

## Gains & Losses from the Great Reformation

You will not, I am sure, expect an exhaustive survey of the subject within the limits of a single paper. Still, in order to cover as much ground as possible I have adopted the concentrated method of the examination answer rather than the more discursive style of the essay.

In order to estimate gains & losses from any movement of thought or action it is at least advisable to sketch the events that prepared for it as well as the actual course it pursued. This is done in the belief that history is but one story, that there is a play of events, & that as reaping follows sowing so consequences follow from things that happen. Yet a selection of facts is unavoidable & ~~different~~ historians differ in their selection not merely because their personal judgements may differ but because they are surveying the field from different angles. The field of historical perspective, like the historical story as a whole is one. But just as the same landscape presents different aspects from different points of view, so the same movement may suggest different judgments if viewed as a phase of political or constitutional or economic <sup>factor in</sup> its aspect as a religious history. My point of view in this survey is that of the church historian, regarding church history as the spiritual side of history, but yet that of the church historian who has no axe to grind & no thesis he feels bound to defend. Whether such a cool impartial attitude is at all feasible you will doubtless discuss when I have had my say. Meantime here goes.

Events that prepared the way. There is ample evidence that during the fifteenth century the Christian Church in western Europe had become deeply secularized. Pope & Emperor had fought for pride of place



and the Papacy had won a Pyrrhic victory. The Church had apparently conquered Caesar, but the spirit of Caesar had entered & taken possession of the Church. The Popes of the fifteenth century are mixed up in the political humors of Italy & have as their chief object the increase of their temporal dominions. They were constantly at war & exerted the utmost pressure & exploited every device & stretched every spiritual prerogative to get money to carry on their wars & maintain the pomp & circumstance of sovereign power with as little scruple as the most worldly ~~to~~ of their competitors. Not only from England were there constant complaints & a growing restiveness against the continual demands for money. Papal provisions & the whole machinery of papal jurisdiction were the occasion of the greatest resentment because <sup>they</sup> drained away large sums without any visible return, & represented an interference with local & national rights. The Church was also the greatest property owner whose estates were in the dead hand that let nothing go, but rather went on gathering & accumulating more & more as time went on. There were proposals for disendowment in the English parliament in 1404 & again in 1410, & Henry VIII. <sup>by no</sup> means the first to lay hands on monastic property & convert it to other uses.

The great officers of state had perforce been taken from the ranks of the uneducated class, the clergy, & this had taken them away from their spiritual duties while offering special attractions to <sup>the</sup> worldly minded to choose the Church as their career. Hence we can understand why



in the later middle ages the higher ranks of the clergy were recruited mainly from the nobility so that the Church ceased to be democratic & a social gulf yawned between the higher & the lower clergy. The Church was merely the convenient instrument of the ~~landowning~~ feudal aristocracy. Sometimes a novus homo of outstanding ability, such as Wolsey, might forge his way ahead to the leadership of the state but he was a politician first of foremost & a conspicuous instance of the secularisation that ~~sapped~~ <sup>sapped</sup> the spiritual energies of the Church.

In the fifteenth century, the last great revival had spent its force & the friars had become a byword for corruption, with a very few exceptions. They are the villains of the worst stories & the spies & ~~dirty~~ <sup>underground</sup> ~~dirty~~ <sup>agents</sup> ~~workers~~ of political intrigue while they also weakened the discipline that the parochial clergy might have enforced over his flock. The Church was but one of many institutions competing for power & control over affairs. Ecclesiastism stifled personal religion & reduced religious ordinances to a dead mechanical routine ~~for~~ exploited for money-making purposes.

The revolt of the human spirit against ecclesiastical oppression ~~was~~ expressed itself in the growth of heresy & the Church betrayed its secularisation by meeting heresy with persecution instead of persuasion, authority instead of argument & tyranny instead of example.

The spiritual deadness of the Church is reflected in the decay of morality public & private in the fifteenth century which is markedly noticeable in politics in the Continent & in England. In Italy it is the age of Machiavelli & the Borgias, in France of Louis XI, in England of the Wars of



The Roses, the last outburst of feudal disorder during which the nobility, demoralised by the Hundred Years' war with France, fought out their personal feuds under cover of a dynastic struggle & almost destroyed each other after the fashion of the Kilkenny cats or Abner & Josab's ~~troops~~ young men at the pool of Gibeon.

recital But we cannot account for the Reformation by <sup>the bare</sup> ~~the facts of~~ <sup>the facts of spiritual</sup> ~~negative phenomena~~ decadence. There were more positive forces at work ~~than~~ which were to build up new institutions on the ruins of the old. The English revolt against the papacy can be traced back to John's ignoble surrender in 1213. It grew during the papal exploitations of the weak Henry III, his son, it gained greatly in strength during the Hundred Years' war with France when the Papacy was undergoing its Babylonist Captivity in Avignon & the Pope was both intent & purpose a vassal of the French monarchy. In the fifteenth century the Pope became an Italian princelet & his chief concern with England was to get money for his Italian schemes. In politics economics literature we can trace the growth of a strong national sentiment in England, & a similar national spirit had grown up in France during the life & death struggle of the Hundred Years' war. The beginnings of a national self-consciousness were made vocal in Germany by Luther, & <sup>had</sup> ~~can~~ been expressed in Bohemia during the Hussite wars. It had developed in Spain during the continuous Crusade against the Moors, and there are indications of it in the Netherlands. But it was in England that Nationality had developed most fully in the age that ushered in the Reformation & this national



Sentiment found visible embodiment & symbol in the strong monarchy of the Tudors which was recognised & supported as the best guarantee of peace & order after the wars of the Roses. Henry VIII. built up an efficient government and the Tudors generally showed themselves able & competent rulers of the land. They fostered the national sentiment & showed full sympathy with the rising interests, the New Learning, Commerce & the Law. Thus they enlisted the support of the developing intellectual & material resources of the nation.

The growth of nationality is indicated also by the rise of a vernacular literature; from Piers Plowman to Chaucer the history of English literature goes on without a break. Chaucer was the first learned layman to write in the mother tongue, but Wycliffe's Bible gave an even greater impulse to the literary development of the English ~~language~~<sup>speech</sup> & its circulation was surprisingly wide. The clergy were losing their monopoly of education. In the later ages there were a number of ~~new~~ grammar schools founded apart from monasteries which had largely ceased to be educational centres. When Dean Colet founded St Paul's School he handed its control over to a body of laymen.

Another factor in the growth of nationality was the decay of feudalism. In the middle ages the divisions of the people in Europe were mainly horizontal, but for feudal society has a general similarity of structure. The French noble had more in common with his English peer than he had with the townsman of his own country. But the <sup>growth of a</sup> strong monarchy broke the power of the feudal nobility & reduced them from being petty <sup>princes</sup> kings into courtiers surrounding the king.



& dependent on him. The growth of nationality created vertical  
 lines of division across the former horizontal cleavages & the  
 exaltation of the monarchy meant the greater fusion of the  
 various ~~to~~ ranks & classes into a national solidarity.  
 But a strong monarchy means a more expensive form  
 of government & the revenues required were derived from  
 the economic developments that are manifest in the  
 growth of commerce, the multiplication of industries, &  
 the transformation of agriculture from subsistence  
 farming & production for a market. The introduction of  
 gunpowder & the ~~new~~ new tactics of pike-armed infantry  
 destroyed the military superiority of the feudal army while  
 the new economic developments dissolved its manorial basis  
 & ~~destroyed~~ <sup>wrecked</sup> its social structure. Geographical discovery & the  
 consequent expansion of trade and industry helped to transform  
 Knights errant into "adventurers" & pirates. The younger sons  
 of nobles were also linked with the trading classes in other activities  
 than "adventures" on the high seas. Class divisions were less  
 rigid in England than in the Continent for by the eldest  
 son of a noble was regarded as noble, all the other children  
 were commoners & the younger sons were often found side  
 by side with the burgesses from the towns in the House of Commons.  
 This made for the solidarity of the English people & strengthened  
 the bonds of nationality which were so powerful a factor  
 in the Reformation movement.

More subtle influences were derived from the widening  
 of the horizon due to the new Learning that took by storm  
 the newly awakening human spirit & prompted those  
 critical enquiries that destroyed the prestige of <sup>authority</sup> medieval



ideals & institutions. The Renaissance is the period, in Italy especially, of the superman, of the assertion of the individual which welcomed <sup>the</sup> new ideals of life portrayed so attractively in the literature of ancient Greece. There was a change in the ideals of life, a return to paganism, the Greek ideal of a full & satisfied humanity as a reaction from mediaeval asceticism. Progress displaced stability as the end to be achieved. ~~The~~ The enlarging mental outlook was further widened by the extension of the physical horizon during the age of geographical discovery that turned the outlook of Europe from the east, now barred by the Ottoman Turkish conquests, to the west, whither trade & commerce began to flow. This change was especially momentous to England, hitherto <sup>an</sup> a backwater, but now set as it were at the front door of Europe. But an even greater revolution in physical concepts was wrought by the astronomical discoveries of Copernicus which abolished - but not without a severe struggle - the geocentric view of the universe.

Yet cumulative as all these factors were in changing the environment they do not account for the Reformation & not even for the Renaissance. Something was at work to take advantage of these developments, something that would keep them developing. This was nothing less than the stirring of the human spirit, foreshadowed by the later developments of scholastic philosophy in the works of such men as Occam & Marsiglius & Wycliffe. It was a movement of the mind that called in question the Divine right of prescription & applied the methods of free inquiry to mediaeval ideas & institutions with damaging results. Beneath this new



intellectual ferment was a real soul-hunger, a craving for a really spiritual religion that the medieval Church failed to satisfy. It was not a mere revolt from asceticism, it was a religious revival one symptom of which was the longstanding & growingly urgent demand for reform of the church in head & members. <sup>When</sup> the conciliar movement failed to accomplish the reform, & the popes were too busy levying wars, collecting rents & patronising artists, to pay attention to this demand, the obvious abuses of the existing church system became more & more distressingly obvious to earnest souls and protests became more & more vocal as in the Holland movement. In many respects Wycliffe was the last of the schoolmen & the ~~first~~ forerunner of the Reformers. The Holland movement suffered a temporary eclipse but was never completely crushed & created the atmosphere in which made it possible for the Reformation to live.

The stage was set & the way was prepared for the Reformation when the movement was precipitated by such events as the recovery of the ~~original~~ Greek & Hebrew texts of Scripture to which the new learning was applied with such results as Erasmus edition of the Greek Testament which proved so useful to translators, the rendering of the Scriptures into the language of the people, & the new methods of study which treated the sacred books as living literature. The invention of printing came most opportunely to bring the new learning & the newly translated Scriptures into the reach of everyone who could read. This put a new weapon of criticism this time not into the hands of the learned so much as into the hands of those who could



barely read, & who read mainly in one book, the Bible. Lorenzo Valla & other humanists might destroy the documentary basis of papalism by demonstrating the forgeries of the Donation of Constantine & the Isidorian Decretals. But the plain man could now <sup>criticise</sup> the teaching he had hitherto had from the Church & that was a more fatal blow to the mediaeval system.

But even so the Reformation might not have come as it did but for two great personalities. I need not here dwell upon the contribution of Luther to the Reformation. It is enough to remind you that while his immediate influence was greatest in his own land it extended far beyond. Even those leaders like Zwingli & Calvin who set going a Reform movement of equal importance in certain directions & differed violently from Luther in some things, yet owed a great deal to him. This is especially true of the Reformation in England to which I shall devote most of my attention. The greatest spiritual leader in the English Reformation was an Englishman who did his greatest work in exile from his native land, William Tyndale. None of the leaders of the spiritual movement in England were men of Luther's stature nor men of Calvin's. The greatest personalities of the English Reformation were monarchs - Henry VIII & his daughter Elizabeth. Tyndale's dying prayer was prescient when he said "Lord, open the King of England's eyes".

The course of the English Reformation can be marked off into two main stages - the political, carried out by Henry VIII, & the doctrinal, begun under Henry Edward VI & finally secured by Elizabeth.

Both Henry & his daughter were amazing personalities & marvellous interpreters & leaders of national aspirations &



both were fully trusted by the bulk of their people.

Henry's break with Rome was <sup>precipitated</sup> caused by the failure of the Pope to solve his succession problem. His desire to marry Anne Boleyn was merely an incident in the situation. If he had not married her he would have had to marry someone else. The Pope had arranged such matters before for other kings, indeed he had arranged matters for Henry's first marriage, but he could not do it <sup>now as he was in the hands of Katherine's</sup> ~~at the time when it was needed~~ nephew. The Pope gave himself away by the length of his procrastination. I do not attempt to justify either Henry or the Pope but the divorce - whether the nullity - question was the occasion & not the cause of the break with Rome. The break was carried out in a strictly constitutional manner by the Long Parliament of the Reformation - by no means the slavish instrument of the Crown. In effect it was the re-assertion in more absolute form of a position the kings of England had always claimed, to be masters in their own house. It was simply declared that the Pope had no more jurisdiction in England than any other foreign bishop, & what was most galling, all payments to Rome were stopped & mostly transferred to the Crown, & the Church of England became once more a self-contained community. The dissolution of the monasteries was carried out because they were the last stronghold of papalism. The results of the dissolution were the reduction of a new nobility, of five new bishoprics & of some University Colleges & professorships and an <sup>augmentation</sup> ~~increase~~ of Crown property. It had little to do with the growth of capitalism which had appeared much earlier & arose from economic causes, mainly the large number of enclosures for sheeprearing.

But though Henry tried, apparently, to limit the changes



to the mode of governing the church, the said changes gave an impulse to the doctrinal reformation. The Ten Articles of 1536 & the Bishop's Book are indications of moving away from medieval standards though Henry issued the King's Book & Parliament passed the Act of Six Articles which were reactionary yet the Great Bible had been set up in churches & the Litany had been issued in English & there was a great ferment in the Universities, especially in Cambridge.

After Henry's death the doctrinal changes went on much more rapidly. The new nobility, collared the Council of Regency, foreign reformers e.g., Bucer, were appointed to positions in the Universities, and the Book of Common Prayer was published & enforced by an Act of Uniformity. The second edition of the Prayerbook was ~~much~~ much more Protestant in character & after the brief reaction under Mary which moved England more strongly towards reform Elizabeth adopted the restored the political system of her father & definitely adopted the second prayerbook of her brother. The publication of the Thirty-nine Articles fixed the doctrinal standard of the English Church on a Protestant basis which was further endorsed by Parker's advertisements, & unwittingly witnessed to by both Romanist reactionaries & Puritan radicals. The Elizabethan settlement soon created a taste for itself & was reaffirmed by the Caroline Divines at Restoration in 1662.

I have not attempted to trace the course of the Reformation in the various countries of the Continent because it took so many different forms in different countries & was far more ~~so~~ intricately complicated with politics than in England. The movement had a better opportunity to work out its own



Course in England, & also in Scotland, because it was far less subject to external political interference though it narrowly escaped such interference in both countries. That it did so escape was mainly due to the influence of political considerations. France & Spain, the eldest children of the mother church were too busy with their own quarrels to combine to crush the reformation movements in Germany, England & Scotland. The German princes found the Reformation movement a useful ally in their struggle to prevent the Emperor from asserting his overlordship & transforming it into a real monarchy. The Huguenots in France were able to secure their position so long as there was rivalry between the Crowns of France & Spain. When that rivalry practically ceased under Louis XIV. their position became finally untenable.

In England, then we can trace more clearly the gains & losses of the great Reformation as a spiritual movement though even ~~the~~ in England it <sup>became</sup> ~~was~~ involved in <sup>the current</sup> political controversies, especially the struggle between the Crown & Parliament during the Stuart period. But, the period when the Reformation was establishing itself in England the chief political issue involved was the assertion of English nationality against foreign domination & this is largely true of Scotland also. Hence its spiritual results can be more clearly traced in England & Scotland than in the other countries <sup>both</sup> because its success was more complete & because it was less entangled with conflicting political interests.



Let us then try to gauge the results of the Reformation as it worked itself out in the sphere of its greatest achievements. We may state them both negatively & positively & here of course judgments have differed, & the personal equation must come in.

On the negative side the Reformation was not a great mistake & breach of Catholicity unless we confuse Catholicity with external order. Latin Christianity is not truly Catholic <sup>though</sup> the terms are commonly regarded as synonymous. The Reformation was really a return to true Catholicity. The English reformers appealed to the original documents of the faith. Bishop Jewel worked out this argument in his famous apology & demonstrated that the Reformation was really a re-affirmation of the original standards of doctrine & worship from which the mediaeval Church had seriously departed.

Now, in spite of a good deal of loose talk about Erasmian was it a reduction of the Church into a department of the State. Elizabeth's objections to the Puritans were chiefly political because they ~~tried~~ criticised her policy & in her eyes were guilty of dividing the nation when unity of mind & action were imperatively necessary to ensure its very existence. Now would she press the penal laws against peaceful Roman Catholics. The English fleet that smashed the Spanish Armada was commanded by a Roman Catholic & officered & manned in no small measure by Puritans. John Calvin & John Knox were even more Erasmian than Elizabeth & so were the Stuart kings of England & Cromwell himself. The Reformation settlement on its political side was



almost a return to the old English system in which Church & State were different organs of one national life. This was certainly the Puritan idea as expressed in New England with the singular exception of Rhode Island. It is true that our modern denominationalism was as abhorrent to the Presbyterian as to the Anglican, <sup>more</sup> so in fact. But the Anglican was less concerned with doctrinal differences than with national unity, especially when national existence was in danger as we can see in the events leading to the Revolution of 1688.

Now again was the Reformation after despotism imposed upon an unwilling people. Henry VIII. had the substantial <sup>body</sup> part of the nation with him & so did Elizabeth. Neither sovereign had the usual instrument of despotism, a standing army. They ruled as real sovereigns because they were equal to their task & could always command the confidence of their people.

On the positive side the Reformation was a great movement. It had to make headway against a system claiming the Divine right of prescription, an organisation controlling a vast mass of vested interests, buttressed by superstition, and touching most closely the everyday life of the people & exercising an authority that extended into the dread region beyond the grave. The Church held vast possessions, monopolised learning & education, and the ideal of life & exercised the power of the keys over heaven & hell. As in some old world city, the great cathedral rises far above & dominates the fringe of dwellings below it so did the Church appear to the men of the middle ages. The men who launched &



carried through the Reformation moved against & away from forces & positions whose strength & magnitude are scarcely realisable by us & that is the measure of the greatness of their work, whether we approve or disapprove of what they did.

It was a step in the progress of mankind ~~that leads~~ <sup>in the</sup> along the path that leads to freedom for it meant the emancipation of the individual from the thralldom of priestcraft & superstition by the recovery of direct access to God through Jesus Christ alone. It was thus a return to the first principles of the Christian Gospel.

But this result was not achieved without blood & tears. There were losses as well as gains during the process.

The first & most obvious loss was the breach in the unity of Christendom. But this unity can be & has been grossly exaggerated. The papacy itself had suffered from schisms not once nor twice. There had been conflicts between different powers & different parties in the church during the period of alleged unity. Pope & Emperor had fought each other, & Charles V. the champion of the church against the Reformers was no friend of the Pope. His troops sacked Rome in 1527 & did more damage than any since the Vandals. There was no love lost between regular & secular clergy, nor between the monastic & mendicant orders. The Reformation got its chance in Germany because the Emperor had to fight the most Catholic King of France, & clashed also with the Pope in Italy & with the princes in Germany. Yet with all these



quarrels & conflicts. The idea of a united Christendom was visibly symbolised by the Papal supremacy & the Reformation broke that unity by revolting against that supremacy & establishing independent self-governing groups who incurred the reproach of schism & could hardly refute it. The unity of Western Christendom was broken in fact & idea.

The swing of the pendulum from mediaevalism ~~the~~ produced the inevitable extravagances of reaction. We have not only the Anabaptist orgies at Münster and similar outbreaks of wild licence & unregulated fanaticism, but we have even among the <sup>more</sup> sober reformers a bewildering variety of doctrine & practice, the spectacle of an "unholy" Church, though there were considerable varieties of custom & ritual in ~~the~~ mediaeval Christendom. But in the enthusiasm of revolt there was much destruction & casting away of what was not merely barless but even laudable & useful. Bishop Hooper refused to wear the Babylonish garments of his episcopal office, the Puritans "scrupled the habit", that is, they objected to the square cap & the surplice, to the ring in marriage & the sign of the cross in baptism. There was a good deal of destruction & damage done in churches. All this was done to the desire to be rid of anything that ~~had~~ <sup>carried</sup> any associations with the former ways, often enough without any discrimination.

This sort of thing greatly exacerbated the controversies that arose over doctrinal differences. Feelings ran high. The persecuting policy of the later mediaeval Church reverberated upon those who stood by the mediaeval customs & ideas, &



There was not only the dust & heat of controversy but the drastic changes & upsetting of the former order gave scope & opportunity for unquiet spirits & the disorderly elements of society to run riot & increase the confusion. There was much odium theologicum & in violence of language there was not much to choose between the two sides. ~~St~~ Sir Thomas More's language epithets that he hurled at Lindale's translation are scarcely in keeping with the character usually ascribed to him & the language of the Puritan tracts was a match for that used by the mediaevalists. Among Anglican writers Richard Hooker is conspicuous by the moderation & restraint of his style - he is indeed the "judicious Hooker". It took some time for the Reformers to learn & give practical expression to the lesson that intolerance was grossly inconsistent with their fundamental position, but we must also bear in mind that in the early stages at least they were literally fighting for their lives. Persecution may purify the Church but its effects & reactions are not altogether lovely & are apt to continue for a considerable time. It was all part of the price that was paid for the success of the Reformation movement.

A more permanent limit to the success of the Reformation was the tendency to treat its imperfect beginnings as final solutions. It was asserted that as the Reformation was a return to primitive faith & order it was itself as finally authoritative as any papacy ever claimed to be. The revolution of yesterday became the conservative of today. The Reformers had recovered the faith once for all delivered to the saints



became  
and ~~was~~ as suspicious & intolerant of further developments  
as the Latin Church. While denying the authority of one  
tradition the Reformers set up another & were as jealous  
of departures therefrom as any sacerdotalist. "New  
presbyter was but old priest with large" wittily said  
Milton & there was much truth in his remark. In their  
anxiety to set up one authority against another they gave  
an absolute supremacy to scriptures of a kind that led  
them into serious difficulties of interpretation when  
faced with a demand for authority and above all the  
supreme difficulty of reconciling liberty of interpretation  
with fixed formulae of doctrine necessary to salvation.

Many of the Reformers themselves were quite prepared  
to place the "open Bible" freely in the hands of the  
people at large in the sublime faith that the  
Reformed interpretation & formulation of its teaching  
would commend itself to candid investigators. But  
later generations were not so open-minded &  
assigned to the Reformers an infallibility they  
would have been the first to disown. The Reformation  
was worshipped as a fetish by large numbers who  
did not really understand its principles but who  
were looking for the kind of final infallible  
authority that the Reformation had really discredited.  
Meaning has already been made of the political exploitation  
from which the Reformation suffered & the temptation  
to which some earnest Reformers succumbed to use  
worldly weapons in spiritual warfare. This became  
painfully evident in the wars of religion that devastated



many parts of Europe, such as The Thirty Years' war made a desert of much of Germany. It began as a struggle for religious security against the progress of the Counter Reformation, it ended as a phase of the dynastic struggle of Hapsburg & Bourbon complicated by the Swedish ambition to dominate the shores of the Baltic & the desire of France to ~~reach~~ reach the Rhine.

But such political complications were not peculiar to the Reformation. Though they cut short its spiritual triumphs. When we look at the Reformation movement as a whole we can ascribe its losses to the human limitations of its agents & recognise them as the outcome of heavenly truth being contained & conveyed in earthen vessels.

There is also another side to the picture. We can reckon solid gains from the Reformation & can assert that they far outweigh the losses.

Who can estimate the influence of the "open Bible" not only on literature & education but on the ideals & conduct of the people who were able now to study the Scriptures for themselves in their own tongue? We have all read & appreciated the great description of J.R. Green in his Short History of the English People of the influence that the Bible exerted. ~~as~~ Luther & Lindale were not only spiritual leaders but the founders of great literatures. Second only to the ~~the~~ English Bible has been the English Prayerbook as a formative & educative influence. It was an immense gain to have an "open service" conducted in a language "understanded of the people." It



did away <sup>with</sup> ~~for~~ the necessity for elaborate ceremonial & made the people partners rather than spectators in public worship.

The Reformation also brought a purer faith & the open Bible freely interpreted served as test & corrective of ~~to~~ errors that had formerly found easy entrance. It ~~It especially tended to check the undue~~ <sup>extensive</sup> ~~multiplication~~ ~~& development of points as in]~~ was not so easy to impose new doctrines as necessary to salvation when the people had in their own hands the standard by which they were to be tried. It is quite true that an open Bible gives room for great variety of interpretation & fanciful developments but it also supplies the necessary corrective. In this way the Reformation was a great step towards religious liberty while it enabled men to return to primitive standards of doctrine & principles of worship & conduct. Above all it swept away all the satellites who had crowded out the figure of Jesus from the minds of men & set Him more clearly in the foreground as the Saviour of all men to whom every individual had the right of direct approach.

In this way the Reformation was a return to real Catholicity for it recognised the real unity of Christendom to be found in personal devotion to Jesus Christ as the Eternal Head of the Church which is the company of all faithful people.

Furthermore, Latin Christianity is not truly Catholic. The first four general councils give a more nearly Catholic standard than the Council of Trent.



The movement towards liberty & the direct approach to God gave a great impulse to individuality & a more virile tone to national character, as may be seen from ~~the~~ a comparison of the subsequent history of Spain & Britain.

Last & by no means least the Church was eventually released from the main pressure of secularism by making religion more personal & ethical & less a demonstration of external power manifested in pomp & circumstance. The Church gave up the attempt to rule the world and was <sup>now</sup> set free to perform ~~its~~ its proper spiritual function. The Reformation led to a readjustment of the relations between Church & State. The modern state has its hands too full to interfere in Church affairs though it still retains the last word in questions where property, or other vested interests are involved.

Finally it is in countries where the Reformation prevails that political liberty was first secured & national development received its strongest impulses. Modern democracy owes a tremendous debt to the Reformation, but whether democracy is the final form of human society is a question no one can answer for it is a problem that is still being worked out.