PROTESTANT REFORMATION

LEADERS

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CONTENTS

PETER WALDO OF FRANCE

c.1140-1217

We are accustomed to thinking of the Protestant Reformation as a fifteenth century revolt within the Roman Catholic Church when Luther and Calvin successfully challenged her supremacy. Yet the Church was never without its heretics, would-be reformers, minor sects, and dissenting parties. Some of these retained their identity within the Roman Church while others were outlawed and often persecuted. Some represented fanatic extremes of theology or church polity. Others were genuine attempts to correct the errors and abuses of the Church. Peter Waldo represents one of the highest type of pre-Reformation dissenting groups. Our information about him is meagre and comes largely from his arch-enemies in the Catholic Church. In spite of initial major faults and flaws in the movement which he organized, he has often been "glamorized" in the popular eye by attempts to interpret his character in the light of later developments in the Waldensian movement rather than by what we actually know of him.

What did Waldo see in the Roman Catholic Church which caused him to react against it? He saw a Church in which the Roman pope was now supreme. At the end of the sixth century, Gregory the Great had become the first real pope. From this time until Pope Gregory VII (1050), the chaos and confusion of the "Dark Ages" had gradually shaped up into the or-

ganization of a new society. . From the time of Gregory VII to that of Boniface VIII at the end of the thirteenth century, the Middle Ages were in their glory and at their height.

> To this, their creative period, belong all those magnificent births which they have bequeathed, some to the admiration, and all to the wonder, of the after world--the Crusades, the rise of Gothic Architecture, the Universities, the Schoolmen, the Mystics, the Mendicant Orders. To this belongs the struggle, so grand and so terrible, between the world-king and the world-priest, the Emperor and the Pope, with the triumph, complete though temporary, of the latter, and thus to this also belongs the Papacy in the most towering heights to which it ever ascended.[1]

You would not speak of the fall of the Middle Ages, would you? - decline and fall of it

From Boniface VIII until the Reformation there was a steady decline and fall of the Middle Ages. Waldo lived near the

early flow of a culture of the Middle Ages perhaps

end of the second and most glorious period of the Middle Ages; he saw the Church at her height; he also could see the temporal and material strength rather than the eternal and spiritual qualities which should mark the Church. His life coincides with that of Pope Innocent III who, in spite of a high standard of personal morality, raised the papacy to its pinnacle of temporal power and splendor. Symbolic of the state of the Church is the fact that this was the age of the great Crusades, when in the name of the Church fabulous sums were spent, and thousands of lives lost, and wild brutalities and immoralities justified and condoned. By offering the absolution of sins for participation in the crusades, the popes spurred Christendom to fanatical zeal while thus promoting

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[1] Trench, Lectures on Medieval Church History. p.216.

one of the most insidious of all Romish practices.

The most obvious quality of the Church which Waldo would see was its worldliness. He was not alone in this observation; nor was he the last one to make it. Within the Church there was constant objection to the accumulation of riches, the lust for power, the construction of vast palaces, the luxurious and scandalous living within the Church. Through moneys received for granting absolution of sin and the sale of indulgences, from the sale of sacred relics, from the receipt of tithes which amounted almost to taxation, and from large tax-free estates, the Church was piling up enormous wealth which became the root of much evil. Princes were jealous of this wealth; the pious saw little in its accumulation and the abuses to which it led which could compare with the Biblical conception of the true Church.

> The wealth of the Church, however proportionate to the extent of its functions, was the chief source of heresy in this age... The Bogomiles, the Waldenses, the Paterines, the Cathari made headway by denouncing the wealth of the followers of Christ.[2]

St. Bernard and St. Frances and hundreds of humble monks and priests sought to do away with the emphasis of the church upon temporal power and material wealth. There was a long stream of men, branded as heretics, who reacted fanatically against these things. Heretics were driven under-ground and operated as subversives. During the decades immediately preceeding the life of Peter Waldo, such groups were growing and

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2 Durant, The Age of Faith.p. 767.

active in France, northern Italy and Germany and were exciting the alarm of the Church. In the ninth century Claude of Turin had started a movement which was still alive after three centuries and was cherished by groups such as the Vaudois in their Alpine valleys. Most famous of these leaders was Arnold of Brescia who was burned at the stake in 1155. Waldo appeared at a moment when a strong leader was in a position to forge these dissenting Christians into a strong organization. While not strictly their founder, he does deserve the credit for initiating the Waldensian movement in its historic role.

Peter Waldo was a rich merchant of Lyons, in southern France. He later claimed that his wealth was based on "sinful usury." One tale states that in the famine year 1171, Waldo heard a minstrel singing an old Poem of St. Alexis who had given away his property, taken a pilgrimage to Palestine, and thereby won inner peace. Waldo consulted a theologian the next day as to how he could find his way to God most easily and quickly. He received the answer of Jesus to the rich young man, "Go and sell all you have and give to the poor, and come follow me," whereupon Waldo immediately attempted to fulfill these words literally. Another tale declares that he was so shocked by the sudden death of a friend at his table that he was driven to renounce worldly wealth. Still another tale traces his spiritual experience to the fact that he engaged some scholars to translate the Gospels into French. From this translation and the vernacular versions of other books of the Bible which

he obtained, he became convinced that poverty and abstenance from all worldliness was the pathway he should walk. Possibly all these tales are true. They indicate a disposition favorable to religion and waiting for confirmation by some such experience.

The merchant of Lyons at once sold his property, giving it away to those he had formerly wronged, or to charity, or simply flinging it into the streets. He sent his two daughters to a convent, and gave his house to his wife, who does not seem to have shared his ideas and was scandalized by his practice of begging for food. In an attempt to fulfill literally what he thought the Bible teaches, he began to preach evangelical poverty in the streets of Lyon. A group of followers known as the "Poor Men of Lyons" gathered about him. They dressed like the monks, going barefoot or in sandals. They practiced chastity and pooled their earnings. They found their way into homes and into the country about Lyons.

> Waldo had no intention of putting himself in opposition to the Church, of being a Reformer in any other sense than St. Francis or St. Bernard was a Reformer, a quickener, that is, and reviver of the Church's spiritual life. His protest was against practical mischiefs, against negligences and omissions of duty on their part who should have taught the people, and did not. Doctrinal protest at this time there was none.[3]

In many respects this was the starting point in the careers of many, if not most, of the Reformers.

Waldo was allowed freedom for only a short while.

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[3] Trench, Op. cit., p. 252.

Soon the Church grew suspicious of the movement. It resented the earnest character of Waldo's followers. Their strict adherence to poverty and rules of morality were blameless but nevertheless threw into sharp relief the current practices of the clergy. Furthermore, Waldo and his followers became expert in reciting the Scripture. While their ignorance freed them from the maze of interpretation the Medieval scholars had evolved around the Scriptures, nevertheless the lessons they drew stung too many consciences. The Archbishop of Lyons in 1178 forbade the preaching of the Poor Men. In spite of Waldo's replies, in which he quoted "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel" and "We ought to obey God rather than men," the Archbishop forced the Poor Men out of the city.

They scattered in all directions, many of them uniting with other groups of kindred spirit. Waldo found his way into the Cottian Alps and settled in Waldensian territory where the teachings of earlier heretics were already cherished. Waldo still hoped to work within the Church, and the following year he appeared at the Third Lateran Council armed with copies of the Waldensian Scriptures. He asked Pope Alexander III to establish an Order with permission to preach. Instead the council ridiculed the Poor Men for their poverty and ignorance. In an examination conducted by Walter Map, a learned Welshman, the Poor Men failed conspicuously. Their learning was based on the Bible and little else, hence they quickly fell into traps set by these scholars. They were forbidden by the council to

continue to preach, unless the local clergy consented, but their sincerity and piety seem to have at least freed them temporarily from more stringent measures which the Church often took against heretics.

Even without the required authorization, the Poor Men under Waldo continued to preach, citing the words of James as their authorization: "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Under persecution and restriction the movement grew more reactionary. It

> took on an antisacerdotal tinge, rejected all priesthood, denied the validity of sacraments administered by a sinful priest, and attributed to every believer in a state of sanctity the power to forgive sins. Some members repudiated indulgences, purgatory, transubstantiation, and prayer to the saints; one group preached that 'all things should be held in common;' another identified the Church with the scarlet woman of the Apocalpse.[4]

Inevitably, the Church took stronger measures and at the council of Verona in 1183, the Waldenses were condemned and excommunicated by the highest authority of the church, thus putting them into the same category with the Cathari and other heretics.

From this time on it is impossible to follow the movements of Peter Waldo, although he undoubtedly remained the strong and vigorous leader of the sect he had formed. He and his followers were repeatedly called to debate with Church leaders, and charged with daring to preach although they were only laymen. Nevertheless their propaganda spread, particularly into the industrial guilds of the cities. Both men and women preached.

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[4] Durant, Op. cit., p. 770.

Everywhere the Bible was text book, law book, and code of morals. They found kindred spirits in the scores of small anti-Catholic sects already existing. Undoubtedly their emphasis on the Scripture served to strengthen the spiritual and moral character of these groups, and also to widen the breach between them and the Roman Catholic Church.

The popularity of their teachings is evident from a record of the edicts and bans pronounced by the Church authorities against Waldensians during this period. These were issued by officials from Spain to Bohemia. Persecution increased, though just how many suffered we cannot know. In 1211 eighty of the so-called heretics were burned at Strasburg. Seeing that the methods of his predecessors had failed, Innocent III sponsored the organization of a society within the Church which would embody as much ~~would embody as much~~ of Waldo's original teachings as the church could allow. This "Order of Poor Catholics" was founded in 1209 and did succeed in drawing back into the Church many of the Waldensians. Had such a step been taken when Waldo first appeared before the Third Lateran Council, his movement might have been reconciled to the Church from the start. Now it was too late and at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, Innocent III had to repeat the common ban against Waldensians and other heretical groups.

Since the Church branded all these groups at once, their teachings have sometimes become confounded. The Cathari (including the Albigenses, near neighbors of the Waldenses) ad-

hered to many real doctrinal errors. They divided the cosmos into Good, God, Spirit, Heaven, and Evil, Satan, Matter and the material universe. Consequently all matter and the flesh is evil. They rejected the Old Testament and the Sacraments, and denied the real crucifixion of Christ, and the resurrection of the body. The Waldenses did hold many radical and extreme views during this formative period, but it is unfair to accuse them of all the errors of these other sects.

> For them the Church of Rome was a Church which had grievously fallen away from the purity of the faith, --which had overlaid the truth with numerous errors; but they did not deny that souls were saved in her, did not regard themselves so much a Church apart, as rather the sound kernal of the Church. Seeing that they attended divine offices in Catholic churches when they were permitted so to do, that their children were baptized by Catholic priests, that they received the Holy Communion at their hands, --of all which there is abundant proof, --it is plain that in their sight Rome had not as a Church absolutely forfeited her right to this name.[5]

We do not know the place and date of Waldo's death. A tradition says he died in Bohemia but this is not substantiated. Certainly his teachings penetrated Bohemia and many followers of John Huss in later years were those already prepared by Waldensian teachings. The date of his death is approximately determined by a curious incident. As far back as 1179 another group in Lombardy, known as the Humiliate, had joined the Waldensians. Although they were an older organization, they were attracted to Waldo and recognized him as their leader.

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[5] Trench, Op. cit., p. 255.

But in 1210 there was a rupture between the two groups caused by Waldo's insistence that the Lombards dissolve their associations of laborers. Until this time Waldo held the government of the entire group in his hands. He was regarded as bishop and supervising head of the movement. In 1218 the two groups tried to reunite, but failed to agree on the eucharist and whether Waldo was then in paradise. The latter point indicates that Waldo was now dead, and the date of his death is usually placed in 1217.

How much credit can be given Waldo for the organization and system of religious life he left behind we do not know. Perhaps the movement of which he is regarded as the head, is best appraised by observing both its errors and truths, its weaknesses and strength, its failures and its victories. At first through ignorance the Waldensians fell victims of error, of extremes, and to literal interpretation of the Bible. It is unfair to ascribe to them the same doctrines they had developed by the time of the Reformation. Their doctrine, so far as it went, reflected the tone of James' Epistle more than those of Paul.

> They placed the stress upon following the practice of the Apostles and obeying the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, and they did not know the definition which Luther put on the word 'justification.' They approached more closely to an opinion now current among Protestants when they said, righteousness is found only in good men and good women.[6]

They placed little emphasis on the death of Christ as a redemptive act and made little mention of the atonement. There were

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[6] Schaff, History of the Christian Church Vol. V, Part I, p. 501.

~~There were~~ doctors within the medieval Church who very much surpassed the Waldensians in setting forth the "doctrines of grace."[7]

Schaff[8] points out the following features of the Waldensian system: (1) They emphasized daily conduct as summed up in the words of the Apostles, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (2) They encouraged the popular use of the Scriptures which they regarded as their supreme authority. (3) They regarded preaching as of supreme importance and insisted on the right of laymen (men and women) exercising this function. (4) They insisted that it was spiritual endowment, or merit and not the Church's ordination which gave the right to bind and loose, to consecrate and bless. The Waldensians produced no great theologians or organizers or literature, but exerted their quiet influence through strict adherence to the rule of poverty, and emphasis upon the Scriptures. Probably it was the idea of giving the Bible to common people in their own tongue which gives Waldo his claim to greatness, and started his movement on the path which eventually, through increased understanding of the Scripture, was ready to actively participate in the Reformation two centuries later.

The subsequent story of the Waldensians is one of the great sagas of Church history. In Southern France the Waldensians were included in crusades against heretics, but they did not suffer nearly so much as the neighboring Albigenses, and it

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[7] Trench, Op. cit., p. 260. [8] Schaff, Op. cit., p. 502ff.

was not until a century after Waldo that a Waldensian in this region was martyred. The same was true of the Alpine regions. In Austria and Germany the group grew to many thousands in the fourteenth century so that papal inquisitors were sent to put down the heresies. It was not until the end of the fifteenth century that the Waldensians were unmercifully persecued when the Pope called upon Charles VIII of France and the Duke of Savoy to exterminate them. They were forced back further into the mountains and suffered terrible hardships. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, after they had accepted the Reformation, they suffered from even more atrocious massacres. Yet in the protected valleys of the Alps they stood fast, enduring persecutions and poverty. They stood, a monument to Waldo's principle of allegiance to the Word of God, a basic tenet which they kept alive for the day when leaders with the same spirit as Waldo, but with superior gifts and training, would appear to bring such freedom to all of Europe.

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John Wyclif of England

(c. 1324-1384)

> In the Middle Ages a scholar who thought out any idea to its conclusion was bound sooner or later to come up against the Church, either in defence or attack.[1]

John Wyclif was just such a scholar. Yet unlike many of his colleagues who retracted their opinions when they saw the consequences, the English Reformer shaped and sharpened his dogmas amid the fires of controversy. He was a scholar and theological professor, yet, particularly in his later years, he drew close to the common man and felt the yearning of the human soul for the fountain of living water. Although on several occasions he was in the spotlight of great public events, by and large his efforts were confined to the university classroom, and parish church, and, supremely, to laborious and voluminous writing. He became the leader of a strong movement to lift Christian faith and life out of the scandalous state into which it had fallen in England.

Due to its insular position, England was often the Pope's problem-child. He and the English king vied with each other to impose their tyranny on the land. The conquest of England in 1066 by William the Conqueror tended to make him and his immediate successors all-supreme. But a century later the clergy began to dominate the government, and the

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[1] Herbert B. Workman, John Wyclif. Vol. II, p. 3.

papal legates were for a period able to drain England of vast fortunes. The people groaned but the kings were helpless. But gradually the nobility of England awoke to the situation, and in the time of Wyclif, the pope was beginning to lose his control. Wyclif became a strong contender for the separation of church and state, and his own apparent immunity in an age when heretics were usually burned was due not only to the large following he had among pious people, but also to strong forces in the government who could use him to attain political independence ~~of~~ from the pope. As was often the case with Reformation leaders, Wyclif was involved in a three-way struggle between the Church, the State, and his own attempts at spiritual and moral reform of all society.

There was nothing sensational about the life of John Wyclif, and his best biographers have had to depend on scanty sources and conjecture to fill in many of the details. His father was a country squire in Yorkshire, an area often raided by the Scots. John was born about 1324, but details of his boyhood are lacking. In later years his family must have regarded him as the "black-sheep" and sought to obliterate records of his home life. The modern reader finds himself in a quaint and now all but forgotten society as he studies the life of Wyclif. Arriving at the University of Oxford, now already a century old, in the year 1345, the boy was faced with the prospect of half a life-time of study.

The surprising thing is that anyone stayed alive in

those days. Travel was dangerous due to highway robbers. Riots between "town" and "gown" (the university and the townspeople) were frequent and bloody. The total lack of sanitation in this university town rivalled that of the most backward areas of the world today. Little wonder that the Black Death which reached England in 1347 wiped out tens of thousands, including many at Oxford. But Wyclif toiled on, gaining his Master's degree in 1361 and finally his doctorate in 1372, twelve years before his death. All but a few years of his life were spent at the university as a student and teacher. He attained renown as a scholar and teacher. Even when his heresy was beyond doubt, his enemies feared to cross swords with him in debate, recognizing him as a giant among scholars of his day.

After completing his master's degree at Balliol he must have lived at Fillingham for about two years where he served as a priest. At this time he determined to continue work toward his doctorate and secured permission for non-residence in his parish. In addition he was granted a "prebend" in York. A "prebend" entitled him to the stated income from this parish. It is one of the ironies of his life that the reformer, who in later years spoke out so positively against the holding of several offices at once, apparently did so himself, resorting to the custom of the day of farming out the actual duties to "vicars" (substitutes) for a third or fourth of the amount he received for holding the "prebend."

Yet in his absence, Wyclif seems to have been more conscientious than most contempories about providing these vicars, and it was only as he gained in experience that he detected the abuses to which such a system was open. It is a tribute to his honesty that he who had much to gain by the practice financially, revolted against it.

He now re-entered Queen's College at Oxford. At this time he secured the prebend of Aust and the collegiate church in Westbury. He has been accused, perhaps justly, of neglecting some of these parishes, and if he did he was simply conforming to what 99% of the clerics in those days were doing. War and pestilence had killed off the supply of vicars, and it may have been impossible at this time to fill all these positions. Not long after entering Queens he became warden of Canterbury Hall, an office which he soon lost due to intrigue on the part of the former warden. Wyclif appealed the case to the pope, but when the verdict was handed down some four years later he found he had lost the case, probably because of his growing criticism of the practices of the Church. Meanwhile he continued to hold several prebends at various places and did not suffer financially.

A second irony in the life of Wyclif was his brief but spectacular fling at politics. He later criticized severely clergymen who held public office. Shortly before receiving his doctorate, Wyclif entered the service of the Crown. We do not know just why he did this. He was committed already

to a doctrine of disestablishment, and probably felt that the only way to bring this about was to fling himself into the fray. For his services he was appointed to the rectory of Lutterworth, which he held until his death. The English government was now eyeing enviously the tax-free church estates. Wyclif would be interested in this battle for he was already objecting to this situation.

Doubtless his reputation as the outstanding theologian of Oxford was the reason he was appointed, probably as theological advisor, to the conference in Bruges between emissaries of England and the pope. This conference must be understood against the contemporary scene. At an extremely humiliating moment in England's history, King John had been forced to agree to pay an annual tribute to the pope. English kings had not paid this for forty years, and the pope now demanded payment. The sum was not large, but England's pride and self-respect were at stake. This was the period of the papal exile at Avignon. The pope was a tool of the French. Ever since 1346 the French and English had been engaged in the sporadic skirmishes now known as the hundred year's war. Naturally the English government was not enthusiastic about paying tribute under such circumstances. Prominent in the struggle was the powerful son of Edward III, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. He was an ambitious and unprincipled man, but his common dislike of current church wealth, although stemming from entirely different motives, made John

of Gaunt and John Wyclif partners. Admitedly Wyclif was somewhat inconsistent in teaming up with such a character against the practice of clerics in secular jobs and against absenteeism. But John of Gaunt seems to have remained grateful to Wyclif for his part in this struggle. As for the mission to Bruges in 1374, it amounted to little and Wyclif's part was almost nothing, since he was soon shoved aside. He probably became disgusted with the whole affair and soon returned to Oxford, while a second mission, in which Gaunt played a prominent part, made a shameful deal with the pope which virtually amounted to dividing the spoils of the English ecclesiastical estates and revenues.

Thoroughly disillusioned, Wyclif returned to the University and his work at Lutterworth. The government under Edward III had fallen into a bad state of corruption, but Wyclif must have taken heart as the "Good Parliament" early in 1376 sought to reform government and church alike, complaining most bitterly because a fourth of the national revenue was leaving the country to fill the pope's coffers. But all reforms were nullifed when the crown prince suddenly died, leaving John of Gaunt supreme again, for the king was now dying. Wyclif's increasingly powerful sermons and books denouncing the clergy and the monasteries for worldliness and ommission of the spiritual obligations of the ministry, and his demands that England break off her financial ties with Rome, meant that the Roman Church was increasingly anxious to

curb him. In 1377 the strongest bishops of England called Wyclif before them to forbid his anti-Church program. But before the session had scarcely begun, John of Gaunt strode forward to liberate the Reformer. A riot broke out during which Gaunt's palace was pillaged, not so much because of the ecclesiastical quarrel but because of an attempt by the king to take the government of London away from the citizens. Tension was eased by the news that Edward III had died and his grandson, Richard II, was now king, thus largely offsetting the prominence and power of John of Gaunt.

Enemies at the papal court now succeeded in turning that pontiff against Wyclif. In 1377 no less than five bulls were sent to England, urging the Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London to put an end to the Reformer's activities. Yet such was his popularity and political position, that nothing came of these efforts. Once again the "three-way" nature of the controversy is evident:

> England in the next two hundred years attempted to crush out heresy, as we see in the later history of the Lollards. But the attempt was made by using the ecclesiastical courts and the statute law of the realm, never once by means of the papal inquisition or by papal warrant.[2]

Fear of treachery caused Wyclif to refuse to appear before the bishops at St. Paul's early in 1378. But a few months later he did appear before them at Lambeth. This trial was reduced to a farce by the intervention of the queen-mother and a popu-

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[2] Ibid., Vol. I, p. 295.

lar demonstration of the Londoners. The demand that he be sent to Rome were not pushed and the proceedings ended with a feeble order not to promulgate heresy any more. Wyclif's powerful defense had completely won the day. The position of the bishops was weakened by the death of the pope and the start of the papal schism in 1378, which established Urban VI as pope in Rome and Clement VII in Avignon. Wyclif simply ignored the summons to Rome, arguing poor health, but actually secure in the knowledge of his popular support.

The reformer now turned his attention from things political to things theological, so that 1378 proved a turning point in his career. He now began to question the Roman doctrine of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, advancing to much the position that Luther later took. It was not so much the position at which he eventually arrived as his attack upon the idea of transubstantiation which aroused his enemies. At the same time the papal schism made the whole idea of the papacy utterly contemptible in his eyes. His contempt extended to the monks and friars whom he charged "with 'drawing' men to church by 'gay windows and colors and paintings and baboonery.'" In his fury he went to great extremes, even condeming the singing in the churches. He protested too against the striving for power and position between the bishops who attained advancement through wealthy women about the court, whom they had pleased as "dancers or trippers on carpets." Perhaps his strongest words were against pluralism and absen-

teeism, both of which he had been guilty of himself, but now realized them as curses upon the Church. Richard II engaged at this time in a foolish crusade in Flanders against the French at the instigation of the Roman pope who authorized the use of indulgences to finance the campaign. This further opened Wyclif's eyes to the spiritual degeneracy of the papacy.

In 1381 the peasant classes revolted. Since Wyclif was somewhat of a rebel himself and had lead a growing anti-Catholic movement, he was charged with having something to do with the rebellion, but the real cause lay in the pitiful condition of the people. War, famine and plague had killed off many. Laborers received only "starvation wages" and the imposition of a much hated poll-tax was enough to set off the rebellion already seething in so many hearts. It was a conflict between capital and labor. One of the leaders of the revolt was captured, and under torture confessed to being a follower of Wyclif, a charge which immediately put the reformer in a difficult position. Although John of Gaunt was not supporting him any longer, Wyclif's enemies do not seem to have seriously pressed charges against him for responsibility in the revolt. As a matter of fact they were never able to press charges against him on moral and legal grounds for (in marked contrast to these enemies) Wyclif's conduct was irreproachable. Wyclif, unlike Luther under similar circumstances, seems to have sympathized with the need for social reform, and after the rebellion was quashed, urged leniency and redress for their wrongs.

Controversy at Oxford had been developing during these years. It reached its conclusion at a council called by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1382. This was the final manuever of the Oxford friars, long-time rivals of Wyclif, to oust him from the University. At this "Blackfriar's Synod" a distinguished group of church-men and scholars drew up charges against Wyclif from his writings. These statements were declared heretical. The Archbishop ordered the chancelor of the University to take proper action. The latter resisted, on the grounds that this infringed on the liberties of the University, but he finally yielded to pressure when called to a second meeting of the synod. Consequently Wyclif was forced to leave the University. Although several of his friends were excommunicated, it is a tribute to the power, the patriotism, the brilliance and the piety of Wyclif that the Archbishop never pressed such means against the ring-leader himself. He was allowed freedom for the two years until his death in 1384. Shortly after leaving Oxford he was struck with paralysis and later died of a stroke while celebrating the mass in his church.*

In this account we have intentionally left to the end three great contributions of this man which make him justly famous: (1) His writings, (2) The English Bible, (3) The Lollard movement.

(1) It would be impossible to review all the writings of Wyclif. He produced a prodigious amount of work. Fiery

*Several decades later, (1428) the body of Wyclif was disintered, burned, and his ashes thrown into the ~~Thames~~ Swift. River. Hence, he too, joined the noble company of the martyrs of the Church.

pamphlets, ponderous theological tomes, as well as lectures and sermons flowed from his busy pen. Some were in Latin, some in English. Much of this work dealt with current struggles in which he was involved, and have little value today. Nor was it widely circulated in England. It was in Bohemia to which his books, readily understood in the common Latin medium, were taken by Bohemian scholars who came to England when Richard II married a Bohemian princess. There they were devoured by scholars including John Huss who carried on the reformation there.

that his writings exerted wide influence.

(2) Wyclif is popularly considered the first translator of the Bible into English. Whether this work was his own, or that of his followers (as Workman claims) the fact remains that he at least sponsored the work. As Wyclif grew more disgusted with the practices and dogmas of the church, he turned to the Bible. This not only widened his rift with the church but caused him to see that if the Bible were widely read, Christians would not put up with the papacy and all that it stood for. Hence he urged the reading of the Bible which he and his friends translated between 1380 and 1384. Parts of the Bible had been previously translated but this was a complete translation. As such it contributed not only to all future English Bible translations, but also to the formation of modern English itself. Strangely enough, the lists of errors for which Wyclif was condemned at various times never included his translation of the Bible. Yet this wide

It worked in vain to point out however that his Bible was condemned, and that the English people were forbidden to read it; that no other translation of the English was made until the Reformation

knowledge of the Bible eventually resulted in the growth of a genuine reformation in England.

(3) As early as the year 1377 Wyclif began to send out his "poor preachers" who "in the highways and byways" and by the village greens and graveyards, sometimes even in the churches should denounce abuses, proclaim the true doctrine of the Eucharist, and teach the right thinking from which, as he deemed, right living would follow. In this Wyclif was like many leaders before and after who have resorted to this means to bring true religion to the people. These itinerant preachers were soon given the name of "Lollards." For centuries, in spite of severe persecution which often threatened to extinguish them, they continued to bring a spiritual ministry to England. In this way the life and work of John Wyclif survived down to the days of the Puritans and the Reformation, and, in a sense, lives on today.

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JOHN HUSS OF BOHEMIA

c.1373-1415.

> It is doubtful, if we except the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, whether the forward movement of religious enlightenment and human freedom have been advanced as much by the sufferings and death of any single man as by the death of Huss.*

This Bohemian preacher dramatically high-lighted the period of restlessness and dissatisfaction which marked the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Reformation. John Huss represents the growing rift between simple God-fearing people and the totalitarian Church during the three centuries prior to Luther's Reformation in Germany. He spoke out powerfully the words which thousands of humble folk in his day longed to hear, but could not hear, or thought, but could not express as he did. By his martyrdom in the presence of perhaps the greatest congress of political, scholastic and ecclesiastical celebrities the world has ever seen, John Huss eloquently championed the cause of truth, and purity, and devotion for which he had lived. Unlike many of the Church-men of his day, including the Reformers, the character of Huss stands out for its integrity of character, spotless personal morality, and singular spirituality. In more than one way, his life resembles that of Jesus Christ whom he sought to imitate. Like the Gospel accounts of his Master, so the bulk of

* Schaff, p. 2.

biographical material about Huss centers about the days of his final trial and death.

John Huss was born about the year 1373, in southern Bohemia, of humble peasant parents. In this frontier environment, he caught the tensions between peasants and nobles, between rich German colonists and the Church they represented and the less-priviliged Czech nationals. His parents sent him to grammar school and then to the University of Prague, about the year 1389. In this capital of Bohemia he found himself in one of the great Mediaeval centers of education. He did not distinguish himself as a student but seems to have indulged in normal harmless amusements (and even pranks). He was so poor that he claimed later to have made a spoon out of bread with which to eat his peas and then ate the spoon as well. In spite of a low moral tone of the age and in the university itself, Huss established a reputation for morality and piety. During the Jubilee year (1393) in Prague he demonstrated his piety by spending his last four pennies to purchase a pardon by buying an indulgence.

Apparently he was still in perfect accord with the religious practices and doctrines of his day, although the atmosphere of accademic debate at the university was beginning to crack the hard shell of Mediaeval scholastic reasoning which held together the Roman Catholic system. Upon receiving his Master's degree in 1396, Huss embarked

upon a promising career. For six years he was a lecturer, and later dean and rector of the university, and finally a priest. He climbed to distinction in his social and ecclesiastic world, attaining a reputation for brilliant oratorical preaching. The excitement of the age was enough to stimulate these talents.

It is impossible to describe the confusion of the world as John Huss saw it. The Roman Catholic Church was supreme. The Pope claimed unlimited power and infallibility as the vicar of Christ. Through the sacraments, which only the Church could dispense, and which ignorant people were taught to believe were indispensable to salvation, the Church held the whip over all Eurppe. When this authority was contested in any way, the inquisition was all-powerful to literally exterminate the opposition. Yet in spite of all this, Huss's life coincides almost exactly with the period of papal weakness and schism. For seventy years the pope had been exiled from Rome and had lived in unspeakable moral corruption at Avignon in France. Now, during the life-time of Huss, there were two popes, one at Avignon and one at Rome. When the Church assembled in 1409 to settle this papal schism, the result was the creation of a third pope, who was soon murdered and replaced by John XXIII, whom even the Roman Catholic church does not now dare to call a true pope.

The political situation in Bohemia was equally involved. Charles IV, King of Bohemia, Emperor of the Holy

Roman Empire of the German Nation and third ruler of the House of Luxembourg, died in Prague in 1378. His son, Wenceslas, became king. His rather weak and vacillating nature destined him to play second fiddle to his younger brother, Sigismund, who became "king of the Romans." Wenceslas' wife, Sophia, was a good woman who exerted strong influence. These brothers fought among themselves and their nobles. Kings, popes and nobles intrigued and counter-intrigued with and against one another, singly and in pairs, changing sides, betraying one another, making and breaking promises, creating the utmost ~~of~~ confusion. Their struggles were mirrored in miniature in the university and the city of Prague where German and Bohemian clashes were common, and where all the low moral tone of Church and State and the evil fruits of the whole system were all too evident. Basically it was a struggle for supremacy between factions in the Church, between factions in the State, and especially between the Church and the State as institutions.

In 1402, John Huss became preacher of the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague, giving him the right to preach in the Czech tongue to a mighty congregation. He followed in the steps of great preachers, who had often challenged and berated the evils of the day, particularly those of the Church. His congregation would not be shocked when the popular young preacher, moved by the scandals he could not fail to see, began to denounce these evils. Huss was swayed too by the growing nation-

alism of the Bohemians who identified the Catholic Church with the German element of the population and who called it the German Church. Bohemia had not been Christian for many centuries and had comparatively recently been won away from the Greek to the Roman Church, largely through German influence. In an era when society was ruled by two governments, the State and Church, who sought to superimpose themselves upon one another (and often succeeded) it was impossible to divorce the two. Undoubtedly nationalism contributed to Huss' revolt against the authority of the Church. But the major cause was the shameless immorality and corruption of the Church. Private immorality ran riot. Church offices were openly bought and sold. Salvation could be purchased, for a price. It was this shocking situation which drove Huss to his Bible. Here he saw no warrant for this set-up. He saw more, too--the realization of which was to undermine his whole belief in the Roman Catholic Church as the sole authority for dispensing salvation on earth. And it was this which would brand him a heretic and eventually burn him at the stake. More and more, by simple Gospel preaching which exposed the corruption of the times and inspired to a better life, Huss held great congregations of admirers spell-bound.

Another powerful factor in the development of John Huss along these "heretical" lines was, surprisingly enough, the influence of John Wyclif of far away England. King Richard II of England had married a sister of the Bohemian king. Her

presence in England, together with her pious nature, attracted Czeck students who soon learned of the English heretic, John Wyclif, and brought his books back to Prague where they were debated in the University, and where Huss read and studied, and even copied them. Whether Wyclif's books started the "heretical" train of thought in Huss, or whether the Bohemian Master merely found coroboration and implementation of his own ideas in the books of Wyclif we do not know. But he was constantly identified with the Englishman and later was accused of being a Wyclifite--in itself enough to brand him as a heretic, and a candidate for the stake, in those days. Huss did not always agree with Wyclif, particularly in matters of doctrine, such as that of the Eucharist where the Englishman denied transubstantiation and Huss did not. But they were at one in their insistence that the Church had no right to control the State in certain areas of its jurisdiction, and that the former had gone far beyond its Scriptural warrant as the sole authority of Christ on earth. Both took their stand on the Scriptures; both wanted the Word of God available to the common man. Yet a return to the Scriptures, and the freedom to think which was the natural consequence of turning to it rather than Church dogma unquestioningly accepted, was anathema to Rome where the ability of such ideas to undermine was easily grasped.

The period 1402-1411 saw John Huss rise to fame and influence not only in Prague but in all Bohemia and beyond.

He was popular and beloved as a preacher. His people loved him; the common people heard him gladly. At first the King, and especially the Queen, supported him. Even Zbynek, the Archbishop of Prague, feared at first to oppose Huss publicly, even writing to the Pope in 1408 that there was no heresy at all in Bohemia. But as Huss became more outspoken and deadly in his denunciations of the evils of the Church, he became more susceptable to the charges of Wyclifism. Powerful enemies of Huss began to charge him with heresy at the Roman court of the Pope. In 1404 they persuaded the Pope to issue the first of many bulls calling upon the Archbishop of Prague to combat heresy in Bohemia. In 1407 Huss aggravated the tension by condeming the Catholic practices while preaching over the open grave of one of the Church dignitaries. Yet Huss did not assume his stand overnight--there were years of gradual change. Sometimes he adopted a compromising position, not being sure of his own convictions, and desiring to keep the peace. But the archbishop gradually grew more antagonistic, openly siding with the pope, and issuing decree after decree vainly trying to prohibit the activities of Huss.

A change in the voting system of the university caused the withdrawal of all German elements, and opened the way for the university to speak in favor of Wyclif's doctrines. Although Zbynek had to flee temporarily, he collected evidence against Huss and gradually drew the net work of conspiracy about him. Hoping for political reinforcement from the pope

and alarmed at the rising cresendo of mob violence, the King forsook Huss by allowing the archbishop to enforce papal orders. John XXIII's announcement of a sale of indulgences in order to raise funds to fight a war with the king of Naples stirred Huss to righteous indignation. From pulpit and with his pen, he threw himself unreservedly into a contest with the whole papal scheme, justifying his conduct by declaring that the pope was not to be obeyed where his orders ran counter to the teaching of Scripture.

Huss was now an international figure, and the Church could allow no further advance in his position. The pope began to use the much dreaded weapons of the Church. He excommunicated Huss, but the reformer paid no heed, continuing to preach openly. He refused to go to Rome for trial as ordered, claiming that his representatives in Rome had to date only been mistreated rather than allowed to plead his cause. Huss was not afraid; but he wanted to be tried under circumstances where his witness would count most. He appealed his case to Jesus Christ Himself. Then the Church placed Prague under an interdict, which meant that so long as Huss was in the city, the entire population was cut off from any services of the church or clergy. In spite of their bravery and their love for Huss, this type of complete spiritual starvation had its effect on the population which, with its inbred superstition, feared to risk losing the benefits of the sacraments. For two years (1412-1414) Huss was forced into exile,

living with friendly nobles in southern Bohemia. Here he preached to crowds of humble peasant folk; wrote his chief work, the Treatise on the Church; and wrestled with his own conscience. That he should hesitate or vacillate must be understood against the background of his times. He was exploring the unknown. At last he became convinced that he would die, and cherished the hope that his sacrifice might imitate Christ's. His books and letters, the growing strength of his convictions, the regard of the Bohemian people who looked to him as their spiritual leader and national emblem --all these built up increasing numbers of loyal supporters.

Huss' expectation of martyrdom and desire thereby to bear witness to his convictions found realization when he was summoned to the council of Constance (1414-1418). The purpose of the council was to settle the papal schism, setting up one pope, and to reform the church, something all realized was necessary. But the trial of Huss provided a side-show as spectacular as these main events. Constance was the temporary capital of Christendom. A citizen of the town reported that 72,460 guests crowded the town, including kings, popes, clergy of all ranks and classes, political officials high and low, professors, physicians, artizans, merchants and entertainers. Processions, pageantry, regal splendor marked the proceedings. Pope John XXIII did everything possible to prevent the convening of the council, knowing that it would result inevitably in his own loss of power.

But King Sigismund, now the most powerful ruler in Europe, forced the issue and often dominated the council. Under this king's guarantee of safe-conduct to and from the council, Huss went to Constance, his travel expenses borne by friendly nobles.

For nearly a month, Huss was unmolested in his rented quarters in Constance. He read Mass daily and worked on evidence for his trial. But suddenly he was arrested and thrown into the vilest of prisons in a Dominican monastery. Sigismund at first professed indignation, but later ignored all efforts on the part of Huss's friends to get him to make good his promise of safe conduct. The reformer was left in a "dark miserable cellar, deep under ground, dank and unhealthy and infested with a pestilential stench as the drains of the monastery there gave into the Lake." He became deathly sick and only the intervention of the pope, who sent his own physician to minister to the prisoner, saved his life. Huss was removed to a better prison but was kept under heavy guard, allowed little freedom even to study. He wrote touching letters to his friends in Prague. His own piety deepened, and his conviction became more firmly moulded. He was read to die.

Although he had arrived in November, not until June 5, 1415 did Huss appear before the council. All efforts to get him to recant while in prison had failed. Now physically ill and exhausted, he was hauled before the council to listen

to long lists of charges against him. He was never allowed to make his carefully prepared formal defense--only to answer yes or no to charges. Open laughter, mockery, and scuffling of feet drowned out his attempted remarks. Even false charges which he emphatically denied were not erased from the list of offenses. His Christian heroism refused to compromise even when a single word would have bought freedom. The entire proceedings, which lasted a month, seem a travesty on our 20th century ideas of justice. But it was not unusual in those times when to have allowed Huss to die in prison without trial, or to have quietly murdered him there, would not have stirred much comment. All these injustices, including Sigismund's failure to keep his promise to protect him, were justified on the grounds that Huss was a heretic, and in those days heretics did not deserve justice nor did promises have to be kept to them.

On July 6th, following the mockery of this "trial" and after all attempts to induce Huss to recant had failed, the council met to pronounce judgement. Following a Mass, a bishop preached from the text "The body of sin must be broken." All attempts by Huss to answer the charges were rebuffed. With a public ceremony he was degraded from his priestly office and turned over to executioners. At the place of execution he was bound to a stake while piles of wood and straw were heaped about him. Death came quickly and mercifully as they lit the fire, but the valiant Reformer refused to retract

the truths he held so dear. In death he voiced his faith in God and his prayers for his persecutors. Later his ashes were gathered and flung into the Rhine river. Not long after the Council also executed Jerome of Prague, a supporter of Huss who travelled Europe, preaching radical doctrine, recanting glibly when freedom could be purchased, but dying like Huss for freedom of conscience.

No martyrdom ever failed to extinguish the fires of truth and freedom of belief so much as that of Huss. All Bohemia continued the way he had led. Though persecution and warfare decimated the population and laid waste the land, still there smouldered the flames which nearly a century later joined in the general conflagration touched off by Luther. Huss died because he saw that the Church of Rome, its leaders and its policies, were thoroughly wicked. He had preached the pure Gospel as he found it in the Bible. He had dared to obey God rather than men. Several modern Christian groups (Brethren, Moravians) owe their origin to the Hussite movement, but all Protestants are indebted to Huss whose martyrdom shook all Christendom and contributed vastly to the undercurrent of reform and true Christian faith which no pope could stamp out and which made the Reformation possible.

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Savonarola of Florence

(1452-1498)

> Luther himself could scarcely have been so successful in inaugurating his Reform had not the sacrifice of Savonarola given a final proof that it was useless to hope in the purification of Rome, and that no attempt to reform the Church could possibly succeed without destroying her unity, at least for a time.[1]

Savonarola was not a Reformation leader in the sense that Luther and Calvin were. He remained a loyal Roman Catholic and never challenged the doctrine or the system of the Church. But he belongs with other Reformers in his rebellion against the corruption of the Church and her failure to adhere to the basic and essential points of her doctrine. Had the Church heard and heeded his warnings she might well have averted the Protestant Reformation and maintained her unity and authority. While Savonarola made no major contribution to the Reformation and left behind no lasting Protestant sect, a study of his life does give us an insight into the turbulent condition of his times, particularly with reference to the Church of Rome. Although his "martyrdom" was due to political rather than religious causes, it did serve as a torch to illumine the dark shadows of the Roman Church, exposing her weaknesses and scandals.

Girolamo Savonarola was born in Ferrara, Sept. 21, 1452. In this age of the city states, Italy was irregularly

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[1] Villari, Pasquale, Life and Times of Girolamo Savonarola (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), p. 771.

divided into a dozen or more states. Superimposed, and not conforming to state boundaries, was the Church, likewise divided into territories or "Congregations" and spheres of influence of the various Monastic orders. Although a member of a distinguished family, Girolamo seems to have been a silent, moody, timid boy who kept somewhat aloof from normal boyhood associations and amusements. His family educated him to become a physician, which meant grasping most of the knowledge of the day, especially philosophy. Brilliance and piety characterized his adolescence, so that the bloody dispute for succession to the throne of Ferrara in 1471, the refusal of a Florentine girl with whom he had fallen in love, an increasing sense of the hollowness of his secular education, and an awareness of the pleasure-loving and flippant character of local society, all combined to cause him to forsake his home in 1475 and enter the Dominican monastery of Bologna.

His superiors began to train Savonarola for the priesthood, and he advanced rapidly through the ranks, easily absorbing the rigid learning involved. His pious nature was scandalized at the debasement and corruption he found in the Church, and the selfish ambitions evident among his monastic associates. The pope, Sixtus IV, had won his office by "simony" and displayed unbridled lust, while resorting to all kinds of crime. Conspiracy, revolt, and civil war were all about. The young friar found peace and satisfaction only as he drew within himself to a life of pious meditation and study.

Due to the inroads of war in 1481, the Prior sent Savonarola to the Monastery of St. Mark in Florence. The beauty and wonder of the architecture and art and learning of this fairest of Italian cities at first held him spellbound, and he began to expect real happiness here. He was soon disappointed. Florence was supposed to be a center of liberty, but in reality Lorenzo the Magnificent of the famous Medici family held the city in the iron grip of a dictator. Under cover of a display of real brilliance and love of art, he held the reins of power, freely distorting justice and depriving all of any semblance of freedom. Extravagant and wild festivals kept the people under control. Such social immorality, political corruption, coupled with the trifling superficiality of the much-vaunted studies of the Florentines arroused the indignation of Savonarola. Unable to imitate the eloquence and scholarly refinements of the local popular preachers such as Fra Mariano, he seemed a failure in the pulpit and devoted himself enthusiastically to teaching the convent novices. Here his exhortations to study the Bibleand his simple yet earnest manner, inspired by much prayer and his conviction that he was God's prophet, soon attracted attention. His visions and prophecies took hold of him. He seemed to move in another world.

Apparently not fit for the city, Savonarola was relegated to the country, being sent to the little republic of San Gimignano in the years 1484-85. But here he created no little stir by predicting that soon the Church would be scourged and

regenerated, and for the first time he found himself and his ability to move a vast congregation. After brief ministries in several northern cities he was recalled to Florence in 1489, at the request of Lorenzo de Medici who thereby sought to bring added renown to Florence and her dictator. Savonarola returned convinced by visions that his was a special divine mission to perform. The intensely involved yet exciting events of the next decade found him the key figure in the city. This period falls into three general sections, the rise, the supremacy, and the decline of popular government in Florence, and the simultaneous fluctuation in the fortunes of Savonarola.

(1) The years best known to history for Columbus's voyage to America, also saw Savonarola rise to fame and power in Florence (1489-1494). Large crowds came to hear him preach. Mixed feelings characterized their response to his repeated dramatic warnings of coming calamity and pleas for repentance and reform. Now preaching in the great Duomo to thousands of listeners, he played upon their emotions with inspired outbursts. Without knowing it, he had stumbled upon the art of moving masses with all the fervour of the "big-time revival" meeting. This was the gift which enabled him to steer the course of the city through this stormy era.

As he reviled the lack of faith of so-called Christians and condemned them for the worldliness, Savonarola soon began to include the tyrant of the city, Lorenzo himself.

> The good and the evil of a City depend on its head, and his responsibility is great even for small sins; if he followed the right path, the whole City would become holy... Tyrants are incorrigible, because they love adulation, because they will not restore ill-gotten gains. They give wicked officials their way; they are led by flattery; they neither heed the poor nor condemn the rich; they expect paupers and peasant to labor for them gratis, or they allow their officials to oppress them; they corrupt the suffrage; they farm the tzxes to oppress the people more and more. Your duty is to eliminate discord, to do justice, and to work for the common welfare.[2]

Lorenzo had been attacked, but he proceeded cautiously, refusing to retaliate for a while. Such fearless attacks only heightened Savonarola's fame, which was further strengthened by his election in 1491 as Prior of St. Mark's. Lorenzo tried in vain with bribes and threats to silence this self-appointed public conscience. But the young preacher replied with demands that Lorenzo repent. He further predicted the immediate death of the tyrant, the pope, and the king of Naples.

The authenticity of this account is challenged. See Cambridge Modern History Vol I Chap 5

But Lorenzo could carry the struggle no further for he was a dying man. One of the strange scenes of history took place as he lay dying early in April, 1492. Haunted by his own wicked past, and finding no peace in the last formal rites of his religion, he sent for his arch-enemy, Savonarola, exclaiming, "I know no honest friar save this one." Arriving for this final audience, the friar was unyielding in his demands that the tyrant restore his ill-gotten wealth and the liberties of Florence. Conflicting reports have come down to us as to what

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2 Roeder, Ralph, Savonarola, A Study in Comscience (New York: Brentano's Publishers, 1930) p. 60.

took place but the evidence points to a deadlock in which neither party was willing to give an inch. Lorenzo died shortly after this interview, thus fulfilling one of Savonarola's predictions. Naturally the whole scene only contributed to the Friar's fame. The death of the pope three months later was further proof to the populace that Savonarola's gifts of prophecy were genuine. The new pope, Alexander VI, was still another in the chain of wicked men who filled this high office during the life-time of Savonarola.

Due largely to pressure by Lorenzo's successor, Piero de' Medici, the friar was absent from the city for a brief period but such a popular preacher could not be kept away long. He now succeeded in severing the connection of St. Mark with the headquarters of the order in Lombardy, thus gaining complete independence for his work. With characteristic zeal, Savonarola set about reforming the life of the convent, re-establishing order and discipline and true poverty, with particular emphasis upon Bible study. For a moment he seemed on the verge of initiating a general reform movement within the Church. But political upheaval was taking place in the city, aggravated by the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII of France who was regarded as the long-promised scourge by Savonarola. Out of the ensuing tangled military and political struggle the Medici family was expelled and Florence invested by the supposedly "friendly" French. The dire predictions of Savonarola were fulfilled. He was the man of the hour and

was held in awe by Charles VIII as well as the Florentines.

(2) This bloodless revolution gave birth to a new popular government. The years 1494-1496 saw this reach its height under the influence of Savonarola. While he sought to give his efforts a spiritual tone by proclaiming Christ as the King of Florence, his labors were untiring in setting up a truly democratic regime with the proper safe-guards against mob-rule on the one hand and minority control on the other. After the now unpopular French army left, his personal popularity was enormously heightened by his efforts to provide relief for the poor. Within a few months incredible progress toward reforms in the government were made. Representative government, fair taxes, fair business practices, and just administration of courts were established. Illustrative of Savonarola's moral reforms was his successful restraint of the Florentines from their customary "wild" celebrations at the annual carnival season in 1496 by substituting the public burning of indecent books and pictures.

Already Savonarola knew that under the wave of popularity was a strong undercurrent of opposition. Florence was full of political factions. The Bianchi (Whites) liked his political but not his religious ideas. The Bigi (Greys) nurtured the hope of restoring the Medici family, who, headed by Piero, made repeated attempts to regain control of the city. The Arrabbiati (the Maddened) were the oligarchical party,

powerfully aided by the Franciscan monks. Savonarola's own supporters in the popular party were known as Piagnoni (Snivellers). A further source of trouble was the fact that Pisa had taken advantage of the French invasion to revolt from Florence, thereby involving costly campaigns to try to win her back. Pressure from a hostile league of Italian States complicated the issues. The Friar was further frustrated as he saw that for all his popularity as a preacher, there was little of the real spiritual awakening among the citizens for which he had yearned. Instead he saw visions of further doom clearly latent in the intrigues of these political groups.

The first act of opposition came upon the election of the Council of Twenty which was to rule the city. They were controlled by the Arrabbiati and quickly charged Savonarola with meddling in politics as a churchman had no right to do. This time Savonarola's strength and popularity sufficed to save him, and he went ahead with his powerful preaching and popular Bible studies. For a time he seemed to succeed and there was evidence of a wide-spread spiritual revival in the city. But in Rome powerful enemies were exciting Alexander VI to put an end to Savonarola's reforms. Hesitating at direct retaliation, the pope at first, in 1495, merely invited the Friar to Rome to talk things over. Claiming ill-health Savonarola excused himself from what would have meant almost certain death at the hands of the treacherous pope. The latter's next move was to undermine Savonarola's power by removing his inde-

pendence. This was accomplished by placing St. Mark's under a newly created Tusco-Roman Congregation. Savonarola's refusal to comply provided the necessary excuse for an order to stop preaching. The duplicity of the Pope is indicated by a simultaneous attempt to silence Savonarola with a bribe--he offered to make him a cardinal. Acting on the invitation of the City Council, Savonarola returned to the pulpit in the Lenten season of 1496. Here he defended his defiance of Rome, foretold new disasters, and urged repentance. These predictions were rapidly being fulfilled as war, pestilence, poverty and famine precipitated a major crisis relieved only by unexpected military victories. Savonarola and his party were absolute masters of the Florentine Republic. It looked like his aims for moral and spiritual reform would soon become a reality. But he was up against greater and more stubborn forces than he realized, as events soon proved.

(3) A new election early in 1497 signalled the downfall. The new government adopted policies which led to the ascendency of the corrupt and turbulent Arrabbiati. Again ~~in~~ during Lent Savonarola denounced Rome and repeated his warnings. But the Arrabbiati, favored by the Pope, were determined to do away with the pious preacher and his reforms. Tumultuous scenes were enacted in the town council. His enemies used the once popular preacher, Fra Mariano, to persuade the pope to excommunicate Savonarola. He retorted with his "Epistle against the

Surreptitious Excommunication." A plague forced the closing of the churches so he could not preach publicly anyway, but he defied the excommunication to the extent of celebrating mass at the convent.

A new and friendly city council elected in the summer brought temporary reprieve, and the murder of the pope's son brought a consoling letter from the excommunicated friar to the grieving father who nearly revoked his previous excommunicating order at the suggestion of the pro-Savonarola party how controlling Florence. The friar himself even addressed a conciliatory letter to the pope, agreeing to obey the summons to Rome when he could do so in personal safety.

The uneasy truce was ended when, at Christmas 1497 and early in 1498, Savonarola remounted the pulpit in defiance of the papal ban but with the approval of the offical Florentine government. While this awed the populace, the Arrabbiati were able to revive much of the old frivolity in the ensuing carnival season--a sure sign of how the common citizens regarded Savonarola's reforms. Nor could the pope ignore such defiance, and he now threatened to place Florence under the dreaded interdict. Savonarola's defence was to urge a general council of the Church to decide these issues and reform all Christendom. A series of communications between the pope and the friar finally resulted in an order completely silencing the latter's public preaching. He retired to St. Mark's where

he continued his teaching. The impact of this struggle was to so weaken Savonarola's political backing that the opposing party, actively aided by monks of the Franciscan order, were able to regain control. With the loss of popular support as well, his cause was hopeless.

From this moment on, Savonarola was doomed--not because of his religious stand but because of political and popular reaction which resulted in his death. In the spring of 1498 a Franciscan friar named Francesco "dared" Fra Domenico, the ardent disciple of Savonarola, to trial by the ordeal of fire. Before his master could intervene, the challenge had been accepted. The object of the ordeal was to test the truth or error of his teachings by seeing which contestant could pass through a fire unharmed. Excitement in the city mounted as the appointed day (April 7, 1498) approached. A tremendous crowd waited all day for the spectacle. Fra Domenico appeared and was ready to undergo the ordeal, but the Franciscans made repeated excuses and put off the affair all day, putting the blame on the Dominican followers of Savonarola. The disappointed mob was furious at this denial of the expected spectacle.

Their fury broke 24 hours later on Palm Sunday in a mob attack on St. Mark's while vesper services were in progress. Unknown to Savonarola, some of his friars had concealed weapons in the convent. A bloody seven-hour fight took place in the convent premises, ending with the capture of Savonarola. The populace had now turned completely against him. His trial was

a complete farce. By torture he was forced to sign confessions only to retract them when he regained his senses. Typical of the proceedings was the remark of a notary who volunteered to manipulate the evidence: "Where none exists, it must be manufactured." After forty days and nights of torture and questioning, the authorities felt justified in executing the death sentence pronounced upon Savonarola and two associates. Before a great crowd in the public square the three were first of all deprived of their offical positions and then hung. As the executioner descended from the platform the flames from the great pile of wood and other combustibles rose about the three martyrs, consuming their bodies. A few pious followers managed to extricate some relics from the ashes and these were long cherished by a small group who kept alive the memory of Savonarola for many years.

Although he died true to the Roman Catholic religion, nevertheless Savonarola indicates the restlessness of the times, and the dissatisfaction with the state into which his church had fallen. He saw that a new era was dawning when men would find their way to God in a more direct fashion through closer adherence to the Bible. Given a different environment and less pressure to enter the political arena, he might well have allowed his conscience to lead him along the road followed by the other Reformers. And in failing to follow him, the Roman Church lost one of its last real opportunities to reform itself without losing its unity.

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Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam

(c. 1469-1536)

> The importance of Erasmus's biography lies not only in his contributions to the beauty and wisdom of the world, but also in his representative function. In his own person he went through exactly the same evolution as did the Renaissance in the whole of western Europe, that of being at first the preparer, then the moderate supporter, and finally the enemy, of the Reformation.[1]

Seldom in history do we discover a more controversial figure than Erasmus. He lived in an age of controversy, yet sought to remain aloof and neutral. His views, clearly set forth in the steady stream of literary works he produced, yet cleverly qualified to avoid the appearance of contentiousness and dogmatism, seemed to favor both the Roman Church and the Reformation movement at times, and then again to find fault and poke fun at them both. Both sides sought his favor and support; both sides were afraid of him and at times accused him of error and heresy. Even today this enigma remains. Yet in spite of many personal qualities in Erasmus which we cannot admire or condone, we are forced to admit that he was a great figure of the Reformation era, a man whose broad and tolerant attitudes made him a far more modern figure than other men of his age. He sought reform, a true piety, and a return to the simple Gospel teachings, but he detested the dogmatic and revolutionary character of the Reformers and sought to preserve order in Christendom. He was dedicated to study the purity and the peace of the Church.

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[1] Smith, Erasmus (New York: Harper & Bros., 1923) p. 320

from wealthy and powerful patrons he was always careful to see that there were no "strings" attached to curtail his freedom. Never would he identify himself so closely with a movement or its leaders that he would be bound to a will or law he could not disobey. Through an expert manœuver by which he first became secretary to the Bishop of Cambrai and then cajoled his patron into providing him with a stipent to attend the University of Paris, he gained his freedom from the monastery. At the university he revolted at nearly everthing: the food, the filthy living conditions, and the cold and formal educational system which he called a theological jail, and whose principles drew only ridicule from him. His delicate health soon broke, and after a short vacation to recuperate he returned to live in private quarters where he tutored pupils from prominent German and English families and abandoned his old studies in favor of Greek. Although Parisian life at this time was notoriously immoral, Erasmus seems to have established a good record, though such cannot be said of some of his companions.

June 1499 marked the turning point in the life of Erasmus. He was now about thirty years old and as yet had shown no signs of genius and had produced almost no writings. But now he went to England with one of his students, Lord Mountjoy. For the first time he felt real freedom and happinness. Gone were the old ties to the monastery whose claims Erasmus managed to avoid for the rest of his life. The cul-

ture and refinement of English universities pleased him. England was his first love, and here he cultivated the friendship of the great. Thomas More, John Fisher, John Colet, Bishops Warham and Cranmer, and King Edward Viii became his associates and patrons and he was lavish in his praise of them. This was not without its ulterior motive, for Erasmus was always on the look-out for establishing "paying" contacts. The dedications of many of his later books show how dependent he was upon this method as a source of income.

From now on, Erasmus was possessed with the wanderlust and his life consists of moving from one place to another in Western Europe so that no place was really home.

> As a genuine citizen of Cosmopolis he was everywhere a visitor, a guest, never assimilating the manners and customs of any specific people, and never acquiring a single living language. During his innumerable journeyings to and fro, he turned a blind eye to all that was peculiar to the country he happened to be traversing. Italy, France, Germany, England, had, so far as he was concerned, only a dozen or so inhabitants each, with whom he conversed in elegant and polished Latin. A town consisted of its library, and he invariably selected the cleanest inns, where mine host received him the most courteously and served him the best wines.[2]

Someone has remarked that Erasmus was "descended from a long line of maiden aunts," an apt and suggestive characterization of a man whose private habits are somewhat amusing. He was always in frail health, suffering from some ailment or other of which he complained constantly. He suffered from the

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2 Zweig, Erasmus of Rotterdam (New York: The Viking Press, 1934) p. 48.

weather, particularly the cold, and soon found excuse to cast off the monkish habit for more comfortable and warm--even luxurious--robes. Only his love of travel forced him to endure the hardships, inconveniences, and boorish companions involved in journeys about Europe in those days, and had there been "Chambers of Commerce" in those cities they would have blushed at his sarcastic and critical remarks about the entertainment provided in inns and taverns. Yet amid the vulgar and ugly, the ruthless and violent passions, and the uninhibited mass movements of the day, Erasmus remained dainty and fastidious in taste and delicate and refined in temper.

The period starting with Erasmus's first vist to England and continuing until about 1517 saw him rise to fame and popularity. For our purposes here it is more important to dwell on the works he produced during this period than to discuss his extensive travels, except to note that he spent the period 1509 to 1514 in England. As the foremost exponent of Humanism, he read widely in ancient Greek and Latin works, and his own writings are a rich product of these studies. His greatest work was his famous Greek version of the New Testament, produced while at Cambridge in the period just mentioned. In so doing he established the first principles of textual criticism to determine the original text. In abandoning many glosses and refuting many errors in the Latin Vulgate

translation Erasmus incurred suspicion and enmity in many quarters but rendered incalculable service to scholarly New Testament study. In so doing he set the stage for what took place during the later periods of the Reformation.

One of his most popular works, which appeared again and again in ever larger editions, was his "Adagia" a sort of "Quotable Quotes" of his day when it was fashionable to sprinkle letters and books with references from classical authors. The "Adagia" provided a handy reference work. In 1511 he produced his best seller, the witty satire known as the "Praise of Folly" in which he points at the superstition and asininity of the times, in Church, state, society, science and nearly everything else. During this period he was always issuing his "Colloquies" or series of conversations in which the various problems and conditions of the day were aired, often at the disadvantage of the existing order. His "Enchiridon" which had first appeared in 1503 without attracting wide attention, was later printed many times and attracted great interest as an exposition of simple evangelical religion written for the common man.

> In Erasmus's writings we find a cheerful humour making the scales even with a more ponderous erudition. Above all he combined a sparkling and yet by no means malicious wit, a caustic yet by no means icy humour... As the leading stylistic writer of his day, Erasmus possessed the art of presenting certain truths in a racy and brilliant way; with consummate adroitness and genial impertinence he gave the slip to the censorship, so that many a naughtiness escaped the reproving eye; he was in reality a dangerous rebel who

> managed never to put himself in danger, seeking refuge behind his professorial robes or deftly assuming the fool's motley... Erasmus packed his wares so cunningly that he was able, unbeknownst, to smuggle all the contraband of the Reformation into cloister and court.[3]

The end of this period of his life saw Erasmus enjoying the homage and attention of all Europe. The great sought his presence. He had achieved that freedom of movement and thought he so desired. Somehow he eluded the claims of Church and state while maintaining both their admiration and his own freedom. It was too good to last.

When Luther posted his theses in Wittenberg in 1517, he kindled a fire which had long been smouldering. Erasmus was not without his full share in preparing the fuel for the conflagration. There was ample ground for the charge that he "laid the egg which Luther hatched." The German Reformer had bought and studied carefully the works of Erasmus and doubtless had thereby formulated many of his own ideas which later would be branded as seditious and heretical. The subtle but radical poison of the Dutchman's ideas had also found its way into the minds of thousands of others who only waited for the leadership of a Luther to rise in revolt.

1517 until 1536 was the final period in the life of Erasmus, a period marked by an honest attempt to remain neutral in the struggle which engulfed Europe, and concluding

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[3] Zweig, Op. cit., p. 53.

with a gradual but definite rejection of the Reformers and a consequent identification with the Catholic church, the only alternative. But to this alternative Erasmus could give only half-hearted support which was rewarded with mixed approval and reproof. Even the residence of Erasmus during this period was governed by the tide of ecclesiastical conflict. Luther's early books aroused such a storm at Louvain where Erasmus was living in 1519 that he left, and, refusing to live in any pronouncedly Catholic town or in one which had gone over to the side of the Reformation, went to Switzerland, where he spent most of the remainder of his life at Basle. Here he liked the clean dignified city and enjoyed a comfortable home and stimulating friendships, particularly that of the printer Frobenius.

It is almost impossible to follow all the vagaries of Erasmus's position with reference to the Reformation. For one thing it was never possible to determine his exact position. At first he clearly applauded the stand of Luther whose disgust at mal-practices in the Catholic Church were shared by Erasmus. Yet almost from the start, Erasmus detected the fanatical element in Luther. If there was anything he hated and strove to avoid it was open conflict and the extremes of fanaticism. This was why he chose to "sit on the fence" and endeavor to point out the good features of both parties without taking any stand on either side but always attempted to resolve the extremes in a compromise.

It is difficult to appraise the value of Erasmus due to the many discrepancies and contradictions in his character. He cannot be classed as a Reformer, for he was their foe, and refused to give aid to their cause in any way. Yet he laid the ground-work for their success. His gentle satires on the corruptions and weaknesses of the Roman Church had their effect in weakening the Roman cause. His emphasis upon getting back to the sources, and especially to the pure Scriptural text in the original language, with a more literal adoption of the New Testament type of Christian living, planted the seeds of the crop harvested by the Reformers. Erasmus lived in advance of his age and not until more modern times could men understand the open-minded, tolerant attitude he adopted.

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Martin Luther of Germany

(1483-1546)

As soon as the coin in the coffer rings,
The soul from purgatory springs.

This jingle, surprisingly like some modern advertizing in tone, symbolizes the extremes to which the Roman Catholic Church had passed in the age of Martin Luther. The whole system of salvation by works, now reduced to its logical end whereby it could be purchased with money, was shamelessly exposed in the high-pressure salesmanship techniques of Tetzel. Luther was not alone in his spontaneous revulsion, nor was he the first. He was already deeply confused and concerned about the state of his own soul and the failure of the Church to give satisfaction. The open sale of papal indulgences, "insurance policies" guaranteeing a reduction of the period of purgatorial suffering (by drawing on the treasury of merit accumulated by Christ and the saints) simply brought the whole basic system of the Roman Church into a well-defined arena into which a man of conscience like Luther strode to challenge.

Luther stood where many predecessors had defied the Church, and like them was forced by the opposition to examine the Scriptures to justify his stand, and in the process soon found himself at odds with the doctrinal basis, the ecclesiastical framework, and the practical effects of the Roman Church. The only difference is that Luther succeeded in winning a

large following which he moulded into a permanent institution. This was because, among other reasons, he did not stand alone, but through the medium of the newly invented printing press, was able to stir into simultaneous action masses of kindred spirits. So ripe were the times, that in a single decade Luther had reformed most of Germany and set the pattern of reform for the rest of Europe.

Martin Luther was born in Eisleben, Germany, in 1483 but his family soon moved Mansfield. His father was a successful miner who by hard work and thrift became an operator of mines and furnaces. At school in Mansfield, Martin received the usual instruction of his day (mainly Latin) to the accompaniement of much brutal flogging. What beatings could not induce, fear of devils did, and it is not surprising that he should include the line "And though this world, with devils filled..." in his "battle hymn of the Reformation." The boy was sent on to school at Magdeburg, Eisenach, and Erfurt from which he received his Master of Arts degree in 1505. He seems to have been a normal student and to have liked university life in spite of its stringent regulations. His parents were training him for law practice but all studies had a theological tinge. Thought was restrained in German universities and the humanistic trends which allowed for open discussion and the tracing of ideas back to original sources were only beginning to exert influence.

The hopes of his parents were dashed, and a new phase of

Luther's life inauguerated when he entered the Augustinian monastery of Erfurt on July 17, 1505. While the immediate occasion of this step was a sudden bolt of lightening which frightened him as he walked along a highway, he had been passing through a period of depression which had conditioned him to take this path. He continued to experience these periods of depression the rest of his life. The next fifteen years saw Luther rise to fame in his monastic order. He became a priest, earned his doctorate, and became a lecturer on theology at the university of Wittenberg. Yet this was not without inner soul struggle. He honestly and zealously attempted every method the Church offered in order to attain salvation for soul and peace of conscience as he wrestled with the problem of how God could be good to him, and how, in his sinful unworthy state, he could approach a holy God. He attempted to perform every kind of good work, do every form of penance, suffer every type of asceticism in order to obtain justification. His spiritual counselors tried in vain to induce him to snap out of his morbid fears and introspection.

Luther could not escape his active world. The Wittenberg University was the pet project of Frederick the Wise, Elector of Saxony. This ruler deserved his name and sought the guidance of professors and graduates of this school in state problems. His justice and open-mindedness protected and preserved Luther during the crucial years of the Reformation. In 1510 Luther had the privilege of journeying to Rome to present a

dispute within the Augustinian order calling for settlement by the pope. He spent a month availing himself of every opportunity to obtain merit according to the Catholic system. "Doing the town" meant celebrating mass at sacred shrines, visiting the catacombs and the basilicas, and venerating the bones of saints. Although Luther was startled and sickened by the corruption and immorality and irreverance of the Roman priests, he still retained his faith in the genuine goodness of the Church. But he also held doubts. After climbing Pilate's stairs on hands and knees kissing the steps in the hope of reducing his grandfather's time in Purgatory, he exclaimed, "Who knows whether it is so?"

Returning to his classroom to lecture on Psalms and Romans, he searched the Scriptures for the answer. By the year 1516 he was expressing his doubts as to the efficacy of relics and indulgences publicly in sermons. Since these were a source of income for local institutions such as the university, as well as the papacy, Luther was stepping on sensitive toes. But his systematic and honest studies of the Bible had led him to develop a whole new theology based on the premise that the "just shall live by faith" to which Luther added the word "alone" thus firing a broadside at the Catholic doctrine of good works with its attendant evil practices.

In 1517 there ocurred an incident which caused the young monk to explode. Albert of Brandenburg, who already held two ecclesiastical offices, in order to purchase another bishopric

from the pope, borrowed funds from the Fugger banking firm. In order to repay the debt he became regional director for the sale of indulgences now issued to finance the building of St. Peter's in Rome. Half the profits went to the pope and half to repay the debt. Albert employed as his sales agent, a Dominican monk named Tetzel, and made extravagant claims for the merits of his "product," the worst of which was that contrition and confession of sin were not necessary--only contribution. Although these sales were not actually conducted in Wittenburg, Tetzel's territory was close enough for Luther to hear about it. Dashing off his famous 95 theses he posted them on the door of the Castle church, inviting open debate on the whole matter of the sale of indulgences. In two weeks, incredible speed for those days, printed copies of the Theses had spread over all Germany. Soon they were all over Europe and excited immense interest. Indulgence sales slumped and Albert and Tetzel appealed to Rome for help.

At this point it is necessary to understand the European political situation in order to see why the Pope and the Catholic civil authorities did not immediately silence Luther before it was too late. Europe was threatened with pressure from the Mohammedan Turks now firmly established in south-eastern Europe. The pope could not afford too much strife in Europe at the moment he was trying to unite all efforts to expel the Turks. Neither did he want any single European ruler to become too strong a rival to his own power, so that he continually

played them off against each other. The Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire was elected to office, and, in order to keep the newly elected emperor, Charles V from becoming too strong, the pope was desirous of maintaining the good will of one of the electors, Frederic the Wise, the pivotal figure of Germany. He could not afford to alienate Frederick over one of his subjects, Martin Luther. Hence the Lutheran movement gained tremendous momentum before the authorities were willing to take definite steps to stop it.

Events following the posting of the 95 Theses moved rapidly. The pope contented himself with transfering the case to Germany for trial and settlement, meanwhile placing Luther under a ban. Luther appeared before the Papal Legate in Augsburg in 1518. After several interviews with the Cardinal, Luther refused to retract his position and returned to Wittenberg. Here the Reformer appealed his case from the pope to a general council of the church which he claimed was above the pope. The pope did acceed to Luther's protests to the extent of issuing a bull clarifying the value of the indulgences and disavowing many of the claims of Tetzel. But Luther, who earlier might have been content with this explanation, had now gone much further in his attack on the papacy. The fact that Frederick was able to protect Luther during this critical period was due to the political situation refered to above. The pope then sent a relative of Frederick named Miltitz to try to keep Luther quiet until the election of the emperor was settled. Miltitz succeeded only in getting Luther to promise not to debate and

publicize his views, provided his opponents did the same. Neither side stuck to the bargain. In the summer of 1519 at the University of Leipzig there occured the famous debate between Luther and John Eck, a Catholic professor of great reputation. The debate had the practical effect of helping Luther formulate his own views more maturely, and, in response to the taunts of Eck, he saw that his position was close to that of the Bohemian Reformer, John Hus, who had burned at the stake a century before for such heresies.

With pope and emperor busy elsewhere, Luther now enjoyed a year of practically uninterrupted development of his own ideas. He was producing tracts and books at a prodigious rate, and these publications spread like wild-fire over all Europe. Among these, "The Babylonian Captivity" discussed the enslavement of the sacraments by the Church. Luther reduced the number of sacraments from seven to two, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, insisting that their merits were through the faith of the believer, and that the mass was not a sacrifice of Christ. He denied the Catholic theory of transubstantiation and substituted an intermediate position between Catholicism and Calvinism by claiming an actual physical presence of Christ, although the elements remained unchanged. In his "Address to the German Nobility" he called upon the civil authorities to protect citizens from extortion by the clergy. He claimed that Church and state should be mutually responsible for the support and correction of each other. In accordance with his doctrine of

the priesthood of all believers, civil magistrates should exercise their Christian duty to exert their authority in the church.

Another of the many tracts produced this year was "The Freedom of the Christian Man," where Luther set forth the principle that a Christian through faith is a free lord and subject to no one, while at the same time he must be the dutiful servant of all and subject to everyone. This concept of liberty was not well understood by many readers who later abused their freedom. This tract was issued at the time when John Eck was enroute from Rome bearing the papal bull of excommunication known as "Exsurge, Domine," ordering the burning of the Reformer's books and demanding that he recant his views within sixty days. This bull was a long time enroute and numerous church and civil leaders were reluctant to publish it, so popular had Luther now become. Luther now appealed to a trial before the new emperor, Charles V, and led the students at Wittenberg in a burning of certain impious papal constitutions, the canon law, works of scholastic theology, and the papal bull itself. He himself fired off a reply to the pope, entitled "Against the Execrable Bull of Antichrist." Luther had found the activity in which he excelled--a good fight. During this period Erasmus, who once seemed to sympathize with Luther, began to move cautiously away and deny his friendship. But others gave him strong support. Philip Melancthon was a faithful friend. In his efforts to soften the rude and blunt position taken by his

a year he lived here in protective custody. Although held by friends, he suffered from loneliness and poor food. Sickness and insomnia plagued him. Yet during this period he continued to write feverishly. A major work was his German Translation of the New Testament, a work accomplished in about six months, but constantly revised with painstaking care down to the day of his death. Luther labored over his renditions and sought to express the Biblical thought in clear and idiomatic German. The result was a work of great beauty as well as accuracy. Meanwhile under Melanchthon and others in Wittenberg, the Reformation made rapid strides--sometimes more rapidly than Luther thought wise. Priests married, the liturgy was revised, students rioted. Some were going to extremes. Upon invitation to the town council Luther returned to Wittenberg in 1522. It was a brave move, for his enemies would gladly kill him. Back in Wittenberg he received a joyful welcome and soon had the town back under control.

The return from Wartburg marked the turning point in Luther's life. Up until now he had been tearing apart the structure of the Roman Church. In the five years since he posted the 95 Theses he had formulated most of his distinctive doctrines. From now on his work was that of building and organizing. Justification by faith in Jesus Christ our sole mediator as revealed through the Word of God, was the foundation upon which Luther built. He was forced to steer a safe course between the enemy of Catholicism on the right and that of fanaticism on the left.

The latter position was represented particularly by the eccentric Carlstadt who adopted an extreme position on the sacraments along with a fanatical legalism. Luther acquiesced in the ~~the~~ banishment of Carlstadt and others such radical leaders. Like some of the other Reformers, Luther was guilty of resorting to the same means to eliminate these extremists that the Roman Church used on the Lutherans. The most notorious instance of this was his attitude toward the Peasant's Rebellion of 1525. Their uprising was occasioned by the transition from feudal anarchy to consolidated national government, by economic and social oppression, and by a misunderstanding of the new spirit of Christian liberty as taught by Luther himself. The demands of the peasants were partially approved by Luther, but when the bloody uprisings occured he sided with the princes in the ruthless suppression of the peasant bands. In so doing he lost much popular support and stained his own reputation forever. We cannot condone his position here, but we must understand it and the methods of extermination which he advocated in the light of the times in which he lived. The Catholics blamed Luther for the uprising and this was their pretext for martyring many Lutheran pastors.

A significant event took place in June of 1525, when Luther married Katherine von Bora who had been a nun. Although the private lives of many clergymen had been scandalous, they had not been allowed by the Church to marry. But wherever the Reformation broke out, priests began to marry. Naturally the

marriage of Luther caused wide interest and approval. His wife seems to have been a capable and loving companion and the mother of six children. Many amusing instances are related of their home life which was wholesome and happy. Luther contributed immeasurably to the establishment of a noble German tradition of fine family life. His own home furnished a living example widely followed by his fellow Germans.

During this period there were several Imperial Diets through which the Church vainly tried to stop Luther and his movement. Emperor and pope were too often busy fighting each other or the Turks to give wholehearted attention to the reformers. The tendency was to allow local princes to decide whether the reformation would be tolerated or not in their domains. The Diet of Speyer in 1529 decided that Catholics were to be given liberty in Lutheran lands but did not give the Lutherans liberty in Catholic lands. The protest of the Evangelicals against this arrangement became the origin of the name Protestant. In general, northern Germany followed Luther while the south remained Catholic. In some cases after the first flush of success the Lutherans actually lost territory to Catholicism.

The relation of Luther's movement to the Reformation in Switzerland under Zwingli deserves careful attention. While the two men had much in common and could have strengthened each other greatly, they actually had little to do with each other and came face to face only at Marburg where a meeting was held in 1529, arranged by Philip of Hesse. Zwingli and Oekolampadius

faced Luther and Melanchthon and debated their doctrines. Although their seconds were much more conciliatory towards one another, Zwingli and Luther refused to come to terms. The cause of the trouble was four words: "This is my body." Both men denied the Catholic view, but Luther held that the elements of the Lord's Supper became the flesh and blood of Christ although the appearance of the substance actually did not change. Zwingli held that the words meant "This signifies my body." For a time a complete deadlock seemed inevitable but the conference closed on a happier note when both parties signed a statement showing the world that there was general agreement except on this one issue. The conference did have the good effect of enabling both parties to better understand the other, but they refused to present a common front against the Catholic world. Philip of Hesse continued his efforts to bring reconciliation and in 1530 each party (the Reformed group of Switzerland, the Lutherans of Germany, and the Anabaptists) produced a confession of faith which did much to consolidate Protestantism and set it over against Catholicism. Luther was pleased with the Augsburg Confession drafted by Melanchthon although the latter tried to make its tone as moderate as possible.

Although Luther lived until 1546, the last fifteen years of his life were comparatively uneventful. He continued to organize his church and turn out books and commentaries. The full German Bible appeared in 1534. He produced catechisms for children and a German mass which contained none of the evils

of Catholicism, but at the same time appealed to those who felt the need of such ritual. He encouraged the music in his churches, and seems to have produced some of it himself, particularly well known being the famous "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." Meanwhile he preached continuously, and kept up a running fire of words with the Catholics and the Anabaptists. Possibly the bitterness of his words was due to failing health. As the result of a long journey to arbitrate a family quarrel, Luther died on Feb. 17, 1546 in the town where he had been born (Eisleben). His body was returned to Wittenburg and burried in the Castle Church where he had first nailed his 95 Theses.

Luther deserves his fame in history as the greatest leader of the Reformation. He had his faults to be sure--mainly those of intolerance of differing views, and occasional outbursts of biting and angry words which no Christian minister should utter. He made mistakes too, but he must not be judged by 20th century standards. Perhaps his greatest mistake was that of tying up the church too closely with the government--yet he had before him no other alternative. His greatest triumph came, of course, through his success in popularizing the doctrine of justification by faith, a principle which undermined the whole structure of Roman Catholicism and made every man a priest fully authorized to seek his own soul's justification through faith and his own spiritual development in the Bible.

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Ulrich Zwingli of Switzerland

(1484-1531)

The life of Zwingli tempts us to exclaim: "Here is another Reformer whose career would be nearly perfect had he not engaged in political controversies!" Yet the Swiss Reformer was caught by the same set of circumstances as his contemporaries. A reform of the Church in doctrine and government could not be successful without a simultaneous upheaval in state government which heretofore had been linked inseparably to the Roman Catholic Church.

Switzerland occupies a unique place in European history. While in many ways an isolated mountainous area, it is also centrally located at the crossroads of Europe. The hardy independent mountain folk had always maintained more local autonomy in church and state affairs than other countries, but the many small city states were loyal to the Roman Catholic Church and, in general, opposed the Reformation at first with local authority just as much as the Roman papal court itself opposed it elsewhere. In the time of Zwingli, the traditional integrity and independence of these mountain people was being seriously undermined by the extensive use of Swiss troops as mercenaries in the employ of nearly every power in Europe, resulting in the loss of many soldiers in battle, and leading to all kinds of corruption, as soldiers were bartered for money, and became subject to bribery, were tempted to pillage conquered

towns, and were allowed to indulge in every kind of immorality. The effect of enormous sums of foreign money pouring into Swiss pockets was far from wholesome. And the practice inevitably drew the Swiss states into alliances with European powers, involving them in wars which did not concern them at all, and sometimes led to civil war.

Ulrich Zwingli was born in the village of Wildhaus in the Toggenburg Valley of German Switzerland on Jan. 1, 1484. His father was a farmer, but was prominent in the village. Observing the natural ability of young Ulrich, his parents determined to make a priest of him and sent him to nearby Wesen where he studied under his uncle, Bartholomew Zwingli, who was a friend of the movement away from the old cut and dried scholasticism. Ulrich proved such a scholar that he soon outgrew all his uncle could teach him and was sent, in 1494, to Basel to the school kept by Gregory Buenzli who treated the boy as a son. Here he studied Latin, dialectic and music. The latter especially interested him, and for the rest of his life he was at his happiest when playing some musical instrument. After four years he was sent a hundred miles westward to Bern where he soon moved to the Dominican monastery, probably because of the training in music there offered. His father then sent him on to the University of Vienna where he studied two years before returning to the university at Basel in 1502, from which he finally received his M.A. in 1506. Shortly before leaving Basel he was strongly influenced by the lectures of a theolo-

gian who emphasized the supreme authority of the Holy Scripture, a principle which later caused Zwingli to break with the Roman Catholic Church.

Zwingli was now called to be rector at Glarus, a parish including several important villages. It was located forty-three miles southeast of Zurich upon a little plain surrounded by mountains. Zwingli was ordained and spent the years 1506-1516 in this beautiful valley community. He was extremely diligent in his duties and most popular with his parishoners. In addition to his regular duties as pastor and preacher he continued all kinds of study. In 1510 he began the study of Greek which, as was the case with many Reformers, opened his eyes to the true teachings of the New Testament. In 1512, 1513 and 1515, he went three times with troops from Glarus to Italy as chaplain. He zealously participated in their fight on the papal side in the first two campaigns but was angered and dismayed when French agents managed to "buy off" his soldiers during the third. Seeing its evils, he began to preach against the practice of "renting" soldiers to the rest of Europe. His zeal for the pope was rewarded by the grant of an annual pension from the pope "for the purchase of books" but this was eventually to bring Zwingli into trouble as it placed him under obligation.

During the latter part of this period Zwingli was strongly influenced by Erasmus' emphasis on the authority of the

Scriptures. This undermined the authority of the Catholic ecclesiastical structure in the mind of Zwingli (as it had in others). Also, while at Glarus, he came upon an ancient Latin book of worship forms which were not like the ones currently in use. He immediately perceived the falsity of papal claims that Catholic worship had always been the same. While in Italy he discovered and compared various other old liturgies which did not agree. Such studies opened his eyes. For instance he could see that the observance of the Lord's Supper had gone through an evolution into the present mass.

From 1516-1518 Zwingli lived and preached in Einsiedeln, a town much nearer Zurich. His duties were lighter and gave him much more time to study in association with monks who sympathized with the New Learning. Zwingli dated his own conversion to the Reformation thought to his stay in Einsiedeln where, said he, he "first began to preach the Gospel." His simple and clear expositions of Scripture were most popular with his hearers, though a few began to grumble about his heresies. Einsiedeln was the sight of a famous shrine and he was rather amused by the superstition of the pilgrims who flocked there. This was also his attitude toward an indulgence salesman named Samson who practically advertized his wares as buying permission to sin. In spite of what Zwingli was beginning to say and think about abuses in the Church, he still had no idea of a break with that Church--only of a reform from within. The Catholic leaders felt they had little to fear from a man who

still accepted his papal pension. Not until 1522 did he renounce this pension.

On Jan. 1, 1519 Zwingli began his duties as preacher of the cathedral in Zurich to which he had been called a few months previously. This was a highly important post for which he had been an open candidate. As he entered office the church officials sought to impress him that his major duty was to preserve and increase the contributions of the people to the cathedral. Zwingli politely thanked them and then ignored their hints completely by announcing that he would begin the next day with a continuous exposition of the Gospel of Matthew, not according to the traditional interpretation of the Church Fathers, but according to the Scriptures themselves without reference to other books. This produced quite a sensation but crowds came and continued to come to hear his popular expositions. All Switzerland rang with his praise as during the next few years he expounded most of the New Testament. It was a diet for which the people hungered.

> He treated practical themes suggested naturally by the Scripture under consideration. Unbelief and superstition, repentance and reformation, crimes and vices, luxury and extravagance, were animadverted on. He was emphatically the patriot in the pulpit, and preached to the times--against pensionaries and mercenaries, against the war spirit and the lying spirit, against the oppression of the poor and the making of widows and orphans, against the destruction of Swiss freedom and Swiss honour.[1]

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[1] Samuel Macauly Jackson, Huldreich Zwingli (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1901) p. 123.

When the indulgence seller, Samson, tried to enter Zurich, Zwingli preached against him and succeeded in prohibiting his trade there. Zwingli was now aware of Luther's opening bouts with the pope and engaged in some slight correspondence with the German Reformer of whom he was always somewhat jealous. Opposition against this young preacher was gathering in conservative circles, but he was popular with the masses and had strong help from certain high official friends. When a plague struck the city, the preacher, who was on vacation, returned to aid his stricken people and himself caught the plague from which he slowly recovered. For the next two years, by study and correspondence and a few writings, Zwingli was laying the groundwork for the Reformation in Zurich. The system of sending mercenaries, the avarice of the pope and the cardinals, and the treatment of Luther by the Catholics, all led to the conviction that reform was necessary. It began in Zurich in 1522.

During Lent of this year, certain citizens of Zurich, applying the teachings of Zwingli, decided that it was not necessary to observe the required fasts. In the interests of maintaining peace the City Council ruled that they should observe the regulations until they were officially ruled unnecessary. But news of this reached the Bishop of Constance who sent a commission which spoke vigorously against the ideas expressed by Zwingli. The fair-minded Swiss citizens insisted that Zwingli be allowed to reply to these charges, which he did with clever quotations of Scripture. The decisions remained about the same

however, but during the summer the city was in turmoil over various questions such as the right of priests to marry, the use of mercenaries, the practice of taking special pensions from the pope, and so on. It was a period when all the old papal regulations so clearly contrary to the teachings of Scripture or unsupported by Scripture were challenged. News of Luther's successful resistance to the Catholic authority greatly encouraged the Zurichers.

During 1523 two great "contests" or debates were held in Zurich. The City Council which had been "sitting on the fence" during the controversy in the interest of keeping the peace, now determined that open debates should be held between the two major factions to settle the issue. This in itself was a victory for the Reformers since the intolerant Catholic party wanted to pronounce its views as absolutely authoritative without leaving room for any argument whatsoever. Consequently the papal representatives made a ridiculous showing, being unable and unprepared to debate, whereas Zwingli had a ready answer, based on Scripture and carefully reasoned out, for every issue. As a result the Council cautiously removed many of the old restraints, including the liberation of monks and nuns from their vows with permission to marry. Most of the clergy were unofficially married anyway and this was a source of scandal which the Reformation everywhere sought to rectify. Busy and active as Zwingli was with his preaching and the publication of commentaries and defenses of his views, he was extremely cautious and

tried to move no faster than public sentiment approved (though of course he did his best to mould that sentiment.) For instance, he taught that images of the Virgin and the saints were idols, but did nothing to remove them from his cathedral, and denounced the violence of his friends who did begin to remove images through mob action. But gradually the Council legally permitted the reforms he advocated.

Meanwhile certain personal relations of Zwingli were altered. His old admiration for Erasmus ended in 1523 because of the latter's unwillingness to pursue his ideas to their logical conclusion. This break was furthered by Zwingli's support of the violent and revolutionary Hutten who was quite a rebel and certainly no saint. Oekolampadius became his strong friend and admirer and assistant. A great event in 1524 was his public marriage to a widow, Anna Reinhard, who had actually been his wife since 1522. This was the generally accepted custom among many of the clergy, but his public marriage occasioned the congratulations and applause of all his friends, as well as signified a further break with the Church. With the abolition of the mass and the celebration of the first Protestant communion on April 13, 1525, the Reformation reached completion in Zurich. It is unfortunate that his career did not now end.

This is not quite the proper chapter for The Anabaptist movement was an offshoot of the Zwinglian reforms. Some of his followers broke with him on views of baptism, or church-State

In 1525 Zurich was invaded by representatives of the radical wing of the Reformation, the Anabaptists. Following public debates with the Zurich Reformers, these men were ex-

pelled, but not without a lot of harsh and violent words. In 1526 the representatives of the Bishop of Constance held a public debate in nearby Baden under conditions entirely favorable to the Catholics. Zwingli refused to attend. But he kept in daily communication with his spokesmen at the conference, and supplied them with arguments. At the end both sides claimed victory but one of the worst effects of the affair was to widen the rift between the Reformed and the Catholic cantons (city states) of Switzerland which were officially united in a loose federal organization. Zwingli did engage in a further defense of his views at a disputation held in Bern in 1527 at which time the Catholic theologians were conspicuous by their absence. He now began to formulate codes of correct living for the city of Zurich and the cantonal clergy. These ordinances met considerable opposition, particularly in the conservative country districts. By 1529 Zwingli reached the height of his influence and his following included not merely the city of Zurich but large parts of Northern (German) Switzerland and Southern Germany. Some 500 clergymen attended the Reformed synod which he headed. But on one side the other Catholic cantons of Switzerland were bitter in their condemnation of the heretic, while on the other side Luther was almost equally opposed to Zwingli because of differences over the Lord's Supper.

In 1529 matters came to a head and Zurich with her allies marched on the five forest cantons. As the armies faced each other at Cappel, they agreed to a truce and temporarily

settled their differences without bloodshed through arbitration while the troops of both sides fraternized between the lines. The terms were favorable to the Reformed cantons and humiliating to their enemies. Taking advantage of the ensuing lull in Swiss affiars, Zwingli took up the struggle with Luther, meeting him at Marburg at the invitation of Philip of Hesse. Here both leaders refused to yield their positions and apparently are equally to blame for their refusal to join forces even if they could not agree on the exact significance of the words of the Sacrament, "This is my body." They did reach agreement on other issues and the meeting had the value of bringing the two wings closer by better understanding the other's position.

Marburg is usually considered as marking the apex of direct discussion between Lutheran and Reformed.

During the next two or three years Zwingli was engaged in political activity not altogether to his credit. His dream was an alliance of powers to safe-guard the freedom of Zurich. But he included not only the cities of Switzerland and South Germany which had joined his Reformed group, but also Venice and Catholic France. He justified these attempts because of political expediency in safeguarding himself against Luther whom he despised almost as much as the Catholics. He refused all efforts by Phillip of Hesse to establish a military alliance of Lutheran and Reformed states against the Catholics. He steadfastly refused even the slightest compromise which might have brought him into complete fellowship with the Lutherans, and since he was the accepted head of the Reformed Church they followed his leadership and have ever since remained in a separate

This would seem to put all the blame on Zwingli - Is it so correct?

tradition from the Lutherans.

Meanwhile the Swiss Federation was again rent by schism. The first Cappel war had settled nothing and the Forest Cantons were determined to get even. Following much bickering and intrigue, the Protestant Cantons voted an embargo on trade in certain essential commodities needed by their enemies in the effort to enforce what they considered fair treatment of Protestants in the Catholic Cantons. The embargo was not popular among large sections of the Protestant citizens whose trade suffered thereby. Hence the threats of the Catholic cantons to resort to arms met with only half-hearted interest among their enemies who carelessly made no preparations for defense although civil war was clearly impending. Not until the Catholics had crossed the borders of Zurich territory did the city awake to its danger, but by then it was too late. The army which hurriedly set out from Zurich was a disorganized and poorly led rabble which fought bravely but was outmanuevered and easily defeated in the battle of Cappel. Zwingli himself went out armed into the battle and was killed by a Forester after having been wounded twice in the legs. At first his body was unrecognized but after his identification a large crowd gathered. His dead body was quartered by the hangman, mixed with dung, and burnt. The defeat of the Zurichers was a terrible day for the city, for nearly every family was soon in mouring. The Forest Cantons failed to press their advantage in spite of initial victories and a negotiated peace settled the dispute by restricting

each territory to the religion it had chosen. This dashed the hopes of the Protestants to establish a united reformed Switzerland.

Zwingli's work continued after him under the able leadership of Bullinger and others. While we cannot condone his mistakes and faults, we can seek to understand Zwingli in the light of the disturbed times in which he lived and worked. He does deserve full credit for the establishment of the Reformed system of doctrine in Switzerland. Although modified in many ways, he is essentially the father of all the so-called "Reformed" group of churches. So far as the reform measures he instituted in Zurich are concerned he deserves full praise and honor for the moderate and well planned manner in which he carried them out. He never flamed into a violent revolt against Roman Catholic errors and abuses but sought a quiet deliberate change based upon the truth as he found it in Scripture.

> Zwingli proved his title to be called the Prudent Reformer. Granted that it was the clear-sightedness of the prayerful scholar rather than spiritual elevation which gave him the knowledge of the objectionable doctrines and practices of the Old Church, he showed true courage in opposing and removing them; granted that he was totally lacking in Luther's flaming zeal, he accomplished a much more complete break with Rome; granted that he was no profound thinker like Calvin, he was much more easily comprehended and probably quite as correct. And in personal qualities he was superior to Luther and Calvin. Men loved Zwingli, and followed him because they loved him.[2]

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[2] Ibid., p. 222.

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Ignatius Loyola of Spain

(1491-1556)

Recent events have proved that Spain is not so strongly Roman Catholic in her thought. Spain moved in a Republic & Church disestablished had it not been for aid given Franco by Hitler & Mussolini

Spain has always been strongly conservative. Even today she remains firmly Roman Catholic with little or no tolerance for those who might differ. The Reformation which swept Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries made little effect upon Spain. This was partly because of the isolated nature of the Spanish peninsular and partly because it had long been concerned primarily with the pressure of the Moors from North Africa and was only now emerging as a free, united country. And it was also due to the resistance of Spaniards to all innovation, so that even the few who did entertain "heretical" views found little sympathy. Little wonder then that Spain produced no reformers, but that her contribution to this era was a man who strongly supported the Roman Catholic Church and was a key figure in restoring some of the lustre to the fame of an institution badly tarnished by corruption. Such a man was Ignatius of Loyola.

And because of the Inquisition

Ignatius sprang from the hardy and tough Basques who lived in the mountainous frontier region between Spain and France. His father belonged to the nobility and had considerable income. The date of his birth is variously determined with the best authorities setting 1491 as the most likely. There is no account of the life of Ignatius until he was thirty, and our knowledge is based on very slim evidence. Even his own "Confes-

sions" of later years give only one sentence to his youth. He

> was like the other young men of his day of noble birth, given to gaming, fighting and women, proud of his orthodoxy, but not particularly interested in living like a Christian. His education was limited to the ability to read and to write a beautiful hand. Doubtless he composed bad poetry for the ladies like other young cavaliers, and knew how to dance, to ride and handle arms.[1]

According to the prevailing custom, he was sent as a small boy as a page to the household of the Governor of the fortress of Arevalo. He must have accompanied these officials to the court of King Ferdinand and his second wife, the pleasure loving Germaine. He seems to have been as hot-headed and conceited as any Spanish boy. Once he got into trouble with the law for some escapade. He did, at the age of 24, enter a minor clerical order of the church in order to draw some ecclesiastical income, but this did not necessarily mean become a priest.

When Ignatius' patron resisted the attempts of the new King of Spain, Charles I, to transfer his estate to the dowager Queen Germaine, the young man fought valiantly for his master in defense of his castle. A few years later, in the service of the Duke of Najera, he saw more military action and distinguished himself as a soldier and because of his high sense of chivalry. He was gaining a reputation for a generous and conciliatory temper and already demonstrated his ability for handling men. During a war between France and Spain he was wounded and captured by the enemy who treated him kindly, dressing his wounds and sending him home. His leg wound had been

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[1] Van Dyke, Paul, Ignatius Loyola (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927) p. 17.

badly treated and for a while it was thought he might not live. He endured intense pain as the doctors reset his leg twice in an attempt to keep it from disfiguring him. While lying in bed, he read the only books available which happened to be a life of Christ and the lives of the Saints. This precipitated a crisis in his soul and he wavered between exotic dreams of some unidentified lady and visions calling him to the life of a saint. These visions are almost impossible to understand but they resulted in his determination to enter a religious career.

As soon as he was able, he set out alone on his mule to the shrine at Montserrat where he made a three day confession to a priest. Then he bought some humble clothes which he put on, giving his good clothes to a beggar in the street. He dropped into a period of asceticism and wandering. He let his hair and nails grow long, he begged in the streets for food. He suffered from mental anguish caused by worries lest he had failed to confess some sin. The modern reader is tempted to regard his account of the mental travail through which he passed as symptoms of psychological disorder which brought him to the verge of insanity in his fanaticism. Yet he looked upon it as a real spiritual experience. He spent most of this period about the town of Manressa. Many thought he was crazy, but when he fell ill, kind and admiring ladies and the local town officials took care of him.

He now determined to set out for Jerusalem in accor-

dance with his dreams. In 1523 he went to Barcelona to take ship, securing his food for the passage by begging. Landing in Italy he walked to Rome, and then on to Venice, begging as he went and refusing to heed the warnings of those who told him of the difficulties of going to Jerusalem which was, as usual, in a state of tension. Although friends in Rome gave him a little money for the trip, he gave it away on the way to Venice. Here the Doge arranged for his passage, and he set sail, although barely recovered from a serious illness. The sailors got irked at their pious passenger and planned to leave him on a deserted island, but the wind carried them on to Cyprus where he was transhipped and soon landed in Jaffa. Arriving in Jerusalem he paid his respects to all the shrines but narrowly escaped serious trouble by his reckless and thoughtless disregard for rules in taking a trip to the Mt. of Olives by himself at night. He did realize that it would be impossible for him to establish a religious order in Jerusalem at that time as he had hoped.

On the way back to Venice his was the only one out of three ships starting out together which did not sink. Returning to Spain he determined to get an education. The grown man started out learning grammar with the little school boys at Barcelona. Then for a year and a half he was at the university of Alcala. Meanwhile he had been developing "Spiritual exercises" based on his own spiritual experiences and these he gave to others who were now coming under his influence. The Inquisition got curious

about this strange student and examined him and his followers. They were released following a promise not to wear clothes which resembled those of a monastic order. They were told not to hold meetings. A few months later he was again arrested and questioned by the suspicious inquisitors. Again he was released with an injunction which amounted to: "We find no fault with you, but don't do it again!"

Ignatius now went to the University of Paris for seven years. His first followers in Spain failed to follow him to France but he gained new comrades there. He attended the same college as did Erasmus and Calvin. At first three fellow Spanish students became his friends and he trained them in the "spiritual exercises." When they got into trouble for begging, Ignatius went to the Inquisitor without waiting for a summons and got a certificate of his innocence. Although he was not distinguished as a student he was far from idle. He became a sort of director of student aid funds which wealthy Spanish merchants asked him to administer. He got into trouble for encouraging students to go to church rather than to university disputations. He gathered several close friends who later became leaders in his movement: Pierre Lefevre, Francis Xavier, Diego Lainez, Bobadilla, Simon Rodriguez, and Alfonso Salmeron. These seven men were bound by close ties of friendship and vowed to establish a religious order. They were to meet in Venice in 1537 to go to Jerusalem if possible. Ignatius went ahead of the others, begging and enduring all sorts of hardship and illness.

During 18 months in Venice, Loyola studied theology and helped souls. His Parisian friends joined him in 1537 after an eight weeks' tramp from Paris. The whole group went to Rome and received the Papal benediction and permission to go to Jerusalem. But they waited in vain for conditions to settle down so they could make the trip. While they labored in Venice the Inquisition got suspicious again, but the brothers were allowed to continue their works of charity and mercy and preaching unmolested. Ignatius did, for some unknown reason, incur the enmity of Caraffa, the head of the Theatine order. This man caused Ignatius a lot of trouble, especially when he became pope twenty years later. Ignatius went to Rome, probably simply feeling his way along as to the best course to pursue. Here he ran into the most serious of eight inquries before the Inquisition to which he had ~~had~~ been obliged to respond.

At Rome, Loyola and his ten followers set up a house and took steps to start their new order. The Pope was most friendly, and gave his official approval of the establishment of the Society of Jesus (its members are popularly knows as the Jesuits). Some in the papal court objected to starting a new order, saying there were already too many. Even more than other orders, the Jesuits vowed direct and unswering allegiance to the pope. Ignatius and his comrades carefully planned and organized their group. They set up what amounted to a military system of obedience to their leaders and their general. They did not require scourging, going barefooted, wearing hair shirts or other

ascetic practices--Ignatius wisely saw from experience the futility of such. They vowed to live a life of poverty, to accept no property or office in the church which might tempt them to greed and avarice, and they refused the spiritual oversight of women. Of course Ignatius was elected as general of the order, but he gave every evidence of being sincerely reluctant about assuming command. The group was a sort of Salvation Army and in some respects resembled that organization. They adopted a set of "Constitutions" governing the membership and activities of the order.

> All through these laboriously wrought-out rules for the guidance of an intricate enterprize for doing good to his fellows, there shines a simple sincerity at times very touching and an unshakable trust in God. This man wishes his followers to be pure in heart, poor in spirit, merciful, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, to strive always to make peace. He is quite sure that men of this sort will carry the Company to great triumphs for God, the Church and man.[2]

By now the activity of Luther and Zwingli and other reformers was beginning to have its effect on the Catholic Church. From the inside, she was beginning to self-examine and self-criticize. There was much to be ashamed of. The scandalous lives of the clergy from the pope on down, the practice of one man holding several ecclesiastical positions simply for the income to be derived, the woeful lack of spirituality and moral restraint of Christendom--all were decried by some of the leaders of the Church. Ignatius never once challenged the ideal of the mediaeval Church, but he looked for new methods for serving that unchanged ancient ideal and for revitalizing

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[2] Ibid., p. 156.

the Church. His order, unlike other orders whose emphasis was the saving of their own souls, worked to save others. And unlike other orders, every member of the Society of Jesus was responsible directly to the general. Their fundamental work was preaching which many of the parish priests did not do. Hence they capitalized on the same advantage possessed by the early Protestant preachers. They were also highly trained and educated, and delighted their hearers with running commentaries on passages of Scripture. They were diligent in hearing confession and in attacking particular sins. The latter got them into trouble sometimes, as when they worked against commercialized vice.

Two outstanding projects of the Society of Jesus under Loyola were his colleges and his foreign mission enterprises. Both of these gave wide fields of service. The idea of the colleges came from Lainez who was one of the most brilliant of the Jesuits, but Ignatius left his impress upon this educational system. The Jesuits insisted upon a high standard of education, loyalty to Catholic religious practices (Protestant students were accepted), and to a rigid adherence to schedule and discipline. The latter point would both amuse and anger the modern student. These colleges were exclusively teaching institutions and not laboratories for the discovery of new truth. By careful and conservative defense of the old truth the Jesuits were able to offset much of the current radicalism of many of the European centers of learning. Their attempts at foreign

missions were equally successful. Most famous of their missionaries was Francix Xavier who went to India, and Japan and finally died trying to enter China. His life is an inspriation in itself. The history of the Jesuits has always been closely linked with their zealous (and often fanatical) efforts in the field of missions.

At the Council of Trent in 1545, when the Catholic world assembled to study internal reform measures, and the Catholic counter-reformation was set in motion, the guiding lights were two leaders from the Society of Jesus, sent by request of the pope himself. Lainez and Salmeron went and, in spite of a rather cool treatment by many in the council, they succeeded in steering the course of the proceedings. By his brilliance Lainez distinguished himself. When the council reconvened in 1551, Lainez again dominated the proceedings--so much so that when he fell ill, council action on important matters was deferred until he could be back to assume leadership.

We must admire Ignatius as the general of his company. He kept in personal tough with his growing following by personal letter. He refused all temptation to wealth and power. He was the guiding light in setting up an immense and ambitious program. He avoided controversy, and ordered his followers not to speak ill of the pope even if they disapproved of him. He tried to avoid all causes of slander. In enlisting young men for his order he was careful to see that they felt the call of God, and he set up safeguards to avoid the criticism of parents

who might charge him with taking their boys away from them. He insisted on rigid obedience from his followers but allowed them some discretion in carrying out his directives in the light of local considerations about which he might be ignorant. Occasionally he used his authority to discipline an unruly brother, but always did so with kindness and every attempt at reconciliation.

Always the "Spiritual Exercises" were the means used by Ignatius to gain recruits for this comapny and to train them. To the modern Protestant reader these seem rather silly but they induced a peculiar psychical effect on those who underwent this schedule of spiritual self-discipline. The course took four weeks and the object was "to conquer self and order life without being decided by an exaggerated affection." It consisted in meditation upon various spiritual problems leading up to the acceptance of certain rules laid down by Ignatius. It is remarkable the effect that this code of discipline had upon the followers of Ignatius, and it does seem to have served his purpose marvelously. Coupled with his own natural ability to draw men, it worked wonders in the organization of his order. He knew how to be sympathatic and kind as well as strict with his followers. In this way he was able to maintain the loyalty and love of his men and exert a wide influence among all with whom he came in contact.

During the latter years of his life, Ignatius was

often ill. In fifteen years he was sick fifteen times and often spent weeks in bed. His friends had seen him rally so often, that they were not particularly worried when he spent the first six months of his sixty-sixth year in bed. But in July of 1556 he died quietly, faithful to the end to what seemed to him to be a God-given mission to fulfill. Even non-Catholics are forced to admire and honor such a man. Had the Roman Catholic Church had a few more like him at an earlier stage the schism occasioned by the Reformation might never have occured. For, in spite of strict adherence to that Church, Ignatius and his followers by their vital spirituality and dedication to God and Church, by their poverty and morality, by their simple preaching and good works, by their system of education and missions, were the greatest single force in restoring the self- respect of Catholicism and checking the growth of Protestantism in Europe.

This paper seems to me to give a somewhat idealized picture of the Society of Jesus

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