FROM FLORENCE TO ZURICH VIA STRASBOURG AND OXFORD: THE INTERNATIONAL CAREER OF PETER MARTYR VERM1GLI i4jj 1562)

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1. IN ITALY

According to his contemporary and biographer, Josiah Sirnier, Peter Martyr Vermigli >>was no vulgar Diuine or of the common number of learned men, but he was of so great wit, of so excellent learning, and therewithall of such godlinesse, modestic, and courteous behauiour, that both he was acceptable, beloued and reuerenced among them with whom he hued, and was cuen of the aduersaries also reckoned among the excellent men, and was had of them in great adrniration.< Vermigli was born into a modest household in Florence and was nam ed for Saint Peter Martyr of Verona who, according to legend, was killed by Manichean heretics for his defense of the orthodox faith. 2 At the age of i6 he was sent a short distance up the hill iIom his borne itt Florence to the Augustinian canons of Fiesole where he read litterae hurnaniore3. His school chums were young Florentines hearing such na mes of the Florentine nobility as de Medici, Ricci, and Stuphas. From thence he went to the University of Padua where, for eight years, he was immersed in liberal studies, and chiefly Aristotle. Here he must have acquired his thorough grasp of Anstotelian method and logic
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Once installed at Oxlbrd \erinigli began to lecture on Paul’s first epistle to the Corinthians and very swiftly became embroiled in

a bitter
dispute

o er the doctrine of the hut harist, His initial opponent was the
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e Richard South. who had Just been sacked from the Re—
rtns chair to make is a’s br Vernigli. Smith. however, fled to Louvain to join other Catliuhcs iii exile helm

e the disputation was full) under—
was ihe ensuing fhrmal debate became an event of national signifi cance. Richard Cox, Chaiaellor of Oxlijrd, presided along with Henry Flolbeach. bishop of Liticolti, and the great humanist scholar and (ientleniaii of the Privy Chamber. Sir Richard \1orison. iLater, during the Mar an exile, both (ox and Morison would visit Vermigli in Zu rich as guests in the house of Heinrit

h Bullinger. Such were the va—
ganes of fortune in the mid—sixteenth detitury. In this debate Verinigli formulated is hat tame to be recognized as both his single most signi— ticant conti il sutioti to Retorniation thought and also, though much less recogtuicd, Ins lasting ittiluent

e upon the liturgy of the Book of Com—
mon Prayer. \‘ermigli’s fiwmulation of the doctrine of the eucharist is as prused

b Julio Calvin as the cleat est, best formulated orthodox
statement of the Reformed position. known technically as >instru— mental reahisinc, this doctrine seeks to recontile the conflicting posi— ttotrs of Zwitigli’s anti—realist sacrasnentarian memorialism and Lu— ther’s hper—realist

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axskxs ard postnon. Both Craiimci and 1a lou were sooti to be execu— ted, and then’ ucre certaiids inanx old adversaries at Oxford who ‘A 001(1 doubtless have been happx to see the Horentmc consigned to the tiaolcs as well, Before receiving i)erimssion to depart the realm, ci snigh courageously consented to join

1 12 )RR.\\0I KIRBY TilE IvrERNATI0NAI. (,AIthER OF FRi ER 51.55 YR VERMiO1.I 143

\t do nexs of Elizabeth’s accession \‘ermigli penned an effusive pan—
etvrit to tlit.’ young Queen containing both fulsome praise and some
fairE pointed advice.’ In an almost hyperbolic invocation of the
oSong of Zecliariah<< from the Gospel of Luke, Vermigli evokes a stri—
king anpanson of Elizabeth’s accession to the scriptural trope of
redeinptix e knigslup. By means of an appeal to a host of Old—Testa— nient and earL —Church examples of kingship he goes en to advise Elizabeth on her dut of religious reibrm in England. Vermigli extends the metaphor of anointed kingship to the point of identifying England as an >select natiotlo, a conceipt xshti h was destined to become a cent— monpiac e of Refbrrnation histot iograpli. As God’s anointed it is Eli—
zaheth’s divinely appointed task to oredeemo the nation through the
restssratiorI a rid establishn tern of her >>godh ruleo.
\\ tilt respect to \‘crrnrghi’s international stature perhaps must telling
of it11 is his appointment by the Striate of Zurich as principal repres
entative of tIre Church of Zurich. along side ‘Iheodore de Béze, Cal—
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a preeminent leaders of internati—
onal Reform throughout his eareei

, and his oauctoritaso’ 7was unmat—

died by an tiler coiiuiientd reb Irniers. Calvin included, among the Elizitbetfian establisiflflent. Vennigli’s decisive contributions to the for— niatiun of the Elizabethan

i eligious and constitutional settlement are
oily I)egnlilnlg to recci

e due

a kin)wledgernent by modern critical
lustor of’ the English Reforniation’’ tIn particular. Vermigli exerted coitsidei’ahlc influence on English political rheology during the mid— ‘1 udor peril of, i.e. from the

a cessjoil of’ Edward VI ill 1547 to the

period 1)1 coitsohdanon of the Elizabethan Settlement in the early 1 hits influence calls fuir a ret onsidt’ration of the underlying his—

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marion. ttli
a vies to dtinonstrattng that the principles and aims of’
the religious settlement of ig were in accord with ideas prevalent on
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cipal tigutes involved in ti.trging this link. ‘fhe received interpretation of the Elizabethan Settlc’nient as the ss iirk of’ political exigency and coitiprunuse 111//wi 1/iou alt’, clear view of’ Refiormed theolo—
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