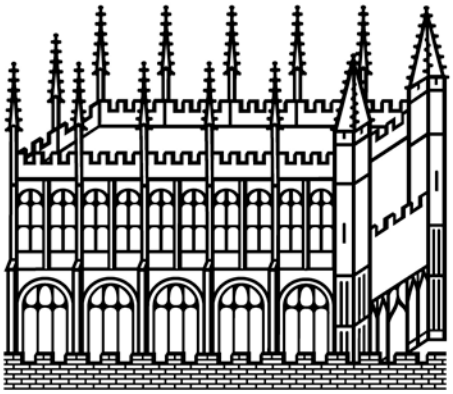

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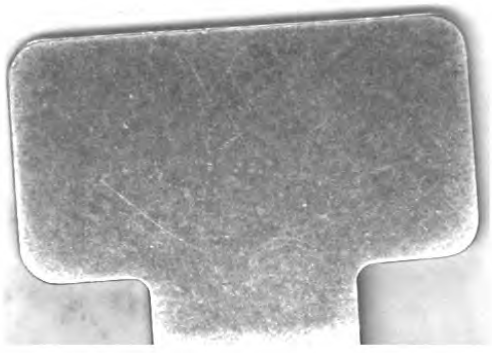

No. XLIV.

Church of England Tract Society,

Instituted in BRISTOL, 1811.

THE HISTORY OF THE WORTHY MARTYR OF GOD, *THE REV. JOHN NICOLSON,*

BETTER KNOWN BY THE NAME OF

JOHN LAMBERT,

Who was burned in Smithfield, in the Year 1538.

Lambert disputing with the Bishops before King Henry VIII.

Sold at the DEPOSITORY, 6, Clare Street, BRISTOL;
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1826.

THE LIFE

OF THE

REV. JOHN NICOLSON,

Better known by the Name of

JOHN LAMBERT.

JOHN NICOLSON, otherwise called LAMBERT, was born and brought up in Norfolk, and studied in the University of Cambridge, where he made great proficiency both in the Latin and Greek languages. He was converted from the errors of Popery, and brought to the knowledge of Divine truth, by the instrumentality of THOMAS BILNEY, the martyr, of blessed memory. Being much persecuted by the Papists, he was at last compelled, through their violence, to leave his native land. He went to the Netherlands, where he joined *Tyndall* and *Frith*, who had left England for the same reason, and remained there upwards of a year, being appointed Chaplain to the English merchants at Antwerp. But even there he was not safe from the persecuting violence of Sir Thomas More, the Lord Chancellor of England, who gloried in being a troubler of the heretics, as all those were called who read the Bible, and sought by humble prayer for the teaching of God the Holy Spirit, and were dissatisfied with the corruptions which had been introduced by the Popes

3rd Ed. 10,000.

and Doctors of the Romish church, to the destruction of the pure and undefiled religion of Christ. What reason have you and I, reader, to be thankful, that we live in a time when we are not exposed to the cruelty of such men, on account of our reading the precious book of God, and praying to Him for His blessing. Let us not undervalue our privileges because we can enjoy them without interruption.

About the year of our Lord 1532, a man named Barlow laid an accusation against Lambert before Sir Thomas More, who sent messengers to bring him from Antwerp to London. When he arrived, he was taken to Lambeth, to be examined by Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, and others; and afterwards was removed to Oxford, where forty-five articles were exhibited against him, to which he was required to give an answer in writing without being allowed the use of any books, from which he might have derived assistance. These questions and answers are still preserved, and prove him to have been a very learned man. He continued in custody at Oxford until the following year, when, in consequence of the Archbishop's death, he was set at liberty. He then returned to London, and at this time (it is supposed) he took the name of LAMBERT, in order to avoid being discovered and persecuted again by the Popish Bishops, and employed himself as a schoolmaster, in which vocation he continued for some years. And having no opportunity of exercising his ministry, he determined to renounce the priesthood, to become a freeman of London, and to be married. But God, who disposeth all men's purposes after the secret pleasure of His own will, prevented both his marriage and his obtaining the freedom of the city of London, and married him

to His Son Christ Jesus, (says the biographer) as now follows to be declared.

In the year 1538, Lambert happened to be present in St. Peter's Church, London, at a sermon preached by Dr. Taylor, a man in those days not far disagreeing from the Gospel, and who afterwards, in the time of King Edward the Sixth, was made Bishop of Lincoln, but was deprived by Queen Mary, and ended his life among the *confessors* of Jesus Christ, who suffered persecution for His name's sake, but not unto death. When the sermon was ended, Lambert went to the preacher to converse with him on the subject of it, which was the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ. Dr. Taylor excused himself from entering upon the controversy at that time, but desired Lambert to write to him respecting it, and to call upon him afterwards, when he was at leisure. According to his desire, Lambert wrote to him ten arguments against the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament. In confirmation of which he quoted passages of the Holy Scriptures, and the opinions of the ancient Fathers and Doctors of the Christian church, who lived before the corruptions of Popery were introduced. Taylor being desirous to satisfy the mind of Lambert in this matter, conferred with his friends about it, and among others, with Dr. Barnes, a favourer of the Gospel, and a zealous preacher, who persuaded him to lay it before Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury; and thus the matter, which at first was merely a private conference, became a public business. The Archbishop's mind was at that time unenlightened on this subject, and he sent for Lambert, and obliged him to defend the cause he had undertaken, in open court. In this dispu-

tation, it is said, that Lambert appealed from the Bishops to the King's Majesty.

At that time Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, was in authority among the councillors of King Henry the Eighth. He was a man of a crafty and cruel disposition, ever looking for some occasion to hinder the spreading of the Gospel. He now thought he had a proper opportunity to accomplish his desire; and accordingly went to the King, and told him how odious he was becoming through his abolishing the Pope's authority, destroying the monasteries, and divorcing his Queen, and what suspicions were entertained that he was a favourer of new sects and opinions, but now he had the means in his power of remedying all these matters with ease, if he would only prove that he was determined to resist heresy, which the case of Lambert afforded him a handle for doing. The King giving ear to this crafty and wicked counsel, sent out a general commission, commanding all the Nobles and Bishops of his realm to come to London and assist him against heretics and heresies, which he himself would sit in judgment upon. Due preparations being made, Lambert was ordered to appear before the King, and defend his opinions in the presence of this august assembly, which was very numerously attended.

On the appointed day, this godly servant of Christ was brought from the prison with a guard of armed men, even as a lamb to fight with many lions, and was placed opposite the King's royal seat. Soon after the King entered, clothed all in white, and when he had sat down on the throne, having the Bishops on his right hand, the Judges and Lawyers behind him, and the Peers of the realm on his left, he looked at Lambert with a stern countenance; and then commanded Dr. Day,

Bishop of Chichester, to state to the assembly the reason of their being called together. When the Bishop had finished his oration, the King standing up, turned to Lambert, with his brows bent, as it were threatening some grievous thing to him, and said, "*Ho, good fellow, what is thy name?*" Then the humble lamb of Christ, kneeling down upon his knee, said, "*My name is* JOHN NICOLSON, *although of many I be called* LAMBERT." "*What,*" said the King, "*have you two names? I would not trust you, having two names, although you were my brother.*" Lambert replied, "*O most noble prince, your Bishops forced me of necessity to change my name.*" After some further questions and answers, the King commanded him to declare his opinion respecting the sacrament of the altar. Then Lambert, beginning to speak for himself, gave God thanks, who had so inclined the heart of the King, that he would not himself disdain to hear and understand the controversies of religion; for it had frequently happened, through the cruelty of the Bishops, that many good and innocent men had been put to death without the King's knowledge. But since the high and eternal King of Kings, in whose hands are the hearts of all princes, had stirred up the King's mind to be present himself to understand the causes of his subjects; and that God of His divine goodness had so abundantly endued his Highness with such great gifts of judgment and knowledge, he doubted not but God would bring some great thing to pass through his means, to the setting forth of the glory of His name. Then the King, with an angry voice, interrupting him, said, "*I came not hither to hear my own praises thus painted out in my presence; go to the matter at once, without any more delay.*" Lambert being abashed at the King's angry words,

paused awhile to consider what he should say. But the King being hasty, with anger and vehemence said, "*Why standest thou still? Answer as touching the sacrament of the altar. Whether dost thou say, That it is the body of Christ, or wilt deny it?*" Lambert replied, "*I answer with St. Augustine, that it is the body of Christ, after a certain manner.*" The King then said, "*Answer me neither out of St. Augustine, neither by the authority of any other, but tell me plainly, whether thou sayest it is the body of Christ or no?*" Lambert replied, "*Then I do deny it to be the body of Christ.*" The King rejoined, "*Mark well, for now thou shalt be condemned even by Christ's own words, 'This is my body.'*" Then he commanded Archbishop Cranmer to refute his assertion, who began his disputation very modestly, saying, "Brother Lambert, let this matter be handled between us indifferently, that if I prove this your argument to be false by the scripture, you will willingly renounce it; but if you shall prove it true by the manifest testimonies of the scripture, I promise I will willingly embrace it." When they had contended for some time, and Lambert had so answered for himself, that the King seemed to be moved, and the Archbishop to be entangled, and all the audience to be amazed, the Bishop of Winchester officiously besought the King to permit him to take in hand the disputation; but not being able to overcome Lambert with his arguments, any more than the Archbishop had done, he fell into a rage, and began to abuse him with insulting words, so that he was forced to silence; for what else could he do? he might well hold his peace like a lamb, since nothing more was left in his power.

After this the other Bishops disputed with him, the King having appointed ten of them to reply to

Lambert's ten arguments. But they had no better success than their predecessors; for he answered them in such a solid manner, that they raged the more exceedingly against him. At length he was worn out with fatigue, having been kept five hours standing, and seeing no hope of prevailing with persons who answered his arguments with railing and scoffing; so that he resolved to hold his peace, only now and then alleging something out of St. Augustine for the defence of his cause, leaving those Bishops who last disputed with him to take their own course, and say what they pleased.

Night coming on, the King being desirous to break up this pretended disputation, said to Lambert, "*What sayest thou now, after all this pains taken with thee, and all the reasons and instructions of these learned men? Art thou not yet satisfied? Wilt thou live or die? What sayest thou? Thou hast yet free choice.*" Lambert answered, "*I yield and submit myself wholly unto the will of your Majesty.*" Then said the King, "*Commit thyself into the hands of God, and not unto mine.*" Lambert replied, "*I commend my soul unto the hands of God, but my body I wholly yield and submit unto your clemency.*" Then said the King, "*If you do commit yourself unto my judgment, you must die, for I will not be a Patron unto heretics.*" And then turning to Lord Cromwell, he said, "*Cromwell, read the sentence of condemnation against him:* which was accordingly done. Thus was John Lambert, in this bloody session, by the King judged, and condemned to death. Lord Cromwell was, at this time, the chief friend of the *Gospellers*; (as the Protestants were then called,) yet, through the malice and subtilty of Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, he was put upon this sad employment. And here we find Taylor, Barnes,

Cranmer, and Cromwell, who, all of them in their turn, suffered persecution for the sake of the Gospel, employed in bringing about the condemnation of Lambert. Thus the malice of Satan was gratified, and grief no doubt afterwards filled their minds, for the part they took in this business.

On the day appointed for this holy martyr to suffer, he was brought out of prison, at eight o'clock in the morning, to Lord Cromwell's house, and taken into his chamber, when Cromwell asked his forgiveness for what he had done. And being informed that the hour of his death was at hand, he was greatly comforted with the prospect of departing to be with Christ, which was far better to him than remaining in this troublesome world. And going out of the chamber into the hall, he saluted the gentlemen who came to attend his execution, and sat down to breakfast with them without any sadness or fear. When breakfast was ended, he was taken to Smithfield, where he was very cruelly treated. For after his legs were consumed and burnt up to the stumps, the wretched tormentors withdrew the fire, leaving but very little under him. Then two men, that stood on each side of him, thrust their halberts into his body, and raised him up as high as the chain would permit. When Lambert, lifting up such hands as he had, his finger ends flaming with fire, cried unto the people in these words, "NONE BUT CHRIST, NONE BUT CHRIST;" and being let down again from their halberts, he fell into the fire, and ended this mortal life.

Thus, reader, you have a short account of one of those blessed martyrs of God, of whom the world was not worthy; one who reckoned not his life dear unto himself, whom bonds and afflictions could not move to deny the faith of Christ; one, who had counted the cost of the profession he had

made, and shunned not to declare it in the presence of the King, and his Nobles, and Bishops, before the most august assembly in the realm. While he showed the greatest meekness and humility in his behaviour to the powers that be, who are ordained of God, he adhered boldly and undauntedly to the truth as it is in Jesus, which no earthly terrors could compel him to renounce. He steadily opposed the idolatry of the Romish church, and all the priestcraft which was founded upon it. And being mighty in the Scriptures, confounded all their subtle arguments, by the use which he made of the sword of the Spirit, the word of God. But this blessed word was not only useful to him as a sword wherewith to resist the attacks of the enemies of the cross of Christ,—which these papists were, while they professed to be servants of the Lord Jesus, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof;" (2 Tim. iii. 5)—the Bible was also precious to Lambert, as it afforded him strong consolation in the time of trial and suffering. Then it appeared that he had not read the Holy Scriptures in vain. He experienced the truth of that remark of St. Peter, (1 Ep. ii. 7.) "Unto you which believe Jesus Christ is precious." This supported him when he had to answer for himself before the most noble and learned assembly in the kingdom; and this supported him also when suffering inexpressible tortures through the malice of his enemies, when they offered him up as a burnt sacrifice with unhallowed fire, (Leviticus x. 1.) which afterwards brought down the divine vengeance on themselves. "None but Christ," was his dying song; and now he reigns with Christ in glory, having the same theme of rejoicing throughout eternity.

Blessed be God, we are not called to endure

the same sufferings as "the noble army of martyrs" underwent, in their passage to the crown of glory. We enjoy those blessings, for which they were willing rather to yield their bodies to the fire, than renounce them. They loved not their lives unto the death, (Rev. xii. 11.) so that they might finish their course testifying the Gospel of the grace of God, (Acts xx. 24.) They endured the fiery trial as seeing him who is invisible, looking for that reward of grace, that crown of life which our blessed Saviour has promised to those who confess Him before men, and are faithful unto death. (Rev. ii. 10. Luke xii. 8.) Let us value the privileges we enjoy, which have been procured for us at the expense of their blood, otherwise we shall show that we are insensible of the benefits that are conferred upon us.

From them we may learn the value of the holy Bible, which they accounted so dear, that nothing on earth could compensate them for the want of it. From them we may learn the value of our prayer-book, which many of them watered with their tears, when pouring out their souls before God in the form of sound words which it contains. Let us prove that we value these books, by making use of them, not merely in public, but in private, searching the Scriptures, that we may know the mind and will of our heavenly Father, and meditating on the petitions in our prayer-book, that we may know what we ask, when we bow our knees before the Divine Majesty. How inexcusable before God shall we be, if we remain ignorant of the precious truths of His holy word, when we have the opportunity of being acquainted with them, when the holy Bible may be so easily obtained by all who are really desirous to read it, and learn the way to everlasting life.

If, reader, you are ignorant of the word and will of God, when you may so readily be informed of it, you will have none but yourself to blame. If you should never have read the Bible, and know not the important truths it contains, you are in a most dreadful state. That is the word by which you will be judged at the last day. Can you be indifferent about knowing that which so nearly concerns you? If you have not got a Bible or a Testament, let me entreat you to use your utmost endeavour to procure one; and then read it with prayer to God, who has caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, that He would be pleased to open your understanding that you may understand the Scriptures, and know the way to God and heaven; "that by patience and comfort of His holy word you may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life which He has given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ." When you come to die, this will be found to be the most importaut thing in the world. And the sooner your heart is influenced by the word and Spirit of God, the less you will have to regret the manner in which your past life has been spent; since the knowledge of Christ Jesus, the true God and eternal life, (1 John v. 20.) is the only source of real happiness to the children of men either in this life or in that which is to come.

FINIS.

J. Chilcott, Printer, 30, Wine Street, Bristol.

THOMAS CRANMER:

AN ENGLISH REFORMER,

AND SOMETIME ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

JOHN HODGES,
13, SOHO SQUARE, LONDON.

PRICE TWOPENCE.

THOMAS CRANMER,

AN ENGLISH REFORMER,

And Sometime Archbishop of Canterbury.

IF it be true that "history has to be re-written," it is no less true that religious biography has to be re-edited—

"Time unveils all truth."

As the years move on, the historical portraits of the pioneers of religious movements lose the false lustre imputed to them by too friendly hands, pale before the light of freshly revealed facts, and, in some cases, disappear altogether from the canvas, to be repainted by more faithful luminers.

Mr. Burke, in his fascinating "Historical Portraits of the Tudor Dynasty and the Reformation Period," has done much to rehabilitate the heroes of those days. The process has not always, nor indeed usually, been to the advantage of the personages under review. Notably was this the case with Thomas Cranmer, created Archbishop of Canterbury in Henry the Eighth's time. Placed upon a pedestal by partisan admirers, and clothed with fictitious splendours, Cranmer, for a time, became the idol of the Protestant party, an idol to be removed in the course of time, by the labours of those whom Brewer pioneered in his State Paper researches; and by the testimony of writers, differing so widely, as Stowe, Heylin,

Burnet, Collier, Strype, Hallam, Froude, Macaulay, and Dean Hook. For, much as Englishmen have been misled by the bias of Froude, and the brilliancy of Macaulay, not to say by the incredulous fables of the now discredited Foxe, the time has arrived when the truth has to come out, and the coarse panegyrics, the feeble apologies, and the half-hearted admiration of various biographers of a period, scarcely yet apprehended, must alike be weighed in the balance of an impartial criticism.

For instance, the character of Wolsey has been greatly misunderstood, and worse, purposely mis-stated; it is satisfactory, however, to find a modern reviewer asserting that "as far as his foreign policy is concerned, it is difficult to estimate his services too highly, for in a singularly complicated epoch, he asserted manfully the dignity of his country, whilst labouring incessantly for the maintenance of peace." The part played by this great ecclesiastic at the time of which we write, demands a brief mention of him.

For nearly twenty years Katharine of Arragon had been Henry's wife. But now the royal conscience was stirred, tardily, it must be admitted. Nay, the Eighth Harry took to studying Holy Scripture to prove that, having married the widow of his brother, Arthur, he was living in sin; whose penalty was that no male heir was borne to the throne. In reply to the King's " tender conscience" the Queen answered, that the first marriage was never canonically fulfilled, or in other words, consummated. Consequently, the marriage with Henry only required a dispensation. Katharine must be considered the highest authority on this delicate question. Wolsey has been taxed as the instigator of this new-born royal tenderness of conscience. Rather, should it be ascribed to other qualities of the King, which were not so meritorious.

The daughter of Sir Thomas Boleyn, Anne, now crossed the King's path. Educated in France, she had become Maid of Honour to the Queen. Katharine never fascinating or handsome, was supplanted by the grace, vivacity, and charms of Anne Boleyn. Naturally, the people who were devoted to the Queen, and whose wishes were recognized by them, were indignant at the proposed divorce, and they accused Wolsey with being a party to it. When, however, the great minister heard from the King's lips, that he was about to marry Anne Boleyn, Wolsey fell on his knees, exclaiming—"Let this Syren retire from the Court, and do not bring upon yourself, the disgrace that will follow."

Wolsey now rapidly lost favour and confidence with the King. It was at this point that a new figure appears on the scene—namely, Thomas Cranmer, who has been described as "the primal motor of England's change of ecclesiastical domination."

Cranmer was born in 1489, at Aslacton in Nottinghamshire. At fourteen, his mother, a pious woman, sent him to Cambridge, where he became a member of Jesus College. Little is known of his college life. His mother, it is true wished her son to become a priest, but, like Wolsey, his tastes were directed to civil law. In 1510, Cranmer becoming a Fellow of his College, of course subscribed to the usual vows of celibacy. A visitor at the Dolphin Tavern, Cranmer secretly violated his vows, and when he was about twenty-seven, privately married "Black Joan," the barmaid of this "College Tavern," as some people styled it, and which was largely frequented by the alumni of the University. Considerable mystery hangs over this alleged marriage with "Joan, with the dark eyes and black hair."

Let us, however, not seek to remove the veil. Within a

year, Cranmer was a widower, his wife having died in child-birth. A cold reception from his kindred and friends, and much mental sorrow and anguish, seemed to have inspired him with the desire to enter the priesthood. Family influence and a "penitential petition," were instrumental in his being again elected Fellow of his College, a proceeding certainly contrary to usual custom.

The King was getting weary with waiting. The tempting fruit hung before his eyes, but the royal arm could not as yet stretch forth to reach it.

In 1528, the sweating sickness was devastating England. The dire disease was playing sad havoc in the Cambridge Colleges. The King was alarmed. Two gentlemen of his Privy Chamber, and some of his courtiers, sickened in the morning and were dead before nightfall. Wandering from place to place, his presence indicated by the glow of fires, kindled to purify the plague stricken air, the King at last found his way to Waltham. Here, at the house of Mr. Cresci, the father of two pupils of Cranmer, the future Archbishop was staying together with Dr. Gardyner, the Secretary of State, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, and Dr. Edward Fox, the King's Grand Almoner, who subsequently became Bishop of Hereford. The divorce question formed the staple of conversation. Here it is that the weakness and dishonesty of Cranmer at once came into play. The time-serving Doctor lacked the boldness of the renegade, married monk, Luther, who would probably have told the Monarch the truth, with a "holy audacity, intended to come down to succeeding ages for admiration."

It has been said that Cranmer lacked Luther's enthusiasm, and that while the latter wished the people to reform themselves, Cranmer wished to reform them. A somewhat

natural distinction, considering the relative position of the two men. If Luther was bold, Cranmer's weakness, at least, at this juncture in his history, was patent. At the same time, it must be allowed that these zealous Reformers were about equally well-matched in craftiness, and that their plans were laid with the same exquisite regard to self-preservation which, in common with more ordinary mortals, they held to be the first law of nature. Cranmer at once proposed a scheme which should win the good offices of the King. He proposed to collect the opinions of all the Universities of Europe on the question —"Is it lawful to marry a brother's wife?" But he did not put the question—"what was the nature of the canonical impediment?"

Henry was at once struck with the artful scheme suggested by his newly imported theological adviser—and perhaps future confessor. The monarch, quite overjoyed, exclaimed as Elizabeth did, years afterwards, to one of the Spanish ambassadors, "In truth, 'he has got the right sow by the ear.'"

It is almost, if not quite certain, however, that this plan had been determined upon before Cranmer came upon the scene.* Cavendish ascribes to Wolsey the suggestion of a reference to the Universities, and Fiddes, in his "Life of Wolsey," holds the same opinion.

Now it was that Cranmer's fame reached the royal ear, his name having been mentioned to the King either by Gardyner or Fox. "Who is this Dr. Cranmer—where is he? Marry, I will speak to him. Let him be sent for out of hand."

Such were the King's words, and Henry's word was law.

Cranmer was introduced to the royal presence. Dean Hook says: "The King penetrated the character of the man at once."

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* Hook's "Lives of the Archbishops of Canterbury."

His Highness spoke to Cranmer "of what he called his conscience, forgetting that his Queen had a conscience too." Finally, Cranmer was entrusted with the task of compiling a treatise, in which he was to be supported, as Dean Hook points out, by the authority of Holy Scripture, of the General Councils, and of the Fathers. Henry was at this time staying at Greenwich. The Queen lived there too, where, according to Dean Hook, Anne Boleyn ruled like a despot. Mr. Hubert Burke, who selects this account of the proceedings between Henry and Cranmer as the most correct of the very many authorities he has consulted, differs from the learned Dean on the conduct of Anne. With this I have little to do. The main point to be noted is the process by which Cranmer was made the ready and subservient tool of Henry. "There is no difficulty," the King is reported to have said, "which he was not ready to encounter if he had only Thomas Cranmer at his elbow." But Cranmer was no theologian. The treatise on the "Marriage Question" was most probably the joint work of himself, Gardyner, and Fox, and in Cranmer's discussion with Sir Thomas More on the points at issue, he displayed entire ignorance of any canon law on which to found his case against Katharine.

Cranmer now visited Oxford and Cambridge, accompanied by Gardyner and Fox, at the "royal command." For a time Cranmer resided in the family of Thomas Boleyn, newly created Earl of Ormond and Wiltshire, the father of Anne. This was a crafty stroke of policy on the King's part, as he knew full well that Cranmer would receive impressions favourable to his cause, as the Earl's family would, of course, be raised in estimation and wealth by the King's marriage with his daughter. This Earl of Wiltshire was a friend of Erasmus, who spoke of him as "a philosopher and well read in the Scriptures." Unfortunately,

these high qualifications did not prevent the Scriptures being wrested to the purposes of king, divine, and courtier alike. Oxford and Cambridge, with some difficulty, had been prevailed upon to give an answer in favour of the divorce.

The Italian and French Universities agreed. It is alleged, that Erasmus was more cautious, and did not commit himself, either verbally or in writing. The German Reformers hesitated, and Luther declared, he would "sooner allow a man two wives, than to repudiate one with whom he had lived in the holy bonds of matrimony for twenty years."

It is worth noticing that Luther does not say the bonds of holy matrimony, but the holy bonds of matrimony. A distinction which is certainly not without a difference. The opinion of a monk who married a nun is not, however, of any real value.

Now came the mission to Rome. The Earl of Wiltshire was appointed head of the Commission, which numbered Gardyner, Cranmer, Fox, Lee, Bonner, and other ecclesiastics, attended by Sir Gregori Cassali, a man who excelled in overstating a case and in doing his royal master's dirty work perfectly. At Rome the Commission was received on several occasions by the Pope. It appears that the High Commissioners did not behave themselves very well, with the exception of Cranmer, who was now royal chaplain, Archdeacon of Taunton, and the holder of other preferments, the emoluments of which he received, performing none of the duties appertaining to the several dignities and offices. Pope Clement seems, indeed, to have been quite won by Cranmer's "fresh, winning semblance of heart," his respectful demeanour, and the moderation of his movements. Cranmer, after spending some weeks at Rome, took his leave of the Pope and went to Germany, having so far won the good graces of Clement as to get appointed "Penitentiary-General of England." This office, according to Fuller, Collier, Heylin, and

Ranke, was one of considerable value and importance, and was only conferred on men "most devoted to the Catholic Church." On his way home through Germany, the new dignitary made the acquaintance of Osiander, the pastor of Nuremburg, who was an enthusiastic student of Holy Scripture, and an eminent critic of the Greek Testament. Andrew Hozeman (Osiander's real name), like Cranmer, was not a Papist, and both were *not* Protestants." Of Osiander, Mosheim remarks, that it was easier to say what he did *not*, than what he *did*, believe. It would thus seem that he was a pioneer of that negative religion with which Protestant Germany is so hopelessly honeycombed at the present day, and which is the outcome of the continental "new learning."

But other attractions than the scholarship and Scripture-lore of Osiander impelled Cranmer to prolong his stay in Germany. Grand-Penitentiary, and priest, as he was, "the bright eyes and sweet temper of Osiander's niece had made an impression upon the susceptible heart of Thomas Cranmer, who having recovered from the loss of his Joan, was passionately in love with the fair Marguerite."* They married, the bride being seventeen, the clerical bridegroom forty-nine.

Upon Cranmer's return to England he was informed that he had been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. The aged and good Warham, who preceded Wolsey as Chancellor, and who was the friend of Erasmus, and Primate, had died in August, 1532. Cranmer was appointed by Papal Bull in February, 1533, the last Bishop in England who received the pall from Rome. Cranmer anticipated the difficulties attending his married state. A more honourable man would, in his circumstances, have utterly refused the Primatial See and

* Dean Hook's "Archbishops of Canterbury."

succession to the noble Warham; but, as Dean Hook remarks, "whatever might be the insults to which they might be subjected, Cranmer and his Marguerite determined not to part." "He sent her before him to England" (Dean Hook does not say in a barrel, although it is averred that Mrs. Cranmer travelled in this undignified manner), "there to provide a home for herself preparatory to future arrangements, which would depend upon circumstances." These "circumstances" came to pass; they were conditions which did not render Cranmer so absolutely necessary to the tyrant King as he had been, and when the promulgation of the Six Articles prevented Mrs. Cranmer from living in Lambeth Palace, she was shipped off to Germany. What became of her, for a time, is not well known. It seems, however, that Cranmer's wife and children returned to England, and that after Cranmer's death, still young and handsome, she married a printer, named Edward Whitchurch. The matter is, however, of no moment.

What is absolutely certain is, that the confiscated spoils of abbeys and monasteries were used by Cranmer to endow his kinsfolk, and, by his friends, to enrich his children. Amongst the monastic plunder Cranmer received the revenue of two hospitals—two poor hospitals.

At his consecration in Westminster Abbey (for he dared not go to Canterbury lest the people should offer him violence, so detested was he for the part he had taken in his dastardly persecution of Queen Katharine), he accepted the Papal Bulls and took the usual oath of allegiance to the Pope. But just before the consecration ceremony, "*before*, not *after*," as alleged, "so that repentance could be pleaded," he lodged a protest before four witnesses and a notary, to the effect that he *did not mean to keep his oath*. He took it, in fact, for form's sake, and with the promise, that by so doing he did not intend

to do anything prejudical to the rights of the King, or prohibitory of such reforms as "he might judge useful to the Church of England."

It is noteworthy that the protest was not lodged with the person granting the Bulls, who was powerless, therefore, to withhold them. Collier drily says, "there is something of human infirmity about this transaction." The most charitable critic must add, not only "something" but "a great deal."

Ascending the steps of the high altar of St. Stephen's, and having declared to those same four persons that he adhered to the protest he had already made, Cranmer took the pontifical oath. Then followed the consecration, and reminding the four persons of his private protest, he took the oath *a second time*. Then he was solemnly admitted into his new and foresworn honours by the Papal delegates.

Dean Hook says, "It was well known that Cranmer was created Archbishop of Canterbury to facilitate the divorce of Queen Katharine."

Dunstable seems to have been chosen on account of its proximity to Ampthill, where the Queen resided. She, however, was above feigning any ignorance in the matter. With true dignity she refused to answer the citation. "I am the wife of Henry the Eighth," she said, "I will never call myself by any other name. Say to the King *I shall ever remain his faithful wife*."

Undoubtedly, Queen Katharine died broken-hearted, and the crushing news that the King had been privately married to Anne Boleyn for several months, conveyed to her by one of the courtiers, was the last burden that crushed her weary life out. Gervase Markham was Prior of Dunstable. He was the friend of Cranmer, and the humble servant of Cranmer's Master· Dugdale, and other writers, tell us that "the monks had a bad

opinion of Markham, he was worldly-minded, and some of them even questioned his morality."

Nothing in the pages of English History is more pathetic than Katharine's dying message to her lord and King. Katharine had asked to see her daughter, who was now twenty. Henry, cruel, selfish monster, as he was, refused the request. These were Katharine's last words to the man who had spurned her—"I make this vow, that mine eyes desire you above all things." Truly she was "faithful unto death."

Anne Boleyn, could not conceal her joy when the tidings of Katharine's death reached her. Anne was a thoughtless, ambitious woman, tempted to evil by her father, and unreproved by the Archbishop, who was her model of wisdom and virtue. We can scarcely wonder that she lived the "painted shadow of a Queen," with less remorse of conscience. I pass over the details of her coronation, at which Cranmer set the crown of St. Edward on Anne Boleyn's head, and anointed her head and breast, delivered to her the sceptre of gold in her right hand, and the rod of ivory with the dove in her left, while the *Te Deum* rose to heaven as the *De Profundis* had done over the newly-closed grave of the unhappy Katharine.

The question has been repeatedly raised by Puritan writers as to what were the "religious principles of Anne Boleyn," and great ignorance has been displayed of "historical facts" by those who should know better. I now refer the reader to a triumphant reply concerning this matter, which is to be found in the first volume of the "Historical Portraits of the Tudor Dynasty," p. 435.

The first great act of the new Primate was to pronounce the sentence of divorce between Henry and Katharine. This was done at Dunstable Priory, a Church recently restored with princely munificence.

Alesse, a contemporary and friend of Cranmer, was a Scotch Reformer.

Cranmer had certainly, to say the least of it, "the luck to be thrown in" with most unprincipled men. The Archbishop wished to "attach the odour of sanctity to the nefarious proceedings." He, and the other prelates, held the court in the Lady Chapel of the Abbey Church. The affair began with a procession to the high altar, where Cranmer celebrated Mass; celebrating it with great solemnity, and observing all the olden ceremonies.

There is strong evidence that the King and Cranmer were in collusion. Dr. Lingard says, that, "the King's object was to compel Cranmer to take the whole responsibility upon himself."

Scarcely three years passed, before Cranmer had to give another judgment, and to declare that the marriage between King Henry and Anne Boleyn, "was, *and always had been, null and void.*" Pomeroy, in his Chronicle, says, that Cranmer gave this judgement standing "*with hands uplifted to Heaven in a manner of awful solemnity, invoking the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.*"

Burnet and Alesse both assert that Cranmer believed "*his own judgment against Anne Boleyn to have been false, and that she was innocent.*" * According to an unpublished paper, in the Cotton Library, Cranmer argued ably to show that Mary Boleyn had been a mistress to the King, and consequently there arose a "canonical impediment" to the marriage of Anne with the monarch. Mr. Burke says, that "Cranmer's judgement does not agree with the paper in question. It is clear that the Archbishop believed the Queen to be innocent,

* See "Historical Portraits of the Tudor Dynasty," for Cranmer's part in the plunder of hospitals.

but the royal pleasure demanded her life, and without further protest, Cranmer withdrew his canon law arguments in favour of his Royal mistress."

The reader is aware that Sir Thomas More and Bishop Fisher had been executed. It is said that Cranmer used his influence to save them. Let us hope he did; but there is no record of such extant. In fact, he dare not supplicate for mercy. Cranmer's efforts, at best, were unavailing, and now that Jane Seymour had come upon the scene, Henry made up his mind to get rid of Anne Boleyn.

Cranmer "never permitted sentiment to supersede interest," and even his Protestant sentiments had to be brushed aside, when "bluff King Hal's" divorce process was required to be set in motion.

One of Cranmer's greatest admirers, Sir James Mackintosh describes the Archbishop at this time, as "the most unhappy or the most abject of men."

At the very moment, when Puritan writers assert (without good proof however), that Cranmer visited Anne Boleyn three days before her execution and gave her great spiritual comfort, the Archbishop was busily engaged in preparing for the wedding of Anne's successor. Anne Boleyn was judicially murdered, and Cranmer was undoubtedly far more than a passive party in the transaction.

The day *after* Anne Boleyn's execution, the King led Jane Seymour to the altar. The great excuse invented by the Puritans for the Archbishop's conduct, is that he considered all these events helped to pave the way for the "glorious Reformation."

Cranmer at one time set about suppressing holy-days: and about this time Coverdale and Tyndale's Bible in English appeared, under the fictitious name of Matthew's Bible. A certain Rogers had a hand in it as well.

Lambert was sent to the stake for denying the Real Presence, yet, at that very moment, Cranmer, according to Lingard, was playing the double part of disbelieving the doctrine and defending it.

It is now time that I briefly notice the history of the famous Six Articles.

Article I., treated of the Holy Eucharist. I have already shown how Cranmer vacillated on this crucial test, or how—for there is no other alternative—he played the part of an accomplished hypocrite. "Dean Hook," says Mr. Burke, "admits that the Article touching the 'Real Presence' in the 'Christian Man,' shows that Cranmer believed the actual presence of our Lord in that ordinance." But what Cranmer wrote is no proof of what he thought, or believed, or cared for. The King maintained the doctrine of the Real Presence, and his Archbishop, of course, professed to hold and maintain the same opinions.

Article V., concerns us nearly. It is "whether the law of God allows the marriage of priests. I am not debating this matter, but merely Cranmer's position in relation to it. Dean Hook admits that "Cranmer was *not a Protestant at this time*," yet he could write to Alesse, a Scotch priest and a professor at Cambridge, who had married;—"Happy man that you are, you can escape. I wish that I could do the same." He then counsels Alesse to escape while he could. Just at this period, the men of the "new learning" were doing their work, but feebly. Crumwell, "the blacksmith's son," hated by the aristocracy, and unscrupulous, was treated with light respect by King Henry.

Latimer was dull and simple. His prosy discourses often lasted three hours. Cranmer admonished him on this point, and also inculcated the necessity of his practising a little more

worldly wisdom. "Honest Hugh," as he was styled by his admirers, was not man of the world enough to take Cranmer's advice.

Latimer's fulsome flattery and imbecility are well indicated by a letter to Lord Crumwell on the birth of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward VI. In this precious document preserved by the British Government in the national manuscripts, and, singularly enough given by Mark Twain, in his "Prince and the Pauper," Latimer compares the birth of the Prince to that of St. John the Baptist, talks about "the God of England, or rather an English God" (!), and in his postcript, which, like the proverbial lady's, contains the story, urges on Crumwell to sacrilege and persecution, I suppose in the name and cause of "the Inglyssh Gode."

Shaxton, Bishop of Salisbury, was "indiscreet, and cantankerous, a man of no principle." Above all, the King wavered. Against the Catholic interpretation of the Six Articles, it is alleged, that Cranmer made a stand. It was perfectly natural that he should do so. For three days he opposed the passing of them in the House of Lords. "It is God's cause that keeps me here, not my own," when his tyrant master bade him quit the chamber. But Cranmer had a wife; in fact, "the Six Articles became Dr. Cranmer's domestic difficulty." Cramner vacillated as usual. *If* he made this sturdy opposition (and some historians doubt it), he certainly very soon after adopted Henry's view, "confirmed," as he said, "by the goodly learning and wisdom of the King." Froude, while condemning the Six Articles, seems to think some repression of the too ardent Reformers was needful. No doubt.

The King rightly thought that the religion of which he was the head, would be wrecked by the opposition of men who were secretly being encouraged by his own Archbishop, and it is even

asserted that the King himself drew up the Six Articles, which, during the eight years they were in force only resulted in twenty-five prosecutions.

Melancthon was horrified at the severity of the penal enactments attaching to these Articles; no one can help being so; but this same Melancthon wrote approvingly of Calvin having consigned Servetus to the flames.

It is undoubtedly true that in Edward's reign Cranmer caused the Six Articles to be repealed, thereby causing entire satisfaction to the country. It was the Commons who re-enacted the statute in Queen Mary's time; but the Lords would have nothing to do with it, and, led by the entire Bench of Bishops, with Gardyner at their head, rejected it as "a disgrace to the Statute Book, and a reflection upon the Christian character of the country."*

So much for the accuracy of the statements made by Melancthon, Bucer, Coverdale, Burnet, and Foxe, that Gardyner and the Papal Bishops were the framers and propounders of these Six Articles. When this statute passed, Latimer and Shaxton, who, however, afterwards changed his views, at once resigned their Sees.

"For a moment," writes a thoroughly partisan historian, "it must shake our faith in Cranmer's virtue to find that he did not do the same." No one who had at all studied Cranmer's real character, could so write. Doubtless the passing of the Six Articles, as Dean Hook writes, "broke up Cranmer's happy home, divorced him from his wife for a season, and separated him from his children." But, of course, and as I have already stated, the surreptitious life of Mrs. Cranmer, "with the bright eyes and pretty mouth," at Lambeth Palace

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* "Domestic State Papers of Queen Mary's Reign."

was not one of unmixed happiness. "Circumstances" must have hung over it, rendering it uncertain and precarious, for the archbishop's wife must have known perfectly well that both in civil and canon law a marriage with a priest, or bishop, was at that period null and void in the estimation of every legal tribunal in Europe.

Dean Hook says, that "though Cranmer's marriage was known, it was not publicly announced." Mr. Burke says, "it was never known publicly until the reign of Edward VI."

"Good Queen Bess," whom the British Protestants delight to honour, never hesitated to express her dislike to married clerics. Archbishop Parker, who had sumptuously entertained Elizabeth, when the Queen came to thank Mrs. Parker for her husband's hospitality, this delicate-minded Queen thus expressed herself: "I do not know by what name to call you, madam. My Archbishop of Canterbury *cannot have a wife*, that is impossible; neither can he have *a concubine;* but whoever *you are*, or whatever *you may be*, I thank *you*." Dean Hook censures such ingratitude; but, as Mr. Burke naively remarks, the use of such language "was exceedingly appropriate in the daughter of such a notable father."

I must now pass under rapid review the remaining incidents in Cranmer's life, having treated in detail, so far as the limited space at my command allows, those which afford, as it were, the master-key to the entire position.

Soon after the death of Jane Seymour, Henry began to look out for a new wife. Greatly increased in size, he stipulated that the future object of his "affections" should be large also. Hans Holbein had painted the portrait of Anne of Cleves, who was named to Henry. As soon as the King saw it, he was impatient for the nuptials. When the bride-elect arrived, she was found by the royal lover "to be big enough, and also

ugly enough," for Holbein had painted with the brush of a flatterer, for which Lord Crumwell paid the penalty.

"Is there then no remedy?" exclaimed the disappointed King. "Must I put my neck into the noose?"

Henry had to do so, and his fat Dutch bride, "demure, sad and sour, unlike her fair predecessor, 'my Mayflower,' as Henry used to call Jane Seymour," was duly turned into Queen Consort. In a few months she was set aside, of course, with the acquiescence of the King's spiritual adviser, Archbishop Cranmer. "The Flanders' mare" was done with.

The Archbishop dissolved the marriage, declaring it to be "null and void." This was the third divorce judgment pronounced in favor of the King by Cranmer. Of all the divorces in which Cranmer was engaged, this was by far the worst; it was carried through within a week, and at the cheap cost of £105; that of Katharine of Aragon was protracted for six years, and cost £22,000. The King now married Catharine Howard, almost before the ink was dry in the document of divorce which separated him from his Flemish spouse. With exquisite delicacy, Henry introduced "his little bride" to his "*late* wife," and when the latter went to the scaffold, the divorced Queen consoled herself with the heartfelt remark, in Plats-Deutsch, no doubt, "Good heaven! what an escape I had." Anne of Cleves never forgave Cranmer, and when he went to the Tower in Queen Mary's time, she gave vent to the modern "serve him right," by exclaiming, "that he should have been sent there long before." Anne embraced the Catholic Faith before her death; High Mass was sung at her funeral by Dr. Bonner, Bishop of London, and a sermon was preached by Feckenham, the last Abbot of Westminster.

As I have just remarked, Henry took to wife Catharine Howard, and Cranmer had to play a prominent part in the

impeachment of the King's fifth wife for adultery. Without trial, and without proof, this hapless girl was sent for execution, and Cranmer, on the face of it, was the man who concocted and arranged the conspiracy against her. The child-queen was in the hands of the Archbishop, of Audley the infamous Chancellor, and of Lords Hertford and Southampton—all of whom were professing Catholics. Two persons were named as paramours of the Queen; they were arrested, and put on the rack to extort confession, which, however, none of the State Papers record. Catharine Howard's domestic history before her marriage is a sad and sorrowful one, but as Henry's Queen, her dying declaration was: "I die guiltless, never having proved unfaithful as a wife to my husband, the King." The Queen, Miss Strickland states, fell a victim to diplomatic intrigue.

Macaulay observes that Cranmer was "the representative of both parties, which at that time needed each other's assistance. He was at once a divine and a courtier. In his character of divine he would have gone as far as any Swiss or Scottish Reformer; as a courtier he wished to preserve the organisation which had for so long served the Popes, and might be expected now to serve equally well the purposes of the English kings and their ministers." Macaulay continues: "Saintly in his professions; unscrupulous in his dealings; zealous for nothing; bold in speculations; a coward and a time-server in action; a placable enemy and a luke-warm friend, he was in every way qualified to arrange the terms of the coalition between the religious and worldly enemies of the Papacy."

The result of this half-hearted policy was, that the friends to Papal authority were arrested and condemned for denying the King's Supremacy; the opposers of the Pope for denying the doctrine of the Real Presence. Henry and Cranmer between them contrived to supply an army of martyrs sufficiently large

to occupy the services of judges, jailers, and executioners, till they were weary with their bloody work. "In his worst actions," says Dean Hook, "Henry found an instrument in Cranmer;" and, to place an opposite opinion side by side, John Foxe "feels certain that Archbishop Cranmer stands next to St. Paul *in the estimation of Christ!*"

Henry "married" Catherine Parr in 1543. Bishop Gardyner, with great reluctance, performed this marriage; but he dare not refuse to do so. The marriage was doubtless brought about by the Reformation Party, with Cranmer at its head. At this time Papists and Sacramentarians were imprisoned and burnt with fearful impartiality. The closing days of Henry were marked by scenes of horrible barbarity. Moved about by mechanical aid from room to room, Henry, a pitiable spectacle of human infirmity, was fast approaching his end. He was nursed by his Queen, who was ever patient with the royal sufferer in his outbursts of furious passion, induced by his terrible sufferings.

The King was urged to impeach Catherine Parr as a heretic; the Duke of Norfolk and his son, Surrey, were the objects of his deadly hatred. One week before his death he sent Lord Surrey to the scaffold. Amidst this murderous strife and bitterness, Henry VIII. expired on the 28th January, 1547, wringing Cranmer's hand, it is said, in his dying embrace. The body lay in state in Whitehall Chapel for twelve days; masses and dirges were sung, and the last scene of all closed with Norreys calling aloud at the open grave, "Of your charity pray for the soul of the high and mighty prince, our late sovereign lord, King Henry the Eighth."

Cranmer was true to his character to the last. Henry had every confidence in the Catholicity of Hertford and Cranmer, both of whom must have committed perjury of the worst kind—

viz., the violation of solemn oaths sworn at the bedside of a dying man.

Miss Strickland affirms that, "with the exception of his murdered tutor—Bishop Fisher—Henry's spiritual advisers, whether Catholic or Reformer, had all been false to their trust. They had flattered Henry's worst passions and lulled his guilty conscience."

Mr. Burke remarks upon the popular feeling against Archbishop Cranmer. He observes:—"The admirers of Cranmer are not, perhaps, aware of the fact that he ever continued to be the most unpopular prelate in England from the period of his divorce of Queen Katherine. No change of religion influenced the heartfelt hatred the people entertained against him. In Canterbury, for many years, Cranmer required the protection of military escorts to save him from the violence of the populace. His ultimate fate gave general satisfaction in London. The women were his unforgiving enemies to the death. For centuries the women of England have honoured the memory of Katharine of Aragon; and the name, 'Good Queen Kate,' became a loving household expression upon the lip of the virtuous and the good. Party writers represent popular sentiment in the opposite light."

It is time now briefly to recount Cranmer's line of action in the reign of Edward VI. The story can soon be told. The Primate crowned the young King, whom nine years before he had received in his arms, a new-born babe. Cranmer appeared in an embroidered cope, the train of which was borne by gentlemen of his household. On his head was a jewelled mitre, before him was borne his crozier, and he was preceded by his suffragans, all mitred and in rich copes. Cranmer sang the Mass of the Holy Ghost. He also preached a sermon, in which occurs the following passage, addressed to the King, a boy, be

it remembered, not ten years old:—"These solemn rites serve to admonish you of the duties which you have to perform as *God's vicegerent and Christ's vicar, to see that God be worshipped, idolatry destroyed, and that the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome be banished, and images removed.*"

When a prisoner in the Tower, some seven years later, Cranmer wrote a letter to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, denouncing as the "Father of Lies" the very Mass he had sung at Edward's coronation. It was in Edward's reign that Cranmer published his "Catechism for Children and Young People," admitting the veneration of the Cross, reverence to the images of saints, confession, and absolution, and the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ by the "bodily mouth" in the Holy Communion.

Poor, half-witted Anne Boucher succeeded Anne Askew in suffering, being sent to the stake upon Cranmer's judgment. Von Parris, a Dutch doctor, who denied Christ's divinity, was also put to death by Cranmer.

I have no space to mention the bitter persecution of Gardyner, who, to Cranmer's eternal disgrace was flung into the Fleet Prison. Somerset, the Protector, took part in the above despotic proceedings.

During this reign occurred a wholesale plunder of the public and university libraries, gold, silver, and other ornaments being stripped off the rich bindings of missals and other religious books. All this was done by the orders of the Council of whom the Archbishop was a prominent member, and without a word of prohibition from him, so far as history records. On the 7th of July, 1555, the Boy King died. Cranmer officiated at the funeral in Westminster Abbey. Then came the announcement of a change in the succession and Lady Jane Dudley was proclaimed Queen Regnant. Mary, however, ascended the throne, and Cranmer was arraigned for treason and heresy.

Cranmer's position at this time was a disgrace to all concerned, and strange to say, several of those prominent in their opposition to him during his trials, became the Reformers in Elizabeth's time. Cranmer was degraded, and after an imprisonment of three years, was sent to the stake. He made six recantations, each one more distinct and emphatic than the former, and finally met his fate like a stoic, exciting the pity of even the most hardened spectators. The horrible vengeance of the times, from whatever quarter proceeding, can call for nothing but loathing and righteous abhorence from every right-minded person. It is sad indeed, to think, that the annals of the Gospel of Love have been so greviously stained by Catholic and Protestant alike, and as the dreary flame-lighted curtain falls on Cranmer's woeful history, we exclaim, "O, Thou to Whom vengeance belongeth, remember not our offences, neither the offences of our forefathers." Thus far History has spoken.

"Cranmer, the Protestant martyr, was no more a martyr," says Lord Macaulay, "than Dr. Dodd." "Cranmer is held up as the crusader against Popish infirmity, but recent disclosures have revealed the fact that Henry's correspondence with Cranmer, and which was entirely wielded by the Prelate, is so indiscribable, that it can only be said of it that nothing in the history of abominable literature can equal it. Cranmer, we have seen likened to Saint Paul, for holiness and purity; but Macaulay says, "when an attempt is made to set Cranmer up as a saint, it is scarcely possible for any man of sense, who knows the history of the times to preserve 'his gravity.'" "A calm review of the Archbishop's character, free from party prejudice, must pronounce upon it a very unfavourable opinion." So writes that distinguished Anglican divine, the Rev. J. H. Blunt; while Canon Dixon affirms that under Cranmer, "the Church of England fell from wealth to poverty; that he was

the slave first of Henry and Cromwell, afterwards of Somerset, Paget, and Northumberland, and that he offered no resistance to the enormous sacrilege of this and the following reign, and that his own hands were not altogether clean."

In reference to the morals, as well as the principles of the Reformation of the reign of Edward VI., the Rev. Nicholas Pocock (than whom no man living, perhaps, knows more of the Reformation period), thus writes:—

"Who could imagine a bishop of the present day being cast in an action for damages, and being sentenced to *pay the butcher, whose wife he had married,* an annual sum during the butcher's life? Suppose such a thing to have happened, is it conceivable that when the bishop married again, the Archbishop of Canterbury *would be present at the wedding?* Yet this is matter of fact as regards Poynet, successively Bishop of Rochester and Winchester, and Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury?

"Again, you would laugh at the idea of an Archbishop imprisoning his brother of London, and afterwards depriving him of his see at the bidding of the Privy Council, and then accepting a reward of money for his services; yet it is matter of fact that this happened in the case of Bonner, Bishop of London, removed to make room for Ridley, and Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury."

Mr. Burke presents a startling indictment against Cranmer. "Let the reader," he says, "reflect on the part the Archbishop played, and then draw his own deductions. First, Cranmer had been for seventeen years the confidential adviser of King Henry, and the secret negociator with several unprincipled German theologians on the divorce question. At the command of the King, he *pronounced the marriage of three Queens to be null and void, and was a party to the judicial murder of two of them.* He

was an adviser to the King when the Carthusian Fathers were immolated; when Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More were sent to the scaffold; when the Marquis of Exeter and his friends were consigned to the headsman; when the Abbots of Glastonbury, Reading, and Woburn were plundered, hanged, and quartered; when the Pilgrims of Grace were first deceived and then massacred; when the trees were bent with the corpses of the Northern peasantry; when Lord Darcy and his chivalrous companions perished on the scaffold; when Lady Bulmer was sent to the flames, and the venerable Countess of Salisbury butchered; when his co-partner in the monastic and Church confiscations paid the penalty of an ignominious death; when those who held his own opinions were sent to the stake as heretics; when the Statute of the Six Articles became law; when the rack, the dungeon, the rope, and the axe spread desolation throughout the land; when confiscation or banishment became the lot of those who were the least offensive to the Royal despot; still, Thomas Cranmer, through all those dark years of violence, blood, and despotism, never sought to allay the fury of his patron; but always enjoyed the confidence of the monarch, even unto the last dread death scene, when the tyrant cried out, in the accent of despair, "*All is lost.*" And, again, having perjured himself as to his dead master's will, for seven years longer he gave all the weight of his position and talents to promote the schemes of the Duke of Somerset and his colleagues; and then, of the Duke of Northumberland, in perfidy, confiscations, judicial murders, concocted masacres, and treason, surrounded with treachery. Every conspiracy that was planned by the members of young Edward's Council for the destruction of each other received the Archbishop's support, just as soon as he had made himself certain as to which side was the strongest. An ecclesiastic who could have maintained his political position,

his liberty, or his life—as the colleague of such men—must, indeed, have been the reverse of 'weak-minded.' On the contrary, he must have been a thorough man of the world, in its very worse sense—possessed, it would seem, not only of a remorseless versatility, but a singular power of moulding men and events to his own purposes."

Here is a striking passage from Mr. S. H. Burke's description of Archbishop Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley, as they appeared before the High Commission Court at Oxford, on Saturday, the 7th of September, 1555 :—

"Cranmer appeared weak and feeble. It is stated that the gaoler would not grant him a seat, so he had to lean upon a staff. His condition at this moment was a disgrace to the authorities, who subsequently shifted the censure from one to another. His clothes were nearly threadbare, and those who remembered the strong and active prelate of a few years before, could scarcely have recognised him now. His jaws were drawn in ; his piercing eyes had become glossy and sunk ; the pleasant countenance had changed to the woe-attenuated aspect of despair ; his long beard white as snow ; his head bald ; and his whole appearance that of a man in the condition of uttermost distress ; so that his 'veriest enemies seemed moved to pity'—for the moment. At this juncture the Reformers forsook their champion, and 'joined in scoffing at the old man who aspired to martyrdom.' Such were the words of Daniel Dancer, an eccentric Reformer of those times. The proceedings of the Court commenced by the Proctor reading a long series of charges of heresy against Archbishop Cranmer. Cranmer replied that he denied the authority of the Pope altogether. 'I have sworn,' said he, 'never to admit the authority of the Bishop of Rome in England, and I must keep my oath.' In another passage he said, 'You attribute the *keys*

to the Pope and the *sword* to the King. I say the King hath the keys and the sword.' "

" The substance of Cranmer's elaborate reply was to the effect, that at no time did he believe in the principles of the Catholic Church, *although he had repeatedly sworn to those principles with the most open solemnity and sent men and women to the stake for not maintaining them.*

" Latimer and Ridley underwent a similar examination, before the same Commissioners, and for offences of nearly the same nature. On being brought into court, Ridley was uncovered; but when he heard the name of the Pope mentioned, he put on his cap. He was ordered to remove it instantly. 'No,' said he, 'I will not; I do protest against the Bishop of Rome. I will not acknowledge his authority in this realm, for he represents *Lucifer, not Christ.*'

" The judgement of the court in Ridley's case was to the effect, 'that he still continued to be an obstinate and an incurable heretic.'

" Latimer next stood forward. He presented, if possible, a more wretched appearance than his friend, Cranmer. He had nearly reached his eighty-second year; the withered remains of a once strong, healthy, and energetic man. He was dressed in an old tattered coat, broken in the sleeves, a torn handkerchief on his head, with a soiled night-cap over it; his head gear was tied by a leather strap under the chin; a leather belt was round his waist, to which a copy of the New Testament was attached enclosed in an ivory case, on which was fastened a small silver cross; his spectacles, without a case, hung from his neck; he was half blind and quite deaf; his teeth were nearly gone; he could scarcely pronounce a word correctly; his once strong voice became faint; yet, when excited, he spoke boldly, but with the enthusiasm of a fanatic. He seemed weak and

cold, and "shivered like the leaves about to be scattered by the autumn winds." Such was the condition of Hugh Latimer, once known in England as the poor man's advocate against the encroachments of the wealthy and heartless. Sad times were those when the law, assuming the forms of equity, demanded the life of such a spectre as Hugh Latimer at the stake fire."

I shall close this brief memoir of Cranmer with one of those passages in which Mr. Burke indulges with charity and delicacy to a fallen foe:—

"Like Wolsey, Thomas Cranmer had many pleasing associations of early life to look back upon—days when innocence and hope had shed a bright and holy sunshine on his spirit. A good son, a good brother, and abounding in benevolence, he had been sought after by the needy and the unfortunate who had stumbled in the race for prosperity. As the son of a country squire, he had been popular with the people for his love of field sports. Jacob Thornton, a fellow student, reports that 'young Maister Cranmer, in the private circles of Cambridge, won golden opinions; and there were others besides Black Joan on whom the charms of his conversation had made an impression.' However, Cranmer's vocation was certainly *not* that of the Church, and it would have been well for his fame, his honour, and his happiness, had he never become a priest."

N.S.

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