CRANMER'S CONVERSION.

By W. Prescott Upton.

THE principal issue of the Reformation, practically considered, was whether the Eucharist was to continue as the Sacrifice of the Mass or be brought back to its Scriptural character as the "Lord's Supper." Doubtless the supreme *logical* issue was the Sufficiency of Scripture, and the supreme *theological* issue the doctrine of Justification; and yet, intensely practical as were both of these in a certain sense, they did not so immediately touch the daily religious life and its expression in outward observance.

The reform of the Eucharist, however, raised at once both of the other cardinal issues. If the Tradition and Authority of the existing Catholic Church could not be trusted to have preserved inviolate the Eucharist, which by its weekly celebration had been the common property of the whole Church from the Apostles' times, there was plainly no doctrine at all upon which the existing Church could claim to speak with commanding voice and intrinsic authority; all must depend upon what support existed elsewhere for the statements of the "Church." Then, why *should* the Eucharist be brought back to the limits of Scripture, except it be agreed that the entire Divine Revelation is wholly contained within the covers of the Canonical Books?

And if there is "No Gospel like this feast," where Christ the Lord—let us waive for the moment the vexed question of interpretation and concentrate upon the actual words of the Master—proffers what "is" His body broken, and His blood shed "for you and for many ("for" or) unto the remission of sins," there can be no evading of the question of Justification. May we, then and there, by simple reliance on these words of Christ—"the promise of God made unto us in *this* Sacrament"—take hold once again of covenanted peace with God and every other blessing which "the New Testament" purchased and sealed in the blood of His Son? May we thus "eat and drink" so efficaciously that, as its divinely ordained pledges become bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, a humble yet stedfast confidence of our acceptance with God for Christ's sake is wrought by the Holy Ghost into the very fibres of our spiritual being? Are we to listen to the "Lord's Supper" as it bears this message of peace to our weary hearts?

Or must we forsake the words of our only Saviour, and blindly accept the "other Gospel" of Rome, where "Justification" is an almost material "quality," which "priests" (reciting by rote the due formulæ and administering the prescribed "matter") can infuse into the souls of all those who have the merely negative disposition of not consciously "opposing any obstacle" to its reception? Is this the ideal of Justification? An indefinable something imparted indeed at Baptism, but lost on the commission of our first "mortal sin"; after which it can only be recovered by the priest's absolution

in the "Sacrament of Penance"; and must this priest-made "Justification" always be secured *before* the Eucharist dare be received?

The Council of Trent had no doubt as to the answer to these questions: "If anyone shall say that the principal fruit of the most holy Eucharist is the remission of sins . . . let him be anathema" (Sess. xiv. can. 4). "If anyone shall say that only faith is a sufficient preparation for receiving the Sacrament of the most holy Eucharist: let him be anathema. And, lest so great a Sacrament be received unworthily, and so unto death and damnation, the holy Synod doth ordain and declare, that for those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin (no matter howsoever contrite they may deem themselves) Sacramental Confession must of necessity precede communicating, if a Confessor can be had" (canon 11).

The substitution of the Lord's Supper for the Mass was therefore not only in itself a direct reconstruction of the public observance of religion and of the every-day Church life of the people, it went far towards realising the wish of the Roman tyrant that all his enemies had but one neck which he might break at a blow. The reform of the Eucharist meant assertion of the Supremacy and Sufficiency of Scripture as against "Tradition" and "Church Authority." It meant Justification by Faith instead of Justification by the priest. It set up against a false "Sacramental Absolution" given in the Confessional, the true Sacramental Absolution openly and visibly sealed by the true Priest Himself, in the true Sacrament of the Supper, "to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him." It therefore cut the ground from under the delusion of Purgatory and propitiatory Masses. In the light of its comforting assurance to returning penitents of perfect acceptation before God in Christ, the notion of approach to the Throne of Grace through an endless concourse of mediating intercessors, fell as Dagon before the Ark of the Lord

English people are naturally slow to realise what an immense change was made even amongst the Lutherans in relation to the Lord's Supper. We know that Luther retained a belief in a "real presence" (although strictly limited to the actual moment of the elements being eaten and drunk), that he left the old vestments and a good deal of the old ceremonial unchanged in the belief that it would gradually die away before the preaching of the Gospel, and that he continued to use the name of "Sacrament of the Altar" and even "Mass" for the service. The intense Protestantism of the English race, bred on an island where "Lutheranism" has been a mere name, has nothing of the forbearing understanding towards Lutheranism in spite of immense provocation prevalent amongst the "Reformed" on the Continent. Most English peope admit that the Lutherans are Protestant after a fashion, but, by their doctrine of the Lord's Supper, are nearly half-way to Popery. It is therefore electrifying to us when we realise what Luther really held about the Popish Mass, and how by resting the souls of com-

municants on Finished Redemption and the Word of Promise, he went far towards neutralising his own errors.

To give no more than a single illustration, in his Smalcaldic Articles of 1537, after laying down as his first article on the Office and Work of Christ, our Redemption by His Death, he proceeded to assert, " That the Mass in the Papacy is the greatest and most horrible abomination, openly and as an enemy fighting diametrically against the first article ; and yet it was above all the other Popish idolatries, the chiefest and most cunningly devised." After which he goes on to show how " this ' tail of the dragon ' (I mean the Mass) hath brought forth manifold abominations and idolatries," specifying Purgatory, apparitions of dead persons, pilgrimages, monkish fraternities, the abuse of relics and indulgences (Von Hase, *Lib. Symb.*, pp. 304–10 : Leipzig, 1846).

In England the controversy on the Lord's Supper may be said to have swallowed up all the others. The idea that we were concerned mainly with vindicating our insular independence of Rome is a myth. The breach with Rome was effected by Henry in 1534 ; but it was not until *fifteen years later*, two years after his death, that it was possible to secure reformation of the Church services. It was not Protestants, as Archbishop Bramhall pointed out, who made the breach with Rome ; they found it ready to hand made for them many years before, by a Roman Catholic King and a Roman Catholic Parliament, that continued to use after their rejection of the Pope the old Latin services and to burn Protestants as " heretics." But with the Protestants so little did the Papal Claims enter into the matter that it would be as difficult to light upon a treatise by any of our Reformers which was devoted to the question of the Papacy, as it would be to find one of their works which does not emphatically and prominently attack the Mass.

Now it was Cranmer who shaped the English Reformation, and who wrote the great treatise which above all others moulded English thought concerning the Lord's Supper. Those who desire to sophisticate the story of the English Reformation will ever and anon claim this or that (usually obscure) writer as their own, but they have to give up Cranmer. No one can read his *True and Catholic Doctrine*, 1550, and his overwhelming reply to Gardiner in the following year, without seeing that by that time Cranmer was most definitely on the " Reformed " side, and that at least as early as 1550, he had abandoned any notion of a " real presence " in the sacramental elements. Now as the *First* Prayer Book was (like the Second, which is substantially the existing one) clearly the work of Cranmer more than anyone else, it becomes a matter of urgency to those who hold the " real presence " to make out that—though the year *after* the Prayer Book saw the light, Cranmer had gone over to the " Reformed "—he was still a believer in that doctrine when he was compiling the Book. The result has been that the date and circumstances of Cranmer's conversion have been involved in considerable confusion.

We must allow Cranmer himself to be the first to give evidence,

notwithstanding a prevalent tendency to correct him as to his own sentiments by the testimony of private letters from other people. In 1551, Cranmer in replying to the "Preface" of Dr. Richard Smith, formerly Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, says that Smith did not understand a catechism which Cranmer published in the summer of 1548 (*Orig. Lett.*, ii. 381).

"And therefore untruly reporteth of me that in that book I did set forth the real presence [1] of Christ's body in the Sacrament. . . . But this I confess of myself, that *not long before* I wrote the said catechism, I *was* in that error of the real presence, as I was *many years past* in divers *other* errors, as of transubstantiation, of the sacrifice propitiatory of the priests in the mass," etc. (Cranmer, *Lord's Supper*, p. 374).

We see here that Cranmer distinctly asserts that he abandoned the doctrine of the "real presence" BEFORE, though "not long before" the summer of 1548, that is to say, *before* the First Prayer Book was drafted. That is a fatal difficulty for those who imagine that the First Prayer Book was intended to teach and maintain the "real presence." [2]

Let us notice also that Cranmer in 1551, having stated that "not long before" 1548 he had held the "real presence," proceeds to say that "*many years past*" he had been in that "other error" of transubstantiation. The steps of his spiritual pilgrimage were therefore (1) the common Romish belief in transubstantiation and the real presence; (2) abandonment, "many years" before 1551, of transubstantiation, but retention still of the real presence; and (3) abandonment of the real presence "not long before" 1548.

Another of his statements enables us to ascertain further circumstances. It occurs in his "Examination" on September 12, 1555, at Oxford, before Brokes, Bishop of Gloucester, acting as sub-delegate for Cardinal de Puteo, the Pope's Judge and Commissary, where we find this dialogue:

"*Martin.*—For you, master Cranmer, have taught in this high Sacrament of the Altar three contrary doctrines, and yet you pretended in every one of them *verbum Domini*.

[1] The term "real presence" first occurs in the year 1504, and is then used to express the Romish doctrine (Browne, *Fascic. Rerum*, London, 1690); it was therefore *usually* repudiated by the Reformers as one of the "new terms" which the Romanists had coined in order to express their new doctrine (Latimer, *Romains*, pp. 251–2; Ridley, *Works*, p. 238; Jewel, ii. 449). Yet in a sense, Protestants may claim the name for their own doctrine, which being true, can alone have just claim to be "real."

[2] It is not here contended that there was no intention to allow the doctrine in question to have a temporary *shelter* under some expressions in that book. There probably was; and this method of procedure was both charitable and prudent in the first attempt to secure reformation of much inveterate error. But after Gardiner made capital out of these dubious passages for the maintenance of the old superstitions, and after the Council of Trent, October 11, 1551, defined the Roman doctrine of the Eucharist, "irenical" ambiguities were no longer tolerable. They were accordingly all swept away at the revision of 1552, which made the Communion Service practically word for word as we have it to-day, for the revision of 1661–2, as far as it touched the Communion, was almost entirely confined to some alterations of the *rubrics*.

Cranmer.—Nay, I taught but two contrary doctrines in the same.

Martin.—What doctrine taught you when you condemned Lambert the Sacramentary in the King's presence in Whitehall? [Lambert was burnt, Nov. 20, 1538.]

Cranmer.—I maintained then the Papists' doctrine.

Martin.—That is to say, the Catholic and universal doctrine of Christ's Church. And how when King Henry died? Did you not translate Justus Jonas's book?

Cranmer.—I did so.

Martin.—Then you defended another doctrine touching the Sacrament, by the same token that you sent to Lynne your printer; that whereas in the first print there was an affirmative, that is to say, Christ's body really in the Sacrament, you sent then to your printer to put in a 'not,' whereby it came miraculously to pass, that Christ's body was clean conveyed out of the Sacrament.

Cranmer.—I remember there were two printers of my said book; but where the same 'not' was put in, I cannot tell.

Martin.—Then from a Lutheran ye became a Zwinglian, which is the vilest heresy of all in the high mystery of the Sacrament; and for the same heresy you did help to burn Lambert the Sacramentary, which you now call the Catholic Faith and God's Word.

Cranmer.—I grant that then I believed otherwise than I do now; and so I did until my Lord of London, Doctor Ridley, did confer with me, and by sundry persuasions and authorities of doctors quite drew me from my opinion."

(Cranmer, *Remains*, pp. 217–18.)

The statement of Martin as to a change in the wording of Cranmer's Catechism does not seem to be correct. No copy of the work with the "not" inserted is known to exist, or even to have existed. Cranmer gives us here the information that as late as the end of 1538 he had held "the Papists' doctrine." He apparently contradicts what he said against Smith, by saying that he had only taught "*two* contrary doctrines" on the matter, which Wordsworth (*Eccl. Biog.*, iii. 550), and some others of later date, think is decisive against the general impression that Cranmer once held the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper. The laborious Dr. Jenkins, to whose learned edition of Cranmer all subsequent students are indebted, held that there is reason to suppose that this conversation has not been reported accurately (*Cranmer's Works*, iv. 95 n.: Oxford, 1830). But the true explanation may lie rather in a different direction.

In dealing with Smith, the Archbishop is reciting the course of *his own opinions* from Romanism to the "real presence" only, and then to the Reformed view. "Smith untruly reporteth that I *did set forth* the real presence." Cranmer here denies, as he denied to Martin, that the Catechism *taught* the doctrine. But before this he says simply "I *was in* that error," and earlier still "I *was . . . in* divers other errors," merely speaking of the state of *his own* mind, not of "teaching."

On the other hand, when before Brokes Cranmer was standing for his life on the charge of heresy, "You have *taught* three contrary doctrines," Cranmer replies, "Nay, I *taught* but two contrary doctrines in the same." This is perfectly true. First he "maintained" Rome's teaching all his life up till (and after) 1538. Then

in 1550, in his book the *True and Catholic Doctrine*, he taught the Reformed view. But he had never *taught* the Lutheran doctrine of " the real presence," for he denied (and truly, as can be proved) that in his Catechism he had meant this doctrine. Hence although he had never " taught " it, there is every probability that his mind had passed through the stage of *holding* it, until Ridley " *quite drew* him from that opinion." And this is strongly confirmed by the statement found in the preface to the Latin edition of the *True and Catholic Doctrine*, printed at Emden in 1557, that Cranmer was " by the instruction of one single blessed martyr, Ridley, Bishop of London, brought at long last (to wit, in the year '46) to this opinion which he here maintains " (Cranmer, *Lord's Supper*, second pagination, p. 6).

If Cranmer was brought over by Ridley in 1546 to the Reformed doctrine, the reason why Cranmer never " taught " the Lutheran doctrine he was then " holding " is obvious. Henry was still alive in 1546, and enforcing the Six Articles which decreed death at the stake against anyone who should " hold any opinion " that the substances of bread and wine remained after consecration. Cranmer passed into and out of his Lutheran phase during the last few years of Henry, when to have divulged his views would have been death. Thus while he had *entertained* at different times *three* doctrines, he had never *taught* but two.

We have seen that Cranmer himself dates his conversion by Ridley to " not long before " the summer of 1548; and that the Emden edition of his book, published the year after his martyrdom, states the exact year to have been 1546. Only a resolute mind in severe controversial straits can well refuse to accept the fact. But as the word of Cranmer himself is set aside, it may be well to prove by collateral evidence that what he said about himself was true.

The *True and Catholic Doctrine* is sufficient to prove that in 1550 Cranmer was already on the Reformed side; or was what Martin, and those who share his Romish views to-day, would call a " Zwinglian." We may work back from this date.

On December 27, 1549, Hooper writes to Bullinger:

" The Archbishop of Canterbury entertains right views as to the nature of Christ's presence in the Supper, and is now very friendly towards myself. He has some *Articles of Religion* to which all preachers and lecturers in divinity are required to subscribe, or else a license for teaching is not granted them; and in these his sentiments respecting the eucharist are pure, religious, and similar to yours in Switzerland " (*Orig. Lett.*, i. 71–2; *Ep. Tig.*, p. 46, " ubi pure, et religiose, *ac Helvetice* sentit de eucharistia ").

With this may be compared what he writes towards the close of this letter:

" Believe me, all the English who are free from Popish tyranny and Romish craftiness entertain correct views respecting the Supper."

And what he writes on February 5, 1550:

" The Bishops of Canterbury, Rochester (Ridley), Ely (Goodrich), St. David's (Ferrar), Lincoln (Holbeche), and Bath (Barlow) are all favourable

to the cause of Christ, and as far as I know entertain right opinions on the matter of the Eucharist. I have freely conversed with *all of them* upon this subject, and have discovered nothing but what is pure and holy. The Archbishop . . . [requires preachers before he licenses them, to] subscribe certain Articles, which, if possible, I will send you; one of which respecting the Eucharist is plainly the true one, and that which you maintain in Switzerland" (*Ibid.*, p. 76; *Ep. Tig.*, p. 48, "plane verus et Helveticus est").

It was a proclamation dated April 24, 1548, whereby preaching was forbidden except under Cranmer's own licence. The "articles" which he prescribed to preachers afterwards became, having been revised more than once, our Thirty-nine Articles. Hooper's evidence shows that Cranmer was on the "Swiss" or "Reformed" side *before the end of* 1549.

What completely overthrows the Romanising contention is the report (probably drawn up by Sir John Cheke, the King's tutor) of the Great Parliamentary Debate on the Sacrament, held December 15 to 19, 1548, in order to clear the way for the introduction of the First Prayer Book. The battle whether there should be this reformation of the services or not, very properly turned upon the master-question, the Communion Service, and therefore upon the doctrine of that Sacrament. Cranmer took the lead for the Reformers; he denied the Mass and transubstantiation, he upheld the spiritual reception by means of faith, denied reception by the wicked (Article XXIX) and adoration of the Host, and from the standpoint of the Black Rubric maintained the *impossibility* of any "real presence" in the elements. No summary of what are themselves but terse notes of the speeches would do justice to the argument. The entire document, reprinted from the original MS. verbatim, literatim, and folio by folio, with introduction and notes by the late Mr. Tomlinson, can still be obtained from the Church Association for sixpence. It proves to demonstration that our Reformers *before* they so much as laid the *First* Prayer Book before Parliament, had already in their own minds reached the doctrinal position of the Second, and gave the clearest and most honest declaration of their mind in open Parliament.

This, however, was not the first intimation Cranmer had given of his opinions. There had been need of the utmost caution under Henry, and even when Henry was dead, the Six Articles remained on the Statute-Book till Christmas Eve, 1547, though not permitted by the Government to be put into operation. By acting with caution Cranmer was able to win from Convocation late in that November a grudging agreement to the restoration of the Cup to the Laity. For the actual communion of the people the following Easter, an "Order of the Communion" was published, March 8, 1548, which consisted of the Confession, Absolution, Words of Administration, and so on in English, to be interpolated into the still unchanged Latin Mass, which, of course, made no provision for the Communion of the people.

The change having once been made, the demand for complete English services could not be denied, and it seems that something

of the kind was established early in May at the Abbey and at St. Paul's. About this time, or soon after, came the issue of Cranmer's Catechism. To the average man it appeared to sound strongly of Lutheranism. When, however, a comparison is made of Cranmer's English with the Latin original, as was done by its learned editor, Dr. Burton, a century ago, it becomes clear that Cranmer eliminated from his version the strongest and clearest statements in favour of the " real " presence, and left only what he regarded as reconcileable with the holding of none other than a *spiritual* reception (compare Cranmer's *Lord's Supper*, p. 227). To give but a single instance of what was done in this direction—Jonas wrote :

" When (God) calls and names a thing which was not before, then at once that very thing comes into being as He names it. Therefore when He takes bread and says, ' This is my body,' then immediately there is the body of our Lord. And when He takes the cup and says, ' This is my blood,' then immediately His blood is present " (Burton, *Latin*, p. 177).

When Cranmer came to this passage, he cut out the first sentence altogether, and then went on :

" Wherefore when Christ takes bread and saith, ' Take, eat, this is my body,' we ought not to doubt but *we eat* His body ; and when He takes the cup and saith, ' Take, drink, this is my blood,' we ought to think assuredly that *we drink* His very blood " (Ibid., *English*, p. 207).

To us who know such things about the *Catechism* of 1548, it is a document proving that Cranmer was already on the Reformed side before he published it, yet it does not follow that in 1548 it so appeared to the popular mind. We know that it did not.

England had for 150 years witnessed the persecution of Lollards, and this mainly on account of their irreconcileable hostility to the Romish doctrine of the " Sacrament of the Altar." When the Reformation came, the English Gospellers would sit at the feet of Luther to hear the glad tidings of free Justification ; but they turned a deaf ear to him when he would have them spare and cherish " the real presence." The result was (as we have seen from Hooper) that every Englishman who favoured the Reformation was set against this tenet of Lutheranism, as well as against the more extended errors of Romanism. An English Protestant did not like, and still does not like (true and legitimate as in a certain sense it is) reference to eating " without doubt " the body and " assuredly " drinking the " very " blood of Christ. He admits that the teaching, with Cranmer's added word " *spiritually*," is in agreement with Scripture ; but being essentially matter-of-fact he does not love the exaggeration and hardening of metaphors, and is likely to ask the sensible question, " Very well ; only if you meant ' spiritually,' why did you not use the word and save misunderstanding ? "

Therefore Cranmer's Catechism created a false impression in the minds of Protestants. A young Swiss student then at Oxford, writes on August 15, 1548, to Bullinger, telling him :

" This Thomas had fallen into so heavy a slumber that we entertain but a very cold hope that he will be aroused even by your most learned letter.

For he has lately published a *Catechism*, in which he has only just failed to approve (*tantum non . . . approbavit*) that foul and sacrilegious transubstantiation of the Papists in the holy Supper of our Saviour; but for the rest, (*ceterum*) all the dreams of Luther seem to him to be sufficiently well-grounded, perspicuous and lucid" (*Orig. Lett.*, ii. 381; *Ep. Tig.*, p. 251).

On August 1, Bartholomew Traheron, a minor Reformer of some importance in his way, who was then—though a clergyman—a member of the House of Commons, and the following year became Dean of Wells, also wrote to Bullinger:

"*All* our countrymen who are sincerely favourable to the restoration of truth, entertain in all respects *like opinions with you*; and not only those who are placed at the summit of honour, but those who are ranked in the number of men of learning. *I except*, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Latimer, and a very few learned men besides; for from among the nobility I know of not one whose opinions are otherwise than what they ought to be. As for Canterbury, he conducts himself in such a way, I know not how, as that the people do not think much of him, and the nobility regard him as lukewarm. In other respects he is a kind and good-natured man" (*Orig. Lett.*, i. 320).

Affairs, however, were coming to a head, and whether it was a *ballon d'essai* or not, Cranmer must have found his Catechism very useful as evoking these manifestations of the solidity with which the reforming party was arrayed against any sort of "real presence."

Early in September the King summoned certain of the Bishops and learned men to Chertsey and Windsor, where the English Services which the Reformers had been drafting seem to have come under discussion. "Also at that time (about September 23) was many battles made of divers parties against the Blessed Sacrament, one against another" (*Grey Friar's Chronicle*, pp. 56 and 57: *Mon. Fran.*, ii. 217). The French ambassador also writes September 30, "that there are daily fights in the London Churches and elsewhere in the kingdom whether there shall be Mass or not" (Odet de Selve, *Inventaire*, p. 453). The meetings at Chertsey rendered it impossible for Cranmer any longer to keep to himself his own views on the matter.

Accordingly we find that by September 28, when Traheron writes again to Bullinger, he is able to say:

"But that you may add more to your praises of God, you must know that Latimer has come over to our opinion respecting the true doctrine of the Eucharist, together with the *Archbishop of Canterbury* and the *other* bishops, who heretofore *seemed* to be Lutherans" (*Orig. Lett.*, i. 322).

Then on December 31, twelve days after the close of the "Great Parliamentary Debate," he thus writes to Bullinger about it:

"The Archbishop of Canterbury contrary to general expectation most firmly, openly, and learnedly maintained your opinion upon this subject. His arguments were as follows. The body of Christ was taken up from us into heaven. Christ has left the world. Ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always, etc. Next followed the Bishop of Rochester (Ridley), who handled the matter with so much eloquence, perspicuity, erudition and power, as to stop the mouth of that most zealous Papist the

Bishop of Worcester (Heath). The truth never obtained a more brilliant victory amongst us. I perceive that it is all over with Lutheranism, now that those who were *considered* its principal, *and almost only* supporters, have altogether come over to our side" (Ibid., p. 323).

The reader will note here again as in the writings of Bishop Hooper, and indeed in those of the Reformers at large, how little there was of "*Lutheranism*" properly so called in England. There were "the Papists" who held to the entire medieval doctrine of the Mass. There were the "Gospellers" who rejected it root and branch. There was no third party, rejecting some Romish extravagances such as "transubstantiation," while retaining and defending the notion of "the real presence."

Traheron in August had regretfully to say how little the Protestants thought of the Archbishop, doubtless through the publication of that temporising *Catechism*: but he had no doubt of the solidarity of the English Protestants against the "real presence." By the end of September the Chertsey conferences had drawn a clear line of demarcation between the contending theologians, and a man of Traheron's position in the conflict could see that Cranmer and his band of reforming Bishops who "heretofore *seemed to be* Lutherans" were now definitely ranged with English Lollardy and the Swiss Bullinger against any variant of the "real presence in the elements." By the end of the year, what had taken place in these private conferences had been publicly repeated in Parliament; and there with the brilliant result that the Reformers had routed their antagonists and so brought the Prayer Book into the Legislature, which enacted it within the next month.

There is one story which needs to be dealt with, because it is made the ground for exhibiting Cranmer as having shown weakness in the matter at this critical time, and also for the untenable assertion that he was really converted by the Polish Reformer of Emden, John a Lasco, whose noble family, by the way, may have been a cadet branch of the English de Lacy line of the Earls of Lincoln. John a Lasco was a man from whom even a Cranmer might not disdain to learn: but the pertinacious manner in which the story is repeated without the least examination of the evidence, is an example of the way in which slipshod and uncritical methods will seriously pervert history. For there can be no question that to Ridley belongs the honour of leading Cranmer into the glorious liberty of disillusionment from the "real presence."

The sole basis of the other view is that John ab Ulmis writes from Oxford to Bullinger on November 27, 1548:

"The Bishops entertain right and excellent opinions respecting the holy Supper of Jesus Christ. That abominable error and silly opinion of a carnal eating has been long since banished and done away. Even that Thomas himself, about whom I wrote to you when I was in London, by the goodness of God and the instrumentality of that most upright and judicious man, Master John a Lasco, is in a great measure recovered from his dangerous lethargy" (*Orig. Lett.*, ii. 383).

A century ago the requisite correction was given by the well-weighed

remark of Dr. Jenkyns in his Preface to Cranmer's Works (p. lxxx):

"John ab Ulmis is a competent witness respecting the time when the change in Cranmer's opinions *became known*, but he was mistaken with regard to the *person* by whom it was effected."

It is nevertheless necessary to-day to break this butterfly upon the wheel, and show by formal proof that the story is destitute of credit.

John ab Ulmis was a clever young man, and his letters are valuable as a light on the English Reformation, provided they are used with discretion, for this letter was written when he had not been in this country six months and when he had not yet come into that intimate contact with influential patrons that gives weight to his later letters. What has happened is evidently this. He has heard of the favourable results of the Chertsey conferences, and that the Reforming side which had won was—including Cranmer—opposed to the "real presence." He had heard that a Lasco had come on a visit to Cranmer, and he puts two and two together. The guess was very natural, although we know it was incorrect. Cranmer had not meant to support but to eliminate the "real presence" from his *Catechism*. He therefore had no need to be recovered by a Lasco from a "lethargy" into which he had not fallen. And his stand for the Reformed doctrine of the Eucharist was made *before* he had met a Lasco.

A Lasco arrived in London, September 21, when Cranmer was away (at Chertsey) and was not expected back for eight days (De Kuyper, *John a Lasco*, ii. 619). Before this date of return Traheron wrote to Bullinger about Cranmer having upheld the Swiss doctrine. There is nothing surprising in the fact that while an important man like Traheron knew of Cranmer's conversion *before* the Primate could have met a Lasco, the young foreign student at Oxford should say that the change was owing to a Lasco. It may be added that Cranmer was in London on October 2, and at Windsor again by October 20 (*Orig. Lett.*, i. 20, 32). It would seem that he came back to Lambeth for a few days and then returned to the Court at Windsor, taking with him a Lasco, who soon fell desperately ill and had to be left there when the Court returned to London for the opening of Parliament towards the end of November, for a Lasco's letter recounting his illness to Calvin is dated at Windsor on December 14 (Kuyper, ii. 620–2). Therefore as a matter of fact a Lasco was probably able to be of little or no assistance to Cranmer at the critical moments, though Cranmer had evidently desired to make use of him.

To Traheron's letter of December 31, John ab Ulmis was permitted to append a short postscript, the last sentence of which is, "The foolish bishops have made a marvellous recantation." The meaning of this is not that the *Reforming* bishops had recanted. The note must be explained by what he wrote on November 27, thinking that the Bishops *as a body* (shades of Bonner, Day, and Heath!) had become orthodox on the Supper. So that when he learned from the Debate that half of them had fought tooth and

nail for Popery, he was naturally of opinion that *these* " silly Bishops have made a marvellous recantation."

The emphasis laid on the share of John a Lasco in changing the opinions of Cranmer is part and parcel of the oft-repeated statement that Cranmer was a weakling who was practically bullied out of " the real presence " by foreign Reformers then in England. The contention itself is a thinly disguised appeal to that insular conceit which makes so many people quite sure that anything coming from a foreigner is altogether contemptible.

Cranmer himself had *invited* a Lasco, pressing him three or four times to come to England to assist in settling for us the Sacramental controversy (*Orig. Lett.*, i. 17: Gorham, *Ref. Gleanings*, p. 21). He also invited Melanchthon, whose toning down of the " real presence " on every possible occasion offended Luther. He brought over Peter Martyr and Bernardine Oechino; Martin Bucer and Paul Fagius, Francis Dryander, Martin Micronius, and Walram Pullain. He desired to have Caspar Hedio, Wolfgang Musculus, Albert Hardenburg, and more of the same character. These were the men Cranmer was bringing to England in 1548, to settle the Sacramentarian Controversy.

The absurdity of the contention that Cranmer was subsequently talked out of his views on the " real presence " by a number of foreign reformers who had taken refuge in England becomes apparent when we remember that Cranmer himself invited them to come over here. Their mere names as given above show the kind of assistance he hoped to obtain from them and sufficiently suggest the bent of his own mind when he issued the invitations. We see here Cranmer striving to settle the Eucharistic controversy by drawing up a formula that would unite Protestants: and whom does he invite to assist in framing it? Not a single Lutheran—with the more than doubtful exception of Melanchthon. There is not a Westphal, an Illyrieus a Brentius or a Heshaus to be found in the whole list. Cranmer empanels a jury which it is certain will condemn the doctrine of the " real presence " out of hand, and does not provide so much as a solitary man who would even state a plea for it. Instead of these foreign reformers having beguiled him from the path of Catholic or even Anglo-Catholic orthodoxy, their very names are proof positive that at least as early as 1548, the Archbishop had already thought himself out of any idea of a " presence " in the sacramental elements and had rightly placed it, as did St. Paul, in the heart of the faithful recipient (Eph. iii. 17).