 'Quare baptismus non repetatur ratio non ex charactere, sed ex significato petenda est'.
CHAPTER XIV THE EFFICACY

Now that we have considered the various effects which may be properly attributed to the sacrament, we must come to grips with the central problem of all baptismal and sacramental theology: whether the sacrament may be said itself to accomplish these effects, and if so, what is the nature and what is the degree of its efficacy. Are we to say on the one side that after all baptism is no more than a sign, which tells us of the operation of God, but which does not itself produce the effects? Or are we to say that on the other that the sign itself is efficacious, a means used by God for the furtherance of his work? And if we do say that, must we restrict the efficacy to the psychological sphere, claiming that the effects are produced by means of an impress made upon the mind and emotions of the recipient? Or can we go further and say that baptism is supernatural in its operation, a material thing directly used by the Holy Spirit to accomplish spiritual ends? And if we see a supernatural efficacy, is it in any sense dependent upon the mind and emotions of those who are baptised, or are we at liberty to say that baptism has its effect irrespective of psychological considerations altogether? Is it possible, in fact, to find a middle way of understanding, in which the crude naturalism of a purely psychological explanation will be avoided, without relapse into the crass supernaturalism which is the opposite extreme?

These are all modern questions, but they are the questions which have always been to the fore when the theology of the sacraments has been under consideration. They were the fundamental questions with which the theologians of the sixteenth century grappled, ensuing and upon which they came into inevitable and violent conflict. The answers given in the Reformation age fell roughly into three groups, according to the alternatives already suggested in the previous paragraph. The Anabaptists were the naturalists: in so far as baptism accomplished anything at all, it did so only on psychological lines. The Romanists were the supernaturalists: the efficacy of baptism was the efficacy of the Holy Spirit working through the material element by means which were purely miraculous and in the last resort inexplicable. The Reformers attempted to work out the middle way, in which a true efficacy of the sacrament should be preserved and yet the fundamental evangelical doctrines safeguarded. In this present chapter it will be our task, first, to state with greater fulness what these opposing views were; second, to try to understand what exactly the Reformers themselves were after when they sought to establish a real working of the Spirit within the context of their general evangelical conception; and third, to make it as clear as possible on which side the sympathies of the Anglican Reformers lay as revealed in the formularies and writings of the period. In conclusion a word ought to be said about the value of the solutions propounded in contemporary sacramental debate.

1. The Romanist View

The Romanist understanding of the mode of the divine operation in
and through baptism was derived directly from the close relation-
ship between sign and grace clearly asserted by the Fathers and
indeed by the New Testament itself. In the Scripture baptism
and the grace of baptism had been brought into the closest possi-
ble connection: the application of the water carried with it,
as it were, the remission of sins and the outpouring of the
Holy Ghost. There were, of course, qualifications to the appar-
ently very close interconnection, and these we must notice in
order to prevent misunderstanding. The New Testament never
dogmatised upon the nature of the relationship of sign and grace.
It stated the facts, setting the sacrament and the spiritual gifts
associated with it side by side. It nowhere drew the deduction
that because the sign and the gifts were associated, the gifts
were necessarily given in and through the sign. Furthermore,
the New Testament brought the spiritual gifts into relationship
not only with the sacrament, but also with a prior repentance
and faith. The accounts of baptisms in Scripture are mostly the
accounts of the baptisms of adult converts, who had made at
least a profession of faith. If these adult converts were the
recipients of spiritual gifts in baptism, they were so not merely
because their bodies were washed in the baptismal waters, but
because their souls were already looking in faith to Jesus Christ.
Again, the New Testament maintained a true freedom of the Holy
Ghost in the distribution of spiritual gifts. The Gospel spoke
of the Spirit doing his work like the wind which bloweth where
it listeth (John 3), and in many cases the gifts of the Spirit
preceded the administration of the outward sign. Thus Cornelius
received baptism because he had already enjoyed the baptismal
grace, not in order that he might enter into that grace (See
MacDonald pp. 178 f.). A further observation might be made, that
in the New Testament the grace of baptism manifest itself in
unmistakable ways and was always recognisable. The very open-
ess of the work of the Spirit prevented the development of theo-
ries of an automatic and ex opere operato efficacy, for such
theories can only flourish when the presumed effects are claimed
to be exempt from objective or pragmatic tests (Ibid.).

The Fathers took over from Scripture the basic thought of a
close interrelatedness between sacrament and grace. Indeed, as
the Reformers frequently observed (Cf. Cooper's Apology of the Pte.
Mass p. 203), they habitually identified the outward sign and the
inward grace which was signified. Thus the term regeneration
came to be used as a synonym of baptism (Cf. Wall), a usage which
may be noted in the Latin of the Anglican Article on Original
Sin (9). For the most part the Fathers do not seem to have en-
quired too closely into the nature of the relationship between
sign and grace: it was a fact in the case of those who were
truly converted, but in adults at any rate faith continued to
be regarded as an indispensable qualification for the sacrament.
Certainly baptism could not be used as a means to dispense spirit-
ual graces to all and sundry, quite irrespective of their inward
disposition. On the other hand, those forces at work which
were shaping the conception of baptism as the 'efficacious, holy
medium of the Spirit' (Harnack H.D. 2 p. 142). For one thing the
visible manifestations of spiritual endowment had become rapidly
rarer, and finally ceased altogether, except in extraordinary
cases. This meant that the baptism with the Spirit had to be presumed, at any rate until the solid fruits of righteousness appeared. But what could be presumed equally well be presumed of all. The replacement of adult baptism by infant baptism accentuated the difficulty, for in infants not only could there be no manifestations of the operation of the Spirit, but there could not even be the profession of a personal faith. The most that could be said of infants was that they did not offer the active obstacle of unbelief but that being the case, there seemed to be no valid reason why they should not be counted the recipients of all the inward graces as well as of the outward sign. A final point is that the very closeness of the identification of sign and grace tended inevitably to produce a static conception of the connection existing between the two (Hastings E.R.E.Art. Bapt.). The Augustinian doctrine of predestination and election did little to stem the tide, for Augustine himself taught that a certain grace was conferred upon all the recipients of baptism, and he regarded the sacrament as the appointed medium for the conveying of irresistible grace to the elect (Beckmann p.76; cf. Mackinnon's Luther 2 pp.81-2). Hand in hand with the static relating of baptism and the baptismal grace went the circumscribing of the effects of the sacrament, which was necessary if antinomian tendencies were to be kept in check.

The static conception reached its full stature with the Scholastics. Important reservations were still made, and there were still important differences upon the nature of the relationship in actual operation. The reservations concerned adult baptism and the baptisms administered by heretics. In view of the necessity of faith and of a right belief, Lombard thought that a distinction ought still to be made between the sacrament itself and the thing signified by it. Some persons may receive the former without the latter, as is the case with those who are baptised in heresy or schism, and those who receive catholic baptism hypocritically and without a true faith. On the other hand, there were the traditional cases in which men received the thing signified without the sign, martyrs, for example, or true believers who died without ever having the opportunity of receiving the sacrament (Lomb.4 Dist.4 A).

Thomas made very similar reservations in the case of adult baptisms, making a further distinction between faith and sincerity. He considered first the necessity of faith, and in view of the powerful arguments in favour of such a necessity, the text in Mark 16, the enquiry made concerning faith, the necessity of intention, which implies faith, and the grievousness of the sin of unbelief, he was forced to the conclusion that in adults faith is an indispensable prerequisite (Thom.3 Qu.68,8). At the same time Thomas contended that baptism does convey character even when administered to those who have an ereticous faith, although in such cases it is not able to confer grace; and he made the further point, that no more need be asked than a right belief about the sacrament of baptism itself. Insincerity constituted a far more serious and definite obstacle to baptismal grace (Ibid. Qu.69,9). Thomas considered carefully the objections which might
be brought against this view: the text Galatians 3.27, the fact that it is the power of God which operates in baptism, and the further fact that more serious sins than insincerity are cleansed and purged by the sacrament. But he thought the counterarguments sufficiently strong to warrant the belief that insincerity constitutes an obstacle to the work of the Holy Ghost: the text Wisdom 1.5; the need for intention, faith and devotion, which cannot be present where there is insincerity; the fact that it is not the purpose of baptism to change the heart by an act of divine omnipotence; and finally the fact that insincerity, being a clinging to sin, carries within itself all sins.

A further question which Thomas raised was whether baptism had its effect or not when the insincerity ceased (Ibid.10). The answer given is extremely important for our present purpose, for it helps to make clear what was Thomas' conception of the mode of God's working through the sacrament. Thomas considered the various reasons which might be alleged in favour of the negative. First, life cannot spring from death. Second, the grace has already been hindered by the previous insincerity. Third, baptism has no power to deal with post-baptismal sins. Thomas himself, however, set against these considerations the decisive dictum of Augustine, that when insincerity ceases, 'then doth baptism begin to have its salutary effect'. He explained and justified this teaching as follows. The insincerity of the recipient had dammed up the grace of God and prevented its inflowing into the soul, but it had not been able to prevent the creation of a form (the baptismal character). Into this form the baptismal grace could flow without any fresh administration of the sacrament once the bar or obstacle of insincerity had been removed. This explanation makes it abundantly plain that even in respect of the reservations the thinking of Thomas was always in static rather than dynamic terms. In every case the grace of God was poured out, although in some cases an obstacle prevented its flowing in. The removal of the obstacle meant an automatic fulfilment of the work of baptism, which had already been partially done by the creation of the form. In other words baptism and the grace of baptism always went together, being separated only when some insuperable obstacle was opposed to the grace. In fairness to Thomas it must be granted that this was not merely a matter of abstract theological formulation, but an attempt to translate into the terms of a sacramentalist theology the concrete facts of spiritual experience. If criticism is to be offered, it must be directed against the unfortunate quasi-physical concepts, which turned the attention away from the spiritual realities, and fostered erroneous and superstitious ideas with regard to the grace and efficacy of the sacrament.

Further light is shed upon Thomas' teaching by his discussion of the case of infants (Ibid.6). Infants, he contended, were not in a position to put any obstacle in the way of the divine grace. They could not lack faith, for faith was not in any case to be expected of them. They could not be insincere, for they had not yet attained to self-conscious life, which alone made
sincerity or insincerity possible. Infants were in fact passive and neutral, and as such they formed excellent subjects for the efficacious working of the Spirit. Not perhaps very logically Thomas still insisted upon the necessity of believing sponsors. Only the children of Christians could thus receive the grace which came in and through baptism. But so long as proper sponsors were available, the children themselves could do nothing to hinder the sacrament's work, and in all cases baptism might be said to accomplish those necessary if limited effects which gave infants a start in the Christian life. The doctrine had one very real advantage: it preserved the supremacy of the grace and activity of God. But it also had serious disadvantages. It made the spiritual operation completely automatic: so much grace was contained as it were in the sacrament, and accomplished so much work except where an obstacle withstood it. This static relating of sign and grace meant in practice the placing of the divine grace in the hands of the church which controlled the sign and its administration, with the result that the priests were endowed quite literally with the powers of eternal life and eternal death. But with all the desire to exalt the sacrament, the final result was to degrade it, for amongst the ignorant and superstitious, who understood neither the meaning of baptism nor the true nature of its working, the ordinance of Christ quickly came to be thought of as little more than an act of spiritual magic or a kind of superior charm.

The Scholastics made reservations in the case of heretics and adults who lacked faith or sincerity, but they also differed widely in their opinions concerning the nature of the inter-relatedness of sign and grace. They were of course agreed as to the main fact, that sacrament and grace were statically united, but they were not agreed in their explanations of the fact i.e. of the mechanism of the union. The presuppositions common to all were two: first, that the water of baptism did carry with it spiritual power; and second, that that power derived ultimately from God, by the divine institution, and to that extent by the congregation of believers. But in what way could the water be said to carry with it spiritual grace? Two main theories were put forward. The first and the more attractive was that the power actually lay in the water itself, by virtue of its application in the Triune name. The water which washed the body was also the water which cleansed the pollutions of sin from the soul. Great names could be cited in favour of this theory: Augustine himself, who had said that the water touched the body and washed the heart, and Beda, who held that God had given to the baptismal water a regenerative power. Thomas himself inclined to this view, for he insisted that the sacrament is a physical and not merely a moral cause of grace (See Bellarmine De La S.T.B. pp. 344-6). The explanation found many adherents in the sixteenth century. Apart from Bellarmine we may mention Henry VIII, who thought that 'the force of spiritual life had been infused into the corporal element' (Assertio p. 100), and Watson, who contended that the sacrament effected what it signified in the strictest grammatical sense i.e. it literally cleansed the soul (Strype's Cheke pp. 101 f.).

The other main theory may be mentioned more briefly. It
was that the sacrament itself does not cleanse but that God himself, invariably present in the sacrament, accomplished the spiritual and inward work. The relationship was still static, for the presence and the work of God could be guaranteed, but the more blatant identification of the supernatural grace with the material element was avoided. **Baptism was the outward ceremony which confirmed the recipient in the possession of spiritual graces on the full authority of the author and giver of the graces, God himself.** In all but the unbelieving and the insincere God himself did actually confer the gifts when the sacrament was administered, but where an obstacle was opposed the gifts were received only formally, being of no more value than a cheque which there is neither the confidence nor the willingness to cash, and upon which payment is rightly and properly withheld (Cf. Be la S. T. B. pp. 344-6).

Two points call for comment. First, we must remember that during the Scholastic period an ex opere operato view of the sacraments was not yet binding upon the church, even in the case of the baptism of infants. Goode could bring forward many passages in which the matter was left open, and no official pronouncements prior to Council of Vienne in 1311 (Goode E. B. I. p. 32). There can be no doubt, however, that the trend of mediaeval thought was in that direction, and by the sixteenth century ex opere operato views, and the more materialistic explanation of the mechanism of the sacrament had gained a firm hold. Second, the nominalists helped to keep the opposition to more rigid automatic views alive by stressing the supremacy of the divine will in the dispensing of sacramental grace. **Baptism was an instrument of purification and regeneration, but only because God had chosen to make it such, and willed to use it as such. This emphasis upon the divine choice contributed at a later date to the Reformed breaking of the static conception of the relationship between sign and grace, and to the replacing of it by a more dynamic conception, in which God retained the initiative, uniting baptism and the effectual grace of baptism in free creative acts (See Mackinnon's Luther 2 pp. 31 f.).**

The Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith constituted the first challenge to sacramentalist teaching, and it provoked a vigorous reaction amongst the sixteenth century traditionalists. Henry VIII was one of those who entered the lists against Luther. He conceded that there ought to be faith in the Christian, but he did not think that a certain and indubitable faith could be exacted of all those who received the sacraments, and against faith he balanced the sacraments, which in the long run were of the greater account. "Faith is not sufficient without the sacrament", he wrote, "nor the sacrament without faith. I think it more safe to allow something to the sacrament than, like Luther, to attribute so much to faith as to leave neither grace, nor the efficacy of a sign, to the sacrament" (Assertio pp. 103-4). Cajetan made exactly the same complaint against the new teaching. Faith was necessary of course, but only as a preparatory disposition. To go further and to subordinate the whole efficaciousness of the sacrament to faith was a serious
and pernicious error (Cristiani's Luther p.60). The Bull Exsurge Domine saw in the Lutheran doctrine a direct challenge to the authority of the sacraments of the new law, condemning the proposition that these sacraments 'do not give grace of justification to those who place no obstacle in the way' (Kidd D.C.R. p.76). To what extremes the opposition went is shown by the case of George Carpenter of Emerich, who according to Foxe was condemned at Munich for not believing 'that the very element of the water itself in baptism doth give grace' (Foxe 4 p.374).

The theologians of Trent added little to the Scholastic discussions and they made no attempt to fasten upon the Church a particular theory of operation. What they did do was to state the traditional position clearly, and to mark it off by anathemas from all erroneous opinions. Faith and repentance were seen to be necessary in the case of adults: 'Faith also is most necessary. It is requisite that each person should repent him of his past transgressions' (Cat.T.2,2 Qu.39). Insincerity was still considered to be an obstacle to the infusion of divine grace; 'By him who purposes to walk according to the flesh and not according to the Spirit, baptism is received in vain and is of no avail' (Ibid.). But the sacrament still had its effect ex opere operato, as is seen in the condemnation of the various Protestant positions: first, the view that 'the sacraments were instituted for the sake of nourishing faith alone' (C.& D.Sess. 7 Bapt.Can.5; second, the opinion that the sacraments of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify, or that they do not confer that grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto' (Ibid.Can.6); third, the denial that 'grace, as far as God's part is concerned, is given through the said sacraments always, and to all men' (Ibid.Can.7); and fourth, the doctrine, 'that by the said sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred through the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise suffices for the obtaining of grace' (Ibid.Can.8).

It will be abundantly clear from the anathemas that the Roman church committed itself at Trent to a thoroughgoing doctrine of ex opere operato efficacy, even though a certain liberty of speculation remained with regard to the precise mechanism of operation. The grace of God and the divinely instituted sign were indissolubly united the one with the other. The union was by divine appointment, and could not be affected by the disposition of the recipient. The material and spiritual elements in the sacrament were so merged that the presence of the one meant necessarily the presence of the other. Even where the unbelief or insincerity of the subject did temporarily or permanently withstand the inward grace, the grace was still there, making the spiritual impress upon the soul, and ready to flow in as soon as the obstacle was removed. The theory that the spiritual power was miraculously enclosed within the material element, by virtue of the divine institution and the baptismal word, obviously formed the most suitable and attractive explanation of the mechanism of the union. Where that theory predominated, the static conception of the union of sign and grace developed to its fullest
extent, enslaving the life and doctrine of the church beneath the sacramentalist yoke.

2. The Protestant Teaching

The pre-Reformation period had not been lacking in those who had opposed the automatic conceptions of sacramental efficacy. Wycliffe and his disciples in particular had declared in favour of a more spiritual understanding, distinguishing carefully between the outward and the inward washing, and attributing the inward work entirely to the Holy Spirit. 'The purging of the Holy Ghost', Wycliffe maintained, 'must God himself do' (Arnold 2 p.4). Some of these early Reformers, Brute for example, stressed the importance of faith in the accomplishment of this inward work. The believer had forgiveness, the work of baptism, even apart from the outward sacrament, the sign, for faith was 'the spiritual water, with which were the faithful patriarchs baptised before the Law' (Foxe 3 p.168). These theories never succeeded in breaking through the front of Scholastic sacramentalism, but they formed the spear-head of the Protestant attack.

It was Luther who accomplished the decisive break-through, and he did it by rethinking the doctrine of baptism in the light of his cardinal doctrine of justification by faith. It may be granted at once that Luther himself often made use of expressions which reflected or suggested an ex opere operato conception. He was kept from a thoroughgoing sacramentalism, however, by his central teaching that it is faith which justifies and not legal or even sacramental works. Without faith there could be the outward rite, but no inward baptism of the Spirit. This did not mean that Luther denied the true objectivity of the grace and operation of God, as Brute perhaps tended to do (See W.A.36, 1 p.218). It did mean that faith is necessary for the reception of the divine grace, so necessary that without it baptism can be of no avail (Ibid. 2 p.216). Faith fulfilled that which the sacrament signified (Ibid. 6 p.532), opening the individual soul to the grace of God (Hamel p.54), enabling the sacrament to have its effects (W.A.2 p.315). Luther resisted strongly the attempt to reduce salvation to a sacramentalist and in the long run naturalistic process. Salvation was an intensely personal matter, the divine offer, its objective side, the human response, its subjective. The sacrament represented the divine offer, and it derived its efficacy from God himself: but the possibility of the sacrament doing its work depended upon the human response. The sacrament thus became a duality. For the unbeliever it was an outward and to a large extent a meaningless sign, a testimony to the divine grace which availed to condemnation rather than to life. For believers, however, this outward and meaningful sign was the grace and power of God to salvation, applied to the soul by the Holy Ghost.

A further point in Luther's understanding must be emphasised. The power of the sacrament for the believer lay not in the element but in the word. Without the word the water and the washing in
water were useless because they were without meaning. The word gave to the element and the outward act an inward and spiritual signification, and by that signification baptism had its effect upon those who received it in faith (Wernle p. 38). It was because the unbelieving could not perceive the signification that for them the sacrament remained only an outward rite which had no inward power. The necessity of faith and the necessity of the word were the two points which underlay the repudiation in Lutheran Confessional statements of ex opere opus theories of sacramental grace (Augsburg 13). Luther and his followers could accept neither the Thomistic explanation, which attributed the power of baptism to the water rather than to the word, nor the Scotist, which seemed to divorce the will and power of God too harshly from both word and water (Articles of Schmalkald: Von der Taufe). 12

It is clear that the aim of Luther was to hold the balance evenly between the divine and human elements in the sacrament, and the corresponding objective and subjective aspects. In Switzerland Protestant extremists tended to destroy the balance on the one side as the Romanists had destroyed it on the other. With the Romanists the human element had been almost completely submerged by the divine, and the subjective aspect by the objective. Zwingli attacked this erroneous conception with such vigour that he came near to a complete separation of the outward rite of baptism from the inward baptism of the Holy Ghost. Many infants who received baptism, he contended, experience nothing but the purely physical sensation of shrinking from the water (C.R. 2 p. 203). The outward baptism of water was frequently given where the inward baptism of the Spirit and faith were lacking (Ibid. 4 p. 223). Only God could give this inward baptism, which was absolutely necessary to salvation, and God acted with complete freedom and sovereignty, distributing to every man according to his own will (Ibid. 2 p. 203). It may very well be that in his anxiety to oppose the one error Zwingli came nearer to the opposite extreme than he himself would have desired, but it would be a gross exaggeration to say that he categorically denied any interconnection between the outward and the inward baptisms. What he did deny was the wrong static interconnection held and taught by the Scholastics and their successors. The sacrament itself might very well be said to confer grace, however where faith existed, or where there had been an antecedent operation of the Holy Spirit.

The Anabaptists carried the teaching of Zwingli a stage further and completed the separation between sign and grace. Zwingli himself accused the Anabaptists of confusing the inward and the outward baptisms, on the ground that they attempted to make the two simultaneous (Ibid. 4 p. 620), but the evidence is fairly conclusive that they regarded the outward rite as a sign only, and a sign rather of the human response than of the divine offer. It is true, of course, that in respect of time they did try to bring the sign into closer relationship with the thing signified, but it is also true that for the most part they had ceased to regard the sign as in any sense, except the purely psychological, a means of grace. Everything was attributed by them to
the inward baptism, to the blood of Christ (B.R.N.2 p.280), and to faith (Muralt p.45). The outward rite marked the formal entry into forgiveness and the new life, by profession of repentance and faith, but not even instrumentally did it help to effect that entry.

It was the work of Bucer and Calvin to purge the Zwinglian doctrine of its extremist tendencies, and to establish that more balanced view which Luther himself had attempted to propagate. The Reformed school could not be entirely satisfied with Luther's own formulation of baptismal doctrine, for the Lutherans still seemed, as Peter Martyr put it, 'to affirm more of the sacrament than was firi (Strype's Cramer 3 p.162). The difference between Lutheran statements and those of the Romanists was not always an easy one to discover, although the account of baptism was not perhaps so obviously unsatisfactory as that of the supper. Bucer, of course, had always the practical aim of bringing together the Reformed and Lutheran parties by the adoption of an all-comprehensive formula. He rejected outright the Anabaptist extreme that the sacraments are no more than 'naked and bare signs' (Lang: Evang. Quart. 1,2 pp.159 f.). He allowed that the covenantal signs might very properly be described as instruments of grace. He was careful, however, to avoid the Romanist error which made the sacraments automatic instruments. They were not 'such instruments or channels of grace as that they bring grace with whatever mind or faith you partake of them' (See Goode E.B.I p.167). The instrumental efficacy was suspended by Bucer upon two interrelated facts: the faith of the recipients, and the divine election (Ibid.p.169). Thus the sovereignty of God and the inwardness of religion were maintained, but without any undue depreciation of the divinely appointed means of grace, or over-harsh separation of sign and thing signified.

Calvin adopted a position very similar to that of Bucer, but he had the advantage that he was not always consciously striving to reconcile opposing groups. Three fundamental principles underly Calvin's understanding: first, that the sacraments are appointed means of grace; second, that repentance and faith, although they need not precede the administration in point of time, are nevertheless essential to their proper use (Tracts 2 p.227 & p.236; Niemeyer p.241); and third, that the efficacy of the sign depends ultimately upon the divine election (Beckmann p.96). The basic error of the Romanists was 'the enclosing of the grace and virtue of the Spirit by the external sign' (Tracts 2 p.574), an error which destroyed the true relationship between grace and sacrament, and caused the Papists to pass by Christ, and to fix their confidence of salvation on the elements' (Ibid.p.340). The endeavour of Calvin was to find the balance between the extreme which looked for a proper virtue in the sacraments themselves (Tracts 2 p.214) and the opposite extreme which denied that the sacraments could confer grace at all, making of them only psychological aids to faith (See Beckmann p.57). The truth about baptism as he saw it was this: that baptism did have a real spiritual effect as it was used by the Holy Spirit and received or understood in faith.
The virtue did not lie in the sacrament itself, but in the sovereign and creative act of God according to the election of grace.

The distinction between the teaching of Calvin and that of the Scholastics is in many respects a fine one, for both Calvin and the Scholastics were seeking to understand and to express what was ultimately the same truth of sacramental efficacy. It might almost be claimed that Calvin's doctrine of the sacrament was Scholasticism purged of static and quasi-material notions. Such a claim need occasion us no surprise, for Calvin and the Scholastics started from the same place, the New Testament, and worked upon the same human experience. It must not be forgotten, however, that a Scholasticism purged of static and quasi-material conceptions is no longer Scholasticism in any specific sense, for these were the characteristics of the Scholastic understanding and formulation. The identity in fundamental truth must not blind us to the fact that there was a vast and important difference in apprehension and expression of the truth. In the place of the static conception of the sacramental union Calvin set a free and dynamic. Sign and grace were no longer identified or conjoined in the material and static sense, but they were united in action, by the free and creative miracle of the Holy Spirit applying the sign to this or that believing soul (Niesel p.212). The foundation remained the same, but the edifice of Scholastic formulation was overthrown, and a new structure erected.

The similarities and the differences between the Scholastics and Calvin are of sufficient importance to warrant a rather more detailed examination. Thus Calvin and the Scholastics had this in common: that finally, God himself is the sole author of grace. The Scholastics deduced from this truth that God has willed once and for all to mediate grace through the sacraments which he himself has instituted and appointed. Calvin could agree that God does will to mediate grace through the sacraments, but he could not agree that he does so in such a way as would prejudice the freedom and the sovereignty of the Spirit. 'When God uses the instrumentality of the sacrament', he claimed, 'he neither infuses his own virtue into them, nor derogates in any respect from the effectual working of his Spirit' (Tracts 2 p.214).

God did not will to give grace to all and sundry, but to this man and that man, according to the divine election. The sacraments were the means, but the Spirit remained the 'internal Master' (Inst. 4.14.9).

Again, Calvin and the Scholastics could agree that faith and repentance were in some sense indispensable to the reception of sacramental grace. The Scholastics, however, conceived of repentance and faith narrowly and negatively, as the absence of an obstacle to the grace contained with the sign. Even the unbelieving and the insincere did receive some benefit from the administration of the sacrament, for an impress was made upon the soul, and a form created into which the grace could pour once the obstacles were broken down. Calvin, however, attributed far more to repentance and faith, for he regarded them as
themselves a work of God (Tracts 2 p. 343) and thus of positive value. The absence of repentance and faith meant the absence of the energising and creative work of the Spirit, and the consequent reduction of the sacrament to an outward sign without inward or spiritual grace. Baptism was one thing for one man and another for another, not in its effects only but also in itself.

We may notice at this point a further point of similarity and of difference. Calvin and the Scholastics could agree that the sacrament had a different meaning and effect according to the presence or absence of sincerity and faith. But they conceived of the difference in a totally different way. For the Scholastics the difference was this: the believer received both grace and character, the unbeliever character alone. The grace was available to all without distinction, but in the latter case unbelief or insincerity denied it access. Now Calvin could agree that in a sense an offer of grace is made to all those who receive the sign. He could also agree that in some cases unbelieving recipients might do receive at least the external benefit of external membership of the visible church. Calvin could go further and grant that those who received in unbelief might at a later date truly repent, and thus enter into the full grace and inward benefit of the sacrament. His dynamic conception of the sacramental union forbade him to connect the sign and the grace necessarily in respect of place or time. He pointed to the example of Simon Magus in Acts, and asked: "What if he had repented at Peter's admonition, would not the grace of baptism have resumed its place?" (Tracts 2 p. 342)

In this way Calvin could safeguard the objectivity of the sacramental grace and the sacramental offer, not suspending it entirely upon the inward disposition of those who received. 'The promises', he said, 'are to all, but the ratification of them is the gift of the Spirit' (Ibid.). All that could be granted, and yet Calvin could still reject entirely the Scholastic interpretation.

He did so because he set aside the Scholastic conception of grace as a kind of spiritual substance, and replaced it by a direct relating of grace to Christ himself and the Gospel of Christ (Niesel p. 214). The grace which was offered to men in the sacrament was not a kind of dose of spiritual medicine, but the person and the work of Christ, the promises of the Gospel (Tracts 2 p. 35). Thus the sacrament had for Calvin the same purpose as the word, the presentation of Christ and of the salvation which is to be found in Christ. In the sacrament as in the word, Christ was offered indiscriminately to all. The unbeliever, however, perceived Christ neither in word or sacrament. He might then receive certain external benefits from his contact with them, but he missed the inward grace; and indeed, the signs remained as a permanent testimony to his hardness and unbelief. With the believer the case was quite different, for receiving the signs he also knew and received Christ himself, the inward grace. The perception was partly psychological in nature, but it was to be attributed ultimately to the miraculous inward operation of the Holy Spirit. In so far as a distinction could be drawn between word and sacrament it was this, that
normally it was the function of the word to evoke faith and the function of the sacrament to confirm and strengthen it. Where infants were baptised, however, baptism could be used as a most powerful adjunct of the word in the evoking of faith, and in any case the word itself, as we have seen, formed an integral and indispensable part of the sacrament.

It will be seen, then, that although Calvin shared with the Scholastics the basic truths which underlie all sacramental theology, he rejected outright the quasi-material conceptions of grace and of its union with the outward sign which had perverted the mediaeval understanding and introduced so much error and superstition into the church. Avoiding carefully any depreciation of the sacraments and their work, Calvin found his way back to an evangelical understanding which was in harmony both with the teaching of Scripture and also with the facts of true spiritual experience. His expositions were not perhaps clear at every point, for who can fully expound the mysterious and miraculous operation of the Spirit? But if many things still remained to be explained, Calvin did at least indicate the lines along which a true and Scriptural sacramentalism may be retained without doing violence either to reason or to true religion, and without jeopardising the deep and basic truths of the evangelical understanding.

The presentation of Calvin's doctrine varied to some extent amongst his disciples, but not in any important particular. Beza stressed the two fundamental points in the master's teaching: the fact that administration and effect need not be simultaneous, and the indispensability of repentance and faith to true reception. The first point Beza argued from Scripture the divine sovereignty and from the examples in Scripture: 'It is not convenient to restrain the sacramentes to the same instant that they be ministred, but the fruit shall be shewed to the elect when it pleaseth God' (B.P.S.34); 'The effect of baptism begins from that moment in which faith begins, faith sometimes preceding, as in the case of Cornelius, sometimes following after, as in those baptised in infancy' (Q.et R.C. III). As regards the second point, Beza made the common distinction between the unbelieving who received the bare sign, and the repentant and believing who received both sign and effect: 'The syne is received by a corporall and naturall maner, as well of the faithfull as of the unfaithfull, but to divers ends and purposes. For the faithfull receyving the syne and the thing signified with the syne, perceive augmentation and increase of faith: the unfaithfull receive the bare syne to condemnation' (B.P.S.46). The reason why the unbelieving could not receive the effects or grace of the sacrament was the simple one that Christ himself is the thing signified, and Christ can be received only by faith: 'He that bringeth not true faith cannot receive Jesus Christ, but he that bringeth faith receiveth him trulie and effectually, but spiritually by faith' (Ibid.). Amongst the later writers we may mention Heidegger and Walaus, who attacked ex opere operato conceptions of all kinds (Heid.25,42) and the authors of the Leidener
Synopsis, who rejected the identification in time of the external sacrament and the inward effect (44,29). The lesson of Calvin, that there is a real sacramental union of sign and grace, but that that union must be understood dynamically and not statically, is not in every respect an easy one to learn, but there can be little doubt that the successors of Calvin in the Reformed school had thoroughly mastered it.

3. The Position in England

As is only to be expected, the Anglican writings, especially those which belong to the earlier stages of the Reformation, betray signs of conflicting and contradictory conceptions of the efficacy and operation of the sacrament. The position of those who remained loyal to traditional teaching is clear enough. It had been stated briefly and forcibly by Henry himself in the Assertio, and writers and disputants like Fisher, More, Gardiner and Watson gave to it equally lucid and forceful expression. Traces of the Romanist view may be found in the Henrician formularies, especially in the conservative King's Book, which spoke of the real effect and virtue of baptism both in believing adults and in infants. Even the King's Book, however, qualified this blunt assertion in a Lutheran direction, for the power of baptism was not found in the water, but in the direct operation of God through the word: 'The sacrament hath its effect... by virtue and force of the working of Almighty God and the promise annexed and conjoined unto the same' (p.41). God himself and the word of God were thus exalted above the external element and sign. In this respect the King's Book maintained some of the ground which had been won in the Ten Articles, which had insisted strongly upon the need for a true repentance and faith in adults, and had also traced back the remission and grace conferred to God himself.

The Prayer Books (Baptismal Offices and Catechism) and the Article itself are sometimes cited as evidence that even the more earnest Anglican Reformers never abandoned a position which essentially if not in every point of detail was that of the traditional theology. Against this it is sometimes pleaded that the language of devotion ought not to be used to establish doctrinal positions. There is of course something in such a plea, but the office and the Catechism belong together, and the Catechism certainly ought to be considered as a statement of doctrine. It ought to be noticed, however, that the Offices and Catechism do not venture to do more than describe or enumerate the effects: they say nothing whatever about the way in which those effects are achieved, the mode of efficacy. That is a most important point, for it means that strict ex opere operato views or a static conception of the relationship between sign and grace cannot properly be deduced from the categorical statements with regard to the effects, statements for which there are in any case parallels in the Lutheran and even in the Reformed orders and catechisms. A further point is that the statements themselves may be interpreted in several different ways: sacramentally, hypothetically, and evangelistically. Within the framework of
of the whole theology of the Anglican Reformers, and the full sequence, Baptism, Catechism and Confirmation, non-literal interpretations of this kind may be convincingly argued. Even those who plead for a literal regeneration of all baptised infants usually take good care to empty the phrase regeneration of much of its New Testament meaning. These points were officially recognised in the famous Gorham Judgment, which laid it down once and for all that ex opere operato views of baptismal regenerations are not by any means incumbent upon those who use the Anglican Offices (See Boultbee p.237).

The case with the Article is different, for the Article is avowedly a doctrinal statement, and its description of baptism as an instrument for engrafting into Christ implies some doctrine of baptismal efficacy. Can it be said with truth that that doctrine is of the non-Reformed type? Quite a number of commentators think so. Stone does not build too much upon the actual description, but he thinks that the opening sentence deliberately excludes the Sacramentarian interpretation. Smithen goes further, and finds the Article inconsistent with the general Evangelicalism of the confession as a whole. He evidently takes it that the Article does sanction some kind of ex opere operato teaching (Smithen p.209). The words 'rightly' and 'instrument' are perhaps the key-words in the statement, and they have given rise to considerable and contentious disputation.

On the one side it is urged that 'rightly' means no more than correctly i.e. with the 'right' matter and formula (McLear and Williams on Art.27), while 'instrument' denotes the instrumental cause, as in the writings of Thomas More and other traditionalists (Ibid.). On the other side it is pointed out that the Latin word for 'rightly' is 'recte' and not 'rite', which implies a right disposition as well as a correct administration (Griffith Thomas on Art.27), while the term 'instrument' 'gives the idea of 'a legal instrument', 'a deed of conveyance', rather than an instrumental cause in the stricter sense (Ibid.).

In the face of so serious divergences it is too much to be asked to settle the meaning to the satisfaction of all parties, but a few significant points may be noted. First, the view which is rejected in the opening sentence is Anabaptist rather than Zwinglian, and it is not excluded as false, but stated to be inadequate, only a part of the whole truth. Second, the Article hardly does more than commit itself to the basic Lutheran and Reformed tenet, that the sacrament is in some sense a means as well as a sign of grace. Third, the term instrument was used not only by Romanists, but also by the soundest of Reformers. Did not Calvin himself speak of the 'instrumentality of the sacraments' (Tracts 2 p.214), and of the Lord being pleased to exert his energy by his instruments? (Ibid. p.84). Fourth, the Article must be taken in conjunction with the more general sacramental Articles (25 and 26), and these definitely rejected any rigid identification of sign and grace. Article 25 made the thoroughly Reformed distinction between worthy receiving (which had a corresponding 'wholesome effect or operation'), and unworthy receiving (which 'purchased damnation').
Article 26 the unworthiness of the minister was stated not to be able to hinder the effect 'in such as by faith and rightly (here 'rite') do receive the sacraments ministered unto them'. Fifth, the language of the Article approximates so closely to that used in the other Reformed Confessions that there can be no doubt that it reflected a similar view. This is tacitly admitted by Stone when in a weak analysis of the 'confused' and 'inconsistent' Reformed views he finds phrases of a more satisfactory kind in the Reformed Confessions (Stone p.58). We may perhaps conclude not unfairly that only an unhistorical criticism will find in the confessional teaching clear ex opere operato views or a rigid and static inter-relating of the sacrament and the sacramental grace.

The Prayer Books and Articles have been considered in the first group because so often commentators have found in them either thoroughgoing Romanist conceptions or at least traces of the traditional teaching. That such interpretations have very little historical foundation we have already seen. It will now be our task to see to what extent the leading Anglican Reformers adopted Lutheran and Reformed views. Since these were the men who framed the Offices and Articles and first brought them into use, it may be argued quite fairly that their opinions represent what the formularies themselves were supposed to set forth and to teach: unless, of course, we take refuge in the evasion that accidentally, or perhaps even intentionally, the official statements left room for doctrines which the framers of them were seeking to destroy.

We find evidence of clear Lutheran views in many Anglican writings, especially of the Henrician period. The 1536 Articles had obviously been influenced by the Augsburg Confession, but more definite Lutheran opinions were expressed in other works, especially in the Book 'The Sum of Scripture' and in the writings of Tyndale and Frith. The identification of grace with the element of water was attacked by 'The Sum of Scripture', which taught plainly that 'there is no virtue in the water: the water taketh not away our sin' (Foxe 5 p.592). Frith urged the necessity of faith and sincerity to a true reception: 'The Spirit...and grace are not given to those who make feynd confession' (B.R. p.91). Tyndale sought to destroy the false confidence placed in the outward sign, and to turn men to the work of God and to faith, which alone could effect the inward and spiritual operation: 'The work of baptism, that outward washing, which is the visible sacrament or sign, justifieth us not. But God only justifieth us actively, as cause efficient or workman. God promises to justify whosoever is baptised to believe in Christ... Faith doth receive, and God doth give and impute to faith, and not to the washing' (Tynd.P.S.2 p.90). Tyndale attacked strongly the false notion that there was a spiritual power or presence of the Holy Spirit in the baptismal water: 'It is impossible that the water of the river should wash our hearts. And if any man allege Christ John 3rd chapter... and will therefore that the Holy Ghost be present in the water, and therefore the very deed or work
doth put away sin; then I will send him unto Paul... the Holy
Ghost accompanieth the preaching of faith, and with the word
of faith, entereth the heart and purgeth it!' (Tynd.P.S.1 pp.
423-4).

In addition to Tyndale and Frith many others advanced Lutheran
opinions of the efficacy of baptism during the early period of
the Anglican Reformation. Lambert suffered partly because he
could not agree that the sacraments 'of themselves give faith'
(Foxe 5 p.193). Latimer attacked the opinion which multitudes
held: 'that all baptised persons are necessarily regenerate,
and secure grace and the Holy Ghost at the moment they are
baptised' (In Ryle: Bishops and Clergy pp.110-111). Latimer
himself equated regeneration with hearing and believing the word
of God (Ibid.). Lancelot Ridley attributed the work of cleansing
inwardly, not to the water, but to Christ himself, who by his
word and his Spirit given to us in baptism, washes away our sins
(Goode E.B.I. p.192). Cranmer's Catechism stated the Lutheran
view fully and clearly: the water had not the power 'to work so
great things. It is not the water, but the almighty worde of
God...and faith, which receyveth God's word, and promise'
(p.190).

The swing over from Lutheran to more pronouncedly Reformed
views took place during the latter part of the reign of Edward.
Both the Lutheran and Reformed schools agreed, however, in the
rejecting of ex opere operato views and of the static conception
of the relationship between grace and sign. It is not always
possible to say which influence was predominant in some of the
Edwardian writings. One of the most definite statements is
to be found in the 'Reformatio Legum', which attacked the equat­
ing of the element and the effect, and ridiculed those who
regarded baptism 'with so much awe and wonder as to believe that
the Holy Spirit emerges from that external element itself,
and that his influence, power and virtue, by which we are
new created...swim in the very waters of baptism' (Cardwell
p.18). Dean Turner set the two views, the Romanist and
the Protestant, distinctly over against each other in his famous
comparison of the New Learning (i.e. Romanism) with the Old (i.e.
historic Christianity). The Romanist teaching was 'that it is
enough and sufficient to receive the sacraments effectually and
with fruit, to have no stop nor let of deadly sin;' the
Evangelical: 'Faith is necessary to be had in him that receiv­
eth the sacrament with fruit' (The Old Learning and the New
Of the Sacraments Fol.A 4). Becon too attacked the attribut­
ing of the effects to the sign: 'Baptism itself bringeth not
grace, but doth testify unto the congregation, that he which
is baptised hath already received grace and the Holy Spirit'
(Bec.P.S.2 p.220). The Marian Confessors 'all stood firm'
in the denial of any ex opere operato efficacy. Thus Bungey
denied that 'by baptism sins be washed away' (Foxe 7 p.399), and
Smith asked Bonner in what sense we were supposed to regard the
sacrament as a cause of salvation: 'Are we saved by baptism or
by Christ?' When Bonner replied 'By both', Smith commented
cautiously: 'Then the water died for our sins' (Ibid.p.352).
Underlying Smith's protest was the overriding anxiety not to allow the sacrament to be exalted at the expense of Christ.

Both the Lutheran and the Reformed schools rejected the Romanist understanding, and both agreed in insisting upon the indispensability of faith to true reception. Many writers could be quoted. Bradford made the simple affirmation: 'Baptism requireth faith' (Brad. P. S. I p. 121). Grindal granted that the water was powerful 'to the faithful receiver' (Grind. P. S. p. 62). Coverdale stressed the uselessness and the danger of reception without faith: 'To use the sacraments without faith profiteth not, but rather hurteth' (Cov. P. S. p. 411). Hooper referred to examples such as Simon Magus: 'An hypocrite or infidel may receive the external sign of baptism, and yet be no Christian nothing the rather, as Simon Magus and others' (Hoop. P. S. I p. 76). Nowell made a sharp distinction between reception in faith and reception without faith (Now. P. S. p. 87). Bullinger protested against the including of the grace within the element, and attributed the spiritual effects to the free work of God and to faith (Bull. P. S. I p. 251). This common demand for faith naturally led the Anglican Reformers to a dynamic conception of baptismal efficacy: the sacrament was a means of grace truly used of the Holy Spirit where God so chose and where there was the response of repentance and faith. Cranmer seemed to have this conception at the back of his mind when he distinguished between the outward water and the inward Spirit, and found the true efficacy of baptism not in the element but in the believing recipients: 'God worketh wonderfully by his omnipotent power in the true receivers, not in the outward visible signs' (Cran. P. S. I p. 341). Ridley approached the question of efficacy in the same way. He found a twofold washing: 'the outward by water, the inward by the Holy Ghost'. All received the outward washing, but only the truly penitent and believing the inward (Rid. P. S. p. 275).

During the later Elizabethan period Rogers in his Commentary on the Articles stated a fully developed Calvinistic doctrine. He denounced the Papist error, that 'the sacraments give grace ex opere operato, and bring faith ex opere operato'. There was of course a general offer of God, but only the believers received the proffered gifts: 'Salvation is promised to such as are baptised, yet not simply in respect of their baptism, but if they do believe' (P. S. 267). Rogers protested strongly against the attempt to make the sign and the effects simultaneous in time: 'Some have faith afore they receive any of the sacraments ... some neither afore, nor at the instant, nor yet afterward (Ibid. p. 249). There can be no question that Rogers understood the efficacious operation of the sacrament dynamically rather than statically. Rogers, however, was in some respects an extremist and it might be asked whether the Elizabethan Anglicans as a whole shared his view, or whether in the search for a via media they were not already feeling their way back to semi-Romanist conceptions. The evidence points to the fact that Rogers was expressing the general understanding of his age. Jewel may be called in as a witness. He was concerned rather with the tying of the material element to the body of Christ in Eucharistic
doctrine, but he plainly rejected the **identifying** identification of the grace of God with the material sign, denying that 'the quickening grace could really and substantially be inclosed either in the one sacrament or in the other', and appealing to the Fathers in support of his contentions (Jew.P.S.1 p.781). The need for faith found plain expression in Jewel's writings:

'We say that the sacraments of Christ, without faith, do not once profit those that be alive' (Ibid.2 4 p.893); and since it was part of his plan to show that the Reformed teaching agreed both with Scripture and the Fathers, he again adduced Patristic evidence (Ibid.2 1106). Like Cranmer, Jewel seems to have seen a twofold sacramental operation, the outward washing in the material sign, the inward washing in the spiritual grace (Ibid.3 p.469). The two washings were freely and dynamically related, becoming one work in those who received truly and in faith. It is noticeable that in the detailed and acrimonious disputes between Whitgift and Cartwright the efficacy of the sacrament was never a point at issue, and Whitgift agreed with his opponent in rejecting ex opere operato views. The statement of the champion of Anglican orthodoxy seems to put the Elizabethan position beyond all doubt: 'It is a certain and true doctrine of all such as profess the gospel, that the outward signs of the sacrament do not contain in them grace, neither yet that the grace of God is of necessity tied unto them, but only that they be seals of God's promises, notes of Christ's covenant, testimonies and effectual signs of the grace of God' (Whit.P.S.3 p.382).

It may be granted, of course, that some Puritans did attack the retention of private baptism on the ground that it conformed to the popish tying of the grace of God to the outward element (2nd P. of a R.I.78). But this was obviously a debating point rather than a serious **extrinsic** objection to Anglican doctrine, as was also the complaint on similar grounds against the rubric that children being baptised and dying 'have all things necessary to their salvation, and be undoubtedly saved'. The Schedule to Langworth and Worley, in which the latter criticism was met, stated clearly that the book did not mean to affirm that the sacrament did of itself confer grace tanquam ex opere operato, but that by these words it only dissuaded from the opinion which the Papists had of their confirmation, **valued Bishoping** (Strype's Whitgift 1 p.257).

The lesser writers of the Elizabethan age repeated again and again the stock opinions and arguments of the great Continental and Anglican leaders. Cooper marked off the Protestant doctrine from the Romanist: 'Yet we do not attribute the operation hereof to the water or outward element, but to the might of God's Word and the power of the Spirit' (Serm. p.30). Alley compared the operation of the sacrament to that of the word, and saw a need of faith to receive either the one or the other: 'It may easily be proved that neither the preaching of the Gospel nor receiving of the sacrament, without faith, doth profit' (Praelections upon 1 Peter Fol.133). Prime asserted the sovereignty of God in election and his lordship over the
sacrament; 'God is not so bound that he must work with, or
cannot work without these means, by his Spirit, the salvation
of those whom he had chosen and predestinated to eternal life
before all worlds' (Treatise on the Sacraments B 1). Some sta-
ed the Reformed doctrine succinctly in a single sentence: We re-
ceive not the grace which is offered by the sacraments unless
we bring faith to the partaking of the sacraments' (Treatise of
the Sacraments C 2). The function of the sacraments according
the Willet was to 'send and refer us to the word and promise of
God' (Synopsis Papismi pp. 538-41). Haddon preserved to the sacra-
ments their proper office and dignity as means of grace, but with
the qualification 'that we do not attribute so much to them that
through them, as through channels, from the mere work
wrought, the grace of God should be necessarily imparted to
us' (Exposition Contra Hierosorum 1.2 fol. 38-9).

It will be seen that with one voice and consent the Anglican
bishops and divines denounced the Romanist conception and took up
the freer and more spiritual Lutheran or Reformed view. One
great name has been omitted, the name of Hooker, but Hooker too
preserved all the essential features of the Reformed understand-
ing. He put the sacraments in their proper perspective as instruments
ordained of God for the purpose of presenting Christ (L.E.P. 5, 6).
In so far as Christ was offered in baptism, the saving
grace of God was also offered, not quasi-materially in the elemen-
t but spiritually in Christ himself. It was part of Hooker's task,
of course, to defend the importance and dignity of the sacraments
against those who tended to decry them. To that extent he was
prepared to assert the instrumental necessity of baptism in all
ordinary cases (Ibid.). God is the God of order, and he may
normally be expected to work through the appointed means. More
than that, Hooker thought it possible to argue that in the
case of infants, who could not believe but who also 'could con-
ceive nothing opposite', 'that grace was given which is the first
and most effectual cause out of which our belief grows' (Ibid.
64,1). This phrase must not be given a Romanist twist, for
Hooker certainly had no intention of reviving ex opere operato
views of the cruder sort. Indeed, the sentence might very
well be given a thoroughly evangelical interpretation, for the
sacraments are undoubtedly a powerful adjunct of the word in the
promoting of true faith. We must acknowledge, however, that
Hooker's statement of the matter marks a recession from the full
dynamic conception of Calvin, and a return to a more static view,
although in a much modified form.

Historically this beginning of a movement away from the full
Reformed understanding was important, for it resulted quickly
in the High Anglican sacramentalism of the seventeenth and succeed-
ing centuries. The great and rapid change which came over
English theology in the hundred years after the Elizabethan Settle-
ment is reflected in the Anglican defence of the definite
language of the Baptismal Thanksgiving at the Savoy Conference,
The Reformed arguments from the election and the promises had
now disappeared, being replaced by the familiar Scholastic assertion
that 'the sacraments have their effects where the receiver both
not put any bar (ponere obicem) against them' (Cardwell: Conference p.356). Although the grosser notions of the sixteenth century were not revived, theologians like Waterland could even use the dangerous expression: the Holy Spirit 'impregnated the water of the font' (Works 4 p.431); and refer to the sacrament as the 'hand, by which God the Holy Spirit, the primary and efficient cause,' dispensed the privilege of adoption and justification' (Ibid. 6, p.12). It is true that in the case of adults faith was still seen to be necessary as 'the hand whereby man received the privileges' (Ibid.), but the point is that sign and grace had again come to be thought of as statically united in consequence of the divine appointment. The formularies themselves were thus impressed into the service of a theological understanding quite other than that of the Reformers themselves, and at a vital point the work of the Reformation was to a very large extent undone.

4. Conclusion

The various explanations of the efficacy and operation of baptism have now been stated. On the one side there was the Romanist extreme, the identification of sign and grace, either by concinnity, or by an infusion of the divine grace into the water. On the other side was the Anabaptist extreme, the harsh separation of grace and sign and the consequent reduction of the sacrament itself to a 'naked' symbol. Between lay the dynamic conception of the Reformers, which preserved the balance between the two extremes, not by a compromise, but by an assertion of the truths which underlay the two extremes. The sixteenth century Anglicans inclined strongly to the Reformed view, but very quickly, and to a large extent by way of reaction against Puritanism, this position was abandoned in favour of a modified version of the static conception.

On which side did the truth lie? The judgment depends, as always, upon more general theological convictions. A monistic world-view, in which there is no place for a belief in the supernatural operation of God, carries with it necessarily, as we may see in the eighteenth century Neology, a reduction of the sign to the purely natural level. Indeed the Neologist and the Pantheist will go further than the Anabaptist, for they will not only deny a special working of God through the sign, but they will deny any special working of God at all, whether in the sacrament or apart from it. Such spiritual value as may still be ascribed to baptism is psychological only. Baptism is a religious rite calculated to express in symbolical form certain religious truths which the ordinary man and woman would probably have difficulty in apprehending, and acting upon, if they were formulated only in an abstract way. As Jesus himself was a teacher who brought to men the simplest and deepest truths about the world and about human life, so the sacraments are religious ordinances which assist men in their apprehension of those truths and in the translating of them into practical living. The Pantheist can of course ascribe a real divinity both to Jesus himself, and to the ordinances of the church, for God is active in and through all things, not least through the
great educators and educative institutions of the human race. It would be impossible for the monist to go beyond this, however, and to say, either that Jesus himself is in a special sense the Son of God, or that the sacraments are in a special sense efficacious instruments in the hands of God.

The sacramentalist, on the other hand, argues from a supernaturalist understanding of the world, in which God is the transcendent Creator and Ruler, and the creation the sphere of his regulative and redemptive activity. On such a basis as this, the static relating of sign and grace is quite intelligible, and has indeed many points in its favour. For one thing, God obviously can and indeed does make use of material things to accomplish spiritual ends. The physical and the spiritual in man are closely inter-related, and a physical action may not inappropriately be chosen as the instrument for the conferring of a spiritual gift. In the misleading quasi-material terminology has been avoided in some modern statements: indeed Dr. Kirk has gone so far as to agree that the effect need not be produced at the time of the administration (See Theology 11 p.66). The static conception has remained, however, in the sense that God has fashioned the material instrument, filling it with spiritual grace in such a way that the effect will necessarily be obtained so long as no obstacle is opposed. Furthermore, it may be argued that God has given a crowning example of this use of the physical and material in the supreme miracles of the Incarnation and the Atonement. At these supreme points God entered the material world, accepting and using the physical for the accomplishment of the work of salvation. If the Incarnation is the pattern of all the redemptive activity of God, then it is surely not too much to argue that material elements and actions may also be used to further the divine work and to apply it to individual souls. The static conception extends the incarnational principle from the person of Christ, the source of grace, to the word and sacraments, the means of grace, appointed and instituted as such by Christ himself. The frank supernaturalism of this understanding rests securely upon the prior understanding of God as Creator and Ruler, and of the divine redemption as a special activity of grace. The simplicity of the material act safeguards the primacy and the sovereignty of God, upon whose prior choice and institution the reception of grace ultimately depends. Popularly misconceived, the static view might very well give rise to exaggerated notions of the power and privilege of the church and priesthood; but properly understood, it emphasises the dependence of man upon divine grace and the sheer miracle of the redeeming work of God.

It will be granted by those who wish to retain the historic Protestant position, which also rests upon the transcendence of God and the divine initiative in salvation, that the arguments in favour of sacramentalist teaching have a good deal of force. The Protestant accepts indeed the presuppositions, but he denies the conclusions. It may be allowed, for example, that God works in and through the physical, that God sanctified matter by himself entering the physical and temporal sphere, and that the operation of God is in the last resort supernatural and
and supra-rational. What does not follow is that in the divine working the physical and the spiritual are united statically in the particular way that sacramentalists suppose, so that God always accomplishes the inward and miraculous work when the outward instrument of grace is applied. What does not follow is that in the God-Man Jesus Christ, the one who is both eternal and temporal, divine and human, the unity of the Person is accomplished by the static fusion of the two natures, so that wherever Jesus is, there he will be received at once as Saviour and God. A true and objective union may indeed be postulated both in the one case and in the other. What may not be postulated is that such a union is so immediately apparent and so universally efficacious, that it infallibly accomplishes its purpose apart from the specific act of individual application in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The comparison with the Incarnation is helpful up to a point. The comparison with the written word is perhaps more helpful, because the word and the sacraments even in their divine and eternal aspects are never more than the instruments of God, whereas historic Christianity accepts Jesus Christ as God himself. But Jesus Christ, like the word or sacrament, has as it were a two-fold aspect, the human aspect and the divine. To use the Kierkegaardian phrase, Jesus Christ and the means of grace are no a direct but an indirect communication. From one point of view they are purely human. Jesus is the great teacher, the religious genius, the martyr for the truth. The sacrament is an ecclesiastical rite and the Bible a religious book. Unbelief can indeed never get beyond this aspect. Yet the miracle of Jesus Christ and of the word and sacraments is, however, that from another point of view that man is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and those religious rites are instruments in the hands of God for the accomplishment of spiritual purposes. The incognito is pierced and the full truth perceived when the individual is brought to repentance and faith by the free creative act of the Spirit, which is also the work of Jesus Christ himself and of the Lord and sacraments. Thus while it is true that in an ultimate sense Jesus is always God and the word and sacraments are always means of grace, yet in efficacy, which is individual application, neither Jesus Christ Himself nor the appointed means of grace can be of any avail apart from the Holy Ghost. The historic Jesus does the work of the divine Christ, not because he is immediately recognisable as the Christ, and the outward contact alone ensures the inward blessing, but because the Holy Spirit takes the historic Jesus and reveals the Christ, applying to the believing soul the benefits of his person and work. So too it is with the sacraments. There is no static uniting of sign and grace so that we can say that so much grace comes by the mere performing of the rite. The sacraments are instruments of God, but their meaning is not immediately apparent and their grace is not automatic. In an ultimate sense, no doubt, they are always instruments, but what matters is God's use of the instruments. And it is only as the Holy Spirit takes and applies the meaning of the sign that the sign and the grace are conjoined to accomplish the divine work.

An obvious objection is that everything thus becomes
subjective: the essential \textit{being} of Christ, and the essential being of the sacraments and the word as means of grace are of little or no account compared with the faith or the unbeliever which recognises or fails to recognise them as such. Crudely stated, such a doctrine might easily lead us to the absurd and erroneous notion that Jesus only is the Christ and the word and sacraments only are means of grace, and there is the individual faith to know the fact. If theology had to do only with the truth of experience and not with essential truth, that would be true enough. In the experience of the unbelieving man Jesus is not God, and the sacraments are no more than human rites. Theology has to do with more than human experience, and to that extent a thorough-going subjectivism is both false and misleading. But it must be remembered that the efficacy and the grace of the sacraments have no reality apart from the application to this and that individual soul. The sacraments are not efficacious in the abstract: they are \textit{only} efficacious only as they are administered, and they are administered only to particular persons. And the efficacy cannot be divorced from the recognition or the non-recognition of their divine character. Thus whereas it may be true to say that the sacraments are divine instruments, and so much grace properly belongs to them, it is wrong to conclude that apart from their actual use as instruments, they have a recognisable divine character, and the grace is automatically given in and through the sign.

A comparison with the work of God in and through the Bible will be instructive. The Bible is of course a given and static thing: it exists apart from the reading of it. The sacraments have no existence apart from their administration. But obviously a Bible is of no efficacy apart from its use, so that the problem with word and sacrament is basically the same. The questions are first, can it be said that God is active in the reading of Scripture or the administering of the sacraments quite apart from the recognition of their divine character or the reception in faith? second, if God is so active, are the Scripture and the sacraments to be regarded then as divine and efficacious in some static way? third, if God is not so active, are they to be regarded as divine and efficacious only temporarily and subjectively, by virtue of the reception rather than of their true nature and correct administration? The Reformers could not agree that either word or sacraments are efficacious apart from their faithful reception. They rejected therefore the abstract and unreal formulation of Scholasticism. But they also avoided an erroneous subjectivism, for they taught clearly that Christ and the benefits of Christ were always offered in word and sacraments, although they were not always recognised and received. In other words, word and sacraments were always a divine offer, although they were not always a divine work. There is a static inter-relationship between the means of grace and the evangelical promises, which gives to them always a divine aspect, but there is no such \textit{mix} inter-relationship between the means of grace, the sounds and the signs, and the efficacious grace itself. In this respect the word and sacraments again reflect the Incarnation of Christ. Christ and his benefits are always present where the Gospel is preached. But they are the
in such a way as to impel to a choice. Only where that choice is the choice of faith are they there efficaciously, to personal apprehension of grace and salvation. The true grace and efficacy are to be sought in the free activity of the Holy Spirit which impels to faith and not to unbelief.

The full discussion of these points would exceed the limits of this present study and the proper bounds of historical theology. It may suffice then to present the three alternatives which confront the modern theologian as he tackles the problem of the baptismal efficacy. If the liberal interpretation of God and the world is preferred, then the greatest satisfaction will be found in a development of the Anabaptist solution: baptism is an ecclesiastical rite, psychologically useful, instrumentally efficacious in the accomplishment of the purposes of immanent godhead. If the traditional Christian position is maintained, then a choice must be made between the static and the dynamic conceptions. The static preserves the objectivity of the divine grace and work, but involves an unreal and mechanistic view of God's working, and may even degenerate into the superstition of a purely magical efficacy. The dynamic offers proper safeguards against automatic views, preserving the sovereignty of God and the personal character of his operations. It allows for the delayed efficacy of the sacrament without the fictions of a spiritual impress and of grace dammed up by internal obstacles. In its extreme form it may destroy an objective reality of grace, although as the Reformers taught it, this error was avoided by the inseparable linking of the sacraments with the proclamation of Christ and his benefits.

The problem of the spiritual efficacy of the sacrament defies ultimate solution. Unless we believe that God himself may be comprehended within a tidy rational scheme, then we certainly cannot expect to comprehend his operations within such a scheme. By grasping clearly the necessary aspects of the problem, and by refusing to stray far from the facts warranted by Scripture and experience, the Reformers offered the solution which we believe will have the greatest appeal to the modern Protestant who wishes to maintain the historic Christian faith. There are difficulties and even apparent contradictions. Not all the ends are neatly tied. Truths are asserted which cannot be put together, but are held in delicate counterpoise. It is in this very incompleteness and untidiness, however, that the greatness of the Reformed understanding most clearly emerges. In eternal matters the loose ends represent gain rather than loss. Truth and reality have not been sacrificed on the altar of a speculative system.

Notes

1 Lomb. 4 Dist. 4 A 'Aliquos suscipere sacramentum et rem sacramentum, alios sacramentum et non rem, alios rem et non sacramentum. ... Adulti quoque qui cum fide baptizantur, sacramentum et rem suscipiunt. B. In ecclesia qui non plena
fide accipiunt baptismum, non spiritum, sed aquam suscipiunt. Qui vero sine fide vel fictè accedunt, sacramentum, non rem suscipiunt.

2 De lax S.T.B. pp.344-6 'Id quod active, et proxime, atque instrumentali efficit gratiam justificationis, est sola actio illa externa, quae sacramentum dicitur, et haec vocatur opus operatum, ita ut idem sit sacramentum conferre gratiam ex opere operato, quod conferre gratiam ex vi ipsius actionis sacramentalis'.

p.345 'Les pères grecs et latins, lorsqu'ils parlent de la vertu purificante de l'eau baptismale, ne laissent pas de doute sur leur pensée'. 'Toute la vertu du sacrement lui vient du Dieu qui l'institua'.

p.346 'Bellarmine se déclare pour l'école qui tient, avec S.Thomas, que les sacraments ne sont pas seulement causes morales, mais causes physiques de la grâce'.

3 Goode E.B.I. p.32, quoting a letter of Innocent IV (1250) 'Ille vero quod opponentes inducunt, fidem aut charitatem, aliasque virtutes parvules, utpote non consentientibus, non infundi, a plerisque non cognoscit, cum propter hoc inter doctores theologi quaestio referatur, aliis afferentibus, per virtutem baptismi parvulis quidem culpam remitti, sed gratiam non conferri; nonnullis dicentibus, dimitti peccatum et virtutes infundi habentibus illas, quead habitum, nbn quoad usum, donec perveniant (or pervenirint) ad aetatem adultam'.

Cristiani Luther p.60 'Cajetan accusa Luther de subordonner l'efficacité du sacrement à la foi'. 'N. For Cajetan faith was necessary 'seulement à titre de disposition préparatoire'

Kidd D.C.R. p.76 'Sacramenta novae legis justificantem gratiam illis dare, qui non possit obicem'.

Luther W.A.30.1 p.318 'Kein Glaube machet nicht die Taufe, sondern empfahet die Taufe'.

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13 Zwingli C.R.2 p.203 'Viele werden getauf, die bei der Taufhandlung nichts als Gruseln vor dem Wasser empfinden. Da doch der Geist jeden sich mitteilt, wie er will'.

14 Ibid. p.223 'Der usser wassertouff gegeben wirt, da der inner touff oder gloub noch nit ist'.

15 Confession of Augsburg (13) 'Damnant igitur illos, qui docent, quod sacramenta ex opere operato justificant'.

16 Articles of Schmalkald: Von der Taufe 'Und darumb halten wir's nicht mit Thoma und den Predigermonschen, die des worts (Gottes Einsetzung) vergessen und sagen, Gott habe eine geistliche Kraft ins Wasser (gesetzt) gelegt, welche die Sunde durchs Wasser abwasche, auch nit mit Scoito und den Barfussensmenschen, die da lehren, dass die Taufe die Sunde abwasche aus Beistehen gottliches Willens, also dass diese Abwaschung geschicht allein durch Gottes Willen, garnicht (aus) durchs Wort oder Wasser'.

17 Ibid. p.223 'Der usser wassertouff gegeben wirt, da der inner touff oder gloub noch nit ist'.
Ibid. p.620 'Du vermischest den innern touff des geystis mit dem usseren sakramentalischen touf...den inneren touf kànnend wir nyeman geben'.

B.R.N.2 p.280 'Sie zyn ghereynicht door het bloed Christi'.

Muralt p.35 'Der Glaube wirkt die Ummwendung'.

Beza Q.et R.C.III 'Incipit ergo Baptismi fructus ab eo momento quo fides incipit, quae quidem interdum praecedit Baptismum, ut in Cornelio apparuit, interdum vero subsequitur, ut in infantibus baptizatis'.

Heidegger 25,2 42 (in Heppe R.D. Bapt.) 'Ita nec baptizatus gratiam ex opere operato, virtute sive inhaerente et physica, sive assistente producit. Qui uniam Augustani nuncum in solidum remitterent, sacramentà gratiae...vehiculae et velut manum quandam, qua Deus gratiam suam donet, statuentes'.

Leidner Synopsis 44,29 'Efficaciam ergo baptismi non alligamus ad momentum illud, quo aqua externa corpus tingitur, sed in omnis baptizandis fitum et resipicientiam cum scriptura praerequirimus'.

Reformatio Legum (Cardwell p.18) 'Illorum etiam impia videri, scrupulosa superstition, qui Dei gratiam et Spiritum sanctum tantopere cum sacramentorum elementis colligant...Plures item ab illis cumulantur errores in baptismo; quem alii qui sic attoniti spectant, ut ab illo externo credant elemento Spiritum sanctum emergere, vimque ejus omnem et virtutem, ex qua recreamur, et gratiam et reliqua ex eo profiscientia dona in ipsis baptismalibus innatam'.

Nowell P.S.p.87 'Soli fideis unc fructum percipiunt'.

Jewel 2 P.S.2 p.1106, quoting Hierome Comm.1.4 in Ezek.Proph. c.16 'Qui non plena fide accipiunt baptismum salutare. De quibus decendum est, quod acceperint aquam, sed non acceperint Spiritum' - the point made by Lombard (Note 1).
CHAPTER XV  THE EFFECTS IN INFANTS

In the light of the two previous chapters, and of the chapter upon the necessity of the sacrament, the opinions of the various parties upon the effects of baptism in the case of infants will already be evident, at any rate in outline. Our task in the present section is the straightforward one of showing how the more general doctrines of effects and efficacy applied when it was the infants of Christians who were the subjects of the sacrament. We shall also have occasion to note at what points the different schools could agree and at what points they were forced into controversy.

1. The Romanist Doctrine

The doctrine held and taught by the sixteenth century Romanists had developed naturally out of that of the Fathers and the Schoolmen. The baptism of infants, as we have seen, had been associated from very early times with original sin and its remission. Infants could not be baptised for the forgiveness of actual sins, it was felt, for they were not yet guilty of such. They could be baptised, however, for the forgiveness of original sin, for not even the youngest or most innocent was free from that hereditary pollution. The first effect of baptism in infants was then, as in adults, the remission of sin.

But positively baptism meant more than that as the Fathers understood it, for it carried with it regeneration, or the restoration to the divine image. The statement of Ambrose is typical: children were by their baptism reformed back again from wickedness to the primitive state of their nature (Comm. in St. Lucae 1.1, c. 1 Wall I p. 114). Augustine pressed the argument from infant baptism in the controversy with the Pelagians. If each child was as Adam, then the baptism had no meaning or value, for baptism had as its purpose the cleansing from the sin and the restoration of the divine image. Pelagius acknowledged the force of the argument for he had to invent a new effect for infant baptism, the elevation of the baptised to a state higher than that of Adam, as heirs of the kingdom of heaven (Ibid. p. 197). Pressed by the argument that Scripture knows only one baptism, and that baptism is a baptism for remission, Pelagius had the further evasions ready, either that infants receive the same baptism which in the case of adults is a baptism of forgiveness, or that infants may perhaps be said in baptism to have the forgiveness of actual sins which they have already committed, the childish sins of peevishness and the like (Ibid. p. 241). The shifts of Pelagius have little interest in themselves, but they help to show how firmly rooted was the association of baptism with the restoration of infants both by remission and by regeneration.

Augustine himself, of course, so closely connected the sacrament and the work of salvation that he reckoned unbaptised infants as outside the sphere and possibility of salvation.
Baptism was necessary in order that they who by their generation are subject to condemnation, by regeneration may be made free from it. Some of the baptismal promises did not apply to infants, but the most important did. Adoption, **pardon** and the translation from the state of nature to that of grace, all these were sealed to infants in and through the sacrament of baptism (Wall I p.147). Augustine did not shirk the problem raised by the Scriptural restriction of the effects to those who believed. He granted that the infant could not be counted as a fidel, except by virtue of the faith of sponsors or of the church. But he argued that the infant also could not be counted an infidel: belief and unbelief lay equally beyond its capacities. He concluded that, that positive faith was not to be looked for in the child, but that so long as it did not put the bar of a contrary mind, it received the sacrament to its soul's health (p.142).

The Scholastics followed the teaching of Augustine closely. Like Augustine, they were not unaware of the difficulties which arose when the effects of baptism were automatically ascribed to infants. Lombard discussed the question of the infant reception of baptismal grace with particular fullness (Lomb.4 Dist.4 H), and Thomas examined the matter with his usual thoroughness and perhaps with greater clarity. Against the ascription of the effects to infants there were four main objections: the infants had no faith, they had no free will, they had no belief, and often the sponsors brought them with only carnal intention, the intention of physical healing. Thomas himself accepted the teaching of Augustine as final: by the sacrament infants enjoy newness of life and incorporation into Christ. He could not accept an adequate alternative suggestion, that infants receive an imprint which leads them later to good works. Against the detailed objections he produced the following arguments: that the lack of faith in infants is due to physical incapacity, that infants offer no resistance, that they may be said to believe by the faith of the church, and that the carnal intention of the sponsors does not constitute an impediment (See Thomas 23 Qu.69,6).

The Scholastics not only defended the doctrine that infants may be said to receive grace. They also elaborated upon the nature of the effects produced. The most important were, of course remission and regeneration, conceived of, as in the case of adults, as an actual washing or cleansing of the soul from pollution. In addition, however, baptism was thought to effect in infants an infusion of habitual faith and other virtues.

The sixteenth century theologians took up the points made by the Scholastics stressing especially the effect of an infusion of faith and virtue. Harpsfield argued against Woodman that it is impossible for a child to be saved or justified by faith because the gift of faith is made in the sacrament itself (Foxe 8 pp.351 f.); and in controversy with Bradford the same scholar referred to the regenerative effect of baptism in infants: 'by baptism we are brought, or as a man would say, begotten
to Christ: for Christ is our father, and the church his spouse is our mother' (Ibid. 7 p. 159). Shetler preached that baptism served to take away original sin, although a further sacrament was necessary to deal with actual sins committed subsequent to baptism (Strype's Cranmer I p. 237). Gardiner insisted that baptism effected justification. He could see no difficulty or mystery in this question of justification, for 'infants were justified and saved in baptism by virtue of Christ's baptism' (Foxe 6 p. 50). The Bull Exsurge Domine, as we have already seen, condemned those who denied that the sacraments of the new law conferred grace of justification upon all who put no obstacle in the way, which included infants (Kidd D.C.R. p. 76). At Trent the question of the effects in infants was further discussed, and Anabaptists and Protestants were alike anathematised. Baptism was held to apply all the merits of Christ to all recipients: 'If anyone denies that the merit of Christ Jesus Christ is applied, both to adults and to infants, by the sacrament of baptism rightly administered, let him be anathema' (Sess. on Orig. Sin Can. 3). Infants could not be washed clean from actual sins which they had not yet committed, but they were purged from original sin and its pollution: 'If anyone saith that infants, who could not as yet commit any sin of themselves, are not truly baptised for the remission of sins, that in them they may be cleansed away by generation, which they have contracted by generation, let him be anathema' (Ibid. Can. 4). The Catechism of Trent taught that the effects of baptism applied equally to infants and to adults, stressing especially in the former case the grace of remission of original sin (Cat. T. 2, Qu. 31).

The noteworthy points in the Romanist doctrine may be summed up as follows. Infants are not believers in the full sense, but since they are offered in the faith of the church and make no resistance, the effects of the sacrament are fully enjoyed. The chief effect is the cleansing of the soul from the pollution of original sin, so that it is restored to its first state and becomes just before God. From the negative point of view this is remission, and from the positive point of view regeneration. A subsidiary but not unimportant effect is the endowing of the soul with supernatural graces, especially habitual faith and virtues. A further effect, which we will be considering more fully in the final chapter, is the destroying of the sin and guilt, and of some of the power of concupiscence. The gift of cooperating grace is a further provision to enable the baptised infant to continue in the life into which it has been introduced by the sacrament.

2. The Reformed Approach

On serious theological grounds which we have already considered the Reformers were bound from the very first to reject the Romanist teaching. For one thing, they pleaded the necessity of a living and personal faith in the subjects of baptism. For another, they put aside ex opere operato and quasi-material conceptions. The grace of the sacrament could not be tied automatically to the administration of the sign. They did not
deny, of course, that there might be very real and very valuable effects in infants. But they insisted that a place must be found for personal faith, and they insisted that the baptismal graces must themselves be understood, not quasi-materially but evangelically, and in relation to the divine promises.

Partly, perhaps, in his eagerness to counter the Anabaptist heresies, Luther took an extreme view, which in some respects approximated closely to that of the Romanists. He boldly asserted that infants enjoy the effects of the sacrament because they have faith, challenging the Anabaptists who would deny them baptism to prove the contrary (W.A.6 p.538; See Mackinnen 2 p.255). What Luther meant exactly by this faith of infants it is difficult to say with any precision. Sometimes he spoke of it in Scholastic fashion as an infused gift, or less concretely, as the absence of a hostile disposition. He argued, for instance, that infants are the best possible subjects of baptism, for they give Satan no opportunities of robbing the sacrament of its power (W.A.6 p.527). Approximations to Romanist doctrine may be conceded, but there can be no doubt that Luther understood the effects themselves evangelically. The justification which infants enjoyed was not so much a making righteous by the purging of the soul as a reckoning righteous by non-imputation. It covered original sin, but it also extended to all actual sins, future as well as present. Baptism marked, in fact, the entry into the new state of life within the Gospel promises. To that extent it was rightly to be regarded as the beginning of the Christian life, which rested upon the work and the word of God. Infants growing to years of discretion were challenged by the sacrament to become what sacramentally, in the promise of God and by faith, they already were.

Melanchthon had been overborne for a time by the specious Anabaptist argument that since infants neither have faith nor are guilty of actual sin they neither have the right to baptism nor do they stand in need of it. Strengthened by the more robust Luther, who addressed to him a stern rebuke (Kidd D.C.R.p.101), he developed a lengthy theological defence of infant baptism in the successive editions of the Loci Communes. The doctrine of original sin was the foundation stone of this defensive work. Like Augustine, Melanchthon related the baptism of infants directly to the sin of the race, pointing out that infants both need and may enjoy remission in respect of original if not of actual sin (C.R.33 p.295). He argued that God has established in the church a ministry of forgiveness, and that that forgiveness is dispensed through the sacraments (Ibid.p.359). Like Luther, Melanchthon understood the forgiveness evangelically, in terms of non-imputation of sin. This must be emphasised, for the language which he used was not very dissimilar from that of the Scholastics. Both Luther and Melanchthon were hampered to some extent by the non-evangelical expressions and thought-forms which they were compelled to use.

The Swiss Reformers tackled the problems in far more radical fashion. The Anabaptists, of course, denied the possibility of any effects in infants. The sacraments were in any case only
signs, and infants, having neither sin nor faith, did not need and could not enjoy the thing signified. Zwingli was at one with the Anabaptists in attacking the notion that baptism either accomplished anything in infants or conferred anything upon them (Zwingli, op. cit., p. 282). But in this respect adults were no better off than infants. The external rite was the sign of an internal spiritual baptism, which produced the inward effects according to the divine election and operation. Zwingli cleverly turned the arguments of the Anabaptists against themselves. He agreed that the external rite accomplished nothing. The Anabaptists deduced from this that there was no reason to give it to infants (Ibid., p. 617). But Zwingli replied that there was every reason, for by covenant right the infants of Christians enjoyed the inward work. To deny them the external sign was pure presumption, as was also the Anabaptist equating the ecclesiastical ordinance and the internal operation of the Spirit (p. 620). As Zwingli saw it, the whole work of baptism was the work of the Holy Spirit (p. 203). and in spite of his tendency to minimise original sin, he did not deny that that work might be accomplished in elect infants.

Calvin's understanding of the matter was in line with his doctrine of the effects in adults, and his dynamic inter-relating of sign and grace. He described the baptism of infants in general terms as 'an evidence that the Lord introduces us into his church' (Tracts 2, p. 153). He undoubtedly saw a powerful psychological effect. The outward sign of the promises of God served as a call and challenge to Christian belief and conduct as the infant recipients grew to years of discretion. It was perhaps this idea which underlay his statement that the aim of baptism is 'to enable children to receive and produce the fruits of their baptism on acknowledging its reality after they have grown up' (Ibid., p. 39). The psychological working was itself in the true sense an operation of the Holy Spirit, and it merged into the fuller spiritual working. If baptism did not cleanse or purge the soul in a quasi-material sense, it did seal to the infants of believers those blessings to which by divine promise they had a covenant right: 'Baptism instead of regenerating or saving infants, only seals the salvation of which they were previously partakers (i.e., by the election) (Ibid., p. 319). 'Children are not absolutely regenerated by baptism, from which they ought to be debarred did not God rank them among the members of his Son' (p. 320). How far was Calvin willing to go when he spoke of a sealing of the promises? Within an evangelical context, and allowing always for the free election and activity of God, he would go a very long way. He had in mind a great deal more than a sacramental sealing, which could, of course, be postulated of all those who received the sign, whether inwardly elect or not. Arguing from the divine infilling of the Baptist from his mother's womb, Calvin seriously considered the possibility of a miraculous endowment of infants in and through the sacrament, especially of elect infants dying in infancy (See Beckmann, p. 97). This endowment would take the form of an internal illumination, which did not come through the outward sign, but through its inward counterpart, the outward sign being the seal.
Although this baptismal regeneration of the elect applied especially to those infants who perished in infancy, Calvin could speak of all the elect being baptised for a future representation and faith not yet formed in them (Instit. 4, 16, 18), and he thought that we might very properly speak of the existence of the seed of both repentance and faith, not of course by virtue of the external administration, but by virtue of the secret operation of the Holy Ghost of which that administration was the sign and seal (Ibid. 20).

Calvin had no intention of reintroducing Scholastic concepts, and these apparent verbal concessions were not the result of muddled and inconsistent thinking, nor the relics of an earlier and imperfect understanding. The point rather is this: that Calvin recognised and allowed for the truths of the divine sovereignty and the impotence and utter dependence of man which underlay the Scholastic doctrine, and he sought to restate and to re-emphasise them in accordance with evangelical principles. Baptism availed for the free pardon of original sin to elect infants. This did not mean that in and through baptism God accomplished a purgation of the soul of all infant recipients. It meant that of grace and according to promise God did not impute sin to the elect recipients. The forgiveness was not a quasi-material operation, but a non-imputation according to promise. Again, baptism might very well be described as the beginning of the work of regeneration in the elect. But when Calvin said that, he said it remembering always the divine freedom and the divine initiative. God called the redeemed to himself according to the election. The means of grace were the means of effectual calling. The work itself would perhaps not come to fulfilment except after a long period, according to the good pleasure of God, but the baptism, as a pledge of the divine work, testified to the gracious will and promise of God, and served as a means to initiate the work. This did not mean that man could control the working and calling of the Spirit, for only those infants already included within the covenant of grace were eligible for baptism, and the secret election of God determined whether or not there was in any particular case an efficacious presentation of Christ.

The disciples of Calvin had no difficulty in attributing to the sacrament the same high value as Calvin himself had done, for they grasped firmly the principles underlying his doctrine. They particularly stressed the dependence of the inward operation upon the divine election. The non-elect were excluded from the grace of baptism, whether they were adults or infants (See Ursinus, Sum of the Christian Religion p. 359). As Bucer had put it, perhaps independently of Calvin, only the elect truly received, although this included many children, 'of whom by far the greater number were snatched hence in childhood, who I make no doubt are saved by the mercy of Christ' (See Goode E.B.I. p. 169). Elect infants might be said to enjoy a presence of the Spirit, who led them 'so far as suffices for their age and condition' (Ibid.). Beza too found a real work of the Spirit in elect infants. They had 'the seed and the spring of
faith by virtue of the promise which was received and apprehended by their elders' (B.P.S.48). Beza did not doubt but that 'by this marke (joined with the prayers of the church which is their assistant) God doth seale the adoption and election in those which he hath predestinate eternally' (Ibid.).

It is evident that in spite of the great care exercised, especially on the part of the Reformed school, the opposing parties used, and were bound to use terms which suggested a fundamental similarity of approach. Yet it is true to say that a deep gulf separated the Scholastics and Romanists on the one side and the Lutherans and Reformed party on the other. The difference might be stated simply in this way. The one side thought of baptism as a means automatically to give a quasi-material grace to all those infants to whom the sacrament was correctly administered. The other side thought of it as a means to offer that grace to them, the grace being Christ himself, and to confirm the elect in a possession of it which already by covenanted promise and according to the eternal predestination of God they enjoyed.

Bullinger put the matter succinctly when he argued that infants are to be baptised, not in order to make them God's, but because they already are God's (Bull.P.S.4 p.382). The individual and personal apprehension of the benefits might of course be delayed. It came when under the Holy Spirit the soul was brought to inward penitence and faith. But baptism sealed the benefits to the elect, and with the word it was a means used by the Spirit to stir up repentance and to quicken faith. Once the quasi-material notions of the sacramental grace and efficacy had been broken down, there could be no harm in continuing to speak of baptism as a real means of grace in infants, whether in the sealing of the promises or in effectual calling. Indeed, regeneration might very well be traced back to its beginning in the signing and sealing of the promises in baptism, a regeneration in embryo in the elect who came to years of discretion, a special illumination of the Spirit in the elect who died without the possibility of a personal apprehension in the normal way.

3. Anglican Teaching

We have grown accustomed to finding different strands of teaching in the English church, especially in the earlier years of the Reformation. The intermingling was due, of course, to the slowness with which the doctrinal reconsideration and reconstruction proceeded. It is no less marked in relation to the doctrine of the effects of baptism in infants than in relation to other baptismal teaching. Romanist, Lutheran and Reformed views all find expression in the various formularies and writings, and the statements of avowed Romanists like Henry himself or Gardiner or Bonner may be set alongside the utterances of the Lutheran Tyndale or the pronouncedly Reformed Hooper.

Of the formularies the Ten Articles, the Bishops' Book and the King's Book stated the matter very much in traditional fashion. The Article interconnected the sacrament of baptism and the original sin of infants: which sin must needs be remitted, which cannot
be done but by the sacrament of baptism'. The Article avoided
an identification of the grace with the water, however, and
attributed the efficacy to the Holy Ghost which was given: 'where-
by they receive the Holy Ghost, which exerciseth the grace
and efficacy in them, and cleanseth and purifieth them from
sin by his most secret virtue and operation' (De Bapt. 2 Lloyd).
Both the Bishops' Book and the King's Book stated the doctrine
very similarly, the latter being especially concerned to defend
the necessity and the utility of infant baptism. Infants were
offered in the faith of the church, and if they died in infancy
they were assured of forgiveness and of grace to salvation: 'Be
cause they be born in original sin, they have need and ought to
be christened: whereby they being offered in the faith of
the church, receive forgiveness of their sin, and such grace
of the Holy Ghost, that if they die in the state of infancy,
they shall thereby undoubtedly be saved' (Lloyd p. 254). There
can be little doubt that these formularies expressed a view which
was mainly traditional, although traces of Lutheran influence
can be seen, and the parallel with Melanchthon's teaching in the
Loci will not be overlooked.

The Homily made a pronouncement upon the fate of baptised
infants similar to that of the King's Book: 'Infants baptised and
dying in their infancy are by the sacrifice of Christ washed
from their sins, brought to God's favour and made his children
and inheritors of his kingdom in heaven' (p. 25). The direct
reference to the sacrifice of Christ is important, for it indic­
ated what was perhaps a fundamental change in understanding: the
movement to a doctrine of imputation rather than of actual washing.
In effect the Homily asserted no more than Calvin: that infants
who perish in their earliest years are assured of the benefits
of baptism, remission of sin and regeneration, by the work of
the Holy Spirit applying the atoning work of Christ. Death in
infancy, at any rate in Christian lands, was regarded by all the
Reformers as a probable mark of election.

The reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI witnessed an ever-in­
creasing influx of Protestant ideas. These new ideas clearly
affected the teaching upon the effects of baptism in infants. They
derived first from Luther and his disciples, and later from the
more radical Reformers, Zwingli, Bucer and Calvin. On the
Lutheran side the effect of the sacrament was seen to be a real
cleansing and endowment of the Spirit by virtue of the general
promises of Scripture and a real faith in the infants. On the
Reformed side baptism was thought to effect forgiveness and the
beginning of regeneration, but only in relation to the divine
covenant and election, not as a general work in all, not in answer
to a real faith on the part of the infants, and not necessarily
finding fulfilment at the time of the administration.

Becon was the protagonist of a view which was mainly Lutheran.
This was only to be expected from one who defended infant baptism
on the ground that infants have an actual faith. Becon put it
in this way. 'Forgiveness of all sins is granted at the very
moment of baptism' (Dec. P. S. I p. 399). In infants this meant
primarily original sin, although the forgiveness had an extended reference to all the future actual sins of adult life. Growing to years of discretion the baptised person might very well commit sin, and if he did so, then 'he fell from the grace of baptism and lost the Holy Ghost' (Ibid. 2 p. 206). But the forgiveness was not finally forfeit, for a re-entry into the grace and the work of baptism was always possible by penitence and faith: 'Those who through frailty and ignorance again offend and break the law of God have always in their baptism an holy anchor to fly unto' (Ibid. 1 p. 339). A superficial reading might suggest that Becon was merely repeating the traditional doctrine, that in baptism an actual cleansing is effected, a cleansing which is lost or forfeited when there is a fresh fall into sin, and which can only be restored only by penance. But Becon had evidently re-thought the traditional doctrine in accordance with Lutheran teaching. He did not associate the forgiveness with the outward act of baptism, whether in adults or in infants, but with the evangelical promises: 'God does not save us for the outward baptism, but for his gracious promise' (Ibid. 2 p. 216). Again, the remission was not understood scholastically, as a quasi-material purgation, but in Lutheran fashion as non-imputation. Even the re-entry into forgiveness which came by repentance was a re-entry into the grace of baptism, not the reception of the grace of some new sacrament: in a word, penance was swallowed up again in baptism. A further point is that Becon had at the back of all his teaching a strong doctrine of election. His view seems in fact to have been very much the view of Luther. All infants may be regarded as believers and inheritors of the promises until by actual deeds of wickedness they show the contrary. Forgiveness, being grounded upon the will of God and the work of Christ, is offered freely to all as a gift, although many put that gift from them or perhaps spurn it for a period. The work of baptism is to proffer the gift, and to seal it to elect infants and believing adults.

Quite a number of the Anglicans seem to have shared Becon's understanding of the matter, and we may notice in passing that all the Reformers agreed that none would be condemned for original sin alone, since that sin had been put away by Christ's work, and its remission was sealed in baptism. The majority of the humbler Marian martyrs expressed themselves in much the same way as Becon. Haukes claimed that infants were washed from original sin, not by baptism, of course, but by faith (Foxe 7 p. 193). The representative faith of the parents availed on behalf of the children, who had no faith in themselves. Smith found a similar cleansing of infants from original sin, although he attributed it exclusively to the blood of Christ (Ibid. p. 352). Woodman thought that we might ascribe an actual faith to the infants themselves, and that on that ground they had both the right to baptism and the enjoyment of the baptismal privileges and graces (Ibid. 8 p. 356). The Homily of Salvation already quoted apparently envisaged a forgiveness of the original sin of all baptised infants by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, a forgiveness which availed throughout life in the case of those who repented of actual sins and turned their thoughts to Christ (p. 25). Hooker took up the same view, giving to it a rather more definitely Scholastic
As he saw it, infants were not capable of faith, and therefore it was not to be expected from them. If they received baptism 'complete as touching the mystical perfection thereof', then they were cleansed from all their sin (L.E.P. 5,62,15). Hooker maintained contact with the Reformed theology by suspending the baptismal remission ultimately upon the divine covenant and promise (Ibid.).

The Baptismal Offices have often been thought to teach a similar doctrine of the effects in infants, especially by those commentators who wish to find in them support for the teaching of a real work of remission and regeneration in and through the sacrament. A variant of the doctrine was that of Davenant, who thought that infants might be pronounced regenerate because they had by baptism 'such forgiveness and grace as is appropriate to the childhood state'. Those who died in infancy had all things necessary to salvation, but those who grew to years of discretion had need of that fuller remission and regeneration of adult life which came by personal repentance and faith (See Goode E.B.I. p.300). Waterland interpreted the Anglican teaching very similarly. Infants were justified in baptism without either faith or works (Works 6 p.33), and if they grew up in faith and obedience, the privileges were continued to them. If they grew up in unbelief and sin, however, the privileges were taken away until such time as they repented. A final revolt might mean the 'permanent forfeiture' of the blessings, although 'God's original granting of adoption or sonship in baptism stood in full force to take place as often as the revoler should return' (Ibid. 4 p.433). All infants could be described as regenerate, but not all infants experienced the renovation of the soul, and those who fell into sin needed constantly to be reformed. The building upon the divine covenant and the emptying of the term regeneration of its full content preserved this interpretation from the erroneous sacramentalist conceptions of the Romanists, but the static association of grace and sign indicated a definite movement away from the Reformed teaching.

It may be allowed that the Baptismal Offices may quite properly be interpreted in some such way as this. It may be allowed too that in a sense all infants who receive baptism are to be reckoned justified and regenerate. Browne's claim that no one prior to 1555 denied the remission and regeneration of all infants who received the sacrament in no way affects the ultimate issue: the battle is not one of statement but of interpretation and understanding. And in this connection it must never be forgotten that when the Reformers spoke of baptismal blessings, whether they were Lutherans, Reformed or Anglican, they meant always not effects in the soul but imputed blessings grounded upon the work of Christ and the divine promises and election. In infants who grew to years of discretion it was everywhere presumed that repentance and faith were necessary for a personal entry into the enjoyment of the blessings and the experience of their effects in the soul. In infants who died in infancy a real remission and an inward application might also be postulated, and all infants, of course, enjoyed remission and regeneration covenantally and sacramentally, as Cranmer put it. Whether all
enjoyed the benefits inwardly and efficaciously depended entirely upon the prior election of God, and the operation of the Holy Spirit bringing the work of baptism to fulfilment in their souls. The most that could be done was to seek to further the effectual working of the Spirit by bringing constantly to notice the benefits proffered and already sacramentally enjoyed: the clear purpose and intention of the Catechism.

The Reformed party in England undoubtedly understood the services in this way, and approved of them accordingly. At root their teaching was very much the same as that of the Lutheran, but some of the less satisfactory conceptions and expressions were avoided. No actual or vicarious faith was attributed to infants, nor was the life of the baptised interpreted as an alternation between the enjoyment of grace and its loss through sin. Hooper, an early disciple of the Reformed school, did not discuss the matter in detail, but rather significantly he thought that original sin was pardoned in all infants, not by an actual cleansing, but by non-imputation (Hoop. P.S. I p. 129). Nowell made the grace of the sacrament dependent upon a future faith and repentance, at any rate as concerning its individual spiritual effects. Within the counsel of God the grace belonged to the elect from all eternity, being sealed visibly in the sacrament, and becoming effectual with the passing of the years, according to the providentially ordered work of the Spirit (Now. P.S. pp. 87-8). Bradford described the sacrament as a reception and sealing: 'Infants and babes are taken and accounted of as members of Christ's mystical body, wherein they are received and sealed' (Brad. P.S. I p. 32). He avoided committing himself to the bald view that all infant recipients of baptism are in effect members of Christ's body. They are baptised because by covenant and promise that privileged status may outwardly be accorded to them. Certainly infants were not made members of Christ's body, using the term 'made' in its cruder sense. Although the Holy Ghost and the pardon of sins were the baptismal blessings, it could not be said that they 'lie lurking in the water' (Ibid. p. 39).

Quite a number of other writers stressed this or that point in the Reformed interpretation. Fulke attacked the Romanist limitation of forgiveness to original sin and actual sins committed prior to baptism (Ful. P.S. 2 p. 388). Whitaker thought it wrong to say that infants are baptised in order to effect remission and regeneration: 'Infants are baptised, not to make them children of Abraham, but because they are his children of Abraham' (Goode E.B. I p. 299). This applied, in the strict sense, only to the predestinate. Abbot could describe baptism as an instrument for the application of grace to infants, but only according to the election (Ibid. p. 281). Rogers stated the full Calvinist teaching. In elect infants who grew to years he saw a delayed efficacy of the sacrament: 'In some the sacraments do effectually work in process of time, by the help of God's word read and preached, which engendereth faith: such is the state principally of infants, elected unto life and salvation and increasing in years' (P. S. p. 249). It was a definite warning to teach or to hold that 'the sacrament of baptism is
cause of the salvation of infants' (Ibid. p. 250). Condemning the Pelagians, Rogers himself did not hesitate to speak of the pardoning of original sin to infants (p. 277), but arguing against the Papists he would not limit the remission to original sin only (p. 278): it was not a work wrought, but a non-imputation.

The Puritans brought forward a few minor objections against the Prayer Book teaching, but in the main they were fully satisfied with the statements of the formularies. Anabaptists, of course condemned the Anglican doctrine: the thing wherein I condemn the Church of England is this: that they say at their washing, or baptising in their infancy, They are members, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. This I dare not believe. They that have prerogative to bee the sons of God, must bee borne of God, even believe in his name' (From the Mysterie of Iniquity unmasked Burrage E.E.D. 1895 2 p. 219).

The Puritans, however, saw clearly that there was no necessity to equate in time the election of God and the individual calling to the state of grace. Connecting baptism primarily with the election, and understanding that the promises embraced believers and their children, they could see no reason why baptised infants should not be described as the adopted sons of God and members of God's kingdom, so long as it was understood that they were not and could not be made such by the outward sacrament (except from the point of view of external attestation). The only statement which gave rise to misgivings was the categorical pronouncement upon the salvation of the baptised, a pronouncement which Some himself had attacked on the ground that it was not true to experience: 'many which have been circumcised and baptised have dyed out of God's favour' (2nd P. of a R. 1 p. 72). The intention of this rubric, however, was to destroy the prevalent notion that confirmation added something to baptism, a point which should be remembered by those who confidently regard the confirmation service as in some sense a sacramental completion of baptism. The Puritan protests against the dogmatic language of the formularies were few and far between in the Elizabethan period. Only when the seventeenth century divines developed a new sacramentalist understanding and re-introduced a semi-Scholastic phraseology did the Puritans take alarm and plead for a modification of phrases which had hitherto been satisfactory, properly understood, but which could now be used as the basis of new and non-Reformed interpretation.

The Article made no pronouncement upon the effects of baptism in infants. It merely stated the general effects, and recommended the continuance of the Godly custom of administering the sacrament to infants. The implication seems to be that the efficacy in infants does not differ from that in adults; otherwise some special ought surely to have been introduced. As Goode well realised, the sacramental theology of the Reformers formed a unity. The subject of the effects in infants could only be discussed within the context of the larger subject of the effects in adults. Indeed we might go further, as the Reformers themselves did, and say that the efficacy of baptism can only be understood only in relation to the efficacy of the supper, and vice versa. The sacramental working of God
conformed to a general pattern. This point is important, for it means that if ex opere operato and static conceptions were excluded in one connection they were excluded in all connections.

We may sum up the discussion in this way. The Anglican Reformers believed that baptism sealed the remission of original sin to elect infants, by virtue of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. They did not think of this remission in terms of an effected cleansing, but in terms of non-imputation. Since forgiveness was by non-imputation and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, they could believe further that the forgiveness of all sins was proffered in baptism and sealed to the elect, again by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, and in accordance with promise. Together with this forgiveness they believed that the new life in Jesus Christ was proffered in the sacrament, and sealed to the elect. Thus it was not improper to speak of the recipients of baptism as the children of God by adoption. They believed finally that, as a visible word, baptism had a large and important part to play; under the Holy Spirit, in the effectual calling of the elect to the personal appropriation of Christ and his benefits, in individual repentance and faith. In infants who died in infancy the Holy Ghost accomplished this work in a special way, by an internal enlightenment. In those who attained to age baptism was as it were the seed out of which a personal faith grew. In the eternal counsel of God that which baptism signified was accomplished in a moment in the elect, although in individual experience the recipient could not enter at once into the benefits proffered and sealed. Not even in infants adults could this be the case, for if conversion to God marked the first crucial point in the fulfilment of the baptismal work, the climax could only be reached with physical dissolution and the resurrection to eternal life. The Christian life itself in all its aspects might very well be described as the effective entry, under the Holy Spirit, into the benefits promised and sealed, and by faith enjoyed already in baptism.

In a word, the emphatic language of the formularies did not point back to a work done, although in due time that too could be looked for. It pointed to a work promised, a work which could be reckoned done because the promise was the promise of God, to whom past, present and future are one. The soul did not rest then upon the performance of a rite and the effects of that performance. It rested upon God, upon the promise of God, upon the purpose of God in election, upon the work of God. To interpret the high sacramental theology of the Reformers in any other way is to set it at variance with their whole deep understanding of the Christian faith.

That is not to say that the actual formularies will not bear another interpretation. Goode, in his masterly analysis, has pointed out that at least six interpretations are permissible without doing violence to the language. He has listed them as follows: that infants are regenerated in respect of the faith of their parents, or the church; that the elect are forgiven and regenerated in the full sense; that those whose future repentance and faith are foreseen by God are forgiven
and regenerated, and Arminian variant; that the seed or principle of faith is given; that all are regenerated sacramentally; and that all are admitted to a new ecclesiastical status (See Goode E.B.I. pp.1-26). It ought to be observed, however, that because these views can be read into the formularies without straining the sense, it does not by any means follow, either that the Reformers themselves held these varied opinions, or that they wished to leave scope for so great a variety of interpretations. It would be too much to say that the Reformers were entirely at one in their understanding of the matter, except in the rejection of the Romanist teaching. It can be stated quite fairly, however, that they understood the effects in infants in accordance with the same fundamental evangelical principles, and that those principles were wholly and entirely in the tradition of Protestantism abroad.

4. Remarks

The problem of the effects of baptism in infants is one which arises in every age, and the question must still be asked: What is the value today of the various solutions proposed? This much may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that it is not possible for the Protestant even to consider a return to the Romanist teaching (See Quick pp.170 f.). It may be granted readily enough that if original sin stands for anything real, then that sin is pardoned to all the baptised, by virtue of the work or the love of Christ. Experience does not bear out the further claim, that the infant recipients of the sacrament are inwardly cleansed from all the pollution of sin, and endowed in some measure with special gifts of grace. In behaviour baptised children show few signs of a superior spiritual endowment other than that which can be attributed quite naturally to the education in Christian faith and conduct which they are privileged to receive. It can always be argued, of course, that in baptism the process of moral renovation only begins, and that the failure to reach a high standard of Christian life is due to the interposition of obstacles with the growth in years. Such an explanation of the facts has the advantage that it can never be disproved, but it has the disadvantage that it can never be proved. It is a pure assumption which evades the one test available, the test of facts, which if it is to be believed at all, must be believed solely upon authority or tradition. The same applies, of course, to the primary assertion that the soul undergoes in baptism a literal and quasi-material cleansing. Obviously an assertion of this kind can never be shown to be either true or false, for the soul and its processes cannot be subjected to empirical investigation, except in so far as they are manifested in the performance of good or bad actions. A theology which introduces and depends upon this speculative dogmatising is no doubt very clever and systematic, but its artificiality and unreality rob it of all power for the modern man.

Rejecting the Romanist teaching, the Protestant who is anxious to retain infant baptism must make a choice between three alternatives. He may deny that baptism accomplishes any supernatural work at all. It may be retained because of its threelfold
value: ecclesiastically, as an introduction into the church; symbolically, as a sign of the goodwill of God and effectually, as a means of instruction. Now all Protestants do believe that baptism has a value along the lines indicated. Where, however, there is a belief in a transcendent God, who does a special and supernatural work in Christians in and through the appointed means of grace, it cannot be allowed either that this is the whole truth about baptism or that it is even the most important part of the truth. The discussion turns, as always, upon the wider views of God and the relation of God to the universe. Monistic doctrines involve necessarily a non-supernatural understanding of the sacrament and its work. A serious doctrine of the creation and of redemption makes anything less than a supernatural understanding quite unsatisfactory and inadequate.

But supposing that baptism does accomplish something of real spiritual value under the Holy Ghost, the further question must be asked: What does it accomplish? On the one hand, a semi-Romanist answer may be returned: God the Holy Spirit works through baptism to cleanse from original sin and to give the first spark of spiritual life, a spark which may in later years either be fanned into flame or quenched and finally extinguished. In spite of the avoidance of quasi-material terms, this view has to face exactly the same objections as the Romanist: What does this purging and regenerating amount to when it is submitted to the pragmatic test? It may be asserted easily enough that a baptised infant receives a spark of spiritual life, but this effect or gift is quite unreal, for in actual living it is not such as to make any appreciable difference, except on the purely human level that the child is treated as a member of the church, and enjoys the privileges of Christian instruction. To make bold claims for baptism, and then to conceal the effects by making them as negligible as possible, and in some cases nothing at all, is to build theological castles in the air. Either God works, or else he does not work. If he works then it must be a real work. If he does not, or if he works in some other way, then there is no point in inventing sacramental effects, which when analysed turn out to be no true effects at all.

The Reformed answer remains. It admits frankly that the forgiveness and cleansing are by imputation: they rest upon the divine promise and they must be believed, not seen. An accusation of unreality may be made, but that is the whole point of faith: we believe that we are righteous, not because we see ourselves to be righteous, but because for Christ's sake God reckons us righteous. The forgiveness proffered in baptism, and sealed to the elect, is not a work done, nor does it claim to be a work done. It requires no demonstration, because it never professes to be capable of demonstration. Yet is it not true that faith and regeneration, and even the forgiveness itself, must manifest themselves in the life? The Reformed understanding allows for this. The baptismal benefits are proffered to all, but they are sealed only to the elect. And in the elect the sacrament itself, hand in hand with the word, is used by the Holy Ghost to bring about that real repentance and faith.
by which the benefits of the sacrament are personally appropriated and possessed, and by which the grace of the sacrament finds fulfilment in spiritual life and moral conduct. God works in baptism, but not indiscriminately in all, and not necessarily at the time of administration. The real work of God reveals itself in time in the conversion to God and in continuance in the Christian life. In eternity and by faith that work has been accomplished from the beginning: it may be claimed because it has been promised. If there is no conversion and no continuance in the Christian life, then the proffered gifts have clearly been rejected, and no effectual operation of the Holy Spirit is presumed.

The advantage in the Reformed understanding is that it does not go beyond the plain facts of experience and yet allows for a truly supernatural work. No attempt is made to invent unreal and artificial effects, with the single exception of the suggested inward illumination of those who die in infancy. The disadvantages are two. First, the doctrine of forgiveness by non-imputation can just as easily become unreal in one way as that of a forgiveness by actual cleansing does in another. Second, the Reformed conception involves necessarily a strict doctrine of the divine sovereignty and election. It was no accident that the renewed sacramentalist teaching of the seventeenth century went hand in hand with the Arminian rejection of the doctrines of grace. Of course, an Arminian explanation is possible. God may be said to work where he foresees repentance and faith. But that is to make the efficacy dependent upon what are in a sense the effects. The point is this, that if salvation is a gift from God in all its aspects, even in its reception, then the fact that the Holy Spirit seals the benefits to some and not to others means inevitably a purpose and an election of God. The thought of the eternity of God, the firm grasp of the principle that with God past and future are one, helps very considerably to soften the doctrine of election, for it makes the election an election in action rather than an election according to pre-existent choice. Many of the harsher features of the Calvinistic doctrine were due to the unlovely conception of the pre-existent decrees. Yet many Protestants will hesitate to commit themselves again to a doctrine of predestination, however it is explained or understood. The only alternative then is to believe that the Holy Spirit seeks to work in all, but that lack of willingness or response robs that work of its efficacy in a large number of cases. The differences between this view and the sacramentalist alternative of a spark of new life are not large, except that the offer of the Holy Spirit is not thought of as the beginning of a work done.

The Reformed conception seems in every respect to be the most satisfactory, except perhaps for its affiliation with a strict doctrine of election. The ultimate choice which Protestantism will have to make if it is to maintain itself against sacramentalism is between the modern naturalistic and the Reformed dynamic teaching. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the naturalistic view bade fair to carry the day, severing the
sacramental theology of Protestantism from its historical and Scriptural base. More recent years have seen a tardy revival of Reformation teaching, and a fresh appreciation of the undoubtedly great qualities of the sixteenth century understanding. For the maintaining of a healthy and balanced doctrine of the sacrament Protestantism can hardly do better than attempt to restate the Reformed view, amending and developing it in accordance with modern principles and requirements.

Notes

1. Luther W.A. 6 p. 527 'Verum ubi virtutem baptismi in parvulis non potuit Satan extinguere'.
2. Melanchthon C.R. 33 p. 295 'Habent autem opus infantes remissione peccati'.
3. Ibid. p. 859 'Infantes nascuntur cum peccato, nec fuint haeredes vitae aeternae sine remissione peccati. Institut autem Deus in Ecclesia ministerium remittendi peccati, et distribuendi remissionem per sacramenta....'
4. Zwingli C.R. 2 p. 282 'Weder der Erwachsenen noch den Kindern schenkt also die Taufe etwas Gottliches; sie setzt das Göttliche beidemal schon voraus!
5. Zwingli C.R. 4 p. 620 'Du vermischest den inneren touff des geysts mit dem usseren, sakramentalischen touf....den inneren touff konnend wir nyeman geben'.
6. Wernle p. 203 'Da doch der Geist einem jeden sich mitteilt wie er will'.
7. Beckmann p. 97 uses the older Scholastic term to describe Calvin's teaching: 'eine geheime Eingiessung des Heiligen Geists'.
8. Nowell P.S. pp. 87-8 'Infantibus vero promissio Ecclesiae facta per Christum, in cujus Fide baptizantur, in praezens satis erit, deinde postquam adoleverint, baptismi sui veritatem ipsos agnoscer e, ejusque vim in animis eorum vigere'.

CHAPTER XVI CONCUPISCENCE AND POST-BAPTISMAL SIN

One final problem remains to be considered, the problem of post-baptismal sin, which includes the co-related problem of the nature and power of concupiscence in the recipients of baptism. The various lines of approach to this matter will already have become obvious from the previous discussions of the effects of the sacrament, and no more is needed than to draw out the implications in greater detail. The study of the Anglican views will afford fresh evidence of the relationship existing between the Anglican Reformers and the Romanists on the one hand, the Lutheran and Reformed groups on the other.

1. The Romanist Teaching

The Scholastic and Tridentine teaching had its roots in the pronouncements of the Fathers upon the effects of the sacrament. As we have already seen, the Fathers taught that baptism effected an actual sinlessness, which the baptised person was now required to maintain (Harnack Hist. of Dogma 2 p.140). The implication of this teaching was that thanks to the baptismal purgation and the restoration of the divine image the original sin in man had been completely destroyed. Theoretically, then, the Christian ought from the moment of baptism onwards to live a life of complete perfection, for all that made for sin, or at any rate all that was sin had been eradicated. In actual experience, however, things worked out differently. The baptised person found that even after baptism the attraction to sin remained, and sins, even sins of a grave character, were actually committed. The continuance of the attraction to sin and the committal of post-baptismal sins gave rise to a two-fold problem: the practical and immediate problem, whether any hope of further forgiveness could be extended to those Christians who had fallen into so-called deadly sin, murder, adultery or apostasy; and the more speculative problem, how this persistence of sin in the baptised and regenerate was to be explained.

The first problem involved the early church in a good deal of bitter controversy, and was not solved without the shattering of the unity of the church by repeated and dangerous schisms. Indeed, from one standpoint the history of the earlier centuries might very well be considered as the story of a struggle between those who advocated a strict rigorism in this matter, and those who favoured more lenient policies. On the side of rigor were such groups as the Monatanists, and later the Novationists and the Donatists. Building upon such New Testament passages as Hebrews 6 and I John 5.16, these bodies denied the possibility of fresh repentance if mortal sin were committed subsequent to baptism. Tertullian himself seemed to incline to this view, advising a long delay before the reception of the sacrament, lest its decisive meaning and importance should not be fully realised (Tert. De Bap. 18). The not uncommon custom of post-
-poning baptism until the death-bed grew directly out of the fear of forfeiting all hope of forgiveness by the committal of mortal sin after baptism. It commended itself, of course, to those who wished to ensure their salvation without the corresponding abandonment of the pleasures and benefits of sin. Augustine's reflection that the moment after baptism is the only logical time for suicide was based upon the same conception, for Augustine meant that at that moment the soul was perfectly fitted for heaven, being cleansed by the washing of holy regeneration.

On the other side, however, there were those who felt that it was carrying matters much too far to assert an absolute exclusion from salvation as the penalty for even the gravest post-baptismal sins. Hermas emerged as the preacher of at least one chance of repentance subsequent to baptism, and the popes of the early third century, notably Callistus, championed the cause of leniency. Cyprian was strict enough in his dealings with the lapsi, but he did at least extend some hopes of readmission to grace. The dangers of moral laxity were grave enough, but the harsh system of penitential discipline provided a constant safeguard and formed indeed a basis upon which a doctrine of forgiveness could be erected. The scandals of death-bed baptisms and the excesses of the Donatists strengthened the hands of those who pleaded for a more lenient teaching, and in the fourth century the victory had been won. Basil argued strongly against the delaying of baptism, especially that delaying which had as its object an irresponsible continuing in sin (Orat. de Bapt. 40). Nyssa carefully weighed the alternatives: baptism at once, with the possibility of relapse into sin, and the postponement of baptism, with the risk of sudden death. He decided that 'in the choice of evils it was rather to be chosen that a man, having obtained baptism, should again be in sin, than that he should end his life void of grace' (Carey Test. of the Fathers). Chrysostom boldly announced that post-baptismal sin need not finally condemn: there was a remission after baptism as well as in baptism (Hom. de Pcenit.). Jerome maintained a similar opinion, resting upon the assurance that labour and industry and diligence, and above all the mercy of God would keep in righteousness (Dial. adv. Pelag. 1.3).

Experience taught quickly that the baptised do fall into sin, but clearly, if baptism accomplished a quasi-material purgation, there could be no forgiveness unless there was a fresh cleansing and restoration of the soul. Baptism itself could not be repeated: a point upon which the rigorists were quick to fasten. The advocates of a second chance were thus forced to discover some other means of spiritual renewal, a second plank to save the soul from shipwreck when the first plank had been carelessly abandoned. The solution to the problem came with the development of the mediaeval sacrament of penance, which derived historically from the age-long system of penitential discipline. Penance became the second means of purification, inferior to baptism in efficacy, superior to baptism in reiterability.

The problem of post-baptismal sin was not without its bearing upon the doctrines of grace and predestination, an important
point in view of the later Reformed teaching. It could be held with Augustine that God exerted his grace effectually and even irresistibly to the elect and through the sacrament of baptism. But whether this was so, or whether it was believed that all who did not place an obstacle experienced the sacramental work, the conferring of baptismal grace did not in any case give assurance of final salvation. The soul that was cleansed in baptism could still perish as the result of defilement with new sin and the consequent withdrawal of the divine grace. The static inter-relating of sign and grace and the quasi-material understanding of the baptismal work destroyed any possibility of a doctrine of final perseverance or of the indefectibility of the divine grace. Only when forgiveness came to be understood as non-imputation, and sign and grace were seen to be related not statically but dynamically could the doctrines of indefectibility of grace and the perseverance of saints be taught without giving even the appearance of a licence to sin.

The mediaeval theologians and canonists took up the Patristic statements and developed them into a thoroughgoing sacramentalist scheme. They also tackled the second and theoretical problem, how to explain the continuance of the desire for sin in the baptised, and the committal by them of definite acts of sin. The acts obviously derived from the inclination. But that is not very different from saying that actual sins derive from original sin. Yet the effect of baptism was to purge the soul thoroughly from original sin. How then was the continuance of this desire for sin to be explained? It could only be explained by separating original sin and the inclination to sin completely, at any rate in the baptised, and by defining the inclination to sin, or concupiscence, in a purely negative way. For the Scholastics concupiscence in the regenerate was not sin: it was a weakness left by God for disciplinary purposes; and as a temporal penalty for the fall, it became sinful only when it was yielded to, and gave rise to definite acts of sin. The grace of God availed to hold it in check so long as the human will cooperated. The continuance of sin in the baptised was thus explained without any devaluation of the effects or efficacy of baptism, and with the concurrent development of the sacrament of penance the whole problem of post-baptismal sin found both practical and theoretical solution (See Mackinnon's Luther 4 p.34).

The Lutheran teaching of forgiveness by non-imputation rather than by purgation constituted a direct challenge to the Scholastic scheme, and the sixteenth century Romanists replied to it by vigorous reaffirmation of the by now traditional teaching. The Bull Exsurge Domine condemned the impious proposition of Luther, 'that to deny the continuance of original sin in baptised children is to tread both Paul and Christ underfoot' (Kidd D.C.R. p.76). The Council of Trent discussed the matter in some detail. Those who denied that the soul was cleansed thoroughly from original sin in baptism were anathematised: 'If any one saith that by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is not remitted; or
even asserts that the whole of that which has the true and proper nature of sin is not taken away; but says that it is only rased (canceled) or not imputed, let him be anathema (Ex C. & D. Sess. Orig. Sin. Can. 5). The Tridentines could not deny the continuance of concupiscence, which they explained as a godly discipline: 'This Holy Synod confesses and is sensible, that in the baptised there remains concupiscence, or an incentive to sin......left for our exercise' (Ibid.). What they did deny was that this concupiscence could properly be called sin in the very strictest sense: 'The Catholic Church has never understood it to be called sin, as being truly and properly sin in those born again, but because it is of sin, and inclines to sin' (Ibid.). The concession that concupiscence was sin in the looser sense, as that which proceeded from sin and inclined to further sin, was made in deference to the authority of Paul and of Augustine, who had both unhesitatingly identified concupiscence and sin. The Tridentine understanding seemed to be this. Baptism abolished the stain, the guilt and the eternal punishment of original sin, but it did not absolve from the temporal penalties, concupiscence, suffering and death. In the case of concupiscence it exercised a weakening and restraining effect, and concupiscence in the baptised ceased to be sin in the fullest and strictest sense. It remained as the combustible material which burst into the flame of sin only with the decision or surrender of the will (See Watkins: God and the Supernatural, quoted by Quick p.172).

The Catechism of Trent stated and explained the Romanist teaching more clearly and simply. Baptism carried with it, as we have seen, the remission of original sin and of prebaptismal actual sin (Cat. T. 2,2 Qu. 60). Concupiscence remained as 'an innate predisposition to sin', but it could not be said 'really to constitute sin' (Qu. 42). Unless it were yielded to, no guilt or penalties attached to it. It was 'an infirmity left for purposes of probation' (Ibid.). Although baptism purged the soul from sin, it did not restore absolutely to the state of 'uncorrupt nature', for the penal consequences of sin remained, amongst them concupiscence. This weakness of the flesh gave rise to 'a most severe conflict of the flesh against the Spirit', for in the baptised the 'germs and materials of virtue' existed alongside the uneradicated predisposition to sin (Ibid.).

Bellarmine defended the Tridentine doctrine against Lutheran and Reformed objections. He claimed boldly that baptism had destroyed or effaced original sin, so that the concupiscence which remained in the baptised could not be equated with it or regarded as sin in the strict and proper sense. The Lutheran explanation, that the sin of concupiscence remained, but without being imputed, he dismissed as contrary to the justice of God. The Romanists had the Fathers on their side, for when the Fathers had spoken of concupiscence, they had defined it, not as sin, but as the effect and the punishment of sin. Paul had used concupiscence and sin as equivalents, but only when he was speaking of concupiscence yielded to. Augustine referred on occasion to the guilt of concupiscence, but by this he must
have meant, either the guilt which follows because concupiscence remains, or the guilt from which concupiscence springs, or perhaps simply the guilt of concupiscence yielded to. Bellarmine granted that concupiscence might always be regarded as an evil, for it was a weakness which owed its origin to sin (See De la S. T.B.pp.366 f.).

The problem of the forgiveness of post-baptismal sins no presented no difficulties, for it had found solution with the exaltation of penance to full sacramental rank. Penance was the means by which the grace of remission was conveyed to those who fell after baptism. A full discussion of Scholastic and Romanist teaching upon this point would take us rather far from the doctrine of baptism properly speaking. All kinds of complicated questions were involved: the meaning of penitence; the matter of the sacrament; the necessity of the sacrament; the relation of the sacrament to perfect contrition; penitence as confession, contrition and satisfaction; the value of attrition; the place of confession, the need for private as well as public confession; the nature of absolution; the value of penances and good works, especially fasting and almsgiving; the extent of the forgiveness mediated, and its limitation; the sin against the Holy Ghost. For our present purpose it will be sufficient to give a brief summary of the outstanding points in the Trinitarian statements.

The sacrament of penance was considered by the Council of Trent in the fourteenth Session. The conclusions were stated in the canons, which took the usual form of anathemas pronounced against those who held contrary opinions. The most important canons were the first two. Canon 1 required a belief that penance was truly and properly a sacrament, instituted by Christ our Lord, for reconciling the faithful unto God, as often as they fall into (deadly) sin after baptism'. Canon 2 condemned those who like Luther confused penance with baptism, refusing to recognise in penance the 'second plank' which was required to save the soul from shipwreck. Later canons dealt with the more detailed questions of contrition, confession, absolution and satisfaction.

The Catechism of Trent repeated the teaching of the Canons, perhaps rather more clearly and certainly with greater fulness. The metaphor of the plank was again used: 'So after the loss of baptismal innocence, unless a man cling to the plank of penance, without doubt all hope of his salvation must be abandoned' (Cat.T.2,5 Qu.1). Penance did not confer so great benefits as baptism', but it had this advantage, that it could be 'repeated indefinitely' (Can.12). A distinction was made between mortal and venial sins. Strictly, the remission offered in penance concerned only mortal and grievous sins, although the lighter sins which are called venial' were also said to require some kind of penance (Can.20). The grace of penance did not absolve from the necessity of making satisfaction, and it was strictly limited in extent. It remitted the guilt of sin, and absolved from the punishment of eternal death, but did not 'remove the scars of sin', nor did it remit the definite temporal punishments' (Can.61). The less efficacious working and the impositions of penalties were providentially ordered by the divine justice and clemency.
'The justice of God required a less efficacious working in those who sin openly and wilfully, and the divine clemency ordained satisfactory punishments, in order to restrain from sin, and to make make restitution to the church' (Can. 62).

It will be seen from the foregoing discussions that by the sixteenth century the solutions to the problems of concupiscence and post-baptismal sin had been fully worked out by the Romanist theologians. Original sin and concupiscence were carefully distinguished: this distinction was necessary, for otherwise it would be impossible to teach an actual cleansing effected by the sacrament of baptism. Post-baptismal sin of a mortal and grievous character involved a fall from the grace of baptism, and the forfeiture of its benefits. This fall did not necessarily involve final loss, for God had graciously provided a means of restoration, penitence and the sacrament of penance. Assurance was impossible, of course, for a failure to receive absolution after the committal of grievous sin meant inevitable perdition. A full atonement had been made for sin upon the cross, but the quasi-material application of Christ's merits through the sacraments severely restricted the value of that atonement for any particular individual at any particular time. At the root of the system there lay the static inter-relating of grace and sacrament, which had as its inevitable consequence the subordination of the work and the grace of Christ, first to the means of grace, and second and by implication, to those who controlled the means of grace, the ministers or priests. A further consequence amongst the ordinary people was the obscuring of the free forgiveness of God and the effacing of the redeeming work of Christ, due to the confusion between the temporal penalties, for which individual satisfaction could be made, and the eternal penalties, for which the satisfaction of Christ alone availed. Against these perversions of a truly Scriptural Christianity the Reformers made their earnest protest, rethinking the whole question of concupiscence and the forgiveness of post-baptismal sin in the light of the doctrine of justification by faith and of the dynamic conception of sacramental grace.

2. The Views of Luther.

In many of his earlier writings Luther seemed to hold a position very similar to if not identical with that of his opponents. He allowed that penance might properly be described as a sacrament. He made a distinction between original sin, which was blotted out in baptism, and concupiscence, which was weakened, but not destroyed. In this whole matter he followed closely the teaching of Lombard and of Augustine (Hanel p. 17, 2.p. 19). According to this scheme concupiscence was a temporal penalty for the sin of the race. After baptism no further guilt attached to it, so that it could hardly be described as sin, but the penalty itself remained. Even in his later work Luther did not depart from this doctrine, although he came to express it in a very different way. He could always allow that concupiscence, even if it was sin, was covered by the mercy of God, so that no guilt attached to it, even while it remained and incited to
actual deeds of sin (Ibid.).

It was the doctrine of justification by non-imputation which revolutionised Luther's whole thinking upon the problem, and led him to state his doctrine in a radically new way. As far as concupiscence was concerned, it opened Luther's eyes to the fact that original sin might be forgiven without being effaced or destroyed. Thus even in the regenerate this root of sin might be said to persist, although in the mercy of God and according to the promise of God it was no longer imputed (Seeberg p.319). Thus of original sin itself, and not only of concupiscence, it could be said that it existed as a fact, although it no longer existed as guilt. This being the case, there was no good reason for not identifying original sin and concupiscence much more closely. As Luther saw it, the baptised had begun to live in purity and innocence (W.A.2 p.730), and they no longer needed to fear the judgment and the wrath of God. But sin itself remained in them, finding expression in individual sinful acts. The concupiscence which incited to these acts might still be nicely distinguished from original sin, as a twist of nature consequent upon original sin, but there was no reason to deny that it was in itself sinful and worthy of condemnation, even in the regenerate or the elect (See Formula of Concord Art.1).

Obviously the Romanists, with their different understanding both of sacramental grace and also of justification, could not be expected either to appreciate or to accept this novel interpretation. For one thing, it called in question the real work done by baptism. That has been seen already, but it cannot be stressed too much how unreal and indeed unreal the Lutheran forgiveness by non-imputation appeared compared with the traditional forgiveness by purgation. Again, it seemed to give a licence to the committal of actual deeds of sin. If man was always sinful in any case by virtue of the continuance of the sin of concupiscence, then surely to strive after a good life was futile from the very first. Indeed, it was necessary, for a free forgiveness by non-imputation was always assured. Of course, in Luther's own thought a double safeguard existed: the non-imputation was only by faith, and a true faith, being the work of the Holy Ghost, naturally and inevitably resulted in righteous works. The opponents of Luther could not understand these safeguards, however, for they conceived of faith quite differently, as little more than a correct intellectual belief. Hence the twofold charge preferred against Luther from the very first: contempt of the sacrament, and antinomianism.

The new understanding of concupiscence inevitably influenced Luther's doctrine of post-baptismal sin and its forgiveness. If concupiscence remained as fault but not as guilt, then it followed that the forgiveness proffered and sealed in baptism extended to the whole life of the recipient i.e. it covered by non-imputation that sin which remained until the very moment of death. But if the sin of concupiscence was covered, then there was no reason not to suppose that all actual deeds of sin were also covered. Thus the baptismal remission need not be restricted to sins committed before baptism, and the need for a new
sacrament or channel of grace in respect of post-baptismal sins disappeared of itself. A forgiveness by non-imputation did not stand under the limitation of time as did a forgiveness by actual cleansing. It could extend to all sins, bringing the whole life of the Christian, both before baptism and after, within the divine mercy, and under the cover of the divine promises.

The conception of a lifelong baptismal forgiveness led inevitably to a rejection of the doctrine of a second plank, and the complete subordination of penance or penitence to the prior and all-important sacrament. Luther attacked the teaching of a second plank as a perversion of true Christian doctrine. It was wrong from the very first, for it made of baptism a thing of small account, frustrated and overthrown by the very first act of mortal or grievous sin (W.A.6 p.529). The truth was that baptism could be overthrown by no sin. Far from being a first plank of salvation, it was itself the ark of salvation, trustworthy and unshakeable (Wernle p.33). What then was the value of penance, a sacrament which Luther retained? It had this value, that when a Christian man fell into grievous sin, by penance he could renew his baptism, returning to the power and faith of that sacrament by the act of forsaking sin and doing penance (W.A.6 p.529). Penance was thus useful and even necessary where there was a relapse into sin, but it had no independent value apart from the sacrament of baptism upon which it rested. It was a sacrament only in a secondary or derived sense, not conveying new grace, but renewing to the penitent and believing the remission already enjoyed by virtue of the great primary sacrament. The sacrament of penance naturally tended to sink in the estimation of those who followed Luther, and very quickly the status of penance as a sacrament and the identification of penance with penitence were called in question.

Luther thus substituted an evangelical understanding of concupiscence and post-baptismal sin for the older sacramentalist understanding. He remained true to the facts of Christian experience, not asserting more of baptism and its effects than reality allowed. He did not teach an automatic forgiveness of all new acts of sin, but demanded a true penitence and a living faith. He exalted the sacrament of baptism, however, referring back all forgiveness to the baptismal work and the baptismal promises. A freer conception of remission and of grace enabled him to avoid the artificial notions of 'doses' of grace, and the tying of the divine work of forgiveness to priestly acts. Misunderstandings of Luther's teaching were inevitable, especially when it was expressed in his own vivid but not always cautious language. His statements had, however, a vitality and profundity lacking in the subtle and closely reasoned, but artificial analyses and formulations of his Romanist antagonists.

3. The Anabaptist Aberration

It was perhaps only natural that the sixteenth century return to a Scriptural theology should carry with it in some circles a
revival of the rigorist conceptions of the early church. The Anabaptists were the ones logically destined to develop unbalanced views of a particularist character. They had as their avowed objective the erection of a church of pure believers separate from the world. They refused to take seriously the doctrine of original sin, and exalted the freedom and power of the human will. The natural result was that they quickly came to exaggerate the ability of the Christian to attain actual holiness and righteousness in this life, and attempted to enforce the demands for holiness and righteousness by a rigid system of ecclesiastical discipline.

It has been maintained by some writers that the Anabaptists went further and taught the sinless perfection of all true believers (Cf. Muralt, p. 36). In their own day they were certainly accused of perfectionism. Zwingli brought against Mantz the charge that he wished to restrain from baptism all but those who were conscious of being without sin (Ibid.). The Augsburg Confession expressly singled out the Anabaptists for condemnation on this score (12), and later in the century Rogers found a similar teaching amongst members of the Family: 'In the regenerate sin is cut away, as with a razor, so that the godly cannot sin' (Rog. P.S., pp. 141 f.). Undoubtedly some of the Anabaptist sects must have held views which either were perfectionist or approximated very closely to perfectionism, although it must not be forgotten that the sinless state was attributed not to the sacrament, and not primarily to the power of the individual will, but to the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ applied by faith. Muralt, however, after a careful examination of the evidence, has given strong reasons for the belief that few of the leading Anabaptists were perfectionists in the strictest sense of the word. They believed certainly that the Christian life ought to be one of perfection, and they believed in the possibility of attaining to this perfection. That is why they called upon their members so insistently to walk in the Spirit and to forsake wicked works (Ibid.). But this very stress upon the challenge to a holy life, accompanied as it was by a call to constant penitence, constitutes in itself an argument against the belief that the holy life had already been attained. The existence of the ban implies similarly the possibility of sin even in those who have made profession of repentance and faith. Such perfection of Christian life as was attainable was attainable only by the few, and not without serious and constant striving.

There can be no doubt, of course, that the Anabaptists were rigorists. The ban served to keep the church pure, and it took the sharpest possible form, the cutting off of the fallen brother from even the most trivial forms of intercourse with the brethren. Where Anabaptist communities were organised, this exclusion and boycott was a very serious matter. The details of the ban and its application do not concern us now, nor does the doctrine of the church which underlay it. What does concern us is the two-fold fact, that the ban implied a striving after an attainable perfection, and that its severity carried with it the implication that the fallen brother was cut off, not only from ecclesiastical
fellowship, but also from all hope of ultimate salvation. Thus the Anabaptists indirectly if not directly denied two cardinal points in Reformation teaching: the continuance of the sin of concupiscence in the regenerate, and the possibility of the forgiveness of even the gravest of post-baptismal sins, by virtue of the baptismal promise and grace. Calvin seized on this latter point in the Anabaptist heresy in his very thorough discussion and refutation in the Institutes. For the Anabaptists the fall into sin after baptism meant, as he put it, 'an abandonment to the inexorable judgment of God'. Particularists were undoubtedly driven to this view by their very particularism, for the Separatists in England, who were Anabaptists in their doctrine of the church if not in their doctrine of baptism, laid themselves open to a similar charge. So severe was their discipline that they seemed to 'take away with Novatus the wicked heretic, all hope of salvation from those which offend out of knowledge willingly' (Rogers p.141, quoting Gyfford's Reply to Barrowe and Greenwood). That this was no trumped up accusation is proved by the famous case of the elder Rolton, who, 'convinced that God neither could nor would forgive him,' was driven to complete desperation, and committed suicide (Ibid.) A point to notice about the Anabaptist and Separatist doctrine is its tendency to subjectivism: salvation depended far more upon the faith or attainments or even emotions of the individual, and far less upon the promise and free grace of God in Christ, which availed for all sin, original or actual, pre- or post-baptismal.

It need not be supposed that all Anabaptists believed that those who committed grave sin and fell under the ban were inevitably cut off from all possibility of repentance and doomed to irrevocable damnation. At the same time the severity of the ban, the doctrines of perfection, and speculation upon the unforgivable sin, undoubtedly combined to lead many to equate the sin against the Holy Ghost with the committal of grave and wilful sin after baptism. The Anabaptists and Separatists did not hold these views, of course, because they shared the Scholastic and Romanist understanding of baptism and its work. They held them for the reason indicated above: because they thought of salvation in terms of human faith and experience rather than in terms of the promise and election. The Christian was forgiven so long as he had an apparent faith i.e. so long as he believed himself to be forgiven, and lived accordingly. But the loss of faith and the relapse into sin meant also the loss of forgiveness and the loss of the new life, symbolised externally in the rejection from the community of the faithful. The Reformers agreed, of course, that an individual faith is necessary for the application of the divine work and the personal entry into the divine promises. But just as they avoided identifying of the work of God with the external sign, so they avoided the too close identifying of it with the external profession of faith. The elect believer was always forgiven in the eternal purpose of God, even though for a time he lived in sin and was destitute of faith, whether before conversion or after. On the other hand in God's sight the man who made a profession of faith, but was not elect, never had remission certainty of sins at all, not even at the time when
he apparently continued for a while in faith and good works.

The doctrine of the sovereignty of God and the divine election had its uncomfortable aspects, but at many points it gave the Reformers a tremendous superiority of understanding both over the Romanists and over the Anabaptists. It enabled the Reformers always to maintain the proper tension between the eternal and temporal aspects of salvation, the inward and the outward, the spiritual and the sacramental, the divine work and the human response. The Anabaptists had a praiseworthy longing after holiness, and they made an equally praiseworthy effort to maintain righteousness and discipline within the church. In the face of the deeper problems, the problem of concupiscence, the problem of sin in the believer and its forgiveness before God, the problem of assurance, in these problems of theology and of experience they fell far short, because they failed to maintain the Reformed balance, setting up impossible standards, concentrating upon the human choice which could be made and reversed at pleasure, missing the sure grounding of redemption in the love and the purpose and the activity of God. The penalty of their failure was a loss of the distinctive tenets of the Reformed teaching, a tortured speculation upon the unforgivable sin and its nature, a harsh application of disciplinary measures, and the lack of that wider charity which alone can save the Christian church from Pharisaism and schism.

4. The Reformed Doctrine

When we turn to consider the Swiss Reformed school, we find that their doctrine of concupiscence and post-baptismal sin developed very largely along the lines already laid down by Luther. New features were the abandonment of the Scholastic phraseology, the rejection of the sacrament of penance, and the repudiation of the new Anabaptist teaching. Zwingli himself was mainly concerned to refute the Anabaptist heresy, and he addressed himself with conspicuous energy to the countering of their perfectionist opinions, and more especially of their particularism in church doctrine and practice. At the same time he took over the Lutheran view of justification and developed a strong doctrine of the covenant and election, thus attacking the very foundations of the Romanist teaching.

Calvin was perhaps the one who stated the Reformed view with the greatest lucidity and force. He did not deal with the problem of concupiscence directly in the Institutes, but refuted the Trinitarian teaching specifically in his Antidote to the Council of Trent. The main argument of Calvin was the argument of Scripture: the Apostle Paul had spoken of concupiscence as sin. He claimed that it was not possible to evade the argument by alleging that the Apostle meant by the sin of concupiscence that concupiscence was the cause of sin or the punishment of sin, for these interpretations would set the verse at variance with the context. The further evasion that baptism changes the nature of concupiscence aroused the scorn of Calvin, for if concupiscence was sin before baptism, and remained the same, then it could not very well not be sin after baptism. The matter was
simple enough as Calvin saw it. Concupiscence was at all times repugnant to God, whether before baptism or after. And that which was repugnant to God was sin. Since then the Apostle affirmed that this repugnant disease remained in the regenerate, it followed therefore that 'of its own nature it is truly sin, although it is not imputed, and the guilt is abolished by the grace of Christ' (Tract 23 pp. 87 f.). Calvin could find support for this exposition of the Apostle's teaching 'in many passages of Ambrose and Augustine which admitted of no doubt as to their meaning' (Ibid.).

Concupiscence could thus properly be described as sin, and it remained in the baptised, although it was not imputed. Upon this basis Calvin re-thought the traditional position with regard to post-baptismal sin and the necessity and efficacy of the so-called sacrament of penance. As far as penance was concerned he came to clear conclusions in his discussion of the five added sacraments in the fourth book of the Institutes (Instit. 4, 19, 17). He considered first the famous saying of Jerome, that penance is the second plank in the case of shipwreck. Calvin thought that a proper sense might be attached to these words if penance were understood to mean penitence. Penitence was as it were a means to repair the garment of innocence received in baptism if anyone had injured it by sin. But it was 'impious' to apply the dictum as the Romanists did, for they derived from it the utterly false doctrine that baptism 'can be effaced by sin'. The true view which Calvin himself held and taught was that baptism itself is the sacrament of penitence and faith. The Christian who falls into sin has in baptism the surest possible pledge of the forgiveness of all sin by the free mercy of God in Jesus Christ. The baptismal forgiveness, being a forgiveness by non-imputation, and not by a quasi-material cleansing, extends to the whole of life, and avails for the cancelling of all sins upon the inward penitence of the sinner.

In his discussion of the aberrations of the Anabaptists Calvin applied the same fundamental teaching, but in another way. He agreed with the Anabaptists to this extent, that there was need of a strict ecclesiastical discipline. He could not agree, however, that the divine pardon was so tied to regeneration or baptism, that the post-baptismal lapse, even if it were of a wilful nature, robbed the Christian of all hope of further remission (Instit. 4, 1, 23-28). The forgiveness of God was the ground of the covenant-entry into the church, but it was also the means of preservation and defence within the church. It was not a pardon extended once only, but a continual pardon extended graciously to those who during their whole lives 'carried about with them the remains of sin, and could not continue one single moment were they not sustained by the uninterrupted grace of God forgiving their sins'. The office of the church was not to exercise discipline only, but to hold out the promise of restoration to the penitent. The keys had been given to the church that it might open not only for the unbelievers, 'who should be converted from impiety to the faith of Christ', but also for believers, who after their baptism fell into sin and turned again in repentance. By the keys Calvin understood, of course, the proclamation
of the divine promises, which bound those who rejected in unbelief and loosed those who received in faith.

Calvin had plainly understood the principles enunciated by Luther, and he had also purged out the compromising elements which still caused uncertainty or confusion in Luther's own writings. The followers of Calvin repeated his teaching with little alteration or addition, as we may see in the lucid statements in the confessions. The French Confession, for example, referred both to the continuance of original sin, and also to its forgiveness in the regenerate: 'Even after baptism it is still of the nature of sin, but the condemnation of it is abolished for the children of God....Even the most holy men, although they resist it, are still stained with many weaknesses and imperfections while they are in this life' (Art.11). This continuance of sin did not create a need for a new sacrament of repentance and absolution, for baptism itself was the sacrament of penitence and faith: 'so that although we are baptised only once, yet the gain that it symbolises to us reaches over our whole lives and to our death' (Art.35). The Belgic Confession stated similarly that original sin is not to be thought of as 'by any means abolished or done away by baptism, although it is not imputed to the children of God to condemnation, but by the grace and mercy of God is forgiven them' (Art.16). The fact that the baptismal forgiveness availed throughout the whole of life made the so-called sacrament of penance meaningless and unnecessary (Art.34). The Confession of the English Church in Geneva gave full assurance that 'although this root of sin be not imputed unto us, yet to the elect it shall not be imputed' (p.13), and in the Exhortation in the Baptismal Liturgy Knox taught that 'the venemous dreggs, although they continewe in this our flesh, yet by the merits of his deathe they are not imputed unto us'. Polan summed up the Reformed teaching upon concupiscence and post-baptismal sin when he affirmed that original sin was washed away and abolished only as concerned the guilt and penalty, not as concerned the sin itself. The fault, the inclination to evil remained to the very hour of death, bringing the Christian into a continual warfare against sin and its author the devil (Polan 6,55). Polan did not hesitate to describe concupiscence as truly and properly sin, a sin which remained in the regenerate after their baptism (Ibid.). Since the regenerate were always sinners, yet of the free mercy of God were reckoned righteous for Christ's sake, the committal of new acts of mortal sin could not alter their status, so long as they were willing always to come to God in repentance and faith. Thus the need of a second plank of salvation did not arise.

5. The English Divines

with the exception of those who favoured the traditional teaching, the English writers followed very closely those of the Lutheran and Reformed schools. Of the former group Shetler and Gardiner may be mentioned as typical. Shetler in a famous sermon preached the need of penance to wash the soul from the defilement of post-baptismal sin (Strype: Cranmer 1 p.257). Gardiner stated in unmistakable terms the traditional view of concupiscence:
'Although the guilt of original sin be taken away in baptism, yet the scarre of it (as it were) the matter of it doth remayne, whiche as it troubleth and letteth man's perfection...so it is not to be accounted our synne, till we conceyve it by our embracyng and agreyanse to such carnall motions' (Quoted by McLear and Williams, on Art.9). On the Protestant side Tyndale was a pioneer, introducing the typically Lutheran thought that in the Christian life the 'fight against the appetites' is the 'fulfilment of our baptism' (Tynd.P.S.1 p. 500). This idea had two important implications, the continuance of concupiscence, with the need for a war against sin, and the signification of baptism and the baptismal forgiveness for the whole life of the believer. In other words, the baptismal remission was the non-imputation of sin and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. Sin itself remained, so that the Christian life became a process of entering morally and actually into the perfection already possessed sacramentally and by faith.

The Articles of Cranmer bore clear evidence of a Lutheran influence, both in respect of concupiscence and also in respect of post-baptismal sin and its forgiveness. The question of original sin was dealt with in the sixth Article. Here it was argued that the guilt of original sin was abolished in baptism, but the corruption of nature or concupiscence remained, and needed to be healed by the work of the Holy Spirit (Cran.P.S.2 p. 474). The Article was cautiously worded, and it will be noticed that concupiscence was not described as sin, or having the nature of sin, nor was the corruption of nature identified too closely with original sin. It will also be noticed, however, that although there was no mention of a forgiveness by non-imputation, yet the Article implied that the reality of original sin remained, although the guilt no longer attached to it. Gardiner himself could probably have used this Article, interpreting it in his own way, but the impression of a Lutheran tendency remains. The King's Book was naturally more conservative. It spoke of the continual struggle which must be waged against concupiscence and carnal desires (which remained in the godly), but found hope in the fact that the baptised man was made more strong and able to resist than is another man which never was christened: an inverted form of the Scholastic teaching that concupiscence is weakened by baptism. Concupiscence itself was not sin, for baptism 'gave such grace that such carnal and fleshly lusts could in no wise hurt us, if we do not consent to them' (Lloyd p. 253).

More pronouncedly Protestant doctrines appeared in relation to the question of post-baptismal sin and its forgiveness. The Ten Articles repeated the teaching of the Augsburg Confession upon this issue. Hope was held out that even the gravest sins committed after baptism would be forgiven if there was sincere penitence and conversion to God, and penitence was identified, not so much with the sacrament of penance, but rather with inward repentance, the renewal, as it were, of the basic penitence of baptism. The wording of the Article was this: 'Such men which after baptism fall again into sin...whenever they convert themselves, shall without doubt attain remission of sins'.
The phrase 'attain remission of sins' suggested perhaps a regaining of forgiveness rather than a re-entry into a forgiveness which was never lost, but a significant movement towards the understanding of the baptismal remission in relation to the whole Christian life may be discerned. The movement was even more apparent in the Homily of Salvation, which linked the remission of post-baptismal sin directly to the sacrifice of Christ: 'They which in act or deed do sin after baptism, when they turn again to God unfeignedly, they are likewise washed by this sacrifice from their sins' (p. 23). In this Homily, and as in the general confession and absolution introduced into the daily office in 1552, the stress was upon the inward work of repentance and the work and the promise of Christ. The minister exercised the power of the keys by declaring and pronouncing to them that truly repent and unfeignedly believe a forgiveness already promised in the Scripture and sealed in the sacrament of baptism. With the triumph of the Reformed doctrine of free justification and forgiveness, the idea of a fresh conveyance of the grace of remission by means of a new sacrament had died a natural death.

During the latter years of Henry and the few years of Edward perfectionist and rigorist opinions seem to have made their way into England, but they met with little favour from the ecclesiastical authorities. The Statute 32 Henry VIII cap. 49 expressly condemned a new error, 'that sinners after baptism cannot be restored by repentance'. The reference must have been to the Anabaptist discipline, although it is doubtful whether any Englishmen of the time shared the opinions rejected. There was a report in 1549 that some London tradesmen held the curious view 'that the regenerate cannot sin inwardly' - whether the inward sin is a reference to original sin, or a rueful concession to the hard facts of experience it is difficult to say (See Strype E.M.1, p. 291). The connection between the perfectionist and the rigorist views seems to be this, that the true believer could not sin, and therefore the professed believer who did sin proved himself to be a hypocrite, and was therefore rejected and condemned. These opinions were clearly refuted by the Anglicans leaders, and they were not held in sufficient strength to be of any great importance. A more serious spread of perfectionist and rigorism occurred under Elizabeth, when the Family of Love took up the former opinion and the Separatists inclined to the latter.

These groups stood outside the main stream of Protestant doctrine in England, however, and never became either numerous or powerful during the Reformation period. Of the more orthodox Protestants, Decon may be singled out for special mention. He took a strongly Protestant line, attacking the Papist contention that the blessings of baptism are lost when the soul is defiled with new sin. The source of forgiveness, Decon argued, is Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is a Saviour not only before but also after baptism. The baptismal blessings have then a value for the believer which is not exhausted in the sacramental act. Being grounded in the patient loving-kindness of God, they cannot be destroyed by even the vilest post-baptismal sins: 'Though we sin NEVER after baptism never so grievously, yet doth not
God straightway take vengeance on us, and cast us headlong into hell-fire....but he patiently abideth our conversion' (Sec.I.S.1 p.176). Bacon's doctrine of forgiveness was definitely a doctrine of non-imputation. This determined not only his view of post-baptismal sin but also his teaching upon concupiscence. He agreed with the traditional teaching thus far, that concupiscence had been left in the regenerate for the exercise of faith (Ibid.2 p.204). But he went further and taught that concupiscence is sinful in itself, although by virtue of the work of Christ that sin is no longer reckoned to the believer (Ibid.).

The other Anglicans did not devote a great deal of attention to the question. Jewel in controversy with Harding maintained the sinfulness of concupiscence. He used very much the same arguments as Calvin, appealing to the Pauline usage, and quoting Ambrose and Augustine. The authority of Pighius was alleged in favour of a clear and straightforward interpretation of the latter Father. Against the assertion of Harding that the sacraments give full remission of sins, he pointed out that the remission taught by the Protestants is fuller: 'a remission of all manner of sins, and that not in half or in part...but full, whole and perfect if all together' (Jewel P.S.3 p.464). This was a plain reference to the Protestant extension of the baptismal forgiveness to all sins, whether committed before the administration of the sacrament or after. Fulke spoke, perhaps rather strangely, of a 'plucking up even of the root of sin' in baptism, but he evidently did not mean that the baptised man was without sin, for he could agree too that concupiscence remained. What he had in mind was not the immediate efficacy, but the extension of the grace of baptism to all the sins of the believer, 'to our eternal salvation' (Ful. P.S.2 p.383). Calfhill pointed out that it is the proper office and work of the sacrament to stir up the sinful soul to repentance by the promise exhibited. In this way 'the sinful soul may be refreshed, and penance out of it gathered' (Calf. P.S.p.242). Sandys referred scornfully to the early practice of death-bed baptisms, postponed until the very last moment 'lest baptism should be a bridle to hold them in'. The belief that baptism confers a perfect but limited remission by actual cleansing underlay this impudent attempt to combine the enjoyment of sin with the procuring of the maximum benefits of the sacrament. But such an attempt was bound to fail, for 'God shall mock such craft' (Sand. P.S. p.152).

The Anglican teaching found its full expression in the Thirty-Nine Articles (9 and 16). Some commentators have sought to find the origin of Article 9 in the similar statement in the Confession of Augsburg, but the resemblances are not particularly close. Indeed, the Anglican pronouncement is much more closely akin to the statements in such Reformed Confessions as the Gallican and Belgic. The Article sets out the Reformed doctrine of concupiscence in plain and unmistakable language. It teaches that concupiscence continues in the regenerate, that it has of itself the nature of sin, according to the testimony of the Apostle, and that thanks to the free mercy and grace of God it is not imputed to the believer. Attempts have been made by some writers
(e.g., McLear and Williams) to soften the opposition between the Anglican statement and traditional teaching by pointing out that concupiscence is said to have only the nature of sin, and not the true and proper nature of sin, the doctrine condemned by Trent, and expressed later in the Westminster Confession. We may agree that those who framed the Articles chose the language with care, but it appears that we have here a distinction without a difference. A careful comparison with the phrasing of say the Gallican Confession will show that there was no essential difference in thought between the two, and that if anything the wording of the Anglican Article is the more definite. Article 16 repudiated the opinions of rigorists both old and new very much in the style of the Augsburg Article (12). Not every wilful sin committed after baptism was to be thought of as the sin against the Holy Ghost for which there could be no forgiveness. All sins were covered, indeed, by the baptismal remission, so long as there was true repentance and conversion of heart in the sinner. The extension of the forgiveness of baptism to the whole life of the Christian made rigorist views quite impossible. It is perhaps worth noting that a few commentators (Browne and McLear and Williams) have attempted to read into this Article an attack upon the doctrine of the final perseverance of saints, as held and taught by the Reformed churches. We may point out, however, that the Reformed Confessions had similar articles, that the doctrine of final perseverance did not imply that licence to sin envisaged by the Augsburg Article (12), that the Reformed doctrine of concupiscence carried with it the implication of a constant sinfulness even of the elect, and that the avowed purpose of the Anglican as of other Reformed Articles was to strengthen the assurance of forgiveness for sins committed after baptism, and not to destroy it. The attempt to turn the Article in an anti-Reformed direction seems then to be devoid of any but a speculative foundation, and it will be made only for the purpose of advancing partisan interests.

There can be no doubt that the Anglicans of the Reformation period understood the Articles to teach the soundest of Reformed doctrine, as we learn in the bluntest possible way from Roger's Exposition of the Articles in question. Rogers claimed that the continuance of original sin in the elect or regenerate was the central truth expressed in Article 9. Amongst the adversaries to this truth he numbered the Papists, 'who say that original sin was not at all', Gisbertus and the Family of Love, 'who affirm that the elect and regenerate sin not', and sects which held similar opinions, 'the Carpocratians, Adamites both old and new and the Begadores in Almaine'(Rog.P.S.on Art.9). Rogers himself identified the concupiscence which was still found in the regenerate with original sin, proving his point from Paul and from the Reformed Confessions. The adversaries to this truth were the Pelagians, who denied any but actual sins, Glover the Brownist, who according to Bredwell's Detection (p.69) regarded the intemperate affections of the mind which issue from concupiscence as no more than venial sins, Francis of Colen, who described concupiscence as natural, and Lombard and the Church of Rome, who allowed the continuance of concupiscence but would not allow
that it was truly sin, only that it proceedeth from sin and inclineth unto sin' (Ibid. pp. 100-103).

When he came to discuss Article 16 Rogers attacked strongly the two errors perfectionism and rigorism. He established first the possibility of sin in the elect and regenerate, proving it from the Scriptural instances, David, Solomon and Peter, and from the admonitions and exhortations, which would be meaningless if the elect enjoyed a state of sinless perfection. He then gave his usual list of the adversaries to this truth: 'the Catharans, Novatians and Jovinians, which think God's people be regenerate into a pure and angelical state, so that neither they be, nor can be defiled with any contagion of sin; the Libertines, who held that whosoever hath God's Spirit in him cannot sin', and various Papists, who had asserted that 'the works of men justified are perfect in this life' and that 'St. Francis attained unto the perfection of holiness and could not sin at all'. Having established the possibility of sin in the regenerate, and indeed the fact of sin, Rogers then proceeded to show that there is forgiveness for those who having fallen into sin unfeignedly repent. He proved this point too from the Scriptural promises and from the Continental confessions. The first adversaries to this truth were the Papists, who wished to tie the forgiveness of post-baptismal sin to the sacrament of penance. But Rogers was more concerned about the rigorists, 'those which leave nothing but the unappeasable wrath of God to such as do sin after baptism, the Montanists, the Novatians, Melchior Hoffmann, the German Anabaptists, and the Barrowists'. He also took the opportunity to condemn again those who said 'that being once regenerate sin is cut away' (the Hessalians and the Family of Love), and finally concluded by opposing the 'desperate, whose sins being either infinite or abominable, they think how God he neither can nor will forgive them'; Cain and Judas, for example, or 'Franciscus Spira, Doctor Kraus and the elder Bolton' (Ibid. pp. 138-142).

The position of Rogers was in some respects rather extreme, perhaps, but there is no good reason to doubt that the leading Anglicans of all shades of opinion willingly subscribed to his propositions concerning concupiscence and post-baptismal sin and its forgiveness. The statements of many of the leading churchmen of the time have already been considered. Travers on the Puritan side affirmed that concupiscence must be considered truly sin even in the regenerate. Hooker, the great opponent of Travers, spoke of the universal sinfulness of men in terms which leave little room for doubt that he too regarded the thought and tendency to sin as equally sinful with the act (Discourse on Justification 7). Willet in the Synopsis Papismi showed the unlimited scope of the forgiveness which baptism sealed. Baptism had been given as a confirmation of faith to seal remission of all sins, 'even of those which are committed after baptism', as well as of sins done before' (Willet Syn. Pap. p. 579). 'Only with the abandonment of a Calvinistic theology did the Anglican divines shift away from these well-established and universally acknowledged principles. Even then the sacrament of penance was not
restored, although divines like Waterland came to speculate upon the possibility of the remission of post-baptismal sin in and through the Eucharist, and more recently the provision at the end of the first exhortation to communion has been made the basis of a regular system of auricular confession and priestly absolution. The teaching of the Articles and of the sixteenth century Reformers is do plain, however, that those who take a contrary view can only do so either by straining the sense of the formularies or by openly or tacitly disavowing their authority.

6. Comments

Not a great deal needs to be said by way of comment upon the different views concerning concupiscence and post-baptismal sin. The various conceptions derived logically and necessarily from the doctrines of the effects of baptism and the nature of its operation or efficacy. The teaching on the wider subject determines naturally the teaching upon the narrower.

For the Roman Catholic original sin is the deprivation of supernatural virtues, and concupiscence a temporal result and punishment of the Fall. Baptism accomplishes a real work in the soul, cleansing it from all the defilement of original sin, and of actual sins already committed, and restoring the divine image which had been distorted, and endowing with supernatural graces, habitual faith and virtues. It does not restore entirely to the state of uncorrupt nature, however, for the temporal punishments are allowed to remain as a penalty and a test. Amongst these temporal penalties is concupiscence, the inclination to sin. As a result of baptism the Christian is better able to deal with concupiscence, but concupiscence itself has not been destroyed or taken away.

The Roman Catholic can agree wholeheartedly that concupiscence remains in the elect or regenerate, for this is in accordance both with experience and with his doctrinal formulation. What he cannot accept is that this concupiscence which remains is itself sin in the strictest sense of the word, for that would be in direct contradiction with his teaching that baptism effects a literal cleansing of the soul. It is sinful in a wider sense, for it is itself a product of sin and gives rise to further sin, but unless yielded to it does not of itself constitute sin.

The doctrine of post-baptismal sin proceeds similarly from the understanding of the Fall and of the baptismal remission. In baptism the fallen man is given a new start. All the guilt of previous sin is remitted, and the graces of the Spirit are given to make possible a life of righteousness. The committal of a mortal sin subsequent to baptism involves the soul in what is tantamount to a fresh fall, involving eternal guilt and requiring a new work of remission and cleansing. Allow the basic understanding of the Fall and of baptism and its operation, and the Romanist scheme forms a logical and self-consistent whole,
a possible interpretation of the facts of Christian experience.

The Romanist understanding is open to many severe criticisms. It is an attempted formulation of experience, but its definitions are artificial and speculative. Its static relating of sacrament and grace opens the way for the worst type of sacramentalism, and drives it to postulate sacramental effects which are beyond anything that either Scripture or experience warrants, and which are in any case quite unnecessary. The Romanists seem, in fact, to have invented a whole series of baptismal effects which in real life make little or no difference to the Christian man either in time or in eternity. The supernatural graces are given or withdrawn, whether in creation or in baptism, without anyone ever being the wiser or the better, and without any difference ever becoming apparent. Man remains all the time just what he always was, and the theological explanations amount to little more than rather pointless tricks of intellectual and spiritual conjuring. The baptismal remission is a wonderful thing, but it is normally forfeited so quickly that it ceases to have any practical value. Concupiscence is not sin, but so regularly and inevitably does it produce sin that there is no noticeable difference. The Romanist system seeks to explain reality in its own artificial way, but it has no real contact with reality. And the result of it all is to leave the ordinary believer in the grip of a sacramentalist and sacerdotalist maze from which there is no exit except at death.

If the Romanist explanation cannot be accepted, the question may well be asked whether there is any more satisfaction to be gained from a liberal Protestant understanding. For the liberal Protestant concupiscence must be taken into account as a real fact of experience, explicable perhaps as demand of the natural physical appetites, or even as a relic of the animal nature. Concupiscence may then be described as sin in the sense of imperfection, although there would be some to dispute this, but it may not be described as sin in the sense of transgression which involves guilt before God. In the modern understanding transgression and guilt no longer have any place, for the world is the scene of the upward struggle to God, in which God himself is everywhere active. And since this immanent God is a God of supreme love, who forgives freely, the problem of post-baptismal sin and its remission is not a problem which has any real urgency or meaning. Of course the baptised man commits sin after his baptism. That is only to be expected, for the sacrament does not work any miraculous change in his spiritual make-up. But God forgives all sin, and sins are treated on the same level whether committed before the administration of baptism or after. Baptism is a sign of that forgiveness which the all-embracing love of God extends freely to all men for all sins. If any place for condemnation remains in this scheme, as it very well may, then it is the self-condemnation of the soul which refuses to respond to the divine love displayed in Jesus Christ and proclaimed through the word and sacraments. This is the unforgivable sin, the only sin for which there neither is nor can be forgiveness. Contact with an evangelical theology may be maintained in some
such way as this, but the thought of a forfeiture of the divine forgiveness through post-baptismal sin, and of the subsequent need of restitution through penance is wholly and utterly repugnant.

The modern view involves a choice at a deeper level than that of a sacramentalist theology. It is, of course, a Christian view in the broader sense, but it is not the view of Scriptural and historic Christianity. The conception of God has changed, in emphasis at least, if not more radically. There had been a corresponding change in the conception of man, and thus of the Fall, and of redemption, and of the word and sacraments. Adherents will argue that the change has been for the better. The true thought of Christianity has been freed from the tyranny of outdated expressions and categories. In recent years, however, warnings have been issued that it involves the surrender of all that is specifically Christian to the demands of a more generally philosophical understanding of the world. If these warnings are thought to be justified, then the Reformed understanding of the problem remains: an attempt to state the truth of experience in living Scriptural and evangelical terms.

The Reformers stress not only the love of God but also the holiness and righteousness of God. This holiness and righteousness of God means that the sin of man is guilt: and since God is personal and not abstract the offence and the guilt are personal. God in his love and through the work of Christ has made possible the forgiveness of the sin and the removal of the guilt, not by its abolition, nor by the ignoring of it, but by the non-imputation of it to the sinner. This does not mean that the sin itself is immediately destroyed. On the contrary, even the forgiven man and the believing man remains a sinner. The infirmity of nature known as concupiscence continues in him, giving rise to fresh acts of sin. Indeed, since concupiscence is contrary to the will of God, it is itself truly and properly sin. The divine forgiveness is not affected by this fact, for the sin is not imputed so long as there is true repentance, a true faith in Christ, and an earnest resistance to the inclinations of corrupt nature. Forgiveness involves a change of status before God, not a change in temporal nature, except in so far as the Holy Spirit begins his regenerating work in the believer. Post-baptismal sins do not create any new problem, for the baptised man is always and constantly a sinner, even when he does not commit conscious acts of sin. He rests wholly and utterly upon the grace of God and the work of Jesus Christ. The forgiveness signed and sealed in his baptism is a non-imputation of all sin, whether original or actual, whether pre-baptismal or post-baptismal. The independence of baptism of temporal restrictions and limitations is guaranteed by the active and dynamic conception of its grace and efficacy.

The merits of the Reformed understanding are plain to see. It preserves a full doctrine of God and of his redemptive work. It keeps always a proper sense of God's eternity as an independence of time. It does not stray far from the facts of experience. The temporal and the eternal aspects of baptism and its work
are properly balanced the one against the other. The relating of
the baptismal grace to the whole work of redemption, from
regeneration to the culminating in the resurrection from the dead,
is a great advance upon the artificial Scholastic doctrine of
a perfect but invisible reconstitution of the soul at baptism,
a work overthrown by the committal of new sin, and re-done, but
less perfectly, by the sacrament of penance.

If the deeper Reformed doctrines be abandoned, then the
most obvious and serious criticism which may be levelled against
the Reformed view is that of a certain unreality in the idea of
forgiveness and righteousness by non-imputation of sin. If a
man is reckoned righteous who is all the time a sin and still
commits acts of sin, then any explanation of the forgiveness
of God is offered, but surely at the expense of serious attempts
at real and living goodness. The criticism is answered by the
dynamic inter-relating of sacrament and grace, under the Holy &
Spirit. God the Holy Spirit applies to the individual the
benefits held out in baptism, and that means individual repent­
ance and faith, conversion, and the reconstruction of the life.
Without this individual application by the Spirit, the forgive­
ness if offered, but it is of no effect, and sin remains. With
this individual application, the forgiveness of sins becomes a
personal reality, and although concupiscence remains, and act­
ual sins will still be committed, the beginning of reformation
has been made, and the conversion will manifest itself in the
fruits of a good life. A continuance in unrepented sin, even
where there is the profession of faith, is conclusive proof
that there is no work of the Holy Ghost, and no individual for­
giveness.

The further difficulty arises, that if everything is thrown
back upon the activity of the Holy Spirit, then the redemption
is suspended ultimately upon the divine election. The man who
is forgiven, and the man who achieves some success in the fight
against original sin is the man whom God has chosen and in whom
God works. But the notion that God has chosen some to salvation
and abandoned the rest to destruction, without any reference
either to their attainments or even to their potentialities, is
particularly abhorrent to the modern mind, since it savours
neither of love nor of justice. The alternative that the Holy
Spirit works in all who allow him to work is a possible
explanation, but it is in contradiction with the Reformed teaching both
upon the helplessness of man in original sin and upon the divine
sovereignty and initiative in salvation.

If the Reformed understanding is to be maintained, then it
can be done so, as already indicated in another connection,
by abandoning the artificial and misleading terms in which the
doctrine of election has usually been stated. The assumption
has always been that the election of God involves a prior choice
in time: thus binding the human choice and human response. But
the truth is surely this, that the divine election is an active
contemporary choice, in eternity. The eternal God is the Lord
of time, the first and the last, bound by no limitations of
past or future. God elects in the sense that he sees the end from the beginning. Man's choice of God is also God's choice of man: not a decree, but an act. If this is so, then the difficulties about election and imputation disappear; for election and imputation are the eternal and final aspects of the temporal and relative realities. The difficulties arise only when the attempt is made to state the eternal and final aspects in temporal and finite terms. The Reformers themselves did not always express themselves with sufficient caution at this point, although they avoided the harsher formulations of their successors. What they did do was to strike a great blow for the truth by breaking through the inadequate and misleading Scholastic systematisation. The greatness of their achievement becomes all the more apparent when there is a clearer insight into the election and work of God as a free act in a living and eternal present.

Notes

1 Kidd D.C.R. p.76 'In puero post baptismum negare remanens peccatum, est Paulum et Christum simul conculcere'.
2 Luther W.A.6 p.529 'Simul vides quam periculosum, immo falsum sit opinari, poenitentiam esse secundum tabulam post naufragium'.
3 Wernle Luther p.33 'das einem zuverlässige, unbesiegte Schiff'
4 Luther W.A.6 p.528 'Quare dum a peccatis resurgimus sive poenitimus, non facimus aliud quam quod ad baptismi virtutem et fidem revertimur'.
5 Muralt p.36 'Man redte daby, das niemandts in der selben kilchenn sin müstte noch soltte, dann die, so sich selbs wüstind on sünd sin'. So Zwingli C.R.4 p.160 'Zum ersten, eine besondere und eigne kilch ufzgrichten, darinn niemans, dann die, so sich selbs on sünd wüstind, gar soltind'.
6 Muralt p.36 'Die Vollkommenheit Christi'.
7 Ibid.p.38 'Es sye nit in sin meinung, das man nit sündigen möge, aber wése, in Christo syent, sollent furhin im Geist wandeln, und kein sündliche werk mer tun'. Muralt comments: 'Perfectionisten im strägstem Sinne des Begriffes sind die Täufer nicht gewesen'.
8 Ibid.p.37 'Wer aber nicht Busse tut, ist kein Glied der Kirche' (Bern Art.38).
9 Gallican Concession 11 'mème qu'après le baptême, c'est toujours péché quant à la coule, bien que la condamnation en soit abolie aux enfants de Dieu, ne la leur imputant point par sa bonté gratuite. Outre cela, que c'est une perversité produisant toujours des fruits de malice et rébellion, tels que les plus saints, encore qu'ils y résistent, ne laissent point d'être tâches d'infirmités et de fautes pendant qu'ils habitent en ce monde'.
10 Ibid.35 'Nous tenons aussi, bien que nous ne soyons baptisés qu'une fois, que le profit qui nous est là signifié s'étend à la vie et à la mort, à fin que nous ayons une signature permanente, que Jésus Christ nous sera toujours justice
et sanctification'.

Belgic Confession 16: '...et n'est pas aboli même par le baptême... quoique toutefois il ne soit point imputé à condamnation aux enfants de Dieu, mais pardonné par sa grâce et miséricorde'.

Polan 6,55 (in Heppe R.D. Bapt.). 'In baptismo non tollitur radicitus quoad actum, sed abluitur et aboletur peccatum originale quoad reatum h.e.culpam et poenam, remanente ipso vitio et morbo h.e.prava concupiscentia et inclinatione ad malum, idque eo fine, ut per totam vitam pugnemus cum peccato et diabolo, peccati auctore'.

Ibid. 'Concupiscentia mala post baptismum in renatis residua est vere et proprie peccatum'.

Cran.P.3.2 p.474 'Quia vero infantes nascentur cum peccato originis, habent opus remissione illius peccati, et illud ita remittitur ut reatus tollatur, licet corruptio naturæ seu concupiscencia manet in hac vita, etsi incipit sanari, quia Spiritus Sanctus in ipsis etiam infantibus est efficax et eos mundat'.
The various aspects of Protestant baptismal doctrine have now been considered. The Anglican views have been stated and discussed in relation to the Romanist teaching on the one hand and the Lutheran and Reformed doctrine on the other. Where necessary, attention has been drawn to the divergent trends and even to actual differences of opinion within the reforming group in England, especially in connection with the Anglican-Puritan struggle. With the detailed exposition as a guide and basis, it is now possible to come to certain broad but definite general conclusions with regard to the Anglican teaching, and also to its expression in the Formularies to which assent must still be made in the English Church. The fact that the baptismal teaching belonged essentially to a wider and larger doctrinal understanding means that these conclusions have more than a limited significance. The further fact that many of the theological and ecclesiastical problems posed in the Reformation period still demand an answer lends to the conclusions a more than antiquarian or historical interest.

A first and obvious conclusion is that with the exception of some of the earlier and clearly unreformed statements under Henry the Anglican writings decisively rejected the main Scholastic and Romanist assertions. At many points the rejection was far more than a vaguely indicated or loosely expressed disapproval. It was a specific and detailed controverting of the traditional teaching. And the attacks were not aimed only at the sixteenth century popular corruptions of Scholastic ideas. They were aimed directly at the Scholastic ideas themselves, as gathered up and systematised in the Tridentine documents. Explain it as we will, the fact is obvious and incontrovertible that at every major point in baptismal doctrine the Anglican and the Tridentine statements were diametrically opposed and quite irreconcilable. The Anglican Formularies of themselves suffice to make this fact clear in outline. When we turn for further proof to the extensive theological and devotional writings of the Reforming period, the demonstration is detailed and overwhelming. This conclusion is important, for it means that in all contacts between the Anglican and the Roman churches must be governed and controlled by this fundamental disagreement in sacramental teaching; the more so because this disagreement in baptismal doctrine points to a wider disagreement between a sacramentalist and an evangelical conception of the Christian faith. To ignore the conclusion, whether by glossing over the facts or by explaining them away, involves the sacrifice of fundamental elements in the Anglican interpretation, and the repudiation of all that the sixteenth century Reformers represented and accomplished.

A second and equally obvious conclusion is that the Anglican Formularies do not commit the loyal English Churchman rigidly to any single line of interpretation in baptismal doctrine,
so long as the limits imposed by the rejection of the Romanist teaching are not transgressed. In point of fact three general lines of permissible interpretation may be discerned already in the writings of the period, the Lutheran, the dominant Reformed, and an embryonic High Anglican. The Lutheran understanding was most influential, as one would naturally expect, during the earliest period of the Reformation in England. It was not specifically represented in the later Formularies, but it was also not specifically rejected or excluded, for only in the doctrine of the Supper did the Anglicans repudiate Lutheran teaching. At the same time we must observe that from the reign of Edward onwards there were few if any Reformers of the front rank who adopted and proclaimed distinctively Lutheran views of baptism. Lutheran elements naturally remained, for at many points the Lutheran and Reformed groups were in fundamental agreement. If more particularly Lutheran characteristics may be observed in the baptismal offices, they were for the most part ceremonial and devotional rather than doctrinal in the stricter sense. The service certainly does not commit the Anglican to a Lutheran understanding, although it would not by any means be impossible for a loyal Anglican to follow the teaching of Luther upon the sacrament. From the wider oecumenical aspect, the doctrine of baptism does not of itself constitute an obstacle to a closer accord between the Anglican and the Lutheran churches.

By far the majority of the Anglican Reformers adopted, not the Lutheran, but the Reformed interpretation. Quite naturally, the Puritans were all thoroughly Reformed in outlook. Indeed, they wished to apply their principles more thoroughly and consistently to liturgical use and ecclesiastical practice. The leaders of the church and the champions of the established order resisted the Puritans upon liturgical and ecclesiastical issues, and upon the minor points of doctrine involved in those issues, but in all major doctrinal questions they were pleased to assert a unanimity of opinion, and to claim a common kinship with the continental Protestants. Even in the smaller ceremonial matters both Puritans and Anglicans appealed to the same continental authorities, Luther, Zwingli, Bucer, Martyr, Calvin, Beza and Bullinger. Of course it may be argued that the Anglicans set greater store by tradition and the Fathers than did the Puritans, but they were not altogether alone amongst the Protestants in appealing to history and the early church when the appeal was convenient. Of course, it may be argued too that the Puritans attempted to show that the liturgical conservatism of the Anglicans implied a retention of Romanist conceptions, but these attempts were obviously controversial in intention, and they provoked indignant denials from the Anglican champions, who marked off their doctrine clearly and forcibly from that of the Romanists.

In the face of the known adherence of the sixteenth century writers to Reformed principles, it is surely astonishing that it should again be necessary to assert the legitimacy of a Reformed understanding of the Anglican Formularies. Since the famous Gorham case, however, it has become fashionable in certain quarters, perhaps on the principle that the offensive is the
best defensive, to suggest that those who hold fast by the Reformed baptismal teaching are guilty of a basic and even blatant disloyalty to the doctrine of the Prayer Book and the Articles. The issue is by no means a purely local and domestic one, for by implication the status of the Church of England as a member doctrinally of the Reformed Protestant Communion is called in question, with serious consequences from the point of view of oecumenical relationships. Now it is not argued that every single theologian of Elizabeth's day, let alone of Edward's, interpreted the Prayer Book and Articles on strictly Reformed lines. Nor is it narrowly asserted, as perhaps historically it might be, that the Formularies cannot be used as the basis for a theological formulation rather different from that of the Reformed school. It is contended, however, that almost without exception the theological leaders of the period, the men who were responsible for the drawing up and defence of the symbols, themselves held and proclaimed a doctrine of baptism which in no essential points differed substantially from that of the most notable Reformers abroad and the most zealous Puritans at home. Unless we are to assume that the Anglican Reformers either failed to understand their own position, or else deliberately and senselessly betrayed it, then we have no option but to conclude that the most inward and basic demand of a loyalty to the Anglican settlement is a sharing with them of their Reformed convictions. But if this is the case, then we must conclude further that in baptismal doctrine at any rate no theological issue of importance divides the Anglican and the Protestant Reformed churches, at least from the historical and confessional standpoint.

A third line of interpretation is that which developed subsequently into the High Anglican, but which was present already in embryonic form in the illustrious Hooker, in Bancroft, and in some of the more conservative of the later Elizabethan bishops. In many respects the High Anglican interpretation represents a cautious retrogression in the direction of Scholastic teaching. The excesses of the Tridentine formulation were avoided, of course, but greater weight came to be placed upon the sacrament and its operation. The necessity of the sacrament was stressed again, although not in too absolute fashion. A real efficacy was seen, so that all who received baptism might rightly and properly be termed regenerate, so long as no obstacle was placed in the way. This baptismal regeneration was not equated with the full Scriptural and evangelical regeneration: indeed, when analysed, it amounted to nothing very much at all. But the baptised were marked off from the non-baptised, not only by the external incorporation into the church, not only by the testimony to membership of the covenant of grace, but by the implanting internally of a seed of new life, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus a prior real if limited ex opere operato working of the sacrament might be asserted quite independently of the free and sovereign operation of the Spirit and the prior or eternal election of God. In short, the union between grace and sign was thought of once again in static rather than dynamic
The dynamic understanding tended frequently to be misrepresented as Zwinglian or Sacramentarian, and as such dismissed as an inadequate interpretation of the plain statement in the Article.

Now two points may be noticed with regard to this High Anglican view. First, if we take the Prayer Book and the Articles as they stand, without reference to their primary historical and theological background, then we may grant that such an interpretation may be adopted quite reasonably, and without any straining either of words or meaning. The High Anglican understanding stresses, in fact, a valuable truth in Christian teaching, the objectivity of the sacraments and of their operation. It forms a bulwark in Reformed sacramental theology against that disruptive subjectivism into which a dynamic conception can so easily degenerate. Second, we must insist that the Anglican Reformers themselves definitely did not favour an interpretation of this kind, so far, at least, as their writings testify. The High Anglican interpretation was indeed alien to their whole evangelical understanding of baptism. The necessity of the sacrament, its ex opere operato efficacy, its relevance only to original and pre-baptismal sin; these were the very things against which the theologians and ecclesiastics of the sixteenth century had risen in revolt. A study of the milieu in which the Prayer Book was revised and the Articles were drawn up makes it clear beyond all doubt that the authors never intended either Prayer Book or Articles to express or to reflect a sacramental theology of this type.

Three strands of thinking were represented in the Anglican theology of the period of the Reformation and of the Settlement under Elizabeth, the Lutheran, the Reformed, and in embryo the High Anglican. A question which naturally suggests itself is whether the formularies were deliberately made as vague and indefinite as possible, in order to make them comprehensive and thus to further the work of religious pacification. This is the contention who states confidently, although without proof, that the Articles 'were drawn up, not as a complete expression of the mind of the Church of England for all her children, but as a concordat intended to facilitate the comprehension of individuals rather than to exactly define truth' (Stone: Holy Baptism p.60). The answer to the question, which is not so simple as Stone either imagines or wishes, may perhaps best be given in the form of a new question: Which groups were intended to benefit from the alleged policy of theological comprehension? Historically, it could be only the Lutherans or the Romanists, for the Sacramentarians in the proper sense of the term were excluded, as Stone himself points out (p.61), the Puritans were quite satisfied with the theology of the Anglican leaders, at any rate in all important matters, and the doctrinal revolt against Calvinism which later became High Anglicanism had not yet begun when the Articles were devised and made law.

As regards the Lutherans, the essential points of difference were not large, in spite of their accentuation in polemical writings and in symbols such as the Saxon Visitation Articles. In any case, after the Marian Exile Lutheranism was a spent force
in England, and although some writers have wished to see in the final draft of the Articles a return to Lutheran forms of expression, it is noteworthy that no clear concessions were made to Lutheranism in the all-important doctrine of the supper. What is more, there is in fact no evidence either that there was a large and influential body of Lutherans requiring pacification or that there was any conscious attempt made to make the Articles acceptable to individuals who might prefer the Lutheran version of Protestantism to the Reformed. Indeed, as Rogers points out, the Articles specifically repudiate the teaching of the Lutherans in many points of detail, as well as in the more important matter of the eucharistic presence.

When we turn to the Romanists, we must remember that neither under Henry nor under Mary, let alone under Edward and Elizabeth, did those who remained loyal to the traditional doctrine make any noticeable attempt to work out a theological via media between the Old Learning and the New. The doctrinal decisions of Trent made accommodation impossible on the Romanist side, and the clear rejection of those decisions in the various Protestant confessions impelled to a definite choice either of the one understanding or of the other. The plain fact was this, that the priest who accepted the Thirty-Nine Articles could do so only by consciously repudiating the Tridentine teaching and deliberately braving the anathemas of the Council, unless, of course, he took refuge in the unworthy shift of mental reservation, which adds nothing either to the meaning or to the intention of the Formularies. In circumstances such as those comprehension as between Anglican and Romanist could have little meaning. However easy the way might be made for those priests who were still Romanist in sympathy, a decisive choice and a decisive break had still to be made.

The resistance of the remnants of the Marian hierarchy emphasised the reality of the choice, and the controversial writings of the period show that at the time itself it was well understood. As far as the Articles themselves are concerned, a careful comparison of their teaching with that of the Reformed symbols on the one hand and that of the Tridentine Canons and Catechism on the other makes it plain that no concessions whatever, certainly none of importance, were made to the Romanist position.

We are left then with the conclusions that if the Articles were meant to be comprehensive, then they were meant to comprehend only varieties of Protestant opinion. Since the High Anglican interpretation of the sacraments had not yet emerged as an important variant, the comprehensiveness amounts to very little, for there were few differences of opinion within the Reformed school except on matters of detail, or on such high and difficult mysteries as predestination and reprobation. As far as the doctrine of baptism is concerned, we may confidently assert that the Article becomes vague and ambiguous, not in relation to contemporary discussions, but in consequence of theological developments subsequent to the formulation of the confessional statement. A liberty in legitimate interpretation may willingly be conceded, but to speak of looseness and confusion in the Reformed understanding, or of a deliberate ambiguity in the language of
the confession is in these circumstances both erroneous and misleading. In any case the title of the Articles makes it plain that the aim was not to legalise diversity within a comprehensive formula, but to establish consent and uniformity by a clear and definite statement. In the eyes of all contemporaries, both friendly and hostile, the Articles undoubtedly committed the Church of England to a thoroughly Protestant and Reformed theology.

The problem of individual assent and loyalty to the Formularies is a difficult one. It would be unfair to insist that the loyal Anglican is committed absolutely to the full baptismal teaching of the sixteenth century Reformers, although naturally an acceptance of that teaching is not precluded. The minimum demands of loyalty seem to be as follows. Negatively, a rejection of the Romanist teaching is required. In doctrinal matters the Church of England and the Church of Rome have been separated decisively and irrevocably by the Thirty-Nine Articles and the Tridentine statements. Positively, a recognition of the theological kinship between the Anglican and other Protestant churches is demanded. Differences exist in points of order and discipline. These differences are real enough, although controversialists have magnified them unnecessarily even seeking to attach to them vital theological significance. In points of doctrine, however, no basic differences exist. The Anglican Reformers of the sixteenth century were proud of their agreement with the best Reformed churches abroad, and loyalty to their work carries with it an acceptance of the kinship which they themselves proclaimed.

The implications of these demands are of the utmost importance, especially in view of contemporary developments both in theology and in ecumenical relationships. The issue which faces the Church of England at the present time is a clear one: whether doctrine is to be sacrificed to order for the sake of intercommunion with Rome and the Eastern churches, or whether order can be sacrificed to doctrine for the sake of intercommunion with the Reformation churches. If the English Church is to abandon its traditional and futile insularity, and to make the choice, then the historical obligations are surely clear even from this present limited study. The lesson is driven home by the example of the sixteenth century, when no barriers to intercommunion with the Reformed churches existed. There are of course serious, although not insuperable difficulties to a real unity with the Lutheran churches. But between the Anglican and the Reformed churches there are no doctrinal differences except those which have been created by the High Anglicans and their historical descendants. These differences are not recognised in the Formularies, and they cannot be emphasised or used as a basis of argument or action without transgressing the bounds of a true loyalty and assent.

A deeper problem than that of loyalty, or even of the relationship with other churches, is the problem of ultimate theological value. The theologian has a duty to the confessional
statement of his church, but he has a higher duty to the truth. It may well be asked then whether the Anglican Formularies have so stood the test of the years that the modern thinker may still use them honestly and sincerely as the basis of at any rate his sacramental teaching. Or has the time come when the symbols must be thought of as important only historically, or when they must even be set aside or revised in accordance with the demands of loyalty to truth and to the Lord of truth?

A certain amount of attention has been devoted to this problem in the course of the detailed exposition. It now remains briefly to gather up the threads. First, we may assert boldly that for the modern Protestant a return to the Romanist position is impossible. The Romanist conception rests upon a perverted understanding of God and of God's redemptive work. There is truth behind it, of course: the truth that God is sovereign, the truth that God works in and through the material. But the truth is distorted by a failure to hold a proper balance. The fact that God is sovereign does not mean that he works inevitably and irresistibly wherever the sacrament is given, for that is to limit the sovereign God by his own instrument and by its minister. The fact that God uses matter does not mean that the matter itself is endowed as it were with spiritual virtues and properties. Just as in Christology the anxiety to assert the deity of Jesus Christ led naturally to a swallowing up of the human nature in the divine presence, so too in sacramental theology the anxiety to assert the divine aspect of the sacrament led to a swallowing up of the natural aspect in the supernatural way and to identify the divine power with the divine presence, so too in sacramental theology the anxiety to assert the identity of the sacramental grace with the sign. It could not be doubted, of course, that had God so chosen he could have identified power and presence or grace and sign in this way: that is why at root the sacramental problem is the problem of the being and nature of God. The whole pattern of the divine revelation and redemption in the Old and New Testaments makes it plain, however, that this is not the mode of operation which God had approved and appointed.

It is unthinkable to go back to the Romanist conception, with its misunderstanding of the sovereignty and the redemptive activity of God. It may be asked, however, whether it is not necessary to go beyond the Reformed interpretation, and to banish the supernatural altogether. That was the contention of the Anabaptists, at least so far as the sacrament itself was concerned. The sacrament and the supernatural work of God were completely sundered, although, of course, the supernatural work did remain in the spiritual sphere. Such an interpretation commends itself to the Liberal Protestant, who would go further, not only denying that the sacrament is more than a natural rite, but denying that there is in the older sense of the word any supernatural activity at all, whether with the sacrament or without it. Such an interpretation involves a breaking loose not only from the Reformed theology, but from the whole Christian theology of Scripture and tradition. That must be clearly understood at the outset. The Biblical understanding of God and the world
gives way to a rationalistic or immanentist philosophical understanding. To see it again in Christological terms, the essential deity of Christ is abandoned, and his humanity is alone stressed, a humanity which is divine only in so far as there is in all things divinity.

The whole problem is obviously a wider one than that of baptism alone, and it must be fought out upon a correspondingly wider front. What is of the utmost importance is that the issue should be squarely faced. Liberal Protestantism is Protestant only on the negative side, in the opposition to the Romanist misunderstanding. Positively, it is as far apart from the Reformed view on the one side, as is Romanism on the other. Obviously, no honest theologian will hold back from it merely because of this fact. But if the honest theologian wishes to adopt a liberal view, then he should be aware of this fact, knowing clearly and letting others know clearly what he is doing. He rejects the basic doctrines of the Reformed and the historic Christian theology. They are partial apprehensions of truth no longer relevant in the modern age with its better understanding.

There are many who will accept the liberal reconstruction as the nearest and most satisfying approximation to ultimate truth. For them the baptismal theology of the Reformers will have no appeal, for it belongs to a doctrinal scheme in which creation, the transcendence of God, revelation, and the special work of God in redemption all have a place. There are others, however, who will find good reasons for regarding the liberal view as completely inadequate, both on philosophical and theological grounds, and also because it has been proved by events to be out of touch with historical reality. If these reasons are thought to be sufficiently well-founded, then the question must be asked whether within the transcendentalist scheme the Reformers have put forward a satisfactory explanation of the sacramental dealings of God with man.

A first answer is that the sacraments and the sacramental efficacy cannot well be brought into better relationship with the evangelical understanding of the Christian faith than was done by the Reformers. The Reformers understood the sacraments as they understood the word of God, the church, and Christ himself. The sacraments had their two aspects, the natural and historical, the supernatural and eternal. The one was open and visible to all, and had its place in the ordinary course of religious development. The other was open and visible only to faith, and had its place in the extraordinary course of the history of revelation and redemption. The sacraments were not two things, just as Christ was not two persons. They were also not one thing; in the sense that Christ is not one nature, whether by the confusion of the two aspects, or by the absorption of the one into the other. The duality appears clearly when the sacraments are considered, as they ought to be, in action, in the application to individual souls. Although in essence they are the same yet to the believer they avail to the accomplishment of the divine work, to the unbeliever they are a witness to condemnation.
Because of this duality the sacraments can be given a vital meaning and purpose without the introduction of those dangerous magical or quasi-material conceptions, which are alien to the evangelical faith. The forceful language of the Bible and of the Fathers can be used again, but without the misunderstandings due to the Scholastic intellectualisation.

The Reformers brought their sacramental teaching into line with their whole evangelical understanding. They also offered an interpretation of the sacraments which the modern theologian can still use as a starting-point for interesting and important work. Perhaps the basic and most difficult problem which an age of historicism has left for the transcendentalist is the problem of inter-relating history and revelation, time and eternity, the work of man and the work of God, both in creation and in redemption. In its ultimate aspects the problem is insoluble, for no man can take up successfully that challenge to final knowledge which reduced the questing Job to self-abhorrence and to repentance in dust and ashes. In its immediate aspects, even if it is still insoluble, it cannot be ignored. The Christian theologian who holds fast to the Scriptural and historical faith must try to understand and to state what it means for the eternal God to act and to be in time. If this operation of God is understood in purely temporal and static terms, then error and confusion will result. There are good examples of such error and confusion not only in Scholastic and Tridentine theology but in the post-Reformation Protestant scholasticism. The doctrine of the decrees and election and perhaps the doctrine of Scripture may both be cited. At the root of all these errors there lies, perhaps, the failure to distinguish between time and eternity qualitatively and well as quantitatively: a failure which carries with it the further failure to distinguish properly between God and man. In practice if not in theory the Reformers avoided that error in the sacramental teaching. They did so by relating the grace and sign dynamically, and by suspending the effects of the sacrament upon the divine election rather than upon a simultaneous spiritual action. But in avoiding that error, the Reformers also provided a clue which if followed up may very well lead to a satisfactory if not a perfect understanding of the whole problem of the revelation and the activity of God in history, without the recourse to tempting but deluding ontological abstractions. Especially necessary in tackling this problem is the measuring of the lesser revelations in word and sacraments by the supreme and indeed the primary revelation in the Word made flesh.

We may conclude then that the Protestant theologian who finds a monistic and non-transcendentalist world-view inadequate, and who deplores the devaluation of the word and sacraments which it necessarily involves, cannot do better than to study afresh and develop the interpretation offered and proclaimed by the Continental and Anglican Reformers. He will naturally wish to restate the Reformed view in contemporary language, and in relation to contemporary problems and needs, both of theology and of life. He will probably see a need to modify, to correct, or more likely to amplify the teaching at many points. But he
will find that the underlying principles will stand the most searching criticism. He will find too that the Reformed teaching is relevant to the most pressing problems of the age, and that grounded as it is upon the doctrine of Scripture, it is capable of almost infinite adaptation as new insights are gained into reality and Christian truth.
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