

William Tindale

A Biography

Being a Contribution to the Early History of the
English Bible

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CHAPTER X

TINDALE AT ANTWERP: NEGOTIATIONS TO INDUCE HIM TO RETURN TO ENGLAND: INTERVIEWS WITH VAUGHAN: HIS CONTINUED LITERARY LABOURS

A.D. 1531.

THE reins which had slipped from the relaxing grasp of Wolsey had fallen into the hands of one who better understood the spirit of the age. Under the steady guidance of Cromwell, England entered upon a new policy, which resulted in the final emancipation of the country from the spiritual tyranny of a foreign potentate. To the accomplishment of this great purpose, Cromwell's energy was for years steadily directed; but whilst many were willing to assist and to applaud him in his efforts, there were few indeed able to understand the clear and comprehensive plan of action which he had laid down. Of those who surrounded the king, and who from various motives acquiesced in the royal policy, Cromwell could not as yet depend upon a single individual as an able and intelligent ally.

The very policy, however, which Cromwell was so steadily pursuing had already been recommended by Tindale. '*One king, one law in the realm; no class of men exempt from the temporal sword, no law except the law of the land*'; such had been the principles advocated in the *Obedience of a Christian Man*; such were the principles which Cromwell wished to establish as the starting-point of the new political life of England. It was probably on the ground of this community of purpose that Cromwell now became anxious to induce Tindale to return to England, in order, perhaps, that his powerful pen might be enlisted in defence of the great cause which the new minister was so anxious to promote. The idea is certainly not improbable; although Cromwell was much mistaken in his man, if he supposed that he should find in Tindale one ready to defend and follow him in all the crooked and devious ways to which political exigencies reduced him.

Some have even supposed that this was the real purpose of that visit of Coverdale to Tindale which Foxe has assigned to 1529, but which later writers, when they admit it at all, are inclined to place in the following year. This supposition, indeed, has been advanced without any documentary support; it is, however, certain that at the period at which we have now arrived, the commencement of 1531, attempts were made by various agents, and apparently with Henry's knowledge and concurrence, to induce the exile to return to England; and to this we owe at last, after so many years of uncertainty and conjecture, a clear and authentic glimpse of the illustrious translator—the first since the description of him by his generous host, Humphrey

Monmouth. For a time, therefore, Tindale emerges from the obscurity in which he had hitherto been surrounded ; not the voice of the prophet alone, but the personal history of the man, engages our attention and appeals to our sympathies.

Stephen Vaughan, one of the envoys to the Low Countries, an old friend of Cromwell, and not unfavourable to the opinions of the Reformers, had been specially commissioned to discover Tindale's place of residence, and, if possible, induce him to return to England ; and he thus reports progress to his royal master:—

'Most excellent Prince, and my most redoubted Sovereign, mine humble observation due unto your Majesty. My mind continually labouring and thirsting, most dread and redoubted Sovereign, with exceeding desire to attain *the knowledge of such things as your Majesty commanded, me to learn and practise in these parts, and thereof to advertise you from time to time*, as the case should require:—And being often dismayed with the regard of so many mischances, as always obviate and meet with my labours and policies; whereby the same, after great hope had to do something acceptable unto your Highness' pleasure, turn suddenly to become frustrate and of none effect; bringeth me doubtless into right great sorrow and inquietude, considering that where [whereas] of late, I have written three sundry letters unto *William Tyndale*, and the same sent, for the more surety, to three sundry places, to Frankfort, Hamburg, and Marburg:—I then, not [being] assured in which of the same he was, and had very good hope, after *I heard say in England, that he would, upon the promise of your Majesty, and of your most gracious safe conduct, be content to repair and come into England*, that I should, partly therewith, and partly with such other persuasions as I then devised in my said letters, and finally with a promise which I made him that whatsoever surety he would reasonably desire, for his safe coming in and going out of your realm, my friends should labour to have the same granted by your Majesty, that now the bruit and fame of such things, as, since my writing to him, hath chanced within your realm, should provoke the man, not only to be minded to the contrary of that whereunto I had thought, without difficulty, to have easily brought him, but also to suspect my persuasions to be made to his more peril and danger than, as I think, if he were verily persuaded and placed before you (your most gracious benignity, and piteous regard natural, [and] custom, always had towards your humble subjects considered, and specially to those which, acknowledging their offences, shall humbly require your most gracious pardon), he should ever have need to doubt or fear.¹ Like as your

¹ The meaning of this long and involved sentence is, that Vaughan had written to Tindale, and put everything in the most favourable way, but that the report of what had occurred in England since he wrote might undo all his efforts, and make Tindale afraid to come. It is, in fact, a hint to Henry that if he wished to have Tindale in England, he must

Majesty, as well by his letter written by his own hand, sent to me for answer of my said letters, as also by the copy of another letter of his, answering some other person, whom your Majesty perhaps had commanded to persuade by like means, may plainly apperceive: which letters, like as together I received from the party, so sent I herewith enclosed to your Highness.

'And whereas I lately apperceived by certain letters directed to me from Mr. Fitzwilliam, treasurer of your household, that I should endeavour myself, by all the ways . . . and means I could study and devise, to obtain a copy of the book which, I wrote, was finished by Tyndale, answering to a book put forth in the English tongue by my Lord Chancellor, and the same should send to your Majesty with all celerity; I have undoubtedly so done, and did before the receipt thereof; howbeit, I neither can get any of them, nor, as yet, come to the knowledge that any of them should be put forth [had been printed] ; but, being put forth, I shall then not fail, with all celerity, to send one unto your Highness.'¹

This letter was written from Barrow, i.e. Bergen-op- Zoom, on January 26, 1530 (by which 1531 is of course meant), and seems to have been Vaughan's first dispatch to the sovereign whom he served, although not his first communication as envoy to the Government at home. Unfortunately the two letters from Tindale, which were enclosed in the dispatch, and which would be, in our ignorance of his history, so acceptable to us, have not been preserved ; and the interesting biographical details which they unquestionably contained are, in the meantime, lost, let us hope, not beyond the reach of recovery. We can gather, however, from Vaughan's words, that the accession of Cromwell to power had somewhat changed the policy of England's chief statesman towards Tindale. The man who had been denounced in May as a perverter of Scripture, was now solicited to return with promises of protection from the violence of the bishops ; and more agents than one were employed on what was evidently deemed a matter of some political importance.

It is quite clear, and this is a point of considerable consequence, that there was no intention of trappanning the illustrious translator by false representations, so as to get him within the power of his enemies; whatever end Vaughan had in view menaced no danger to Tindale. In this project of inducing Tindale to return to England, Henry was evidently interested ; although, as will be more apparent from the sequel of the correspondence, he was not at all persuaded of the propriety of a step which had been suggested by his new minister, and was in truth only 'convinced against his will.'

Of this dispatch an exact copy was transmitted to Cromwell, with the accompanying confidential communication, which makes it still more

take care to restrain the severity of the bishops.

¹ Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x. 46 of new notation. The letter is slightly damaged.

apparent that the scheme for bringing Tindale into England was not of Henry's but of Cromwell's devising:—

'Sir, here see you my rudeness and inability to be a writer to so great a Prince; but his gracious benignity encourageth this to do; which chancing [if it happen] to be acceptable to his Majesty, shall be to me an exceeding pleasure, and otherwise the contrary. Wherefore I most heartily pray you to wait a time for the delivery thereof, to be taken when you think his Highness will immediately look upon them; for then may it chance, if any fault be, your goodness towards me will excuse the same in the best manner. Herewith I send you the copy of *Tyndale's* letters, which he sent to me; the other, for lack of leisure, I could not copy, being so long a matter. The *Dialogue of Ockham* [treatise by William of Ockham, a well-known schoolman, written against the pretensions of the pope] I have delivered to Mr. Tuke [one of the royal secretaries], who will bring you it in his mail [his courier's bag], and will depart within four days next. I pray you let me know how the King taketh my letters, as soon as is possible. *It is unlikely to get Tyndale into England, when he daily heareth so many things from thence which feareth him.* After his book, answering my Lord Chancellor's book be put forth, I think he will write no more. *The man is of a greater knowledge than the King's Highness doth take him for, which well appeareth by his works. Would God he were in England!*'

The proceedings in England, to which Vaughan again alludes, as likely to operate unfavourably on Tindale's mind, were, doubtless, the vigorous steps taken by Stokesley and Sir Thomas More to enforce the prohibitions of the royal proclamation, and to punish all who were suspected of leaning towards the Reformation. It was about this time that Tindale's brother John was arrested, along with Thomas Patmore, a draper of London, and was taken before the Star-Chamber, charged with receiving New Testaments from abroad and selling them. He was also accused of sending money to his brother, and carrying on correspondence with him. Both were found guilty, and were sentenced to be exhibited for public ridicule at the Standard in Cheapside, mounted on horseback, with their faces turned ignominiously to the horses' tails, and their cloaks hung round with the prohibited Testaments which they had imported. They were also compelled to pay a considerable fine before they were liberated.¹

And this was not an isolated deed of violence; throughout the Diocese of London, determined and systematic efforts were made to discover and seize all who had ventured to express opinions contrary to the received doctrines or injurious to the established ceremonies of the Church ; and especially were those marked out for vengeance who were known or suspected to be in

¹ Harleian MSS., 425.

possession of Tindale's writings. Of these violent proceedings Tindale could not be ignorant; indeed, it seems certain that his bosom-friend, John Frith, had ventured into England in the month of March of this year,¹ and on his return he would, of course, faithfully report what he had seen and heard in his native land. It is not surprising, therefore, that Vaughan should speak of the intelligence coming from England as likely to counteract all his efforts to induce Tindale to return to a country where his name was held up to public abhorrence as one of the great heresiarchs of the age. Undismayed, however, by the untoward aspect of affairs, Vaughan continued his efforts to accomplish the commission which had been entrusted to him; and was successful, as his next letter apprises us, in procuring a copy of Tindale's reply to Sir Thomas More. On what was then the first day of the New Year, Lady-day, he thus writes to Cromwell from Antwerp:—

'So it is that as I lately advertised you by my letters [not preserved] that I have obtained a copy of the third part of Tindale's book against my Lord Chancellor's book, which is so rudely scribbled [i. e. it was a MS. copy, the book not being yet printed], that I am constrained to write it again, and am writing of it as busily as I can. When that part is written I intend to labour to obtain the other part, which I will presently² write in a fair book and send unto the King's Highness. It containeth, with all the three parts, as I am informed, three quires of paper thoroughly written. Sir, he hath made in the beginning of the same an epistle to the King's Highness, *as I am informed*, which as yet is not come into his hand. I would gladly have your advice whether it be best that I shall put it to his book as he putteth it, or otherwise. I am in doubt whether the King's Highness will be pleased to receive any such epistle from him or not; I pray you let me have herein your advice, as soon as it is possible. I promise you he maketh my Lord Chancellor such an answer as I am loth to praise or dispraise. *No work that ever he made is written in so gentle a style.* Sir, this work will he not put in print till he know how the King's Highness will accept and take it. If he hear that his Grace take it well, it may then, peradventure, be a means to bring him into England. Howbeit, whether he come or not come into England, he will make no more works after this [i.e. Vaughan supposes so]. He would no doubt come into England, and submit him to the King's Highness, if he had any sure hope of his

¹ In Stokesley's *Register*, the process against Frith, June 20, 1533, is regularly entered, and contains the following statement:— 'Interrogatus fatebatur quod venit ultimo a parti- bus ultra-marinis circa festum Sancti Jacobi ultimo praeteritum et *quod fuit in Angliâ in quadragesimâ. ad duos annos elapsos.*' It appears, therefore, that Frith was in England in Lent two years before 1533, that is, in February and March, 1531: for in 1531, Lent began February 22. See extract from Stokesley's *Register*, in Townsend's *Foxe*, vol. v, Appendix xxii.

² Such is probably the meaning of Vaughan: his word is clearly *wyntly*, but what that means I do not pretend to say.

gracious favour. I can little or nothing profit with him by my letters, for so much as the man hath me greatly suspected. Howbeit I have stayed the impression [printing] of this book hitherto, and will hereafter do as much as I can.¹

Vaughan's words in this letter almost suggest that he was in communication with some friend of Tindale: and in a few weeks more his patience received its full reward. The very man of whom he had been so long in search requested an interview with him. Vaughan was as much taken by surprise as Obadiah was when Elijah appeared before him; and in the full excitement of the impression which Tindale's earnest words had produced upon his mind, he sat down to narrate the whole proceedings to one little likely to enter into his feelings. His letter is of surpassing interest:—

'Please it your Majesty to be advertised, how of late I obtained a copy of one part [the third, part] of Tyndale's book, answering to the book put forth by my Lord Chancellor, whereof immediately I gave knowledge to my master, Mr. Cromwell, and him required thereof to advertise your Highness, as appertained. Which copy being rudely written, interlined, and difficult to be read, methought uncomely, and not meet in so vile array to be sent to the hands of your Royal Majesty. The regard whereof moved me to write it again, that it might come to your most gracious hands the more legible and easy to your reading. Which part I have herewith sent unto your Highness; thinking that the matter therein contained, for the modest order thereof in regard of his former writing, will somewhat better like you than some other of his works, which he hath, with less advisement, more rashness, and ruder spirit, put forth before this time. This part, which your Grace receives now, is but a third or fourth part of his whole work; but comprehendeth in effect the substance and pith of the other parts; where he particularly answereth to every chapter of my Lord's book, with such grounds as he hath laid in his first part, though he use in it a larger circumstance. The *second* part I have in likewise obtained, which I will in likewise write, and send unto your Grace, with all convenient speed and celerity.

'The day before the date hereof [i.e. April 17, as appears from Cromwell's reply] *I spoke with Tyndale* without the town of Antwerp, and by this means: He sent a certain person to seek me, whom he had advised to say that a certain friend of mine, unknown to the messenger, was very desirous to speak with me; praying me to take pains to go unto him, to such place as he should bring me. Then I to the messenger, "What is your friend, and where is he?" "His name I know not," said he; "but if it be your pleasure to go where he is, I will be glad thither to bring you." Thus, doubtful what this matter meant, I

¹ State Paper Office: Miscellaneous Letters, Henry VIII. Second Series. This letter has never been printed before.

concluded to go with him, and followed him till he brought me without the gates of Antwerp, into a field lying nigh unto the same; where was abiding me this said Tyndale. At our meeting, “Do you not know me?” said this Tyndale. “I do not well remember you,” said I to him. “My name,” said he, “is Tyndale.” “But Tyndale!” said I, “Fortunate be our meeting.” Then Tyndale, “Sir, I have been exceedingly desirous to speak with you.” “And I with you; what is your mind?” “Sir,” said he, “I am informed that the King’s Grace taketh great displeasure with me for putting forth of certain books, which I lately made in these parts; but specially for the book named *The Practice of Prelates*; whereof I have no little marvel, considering that in it I did but warn his Grace of the subtle demeanour of the clergy of his realm towards his person, and of the shameful abusions by them practised, not a little threatening the displeasure [grief] of his Grace and weal of his realm: in which doing I showed and declared the heart of a true subject, which sought the safeguard of his royal person and weal of his commons, to the intent that his Grace, thereof warned, might in due time prepare his remedies against their subtle dreams. *If for my pains therein taken, if for my poverty, if for mine exile out of my natural country, and bitter absence from my friends, if for my hunger, my thirst, my cold, the great danger wherewith I am everywhere compassed, and finally if for innumerable other hard and sharp fightings which I endure, not yet feeling their asperity, by reason I hoped with my labours to do honour to God, true service to my prince, and pleasure to his commons; how is it that his Grace, this considering, may either by himself think, or by the persuasions of others be brought to think, that in this doing I should not show a pure mind, a true and incorrupt zeal and affection to his Grace?* Was there in me any such mind, when I warned his Grace to beware of his cardinal, whose iniquity he shortly after approved [i.e. proved, discovered] according to my writing? Doth this deserve hatred? Again, may his Grace, being a Christian prince, be so unkind to God, which hath commanded His Word to be spread throughout the world, to give more faith to wicked persuasions of men, which, presuming above God’s wisdom, and contrary to that which Christ expressly commandeth in His testament, dare say that it is not lawful for the people to have the same in a tongue that they understand; because the purity thereof should open men’s eyes to see their wickedness? Is there more danger in the King’s subjects than in the subjects of all other princes, which in every of their tongues have the same, under privilege of their sufferance [sovereigns?]. As I now am, very death were more pleasant to me than life, considering man’s nature to be such as can bear no truth.”

‘Thus, after a long conversation had between us, for my part making answer as my wit would serve me, which were too long to write, I assayed him with gentle persuasions, to know whether he would come into England; ascertaining him that means should be made, if he thereto were minded,

without his peril or danger, that he might so do; and that what surety he would devise for the same purpose, should, by labour of friends, be obtained of your Majesty. But to this he answered, that he neither would nor durst come into England, albeit your Grace would promise him never so much surety; fearing lest, as he hath before written, your promise made should shortly be broken, by the persuasion of the clergy, which would affirm that promises made with heretics ought not to be kept.

‘After this, he told me how he had finished a work against my Lord Chancellor’s book, and would not put it in print till such time as your Grace had seen it; because he apperceiveth your displeasure towards him, for hasty putting forth of his other work, and because it should appear that he is not of so obstinate mind as he thinks he is reported to your Grace. This is the substance of his conversation had with me, which as he spake I have written to your Grace, word for word, as near as I could by any possible means bring to remembrance. My trust therefore is, that your Grace will not but take my labours in the best part, I thought necessary to be written unto your Grace. After these words, he then, being something fearful of me, lest I would have pursued him, and drawing also towards night, he took his leave of me, and departed from the town, and I toward the town, saying, “I should shortly, peradventure, see him again, or if not, hear from him.” Howbeit I suppose he afterward returned to the town by another way; for there is no likelihood that he should lodge without the town. Hasty to pursue him I was not, because I had some likelihood to speak shortly again with him; and in pursuing him I might perchance have failed of my purpose, and put myself in danger.

‘To declare to your majesty what, in my poor judgement, I think of the man, I ascertain [assure] your Grace, I have not communed with a man—.’¹

Here, however, the copy of the dispatch abruptly terminates in the very climax of its interest; and, as it is unlikely that the transcriber would have omitted the sequel if it had been preserved, the suspicion irresistibly arises that the indignant monarch to whom it was addressed, unable to control his patience any longer, had vented his anger upon the honest document which might have saved his reign from one of its foulest blots; just as the besotted Jewish king cut in pieces the faithful warning of the prophet. Vaughan, in his zeal, had travelled beyond his commission. Receiving his instructions personally from Cromwell, his friend and patron, he had assumed that the wishes of the King were identical with those of the minister, and little suspected that the attempt to induce Tindale to return to England was simply a part of Cromwell’s policy, which the King had been half persuaded to tolerate, but of the expediency of which he was by no means convinced.

¹ Cotton MSS., *Titus*, B. I.

And since Cromwell had conceived this project, circumstances had occurred which were certain to revive all Henry's prejudices against Tindale. It is obvious from the date of Vaughan's first dispatch (Jan. 26) that he must have received his instructions and must have left England some time before the close of 1530, probably not later than the commencement of December of that year.¹ But at that time Tindale's *Practice of Prelates* had not yet reached England, as we believe; and when that work did come to be perused by Henry and Cromwell, then it was inevitable that a change should take place in their feelings towards the writer. If Tindale had propitiated Cromwell's favour by advocating in *The Obedience* the very policy which he wished to inaugurate in England, he had certainly given mortal offence to Henry in *The Practice of Prelates* by denouncing the divorce as a flagitious attempt on the part of the clergy to tamper with the law of God. To the King the policy of Cromwell was a matter of inferior importance; he knew that he was master of England, and probably felt none of that need for assistance which oppressed his minister: but the matter of the divorce touched him to the quick, and here he could tolerate no opposition. Whatever countenance, therefore, he might have been induced to lend to the design for bringing into England the author of *The Obedience* would be at once withdrawn when *The Practice of Prelates* appeared; and his resentment would naturally be increased by the feeling that he had been seduced by false representation into promising his protection to the man who thus dared to oppose and censure his most cherished wish. Tindale did not speak without good reason of Henry's 'great displeasure for his putting forth of the book named *The Practice of Prelates*'; and the mutilated dispatch of the ill-advised envoy may possibly be accepted as no bad indication of the passion which agitated the King on reading the inopportune panegyric of his too honest ambassador.

If the dispatch of Vaughan was annoying to Henry, it must have been terribly embarrassing to Cromwell, whose position with his master was seriously compromised by the precipitation of his subordinate. Between Henry and Vaughan, indeed, Cromwell had a very difficult part to play; and the embarrassment of the unhappy secretary is singularly reflected in the draft of his reply, which is interlined, corrected, and recorrected, and is evidently the work of a man in the utmost bewilderment. It seems a probable conjecture that the dispatch as originally penned, though censuring Tindale's writings with great severity, was not sufficiently bitter to satisfy Henry; and that Cromwell was therefore compelled to alter his language so as to give it additional force. It has even been supposed that the interlineations are by Henry's own pen; but, though the handwriting is not unlike Henry's, careful

¹ He had not only travelled to Bergen from London, but after arriving there and making inquiries, he had written and dispatched three letters to Tindale, and had received a reply, an extremely circuitous operation when Tindale's actual abode was unknown.

examination inclines us rather to believe that they are the work of Cromwell. The letter as it was finally prepared for transmission is here subjoined; the original draft, where it differs, being added at the foot of the page for the information of the reader.¹

‘Stephen Vaughan, I commend me unto you, and have received your letters [i. e. letter] dated at Antwerp the eighteenth day of April, with also that part of Tyndale’s book sewed and inclosed in leather, which ye with your letters directed to the King’s Highness, after the receipt whereof I did repair unto the court, and there presented the same unto his Royal Majesty, who made me answer for that time that his Highness at opportune leisure should visit [inspect] oversee and read the contents as well of your letters as also the said book. And at my next repair thither it pleased his Highness to call for me, declaring unto me as well the contents of your letters, as also much of the matter contained in the said book of Tyndale.

‘And albeit that I might well perceive that his Majesty was right well pleased, and right acceptably considered your diligence and pains taken in the writing and sending of the said book, as also in the persuading and exhorting of Tyndale to repair into this realm: **yet his Highness nothing liked the said book, being filled with seditious, slanderous lies, and fantastical opinions, showing therein neither learning nor truth: and further communing with his Grace I might well conceive that he thought that ye bare much affection towards the said Tyndale*, whom in his manners and knowledge in worldly things ye undoubtedly in your letters do much allow and commend; whose works being replete with so abominable slanders and lies, imagined and only feigned to infect the people, doth [do] declare him both to lack grace, virtue, learning, discretion, and all other good qualities, nothing else pretending in all his works but to seduce, deceive, and sow sedition among the people of this realm.’²

¹ Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x.

² Such, so far as I can make it out, I believe to be the final form of the dispatch; but the erasures are so numerous that it is difficult to decide what was at last permitted to remain. In the original draft the passage within the asterisks ran thus: ‘. . . in the accomplishment of his high pleasure and commandment. Yet I might conjecture by the further declaration of his Highness’ pleasure, which said unto me that he thought that by your writing it manifestly appeared how much affection and zeal ye do bear towards the said Tyndale, whom in his manners, modesty, and simplicity ye undoubtedly do much allow and commend. Then his works being so replete with lies and most abominable slanders imagined and feigned to infect and intoxicate the people may to indifferent judgement declarereth [declare] him [show unprejudiced persons what sort of man he is]. For the which your favour supposed to be borne to the said Tyndale (who assuredly showeth himself in my opinion rather to be replete with venomous envy, rancour, and malice than with any good learning, virtue or discretion) hath put the King’s Highness in suspicion of you, considering that ye should [i.e. do] in such wise lean unto and favour the evil doctrine of so perverse and malicious a person, and so much praise him who nothing goeth about or pretendeth but only to seduce, deceive, and disquiet the people and commonwealth of this realm.’

+ ‘The King’s Highness, therefore, hath commanded me to advertise you that ye should desist and leave any further to persuade or attempt the said Tyndale to come into this realm; alleging that he, perceiving the malicious, perverse, uncharitable, and indurate mind of the said Tyndale is in manner without hope of reconciliation in him, and is very joyous to have his realm destitute of such a person¹ + than that he should return into the same, there to manifest his errors and seditious opinions, which (being out of the realm by his most uncharitable, venomous, and pestilent book, crafty and false persuasions) he hath partly done already. For his Highness right prudently considereth that if he were present, by all likelihood he would shortly (which God defend) do as much as in him were to infect and corrupt the whole realm, to the great inquietation and hurt of the commonwealth of the same.

‘Wherefore, Stephen, I heartily pray you in all your doing, providing, and writing to the King’s Highness, ye do justly, truly, and unfeignedly, *without dissimulation show yourself his true, loving, and obedient subject, bearing no manner, favour, love, or affection to the said *Tyndale*,’² * ne to his work in any manner of wise, but utterly contemn and abhor the same, assuring you that in so doing ye shall not only cause the King’s Royal Majesty, whose goodness at this time is so benignly and graciously minded towards you (as by your good diligence and industry to be used to serve his Highness, and eschewing and avoiding to favour and allow the said *Tyndale*, his erroneous works and opinions) so to set you forwards as all your lovers and friends shall have great consolation of the same; and by the contrary doing ye shall acquire the indignation of God, displeasure of your sovereign lord, and by the same cause your good friends, which have been ever glad, prone, and ready to bring you into his gracious favours, to lament and sorrow that their suit in that behalf should be frustrate and not to take effect according to their good intent and purpose.³ Having, therefore, firm trust that for the love ye owe to yourself and your friends, ye will beware and eschew to enter into any opinions whereby any slander, dishonesty, danger, or suspicion might ensue towards you, whereof I promise you I would be as sorry as your natural father.

‘As touching *Fryth*, mentioned in your said letter, the King’s Highness hearing tell of his towardness in good letters and learning, doth much lament

¹ For the passage enclosed between + + the original draft read thus: ‘Whose coming into England the King’s Highness can right well forbear, and hath commanded me expressly to write unto you that ye should desist and leave any further to persuade or attempt him thereunto; alleging that His Majesty, so evidently perceiving the malicious, perverse, uncharitable mind and disposition of the said Tyndale is rather very glad that he is out of his realm than that, &c.,’ as above.

² This specific clause was inserted instead of the original, which said more generally, ‘Show yourself to be no fautor unto the said Tyndale.’

³ This passage also has been changed from the original, but as the changes had no reference to Tindale we forbear to transcribe them

that he should in such wise as he doth, set forth, shew and apply his learning and doctrine in the semination and sowing such evil seed of damnable and detestable heresies, maintaining, bolstering, and advancing the venomous and pestiferous works, erroneous and seditious opinions of the said *Tyndale* and other . . . Wherein his Highness, like a most virtuous and benign prince having charge of his people and subjects, being very sorry to hear tell that any of the same should in such wise run headlong and digress from the laws of Almighty God and wholesome doctrine of holy fathers, into such damnable heresies and seditious opinions; and being ever inclined, willing, and greatly desirous to foresee and provide for the same; and much desiring the reconciliation of the said Fryth, firmly trusting that he be not so far as yet inrooted in the evil doctrine of the said *Tyndale* and others, but that by the grace of God, loving, charitable, and friendly exhortations and advertisements of good people, he may be called again to the right way; hath willed me to write unto you that ye, therefore, according to his trust and expectation will, with your friendly persuasions, admonitions, and wholesome exhortations, counsel and advise the said Fryth, if ye may conveniently speak with the same, to leave his wilful opinions, and like a good Christian to return unto his native country, where he assuredly shall find the King's Highness most merciful, and benignly, upon his conversion, disposed to accept him to his grace and mercy.

'Wherefore, eftsoons, I exhort you, for the love of God, not only utterly to forsake, leave, and withdraw your affection from the said *Tyndale* and all his sort, but also as much as ye can, politiquely and charitably, to allure all the said Fryth and other such persons being in these parts, which in any wise ye shall know or suppose to be fautors and assistants to the same, from all their erroneous minds and opinions. In which doing ye shall not only highly merit in Almighty God, but also deserve high thanks of the King's Royal Majesty, who will not forget your devoirs and labours in that behalf, so that his Majesty may evidently perceive that ye effectually do intend the same.'

The draft of the dispatch then concludes with a brief reference to the ordinary topics of official correspondence, which, under other circumstances, might have occupied a more conspicuous place: for the relations between the King and the Emperor were of a somewhat delicate kind; the proposed divorce and the new policy of Cromwell having not unnaturally created considerable jealousy in the breast of Charles. But to the dispatch as actually sent there was appended a most incautious postscript on the part of Cromwell, virtually cancelling all the text of the letter, and showing plainly that it was the minister and not the King who was so bent upon inducing Tindale to return to England. 'Notwithstanding the premises in my letter,' wrote the audacious and indiscreet secretary, 'if it were possible, by good and wholesome exhortations to reconcile and convert the said *Tyndale* . . . I doubt not

but the King's Highness would be *much joyous* of his conversion . . . and if *then he would return into his realm . . .* undoubtedly the King's Majesty refuseth none.¹

Tindale had evidently made a profound impression upon Vaughan. Even before the interview at Antwerp, Vaughan had probably shared in that sympathy for the Reformers, which Sir Thomas More represents as not uncommon among the educated classes in England; and when he actually met Tindale he appreciated at once the noble character of the man with whom he had to deal, and from that moment became his friend. There is really no reason to believe that at first either Henry or Cromwell meant to ensnare Tindale, and so get him into their power; but, on the contrary, it seems probable that Cromwell hoped to find in him an ally, such as he afterwards had in Latimer, whose eloquence might promote that policy of reformation which he contemplated.

It is quite certain, at all events, that Vaughan was not likely to lend himself to any dishonourable plot for depriving Tindale of his liberty; for notwithstanding the sharp reprimand administered by Cromwell, he still endeavours to produce in Henry a favourable opinion of the man whom he himself so highly esteemed. Cromwell's angry dispatch reached Vaughan at Bergen-op-Zoom on May 18, and two days afterwards Vaughan replied, giving us a most interesting record of a second interview with Tindale.² After briefly alluding to the peace for two years recently concluded between the Turks and Ferdinand, the growing dissensions between the Emperor and his German subjects on religious questions, and the appointment of Mary, Queen of Hungary, as Regent of the Low Countries, in the room of the deceased Lady Margaret, he proceeds to what is of more immediate interest to us:—

'As touching a young man being in these parts named *Fryth*, of whom I lately advertised your Majesty, by my former letters [letter], and whom your Royal Majesty giveth me in commandment, with friendly persuasions, admonitions, and wholesome counsels to advertise to leave his wilful opinions and errors, and to return into his native country, I shall not fail, according unto your most gracious commandment, to endeavour, to the utmost of my power, to persuade him accordingly, so soon as my chance shall be to meet with him. Howbeit I am informed that he is very lately married in Holland, and there dwelleth, but in what place I cannot tell. This marriage may, by chance, hinder my persuasions. I suppose him to have been thereunto driven through poverty, which is to be pitied, his qualities considered.'

¹ The whole passage is quoted again in Vaughan's reply: see p. 357.

² *Galba*, B. x. 7 of the new notation: original in the State Paper Office; *Chapter House Papers*.

'I have again been in hand to persuade *Tyndale*; and to draw him the rather to favour my persuasions, and not to think the same feigned, I showed him a clause contained in Master Cromwell's letter, containing these words following:—"And notwithstanding other the premises in this my letter contained, if it were possible, by good and wholesome exhortations, to reconcile and convert the said *Tyndale* from the train and affection which he now is in, and to excerpt and take away the opinions and fantasies sorely rooted in him, I doubt not but the King's Highness would be much joyous of his conversion and amendment; and so being converted, if then he would return into his realm, undoubtedly the King's Royal Majesty is so inclined to mercy, pity, and compassion, that he refuseth none which he seeth to submit themselves to the obedience and good order of the world."

'In these words I thought to be such sweetness and virtue as were able to pierce the hardest heart of the world; and as I thought, so it came to pass. For after sight thereof I perceived the man to be exceedingly altered, and to take the same very near unto his heart, in such wise that water stood in his eyes, and answered, "What gracious words are these! I assure you," said he, "*if it would stand with the King's most gracious pleasure to grant only a bare text of the Scripture to be put forth among his people, like as is put forth among the subjects of the Emperor in these parts, and of other Christian princes, be it of the translation of what person soever shall please his Majesty, I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more, nor abide two days in these parts after the same; but immediately to repair into his realm, and there most humbly submit myself at the feet of his Royal Majesty, offering my body to suffer what pain or torture, yea, what death his Grace will, so that this be obtained.* And till that time I will abide the asperity of all chances, whatsoever shall come, and endure my life in as much pains as it is able to bear and suffer. And as concerning my reconciliation, his Grace may be assured that, whatsoever I have said or written in all my life against the honour of God's Word, and [it be]¹ so proved, the same shall I before his Majesty and all the world [utterly] renounce and forsake, and with most humble and meek mind [embrace] the truth, abhorring all error, sooner at the most gracious and benign [request] of his Royal Majesty (of whose wisdom, prudence, and learning I [hear] so great praise and commendation), than of any other creature living. But if those things which I have written be true, and stand with God's Word, why should his Majesty, having so excellent [gift] of knowledge in the Scriptures, move me to do anything against my conscience?" with many other words which were too long to write.

¹ The words enclosed in brackets in this part of the letter are supplied conjecturally to fill up the sense, the edges of the MSS. having been injured by fire.

'Finally, I have some good hope in the man, and would not doubt to bring [him] to some good point, were it that some thing now and then might proceed from your Majesty towards me, whereby the man might take the better comfort of my persuasions. I advertised the same *Tyndale* that he should not put forth the same book, till your most gracious pleasure were known: whereunto he answered, mine advertisement came too late, for he feared lest one that had his copy would put it very shortly in print, which he would let [i.e. prevent] if he could; if not, there is no remedy. I shall stay it as much as I can. As yet it is not come forth, nor will not in a while, by that I perceive. Luther hath lately put forth a work against the Emperor, in the German tongue, which I would cause to be translated into Latin and send it to your Majesty, if I knew your gracious pleasure. In it are many things to be seen.'

Though baffled and disappointed, neither Cromwell nor Vaughan was willing to relinquish the attempt to induce Tindale to return, without a further effort. Writing on June 19, Vaughan records yet one more ineffectual attempt to persuade Tindale:—

'I cannot come by the book of Luther's [referred to in the previous letter]; there came but one to all this town, and that was gone or I received answer. I have another put forth by Melanchthon in the Latin tongue, which I obtained while I wrote this, and would have sent it you, but the bearer thought it too great. It is entitled, *Confessio fidei exhibita invictissimo Imp. Carolo v. Caesari, Aug. in Comitiis Augustae* [a Confession of faith presented to the most mighty Emperor Charles V. at the Assembly at Augsburg]. I would gladly send such things to his Highness; but I am informed he looketh not upon them himself but committeth them to others. I am sorry he so doeth, because I know his high judgement in learning to be such as might safely without danger approve men's opinions by reading thereof... I was never more desirous to speak with you than now, wherefore I pray you help me to come home. *I have spoken with Tyndale*, and shewed him as you wrote me the King's royal pleasure was, but I find him always singing one note [i.e. always alleging the same objections to returning to England]. You wrote that the answer which he made to the Chancellor was unclerkly done: and so seem all his works to eloquent men, because he useth so rude and simple style, nothing liking any vain praise and commendation. If the King's royal pleasure had been to have looked thereupon, he should then have better judged it than upon the sight of another man. The prophets Esay and Jonas are put forth in the English tongue [one translated by George Joye from the Vulgate, the other by Tyndale from the Hebrew], and [it] passeth any man's power to stop them from coming forth.'¹

¹ State Paper Office: Miscellaneous Letters, Second Series; printed by Sir Henry Ellis in his collection of *Original Letters*.

Here, for a time, the correspondence ceases. Vaughan seems to have obtained that permission to return home which he so urgently requested, and it was not till the month of November that he resumed his functions as envoy in Antwerp; and he does not appear to have ever reopened personal communications with the illustrious exile whom he so much admired. And the occurrences of the summer of 1531 in England were of such a nature as to confirm all Tindale's fears, and to prove conclusively how well founded had been his disinclination to relinquish his comparative safety in Antwerp and to face the dangers and uncertainties which awaited him in England, where, for a brief season, the enemies of the Reformation seemed to be expending their utmost violence. The commencement of the year, indeed, had been signalized by Cromwell's first great achievement in the humiliation of the clergy. Convocation, after long and fierce debates, had not only been compelled to pay the King an enormous fine, as the price of their exemption from the penalties of the Statute of *Praemunire*, which they had incurred by acknowledging Wolsey's legatine authority; but, more bitter humiliation still, they had also been forced to recognize Henry to be 'the supreme head of the clergy and Church of England,' thereby virtually annulling their oath of supreme allegiance to the pope. By way of compensating themselves for this degradation, Convocation proceeded to exhibit extreme rigour in prosecuting heretics; and, probably from reasons of policy, no attempt was made by Henry or Cromwell to restrain them.

William Tracy, of Toddington in Gloucestershire, a former friend of Tindale, conspicuous for his piety and his careful study of the works of the Fathers, and especially St. Augustine, had died in 1530, and his will was found to contain what was deemed gross heresy. He denied the efficacy of works to procure salvation, impugned the mediation of saints, and directed that no part of his goods should be bestowed to purchase prayers for the benefit of his soul. His testament had made such an impression that copies of it had been circulated; and as early as February 25, 1531, the subject was brought before Convocation, and the will was condemned as 'proud, scandalous, contradictory, impious, and heretical;' and it was decreed that, unless satisfactory reasons could be alleged in explanation, he should be declared a heretic, and his body should be exhumed and cast out of consecrated ground,—a sentence which was subsequently officially pronounced, and carried into execution with circumstances of additional atrocity by that same Dr. Parker, Chancellor of Worcester, who, ten years before, had summoned Tindale before him and rated him like a dog.

Proceedings were instituted at the same time against Latimer, Bilney, and Crome, all Cambridge men, and well known to Tindale; and the last of these, a conspicuous reforming preacher in London, was compelled to abjure. On the last day of March, another distinguished Cambridge scholar, John

Lambert or Nicholson, a convert of Bilney, was brought before Convocation. In him Tindale must have felt a special interest, for he had been ‘chaplain and preacher to the English House at Antwerp’ for upwards of a year, and had been betrayed by Barlowe, the very brother of Greenwich, as some suppose, who had joined Tindale at Worms after the departure of Roye.¹ These proceedings, which were all reported and probably exaggerated at Antwerp, were certainly not calculated to induce Tindale to comply with Vaughan’s invitation; they were in all likelihood known to Tindale before his interview with the envoy, April 17, and amply justified his declaration that ‘he neither would nor durst come into England, albeit the King would promise him never so much surety, fearing lest his promise made should shortly be broken by the persuasion of the clergy, which would affirm that promises made with heretics ought not to be kept.’

As the summer passed on, the prospect in England grew every day darker and more discouraging. Bilney, whom Tindale had unquestionably known at Cambridge, and from whom he had perhaps imbibed his first love for the doctrines of the Reformers, was apprehended and burnt at Norwich in August.² A few weeks later, Bayfield, another friend of Tindale, shared the same fate; one who, according to Foxe, had been converted to the cause of the Reformation by the study of Tindale’s works, and who, according to the same authority, was ‘beneficial to Master Tyndale and Master Frith, for he brought substance with him, and was their own hand, and sold all their works.’³ After two most successful importations of the works of Tindale and the Continental Reformers, he had been seized, when in possession of a third cargo, and being a relapsed heretic, he was condemned, degraded, and burnt.

¹ Foxe, vol. v. p. 181; Wilkins, vol. iii. p. 746. Tindale calls this ‘brother of Greenwich’ *Jerome*. Rinck’s letter, given on page 192, mentions Jerome Barlowe as one of the associates of Tindale; and it seems, therefore, a fair conclusion that Jerome and Jerome Barlowe were the same person. This person was, according to Tindale, the author of a poem against the Mass; and Barlowe, Bishop of Bath, a martyr in Mary’s reign, acknowledged having written against the Mass. The bishop’s name, however, was *William*; but possibly William Barlowe was the correct name, and Jerome only an assumed monastic name. Now Sir Thomas More (*Confutation*, p. 656) speaks of William Barlowe as ‘long conversant in Germany,’ but before 1532 changing his opinions. Was not this therefore the informant against Lambert? and if so, how deeply must Tindale have been interested!

² See Demaus’s *Latimer*. A friendly critic in the *Contemporary Review* asks my authority for fixing August 19 as the date of Bilney’s execution. Tunstal’s *Register*, I am aware, assigns August 26, but this is in a marginal note, and I have repeatedly seen reason to distrust marginal notes. Foxe, without mentioning any day of the month, says the execution took place on Saturday, being St. Magnus’s Day: now in 1531, St. Magnus’s Day (August 19) fell on a Saturday. Such a coincidence seems to me always preferable to a bald statement: moreover, Collier and Holinshed also give the 19th.

³ Foxe, vol. iv. p. 681. Foxe’s account of Bayfield’s earlier career is confused and incredible.

Bayfield was resolute, and could not be induced to make any confession incriminating his associates abroad; but the next person who fell into the hands of Sir Thomas More proved more pliable, notwithstanding the favourable omen of his name. George Constans or Constantine, who had been for years on the Continent, one of those whom Rinck had associated in his letter with Tindale, Roye, and Jerome, and who had been an active agent in the circulation of Tindale's works, was seized and carried before the Chancellor, then in the height of that fierce career of persecution so totally incongruous with his own gentle character and the tenor of his early opinions. Sir Thomas was anxious if possible to ascertain from whom Tindale and others received assistance; and he determined to work upon Constantine's fears. The unfortunate man was put in irons, 'tied by the leg with a chain like a wild beast,' according to Vaughan; and, overcome with terror, he confessed at least part of what Sir Thomas More wished to learn. He revealed the name of the merchant who received the prohibited books, 'and the marks of the fardels,'¹ so that they were subsequently seized and burned. He made statements also reflecting upon Vaughan, greatly to the distress of the honest envoy, as we shall subsequently see. It does not appear that he made any disclosures concerning Tindale; fortunately, however, he contrived to escape from durance, and without loss of time he returned to Antwerp, which he reached in the beginning of December.

Such are a few of the occurrences of the year 1531; in all which intimate friends and associates of Tindale were concerned, and they were certainly not at all reassuring. Nothing but bonds and death seemed to await him if he returned to England; and though he was ready, with God's help, to face any danger when duty called him, he saw no reason for voluntarily courting the fiery doom of Bilney and Bayfield. On the Continent, in the meantime, he was safe; there were misunderstandings between the Emperor and the King of England, and complaints that might even involve the two nations in hostilities; and while this state of things lasted, there was no likelihood that Charles would give up Tindale to gratify Henry's desire for vengeance. That he remained during the whole year at Antwerp cannot with any certainty be affirmed: but as he was there in the months of May and June, when Vaughan had interviews with him, it seems in no way improbable that he spent the greater part of the year there. He was still diligently prosecuting his noble work; and this year he gave to the world the last contribution to the translation of Holy Scripture, which was published in his lifetime,—the translation of the prophet Jonah.

The history of this little work is surrounded with the same element of romantic interest which invests the first issue of the New Testament.

¹ Sir Thomas More's *Confutation of Tindale's Answer*, fol. 346.

Although the book was denounced by name at Paul's Cross by Stokesley, as the New Testament had been by Stokesley's predecessor in the see; although Vaughan alludes to it, and Sir Thomas More in his *Confutation* had with facetious violence declared that 'Jonas was never so swallowed up with the whale as by the delight of that book a man's soul may be so swallowed up by the devil that he shall never have the grace to get out again'; yet the work had at a very early period become extremely scarce, and, in fact, had so totally disappeared that many writers had begun to deny its existence. The Prologue to the translation had, indeed, been repeatedly reprinted; but the translation itself had apparently become so rare that in the Bible of 1537, edited by John Rogers, to whom Tindale is said to have given his manuscripts before his martyrdom, Coverdale's translation of Jonah is printed; Rogers being, it is presumed, unable to procure a copy of Tindale's.

In 1861, however, Lord Arthur Hervey, then Rector of Ickworth, found in an old volume, which had been in the possession of his family for upwards of two centuries, a copy of the long-lost treatise, containing both the Prologue and the translation, thus setting at rest the question which had so long perplexed biographers. It is a little tract of four-and-twenty leaves, with neither date, nor place, nor name of printer annexed: the author of the work being indicated, as in the Pentateuch, by the simple phrase, 'W. T. unto the Christian reader,' prefixed to the Prologue. 'The type,' says Mr. Fry, who has reproduced the book in facsimile, 'is the same as that used by Martin Lempereur in the Bible in French, printed at Antwerp in 1530'; and as Tindale was at Antwerp in 1531, and as he employed Lempereur to print for him, there seems no reasonable doubt that the Jonah issued from the same press from which Tindale's revised New Testament proceeded in 1534. This copy is now in the British Museum.

The Prologue is of course directed against the great errors of the day; but the reader seeks in vain for anything to justify the fierce condemnation of Sir Thomas More. All the errors and abuses that prevailed had sprung, in Tindale's view, from one great cause; Scripture had been depraved by allegorical interpretations, and the laity were not permitted to search and ascertain for themselves its true meaning.

'As the envious Philistines,' says he, repeating one of the old illustrations of Erasmus's *Enchiridion*, 'stopped the wells of Abraham, and filled them up with earth, to put the memorial [recollection of them] out of mind, to the intent that they might challenge the ground; even so the fleshly-minded hypocrites stop up the veins of life which are in the Scripture, with the earth of their traditions, false similitudes, and lying allegories; and that of like zeal, to make the Scripture their own possession and merchandise, and so shut up the kingdom of heaven, which is God's Word; neither entering in themselves, nor suffering them that would.'

They had corrupted all parts of Holy Scripture, ‘the Law, the Gospel, and the stories which it contained.’ ‘When the hypocrites come to the Law, they put glosses to, and make no more of it, than of a worldly law, which is satisfied with the outward work, and which a Turk may also fulfil . . . And when they come to the Gospel, there they mingle their leaven and say, “God now receiveth us no more to mercy, but of mercy receiveth us to penance,” that is to wit, holy deeds that make them fat bellies and us their captives both in soul and body. And yet they feign their idol the pope so merciful, that if thou make a little money glitter in his Balaam’s eyes, there is neither penance nor purgatory nor any fasting at all, but to flee to heaven as swift as a thought and at the twinkling of an eye. And the lives, stories, and gests [deeds] of men which are contained in the Bible, they read as things no more pertaining unto them than a tale of Robin Hood, and as things they wot not whereto they serve, save to feign false descent and juggling allegories, to establish their kingdom withal. And one the chiefest and fleshliest study they have, is to magnify the *saints* above measure and above the truth, and with their poetry to make them greater than ever God made them. And if they find any infirmity or sin ascribed unto the saints, that they excuse with all diligence, diminishing the glory of the mercy of God, and robbing sinners of all their comfort, and think thereby to flatter the saints, and to obtain their favour, and to make special advocates of them, even as a man would obtain the favour of worldly tyrants: as they also feign the saints much more cruel than ever was any heathen man, and more wreakful and vengeable than the poets feign their gods or their furies that torment the souls in hell, if their evens be not fasted, and their images visited and saluted with a *Pater noster* (which prayer only our lips be acquainted with, our hearts understanding it none at all), and worshipped with a candle and the offering of our devotion, in the place which they have chosen to hear the supplications and meek petitions of their clients therein.’

There was, in the circumstances of the age, an obvious reason for selecting the book of Jonah as peculiarly likely to benefit his countrymen. To Tindale it appeared that the position of Nineveh when visited by the preacher of repentance was strictly analogous to that of his own country, long sunk in ignorance, and now summoned to hear and obey the teaching of the Gospel; the only difference being that the Ninevites had at once obeyed the preacher’s invitation, while the authorities in England seemed determined to offer the most bitter opposition. Most earnestly, therefore, did he entreat his countrymen to repent, and so escape those penalties which the indignation of God was sure to inflict upon the impenitent.

‘Since the world began wheresoever repentance was offered and not received, there God took cruel vengeance immediately; as ye see in the flood of Noah, in the overthrowing of Sodom and Gomorrah and all the country

about; and as ye see of Egypt, of the Amorites, Canaanites, and afterwards of the very Israelites; and then at the last of the Jews too, and of the Assyrians and Babylonians, and so throughout all the empires of the world.

‘Gildas preached repentance unto the old Britons that inhabited England: they repented not, and therefore God sent in their enemies upon them on every side and destroyed them up, and gave the land unto other nations. And great vengeance hath been taken in that land for sin since that time. Wickliffe preached repentance unto our fathers not long since: they repented not, for their hearts were indurate and their eyes blinded with their own pope-holy righteousness wherewith they had made their souls gay against [for] the receiving again of the wicked spirit that bringeth seven worse than himself with him, and maketh the latter end worse than the beginning; for in open sins there is hope of repentance, but in holy hypocrisy none at all. But what followed? They slew their true and right king [Richard II] and set up three wrong kings a-row Henry IV, V, VI], under which all the noble blood was slain and half the commons thereto, what in France, and what with their own sword, in fighting among themselves for the crown, and the cities and towns decayed, and the land [was] brought half into a wilderness in respect of that it was before.

‘And now Christ to preach repentance is risen yet once again out of His sepulchre, in which the pope had buried Him and kept Him down with his pillars¹ and poleaxes and all disguisings of hypocrisy, with guile, wiles, and falsehood, and with the sword of all princes which he had blinded with his false merchandise. And as I doubt not of the ensamples that are past, so am I sure that great wrath will follow, except repentance turn it back again and cease it.’

Tindale still continued to prosecute his translation of the Old Testament, but except a few detached fragments, no more of his work was given to the world during his lifetime. For another great idea had taken possession of his mind, and he was devoting all his energy to its accomplishment. ‘It is not enough,’ he said, ‘to have translated, though it were the whole Scripture, into the vulgar and common tongue, except we also bring again the light to understand it by, and expel that dark cloud which the hypocrites have spread over the face of the Scripture, to blind the right sense and true meaning thereof.’² With this purpose in view he had written his *Prologue to Jonah*; and in prosecution of the same purpose he issued in September of this same year an *Exposition of the First Epistle of Saint John* and, indeed, the greater part of the year 1531 was engrossed with the accomplishment of this new task. These expository works possess very considerable merit, mainly,

¹ Part of the insignia borne before the pope and his legates.

² Prologue of *Exposition of 1 John*.

however, of a polemical kind; but, in spite of their constant clearness and their occasional eloquence, one cannot help regretting that Tindale was thus withdrawn from his true function of a translator, in which he stands unrivalled, to labours far less congenial to his capacity. Upwards of two years were thus entirely, or almost entirely, lost to the revision of his New Testament, which he had long before promised, and which the Dutch printers were so earnestly pressing upon him; and the prosecution of his labours on the Old Testament must have been for a time almost completely arrested.

The Exposition of Saint John's Epistle is, probably, the least striking of all Tindale's works to a modern reader. The constant interruption to the continuity of the subject was unfavourable to that earnest and impetuous eloquence which forms the chief charm in his other writings: and while no one has laid down more clearly than Tindale the true principle of sound Scriptural interpretation, he has not carried his principle into execution, in such a manner as to excite the interest of readers accustomed to the elaborate expositions of modern commentators. It is, accordingly, not those passages that would in strictness of speech be styled expository which arrest our attention; but rather those in which Tindale breaks out afresh on the old themes on which he was never tired of descanting, and in which his reader never loses his interest. On these the old fire burns as brightly as ever, and his hand deals out as heavy blows on those who were the unrelenting opponents of all attempts to enlighten and reform the Church.

In a single sentence, he lays down with admirable succinctness the whole scope and purport of the Reformation which he advocated: 'We restore the Scripture unto her right understanding [meaning] from your glosses, and we deliver the sacraments and ceremonies unto their right use from your abuse.'

Sir Thomas More did not, of course, omit, in his *Confutation*, to censure Tindale's *Exposition*, which he declares to have been 'in such wise expounded that I dare say that blessed apostle [John], rather than his holy words were in such a sense believed of all Christian people, had lever [rather] his epistle had never been put in writing.' And Tindale had, in truth, given fresh provocation to his old adversary by repeating once more, in the most offensive manner, the imputation against his honesty, which he had already advanced in his *Answer*. 'Love not the world,' the Apostle said, 'nor the things that are in the world: if a man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him'; and Tindale, in his *Exposition*, thus comments upon these words of St. John:—

'The love of the world quencheth the love of God; Balaam, for the love of the world, closed his eyes at the clear light which he well saw. For love of the world the old Pharisees blasphemed the Holy Ghost, and persecuted the manifest truth, which they could not improve [disprove]. For love of the world many are this day fallen away; and many which stood on the truth's

side, and defended it awhile, for love of the world have gotten them unto the contrary part, and are become the Antichrist of Rome's Mamelukes, and are waxen the most wicked enemies unto the truth and most cruel against it. They know the truth, but they love the world: and when they espied that the truth could not stand with the honours which they sought in the world, they hated it deadly, and both wittingly and willingly persecuted it, sinning against the Holy Ghost: which sin shall not escape here unpunished; as it shall not be without damnation in the world to come; but shall have an end here with confusion and shame, as had Judas Iscariot, the traitor.

'And if pride, covetousness, and lechery be the world, as St. John saith, "all that is in the world, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of good, are not of the Father, but of the world," then turn your eyes unto the spirituality, unto the Roman bishop, cardinals, bishops, abbots, and all other prelates, and see whether such dignities be not the world, and whether the way to them be not also the world! To get the old abbot's treasure, I think it be the readiest way to be the new. How few come by promotion except they buy it, or serve long for it, or both? To be skilled in war, and in polling to maintain war and lusts, and to be a good ambassador, is the only way to a bishopric; or to pay truly for it. See whether pluralities, unions [holding of many benefices], tot quots, and changing the less benefice and bishopric for the greater (for the contrary change, I trow, was never seen), may be without covetousness and pride. And then, if such things be the world, and the world not of God, how is our spirituality of God? If pride be seeking of glory, and they that seek glory cannot believe, how can our spirituality believe in Christ? If covetousness turn men from the faith, how are our spirituality in the faith? If Christ, when the devil proffered Him the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof, refused them, as things impossible to stand with His kingdom, which is not of the world; of whom are our spirituality, which have received them? If covetousness be a traitor, and taught Judas to sell his Master, how should he not in so long time teach our spirituality the same craft? . . . The rich persecute the true believers. The rich will never stand forth openly for the Word of God. If of ten thousand there spring one Nicodemus, it is a great thing.'

All the other topics which Tindale had so often treated in his former works are again introduced, and discussed, if not with any fresh arguments, at least with unabated earnestness. A single specimen will show that his hand had lost none of its cunning:—

'To speak of worshipping of saints, and praying unto them, and of that we make them our advocates well nigh above Christ, or altogether [above Christ], though it require a long disputation, yet it is as bright as the day to all that know the truth; how that our fasting of their evens, and keeping their holy days, going bare-foot, sticking up of candles in the bright day, in the

worshipping of them, to obtain their favour, our giving them so costly jewels, offering into their boxes, clothing their images, shoeing them with silver shoes with an ouch of crystal in the midst, to stroke the lips and eyes of the ignorant, as a man would stroke young children's heads to entice them and bring them in, and rock them asleep in ignorance, are, with all like service, plain idolatry, that is, in English, image-service. For the saints are spirits, and can have no delectation in bodily things. And because those bodily deeds can be no service unto the spiritual saints, and we do them not to be a service to ourselves or our neighbours, we serve the work and the false imagination of our fleshly wit, after the doctrine of man, and not of God, and are image-servants. And this is it that Paul calleth *servire elementis mundi* [to serve the elements of the world], to be in captivity under dumb ceremonies and vain traditions of men's doctrine, and to do the work for the work itself; as though God delighted therein, for the deed itself, without all other respect [without regard to anything else].

'But and [if] ye will know the true worshipping of saints, hearken unto Paul, where he saith, "Ye shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life unto my glory (or worship), against the day of Jesus Christ, that I have not run nor laboured in vain.' That is to wete, the worship which all true saints now seek, and the worship that all the true messengers of God seek this day, or ever shall seek, is to draw all to Christ with preaching the true Word of God, and with the ensample of pure living fashioned thereafter. Will ye therefore worship saints truly? Then ask what they preached, and believe their doctrine; and as they followed that doctrine, so conform your living like unto theirs: and that shall be unto their high worship in the coming again of Christ (when all men's deeds shall appear, and every man shall be judged, and receive his with an ouch of crystal in the midst, to stroke the lips and eyes of the ignorant, as a man would stroke young children's heads to entice them and bring them in, and rock them asleep in ignorance, are, with all like service, plain idolatry, that is, in English, image-service. For the saints are spirits, and can have no delectation in bodily things. And because those bodily deeds can be no service unto the spiritual saints, and we do them not to be a service to ourselves or our neighbours, we serve the work and the false imagination of our fleshly wit, after the doctrine of man, and not of God, and are image-servants. And this is it that Paul calleth *servire dementis mundi* [to serve the elements of the world], to be in captivity under dumb ceremonies and vain traditions of men's doctrine, and to do the work for the work itself; as though God delighted therein, for the deed itself, without all other respect [without regard to anything else].

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'And that we worship saints for fear, lest they should be displeased and angry with us, and plague us or hurt us (as who is not afraid of St. Laurence? who dare deny St. Anthony a fleece of wool, for fear of his terrible fire, or lest he send the pox among our sheep?), is heathen image-service, and clean against the first commandment, which is, "Hear, Israel, the Lord thy God is one God." Now God in the Hebrew is called *El*, or *Elohim* in the plural number, i.e. *strength or might*. So that the commandment is, Hear, Israel, He that is thy power and might, thy sword and shield, is but One; that is, there is none of might to help or hurt thee, save One, which is altogether thine, and at thy commandment, if thou wilt hear His voice. And all other might in the world is borrowed of Him: and He will lend no might against thee contrary to His promises. Keep therefore His commandments, and He shall keep thee: and if thou have broken them, and He have lent of His power against thee, repent and come again unto thy profession; and He will return again unto His mercy, and fetch His power home again, which He lent to vex thee, because thou forsookest Him and brakest His commandments. And fear no other creature; for false fear is the cause of all idolatry.'

As in the case of most of his other works, almost every copy of the original issue of the Exposition has perished. Only very few contemporary copies are known to exist, one being in the library of St. Paul's Cathedral; and in it there is nothing to indicate either time or place of publication, the title-page having been destroyed. Sir Thomas More's notice, however, leaves no doubt

of the *time*, which, as we shall see, is sufficiently fixed by one of Vaughan's letters; and, as to the *place*, a careful comparison with other books makes it equally certain that the work was printed at Antwerp.¹

The same ancient copy contains also an Exposition of the Second and Third Epistles of St. John, printed so as to form one continuous whole, and with an index to them all as one book. Evidence both internal and external has been adduced against the authenticity of this Exposition of the two latter Epistles; More, it is alleged, alludes only to the Exposition of the First Epistle; Foxe reprinted only this; Vaughan mentions only this; and there are expressions in the other Expositions which seem quite inconsistent with the opinions repeatedly expressed by Tindale. On the other hand, Tunstal's *Register* mentions amongst the prohibited books *The Exposition of Tyndale upon the Epistles Canonik of Saint John*;¹² the later Expositions distinctly allude to the preceding Exposition of the First Epistle; and the oldest copy of the work extant contains, as already noted, all three Expositions evidently treated as parts of one book. It is true that the later Expositions are very commonplace; but there is nothing in the Epistles themselves to suggest any of those topics on which Tindale was likely to have expatiated with his characteristic boldness and energy. On the whole, therefore, it may be accepted as probable that Tindale expounded all the three Epistles; and we may fairly consider this work as constituting his chief occupation in Antwerp during the summer of 1531.

But the leisure and security thus enjoyed in Antwerp were very precarious. With such an envoy as Vaughan, he was indeed safe from any violence on the part of England; and the rights and privileges of the great trading city were sufficient to shield him from ordinary dangers: yet he knew too well the sleepless animosity of his enemies, and his own utter helplessness against any unforeseen combination of those who were anxious for his apprehension. His safety was best assured by that obscurity which had so long baffled the ingenuity of his hunters; and he seems accordingly to have left Antwerp about the close of the year, and for some months to have wandered up and down in Germany, with no definite aim, probably, beyond that of throwing his persecutors off the trail; and yet, as we shall see, not even in this nomad condition neglecting his great purpose of providing his countrymen with true Expositions of Holy Scripture.

It was not without good reason that Tindale left Antwerp at this time. Henry seems, for some cause unknown, to have changed his policy; Vaughan having proved impracticable, a less scrupulous agent was now employed;

¹ On examining the copy in St. Paul's, I observed that there occurs at the end of the Prologue a woodcut, which was subsequently used in an edition of the New Testament printed at Antwerp

² See Religious Tract Society's Foxe; Appendix to vol. v.

and the dispatches speak no longer of *persuading* Tindale to return to England under a safe conduct, but of *apprehending* him. Vaughan appears to have been in England during the autumn, probably to receive fresh instructions regarding those mutual complaints which were endangering the peace of England and Germany, and perhaps also to enable Cromwell and Henry to judge whether he was likely to aid them in their further designs upon Tindale. Vaughan's convictions, however, were too deep to be shaken; and another envoy, Sir Thomas Elyot, a friend of Sir Thomas More, was entrusted with the ignoble task of detecting and apprehending the Translator. Elyot's achievements, however, belong to the following year, and will come before us in due time; the narrative of the present year will close most appropriately with Vaughan's noble protest against the violent persecution that was raging in England.

After a long silence since June (explained by his visit to London) he thus, in November, resumes his correspondence with Cromwell:¹ ‘I am informed that George Constantine hath of late declared certain things against me before my Lord Chancellor. If it be true, I pray you let me know what things they be. Be you hereof assured, he can declare nothing against me that is truth to hurt me. Peradventure he hath declared that I spake with *Tyndale*. If so he have done, what hath he therein declared that I myself have not signified to the King’s Highness? Peradventure he hath also declared that I laboured *Tyndale*, upon the King’s safe-conduct, to come into England. This also I have signified to his Highness. What other thing soever he hath declared against me, being true, I care not for it; if otherwise, *Veritas liberabit*. I pray you let me have your letters [letter], to know whether you have received my former three letters [all written since his return from England] or otherwise.’

A few days later, November 14, he again writes to Cromwell, sending along with his letter ‘another book lately put out by William Tyndale, being *An Exposition upon the First Epistle of John*,’ which he requested the secretary to deliver into the hands of the King. Again adverting to the charges made against him, he protests, ‘I would to God that the thoughts of my heart towards the honour of his Majesty might be by his Highness seen. Then should he right well apperceive that whatsoever the world, either for malice or fear of themselves, saith or shall report, I am a true and faithful subject of his, and no otherwise, by God’s grace, will be, though my death were threatened thereby; yea, be you further assured that no friendship, no promotion, no advancement, no promise, no gifts, finally, no earthly treasures or persuasion can once bow my neck (though to look upon I am but weak) or anything stir my mind and purpose to the contrary.’

¹ *Titus*, B. i. 373: the letter alludes to his recent visit to London.

Most of all, however, he commends to the notice of Henry and Cromwell a book recently published by Barnes, of which he sends a copy for their perusal, characterizing it as ‘such a piece of work as I yet have not seen one like unto it: I think he shall seal it with his blood.’ With singular lack of caution, he suggests to Cromwell that it would be a good deed ‘to help that Doctor Barnes might declare the opinions of his book before the King’s Majesty.’ ‘Men’s errors,’ he continues, ‘in my poor judgement should from henceforth cease, were it so that it might please the King’s Majesty to have that man examined both before his Highness and the world, whereby his Grace should show himself seriously to regard the truth of God’s Word, and that his judges were men virtuous, of good living, and of good learning, and indifferent [i.e. impartial]. Thus doing, the matter were soon tried and the people soon brought out of doubt: and what better deed could his Majesty do than this? When any be secretly examined the world murmureth, and hath thereby cause to deem [judge] wrongfully. Behold the signs of the world which be wondrous!’¹

Bold as these words were, they are completely eclipsed by the honesty and courage of a subsequent letter, written from Antwerp on December 6, the very day when George Constantine arrived there after his escape from prison in England. After acknowledging the receipt of some long-expected dispatches from Cromwell, he thus proceeds to defend himself and to declare his opinions as to the state of things in England:—

‘And whereas in the same your letters among other things therein contained you signify unto me the taking of George Constantine, and the doubt which your friends putteth, that the said George will accuse me [not]² only to be a fautor and adherent to the Lutheran sect, but also to have given help for and towards the setting forth of such books and works as be erroneous and suspect: and therewith cease not, after your accustomed manner, with many friendly, loving, earnest, and discreet exhortations to move, stir, and persuade [me] to be circumspect; and clearly separating and alienating myself from such sects and erroneous opinions, only to apply and endeavour myself truly and unfeignedly to serve the King his Majesty in such things as his Highness hath trustily commended unto me in these parts; promising me thereby the increase of my laud, praise, and commendation, with other things too long to write.

‘To these things before rehearsed pleaseth it you benignly to receive mine answer in these words following: If Constantine have accused me to be of the Lutheran sect, a fautor and setter forth of erroneous and suspected works, I do not thereat marvel, for two causes specially. One is, for that my Lord

¹ State Paper Office: this interesting letter has never been printed.

² The words in brackets are supplied from conjecture, the MS. being burnt in those places.

Chancellor, in his examination of the said George and of all other men, as I am credibly informed, being brought before him for cases of heresy, doth deeply inquire to know what may be said of me; and in the examination thereof showeth evident and clear desire in his countenance and haviour to hear something of me whereby an occasion of evil might be fastened against me; which, no doubt, shall soon be espied in the patient whom he examineth, who app[erceiving] his desire in that behalf, and trusting, by accusing of me, to scape and avoid his present danger, of pure frailty and weakness spareth not to accuse the innocent. The other is, for that George, besides the imminent peril and danger in which he was, abiding prisoner in my lord's house, was vehemently stirred and provoked, what with the remembrance of his poor wife remaining here desperate, bewashed with continual tears and pinched with hourly sorrow, sighs, and mourning, and the sharp and bitter threatenings of his poor [state] and condition, likely to be brought into an extreme danger of poverty, [and] more hard than the first, by the success [excess?] of his misery, to accuse whom they had longed for, rather than to be tied by the leg with a cold and [heavy] iron, like a beast—as appeared by the shift he made to undo the same and escape such tortures and punishments. Will not these perils, fears, punishments, make a son forget the father which gat him? and the mother that bare him and fed him with her breasts? If they will, who should [wonder] though he would accuse me, a thousand times less dear unto him than either father or mother, to rid him out of the same?

'Would God it might please the King's Majesty to look unto these kinds of punishment; which, in my poor opinion, threateneth a more hurt to his realm than those that be his ministers to execute the same tortures and punishments do think or conjecture; and by [for] this reason only. It shall constrain his subjects in great number to forsake his realm, and to inhabit strange regions and countries, where they shall not practise a little hurt to the same. Yea, and whereas they think that tortures, punishments, and death shall be a mean to rid the realm of erroneous opinions, and bring men in such fear that they shall not once be so hardy [as] to speak or look: be you assured, and let the King's Grace be thereof advertised of my mouth, that his Highness shall duly approve [discover] that in the end it shall cause the sect to wax greater, and those errors to be more plenteously sowed in his realm than ever afore. For who have so mightily sowed those errors as those persons which for fear of tortures and death have fled his realm? Shall they not, by driving men out of his realm, make the rownt¹ and company greater in strange countries, and shall not many do more than one or two? Shall not four write where one wrote afore? Counsel you the King's Highness, as his true subject, to look

¹ This word does not occur, so far as I know, in any dictionary or glossary of the English language; it seems equivalent to the old *rout* or *rabble*.

upon this matter, and no more to trust to other men's policies, which threateneth, in mine opinion, the weal of his realm; and let me no longer be blamed nor suspected for my true saying. That [what] I write I know to be true; and daily do see the experience of that I now write, which, between you and me, I have often said and written, though peradventure you have little regarded it. But tarry a while, and you will be learned by experience. I see it begin already.

'To some men it shall seem by this my manner of writing, that I being (as they suppose, and as I have been falsely accused to be) one of the sect, do write in this manner because I would that both I and the same sect should be suffered without punishment. Nay truly; but rather I would that an evildoer should be charitably punished, and in such manner as he might thereby be rather won with other than lost with a great many. And let his Majesty be further assured that he shall with no policy, nor with no threatenings of tortures and punishments take away the opinions of his people till his Grace shall fatherly and lovingly reform the clergy of his realm. For *there* springeth the opinion. From *thence* riseth the grudge of his people; out of *that* take and find men occasions to complain. If I say truth, let it be for such received. If otherwise, I protest before God and the world that whatsoever I here write I mean therein nothing but the honour, glory, and surety of my only Prince and Sovereign, and the public weal of his realm. And as to myself and the fame and opinion of [by] some men had of me, let all men know, whatsoever the world babble of me, that I am neither Lutheran nor *Tyndalian* [Tyndalyn in MS.]; nor have them or any other, or esteem them any other for my gods, nor for the persons in whom or in whose learning I have any trust; nor yet do trust in the doctrine and learning of any earthly creature: for all men be liars, *in quantum homines*, as Scripture saith [i. e. as for men, they are deceitful]; and again *maledictus qui confidit in homine* [i.e. cursed is he who putteth his trust in man]. Christ's Church hath admitted me a learning sufficient and infallible, and by Christ taught, which is the Holy Scripture; let the world brawl, I am sure to have none other. I find not myself deceived, nor I trust shall be. As the world goeth, men's learnings are not to be trusted; God's learning cannot deceive [me, if] that I embrace it humbly and with reverence. His learning is an only truth in the world; and among men, besides that, is there found no truth, but the contrary, sin, untruth, corruption, and wretchedness.

'And as to my truth to my Prince and Sovereign, and my service towards his Grace, be not afraid, nor think that any worldly thing can corrupt my mind or move my body or any member thereof, once to think or do any manner of thing that shall not both become a Christian man and also a true and faithful subject to his Prince. If I were of another sort, and as the more part are, I might by chance obtain more favour. But whatsoever I do or shall do to my

Prince I do it not for any reward, nor thereby seek reward, which with half an eye ye may apperceive; and whether I be rewarded or not rewarded it is all ones to me, I will nevertheless do my duty: God hath eyes to see; and His reward prepared, and will prepare a living for me wheresoever I be come, no less than He doth for those His creatures which neither sow nor mow. I am unkindly handled to have such sharp inquisitions made of me in mine absence; I am unkindly handled for my service. Such stripes and bitter rewards would [make] faint and make weak the heart of some men towards their Prince: but I am the stronger because I know my truth, and am at defiance with all men pretending the contrary. What should I be longer in declaring my mind? Receive you the sum thereof in short words. I will not be untrue to my Prince, though he were the odiablest [most odious] person of his realm, though his governance were such as should offend both heaven and [earth]. As his Grace is the very contrary, most noble, gracious, benign, and . . . am I not commanded by God to be obedient to my Prince? Do I not by the contrary break God's ordinance? Am I ignorant in these things, supposeth the world, [whose] eyes are covered with ambition, dissimulation, and such like? I can no longer forbear, but show you my mind; it pierceth my heart with a deadly wound when I hear that I am otherwise meant. I had much rather forsake my natural country, my most dear friends and family, and wander into some strange region and country, there to lead the rest of my short life than thus to be handled for my true service and good mind; considering that truth hath no better estimation, is so much . . . standeth in such danger, and is so vilely reputed.

'I hear everywhere how diligently my Lord Chancellor inquireth of all those he examineth in cases of heresy, for me—what are my manners, my opinions, my conversation, my faith; finally, what is my life ent . . . [entirely?]. And besides him there be other deputed for such like examinations, which also make like inquisitions. Wherfore take they so great pains? what think they to hear? or what think they that I am less than they? As concerning my creation, a man, a sinner, a vessel conceived in sin, finally a wretched creature, barren and devoid of goodness: and this might they consider, without so great painstaking. Who so miserable a creature as I am? beholding himself to be threatened with men so . . . and puissant would not think himself to be in great danger? Who so unkindly and unchristianly entreated may. not wofully sing the verses painted in your stained cloth, resembling [i.e. representing] the eversion [overthrow] of Italy, changing the feminine into the masculine:—

"Et sola et mediis herens in fluctibus, ecce!

Me miseram quantis undique pressa malis.”¹

‘I see there is no remedy but I must depart out of this country. I am here suspected above all men. I would it might please his Grace to license me to come into his realm, and no longer to be here occupied in these things which so dangerously threaten my displeasure [discomfort]. I shall be contented to live in a corner of his realm, far from the company of men, and there to pass the residue of my short time. I have too much laboured in truth. My policies have been here divers; my conversation amongst men, like unto theirs; amongst Christians, I have been a Christian; amongst Jews, like to them; amongst Lutherans, a Lutheran also. What can I here do without such policy? Shall such policies hurt me, because I used them to compass other things? Then, either think they that they sent a fool, or me constrain they to think, that they have no discreet perseverance.

‘Another thing that most grieveth me is this, that by this mean I should [i.e. am likely to] lose a most dear friend and special good master of you, as I have been lately informed, and that you have excused you to the King’s Majesty for me [i. e. for recommending me], and showed to him that you are very sorry that ever you commended or advanced me to his Majesty—considering that I am of such sort as I am, and that you were greatly deceived by me—supposing that I had been far otherwise disposed than I now am. Thus saith my Lord Chancellor, and so it is reported to me, of his mouth. If you have so done, then again increase my troubles into a more bitter passion than ever; and think not but whatsoever you have said, or shall say, have done, or shall do, it cannot yet turn my heart from you, of whom I have received far greater pleasures than these displeasures. But rather I will owe you all my powers (besides that part which longeth to God) while I live, and will not be driven from you, though my body should extremely suffer. I speak it not feignedly, intending by such colour and manner of writing to win your favour, or to gape for your gift, having no need thereof; nor, God willing, shall have, being right able, *partout*, as the Frenchman saith, to get my living. But I declare, by this my writing unto you, the earnest meaning of my heart, and that thereunto your exceeding merits have before drawn me, *nolens nolens*. Here leave I to write any farther of this matter, till I hear either from you or some other my friends.

‘Master Elyot, the king’s ambassador [the envoy commissioned to entrap Tindale], this day sent me a letter from Tournay with another enclosed to you, wherein I think he desires you to be a solicitor to the King’s Majesty and to his honourable Council for him, that he may from time to time have answer of his letters, and be made thereby more able to do the King honour

¹ i.e. Alone and in the midst of the waves, behold with how great evils I, wretch that I am, am on all sides overwhelmed!

in these parts. It is not well done that *he should be so long without letters*, considering his little experience in these parts, who, in short time, in mine opinion, would do right well if he were a little holpen. . . . George Constantine came to Antwerp after his breaking from my Lord Chancellor, the sixth day of December. With him nor with none other such, will I meddle or have to do, considering that I am beaten with mine own labours.¹

The mysterious silence of the authorities at home, who seemed to receive communication after communication from their diplomatic agents abroad without deigning any acknowledgement, still continued. Even this dispatch from Vaughan, plain spoken enough, one would have supposed, to have drawn from Henry and Cromwell an immediate reply, and perhaps a sharp reprimand, was treated with the same incomprehensible reserve. Once more, therefore, and for the last time Vaughan addresses Cromwell on the subject of his dealing with Tindale and the imputations in which he had been involved. ‘Divers and [many letters I] have written and sent to you, trusting again to receive yours, but hitherto, since] my coming out of England, I have but only received one letter from you, [which] causeth me not so often to write as I would. Wherefore when it shall stand with your pleasure, I humbly desire you to have memory of me. . . .

‘I hear of divers, as well men as women of the Lutheran sect, whose persons nor names I know not, nor will know, to be fled out of England for fear of punishment, and that lately, bringing with them all that ever they can make: so that by this means it is likely that new *Tyndales* shall spring or worse than he. I am unwise thus to write, being so unkindly entreated in England in examinations, so that it seemeth that my poor [house], my body, and finally my life, standeth only in the untrue reports of any evil disposed person within the King’s realm; which being examined of me, will by chance evomit or spit out any venom against me, whereby he may trust to scape himself. Doth such unkindness, trow you, move me to use any policy with these manner of people, or to go about anything which by chance might either help or [ease]? Nay, truly; but much rather I am utterly determined from henceforth, never to intermeddle or to have communication with any one of them; but shall rather give place to some other man, which peradventure shall have better luck than I hitherto have had; whom they go about thus unkindly to threaten, beat, rend, and tear for my service. I marvel of their exceeding thirst [i.e. thirst] to bring me in danger, which never offended them. What Job could here have patience? What mind so quiet, would not here be troubled? Let their manners, their behaviours, their meanings, their communications, their companies, their opinions, their conversations, the orders of their

¹ Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x. pp. 21, &c. I omit the rest of the letter, which contains an elaborate account of the visit of the Emperor Charles to Tournay a few days before.

livings in all things, be as nearly examined as mine; as subtilly searched and tried as mine; by so many sundry persons as mine; and what think you they shall be found innocents? Nay, *nocentes* [i.e. guilty]; yea worse, peradventure, than he of whom they so greedily examine. I would they all, which so greedily examine, did know, I am no heretic, nor for them all will be made one. I neither have so corrupt a mind, so evil a conscience, nor so little understanding as it seemeth they would I had, which seek ways to destroy the innocent. I pray God amend them. If in any part of this my writing I have erred or offended, I ask thereof pardon, my passion is so great I cannot resist.¹

Vaughan was evidently alarmed by the proceedings in England; he had protested with rare boldness against that mistaken policy of violence and persecution which Henry was pursuing, or permitting to be pursued; he admired Tindale, and sympathized with the popular desire for a reformation of the clergy; but he was not prepared to expose himself to further danger by openly identifying himself with the cause of the persecuted. He disapproved entirely of the crusade instigated by More and the bishops against the English Reformers; but he was, as he himself said, neither a Lutheran nor a Tindalian. Tindale was secure from any violent or dishonourable proceeding on the part of Vaughan; but the kind-hearted and high-souled envoy was only *almost*, not *altogether* persuaded to adopt the opinions of the great Translator. We cannot doubt but that Tindale deeply appreciated the sympathy which Vaughan had so evidently felt for his unworthy treatment; and we readily own to a deep debt of gratitude to the official, whose kindness comforted the heart of the noble martyr in his exile, and whose writings have preserved for posterity such genuine and picturesque glimpses of the personal history of the Reformer.

¹ Cotton MSS., *Galba*, B. x. p. 26.