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13 Jun. [1531]
Lansd. 115, f. 1. Strype's
Cranmer, App. 675.

10. CRANMER TO THE EARL OF WILTSHIRE.

The King, my Lady your wife, and lady Anne your daughter, are in good health. **Touching the King's cause, Master Reynold Poole has written a book much contrary to the King's purpose, with such wit that he might be of counsel to his Grace, and of such eloquence that if it were known to the common people, I suppose they could not be persuaded to the contrary. The principal intent is that the King should be content to commit his cause to the Pope's judgment; "wherein me seemeth he lacketh much judgment." He uses such eloquence that he would persuade many, but me he persuadeth in that point nothing at all, though in other things he satisfieth me very well.** He states, first, why he had never pleasure to intromit himself in this case; viz., on account of the trouble that would arise from diversity of titles, as in the days of Lancaster and York. The people think the King has an heir already, and they would be sorry to have any other. The Emperor would support the Queen, his aunt. It is alleged for the King that he was moved by God's law, that the people's judgment has nothing to do with it, and that if the Emperor will maintain an unjust cause we shall have the aid of the French king by the league he has made with us, and out of his old grudge to the Emperor. But to these arguments he replies: first, as to the law of God, if the King pleased to take the contrary part, he could justify that on as good grounds. Yet if he thought the King's view never so just, though the King might be right, he should be sorry to be a doer therein; for he would not only take away the Princess's title, but must accuse the chief part of the King's life hitherto, who has lived more than twenty years in a matrimony so shameful and against nature, as the books upon the King's side say. As to the people, he thinks it impossible to satisfy them by learning or preaching; but as they now begin to hate priests, this will make them hate learned men all the more. What loyal person would gladly hear that their prince had lived so long in matrimony so abominable? Moreover, when they hear this marriage spoken against, they cannot be persuaded to dislike it, but rather grudge against the divorce. As to the authority of the universities, they are often led by affections; and he shows with how great difficulty they were brought to the King's party. Moreover, against them he sets the authority of the King's father and his council, the Queen's father and his council, and the Pope and his council. Then, as to the Pope, the Emperor, and the French king, the Pope is naturally opposed to the King's purpose, else he would discredit his predecessors, restrain his own power, and set sedition in many realms, as in Portugal; of which King the Emperor has married one sister, and the duke of Savoy the other. He then extols the power of the Emperor, and diminishes the aid of the French king towards us, saying that the Emperor may injure us without drawing a sword, by merely forbidding traffic in Flanders and Spain. And what if he drew his sword, seeing that, when of much less power than he is now, he subdued the Pope and the French King? As for the French, they never keep league with us, except for their own advantage, and our nation will think themselves in miserable condition if compelled to trust them. **He then comes to the point, to save the King's honor, saying that he stands on the brink of the water and yet may save all; but one step further, and all his honor is drowned.**

Will show the rest of this matter to you tomorrow, by word of mouth. I hear nothing from my benefice, and Master Russell's servant is not returned. The King and my lady Anne rode yesterday to Windsor, and are looked for again tonight at Hampton Court. Hampton Court, 13 June.

Hol. Add.