Leaders of Religious Thought. II.—Cranmer: Liturgical Thought.

By the Right Rev. the BISHOP OF BURNLEY.

THE immediately inciting causes of the Reformation here in England were singularly different from those which produced the movement in Germany. This is amongst the commonplaces of history. It is, nevertheless, worth our while to mark this before going further into our present subject.

In Germany the movement took its rise in one strong, indeed completely unique, personality. Luther was the father of the German Reformation. It was his child, and, to use his own vigorous metaphor, the child was the fruit of a "mystical union." "I have wedded the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians. It is my wife." And as Luther was the parent of the movement, so, as long as he lived and as far as he was permitted, he guided it. And yet it should not be disguised that he was no fully-furnished theologian. In this he was unlike Calvin, unlike even Melanchthon. His head was often carried captive by his heart. That heart was too warm, too intensely human, to permit him to spend and be spent in formulating confessions that should sift the false in the old from what was true. He was a genius, and genius is intuitional.

No such man of men presided over the Reformation amongst ourselves. Its origin was political. The theologians and scholars of the day were all bending their thoughts at the period of its inception, not upon great doctrinal questions, not upon the urgent reform of scandals and abuses in the Church, but upon the unsavoury question of the royal divorce. A vicious despot broke with Rome because Rome espoused the pitiful cause of his injured queen.

Here was the prime moving cause, and we have nothing to say in extenuation of it; nay, much (were this the place) to say in strongest condemnation of it.

But most interesting was the effect of this unworthy cause

upon the development of the Church crisis now known familiarly as the English Reformation. The English Reformers had no free hand given them. The strong Tudor sceptre checked them at every step; rendered for us the Reformation a slow and laboured growth; restrained the spirit of ultra-Protestantism from landing us in a separatists' sect, under the leadership of a Peter Martyr, a Bucer, or even a Zwingli; and rendered it possible for us of to-day to hold in our hands a "Book of Common Prayer," the bulk of whose devotions date, not from the sixteenth century, but from the eleventh, the sixth, and even the fifth.

Many persons imagine that our Prayer Book was the original work of our Reformers. These have to learn that the proportion of original work is exceedingly small; that the liturgical labours of Cranmer and his colleagues consisted largely in the revision (and revision with a tender bias towards the old forms) of pre-Reformation service books. No new forms were suffered without very good reason. This was only when the old prayer-form taught error so plainly that it was (so to speak) past revision for the purposes of reformed devotion.

For labours such as these genius is not needed; what is wanted is a mind well stored with the best devotional forms of the past; the true devotional spirit; a master of the purest English, trained in the nervous terseness of the Latin, almost as familiar as a vernacular; and, lastly, the spirit of a loving reverence for the ancient liturgies, with the firm purpose of incorporating as much of them as loyalty to truth permits. These are the qualifications of a Prayer Book reviser, and these qualifications were found in a remarkable degree in those to whom in God's providence 350 years ago this task was committed.

As announced in our first paper, it lies with us to view Archbishop Cranmer on the side of his liturgical labours. We may not, however, altogether lose sight of the man in his mission. To be just to the memory of Cranmer is, of course,

every honest student's desire. But in order to be just the student must have access to just authorities, and these can hardly be said to exist. Foxe on the one side is as untrustworthy as Macaulay on the other. Secretary Morice is a Boswell. Dean Hook is perhaps too hard upon the Archbishop at junctures in which his conduct might admit of two constructions; but it is matter of unquestioned history that there was not a little in the actions of the first half of his public career which all righteous men must condemn; while the moral weakness betrayed in the series of miserable written "Retractations" which immediately preceded the terrible end was hardly atoned for in the courage that held the "unworthy right hand" in the fire till it was burnt to the bone. But while so many have joined in condemning, it is not unmeet, even in the interests of justice, and this without refusing to join in the condemnation, to register one or two facts on the other side. In the first place, Cranmer was utterly without ambition. We believe his lingering in Germany when the Archbishopric was offered was with the entirely genuine hope that Henry would reconsider the offer and select another. His was a kindly, gentle character. He never bore malice. People could say of him: "You have only to do him an ill turn, and you make him your fast friend." It was a sore trial to him when the enactment of the Six Articles forced him to send his wife back to her friends. His daily life fulfilled no ordinary ideal. His worst foes did not dare to slur his private life.

Next, he loved the Bible, and was bent upon giving it to the people, and England ought never to let die out of grateful memory the fact that he did give it.

Again, the moral cowardice of the "Retractations," though it may not be discounted, may be qualified by consideration of the equally cowardly deceits which wrung them from a worn-out old man who had known the inside of a Marian gaol for months, and by consideration of certain pleasing incidents in his course, in which he showed himself by no means lacking in earless disregard for his own safety. Moreover, much of dishonourable compromise has been *read into* the character of

Cranmer by those who ignorantly regard him as the "first Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury." In a sense, indeed, this is true; but in a still broader sense it is not. During the whole of the reign of Henry VIII. he was in doctrine a Roman Catholic. He was a believer in transubstantiation. "It must," as one writer justly points out, "be remembered that the modern idea of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism as two broadly-marked and antagonistic systems was all but unknown in England in Cranmer's day. It would be unnecessary to state so obvious a truth, were it not for the rooted tendency of hasty thinkers to throw back now familiar distinctions in religion and politics to a period when such distinctions had no existence." These are among reflections which may well serve to mitigate our censures of the Archbishop, though quite insufficient to silence them. Nor will we forget that we are all, more largely than is always realized by us, the embodiment of the ethical standards of our age. It is an indication of the moral advances we have made that the conduct of a former age shocks and perplexes us. Only by the arrest of all moral betterment could we escape this shock to our own ideals. Place in imagination the eighth Henry on the throne of our seventh Edward, and which of us without shivering our own glass houses could cast a stone at Cranmer ruling the Church at Lambeth to-day? With this brief biographical notice we return to the subject of Cranmer's Prayer Book revision.

The strength of our Church's position is largely due to the circumstance that the Reformation settlement partook largely of the nature of a compromise. We have not been bereft of our historic continuity. A hoary antiquity lies behind us. The cautious wisdom which controlled the liturgical labours of Cranmer has left a liturgy which in the main clothes our devotions in the actual language which clad those of the Church a thousand years ago.

The incisive words of Dean Overall in the Convocation of 1605 might with equal truth have been uttered by Cranmer with reference to much of his work. "We have detracted

nothing in Doctrine, in Church-order, from that which has been handed down from Christ and the Apostles, and accepted and acknowledged by the primitive Church. We have only uprooted the tares of corruption and abuses which had in the course of time grown up."

A glance into the Book of Common Prayer will illustrate this canon of revision. Of the eighty-nine collects to be found in the book no less than fifty-nine are from ancient sources. This means that two-thirds are at least 1,300 years old. Seven belong to Leo (A.D. 440 to 461); twenty-four are to be assigned to Gelasius (A.D. 492); twenty-eight are the product of the liturgical labours of Gregory the Great (A.D. 590 to 604).

Of the modern collects nineteen or twenty are from the pens of the Reformers, most of these for an obvious reason being for Holy Days. Four bear the date of the Restoration. Some six or seven are of doubtful origin.

This hurried analysis will sufficiently indicate the lines on which our Prayer Book was constructed, and a further and closer examination would serve to show how much we have gained by this chastened regard for ancient sources.

From this it cannot fail to be noticed that our Church is nearer Rome in her devotions than in her dogmatic formularies. And this is in no way unreasonable. It is only indirectly or by implication that dogma appears in a prayer-form. The least dogmatic forms are usually the best. Whereas an article of belief must, if it is to serve its purpose, be explicit, and be directly framed with a view to confuting error, a creed is bound to be polemic. It is a defensive weapon, and would, therefore, be out of place where no attack was to be feared.

In their general features Cranmer's collects are readily to be distinguished from the older ones by their direct verbal allusions either to the Gospel or Epistle for the day, or to both. This feature they possess in common with those of the Restoration period. In another respect they are much superior to the latter, as being less theological. As examples of Cranmer's collects, we

may examine at leisure those for the first and second Sundays in Advent, that for Quinquagesima.

The first of these, "Almighty God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness," has been truly called by Dean Goulburn "a magnificent collect," and "shows how abundantly qualified he was for his task." We learn to appreciate its rich and ordered fullness the more when we compare it with the thin and sapless form in the old service books which it replaced.

Among the collects we owe to Cranmer are no less than thirteen for Holy Days. This is obviously accounted for by the saint-worship which for so long had robbed the Triune God of His honour. Twelve of these were written for Edward's First Book of Common Prayer, put forth in 1549; the thirteenth (that for St. Andrew) appeared first three years later in the Second Book. None of these have Latin originals. Two only out of the whole twenty are drawn from ancient sources without material alteration—those for the Purification and Annunciation. That these two should need no purging before transference to our present Book is a striking testimony to the late introduction of undue honour to the Blessed Virgin.

Let a passing regret here escape us that, while the heroes of the world's history are commemorated with all meet regard, the heroes of faith, the saints of God, are left by the Church's children unhonoured, and only an accidental recognition accorded them when the days sacred to their memories chance to fall on a Sunday.

Cranmer's labours were not, it need hardly be said, confined to a revision of the collects, and the supply of new forms of them where this was called for. A litany was prepared by him in 1544 which received the royal authority for public use. As may be supposed, the work of revising the Communion Office was a much more responsible one, and proceeded by slower stages. As has already been observed, the Archbishop until the last few years of his life was, as regards the presence of Christ in the Holy Sacrament, a Roman. The date of his

renunciation of the dogma of transubstantiation is uncertain. At the funeral of Henry VIII. he celebrated Mass, and again on the death of Francis I. But the light did break, and the great truth that for the sustenance of spiritual life spiritual, and not corporeal, food is needed is clearly set forth in our Articles, our Catechism, and in the service of Holy Communion itself.

None, perhaps, in the annals of the Church more needed the shelter of the assurance—so comforting to all broad minds and gentle hearts—marking a distinction in the judgment between a man's standing in the sight of heaven and his actual work in the Church. "The fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as through fire." Much of that work may be as of wood, hay, stubble, while the worker, with a loyal heart and true, may be in comparison as the gold, silver, and precious stones. Much, therefore, of the work may be burned, and to this extent he may suffer loss, while through the fire of Divine testing he himself is saved, and so passes into the light, where he who loves best sees furthest, because there light and love are one.

A tender closing glance upon our second-best treasure among books: was there ever such a literary history, next to that of the Holy Bible itself, as that of the English Churchman's Book of Common Prayer? The Bible took fifteen centuries to grow: the Prayer Book took fourteen. Round the sacred nucleus of all its services, the Lord's own Form, cluster forms which breathe the Church's holiest aspirations, while pointing to the vicissitudes of her chequered history. Using them, we of to-day seem knit together in one communion and fellowship with Christ's elect in the far days that are gone. The tongue was a living one when these prayers were written in it, and then in the dark after-time it died. And now no longer linked to a dead tongue, like a living captive to a corpse, these ancient forms live and breathe again through our own vernacular, and we may pray with the spirit and with the under-

standing also. But, by the quickening power of the Spirit of God, may *another* translation be effected, lest our praiseless lives cause our common prayers to revert to a dead tongue, and we in our error mistake a dumb heart for a deaf God.

The Person of our Lord and the Kenotic Theory.

By the Rev. F. S. GUY WARMAN, M.A.

THE kenotic theory: the ugliness of the phrase is characteristic. Out of a single word theories have been evolved the very statement of which jars on our ears as followers of Him whom we hold to be our infallible Lord and Saviour. We have the one word ἐκένωσεν and a scant phrase here and there, and upon this foundation there have been built, ofttimes in the interests of, and in order to add weight to, purely human speculations, theories which are subversive of our Lord's authority as Teacher, and practically of His personality as Son of God. Unitarianism is clamant amongst us, sometimes in the guise of some other sect or of *soi-disant* undenominationalism. It is well for us to face such a question as the extent of our Lord's self-humiliation, but it is necessary to demand at the outset that the so-called results of extreme criticism, purely speculative and often based on meagre foundations, shall not be allowed more than their proper weight, and that is small indeed, in determining the nature of our Lord's κένωσις.

In approaching the subject, let us do so from exactly the same point of view as St. Paul. The standpoint from which great doctrines are considered materially influences the conclusion which is reached. Arius argued from the logical aspect of a son's relationship, and his point of view led him to the ignominious position of an arch-heretic. Let us beware, then, of a similar fate, and our caution will force us to St. Paul's aspect of the kenosis—viz., as viewed from an ethical standpoint. For St. Paul introduces this, the most important of his doctrinal